

UN Office for Project Services Head Leads WFWPI Advocacy Training for CSW 70

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New York - Dr. Rior Santos, UN Office for Project Services project manager in the Pacific region, will lead the Women's Federation for World Peace International's CSW 70 Advocacy Training in New York City in March.

Dr. Santos, currently based in Myanmar, has presented on UN collaborative efforts, including digital transformation strategies and Smart Island initiatives in Micronesia. He holds a doctoral degree in Sociology from the De La Salle University in Manila and is a practitioner-researcher focusing on innovation, digital transformation, and AI

governance.

The training will enhance the capacity of participants to align and document their programs and projects for greater awareness, impact, and visibility in government, multi-stakeholders, and UN structures.

About 80 women leaders of WFWPI will join the annual training, this time on March 6-8, 2026, at the New Yorker Hotel.

The training is put together by the WFWPI UN Relations Offices with the theme of the training "Empowerment, Innovation, Transformation: Advancing Feminine Leadership Toward a Just and Peaceful Future."

WFWPI is a global women's organization with 128 member countries worldwide. It has a General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Its UN Relations Offices are in New York, Geneva, and Vienna, and headed by Merly Barlaan who also serves as Vice President for Administration.

Barlaan, as head of training, will discuss topics on civil society-government partnership and institutionalization strategies.

Other major highlights of the training include:

Philippine Amb. (ret.) Mario de Leon who will discuss the topic on meaningful participation in the UN and government processes such as the Committee on the Status of Women and the General Assembly Resolution 1325, the Right to Development.

Carolyn Handschin, WFWPI Geneva and chair of CSW Geneva, will shed light on Advocacy products like statements, consultations, mission engagements, and formal inputs. She will be joined by Jennifer Okeke, President of the National Women's Council of Ireland.

Rosie Chawla, director for the UNESCO Center for Peace, will discuss sustainability, funding, and scaling strategies alongside WFWP Korea President Go Eun Kim and Barlaan.

WFWP president Moriko Hori will formally open the training with a keynote speech at the opening dinner on March 6, 2028.

WFWPI, founded in 1992 by Rev. Hak Ja Han Moon, focuses on four major programs aligned with the UN: Gender Equality, Economic development, Peace and Security, and Climate Action.

At the end of the training, participants will become certified UN Advocacy Desk Officers for their respective countries.

The 2026 training is a step up to the 2025 CSW 69 training where WFWPI leaders investigated their internal capacities and systems in delivering their mandated programs on gender equality, economic development, peace building, and climate action, said Barlaan.