

WFWP Middle East: Living Together In Peace: What Does It Take?

Zoe Bennett
June 9, 2022



On June 9, 2022, the Women's Federation for World Peace Middle East and Association for Equality and Citizenship (ANWAR), organized together a virtual event under the title: "Living Together in Peace-What Does it Take?"

The attendees had the chance to listen to three presentations on achieving peace through the health of the body and mind, achieving solid societies and caring for the environment. This unique event was moderated by Dr. Hajiba Ayoubi, medical specialist in Occupational Health and Ergonomics and executive at the central service of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection in Morocco.



Dr. Zoe Bennett, Vice President of WFWP Middle East, and President of WFWP Cyprus was the first speaker. She introduced WFWP its nature and goals, alongside Mrs. Brigitte Wada, Vice President of WFWP Europe and President of WFWP France, who introduced the WFWP's activities in Europe.

Next, Mrs. Mouna Echemmakh gave us the chance to know more about Anwar Association for Equality and Citizenship. Mrs. Echemmakh, who is a member of the executive board of the Association, explained the nature of it, its goals and main objectives: consolidation of a culture of citizenship and of equality

between women and men. She highlighted the workshops in Moroccan cities and villages that Anwar organized, and other activities aiming to achieve peace, and create a society that preserves an individual's dignity.

The first guest speaker, Dr. Fouzia Kadiri, a medical doctor, a specialist in ENT, sleep disorders and clinical psychology, former head of the ENT department in Casablanca hospital, a spiritual health trainer, lecturer and author and president of the Moroccan Society of Sleep and Vigilance, explained about the relationship between health, peace and spirituality. Discussing scientifically proven facts, Dr. Kadiri presented the way how an individual would start achieving peace and how space, spirituality and health are linked.



The second guest speaker, Mrs. Amna Soula, a professional journalist, former director of Radio Tunisia, and former communications director of the center of research of women, highlighted the importance of the media's role in advancing or preventing, peace. She emphasized that although politics drive away from any direction of nurturing peace, people, at least in Tunisia, continue to live in an atmosphere of fraternity and cooperation.

Finally, Dr. Soumia Guennoun, a lawyer and professor, expressed how important the environment is in creating and consolidating peace. She elaborated on three reflections:

- humans need to make peace with the environment (not abuse it),
- a healthy environment is an essential part of conflict prevention and
- the ecosystem for peace must integrate underrepresented groups such as women, indigenous peoples and young people

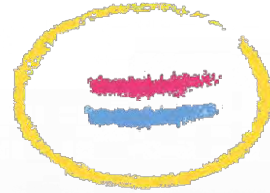
An engaging session of questions and answers followed when participants shared their opinions, questions and recommendations. The meeting came to a close with Mrs. Carolyn Handschin, Director of the WFWPI UN Offices and President of the UN NGO/CSW, highlighting each speakers' important points. Mrs. Handschin stated that the government's responsibility in securing people's safety and freedom, goes together with people's responsibility towards life, love, peace and growth. Women as leaders and mothers play an important role in passing a culture of peace to the next generation.

View the full report [here!](#)



**WOMEN'S FEDERATION
FOR WORLD PEACE MIDDLE EAST**

جمعية انوار
للمساواة و المواطنة



**Association Anwar
pour l'Egalité et la Citoyenneté**

Zoom conference

Living Together in Peace; what does it take?

Thursday June 9th 2022, 19:00 CET

MC

Dr. Hajiba Ayoubi, M.D.

Introduction

Dr. Zoe Bennett President, WFWP Middle East

Mrs. Mouna Echemakh Founder of ANWAR Association

Mrs. Brigitte Wada President, WFWP France

Session 1

“Health, Peace and Spirituality”

Dr. Fouzia Kadiri, M.D.

Session 2

“Concern for the Other as a Means to Peace”

Mrs Amna Soula, Journalist

Session 3

“Environmental Peacebuilding”

Dr. Soumia Guennoun, Professor-Researcher

Questions and Answers

Closing summary

Mrs. Carolyn Handschin Moser, President of the UN NGO/CSW

End of the event

Introduction



Introductory remarks from Zoe-Anne Bennett

Dr Zoe Bennett is from Greece, and serves as the Vice President of WFWP International for the region of the Middle East President of WFWP Cyprus and has a Ph.D. in Literature and Folklore of Korea and Japan. She has been with WFWP since its creation, in 1992 and she has been working in the region of the Middle East and North Africa since 1996.

