



Women's

Federation for World Peace International

United Nations Office Newsletter

March 2001

A Forum on the Eradication of Poverty: An NGO's Perspective.



United Nations Headquarters
October 14, 2000



Hosted by the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Mozambique to the United Nations and organized by the Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI), a forum on the Eradication of Poverty took place at the UN's headquarters in New York on October 14, 2000. The participants included government officials, staff members from the UN system, NGO leaders, and some of the WFWP field project directors. The panelists presented a grassroots perspective through the presentation of slides, reports on their various educational programs, and the story of their work.

The Human Challenges for this Millennium

The forum was held in Conference Room 4, UN headquarters from 2 to 6 p.m. on October 14 and commemorated the UN's International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (October 17th). The plates of the Member States remained on the tables lending a

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dignified atmosphere. Among the 350 participants present we were honored by the presence of four ambassadors to the United Nations including H.E. Carolos dos Santos of Mozambique, H.E. M. Joseph Mutaboba of Rwanda, H.E. M. Ousamane Moutari of Niger and H.E. Mr. Ravan Farhadi of Afghanistan. There were also representatives and officials from the UN systems, national governments and representatives of numerous NGOs. Seventy participants traveled from Japan and sixteen WFWP project directors flew in from their various project nations.

At the Opening Session, Ms. Motoko Sugiyama (Vice President of WFWP International), the Moderator of the forum and Chair of Organizing Committee, greeted and explained how the Women's Federation began its work in the field of poverty eradication. Then H.E. Mr. Carlos Dos Santos, Per-

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Statement of Purpose

The Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) supports a network of National WFWPI Chapters worldwide. WFWPI Chapters adhere to the principle that women, working together, taking initiative and empowering one another across traditional lines of race, culture and religion to create healthy families, are resolving the complex problems of our societies and world. Ultimately "solutions" come as **true** partnerships between men and women are established in all levels of society. The beginning point is within society's most elemental level—the family. Peace then expands into our communities, nation and world.

Therefore, WFWPI works to provide women worldwide with: **the knowledge, tools and support needed to create peace at home, peace in our communities, our nations and our world.**

Ms. Motoko Sugiyama
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FIRST UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY



1997-2006

Excerpted from A/RES/50/107

16. Proclaims the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006);

17. Urges all Governments and the international community, including the United Nations system, and all other actors in society to pursue effectively the implementation of the outcomes of major United Nations conferences related to the eradication of poverty, in particular the World Summit for Social Development;

18. Welcomes the arrangements, within the agreed appropriation level for the biennium 1996-1997, made by the Secretary-General regarding the entity within the Secretariat required to undertake the functions needed in support of the system-wide implementation of the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty, including activities of the Decade;

19. Requests the Secretary-General to invite those organs, organizations, programmes, funds and bodies of the United Nations system that have not already done so to consider the establishment of focal points and other similar mechanisms so that they may effectively implement the provisions, agreements and outcomes of major United Nations conferences relevant to the eradication of poverty;

20. Recalls the coordinating role of the Economic and Social Council in the activities of the United Nations system towards eradication of poverty in the context of the coordinated follow-up of the outcome of the major United Nations conferences and summits organized since 1990 in the economic, social and related fields;

21. Stresses the importance of ensuring, at the intergovernmental and inter-agency levels, coherent, comprehensive and integrated activities for the Year and Decade, according to the outcome of the major United Nations conferences and summits organized since 1990 in the economic, social and related fields;

22. Invites the Administrative Committee on Coordination to ensure, in particular through the inter-agency task forces, the involvement and coordination of all relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system for a full and effective implementation of the present resolution and to submit to the General Assembly, at its fifty-first session, through the Economic and Social Council, reports on activities envisaged in support of the Decade, taking into account the outcome of the major United Nations conferences and summits organized since 1990 in the economic, social and related fields;

23. Calls upon States, the United Nations system, relevant international organizations and all other actors concerned with the Decade to participate actively in the financial and technical support of the Decade, in particular with a view to translating all measures and recommendations into operational and concrete poverty eradication programmes and activities;

24. Decides that the trust fund of the World Summit for Social Development established in accordance with General Assembly resolution 47/92 of 16 December 1992 to finance preparatory activities be continued and renamed the Trust Fund for the Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development, under the authority of the Secretary-General, with the aim of supporting programmes, seminars and activities for the promotion of social development in the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of

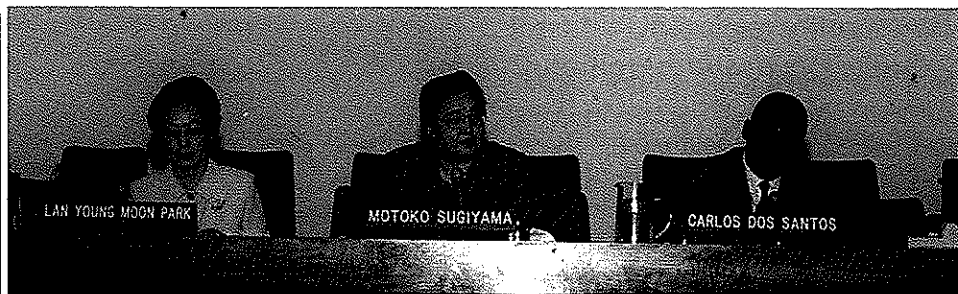
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manent Representative of Mozambique to the UN, and Mrs. Lan Young Moon Park, President of WFP International gave their opening remarks. Ambassador dos Santos pointed out that "poverty was one of the major challenges that the human beings face in the new Millennium ... (and that it is) the cause of inequality, violence, and armed conflicts." He also recognized and thanked WFP's consistent effort to help eradicate poverty, achieve gender equality, ensure sustainable economical growth and assist with the resolution of conflict.

