



## South East European Peace Summit

### *“Women Together: Redefining Pathways to Peace, Reconciliation & Development”*

Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup>. 2019, Tirana /Albania - Renate Amesbauer

Session Chair: **Mrs. Carolyn Handschin, Director, United Nations Office, WFPW International.** In her opening remarks, Mrs. Handschin welcomed the full house on behalf of the organisers, thanking the many who contributed to the preparations, especially WFPW Albania. She reminded audiences that we are here to advance together, saying that the EU has no monopoly on solutions and referred to the debates during the WFPW events that brought women Parliamentarians and civil society together in the Albanian Parliament and Kosovo Parliament in 2018 and 2119.

The solidarity among women leaders in the Balkans and their concern about how to promote women’s participation while taking consideration of the outgoing men in office was striking- and something European women leaders seem to be less concerned about. Ms. Handschin explained that the organizers tried very hard to include a male voice in the panel, believing that it is important not just to talk among ourselves and not to repeat the same mistakes attributed to historic male dominance in politics. That speaker, an important male representative of the UN Office on Drugs and

Crime (UNODC) in the Balkans, she was unfortunately called away to mission just before the conference.

**Prof. Julia H. Moon is the President of the Women's Federation for World Peace International.** *A internationally renowned ballerina, she is also the chairperson of the Universal Culture Foundation, coordinating the operations of the Universal Art Center, the Universal Ballet Academy, the Kirov Academy of Ballet in Washington, D.C., and the Julia Company, aside from the Universal Ballet Company.*

“Women are those that suffer the most in conflicts and wars, losing husbands and sons, with a possibility of being victim of violence themselves. We are here to find new pathways for peace therefore, it is high time that societies are not led by the logic of power, but by the logic of love and reconciliation! It is through love and forgiveness that wounds can be healed. Prof. Moon also emphasised that women develop their talents in the caretaking of their family and household, organising the life of their children.

These qualifications need to be used for the wider society: What is most need now is the ability to embrace, have empathy and compassion that can heal the world!”



**Hon. Mrs. Ardiana Jaku is currently a Member of the Albanian Parliament.** *She has served previously as a Vice-Minister of Health and Social Protection and as a Regional Director of Social Service in Lezha city. Before being involved in politics, she had experience of leadership in civil society and has qualifications in management and finance. Mrs. Jaku has degree in Finance, is married and has two children.*

Ms. Jaku has always been concerned with social wellbeing, to improve equal chances for men and women! Laws had to be adapted to counteract gender based discrimination. Women are the main care takers in the household and too often victims of domestic violence. Hon. Ms. Jaku pleaded for the support of victims and the consequent pursuing of the perpetrators, in order that women and girls are better protected. 61% of work is performed by women, while they only own 26% of the mof income. Therefore, Ms. Jaku started a plan of action for entrepreneurship of women.

She also developed the system of early diagnosis and treatment of cancer, primarily concerning breast and uteral cancer. She founded new pediatric hospitals. Hon. Ms. Jaku very energetically stroven for a society of justice and well-being for all! She says “Quotas is not enough, it os quality that is so important”. She also mentioned not to forget, “For every women to step in, a man has to step back! How can we help them to keep their dignity?”!

**Dr. Céline Guérin** *completed her PhD in Neurosciences in 2008 in the CHUV, the hospital of Lausanne in Switzerland. Her willingness to explore consciousness and human behaviors brought her to work in a Psychiatric Institute and to experience alternative healing techniques such as meditation, EFT and hypnosis. Today she specializes in relationship issues, self-esteem, stress management and sexual abuse and she is working in Sophia Health Centre in Lausanne as a certified Peak States® therapist. This therapy is the accomplishment of 30 years of research led by the ISPS- Institute for Study of Peak States (of Consciousness) and is based on a psychobiological model explaining how our emotions and physical sensations are correlated to biology.*

In the conference, Dr. Guerin spoke about the links between our story, epigenetic and behaviors and how trauma therapy techniques might be efficient tools to bring peace in ourselves and, by

extension, to increase peace in the world. Dr. Guerin shared how she at a young age -watching the news – always was asking herself: “Why does history always repeat itself, why do people continue to make the same mistake over and over again?” She learned that all you can do , like Mahatma Ghandi has been stating, is to change yourself! M. Ghandi said: ”If everyone would transform into a better person, the world would become a better place.” So we need to understand more about ourselves, why are traumas so deeply rooted in us?