Good afternoon everyone! Thank you for joining us. I want to particularly thank our co-organizing NGO, ANWAR for their collaboration and for the great work that they are doing in Morocco! My thanks also to our MC, Dr. Hajiba Ayoubi, who is a long time good friend, always willing to help and of great influence, through her work, on the Moroccan society.

I would like to give a sad news. One of the first members of our WOMEN'S FEDERATION in the Middle East, Dr. **Arbia Ben Ammar Bouchiha** from Tunisia passed away just last Saturday. Dr Ben Ammar was a Member of Parliament and university professor. She has been a close friend of WFWP since 1994, when she met our Japanese volunteers in Tunisia. She attended three of our Middle East Women's Conferences and was very appreciative of our activities. WFWP recommended her to participate to a conference of our sister organization, UPF in Korea and eventually she became Ambassador for Peace.

The Women's Federation for World Peace is an international NGO aiming to inspire women to improve themselves and therefore bring peace through their capacities of inclusiveness, empathy and resilience. With this vision we have worked for 30 years, and more, I would say, (as the forerunner of WFWP, the WFP in Asia, already existed a few years before in Japan,) with the mission to empower women as leaders in all levels, the family, community, nation and the world. Basically we aim to create an environment of peace and wellbeing for all people and for the future generations. We have our volunteer members in practically every country of the world. We adapt our activities to the specific needs of every country and region.

In the Middle East and North Africa region, with the sponsoring of our organization from Japan, we have been organizing the Women's Conference for Peace in the Middle East every year for 27 years. It has become a signature project for our organization. This conference brings women leaders from as many countries of the region as possible, even from conflicting countries, in an environment of goodwill, where they can share their situation and get to know each other.

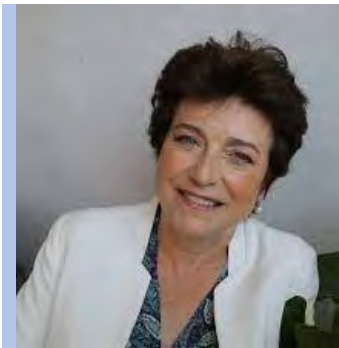
The results are the creation of solid friendships, as well as initiating humanitarian projects supported by the women of even enemy countries. Our meeting today is honored to host speakers from Morocco and Tunisia and we hope that the conclusions we will reach can become a paradigm of living together in peace for the whole region.

Thank you very much.

MOUNA ECHEMMAKH

Mouna Echemmakh is Moroccan and has a degree in Management and a master's degree in coaching and human development. She worked for 17 years as the director of a shelter for women and children victims of violence and 5 years as coordinator of projects on equality and the fight against discrimination against women and young girls. Currently founder and member of the executive board of the Anwar association for equality and citizenship and very passionate about working with young people and giving them a space for exchange and their inclusion in social life. Mrs Mouna Echemmakh made a presentation about her association.

Some good practices of WFPW in France



Mrs Brigitte Wada is from France, Vice-President of WFPW Europe and President of WFPW France. In France, she has organized the Peace Academy for Women, bringing together young women and mothers to share their expertise in health, education and the environment, and the Women's Forum, a series of conferences for women relating to their own selves, their families and their environment.

Good evening,

I am delighted to take part in this event. I thank the Middle East branch of the WFPW as well as the Moroccan organization *ANWAR* for initiating this conference on the theme, “living together in peace: what should be done?”

This topic is particularly relevant to us today because, facing the current conflicts, this is the very question which comes to our mind every day.

This year the *Women's Federation for World Peace* celebrates its 30th anniversary. It has accomplished a great deal since its founding in 1992, thanks to women volunteers who tirelessly invested themselves with an approach of altruistic love. I would like to give you a brief overview of our activities.

1. Global Network of Women for Peace

In 2012, during the inauguration of the *Global Network of Women for Peace*, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon had expressed how important it was for the WFPW to cooperate with women leaders and NGOs around the world so that together they can work for a world of peace. Indeed, the *Global Women's Network for Peace* has become an essential step for the creation of lasting peace.

During the *World Summit* in Korea in 2020, the association of first ladies for peace was inaugurated with the support of the International WFPW. It was then an opportunity for the WFPW to invite

former first ladies and NGO leaders to speak at our conferences and thus give their views on how to move forward to build lasting peace.

