



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY MARCH 8 2010, NSW PARLIAMENT

The 99th anniversary of International Women's Day was held in high spirits at the NSW Parliament in Sydney with great participation and celebration. Around 100 participants with an array of colourful faces lit up the room representing many different walks of life and cultures culminating into one people, focused on equality, prosperity and freedom.

WFWP President Tracy Degeer gave a warm welcome, urging us to enjoy the event and briefly introduced the keynote speakers. The audience was swept up by the movement and swaying of a wonderful cultural song and dance presented by Aunty Ali Golding, making references to our land, "our living treasure" and our connection as one people. This was followed by her welcoming and acknowledgment of the ancestors, of the great women that have gone before us, who carved the way for our future generations, even within the walls of Parliament.

After this welcome to country, next in line was our host, Honorable Marie Ficarra, representing the upper house of the NSW Parliament who paid respect to Parliament itself, special homage to Aunty Elle and the Gadigal clan, and noted the exceptionalism of Tracy and the executive team of WFWP.



She outlined the historical changes in democratic action from 1824 to our globalised world of today and the different challenges we now face. With the threat of economic downturn and terrorism, Ms Ficarra underscored our need for better understanding other peoples beliefs in order to provide humane responses to such challenges. She highlighted a few statistics relating to women such as life choices, education factors, discrimination and that 70% of the world's poor are women. She called on women's natural instincts of nurture and care, to contribute to diversity and promote peace. Being in Australia, she illustrated the opportunity that this nation provides us with, in that we can act locally, by breaking down the barriers with our indigenous communities.

Our Emcee, President Tracy Degeer returned to the podium, asking us to stand and greet three other women and congratulate each other with "Happy International Women's Day" declarations. A warm and fun-filled gesture. Moving on, she then listed the large variety of organizations we had represented at this meeting. These included the Aboriginal Heritage Office, Citizens Commission of Human Rights, Ministry of Peace, Australian Chinese Community, just to name a few. Tracy congratulated us on being present and

The Role of NGOs to Achieve MDG#3: Promote Gender Equality & Empower Women WFWP Dinner Meeting

March 2, 2010 - Delegate Dining Room 6, UN HQ NYC

By Bonnie Berry

WFWPI hosted a Dinner Meeting in celebration of a very successful parallel event (see Parallel event report on page 5). Fifty members of the WFWPI

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United Nations Affiliation

WFP International became a “NGO in General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations” in 1997. This status has continued to be renewed based on the preparation of the quadrennial report.

Consultative status is granted by ECOSOC upon recommendation of the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs, which is comprised of 19 Member States.

There are only one hundred and thirty-nine NGOs worldwide that hold the general consultative status. The requirements of this level of affiliation include:

- ❖ Applying organization’s activities must be relevant to the work of ECOSOC
- ❖ The NGO must have been in existence (officially registered) for at least 2 years in order to apply
- ❖ The NGO must have a democratic decision making mechanism
- ❖ The major portion of the organization’s funds should be derived from contributions from national affiliates, individual members, or other non-governmental components
- ❖ NGOs granted General Consultative Status must submit to the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, every fourth year, a brief report of their activities, in particular regarding their contribution to the work of the United Nations (Quadrennial Report)

General Consultative Status is reserved for large international NGOs whose area of work covers most of the issues on the agenda of ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies. These tend to be fairly large, established international NGOs with a broad geographical reach

The benefits of receiving this status include:

- ❖ The NGO may propose new items for consideration by the ECOSOC
- ❖ Organizations granted status are also invited to attend international conferences called by the UN General Assembly special sessions, and other intergovernmental bodies

WFP International maintains a UN office in New York City. WFP International has twenty UN representatives in seven countries: Austria, Chile, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Switzerland, Thailand, and the US.



IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH

Target 5.A:

Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio

5.1 Maternal mortality ratio

5.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel

Target 5.B:

Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health

5.3 Contraceptive prevalence rate

5.4 Adolescent birth rate

5.5 Antenatal care coverage (at least one visit and at least four visits)

5.6 Unmet need for family planning

Success Stories

Over the last four years in Rajasthan, the percentage of deliveries assisted by skilled birth attendants increased by more than 30 percent. In rural India, one woman dies every five minutes giving birth, often due to poor health, unsafe home births and inadequate access to quality healthcare. In the country more than 100,000 women die every year due to childbirth-related causes. UNICEF has been working with the Government of India, health partners and donors to address this situation. The Women’s Right for Life and Health project aims to ensure that women and their children, especially among the poorest communities receive adequate health care. Over the last four years in Rajasthan, for example, the percentage of deliveries assisted by skilled birth attendants increased by more than 30 percent. Communities have responded positively with a boost in voluntary blood donations for use during obstetric emergencies. Today, maternal mortality reduction has become both a state and a national priority, which is reflected in the government’s National Population Policy and National Health Policy.

