

Julia Hoon Sook Moon hosts WFWP Oceania's Asia Pacific First Ladies Summit

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The Asia Pacific First Ladies Summit in Koror, Palau was jointly co-hosted by the First lady and the Office of the President of the Republic of Palau (HE Debbie Remengesau and her husband HE Thomas Remengesau Jr.), the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) and the Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI). The event took place on December 9 to December 12.

Encouraged by the commitment and compassion of the women leaders at the First Ladies Summit in Koror, a new partnership and grassroots movement was launched.

This initiative was taken by leaders who were present at the Summit- from governments, civil society, and the private sector; for the sake of providing a life of dignity for all people and a world of lasting peace. In short, the Summit's purpose was to advance government and civil society cooperation to advance peace.

On December 9, International guests were welcomed to an opening banquet hosted by the Office of the President. Participants were welcomed by the First Lady and her husband, enjoyed Palau traditional dances and a beautiful buffet located on the white sands of the Palau Pacific Resort beach. The Summit brought together three hundred international participants, including two hundred dignitaries from 36 nations.

On December 10, the Opening Plenary included keynote speeches by HE Debbie M. Remengesau, Dr. Julia Moon (WFWPI President) representing Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon (Co-Founder of UPF and WFWPI), HE Teiraeng Maamau (First Lady of Kiribati), HE Ingrid Aingimea (First Lady of Nauru), HE Diann Torres (First Lady of the N. Mariana Islands), HE Rachael Marape (First Lady of PNG), HE Adi Lieom Loeak (former First Lady of Fiji), and HE Lieom Loeak (former First Lady of Marshall Islands).

Debbie Remengesau shared that in the Palau culture, women choose their chiefs and control the finances, and have the power to dismiss their leaders if they are not doing a good job. Therefore, Palau is a good starting point to inaugurate the First Ladies association.

Remengesau also mentioned that when women are empowered, radical change for society happens fast. More than now we need the woman's voice to create a global family aspiring independence, mutual prosperity and universal values. "I feel very blessed to have inherited wisdom about how to protect the environment from our elders. We must respect our environment if our planet is to survive. Palau's conservation is in our DNA," she said.

Julia Moon shared greetings from Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and explained that in order to create a world of peace, we need ideal families and testified that Mrs. Moon does not rest. By continuing the work of Founders she feels deep love for humanity. She also continued to explain that Mrs. Moon does not speak about the results of distress in the world, but focuses on the root cause of these problems. Following this

introduction, Julia Moon shared one of Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon's speeches.

"My hope is that the First Ladies Summit will spread to all nations so that enlightened women can bring about peace for all," she said.

Concluding the keynote addresses, a resolution to establish the International Association of First Ladies for Peace (IAFLP) was signed by all of the speakers.

For the 2nd Plenary Session, which was run by WFWPI, had the theme, "The Role of Women Leaders in Addressing the Critical Challenges: Solutions and Best Practices." Speakers from Korea, PNG, the Philippines, Tuvalu and Europe shared their insights and knowledge about practices that are working in the regions they represented.



The 3rd Plenary Session was run by the government of Palau, with the theme: Palau, Preserving the Environment through Cultural Wisdom. The session was a rally cry for future generations to preserve the environment through cultural wisdom. Real examples of how this is occurring in Palau were presented as follows.

The Palau constitution stipulates that the nation is a nuclear free zone. Historically, the women of Palau rose up against international pressure to prevent Palau from being a nuclear testing ground. People died for this cause.

Palau has also banned fishing trawling. At present, the government is working to ban commercial fishing within Palau waters, with the aim to become the first national marine sanctuary in the world.

Palau has the philosophy that "we borrow this Earth from our children," rather than the notion that our children inherit the Earth from us. Palau is making intentional decisions that their children and grandchildren will be proud of.

When visitors pass through immigration, a pledge is stamped in their passports to read and sign in front of the officials, this is a government law. The government seeks to conserve Palau's fish, culture and natural beauty. "We want our visitors to be part of this! It isn't the government's responsibility, but everyone's."

On December 11, WFWPI hosted the "Interactive Session: Leadership Paradigms – Asia Pacific Partnership Projects." This program was designed to showcase WFWPI's best practices in the field of education, humanitarian service outreach and peace-building initiatives within the Asia Pacific region. It became a great platform for women leaders to network and work together to solve critical challenges within their regions.

The keynote was given by Mulipola Anarosa Ale-Molioo from Samoa. The keynote was followed by an overview of WFWP humanitarian projects in Asia, guided by Moriko Hori (WFWP IVP for Asia) and Oceania, guided by Anne Bellavance (WFWP IVP for Oceania).

Following presentations, lively table discussions allowed the women leaders to share issues most evident within their nations. Each table facilitator then presented to the whole group their tables findings. These were collected for the purpose of initiating an Asia Pacific joint project with the women who resolved to assist.