Ambassador dos Santos further emphasized the centrality of education and women's participation to the improvement of society. He underscored that educating a girl means educating a future mother, a future wife and future professionals. This in turn means better living conditions for families and their community. He concluded that the efforts of WFP to provide educational opportunities deserved admiration.

Prof. Lan Young Moon Park stated that the UN has conducted various projects to eradicate poverty, but their programs alone cannot radically change the situation. NGO activities worldwide have a significant role. She called for each individual to approach



poverty issues with the heart of a mother concerned for her family.

Starting with Education

Ambassador dos Santos moderated the afternoon session. There were nine presentations which concluded with questions and answers from the audience. Presentations were made by WFP project directors. Ms. Akiko Hozan began by explaining the process, activities and outcomes of the Junior High School project "Sun of Mozambique."

In Mozambique, the civil war continued for 16 years after the War of Independence. During this time, a great number of people were killed and many others left the country. Seventy percent of the existing schools were destroyed or left in total shambles. Ms. Hozan and her colleagues entered Mozambique in 1994 for the first time. Their fact-finding team and

later research concluded that establishing a school was the best way they could contribute to improving the future of Mozambique and so the following year, WFP Mozambique constructed and established the "Sun of Mozambique" Junior High School in the second largest city Beira.

In 1999 the school was accredited by the Ministry of Education and 1300 students in total have studied there. Many students with an ardent passion of learning enter this school which is now recognized among the best private schools in the city.

Ms. Hozan mentioned, "if building construction is like giving birth, ongoing school management may be compared to child rearing. In child rearing you have to give thought and care constantly and unconditionally every moment. So too, you have to commit your mind and body with care in running a school... Dedication and care is necessary for each task. Overcoming differences of language, customs and value systems are as crucial elements as fundraising and dealing with the mountains of paper work. All of these at times felt like a thick and tall wall.

... On the other hand, our staff feel deeply gratified to see many of their students pass the entrance exams and move on to excellent high schools and universities."

W F W P Mozambique is currently planning to establish another junior high school with a student capacity of 3000. They are applying for the approval to open a senior high school. "The self-sustainability of a nation depends on sufficient basic education for its youth," she stated, "many African countries



Forum, cont. from pg. 1

Action of the World Summit for Social Development, which include activities of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, and invites all States to contribute to the Fund;

25. Requests, therefore, that the Secretary-General ensure that the outcomes of major United Nations conferences are disseminated as widely as possible and also to ensure that the documents related to the Year and the Decade, once adopted, are transmitted to all States, relevant international and regional organizations, multilateral financial institutions and regional development banks in order to secure their active and substantial contributions;

26. Recommends that donor countries give greater priority to the eradication of poverty in their assistance programmes and budgets, on either a bilateral or multilateral basis;

27. Encourages developing countries to mobilize domestic and external resources for poverty eradication programmes and activities, and to facilitate their full and effective implementation;

28. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session, in one document, a progress report on action taken by the United Nations system to implement the programme for the observance of the Year and action envisaged to be taken in preparation for the Decade;

29. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-first session an item entitled "First United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)".

96th plenary meeting 20 December 1995

Forum, continued on pg. 4

have rich natural resources that someday will lead to successful industries in agriculture, mining, fishery and travel." She expressed her concern that educated native Mozambicans be the ones to develop these industries, and naturally resolve the poverty issue. "Our hope is to raise up the sons and daughters of Mozambique to lead the development of their country," Ms. Hozen concluded.

Ms. Kati Vigh-Brisbois, founder of the Sunshine Farm, an institution for orphans in Romania, told some of her stories and shared her vision and depth of the programs the Farm offers. Established three years ago



to help the orphans to become self-reliant, she explained the healing that the orphans were engaged in as they sought to rise above their trauma through the activities this program provides.

Character education worked to revive the youth's sense of worth and dignity by clarifying the value of family and how they can realize in their own future what they had not experienced in their past. The Sunshine Farm gave them their experience of this as each one began to feel liberated from poverty and misery.

"Two boys found a home in Sunshine Farm. They made a commitment to stay and work on the farm. The boys, Horvath Jozsi and Picai Tino were close friends in their orphanage. Jozsi is of Hungarian descent, and Tino of Romanian origin. Jozsi who is 17 years old was the first one to come to Simian. He was always ready to help do any task. He never knew his parents or any relatives because he was abandoned at birth. He always hoped and prayed that when he grew up he'd have a little house where he could find some happiness." This was his first taste of such freedom of the heart.

To Give Women Economic Strength

Ms. Diane Langston, (Senior Technical Officer, UN Population Fund) spoke on "Role of NGOs in Eradicating Poverty."

Firstly, she expressed her gratitude to NGO that they invest time and money to help the fellow citizens in the global community. She then explained about UNFPA that it is the largest organization on developmental issues and promotes programs such as

1. Family planning, AIDS preventive activities;
2. Population and developmental programs;
3. Sex equality and advancement of women.



According to the statistics, among the six billion people in the world, 1.2 billion live with less than a dollar a day, and over 1.8 billion with less than two dollars a day. UNFPA has faced the poverty issue since 1987. She stated that poorer women have less choices for education, marriage, medication, employment and family planing. It is important that women have economic strength and so participate in handling the health, birth and economy of the family.

Vocational Training for Self-reliance

Ms. Sachiko Yokoyama, the WFWP project director in Rwanda reported about the vocational training project for the self-reliance of women in Rwanda. Ms. Yokoyama and other volunteer members entered the country in January 1995. When they landed, they saw everywhere, the fresh wounds of the war and thousands of widows struggling to search for ways to live. The project they started was a vocational training school for women. At present, 150 students are taking courses such as dressmaking, language, barber/beautician, and embroidery/knitting. 40% to 60% of the graduates have been employed or self-employed so far.