Source: www.mdgmonitor.org/

THE 8 MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS



1 Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger



2 Achieve Universal Primary Education



3 Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women



4 Reduce Child Mortality



5 Improve Maternal Health



6 Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other Diseases



7 Ensure Environmental Sustainability



8 Develop a Global Partnership for Development

For update on the Millennium Development Goals go to www.mdgmonitor.org/



Jynene Helland
Vice President of WFWPI
Oceania Region

Jynene has background in Social Science . Currently she is also coordinator of the Family Department of FFWP regional office



Tracy DeGeer President of
WFWP Australia

Tracy is a Naturopath working at the Nature Care Wholistic and Medical Centre, specialising in stress management and education and coaching for adopting healthy behaviour.

recognizing the significance of International Women's Day. She also inspired us on a more personal level by expressing how we can all individually celebrate being women, how we should practice self reverence and honour our spirits, honour our hearts and recognize that we are all sisters. She also brought attention to the colours of International Women's Day, purple, green and white, representing dignity, new life, and sincerity respectively.

Tracy explained that the main part of the afternoon was about ceremony, the simple process of honouring something deeper. She once again called on Aunty Ali to the stage so we could better understand aboriginal culture and cultivate a sincere sense of responsibility and obligation to our past history. This follows the 2010 theme of "Equal rights, equal opportunities: Progress for all," and with Aunty Ali sharing her story it was inspiring to realise no matter what racial discrimination she has endured, ultimately she has overcome such prejudice and still has love in her heart, love for those who persecuted her and continues to respect other cultures and customs. This was a true testament to the deep heart of Aunty Ali, and everyone felt her sincerity, a woman to be greatly admired. Her story was concluded by the candle-lighting ceremony with Tracy Degeer and Aunty Ali as representatives and showing us the way to participate.

We were in need of some deeper explanation to the significance of the Bridge ceremony and candle-lighting, therefore Jynene Helland, WFPW vice president of the Oceania Region enlightened us explaining that the ceremony represents a way to overcome resentment from conflicts between nations and addresses the need for forgiveness and healing.

Jynene took us through the history of the Bridge ceremony beginning in 1994 when 160,000 Japanese women travelled to Korea to participate in the first such ceremony held on an international level. The most significant ceremonies have taken place thereafter between Japanese and American women in 1995-96, Australian and Aboriginal women in 1999 and then most recently in Jerusalem between Jewish and Palestinian women in 2004.

Jynene also brought the significance back down to our own bridge in NSW Parliament, March 8, 2010, which was specially hand painted by Aunty Ali with deep symbolism and heart, and then also explained the process and gestures required to participate in the ceremony. Also further explanation of the candle's flame was offered as symbols of the Aboriginal spirit and fire as a comforting process of healing.

Each woman present at the International Women's Day celebration on March 8th walked the bridge of Peace, lit candles together and then exchanged details with her new sister, a special experience that is moving and reconciling.

The Bridge ceremony concluded with a song first performed by the WFPW Choir entitled If We Hold on Together, before everyone gathered in a circle and sang together Let There Be Peace On Earth. With the words of the song engrafted on our hearts, the event had come to an end.

This experience was enriching and has deepened our understanding of each other's cultures. It will be remembered when we are culturally confronted or when we see others in similar situations. The Bridge of Peace is symbolic and helps us remember we can overcome discrimination, we can heal our hearts and reconcile with others and peace is possible when we meet in such a way with similar values in mind.



Sharing of Good Practices to Achieve MDG# 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women Parallel Workshop at UN 54th Session on the Status of Women, Beijing + 15

Cosponsored by WFWPI and WFWP Europe, March 2, 2010 - United Nations Church Center, New York

By *Motoko Sugiyama*

The panelists presented good practices from grassroots efforts and experiences to achieve MDG #3. These diverse speakers shared their experiences in the areas of education, training, income generating activities to fight poverty and a successful women's dignity campaign.

