



WFWPI OFFICES FOR UN RELATIONS NEWSLETTER



IN THIS ISSUE

Feature Article

UN Social Forum & YPC 2023

Meet & Greet

Working Together for a More Resilient and Sustainable Future for Generations to Come:

Session 1

Session 2

UN events

Crime Prevention

50th Anniversary of the NGO CSW Geneva

16 Days of Activism

Events Attended at the UN HQ in New York

UN Geneva Social Forum and Youth Peace Conference 2023

By Carolyn Handschin, Srruthi Lekha Raaja Elango & Sandra Aboagye Brenyah

The UN Advocacy and Youth Peace Conference 2023, hosted by the Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) at the United Nations in Geneva (UNOG) from October 30 to November 3, aimed to train and certify youth advocates for peace. The program covered vital topics such as advocacy, youth leadership, negotiation, and mediation, targeting participants aged 18 to 40.

Commencing on October 31, the participants experienced the UN environment during the UN Social Forum at the UNOG. A significant session included the 8th Session EMRTD Panel on Women and Development at the Geneva UN, where Mrs. Carolyn Handschin, President NGO CSW Geneva, emphasized the meaningful participation of women in development processes. Networking opportunities during lunch at the UN cafeteria facilitated interactions among participants.

The day continued with a session at the WFWPI UN Office Geneva, focusing on the "Role of Technology in Building Peace and Protecting Human Rights." Facilitated by Mr. Harsha Sathiyamurthy, workshops and interactive sessions enhanced participants' leadership and negotiation skills. Role-playing exercises allowed them to practice negotiation strategies and receive feedback.



Vision

Women working together to realize one global family rooted in a culture of sustainable peace.

Mission

Empowering women as peacebuilders and leaders in the family to transform the community, nation and world.

Through education, advocacy, partnership, reconciliation and humanitarian service, WFWPI aims to create an environment of peace and well-being for future generations and people of all races, cultures and religious creeds.

UN NEWSLETTER TEAM

Publisher

Moriko Hori

Editor in Chief

Carolyn Handschin

Editorial Director

Srruthi Lekha Raaja Elango

This newsletter is published by
Women's Federation for World Peace
International
Office of UN Relations
4 West 43rd Street
New York,
NY 10036, USA

NEW YORK: unoffice@wfwp.org

GENEVA: c.handschin@wfwp.org

VIENNA: m.riehl@wfwp.org

WWW.WFWP.ORG

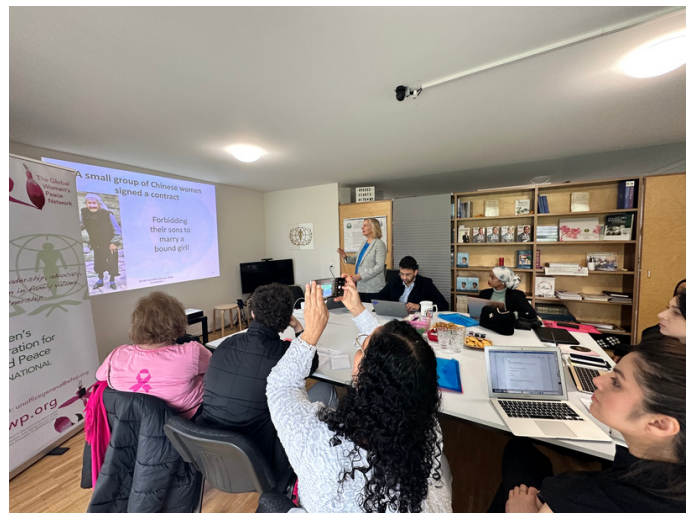
UN Geneva Social Forum and Youth Peace Conference 2023



On the second day, Mrs. Carolyn Handschin, Ms Srruthi Lehka and Mrs. Sandra Aboagye led comprehensive training sessions at the WFWPI UN Office, covering topics like advocating for Human Rights at the UN, peacebuilding, youth leadership, diplomacy, challenges faced by young leaders, character development, public speaking, negotiation, mediation skills, and strategy building.