2. Women's Academy for Peace

The second important point is to strengthen the capacities of women. It is no longer a point of making big declarations. We need to take action and try to improve ourselves, to better understand the challenges of society by participating in training sessions led by experts.

In France, in March 2021, we started a nine-session women's course by zoom led by a marriage and family counsellor. It came to an end in April this year.

A first course of three sessions focused on the woman in relation to herself, a second course on the woman in her marital and parental relationships and a third course on the woman in her relationship with her environment. All his sessions were full of practical advice.

3. Promote young people and their commitment.

We have more and more programs involving motivated and talented young people. Without their input, it is difficult to advance the cause of peace.

In 2019 in France, young mothers, particularly eager to discuss everyday topics, began to meet once a month at a mother's house and later by zoom, which allowed us to reach a wider audience. This is how the *Women's Academy for Peace* program began. The topics covered are mainly on education, health and personal development.

4. Reconciliation and peace process.

In addition to conferences on reconciliation and the peace process, one of the flagship initiatives of our movement is the bridge of peace. We have organized hundreds of them in Europe.

5. Humanitarian projects

We have some humanitarian projects supported by different countries in Europe, either on a permanent basis or on an ad hoc basis, such as collecting donations to help Lebanon after the huge explosion of August 2020 in Beyrouth and more recently for Ukraine.

I would like to end by quoting a sentence from Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon: "Today's problems cannot be solved by the logic of power... Our present problems can only be solved by the logic of love." It's a solution that seems obvious but difficult to achieve, but thanks to our constant efforts to live for others, it is quite possible.

Thank you.

Session 1 / Speech of Dr. Fouzia Kadiri



“Physical and spiritual health of the being and of the universe”.

Dr. Fouzia Kadiri is a surgeon in otorhinolaryngology. She is also a specialist in allergology, and medical psychology. She lives and works in Casablanca (Morocco)

For several centuries, Western thought has separated the body from the spirit, whereas the majority of chronic illnesses, whether biological or psychic, result from stress. And what is stress if not an inconsistency and disorder between the mind and the body? This split between body and mind is partly reinforced by Darwin's theory that human beings appeared merely by chance, just like itself on earth. James Watson supported this theory of Darwin when he discovered the double helix of the DNA chain and later affirmed that the genetic engineering controls all our biological functions, i.e. physical, emotional and behavioural. These theories leave no more room for the spirit or the soul. It is then difficult for humans to understand the reality of its existence.

Fortunately, cell biology has developed to explain that the intelligence of our cells does not stop at our DNA but also relates to the exceptional capacities of its membrane; it was the major discovery of epigenetics. Indeed, the cell membrane is able to choose the nutrients necessary for its activity, and reject the substances it does not need. This exchange with its environment makes it possible to establish a good metabolic balance in the body and good homeostasis.

However, this ability alone is not enough to guarantee good health. The laws of quantum physics tell us that we are made of cells. These cells are made of molecules and these molecules are made of atoms, which are nothing but energy. Consequently our body reacts like a quantum body by favouring exchanges of vibratory information between our cells and our emotions which are themselves vibratory energies. When we harbour negative emotions such as anger, fear, frustration, our cells are in a state of stress causing disease.



Scientists have demonstrated that these same cells are also under the influence of cosmic energy that physicists call quantum field. This means that, for the body to be healthy, it is not enough that our cells are well fed and that our thoughts and emotions are positive. It is necessary that the latter be, together with our actions, in harmony with the vibrations of the quantum field.



Nassim Hamein

For this, the intentions of the spirit should harmonize with the breath of the soul because it is the soul which connects to the cosmic energy.