In the process of developing the educational program, they realized that vocational training alone would not enable some Rwandan women to become self-supporting. There was a clear need for

psychological healing and rebuilding of their own lives. So character education took its place alongside vocational training.

We can easily understand that such support would be needed for many. Ms. Yokoyama saw this first hand as she observed in her classes some students mindlessly repeating the same motions, sewing and untying the same material for a half-day. Others would not reply when the teachers asked questions.

When WFWP Rwanda had a chance to meet the then First Lady of Rwanda, she noted that the most tragic people in this country were those children who saw their parents kill others in front of them. "The minds of these children have been numbed." So the volunteer members then started to offer post-trauma support, the teachers sometimes simply holding their hands and talking and being with them face to face, eye to eye in the classes. They also started to offer a monthly seminar on emotional empowerment.

Through a relaxed atmosphere created with games, recreation and free talks, the learning disabled students began to learn little by little, and their skills also improved.

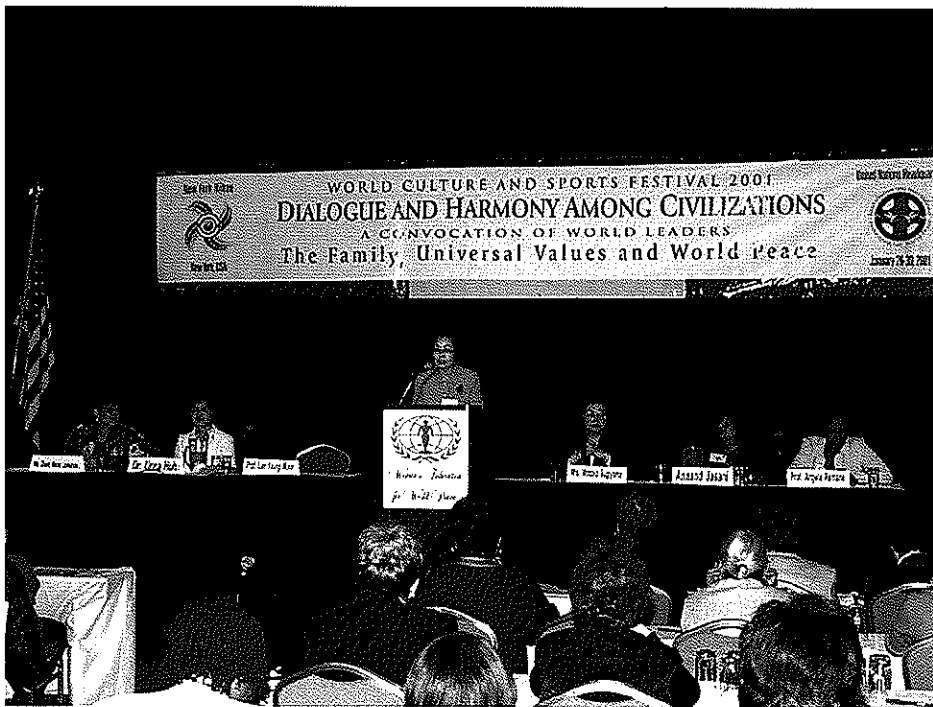


The First Lady visited their school in December 1999 to encourage the students. They displayed their dresses and modeled their own fashions. The First Lady was deeply moved to see the students' faces shining with pride and hope.

Ms. Yokoyama concluded her remarks by saying that material aid and vocational education are indeed important but not sufficient to eradicate poverty. "It is important that the Rwandan people themselves develop a strong desire for self-reliance and a sense of responsibility for the future of the country. It is the hope of the volunteer members of WFWP Rwanda that through teaching character education and family values, along with vocational training, Rwandans will recover and rebuild their country."

Ambassador Santos affirmed that while

Forum, continued on pg. 9



WFWP Panel Session at the Convocation of World Leaders 2001.

January 27th, 2001
New York, NY

The WFWP Panel Session of the Convocation of World Leaders 2001 was held Sunday January 28, 2001 at 2:30-4:00 pm in the New York Hilton Hotel. Ms. Motoko Sugiyama, Conference Coordinator and Vice President of WFWP International moderated the session "Dialogue among Civilizations: The Role of Women."

In his address to the *Dialogue among Civilizations Round Table* of the United Nations Millennium Summit in June 2000, the personal representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for Dialogue Among Civilizations, Mr. Giandomenico Picco, introduced an approach developed by the Secretary-General and himself. First assuming the self-evidence of the need to manage diversity better, they focused on the how to make this dialogue relevant.

With these two points in mind, WFWP initiated an ongoing dialogue intended to be meaningful to women both at the grassroots level as well as for policy setting. The three focal points of discussion were:

- A look at underlying assumptions and principles in an effort to clarify common values "universal" in all civilizations.
- The urgent need for the women's perspective or "heart" in human affairs.
- How to empower women to take initiative and be actively involved in decision-making areas that particularly and most dramatically affect women—war, violence and conflict.

The panel had two speakers for each topic. Prof. Lan Young Moon, President of WFWP International opened the session, welcoming the guest speakers and the 200 participants. She closed her remarks noting "We are not gathered here to insist on our own identities only. We are here to find common ground among the diversity of different cultures."

Part I: "Universal Values Common to All Civilization"

H.E. Anette Hsiu-Liao Lu, Vice President of Taiwan, R.O.C. presented her speech through a videotape made exclusively for this panel session as she was unable to come in the last minute due to an urgent political situation. She emphasized that "worshipping heaven, trusting God, and loving people" are common "highest" values in all civilizations, the core of these being "love."