The third day involved participants attending the UN Social Forum at the UN premises, where they delivered official UN statements based upon issues they are confronted with in their nations. Ms. Srruthi Lekha assisted in drafting oral statements, ensuring concise presentations. Topics discussed included the Roundtable on the Triple Planetary Crisis.

The final day featured another UN Social Forum session, with participants making final oral statements on various topics. A side event titled "Unlocking Sustainable Futures" showcased best practices and success stories from local governments and communities worldwide. The conference concluded with a reflection session, where participants shared key takeaways, emphasizing the importance of youth engagement in peace advocacy. Overall, the UN Advocacy and Youth Peace Conference 2023 provided comprehensive training for youth advocates, empowering them with valuable knowledge and skills for peacebuilding and human rights advocacy at the UN.



Women and Youth Working Together in Achieving a More Resilient and Sustainable Future

By Renate Amesbauer & Merle Soquila - Blaschke

In the aftermath of a series of Constructive Dialogues organized by the UNODC (SE4U), which aimed to enhance the exchange between Civil Society stakeholders and representatives of member states on specific topics such as Human Trafficking, Smuggling of Migrants, and Technical support in fighting International organized crimes, the WFP UN Vienna Office has decided to continue the dialogue through a 'Meet and Greet' initiative. This initiative involves engaging young people from various parts of the world and representatives of NGOs encountered during the dialogues. The objective is to provide a virtual platform for exchange, inspiration, and further cooperation.

The initiative, spearheaded by our colleague Merle SOQUILA-BLASCHKE, a Spanish-Filipino residing in Carinthia, successfully brought together a diverse group of young people. Participants included individuals from the Philippines involved in significant projects related to Permaculture and Moonlight Solar lamps (by 10K Heroes United). The gathering also featured a young lady with Nepalese background, a woman born in Afghanistan but residing in Austria for the past 20 years, a young mother from New Zealand collaborating with WFP, an African woman leader from Mothers' Hearts Network, a youth leader from YSP operating in rural regions of the Philippines, and two men representing other NGOs—one promoting smooth migration for work (Labor Mobility Partnership-LaMP), and the other involved in combating Human Trafficking and supporting survivors in Africa (Counter Human Trafficking Trust-East-Africa-CHTEA). Additionally, a young man with Filipino roots, residing in Austria, shared about his initiative "Soldiers with Heart," which engages young people, both within and outside the military, to assist needy children and families in remote mountainous regions.

The gathering also welcomed Ms. Daryll Generyn MIGANO, Attache at the Embassy & Permanent mission of the Philippines in Austria, along with greetings from Dr. Maria Riehl and Ms. Merly Barlaan from the WFP UN Offices in Vienna and New York, respectively.

The session proved to be a success, fostering a vibrant exchange of inspiring ideas and shedding new light on various matters. The 'Meet & Greet' left participants with a sense of accomplishment, sparking inspiration that may lead to even more practical exchanges in the future. The event concluded on a high note with a youth group musical contribution titled "IMAGINE," presented in a recorded video by 10K Heroes United.



Working Together for a More Resilient and Sustainable Future for Generations to Come

By Renate Amesbaur



The WFWPI UN Vienna team, after participating in various meetings and conferences promoting NGO involvement, established connections with ambitious representatives from different organizations. Recognizing the importance of preventing human trafficking, smuggling of migrants, and other forms of international organized crime, they aimed to link these initiatives with local WFP chapters. Mrs. Merle Soquila Blaschke, a passionate advocate with firsthand experience of migration, poverty, and family separation, played a pivotal role in driving this initiative. The recent focus of their efforts was Africa, where youth comprise 75-80% of the population. Addressing concerns about keeping young people away from drugs, crime, trafficking, and abusive situations, speakers emphasized the need to provide opportunities for education and job training based on individual talents and abilities. This approach not only ensures a prosperous future for the youth but also contributes to national development.

Mr. Patrick ERLANDSON, Founder and Director of "Father-Con.org," highlighted the impact fathers have on the healthy development of children. His platform, "FATHER-CON," provides a space for men to share experiences and receive education on their influence on child development, addressing the vulnerability of girls and boys caused by the absence of fathers.

