

WFWP UK Int. Women's Day With Sun Hak Peace Prize Winner Sakena Yacoobi

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We held a WFWP International Women's Day event on Wednesday March 9th with four wonderful guest speakers. Almost 100 women took part online, and also joined in interfaith prayers for an end to the war in Ukraine.

Dr Sakena Yacoobi, Sun Hak Peace Prize winner and currently in America, spoke movingly about her many years of work to provide education for young women in Afghanistan and Pakistan, more than 14 million in total.

Marcia Lewinson, CEO for 18 years of Women Acting In Today's Society, spoke of her wide ranging activities in advocacy for women's rights, and in help and support for women victims of domestic violence and abuse.

Our youngest speaker, Amine Meshnuni, a refugee from Albania and winner of the 2021 Young Women's Speech Contest, shared about her own life journey, and her efforts to help other young women through work with the Shpresa Programme, and in the UK Parliament, among many others.

Finally, Shari Brown described her years of work helping refugees and asylum seekers, in Birmingham and in Brussels, currently working at the Refugee and Migrant Centre in Birmingham, and the impact which some of the women she has helped have had on her own life.

Dr Sadia Ahmed, Chair of the UK Islamic Mission, Cllr Diane Donaldson, a Birmingham City Councillor, and Dr Lakshmi Vyas, Chair of the Hindu Forum of Europe, then shared brief, but very meaningful, reflections on what they had heard.

Julia McHugh offered a beautiful song for us, before we concluded with prayers from some of our faith traditions, for those caught up in the conflict in Ukraine, for Afghanistan and Yemen, and for all those women and children who have had to flee, leaving the safety and security of their homes.

Then time for personal prayer and reflection, as we listened to a young girl singing 'Make Me a Channel of Your Peace'. A very moving and thought-provoking evening.