Part II: The Importance of Women's Perspectives in Making the Dialogue among Civilizations Relevant

Dr. Unna Huh, Congresswoman of the Republic of Korea pointed out the importance of Information technology and the internet in particular, for the Dialogue saying, "the internet will have an enormous influence on globalization. It has provided a potentially powerful means of understanding one another for people living in different cultures. In other words, dialogue". She also underscored that no nation can expect to succeed in the new era of globalization while its women are trapped in the vicious cycle of inequality.

Ms. Dawn Marie Lemonds, International Programme Coordinator for Human Rights/Status of Women, Soroptomist International, USA, outlined the 3 A's of Awareness, Advocacy, and Action. She maintained these are essential elements in women's local and global partnership. She also introduced some example of the 3 A's in the projects and activities of Soroptimists.

Part III: Empowering Women to take Initiative in Conflict Resolution

Ms. Annand Jasani, Producer and Broadcaster of "A Voice for All" for BBC Wales, United Kingdom also prepared a very informative and insightful speech on this topic concluding "Last but not least, the empowerment of women needs political support. Sadly, however in the political arena only 8 countries have lived up to the commitment made by 189 government at Beijing to increase women's share of parliamentary position to 30%." She also quoted UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's remarks "the

Panel Session, continued on pg. 11

Russia—Moscow

Similar work is going on in other cities: Ivanovo, Ekaterinburg, St. Petersburg. WFWP is most active in a few republics in the C.I.S.: Mongolia, Moldova, and Kazakhstan. Service Projects:



- Food for veterans of the Second World War
- TV, VCR and Videos for orphanage #13
- Fruits for Mozhaisk Women's Prison
- Medicines and shampoos for Chechen soldiers
- Velvet material for girls in Orthodox monastery
- Total donation price - \$1425

Events:

- Sending participants to an International Conference series on Culture of Peace in Washington, D.C.
- Radio Program "Hope" (30 min)
- TV Program "What Does a Woman Want"
- Counseling for young married couples
- Participation in Parliamentary hearings concerning drug problem, violence and human rights
- Monthly meetings focusing on WFWP's Founding Principles
- Sponsored and organized educators, leaders and students to attend Character Education Conferences in Bridgeport, Beijing, Moscow, Seoul, London and Berlin.
- Leadership Seminar for WFWP staff from CIS, Sept 28-30

Youth Club

- Participation in World Association of NGOs Conference "The Millennium Declaration: A Response from Civil Society," October 20-22
- Character Development Lectures in the Energy College, Russian Humanitarian University and Military Academy
- Attended Seminar about a drug prevention sponsored by Ministry of Education, Oct. 10-13
- Music and Cakes for old people in Senior House
- Now we are preparing Forum "Woman in the 21st century". We will talk about culture of Peace and moral education for youth.



Top Left: Moscow Orphanage #4 receiving a gift of TV/VCR and video tapes.

Left: Mrs. Gorbacheva meets with Japanese women for lunch in Danilovsky Restaurant.

Below: College students after the 4th Leadership Seminar, Sept. 29-30, 2000.



WFWP-UK Supporting the UN's "International Year for the Culture of Peace"

WFWP-UK held a range of activities practising the motto of WFWP International, which is "Love and cooperation in our society and the world"

The highlights of the activities were:

1. The Forum for Racial Harmony.
2. Sisterhood Ceremony between German and British women.
3. The opening of the Children's Home in Hyderabad India which WFWP-UK cosponsors to give children the possibility of a better future.

The Sisterhood Ceremony between German and British Women

It was our desire since the beginning of this year to hold a Bridge of Peace Ceremony with German women; so we were happy to hear that German ladies were ready to embark on this adventure to cross the Channel and come to London for this occasion.

As the time coincided with an invitation of the International Association of Educators for World Peace to its 10th conference, it presented a wonderful opportunity to conclude the conference with a contribution from women. Dr. Mercieca, President of IAERP gave us the opportunity to contribute through the Bridge of Peace.

We invited five ladies who shared their experiences and insights on the topic of the Role of Women in World Peace topic. This enriched and uplifted the audience. The five ladies were:

1. Mrs. K. Puri (Director of East and West Family Circle)
2. Zerbanoo Gifford (Founding director of a multi-faith centre)
3. Dekha Ibrahim (trainer in conflict resolution in Kenya)
4. Maxime Jean-Mane (Headmistress of Excell Preparatory School)
5. Eileen Noakes, Councillor

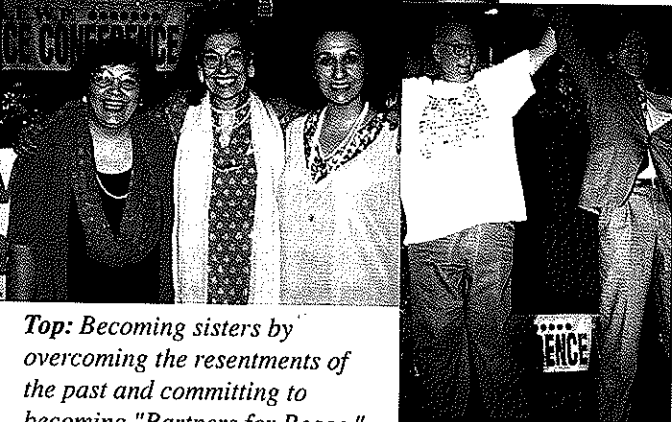
By the end, the time had come for the historical *Bridge of Peace Ceremony* to take place.

Everyone waited with excitement to see who would be their new sister.