Mr. Gene Alcantara discussed "Human Trafficking of Filipinos in Europe," shedding light on modern slavery cases, such as truck drivers facing exploitation and unacceptable working conditions. He emphasized the need to bring these cases to authorities with recommendations for action.

Mr. Justus Mokaya, founder of EZEHSA-PLUS in Nairobi/Kenya, shared his vision of providing education, vocational training, and job placement for young people. The organization has already assisted hundreds of women and youth from disadvantaged circumstances.

Mr. Mutuku NGULI, Chief Executive for "Countering Human Trafficking Trust - East Africa," outlined their efforts to combat human trafficking in seven East African countries. The organization conducts awareness campaigns and educational programs to warn about the dangers of human trafficking, addressing issues like forced labor, domestic servitude, prostitution, and begging.

Ms. Joana ADESUWA REITERER, founder of JOADRE, discussed her experience with human trafficking and her organization's efforts to raise awareness and support victims. JOADRE focuses on prevention through education, job training, and coaching young people.

Risa SMART, President WFPW Nigeria, presented a microcredit program that has successfully benefited 130 individuals, helping women start or expand their businesses and improve their livelihoods.

Ms. Merle Soquila expressed gratitude for everyone's participation and encouraged ongoing interaction, announcing the continuation of such online talks. The event was moderated by Ms. Kyung In van de ven Oliveira, WFWPI UN Vienna youth representative, whose professional life involves dealing with minor migrants, making these topics particularly relevant to her interests.

Strengthening International Cooperation: A Holistic Approach to Crime Prevention by WFWPI

By Maria Riehl, Renate Amesbauer, Lilly Gundacker, Sola Safi

Recent WFWPI side events have delved into crucial topics, such as encouraging young people's involvement in community development and entrepreneurship to counter the abuse of narcotic drugs and other criminal activities (CND 66, March 2023). Another significant event centered on preventing crime by promoting a healthy and sustainable lifestyle for young people (11COP -UNTOC, October 2022).

Professional training and support to enter the job market, along with backing for entrepreneurship through initiatives like start-up loans and microcredits, are integral components of WFWPI's comprehensive strategy. The organization recognizes that young people often possess innovative ideas that could address societal issues, and supporting their initiatives is crucial for societal progress.

The recommendation to embrace online education resonates as a practical solution to reach even remote areas when internet access is provided. Furthermore, WFWPI advocates for collaborations between universities and rural areas, recognizing the potential for knowledge exchange and development. Additionally, encouraging cooperation between local governments and NGOs, which are often already active in specific areas, ensures a holistic approach to addressing societal challenges.

Addressing the pressing global issue of migration, WFWPI acknowledges the empowering potential of migration for women. However, the organization also underscores the vulnerability of female migrants to human rights abuses, given their dual identity as women and foreigners. WFWPI recommends creating an environment that promotes solidarity, diversity, and openness for sustainable resettlement.

Highlighting the importance of a welcoming and inclusive society, WFWPI emphasizes the role of such an environment in supporting the integration of the young generation. Ensuring opportunities for newcomers' voices and meaningful participation in the community is essential for fostering a sense of belonging and contributing positively to society.



50th Anniversary of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women Geneva

By Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand (International Alliance of Women) & Carolyn Handschin

On September 21, 2023, the International Day of Peace, the NGO Committee on the Status of Women celebrated its 50th Anniversary. Representatives of the member organizations and distinguished guests gathered in Palais Anna and Jean-Gabriel Eynard, Geneva.

Over these five decades, the NGO Committee on the Status of Women Geneva has been a beacon of hope, a powerhouse of advocacy, and a catalyst for change. Julia Handschin performed Whitney Houston's "One Moment in Time" and set the audience in the mood for the 50th anniversary of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women Geneva's Celebration Day.

Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand (International Alliance of Women), Chair of the Anniversary Task Force, and Carolyn Handschin (Women's Federation for World Peace), president of NGO CSW Geneva, welcomed the guests and emphasized that for 50 years the Committee is advocating for women's and girl's rights, convinced that gender equality is a basic precondition for peace and fairness in the world.