Nassim Hamein, sometimes called the new Einstein of the 21st century calls this cosmic energy “Higher Consciousness”. Through mathematical and physical formulas, he has reached the following conclusions:

- 1/ the universe is organized and follows an order,
- 2/ this order is under the control of a single power,
- 3/ this power is something which is omnipresent, which is omniscient, which knows and which organizes and controls everything in an established order. Nassim Hamein called it “The Supreme Consciousness”.
- 4/ the universe is unified; the universe is one, without separation, without rupture. Matter, energy and consciousness are interconnected,
- 5/ all entities are interconnected and everything responds to the same order; when one of the particles undergoes a displacement in the universe that resounds on all the universe,
- 6/ we are part of this connected universe.
- 7/ space is not empty, it is made up of electromagnetic fluctuations and these fluctuations are nothing other than information. Billions of billions of information; those of the universe, those of the earth, those of humans; when a leaf falls, its vibrations are recorded in this field, when an insect moves its vibration is recorded, when a word is said, its vibration is recorded. Moreover, when a thought or an intention is emitted, it is also a vibration, which is recorded. The same is true when an emotion is felt. And what is an emotion? It is an energy in motion and thus a vibration which is also inscribed in the field of the universe. The last of the atoms is defined by its vibration and all vibration are inscribed in the universe as information.
- 8/ our memory is located in the field and not in our brain. And we, as human beings, leave behind billions of pieces of information in space every year. This information is the trace of our memory inscribed forever in the field of the universe.
- 9/ our brain and our body behave like an antenna which emits and draws from the field of information. All the protons in our body are connected to this set of information. Thus comes the question that scientists have asked themselves, i.e. “if consciousness is around us, can we draw from it?” Yes, definitely, neuroscientists tell us. We can thus increase our flow of information. Our brain, as has been said, is an antenna connected to a set of information and its sets of information produce sets of reactions in our body.

To understand this is to be able to interact with the structure of space in a nourishing way for our body instead of isolating it, which will make it sick. What is disease if not the result of the

decoherence of information in a region of space that would influence a part of our body. So with consciousness we can recreate coherence in our body, this coherence which would have been altered or broken beforehand. This mindful consistency could explain the placebo effect.

10/ we are not separated from the universe of galaxies and spaces that seem empty to us; we are an integral part of this flow of information. This would mean that each of our thoughts, each of our intentions, each of our emotions affects the universe. Each of our actions influences the whole universe.

“Each gesture of love is imprinted in the heart of the Universe”.

We must be able to constructively influence the energy of the universe. Therefore, we must learn to raise the level of vibration of our consciousness. To understand this is to develop the sense of our responsibility in the universe to bring Peace. When we do understand this, we shall involve ourselves by telling ourselves at every moment that we have to “build” something on this planet, to build to improve the lot of humanity. Build to unify humanity in love and Divine order.

Session 2 / Speech by AMNA SOULA

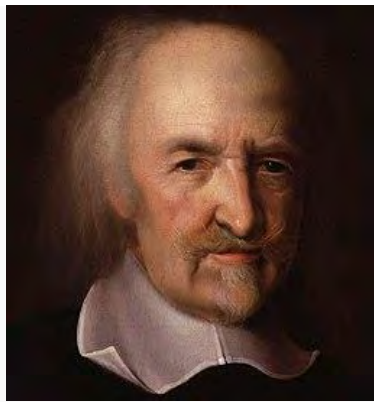
What about peace, right now? Please, bear with me if I often refer to France and French media, due to my culture and background. In a Nato meeting, taking place March 24, President Macron, the President of France and current chairman of the European Union, warned about the risk of an unprecedented world famine.

Soon after the war had started in Ukraine, we witnessed a soaring inflation. The ton of wheat quickly increased from 255 to over 400 Euros. This will be a serious challenge to Montesquieu’s famous theory of the *Doux Commerce*.¹

At all times, economic crises and poverty have been very detrimental to human relationships. Everyone is hit by the omnipresence of clashes and struggles which impose some form of terror upon us.



Montesquieu



Thomas Hobbes



Emmanuel Kant

¹ Montesquieu (1689-1755), the French theoretician of the separation of powers, argued that, “wherever the ways of man are gentle, there is commerce; and wherever there is commerce, there the ways of men are gentle”. Thomas Paine agreed with this view. This prompted Montesquieu to coin the expression *Doux Commerce* (Soft Trade)

We had thought that humanity's transition from the state of nature, defined by the philosopher Thomas Hobbes² as being chaotic and conflictual, to the status of civilization characterized by order and peace, as presented by philosophers such as Kant and others, was something firmly established and lasting. For this very reason, the UNESCO and our Federation persevere and have constantly supported actions intended to reinforce and propagate a certain number of philosophical and moral concepts, in order to spread the human rights and the human person who, individually contributes to the establishment of democracy, which in turn is a necessary condition for the establishment of an atmosphere of peace.