Ingrid Lindemann from Germany and Martina Coombs, President of British WFWP explained the significance of the Bridge of Peace for each one of us who were willing to forgive the past and set a new tradition of understanding, forgiving, repenting and serving one another as partners in the peace process..

After beautiful presentations of the German and British National Anthems the ladies, who had lined up on each side of the bridge bravely and determined crossed the bridge, bowed and embraced each other and walked hand in hand to their table where they exchanged details about themselves and their families. Presents were exchanged and the sharing of hearts between them was unstoppable.

When all the ladies were sisters, the men in the audience could not stand back any longer and wanted to become brothers by crossing the bridge; which was a very wonderful unexpected conclusion to the programme. Finally 29 sisterhood and 11 brotherhood couples found each other. It was a beautiful sight – to see everyone engaged in eager and warm discussions. To celebrate this momentous occasion participants came to the stage to contribute with enthusiasm songs from the different countries. Finally everyone could not but get up, join hands and dance together with deep joy, making this afternoon an unforgettable time! It gave every participant an insight of an ideal world, of a peaceful future that each person is longing for deep in their hearts!



Top: Becoming sisters by overcoming the resentments of the past and committing to becoming "Partners for Peace."

Above: International bonds forged and strengthened at the 10th IAERP conference 2000.

Right: The men could not stand by and let the women celebrate a victory of the heart without them—they too became Partners for Peace.

Creating a Culture of Peace through Ongoing Dialogue among Civilizations, Nations, Races and Cultures

WFWP Spain

International Women's Day Conference, March 11th. Focusing on "Women transmitting Values in the Family and the Community," Juana Aurora Mayoral Gallardo, an author of children's books, was one of a number of presenters. She explained how women contribute naturally by helping their family and their community by setting examples and modeling the values in daily life.



Finland

Throughout the year, we continued to collect signatures for Manifest 2000. The year's monthly meetings centered around international and cultural exchange and International Women's Friendship Meetings. Our first was on 14.10.00 when a delegation of twelve Russian ladies came from St. Petersburg. This was a follow-up meeting from previous sisterhood gatherings. This quickly became an international meeting with numerous other nationalities present. Not surprisingly, our common concern for raising children with positive values melded us together centering on our Finnish guest speaker.

With each month we built on this foundation and included monthly themes such as: Positive thinking as a way to control and channel energy levels and happiness; Stories from two of Mother Theresa's Sisters of Charity; Exploring Fen-Shui; Revisiting traditional Eastern-Finnish dance traditions, porcelain, doll and toy collection with the artist, dancer and author Aira Samulin; sharing spring songs of Estonia and Russia; an introduction to the

WFWP Austria

Our activities this year were centered on our regular meetings twice a month featuring guest speakers and organizations. Our programmes included cultural evenings often conducted in cooperation with embassies based in Vienna. They included presentations on:

- South Africa facing the challenge of finding ways to live peacefully together after years of apartheid.
- Native Americans with their "trail of tears" (Reuben Silverbird, an "ambassador" of American Indians lives in Austria)
- The first Christians in Syria on the trail of St. Paul in Damascus.
- Tibet, a country whose existence and culture is uncertain (Save Tibet Association.)
- An Equadorian aid project seeking water pumps for the people in mountain regions (Austrian Development Aid Association)
- The refugees of the West Sahara, a forgotten people, who live in the desert waiting for their return in their country—presented by a cultural journalist and expert of North Africa

Since the start of the Year for a Culture of Peace began, we have been planning to offer the "Bridge of Peace" as a contribution to the Decade. Through the NGO Committee On Peace we made the proposal and on December 16, 2000 we held this significant event.

The program had two main parts. First guest speakers addressed topics and projects where "bridges of peace" are being built: between religions (Mr. Reuben Silverbird spoke briefly on "Many religions, one God," finishing with a song

Finland, cont.

ancient study of numerology; a Baltic Evening with a focus on Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia.




for peace and blessing on his Indian flute;) in education (Mrs. Dr. Jalka, a psychologist and therapist and graduate in theology spoke on the topic "Educating people to be peaceful;") between races (Mrs. Malema, minister of the South African Embassy spoke on "Reconciliation between black and white in South Africa;" between cultural traditions and healthy values (Mrs. Hadis, president of African women in Vienna who fights against harmful traditions in Africa such as female genital mutilation by focusing on the need to educate people; between political enemies (Mr. Chung, the Minister and Counsellor of the South Korean Embassy addressed "Reconciliation and Cooperation between North and South Korea," indicating that now, for the first time, steps are being made between two parts of a country that have been fierce enemies.)

In the second part, NGOs on the Committee On Peace had the opportunity to present themselves and their activities.

After this came the Bridge of Peace ceremony. People greeted the experience with enthusiasm. Many new friendships were forged between people from different cultural and religious backgrounds. The diplomat of the South African Embassy was so enthusiastic about this idea that she wants to introduce this idea in South Africa—a Bridge of Peace between Black and White.

Many people were very enthusiastic about this event and said that it was not just an intellectual meeting but that people could also experience something in their heart. They could experience that peace has to begin with each person. Each participant received a document with a pledge to "be a peace maker and (to) build bridges of peace wherever I am."

We are proud to look back on a year where we feel that God's blessing has been with us. Without his help we could never have done this, since we are only 3 women who organized this (all of us working full time in another job and being mothers of 4-5 children each).

by Inge Kliman, Maria Riehl, 
Renate Amesbauer

the suffering of the Rwandan people was well known he noted that the efforts of the project staff to rebuild the people's hearts and minds as well as the social structure and buildings, was very admirable. The Rwandan Ambassador to the UN later expressed his heart-felt gratitude to Ms. Yokoyama, and her staff for loving and serving his country with its many difficulties.