Ms. Handchin's keynote address highlighted the passions and focus of the iconic early members, as well as a look at opportunities and dangers of the current day. She cautioned that it is important to be strong enough to listen to those we disagree with, represent local knowledge and priorities, yet act in solidarity in defense of local concerns with a broad mind for the future of the planet.



The Mayor of Geneva, Mr. Alfonso Gomez, and the former Director of the International Labor Organization's Gender Equality Bureau, Ms. Jane Hodges, expressed their appreciation for the commitment of the committee.

Written congratulations were submitted by Tatiana Valovaya, Director of the United Nations Office Geneva, Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Secretary-General, International Telecommunication Union ITU, Tatiana Molcean, UNECE Executive Secretary, as well as by Dr. Maria Niera WHO Director of Department on Environment, Climate and Health.

UN EVENTS

The NGO Committee on the Status of Women could not fulfill its commitment to the United Nations to raise awareness on issues related to the status of women and gender equality without the strong commitment of its member organizations, all accredited to the United Nations Economic and Social Council. The representatives of the 28 member organizations were welcomed and thanked for their tireless cooperation and valuable support. The main program focused on the past, present and future of the committee: Interviews with eyewitnesses of the early years provided an insight into the history. The following pioneers shared their involvement in the past: Afton Beutler-Reed (Mother's Legacy Project), Berhane Ras-Work (United for Equity and Ending Racism), Brigitte Polonovski (International Council of Women), Edith Ballantyne (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom) and Paula Daepfen (FAWCO and Biovision).

A panel discussion explored the Committee's advocacy work, its presence today, and the collaboration of civil society and governments within the United Nations. With contributions from: Ms. Adriana Quinones, Head of Human Rights and Development of UN Women Geneva, Ms. Corinne Dettmeijer-Vermeulen, member of CEDAW, Prof. Manjit Dosanjh (International Cancer Expert Corps), Zarin Hainsworth (Widows Rights International) and Srruthi Lekha (Women's Federation for World Peace).

Video statements by NGO CSW Geneva's member organizations by their presidents projected on a large screen providing information about their plans for the advancement of human rights and the empowerment of women and girls including WFWPI President, Ms. Moriko Hori. The event was followed by an official reception generously supported by the City and the Canton of Geneva, represented by Mayor Alfonso Gomez and Beatrice Ferrari, Director of International Affairs of the Canton of Geneva.



16 Days of activism against Violence Against Women

By Dr. Remi Alapo

On November 27, a powerful collaboration unfolded as the Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) joined forces with the York College Women's Center for Gender Justice, to host the "16 Days of Activism to End Violence Against Women and Girls" campaign. Spearheaded by Dr. Remi Alapo, WFWPI UN Representative and Professor of Cultural Diversity and Black History, and Ms. Nichole Acevedo, Liaison Officer of the York College Women's Center for Gender Justice, the event marked a significant effort to raise awareness and advocate for the end of violence against women.

The campaign, a civil society-led initiative, spanned from November 25, recognized as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, to December 10, culminating on Human Rights Day. Throughout this period, the collaborative efforts aimed to shed light on the pervasive issue of violence against women and girls, emphasizing the importance of collective action to address and eradicate such forms of violence.

A key highlight of the event was the presentation of the Global Women Peace Ambassador Award to Dr. Berenecea Johnson Eanes, the esteemed President of York College (City University of New York, CUNY). Merly Barlaan, Director of the WFWPI UN Office in New York, bestowed this prestigious accolade upon Dr. Johnson Eanes, acknowledging her exemplary leadership and significant contributions in the areas of education and women's empowerment.

The collaboration between WFWPI and York College played a crucial role in amplifying the awareness of violence against women. Through various channels, including social media platforms, stories and messages were shared, creating a digital space for dialogue, education and advocacy. The power of storytelling emerged as a potent tool in conveying the urgency and gravity of the issues at hand, reaching a broader audience and fostering a sense of solidarity.

The Global Women Peace Ambassador Award, presented to Dr. Berenecea Johnson Eanes, symbolized the recognition of individuals who stand at the forefront of positive change. Dr. Johnson Eanes' leadership in education and commitment to advancing women's empowerment made her a beacon of inspiration, embodying the values championed by WFWPI.

