

Inauguration of Global Women's Peace Network in New Zealand

Yeon Ah (Choi) Moon
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Yeon Ah Moon giving her keynote address

On September 14, 2015, the inauguration of the New Zealand chapter of the Global Women's Peace Network (GWPN) took place in Auckland at the Quality Hotel Parnell.

The event commenced with welcome remarks from the mistress of ceremonies, Mrs. Ruth Cleaver, a founding member of WFWP New Zealand. She explained WFWP's founding vision and elaborated on the status of WFWP as an NGO in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN ECOSOC.

Before dinner, Dame Jane Seccombe, a WFWP member and an ambassador for peace, said grace. The session started with a beautiful duet from James and Elinora Prentice followed by a video presentation of the activities of WFWP worldwide, including the international inauguration of GWPN in 2012. Panel speakers focused on the topic, "the Role of Women in the Twenty First Century." Alexis LewGor, national president of the New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils, and Rev. Diane Winder, an interfaith minister and former vice-president of the UN Association of New Zealand, gave presentations.

Yeon Ah Moon stressed in her keynote address, "Women need to form a network by educating from the lowest levels in our own communities." She expressed her hope that the women of New Zealand will work for peace together with WFWP.

Mrs. Felicity Cairns, president of WFWP New Zealand, introduced the Bridge of Peace Ceremony. Dr. Miyuki Fyers, who is Japanese, spoke about the culture in her native land. Debra Taylor spoke about Western culture. Dr. Rafah Smith spoke about Islam, while Mrs. Susan Hosokava spoke about Christianity. The Bridge of Peace Ceremony is project that symbolizes reconciliation, resolving conflicts and creating harmony between different races and people. Mrs. Anne Bellavance, president of WFWP Australia and international vice-president of WFWP Oceania, stressed that if women with a will work together, a new cultural era can begin.

GWPN is currently holding inauguration ceremonies by region and nation to expand the Abel Women's UN, which True Parents' founded on July 16, 2012 at the Cheongshim Peace World Center. GWPN advocates the advancement of women and the formation of a women's peace network all around the world in order to realize world peace.

I would like to express appreciation to all the peace loving woman leaders for coming to the launching of the Global Women's Peace Network (GWPN). As leading citizens and residents of New Zealand, you have the responsibility of guiding the world in the twenty-first century. The promise of a peaceful, prosperous future depends directly upon the collective actions we take today. In the previous panel discussion, we shared field experiences of great woman leaders. I believe this will prove helpful in making specific plans as you work in the field to build a culture of peace.

I would like to share with you the vision and purpose of the Global Women's Peace Network and how it was founded. I believe women should play a central role in building peace in the twenty-first century. I wish to provide motivation and a starting point as you discuss how women can work together to realize a

culture of peace in your community, nation and the world.

This year marks the seventieth anniversary of the UN. For WFWP, it marks the third anniversary of the passing of Rev. Sun Myung Moon, who devoted his life to establishing world peace and one human family. Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, as a cofounder of WFWP, is continuing Rev. Moon's vision for peace and his efforts to establish peace in every part of the world. As a part of this effort, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon held the inaugural Sunhak Peace Prize Ceremony last month.

Both recipients of the Sunhak Peace Prize are examples of creating a culture of peace based on a strong determination that creating a peaceful civilization for future generations is the responsibility of this generation.



The New Zealand Global Women's Peace Network Inauguration ceremony

These times desperately call for women that feel a sense of responsibility toward their community to step forward and cooperate in building a world where our future generations can live in peace.

Peace loving woman leaders of New Zealand, this is an age where input from a woman's viewpoint is an important addition to the successful efforts at achieving peace. In 1992, Father and Mother Moon proclaimed the dawning of the age of women. Ever since then, they have been educating and supporting women to be leaders that prepare for a century of true peace and happiness. To that end, they initiated the Global Women's Peace Network project in 2012.

Woman leaders and NGO's are uniting to establish a collaborative foundation for a true culture of peace through service, education and reconciliation strategies.

In March 2012, WFWP International inaugurated the GWPN International Assembly with six hundred woman leaders from thirty-three countries in Korea. Since then, GWPN has been launched in different areas of the world including the Middle East, Europe, the Americas, Asia and Eurasia and today in New Zealand. That we are here today to build solidarity and determination to establish peaceful communities is significant. Launching GWPN in New Zealand will be a great addition to the cooperation of women worldwide for peace and happiness among all humanity.