NGO as Partner of UNDP

The next speaker was Ms. Sarah Timpson, UNDP's Global Manager of the Small Program for the Environment. Acknowledging Ms. Yokoyama's report from Rwanda, she said, "sharing the pains and suffering alongside people in the field is the true example set by NGOs....The way WFWP volunteers view the situation and respond is admirable," she added.

UNDP conducts 6000 projects in 175 nations a year, in cooperation with other international organizations, governments and NGOs. In her speech, she outlined two of her expectations

for NGOs: (1) NGOs raise awareness of issues and bring them to the attention of governments and the world; and (2) NGOs promote grass-roots movements, the benefits of which can reach every citizen in ways that government policies alone cannot.

Microcredit Program for Women

For the second half of the forum, another four speakers came to the podium. First, Ms. Yuko Kuribayashi gave the presentation about their Loan Project in which they provide small loans to help self-support of the poor women in the slum area in Bangladesh. Learning from the example of the Bangladesh's Grameen Bank, with its well-known microcredit program without requiring a security such as a land, a house or any assets. The WFWP-Bangladesh started a similar microcredit program, in which five women who aim to become self-reliant make a team. They are assigned to take a



Sarah T

joint responsibility for repayment. They support each other to pay each debt. Before receiving the loan, the selected team leader is taught how to read, write and calculate of a basic level, and the system to pay the debt as a team.

The amount of loan is 70 US dollars fixed for each individual. This is equivalent to the total amount of the several months' salaries earned by a textile female

worker in the area. They recruit a number of supporting members in Japan as a "foster partners" of each Bangladeshi borrower.

In the last three years, they provided the credit for 145 women and some of them became self-reliant with their own small business such as tailoring, roadside stands, Sari peddling, and chicken or duck farms. The borrowers express positive comments such as: "My husband, who had left the family due to poverty, came back," and "the living condition has been stabilized and I fight less with my husband on money issues." So far the repayment rate is 100%. The Japanese lenders receive the profile and picture of the borrowers and the progress report of the borrower's business. This system helps to create trust and interest with each other and strengthen the bond. Ms. Kuribayashi and the project staff want to increase the number of the Japanese supporters to help more people. Ms. Kuribayashi, who is also involved in another educational project on family values, shared her realization that the family bond is so strong in that culture and that she was amazed by the mothers who can dedicate themselves totally for the sake of their families.

Ambassador Santos commented, "we heard a lot about the Grameen Bank experience, which is experimented toward the world. But we never heard this very specific relationship with family household, which help strengthen family, which bring family back together. I think it's quite important to see. How important that is!"

After that, Ms. Minerva De Leon, (Consultant, Poverty Eradication,



YOKO KURIE

NGO.PO, Office of the President, and President of WFWP-Philippines) spoke on the relationship of the government and NGO in poverty eradication project in the Philippines. She shared her views that it is important for NGO to build a trusting relationship with the government, and that NGO should expand its area of activity in order to respond the needs of the people. She emphasized that NGOs should gain trust and support of the government.

A Course for Homemaking was added before Graduation

After that, Ms. Tomoko Kaneda, the WFWP project director in Ethiopia

gave a report about her project. They created an agreement with the government before they started the vocational training to help women's self-reliance. In the course, they teach subjects such as dressmaking, embroidery and knitting since 1997. Recently, since many of the graduates are unmarried, they added a supplemental course for three months to teach house making. In this course lectures are offered on nutrition, health-care, home management and cooking. 260 in total have graduated so far and for those who applied, they offer small loans to pay back in a year.

In another project, they offer literacy and other basic education for poor children. In the last 3 years, about 270 children came to the program and almost 200 of them were admitted into the public schools. The director of the lit-

eracy-education section of the Zone 5 Education Department has strongly requested that they build a non-formal-education school for 100 children for each grade from the first through third. He suggested that



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Millennium Forum

Follow-Up :

A Town-Hall Meeting at UN HQ

DPI/NGO Briefing
15 March, 2001

Topic: Millennium Forum Follow-up

Speakers:

Esmeralda Brown, *Millennium Forum Executive Committee*

Kay Greene, *Chair, NGO/DPI Executive Committee*

Afaf Mahfouz, *Past President, Conference of NGOs (CONGO)*

The briefing began at 10:00 am with a video presentation of the program "World Chronicle", where Mrs. Frechette Louis, UN Deputy Secretary General was interviewed by Betsy Pasik from The Washington Times and James Bone from The Times of London concerning the role of women in the UN. She explained that even though it's not the ideal situation, there haven't been so many women working in the UN management as today.

After the video presentation Paul Hoeffel, past Chief of NGO Office of DPI introduced the moderator for the briefing, Mrs. Kay Greene of the DPI/NGO Executive Committee. Mrs. Greene informed the gathering of 150 NGO representatives that "the challenge of the follow-up to the NGO Millennium Forum did not belong to any organization in particular, but to all." She then invited every representative to participate in the "Town Hall" meeting that this was, and so put on record, his or her ideas regarding effective follow-up of the Millennium Forum.

The first speaker, Mrs. Afaf Mahfouz, emphasized that "the main purpose of the gathering is to listen to you. We want to have a brainstorm session". She pointed out the need for:

1) A process to use the means and tools to bring the NGOs representatives to work together, to improve the way of communi-

cation among the different organizations.

2) A goal accomplished through the implementation of agreements, treaties at the grass roots level as well as the regional, national and international ones, and

3) A task to coordinate and find the right tools to make the link between the NGOs effectively.

