

WFWPI Closes 2025 with Celebration of Gratitude and Fun

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The Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) brought together its worldwide family for the annual year-end celebration. It was a bright, heartwarming, laughter-filled evening that united 391 participants across oceans, time zones, cultures, and traditions.

The event was hosted by Sonomi Takahashi, a cheerful and energetic young professional from WFWP Japan. Her natural warmth, humor, and ease made the celebration feel like gathering around a table with long-time friends. With her guidance, participants immediately felt at home, chatting, smiling, and waving to one another as the virtual room filled.



The celebration officially opened with an inspiring address from WFWPI International President Moriko Hori. She shared how the year had taken her to fifteen countries, where she met countless women courageously leading peace dialogues, supporting families and youth, caring for vulnerable communities, and quietly shaping culture through compassion. Her words captured the essence of WFWP's mission: "Thank you to every one of you. Your dedication is the true foundation of this movement."

The atmosphere soon shifted into a joyful, celebratory moment as MC Sonomi invited everyone to raise their cups. In a unified gesture, participants lifted glasses, mugs, water bottles, and festive cups toward their screens. "One... two... three... Cheers! Kanpai! Salud! Santé!" she counted. Instantly, hundreds of small squares lit up with laughter and sparkling smiles.

The spirit of gratitude continued as participants filled the chat with heartfelt messages. Many expressed thanks to their families, for new opportunities, for the support of WFWP sisters, and even the strength to

overcome a challenging year. Sonomi read some aloud with tenderness, saying, "So much love and courage in this room, which is what makes WFWP a real family."

Participants were then placed into small breakout groups to share one lesson they would carry into 2026. These intimate conversations became some of the most memorable parts of the evening. When everyone returned to the main session, several people shared their experiences. One participant joyfully mentioned meeting two new friends from Korea and the Dominican Republic. Another reflected on learning that reaching people's hearts requires patience, investment, and sincere listening. The reflections were simple, honest, and profoundly human, reminding everyone that wisdom is often found in one another.

As part of the Best Practice presentation for 2025, the WFWP UN Vienna Team offered a fascinating and inspiring look into their work at the United Nations. Led by Dr. Maria Riehl and Renate Amesbauer, they shared their involvement in six UN committees and their numerous side events on drug prevention, social justice, crime prevention, and peace education. They highlighted their collaboration with ambassadors and government missions, their educational programs for youth, and their training for social workers in Uganda. Their presentation showcased the incredible reach of WFWP's voice, proving that from grassroots villages to international diplomacy, WFWP continues to shine as a beacon of compassion and leadership.

The mood then shifted to playful excitement as MC Sonomi kicked off the Zoom Scavenger Hunt. Participants hurried to find three meaningful items: something from their culture, something they use when serving others, and something that reminds them of a challenge they overcame this year. What followed was a delightful mix of traditional hats, cultural crafts, aprons, notebooks, pens, symbolic objects, and heartfelt stories. With each round, the room echoed with laughter, applause, and genuine appreciation. It was fun, slightly chaotic, and beautifully human.



One of the most anticipated highlights of the evening soon followed: the Lucky Draw featuring handmade dresses created by the talented students of the WFWP School in Rwanda. Using a spinning wheel, names were selected from those who pre-registered. Each time a winner was announced, the screen filled with surprised reactions and joyful cheers from the global family. Participants were also invited to pre-order Rwandan dresses and support the school through donations.

As tradition continues each year, the Best Dresser contest brought color and excitement to the screen. Many participants joined in festive or cultural attire, turning the Zoom gallery into a vibrant fashion showcase. Finalists were spotlighted one by one, each offering a shy smile, a wave, or a confident pose. The chat filled with cheers and hearts as participants celebrated one another's beauty and cultural pride. A live Zoom poll determined the winner of the Best Dresser Award, who received a handmade pouch and custom bag from the Rwanda School students.

As the evening approached its close, WFWPI introduced the Global Themes for 2026, which will guide the organization's educational work, humanitarian efforts, and peace projects in the coming year. President Hori offered her closing reflections with deep warmth and encouragement: "Let us step into the new year together with renewed courage and compassion."

Screens soon filled with waves, hearts, and messages of gratitude. Some participants stayed behind to chat a little longer, unwilling to let the night end. Others sent blessings for the new year, expressing how meaningful the gathering had been.

The 2025 WFWPI year-end celebration was a beautiful reminder that WFWP is a living family, bound not by geography but by shared purpose, shared heart, and an unwavering love for peace.