What is the original vision of these peace movements led by women? To quote Father Moon, it comes from "the motherly love of living for the sake of others" and the "True family ideal where peace and harmony are achieved centering on a family formed by a man and a woman each representing the yin and yang sides of God." "The basis of creating a world of peace is an ideal family formed through respect and love between a man and a woman."

Next, I would like to share the cofounder's speech given at the inauguration of GWPN in 2012.

The UN has not been able to advance beyond the level of an organization nor balance the various interests of each nation. That is why we urge today that a new system, a women's peace movement centering on an NGO, to replace the current male-centered system of governmental organizations in order to overcome their limitations and ultimately to usher in world peace.

Since a women's peace movement can only be realized through global cooperation, which is beyond the capacity of an NGO, the establishment of the GWPN is necessary.

When we look back, today's historical establishment of GWPN began from the establishment of the Women's Federation for World Peace, which we created as the backbone for a women's peace movement according to Heaven's will in April 1992. For twenty years, WFWP has constantly

been engaged in a global peace movement through creating networks for peace movements centering on women in 160 nations.

WFWP is different from the aggressive and political women's movement that sought to achieve goals through conflict.



Yeon Ah Moon with WFWP members

Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and I, as cofounders, have been creating foundations around the world since the creation of WFWP. The peace movement was able to expand with the help of 1,600 Japanese volunteers who went to those 160 nations. Even now, it is advancing reconciliation between nations through various volunteer and educational programs that transcend racial, religion, language and national boundaries.

All of this is occurring in accordance with the message I revealed in my speech at the establishment of WFWP: "We must realize ideal families through a true-love movement. Then, we must wage the fight, in every part of society, to realize true love, living for others' sake, so that we may realize world peace." Following a special address that Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon was invited to give at the UN Headquarters, in New York, in September 1993, and three years of international humanitarian activities, WFWP was approved by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as an NGO with General Consultative Status in 1997.

WFWP's Women's Conference for Peace in the Middle East, an annual event since 1997, has attracted interest and participation from woman leaders from many nations in the Middle East. Now it has expanded and given birth to additional concrete activities in the field, about which I am glad to be able to report. At the end of June 2012, WFWP sponsored its sixteenth annual Middle East conference, held in conjunction with the UN Office at Geneva, on the subject of Children Affected by Conflict and Disaster: Prevention, Protection, Healing and Empowerment. The contribution by speakers from UN organizations, experts in relevant fields-combined with the active participation of UN ambassadors, counselors and international NGO representatives-led me to feel that such meetings have the potential to offer real solutions to the healing of our world if the conclusions reached can be acted upon.

Moreover, WFWP actively provides relief to victims of natural disasters and helps children and women in North Korea. These endeavors have been successful.

I extend my sincere gratitude to those who have helped WFWP to stay on track. However, WFWP must now advance even farther. It must go beyond the next step, to follow the path toward the creation of a peaceful world through joining forces with other NGOs and other woman leaders in the world. The establishment of GWPN-which will go beyond the level of a women's NGO and bring governments around the world together is absolutely necessary.

I solemnly declare the establishment of GWPN, which will help all the women in the world to realize this historic mission, and will expand the scope of women's movements to the entire world.

In today's world, where must humanity go? The problems that humanity faces today can only be resolved through the ideals of true love centering on God and one family under God, which my wife and I have been teaching all our lives from the moment we received this understanding from Heaven. These ideals alone represent the only path that will lead humanity to a world of everlasting peace and happiness.

In the twenty-first century, women should play a major role in world history by serving with men as one of the wheels of the engine pulling forward the construction of a peaceful world. Going beyond a century of power and technology, women will be the central axis in building a century characterized by its loving, peaceful culture, and their role will be more important than ever before. I sincerely ask you to choose a true mother's path, the path of a true wife, the path of a true daughter, and the path of a true woman leader who will build a unified world where freedom, peace, and happiness in its truest sense, overflow.

I hope that you can deeply consider the vision I introduced today, as a result women movements can develop on a new level. Through this event, the launch of the Global Women's Peace Network, I sincerely hope that a plan can be established for an annual Global Women's Peace Network assembly or symposium as a contingency plan for collaboration of women in New Zealand.



Women establishing sisterhood relations through a WFWP Bridge of Peace event

Please work together with the WFWP New Zealand for developing GWPN for the peace and happiness of our next generation.