The second speaker, Mrs. Esmeralda Brown, suggested the need for consultations both formal and informal. She was concerned over the possibility of certain groups trying to dominate the NGO movement, and explained that the among the 1,350 NGOs participating in the Millennium Forum, the majority were from developing countries, what she called "the South." She invited everyone to attend the Southern Summit of NGOs, which will take place in Nigeria Oct. 8-10, 01.

Mrs. Kay Greene, then open the floor giving everyone in the audience the opportunity to offer their ideas how to follow up the Millennium Forum. Among the many suggestions from the different NGOs representatives are:

1. Re contact those NGOs, which participate in the Millennium Forum finding the best way of communication.
2. Find a practical way to exchange among the different NGOs.
3. Inform every organization of the programs that have been successful
4. The need for the proper diagnosis in order to have a big bang change.
5. Overcome the current waste of resources, both man and material.
6. Let the people in the countryside know the existence and good work of the UN.
7. Encourage the full participation of all people.
8. Improve the way of communication such as phone conference calls.
9. Make programs to reach out those who

have resistance.

10. New leadership style.

11. Change the Nation-State system for a unit made of government and civil society together.

12. Media effect such as establishing a TV program showing the activities of the different NGOs.

13. Create a structure to substantiate all these suggestions.

14. Better use of the technology to make the NGO programs more effective.

15. Utilize this year's focus on the Dialogue among Civilizations for 2 key reasons: first, dialogue engages us all beyond the naturally self-interested limitations of national politics and diplomacy; and secondly, the focus on civilizations brings interfaith and spiritual perspectives to bear on global issues.

For more information about the Millennium Forum, go to:
<http://www.millenniumforum.org/>

Forum, cont. from pg. 9

children could be admitted to the fourth grade of the public elementary schools. Ms. Kaneda concluded that, from now on, their focus is to find a way to market the graduates' products and develop their educational contents to cover more academic and technical areas.

Lastly, Ms. Phyllis Bennett (Founder and CEO, PIB Associates, Pennsylvania), spoke about the cooperation between NGO and the government. She introduced about her own experiences and emphasized that in

order to eradicate poverty, we need to view the situation not only in a material aspect but mental and spiritual aspect. She stated that one couldn't speak about poverty without experiencing the sadness, pains and misery. Even now, 26 million children are suffering from starvation. We have to become acutely aware of the pain of poverty and take it as our responsibility to work on its eradication. She concluded that the most impor-



Forum, cont.

tant is to provide education for women.

A Lively Question and Answer Session

The session was deluged of questions from the floor and another half an hour was added to end the session. A question was raised, asking how the issue of poverty can be solved. Ms. Bennett responded that all of us have to become givers. If you earn 100,000 dollars for income, you cannot make any difference if you do not give out any. By giving even 10 dollars to others, poverty can be diminished to an extent. There is no reason people remain in poverty. Some African countries have rich oil and people remain poor. This is a man-made, political problem. We need to influence the politics by writing letters and discuss with them as organizations. Only one individual can change the situation. Nothing will change unless you continue to make effort to push.

Another question was about what are the prioritized criteria for WFWP to implicate a project. Ms. Motoko Sugiyama, the Vice President of WFWP International responded that the federation first studied about what is the most needed in the field, secondly, it is concerned especially to provide education for women and children. Ms. Bennett also expressed her expectation to the audience that they would visit the third world and see the poverty situation, which is completely different from the poverty seen in the U.S.

Ambassador Santos, who worked as an excellent moderator, closed the impressive forum by summarizing that the information offered was rich, full and fruitful. It was a great step for all of us toward our goals, he added.

Friendship Exchange at the Reception

After the forum, the reception was held from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Delegates Dining Hall on the 4th Floor of the UN HQ. The hall was full of people, joined by other guests and visitors to the forum participants. In a corner set up in the entrance, the panels of pictures from the project fields in 16 countries were displayed, where the staff members were explaining and responding to the questions about the WFWP projects.

At the reception, H.E. Mr. Ousmane Moutari, Ambassador of Niger to the UN gave a toast and congratulated the success,

and expressed his gratitude to the host and the organizer of the forum.

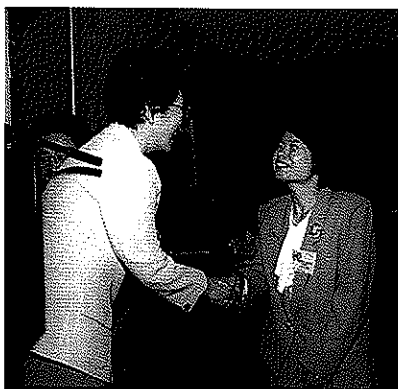
Ambassador Santos received avalanche of request to take pictures together. He expressed his delight that he was happy to work as the host to such a wonderful conference, where everyone was happy. An official from some gov-



H.E. Mr. Ousmane Moutari, Ambassador of Niger to the UN toasts the success of WFWP's ongoing work for Poverty Eradication.

ernment praised WFWP that it presented an example of NGO that is welcomed by both UN and the field.


At the reception, 23 WFWP project directors received "WFWP, International's Peace & Service Award 2000". President Lan Young Moon Park presented the certificate with the signature of the Founder of WFWP, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and the gift to each project director. The directors were amazed and delighted by the unexpected gift. They renewed their determination to make more efforts to develop their projects.



Ms. Kazuko Kato, the WFWP Project Director in Jordan, receives a "Peace and Service Award 2000."

