

30th Anniversary of WFWP Women's Peace Meeting in Birmingham, UK

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To celebrate the 30th anniversary of WFWP and recognize the United Nations Day for Peace, our Women's Peace Group met in my home, our first occasion to meet in person for a very long time. The topic was 'Countries in Conflict -The Real Story, ' to better understand the reality of women and children in 3 different countries, Afghanistan, Syria, and Yemen.

About 70 women came together, and when we briefly introduced ourselves, there were 28 nationalities present! It was also very nice to have quite a lot of new faces and a good number of young women in the audience. In the beginning, I gave a slide presentation to celebrate the 30th anniversary and to show how far we have come as a Women's Peace Group since we began in 1993. Then we heard from a lady from Afghanistan, two ladies from Yemen, and finally, a lady who will be going to Syria soon to support her mosque's project there, which helps widows and orphaned children.

All the talks were extremely moving, and we had lots of good, positive sharing afterward from both individuals and women representing like-minded organizations. Several suggestions were made as to how we can help refugees here in the UK who arrive having experienced different types of trauma. We then passed a 'shoe box' around and collected £360, which will be used for the project in Syria. Finally, a moving, peaceful candle-lit time of readings, songs, and prayer, and all of us could feel the collective spirit of compassion and love in the room, offering all of this up with one heart. We concluded with a special cake, singing 'Happy Anniversary' together for WFWP, and then enjoyed a relaxing hour of food, socializing, and networking, which brought the evening to a close.