Meanwhile, the world of politics seems to turn away from projects supposed to perpetuate peace, whereas peace is pre-condition for any sustainable development. The picture looks rather gloomy and dark, but we don't pretend that we have just shed the light of the absolute truth on the human reality, far from us to believe in the illusions of determinism.

Since the dawn of time, humanity, through its thinkers and philosophers, has been involved in the construction of concepts and tools conducive to the establishment of peace.

International law may not be all of reality but one has to acknowledge that it often manages to make its efficiency prevail. The legal framework of the European Union is a revolutionary innovation and it is a real success in the process of peace building in this continent

It should also be emphasized that the religions have given a particular attention to the concept of fraternity. We are all brethren because we are all the children of God. True believers and people of different denominations have taught and widely propagated this notion of brotherhood which is a key philosophical element of peace. Today, many humanists are active within the civil society. Their advocacy of brotherhood is very crucial for politics, because it is the foundation of notions like human rights and living as one family in a motherland. Brotherhood is the cornerstone of living together in any society.

John Mueller, of the University of Rochester, wrote a famous book on the obsolescence of major war, in 1990. Despite what we are just witnessing now, it is worth remembering his main points

- The cost of weapons is just too high
- We have changed our values and the culture of peace is gaining ground.
- Of course, the nuclear race and the perspective of mutually assured destruction, as already explained by Raymond Aron, also plays a role.

To conclude on a hopeful note, let me talk about a good example of living together in Tunisia. Whereas terrorism is still threatening us, there are men and women who look at the present time with hope and joy in a country which is predominantly Muslim.

² Thomas Hobbes (1588-1689) was an English philosopher and author of *Leviathan*, famous for his saying, "man is a wolf for man"



El Ghriba Synagogue (Tunisia)



Jewish pilgrims come from around the world to visit the El Ghriba synagogue tracing back to 586 BC in Djerba³. Muslims and Christians then join them to promote a message of peace and tolerance. This can be seen as a vibrant model of brotherhood among humans.

Session 3 / Speech by Soumnia Guenoun



First of all, I would like to thank WFP Middle East branch and especially Dr Zoe BENNETT and Dr Hajiba AYOUBI for the invitation. It is always an honour to participate in the events of the Women' Federation for World Peace and a pleasure to be in contact with the people who gravitate in its constellation.

I want to extend my congratulations to the ANWAR association for this initiative, this theme. I also greet my co-panelists and to the people who follow us on social networks.

My intervention will elaborate around 3 small reflections.

The first reflection concerns **the observation that the human species must make peace with nature**. Because, up until now – and we can never stress this enough – (1) we have adopted a development model that consumes a lot of resources, (2) it is an increasingly unequal model and (3) it causes a continuous degradation of the environment.

Indeed, the upheavals experienced by nature and which are mainly due to human activities, pose risks of an unprecedented magnitude to our societies, and to living organisms more broadly. These risks, already partly present, notably threaten the human habitability of the emerged surfaces, access to essential resources (water, food), and ultimately peace.

This major reality has never been so obvious, it has been proclaimed loud and clear by the **IPCC** in its various reports which note that the impacts of climate change are faster, more violent and cause more victims than expected.

³ The ancient **El Ghriba Synagogue** is located on the Tunisian island of Djerba. The synagogue is the oldest in Tunisia, and besides being the center of the island's Jewish life is also a site of pilgrimage.

These climatic disturbances such as droughts, floods, storms, and fires certainly upset the global balance but also cause various tensions related to forced displacements, increased competition for resources and even armed conflicts .

Global environmental protection is therefore directly linked to the building of peace. Indeed, an unhealthy planet threatens human health, prosperity, equality and peace.

Which brings us to the **second point that I would like to make**, which relates to **the recognition that a healthy environment is an essential part of conflict prevention**.

The good news is that in October 2021, the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a landmark resolution (48/13) recognizing the human right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable. An environment whose quality allows human beings to have a dignified and fulfilled life. This resolution, in addition to its influence on the formation of an international custom, could serve as a catalyst for the formal recognition of the right to a healthy environment within domestic laws which have not yet consecrated it.

Morocco, which is part of the small group (Costa Rica, the Maldives, Morocco, Slovenia and Switzerland) on human rights and the environment which carried this resolution (48/13) had already devoted the right to a healthy environment in its 2011 Constitution.

