

“Women’s Participation for Development!” – WFWP Meeting

March 4th 2016, Tirana – Albania

On the afternoon of March 4th, Women’s Federation for World Peace, and Universal Peace Federation have jointly organized a mini-conference on the occasion of International Women’s Day, with the title „Women’s Participation for Development”. The meeting was held in the Peace Embassy in Tirana, and moderated by Mrs. Lavdie Ruci, chairwoman of Tirana Peace Council.



In order to set the tone for the discussion, Mrs. Katarzyna Minollari, WFWP president, opened the meeting by reading some of the Founders’ words on the role of women: *“Naturally then, a man and woman are not born to exist in a relationship of hostility or opposition, where they covet or attempt to mimic the characteristics and qualities of the other. (...) Their relationship is originally designed to be one where all their qualities as well as possessions are shared with each other so that both can achieve completion and perfection, and thus together become a whole greater than the sum of the parts.”*

She then went on to recall UN work for gender equality as expressed in the Sustainable Development Goals. One of the recent achievements of the UN work, she said, is inclusion of women in the UN peacekeeping missions. In fact, one fourth of all peace-keeping UN missions are currently led by women, including the mission in Kosovo. The participation of women in this way has brought new skills into peacekeeping troops and helped create bridges of communication between local populations and UN troops.



Our next speaker was Mrs. Vjollca Mecaj, a renowned lawyer, currently executive director of Helsinki Committee in Albania. Mrs. Mecaj has quoted Albanian statistics that women usually achieve higher results in education, what brings up the necessity to encourage capable women to take an active role in the society. On the other hand, Mrs. Mecaj mentioned, women should not try to become men, but both sides need to cooperate harmoniously, while paying attention to the family, which many young people nowadays put aside in their plans, behind career and financial success. We need to believe that women have specific qualities and skills, which only they can provide, and which are very much needed in our world today, our speaker said.

The very much appreciated presentation of Mrs. Mecaj was complemented by a lively talk by Mrs. Dorina Prethi, young member of WFWP board. Mrs. Prethi focused in the necessity of partnership of men and

women both at work and in the family. In order to help women participate in society and be able to work outside of home, they need the support of men. In order to raise men to do that, the role of mothers is really indispensable. Men need to be taught to share the duty of house hold chores from a young age. These statements and lively interaction with the audience made the presentation very involving.



After that, Mr Gaqo Apostoli, long time Peace Ambassador and Chairwoman of National Peace Council extended wishes to all the ladies, and commented on recent political developments in the parliament, criticizing lack of respect toward female parliamentarians. Mr. Apostoli, who is known for his love for music, could not resist the request from the audience and sang an Albanian song about mothers, what brought about a festive and joyful atmosphere.



An important part of the program was Ambassadors for Peace nominations. This title this time was bestowed to our first speaker, Mrs. Mecaj, Mrs. Gardalina Boliko, long term WFPW member and educator in the orphanage, and Ms. Kujtime Kotorri, the youngest appointee this evening. Ms. Kotorri has been an initiator and manager of a plastic cap recycling project in Albania, a project which made possible providing wheel chairs for many handicapped people. WFPW has actively supported this project, collecting and donating many kilograms of caps, thanks to our network of dedicated contacts.



All the new Ambassadors of Peace were very moved and happy, and promised to commit themselves to practicing the ideals of Peace Ambassadors. The meeting was concluded by sharing refreshments and a friendly talk.