



Women's Federation for World Peace International

United Nations Office Newsletter

Spring 2006

Intensifying HIV Prevention A Forum Leading up to World AIDS Day 2005

November 30, 2005 - UN HQ, New York



The Forum: Intensifying HIV Prevention

By Motoko Sugiyama

The Forum, Intensifying HIV Prevention, Leading up to World AIDS Day 2005 was held on Wednesday, November 30, 2005 in Conference Room 3, UN HQ, New York from 1:15 -3:00 pm. It was sponsored and organized by UNAIDS, WFWPI (Women's Federation for World Peace International) and IIFWP (Interreligious International Federation for



World Peace). **Ms. Zahra Nuru**, Director and Senior Adviser to the Under Secretary General and High Representative of OHRLLS (Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States) moderated the forum.

Ms. Motoko Sugiyama, WFWPI Vice President and Director of the UN Office



delivered welcoming remarks as cochair of the forum organizing committee. She explained that the forum is a part of a week long campaign organized by UNAIDS surrounding World AIDS Day, December 1. She thanked all the NGO cosponsors, members of the NGO Committee on HIV/AIDS, including Balri Gilead, International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Science, Maryknoll Missions, UNANIMA International, WAGGGS: Zenab for Women in Development Inc. as well as the supporting Missions, Burundi, Equatorial Guinea, Malawi, Nigeria, Tuvalu and Zambia.

The forum covered three topics:

- I. Introduction and Review of the UNAIDS Policy Position Paper by Dr. Desmond Johns, Director of UNAIDS, New York.
- II. Addressing the Human Barriers to Scaling up HIV Prevention through Alliances by Mr. George M. Querie, IIFWP Director of HIV/AIDS Prevention Initiative, Abuja, Nigeria.
- III. Actions Central to HIV Prevention at Work in the Field.

Contents

Intensifying HIV Prevention Forum -----	1
At the UN in New York	
NGO Briefings -----	2
Reports from Special Events	
Women Award Luncheon -----	3
Forum on Microcredit -----	3
50th Session of CSW -----	5
At the UN in Geneva	
Promotion & Protection of Human Rights --	6
At the UN in Vienna	
UN Women's Guild of Vienna -----	7
Activities Around the World	
WFWPI Leaders' Workshop in Moscow ----	7
Youth Volunteers for International Cooperation:	
Cambodia, Philippines -----	8
Thailand, Paraguay -----	9
50th CSW Parallel Event -----	10
Upcoming Events -----	12

Practice I - by H.E. Mr. Brown B. Chimphamba., UN Ambassador from Malawi.

Practice II - by Ms. Fatima Ahmed, President, Zenab for Women in Development Inc.



Topic I. Dr. Desmond Johns gave a PowerPoint presentation entitled "New Opportunities for Intensifying HIV Prevention" produced by UNAIDS. The presentation focused on what has been gained through twenty years of experience and evidence, HIV Prevention works, HIV Treatment, Links between HIV and sexual/reproductive health, new resources for prevention. Dr. Johns stressed that the UN's recommendation for the A-B-C prevention method (A-Abstinence, B-Be faithful, C-Condom) is that all three components be implemented together and no one aspect should be emphasized to the exclusion of the others because the ABC method has the most successful outcome when

HIV Prevention, *continued on pg. 11*



Statement of Purpose

The Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) supports a network of National WFWP Chapters worldwide.

WFWP 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, WFWP 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.

WFWP International is a non-profit, non-governmental international organization in General Consultative Status of ECOSOC and DPI Associates with the United Nations

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At the UN in New York...

Reports of NGO Briefings

Preserving Outer Space for Peaceful Use

In Observance of Disarmament Week (October 24-30, 2005)

October 20, 2005 - UN HQ, New York

By *Motoko Sugiyama*

The Briefing began with the video, "Mission to Planet Earth", produced by UNTV.

Because this briefing met shortly after the huge earthquake in Pakistan, India and Afghanistan, the representative of OCHAC (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), UN focal point for relief aid was invited to brief us on the current earthquake relief efforts. She compared this earthquake with the Tsunami in South East Asia in 2004.

This relief effort has been very challenging because only Pakistan requested international assistance. In the Tsunami's case, 80% of funding came within 10 days. Yet in this case, relief funding is arriving very slowly. As winter is approaching, time to secure people's well being is limited. More mobilization of leaders

of big countries and more funding and trained staff are needed. The best thing that happened as a result of this tragedy is that Pakistan and India put the issue of Kashmir aside and cooperated to face the tragedy.

Ms. Sasa Gorisek, Moderator from DPI NGO Section opened the panel discussion by stating that this briefing will focus on how to use space science and technology for peaceful purposes and prevent arms proliferation in outer space. She also informed us that the governments of Egypt and Sri Lanka have submitted resolutions to the Prevention of Armed Conflict in Outer Space Committee of the GA as a part of the UN's observance of World Space Week (Oct. 4-10) since 1999.