In essence, the collaboration between WFWPI and York College not only facilitated a dynamic and impactful campaign but also strengthened the collective voice against violence toward women. By fostering partnerships, sharing narratives, and recognizing leaders in the field, the event exemplified the potential for civil society to drive meaningful change in the quest for a world free from violence against women and girls. The "16 Days of Activism" campaign served as a reminder that united efforts and awareness can pave the way for a future where every woman and girl can live free from the threat of violence.



Events attended at the UN HQ in New York

By Priscilla Garces

NGO CSW Advocacy Training, on February 24, was led by the chair, co-chair and members of the NGO CSW Team. Pamela opened the event and expressed gratitude to: Luisa Kissinger, who works for the United Nations Foundation, is a senior member of the Girls and Women's team and a member of the Executive committee of NGO CSW (Commission on the Status of Women); Rosa Lizarde, Global Director of the Feminist Taskforce and co-convenor of the Women's Working Group for Financing and Development; as well as Rachel Beth Tamayo, Annabelle and Carla, who are the project coordinators.

Following the opening remarks a virtual poll was initiated, revealing that 63% of participants were first-timers at CSW68 and 32% had prior advocacy experience and attended CSW events before. After revealing these results, Luisa Kissinger led the thorough advocacy presentation. CSW68 is highlighted as a vital opportunity for advocacy on regional, national and international levels.

Luisa Kissinger and Rosa Lizarde, led a comprehensive presentation on effective advocacy, emphasizing collaboration and discussion on gender equality issues. One example highlighted during this presentation was the ongoing funding challenge for civil society organizations in some countries. The CSW68 planning team's advocacy toolkit was introduced as part of the training.

Key elements for advocacy work include identifying community issues, developing a strategic plan and engaging with local leaders, state representatives and UN-affiliated NGOs. Strategies discussed involve digital advocacy, attendance at CSW meetings and active participation in discussions and proposals. The takeaway of this presentation is that effective advocacy is about familiarizing oneself with the negotiation process at the regional, national and international level at the UN. To illustrate, advocating at the local level involves building solid working relationships with the minister of foreign affairs.

CSW's intergovernmental nature requires building relationships with government officials for effective negotiation at all levels. Advocates are advised to connect with their local leaders, participate in informal meetings to discuss goals with relevant authorities, research allies, prepare concise talking points and create language recommendations to positively influence outcome documents.

Opportunities for advocacy are abundant at various levels, including events, social media and virtual meetings. Expert group meetings that usually occur around October to November set priorities, leading to CSW themes based on the Secretary-General's report. The Netherlands facilitates this year, issuing the zero draft for member states' feedback, negotiation and discussion. Early preparation of language recommendations is crucial, as this process limits amendments to outcome documents.

After Luisa Kissinger's presentation on effective negotiation and advocacy, Rosa Lazard briefly introduced herself and led the second part of the presentation outlining the framework related to the CSW. In the second part of this presentation, Luisa mentioned the topic of Economic Justice for women and girls and its complexities associated with advocacy. Financing for development stems from conferences that took place in the 90's focusing on various women's issues of concern. However, these proposed agendas including the agenda on social development, and countries like Cairo and Beijing were not linked with the necessary funding resources.



This led governments from the global cell to initiate the process of financing for development. There have been 3 global conferences on financing for development. The first one took place in 2002 in Monterrey, Mexico, the second one in 2008 in Doha and the third one in 2015 in Addis Ababa.

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda presently serves as a guide for the financing of the development process. It was mentioned that a fourth conference on Financing for Development will take place in 2025 in Spain. According to a briefing by the chair of the CSW Bureau, the CSW outcome document can influence the process of financing for development going forward. This aligns with the priority theme of poverty and financing institutions. The Summit of The Future is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for generations to address pressing issues associated with global governance and other social issues, especially finance for development which will be in the outcome document. In conclusion, the CSW Advocacy training emphasized the importance of collaboration, strategic planning and effective communication to address pressing issues at local, national and global levels. Advocates were encouraged to actively engage with government officials, leverage digital platforms and prepare in advance for successful advocacy outcomes.