Indeed, we are lucky in Morocco, to have an impetus at the highest level of the state, by his majesty the King, of an Environment priority, a Renewable Energies priority, a Climate priority, which had been in decline for twenty years, and which has now produced results through a number of achievements.

This top-down approach is certainly important in the consolidation of peace in favor of the environment. But the latter must also favor a bottom-up approach in favor of more inclusiveness. And this is **the subject of the 3rd point to raise** .

Indeed, **the ecosystem for peace must integrate underrepresented groups such as women**, indigenous peoples and young people, no longer as passive recipients but as knowledge-bearing agents of change by considering their realities and experiences.

Certainly, the inclusion of women in climate action and decision-making processes is not only beneficial to environmental peacebuilding but is also essential for effective and informed action, if only for 2 reasons:

The first is that women not only have unique local expertise in areas such as agriculture, conservation and natural resource management, but experience has shown that when women are included in decisions about resource use and societal investment, they more often make decisions based on the best interests of children, family and community. And therefore participate in the construction of a more stable and peaceful society.

The second reason for including women in this process is that in times of conflict, women are sometimes forced to take on new roles and responsibilities related to natural resources, which can help break down existing barriers to their participation. political, social and economic. Especially since failure to take into account the risks faced by women is a real challenge to lasting peace.

And so, this type of approach must go beyond simply promoting inclusion, and help bring about structural transformation that recognizes the gendered nature of both environmental interactions and peace and conflict processes.

In conclusion, I would say that the consolidation of peace in the field of the environment is the most urgent challenge facing humanity: that of finding a way to live together peacefully and equitably on a planet capable of supporting our needs and those of future generations.

Thank you for your attention.



Closing summary

Mrs Carolyn Handschin Moser is from the United States, but she feels rather Swiss, after living in Geneva, Switzerland for 40 years. She is the Director of the UN Office for WFP, since 20 years and recently she became the President of the UN agency, NGO/CSW. Her passion is to empower youth, which led her to create the WFWPI-UN Internship.

Our title tonight reminds me of an earlier Middle East Women conference. It was entitled *Women Uniting for Peace: Resolving Conflict and Educating to Live in Peace*. It has been held in Cyprus, using the initiatives for peace and the friendship between women in the divided Cyprus- to give hope to the Israeli Palestinian situation.

Thank you to our speakers who have blended deep philosophical perspectives with pragmatic assessments of today's needs and resources.

Women are great resource, and better resource than victim; same for, youth, indigenous people.

I cannot do justice here to their profound insights.

There were fascinating references into the holistic disciplines like epigenetics, that bridge time and space and bring it back to the individuals thoughts and emotions. Exciting because the more we understand, the more we can be in control of our lives and surroundings. The more we realize how we affect each other, the more responsibility we assume.

We even touched on the point of our Existence, and interconnectedness, a supreme consciousness or Source or Cosmic Designer, which is a convincing explanation to our expectation to be treated well and live in peace with each other, Human Family, and its endless opportunity".

As we heard, emotions like stress, resentment are not just "personal", they impact the environment around us for the better or worse. Management of our emotions, even our historic influences is a new ever-closer frontier.

Also we looked at the role of governments who claim responsibility for our security and freedoms, institutions like UNESCO promoting science in its relationship to human development and peace. There was the role of human rights as a language and tool for living in peace, and governments adoption of its tenets, but still needing our help to interpret and apply.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights needs to be adapted into religious communities, respectful of their doctrine, also to patiently incentivize cultures which have different context and norms to the value of human rights.

And so importantly, “making peace with nature”, where we can learn so much about ourselves, our best selves. The recent awareness and engagement of people everywhere to learn about and protect the environment is so hopeful. The UN and HRC have been listening to the call of civil society not only to be vigilant, but to offer partnership in healing and planning.

Media is soo critical. We see between Ukraine and Russia, there is a diametrically different reporting of facts, interpretation, worsening the trauma and enmity, The layers of unresolved trust issues should have been diagnosed and treated earlier. Facts viewed with peace in mind. Reconciliation...

All human responsibility is toward “life, love, peace, growth”. Womens role is crucial to our “taking the curve”, also as mothers in nurturing passing on culture and norms, and as leaders and then continuing to be involved in society and governance., or sometimes active supporters of those who promote the values and expectations we embrace at our best moments.....

It was an enlightening and hopeful debate