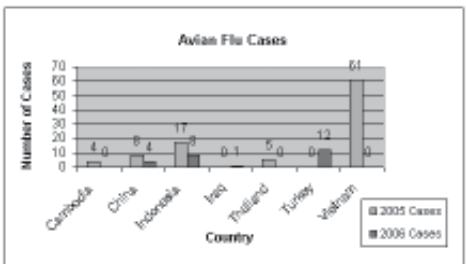
Outer Space, continued on pg. 3

Avian Flu Crisis: Possible Pandemic or Mere Concern

February 9, 2006 - UN HQ, New York

By *Hannah Alexander*

On 9 February 2006, Dr. David Nabarro, UN System Coordinator for Avian and Human Influenza, Mr. Kim Moon-Hwan, Director, Human Rights Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Republic of Korea, and Dr. Sanjay Sinho, Health Director, CARE addressed the UN NGO community about the threats and challenges of a possible avian flu (also known as the bird flu) epidemic. All the speakers underscored the importance of civil society-government collaboration to combat



the potentially devastating contagion. Community level initiatives such as educating

Avian Flu, continued on pg. 4

Violence Against Children: United Nations Secretary General's Study

November 17, 2005 - UN HQ, New York

By *Motoko Sugiyama*

Ms. Sasa Gorisek, Moderator from DPI, NGO Section announced that the speakers will discuss a study commissioned by the Secretary General to raise awareness on all forms of violence against children, better understand the causes, evaluate mechanisms already in place to report violence and make recommendations for the prevention of such abuses.

Dr. Amaya Gillespie, Director, Secretariat, UN SG's Study on Violence against Children explained the purpose of the UN's nine regional consultations in March-July 2005 on the issue of violence against children. The aims were 1. High level participation including children 2. Analysis of the trends and priorities. 3. An outcome report from each of the nine regions, a declaration, recommendations and follow-up. This program also involves WHO, OCHA, UNICEF.

Dr. Gillespie stated that there is violence against children in the countries who have rejected this program. We all have to know violence is never necessary and is absolutely preventable.

At the Regional Consultation in Middle East, children said that agreements ratified in consultations have yet to be implemented. Children need help because even though they know they have rights, they don't know how to explore or claim their rights. Success will come only through strong partnerships. The SG's final report on this issue will be submitted to the GA by the end of 2006.

H.E. Roman Korn, Ambassador from Slovenia to UN was the second panelist. Slovenia was host country for the regional consultation in Europe. Three Central African countries also participated at this consultation in July 2005. H.E. Korn stated that violence

Violence, continued on pg. 4

5th Annual Awards Luncheon: Women Who Make a Difference

NGO Committee on the Status of Women
November 3, 2005 - UN HQ, New York

By *Hannah Alexander*

More than sixty NGO leaders, UN officials, and diplomats gathered at the United Nations Delegates Dining Room on November 3, 2005 to honor nine female diplomats who have advanced female leadership and have made a difference in the international community. Jackie Shapiro, Chair of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women, (a sub-committee of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations focused on enhancing women's issues), made the opening remarks. Barbara Crosette, best known for her work as UN Bureau Chief of the *New York Times* from 1994 to 2001 and outstanding in depth reports on international human rights and women's issues, made the keynote address. Ms. Crosette, proclaimed determinedly to the audience, to continue to advocate for greater women's rights. The future is hopeful for young women, Ms. Crosette averred.

The Awards Ceremony followed, with Vivian Pender and Leslie Wright, Members of the NGO CSW Executive Committee, presenting awards to H.E. Mrs. Maria Angela Holguin of Colombia; H.E. Ms. Mirjana Mladineo of Croatia; H.E. Mrs. Tiina Intelmann of Estonia; H.E. Ms. Kirsti

Lintonen of Finland; H.E. Ms. Ruth Elizabeth Rouse of Grenada; H.E. Ms. Solveiga Silkalna of Latvia; H.E. Ms. Marlene Moses of Nauru; H.E. Ms. Rosemary Banks of New Zealand; and H.E. Mrs. Fekitamoele Utoikamanu of Tonga. The awardees affirmed their determination to heighten awareness of women's issues and promote women's participation in politics in their countries. "Although more women are in politics [now than before], very few females are [elected to top posts] in the diplomatic world," said one award recipient. Indeed, increased women's participation in the public sector has yet to become a more central issue in policy discussions. With one of the 50th Session of the CSW's theme's being: Enhanced Women's Participation in Development, we hope that the world, particularly governments, will not only take a closer look at, but also take action on this issue. (*WFWPI is a member of the Committee on the Status of Women and a member of the 2006 NGO Committee on the Status of Women Consultation Planning Committee.*)



Reports of NGO Briefings continued...

Outer Space, contd from pg. 2

Two panelists are Ambassadors of those two countries.

First panelist, Dr. Sergio Camacho, Director of UN Office for Outer Space Affairs, summarized the work of two subcommittees on outer space treaty. They are: (1) Scientific and technical committee and (2) Legal committee. Each committee has 12 member states. They focus on benefiting developing countries in capacity building and creating guidelines for peaceful use of outer space. (Now over 40 countries have built and launched over 700 satellites).