Moderator, Ms. **Motoko Sugiyama**, VP and Director of UN Office of WFWP International opened the meeting before a standing room only crowd. She welcomed and introduced WFWP International President Prof. Lan Young Moon Park and delegations from Japan, Europe, Asia, Africa and USA and gave brief biographies of the four speakers.

Dr. Nessie Ndivi-Hill, Professor of Essex County College in New Jersey and President / Founder of Gender and Development Inter-Action Global Organization (GADIAGO) examined the status of women in higher education in her home country of Cameroon. She stressed that investing in women via higher education and training yields large social and economic returns and breaks intergenerational cycles of poverty with long term benefits for poverty reduction. However there are barriers to women achieving higher education including socio-cultural factors, high tuition costs and other fees and constraints to access and enrollment. She recommended that policies and program reforms and intervention must influence higher education in a cost effective manner and include internal government policies and the grassroots level. Universities should build partnerships with businesses in order to help fund education for women and provide them decent employment. Women's organizations should conduct workshops to train women in micro-credit schemes and financially sponsor higher education for women. She concluded that the lack of women in higher education is a global concern and catastrophe and it needs immediate intervention in order to promote gender equality, empower women and save humanity.

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delegation and distinguished guests attended. Bonnie Berry, WFWPI UN Representative presided as Mistress of Ceremonies. WFWP International President, Professor Lan Young Moon Park welcomed everyone warmly, reminding all in attendance of the advancements of women to leadership roles around the world and reflected on challenges past, present and future. She encouraged those present to continue to serve and love with a heart of a parent with the aim of creating one global family. Mrs. Alexa Ward, President of WFWP USA and Vice President of WFWPI proposed a toast to open dialog over dinner.

Keynote speaker, Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra, UN Under – Secretary – General, Special Adviser on Africa and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Land-locked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States spoke on the topic, “The work of OHRLLS in relation to the MDG#3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women”. He emphasized the important role that women have in fulfilling the MDGs. He also stressed that gender parity is crucial to fulfillment of MDGs. Mr. Diarra informed us about initiatives his

Ms. Keiko Nozaki, Vice Project Director of WFWP Japan for Senegal gave a power point presentation on the JAMOO Project, Social Self- Support Assistance Center in Senegal. She introduced the present economic situation of Senegal. GNI per capita: \$820 USD, Unemployment rate: 48%, 17% of the people live on less than 1 dollar a day; and the adult literacy Rate: 52 % (for males) and 33 % (for females) (Data 2006-2007). She explained how the project began. Ten WFWPI volunteers from Japan went to Senegal in 1994 to research and identify a project to help women in the country. The volunteers decided to open the Social Self-Support Assistance Center in November 1995, naming the center “JAMOO” which means Bringing Peace- in Wolof, a Senegal dialect. The curriculum for four courses:1.Embroidery 2.Knitting 3.Sewing 4. Homemaking Education has been developed over the years. Students acquire all skills within four years. Women age 12-40 years old are eligible to apply. Students pay \$5 per month, part of the education material fee. Graduates receive official government certificates. Since opening the center in 1995, a total of one thousand students enrolled and were trained. In 2001, Salon de Couture JAMOO, a training shop was opened to empower the graduates toward complete self sufficiency. So far sixty women graduates have become independent business owners. Ms. Nozaki reflected on the great joy she experiences when students, their husbands and families show smiling, happy faces because of their success and peace of mind.

Ms. Delia C. Javanasundara, Vice President of WFWPI for Asia Region and Coordinator of International Relief Friendship Foundation (IRFF) of Vietnam shared her experience and efforts in tackling achievement of MDG #3 in Asia. Her power point presentation focused on three themes:

1. WFWP support to eliminate gender disparity in education through the Foster Parents scholarship project. Last year, over 65% of the more than 500 recipients were girls. In addition,

office is undertaking to assist in educating promising young professionals from the most vulnerable nations to be leaders in implementing achievement of the MDGs. During questions and answers following his talk, Mr. Diarra committed to partnering with

WFWPI to leverage the successes of WFWPI's volunteer projects for the benefit of the most vulnerable nations and peoples around the globe. (Complete text of Mr. Diarra's speech is available at www.wfwpi.org)

During the course of the the CSW the official delegations approved a declaration recommitting to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action that will be submitted to ECOSOC and to the General Assembly and seven resolutions about some of the most dire challenges facing women and girls. (Full text of Declaration and Resolutions at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing15/outcomes.html>)

WFWPI was a cosigner on an NGO joint statement to the 54th CSW regarding the health and wellbeing of girls and woman. The full text of the statement is available at www.wfwp.org, available at

non-formal education projects provided learning opportunities to adult women in Bangladesh, India and Taiwan.