WFWP Poland


- Oct. 16, 1999 Interreligious sisterhood & conference "Women for Peace" in connection with the proclamation of the International Year for the Culture of Peace;
- June 1-3, 2000 participated in the conference sponsored by the Association of Military Families, This conference was headed by Mrs. Maria Syp, WFWP Poland's representative at WCSF IV in Korea.
- June 18, 2000 Workshop entitled "A World with God: Ideals, Reality and How to Connect Them".
- October 20-22, 2000 participated in "Millennium Declaration: A Response from Civil Society" in New York, October 2000.
- November 15-18, 2000 participated in a UN sponsored preparatory conference for Central and Eastern Europe NGOs for the World Conference Against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance 2001;

We also held regular monthly meetings on various topics to build on the 2000 focus on "Building a Culture of peace." 

Panel Session, cont. from pg. 5

best strategy for conflict prevention in the course of this century would be to expand the role of women as peacemakers".

Prof. Angela Remane, Agronomist and lecturer at Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique shared her conviction of the need to empower women for the urgent work of poverty alleviation and the achievement of food security in Mozambique. "I was lucky to have access to education but that is not the case of most women in my country. One important way to empower women to solve conflict and to alleviate poverty is through education..." She concluded saying that she is very happy that the WFWP in Mozambique is already working in the field of education.

The remaining twenty minutes saw the floor open to comments, questions and answers. It was a great example of dialogue. As the theme of this panel suggests, speakers were from the various corners of the world, from many different cultural, occupational, economic and educational backgrounds. Yet we were sisters in the harmony of focus on finding a way for peace to settle. Surely, women have a very essential role in making the dialogue among civilizations meaningful in each home, in each family, in their communities and in their nations. 

Upcoming Events 2001

March 6-16

Commission on the Status of Women
United Nations HQ, New York. For more
information go to: [http://www.un.org/
womenwatch/daw/csw/45sess.htm](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/45sess.htm)

April 8

9th Anniversary of WFWP, Seoul
Contact Information: Prof. Lan Young Pak Moon
email: icb@mail.igroupnet.co.kr

May

5th Middle East Women's Conference for
Peace—May 7-10, Istanbul, Turkey
Contact information: WFWP Japan—Mrs. Hisae
Kobayashi
email: orap@tkd.att.ne.jp • tel: 81-3-5721-2579 •
fax: 81-3-5721-2580

15th: International Day of Families

June

1st: WFWP International's Quadrennial
Report Due
11th - 25th: Prep Committee for the Special
Session of GA on Children.
25th - 27th: Special Session of the General
Assembly on HIV/AIDS, UN HQ New York.
For more information go to <http://www.un.org/ga/aids/>

August

*International WFWP Conference, Taiwan.
Contact information: WFWP Taiwan—Mrs. Lili Chen
email: wfwp@ms8.hinet.net • tel: 886-22-363-7656
fax: 886-22-363-8410

56th Session of the United Nations' General
Assembly

September

10-12: 54th DPI/NGO Annual Conference
"NGOs Today: Diversity of the Volunteer
Experience"

18th: International Day of Peace

October

17th: International Day for Eradication of
Poverty.
*Forum on Poverty Eradication, UN HQ,
New York.

* Dates or Events tentative at the time of printing

At the UN

2001 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals

November 28th in the ECOSOC Chamber, United Nations Headquar-
ters, New York, WFWP International joined a small group of NGOs invited
to attend the launching of the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals, 2001.

Chaired by the Emergency Relief Coordinator, Carolyn McAaskie, the
UN launching was opened with an address by Secretary-General Kofi Annan.
Other speakers included Liv Ullmann, Actress and Director, and Honorary
Chair For the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children; Harri
Holkeri, President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly; Noleen
Heyzer, Executive Director of UNIFEM; Binta Mansaray, Sierra Leone; and
Habiba Dalil, Afghanistan.

Perhaps the most poignant statistic given was this: IF one day's military
spending of all nations was "donated," this would cover the entire annual
budget needed by the UN and its related agencies for the proposed basic
assistance of the 40 million refugees worldwide. Not a bad idea!

In brief, Mr. Annan opened the appeal with the following:

"It gives me great pleasure to join you today to launch the Consolidated
Inter-Agency Appeals for the year 2001. More than 35 million of our fellow
human beings urgently need humanitarian assistance. I am here today to lend
them my voice.

These women, children and men are the disenfranchised, the displaced,
the targets of conflict and the victims of natural disasters. They suffer not
only the direct effects, but also the indirect consequences, as violence and
upheaval affect their livelihoods and prevents their access to health care, edu-
cation, clean water, and other essentials for survival.

They look to us, here and now, not only for protection and life-sustain-
ing support today, but also for assurances that they -- and their children ---
can live their tomorrows in dignity and security." For more information, please
go to: <http://www.reliefweb.int/appeals/2001>

45th Commission on the Status of Women

The 45th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)
was held 6-16 March 2001. The featured event was the celebration of Inter-
national Women's Day with the theme: Women and Peace: Women Manag-
ing Conflict held in Conference Room 3, 9:45-12:00 noon. During this was
the screening of film "Women, Peace, Security" (UNIFEM/DPI) followed by
presentations given by:

- * Louise Fréchette, Deputy Secretary-General
 - * Harri Holkeri, President of the General Assembly
 - * Volodymyr Yel'chenko, President of the Security Council
 - * Angela E.V. King, Assistant Secretary-General, Special adviser on Gen-
der Issues and Advancement of Women
 - * Elisabeth Rehn, Former Special Representative of the Secretary-General
in Bosnia and Herzegovina
 - * Felicity Hill, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
 - * Asma Jahangir, UNIFEM/International Alert, Millenium Peace Prize Re-
cipient
 - * Theresa Kambobe, United Nations Volunteer Programme
- The second segment will be video-conferenced with DePaul University in
Chicago.

*Further information can be found on the United Nations Website:

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/45sess.htm>

