

UPF International - Peace Summit 2023: Session IV-C: Focus on Women Leaders

Blessie G. Dhakal
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Opening Remarks: Mrs. Moriko Hori, President of WFWP International

Mrs. Moriko Hori began her opening remarks by welcoming all First Ladies, prominent women leaders and participants. Acknowledgement was made to the three previous WFWPI presidents: Dr. Lang Young Moon, Prof. Yeon Ah Moon and Dr. Julia Moon. She deeply thanked them for their dedication and achievements from which WFWP further developed as a worldwide organization.



Mrs. Hori noted that each presenter would give valuable advice about how to bring peace in the age of polarization and confusion. She gave us a glimpse of the great work that the WFWP has been doing around the world for the last three decades. We heard how women from enemy countries have been coming together to heal the wounds of the world in amazing ways. The WFWP is truly living up to its motto, "Our world is one global family." She stressed that mothers play a crucial role in educating their children about their worth and responsibility towards local, social, national, and global issues. Stating that strengthening family skills through education and support for parents is also crucial, she encouraged those

present to work together to break the chain of suffering, strengthen families, educate the young generation, and provide them with hope for the future.

H.E Dr. Ade Shirri Dion Ngute Grace, Spouse of Prime Minister, Cameroon

H.E Dr. Ade Shirri Dion Ngute Grace stated that in the past 100 years there has not been a single day with no recorded history of war or conflict somewhere on planet earth, so is peace even achievable? It can happen, she said, if and only if we as individuals collectively start being more loving, understanding, and caring individuals. To quote her mentor, "World peace can only be achieved by CHANGING OURSELVES."

She pointed out that only through inner peace can genuine world peace be achieved. She said that we need to build bridges between communities and nations in order to promote mutual understanding and respect, and work together to address the root causes of conflict and violence.



H.E Dr. Monica Chakwera, First Lady, Republic of Malawi

H.E Dr. Monica Chakwera inspired us about the incredible foundation that is being laid in Malawi in order to welcome Mother Moon to bless her nation. She told us how peace on the Korean peninsula entails peace in Malawi. However, we are saddened to hear about the devastation that has taken place in Malawi and we hope we can find solutions to improve that situation quickly.

She said that she is happy to have come to Korea and have interactions with colleagues from various countries and learn what they are doing to promote peace in their countries, and she is looking forward to promoting peace across the globe.



Dr. Rajni Kaushal Chand, Spouse of the Deputy Prime Minister, Republic of Fiji

Dr. Rajni Kaushal Chand, conveyed that women everywhere play a vital role as caretakers of families, communities and the nation they belong to. They additionally are symbols of peace, displaying

characteristics of being peacekeepers, and are advocates for peace even in war-torn areas and climatically challenged countries. They are thus holistically designers, engineers, and instruments of peace in all aspects.

Mme. Hilda Patricia Marroquin de Morales, First Lady (2016-2020), Republic of Guatemala

Madam Hilda Patricia Marroquin de Morales emphasized the crucial role women play in raising good children. She also noted the importance of the both parents in raising good families. She went on to give an explanation of the Bible story of how woman was created from the rib of man, signifying that man and woman are equal in value. She said that the bone was not taken from the skull, alluding to the fact that woman is above man, nor was the bone taken from the foot, placing woman below man, but at the side as an equal partner.



Mme. Shiranthi Wickramasinghe Rajapaksa, First Lady (2005-2015) and the Spouse of the Prime Minister (2019-2023), Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Madam Shiranthi Rajapaksa, an esteemed educator and grandmother, shared her wisdom on the importance of the family. Her Excellency praised Mother Moon for initiating the Asia Pacific Union (APU) which she said would promote Asia's shared values such as children honoring their parents.



She stated that "Peace begins in and is centered on the family," and the seed of a peaceful world is the

holy marriage between a man and a woman. So, the most serious challenge to a peaceful global order is and always has been the mixup of values.

Hon. Liza Gashi, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora, Republic of Kosovo

Hon. Liza Gashi highlighted how women's leadership can contribute to better representation, gender equality, peace and security, and inclusiveness and diversity -- all of which are crucial in building a lasting world culture of peace. It is essential that we work towards a world where women are empowered to lead in all sectors of society. We must break down the barriers that prevent women from accessing leadership positions, and we must ensure that women's voices are heard in all decision-making processes.



Closing Remarks:

Mrs. Blessie G. Dhakal, International Coordinator, IAFLP

Mrs. Blessie Dhakal gave highlights from the insightful speeches from each eminent member of the panel and conveyed that this event has been meaningful and valuable because it afforded an opportunity to gather and discuss important issues related to the role of women in building a culture of peace. She is looking forward to further discussion and development on the critical issues that were raised.

Mrs. Kaeleigh Moffitt, President, WFWP-USA and International Vice President of North America

Mrs. Kaeleigh Moffitt welcomed the First Ladies and prominent speakers taking part in the event. She thanked everyone for their contributions and dedication towards achieving World Peace.

A total of 80 participants, including 15 First Ladies, attended the Peace Summit which was held in Seoul, Korea on May 3, 2023.