2. Training women for jobs in the non- agricultural sector through vocational schools in Nepal and India and empowering women through microfinance projects in Bangladesh and Vietnam.

3. Seminars on gender awareness and other women's issues including women and climate change for women in national parliament.

The final speaker, Ms. **Ingrid D. Lindenmann**, Director of Education of WFWP Europe and Co-Founder of the European Dignity Project introduced the launch of the Global Campaign to End Violence Against Women on Feb. 25, 2008 by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon. At the time, Secretary General Ban stated, "I call on men around the world to lead by example: to make clear that violence against women is an act perpetrated by cowards, and that speaking up against it is a badge of honor." She stressed that violence towards women in Europe still continues. It is by far the most frequent violation of human rights despite the shift of women's right to vote, receive education, and gain full employment. Women face serious dangers of degradation through prostitution, pornography, advertisement, FGM, widow burning, honor killing and rape as part of the strategy in war. Nearly 500,000 Eastern European women are abducted each year and forced into prostitution in the European sex trade. Ms. Lindemann explained two aspects of the Dignity of Women project. They are: 1. Restore the image of womanhood in society. The campaign slogan is, "Let us awaken human awareness fully to the original value and the original beauty of women." 2. Inspire women to experience the beauty and value of true femininity, to discover and live their immanent God given dignity. WFWP Europe has featured the campaign since 2007 in countries throughout Europe. A call to action appeal was sent throughout the European countries. WFWP members held seminars, signature campaigns against rape in Bosnia and sex and violence on TV, used book tables, a website, networking with other NGOs and conferences including the WFWP Europe annual conference to conduct outreach and engage people in the Dignity of Women project.

EMPOWER TO ERADICATE POVERTY

Since 1994 WFWP has dispatched volunteers worldwide, to implement development assistance projects based on local needs.

Support the efforts of
WFWP volunteers worldwide:

Women's Federation for World Peace International
4 West 43rd Street
New York, NY 10036, USA

(Make checks payable to WFWP International)

Dedicate your donation to a specific project by noting on memo line:

- Schools, ● Scholarships, ● Nutrition, ● Sanitation,
- AIDS Prevention, ● Medical Aid, ● Vocational Training, ● Micro Credit



WFWPI is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Organization

For more information about projects, see Biennial Reports at www.wfwp.org

Celebrating Life: Youth Leaders Workshop 1

*Sponsored by WFWP and UPF
Report by Naomi Von Dinklage,
Character Education Team*

On Saturday, 15th May, the Character Education team consisting of Mamiko Rattley, Kayeon Song, Daniel Treacy, Hanae Halmdienst and Naomi Von Dinklage made their way up to the Mt Druitt Community Health Centre to present and facilitate a discussion based on four Character Education presentations. There were five representatives from the local community who attended, including church youth leaders, a NGO worker and a year 12 student from Penrith High School. The morning started off with a round of introductions and tea and coffee, as we all waited for the program to begin. Mamiko Rattley then introduced all the youth speakers and spoke about the need for addressing youth problems in modern society through character education.

Daniel Treacy kicked off the presentations with his one, 'Who Am I?' This talk addressed identity issues within young people and was followed by three other presentations looking at issues such as friendship, making responsible choices, and drugs, alcohol and cigarettes. Each of the presentations was followed by a short discussion between presenters and facilitators, with the aim to develop the content and presenting style to best cater to the desired audience. A lot of useful feedback was given and the Character Education Team briefly met afterwards to discuss how to effectively implement the suggestions that had been made.

Apart from the presentations, there was also time throughout the day to socialise over food, ask questions and develop relationships between the participants. A simple lunch was served and everyone gathered around the table to talk about their lives, school, jobs, families and personal situations. The bonds created that day were strong, and everyone left the health centre with the resolve to meet again in June and continue on with this youth project.