As a neuroscientist she found, that heavy trauma is changing our epigenetics, is changing our DNA. This implies that, if not healed, it will be transmitted to the next generation, and we inherit from the past. Again, what can be done about that? Dr. Guerin explained three dimensions: Consciousness, a relationship issue and –very important: Meditation! She brought meditation into psychiatric institutions. As a trauma has been an experience with strong emotions, like in the case of (sexual) violence, it needs therapeutic relationship to be healed, but also meditation, to heal the inner wounds. And very important: It is a personal decision to want to be healed, to heal!

She calls her healing centre “Peak State Therapy for Peace Centre”, as it is when one can feel deep and positive emotions of joy, happiness, freedom one can heal. Dr. Gurin says that 70% of healing takes place once a person can speak about the painful experience, is able to share what she or he has gone through! “Healing for Peace” is finding peace within ourselves and with influential people and when there is love between nations.



**Ms. Bettina Kircher**, International security Sector Advisor; independent conflict consultant and mediator, Germany.

Ms. Bettina Kircher obtained her M.A. in Regional Sciences and is a Lecturer at Helmut-Schmidt-University in Hamburg. She also serves presently as a facilitator and trainer for the German Staff and Command College, Armed Forces and Police, Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance / International Security Sector Advisory Team, German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ), etc. She has more than eight years of working experience in conflict and war zones with the International Committee of the Red Cross, UN Peacekeeping and E.U. Common Security and Defense Policy Missions, predominantly in Sub-Sahara Africa and Latin America.

Her strong recommendation is an international security team with a mandate to act!

In a war, women are even more affected than man, being prone to multiple acts of violence. But also boys and men are misused - having to wear a gun, being forced to fight, or boys being forcefully recruited as soldiers at an early age. There is nothing good that comes with war!

Her first mission was to go into the jungle to meet the guerrillas to protect civilians from more killing. (Ivory coast); “First it took months to explain to the authorities that I want to meet them, they are people, someone has to start talking to them.” It took weeks to get a local permission to enter the area. Then informal negotiation could start; I wanted to show – they are human beings! It is possible to negotiate.” For one year now unlawful killing did take place and peace negotiations could start. To

reach successful and sustainable peace and reconciliation also income-generating projects can be important. To offer practical help, often it is out of social desperation or imbalance that might further leads to violence. More important points: Lasting peace can only be reached with participation from the field, the people themselves, plus a strong involvement of women. Let the people find the solution and work for it – together, create a common goal and vision!

There should be not any kind of abuse or neglect remaining; if such continues, then this might lead to violence again. Dare to talk to the enemy! Like Betty Williams and Desmond Tutu said: "It is easy to talk to the friends, but it is important to talk to your enemy- and make him your friend!"



**Prof. Zilka Spahić Šiljak** holds PhD in gender studies and her scope of work includes addressing cutting edge issues involving human rights, politics, religion, education and peace-building with more than fifteen years of experience in academic teaching, and work in governmental and non-governmental sectors. She teaches at Cultural Studies at the University of Zenica and at the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of the University of Sarajevo. Zilka is former research associate at Stanford University and Harvard University.

"I am a Muslim feminist" "Women and Peace: Peace is not the mere absence of war or violence; we need a positive Peace: This means the rebuilding and healing of broken relationships! We need a culture of trust and overcoming historical barriers."

Women are differently affected by war than men. A woman's first interest is the wellbeing and socialisation of her family. Through motherhood a high potential of the heart is reached. This is why women can reach out the hearts of people. What has been learned in the family can be extended to the wider society. Men are more the negotiators.

During or after wars it is often the women who are the first to reach out to the "enemy", being ready to cross the border again! Women have a high desire for peace, and a peaceful surrounding for the sake of (their) children. The fact is, that women often lack confidence! It needs to be rebuilt. Therefore, it is so important to make achievements reached by women visible. Often it needs one year of intense training that a woman feels: Yes, I can do it, I can start up with something. So they start social or educational projects together.

Women need peace and Peace needs women! It needs a women and men equality; that men to be the supporters and allies of women. And of course the other way around. This is why gender mainstreaming is important to keep the momentum of development in our societies going. Her publications include: *Bosnian Labyrinth: Culture, Gender and Leadership* (2019); *Shining Humanity – Life Stories of Women Peacebuilders in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (2014); *Contesting Female, Feminist and Muslim Identities. Post-Socialist Contexts of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo* (2012); *Women Religion and Politics*, 2010.



Report by Renate Amesbauer, President, WFWP Austria