

Reflections on the 59th Commission on the Status of Women in New York City

Angelika Selle
March 26, 2015



WFP Ladies outside the United Nations

It was a great joy for WFP USA to co-sponsor and participate in this year's CSW59 events in New York at the United Nations. More than 9,000 women from around the world and the United States registered this year. Among them were a good number of men! All were eager to participate in the main CSW59 (59th Commission on the Status of Women) session at the UN and in over 450 side or parallel events, all under the theme, "Make it Happen."

This year marked the 20th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, which promulgated the landmark Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Considered to be the most comprehensive blueprint for advancing women's rights, the 1995 Beijing Declaration road map was adopted by 189 governments.

But, 20 years later, those commitments adopted have been only partially fulfilled. In the sessions I attended, one could feel and hear a sense of dissatisfaction on this point. Questions were raised again and again as to how to "make the Beijing Declaration's action steps truly happen."



North Star Academy High School

Yet, it was quite refreshing to participate in WFWP International's parallel events on March 9, the Public Event, and on March 10, the more intimate Luncheon Program, both of which focused on the theme, "Young Women and Leadership: Education, Opportunities, and Obstacles." Having attended such events over the past five years, I found this year's experience was entirely different. For example, in the program on March 9, all of the panelists and the emcees were young women in their 20s and 30s. Each co-sponsoring organization had a few moments to introduce itself, and then everyone enjoyed the young panelists' eloquent presentations.



Frederick Douglas High School, Harlem

Our local WFWP chapters from New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut sent small delegations of high school and middle school students from the following schools: Frederick Douglas High School in Harlem, New York; M.A.C.A.D.E.M.Y. School of Science and Technology in Brooklyn, New York; North Star Academy College Preparatory High School in Newark, New Jersey; and Bridgeport International Academy in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Exposing students to these events was a first, and added greatly to the overall experience for all the participants. We look forward to hearing their impressions and reflections in the next issue of the Logic of Love News.



Participants from M.A.C.A.D.E.M.Y. High School

Ms. Ronchetti from Frederick Douglas High School said that the WFWPI parallel event opened the children's mental scope and way of looking at the world; that the students now can begin to look beyond Harlem to have an outlook of the world that goes beyond their community and environment. It will enrich their lives and help them to dream big.



The highlight of this year's Luncheon Program was the keynote address by our new, young WFWP international president, Professor Yeon Ah Moon. She quoted at length from the words of WFWP's co-founders, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and her late husband, Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon. Also very inspiring and insightful were the remarks by newly appointed director of the WFWP International UN Office, Mrs. Carolyn Handschin, who

eloquently emphasized the role of women.

Every night after attending multiple CSW sessions at the UN, President Moon met with different groups of women until late at night to reflect, strategize, and mobilize.

Our WFWP USA team enjoyed a dinner with our international president, along with many young women. Each young lady shared about her passions, studies, hopes, and dreams for WFWP and for her own life. The "more experienced" ladies in the room poured out their hearts, their wisdom and insights to the younger ones, invoking tears, laughter, and everything in between. That is what you get when women of all ages come together and share.



WFWP USA Staff with the Young Participants

With the conclusion of the CSW 59 events this year, WFWP USA is very hopeful for the future, as we connect and expose our local foundation and the next generation of young women to global affairs. This year we were able to witness the beginning of this paradigm shift as it takes on more substance, with more men supporting women and with women of all ages, especially young women, getting involved and being heard. Action steps toward real and lasting peace are developing. There's no turning back now.

Angelika Selle, born in Pforzheim, Germany, studied at the University of Freiburg in Catholic Theology, in German and English. In the years following she travelled to Japan, Korea and America.

She settled in the U.S. in 1983 with her American husband, Bob Selle. Together they are the parents of 4 wonderful children. She has worked with Government officials, held the position of the editor in chief of two magazines, "Neue Hoffnung" and "Today's World", and she taught at a

parochial elementary school.



Rev. Selle's true passion and calling is to be a reconciler and peace-maker to promote reconciliation and healing between different races, religions, and cultures.

Together with her husband and another family, they founded a reconciliation group in MD. In 2001 she founded the Prayer in Action Ministry and in 2003 the Interfaith Prayer and Fellowship Ministry in Washington DC.

On April 8, 2005 she was ordained at the Lively Stone Worship Center under "God's Vision International Ministries" by Apostle Floyd Nelson.

In 2006, Rev. Selle was appointed to be the Pastor of New Hope Family Church in Landover Hills, MD. Earlier this year, on March 21, 2010, Rev. Selle was appointed by the Founder of WFWP, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, to be the President of Women's Federation for World Peace USA and Vice-President of WFWP International.