Second panelist, H.E. Mr. M.A. Abdelaziz Ambassador to UN from Egypt explained that his country's interest in submitting resolutions is to maintain international peace and security by preventing conflict in outer space.

H.E. Mrs. Sarala Fernando, Ambassador to UN from Sri Lanka also explained why Sri Lanka is interested in outer space even though her country is a small, developing country. Her country believes that all countries are custodians of the planet. Not using weapons in outer space is the only way to prevent arms proliferation in outer space. If we can't prevent it, there will be only a few survivors, not enough to rebuild the world.

The last panelist, Dr. Laura Grego, Staff Scientist, Global Security Program, Union of Concerned Scientists lectured on the current satellite situation and numbers of countries with satellites. The categories are civil, civil & military and military. The quantities are as follows:

	Civil	C&M	Military
US	195	116	73
Russia	25	25	34
China	20	8	unknown
All other nations	260	12	18

There is the danger of nations using satellites in military missions such as attacking ground targets, missile defense and defense and attack of other satellites. There is positive impact of space exploration on discovery and humanitarian improvement of lives. Therefore, Dr. Grego emphasized that keeping the use of outer space equitable and secure through establishment of laws and norms is crucial.

The briefing reached a conclusion that we, the human family must resolve not to lose this precious planet and must invest our whole heart and wisdom in our common interest: peace and happiness for all.



International Year of Microcredit 2005: Forum to Build Inclusive Financial Sectors

November 7-8, 2005 - UN HQ, NYC

By *Hannah Alexander*

From 7-9 November 2005, representatives from more than 95 countries assembled at the concluding event of the International Year of Microcredit 2005: the **International Forum to Build Inclusive Financial Sectors**. Speakers included Former U.S. President Bill Clinton, José Antonio Ocampo, Under-Secretary-General of United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA); Matthew Bishop of the *Economist*; and Her Royal Highness Princess Maxima among other notable diplomats, private sector leaders, microentrepreneurs, and former heads of states. Participants and speakers engaged in lively, and at times, heated discussions on the future prospects of the microfinance industry. "How can microfinance be transformed from charity to a profitable business venture that can benefit poor people (especially the poorest), governments, and investors alike?" opined many of the participants and panelists. UN agencies, micro entrepreneurs and microfinance institutions further grappled with the question of how to increase access to financial services for the hardcore poor, who currently make up a whopping 60% (approximation) of the world's population. At the conclusion of the three-day event, most speakers and participants agreed that the microfinance sector is gaining substantial momentum. It was stated that as the cost of providing modern technology declines, processing services can be supplied more cheaply. Microlending will grow significantly over the next five years, as evidenced by the increased number and quality of organizations involved from private sector, including Citibank, Deutsche Bank and Credit Suisse. (*WFWPI is a participant on the International Year of Microcredit 2005 website.*)



GA President Jan Eliasson's Briefing to the NGO Community on the Status of Negotiations on UN Reform

A Followup to the World Summit in September 2005

December 16, 2005 - UN HQ, New York

Bonnie Berry

Mr. Jan Eliasson began by stressing that open and direct dialogue between the UN and the NGO Community is crucial. He gave credit to NGOs for being bridges to the world and the connection to people, giving practical help in the field as well as communicating early warning for troubled situations. Mr. Eliasson emphasized that success of UN's reform should be based on a field test of whether individuals affected by poverty, conflict or disease had seen their lives effectively improved. "I'm a firm believer in the first three words of the Charter," he continued, "We the Peoples."

Mr. Eliasson remarked that the UN Reform document is extremely ambitious for the UN. Citing the "Responsibility to Protect Civilians", Mr. Eliasson stated that this was a new concept that would allow the international community

to protect populations against egregious violations of human rights when nations fail to live up to their responsibility. "Solidarity," he said, "no longer stops at a border, but rather at the human being in need." **The Peacebuilding Commission** was listed by Mr. Eliasson as another major accomplishment of the Summit. He said this initiative would help countries in their reconstruction and reconciliation efforts in the aftermath of conflict by bolstering humanitarian action, development projects and institution building through country specific prisms that will prevent conflict from reoccurring in these places.

For these Summit decisions to be implemented, Mr. Eliasson recognized that political will would need to take root around multilateral solutions. He expressed concern

about the suspicion that exists among Member States as they negotiate about the reform agenda. Mr. Eliasson emphasized that for reform to be successful, the multilateral framework of decision-making at the UN would need to be strengthened rather than weakened. He noted that this was especially important for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Mr. Eliasson called upon the NGO community to mobilize public opinion for strengthening multilateral framework. He also acknowledged that NGOs are an indispensable ally in helping Member States connect with two realities: on the one hand, the human face to the problems of disease, poverty and conflict, and on the other, the expectations and aspirations needed for addressing these plagues. An awareness of these two realities, he emphasized, helps the UN to look outward, which according to Mr. Eliasson, enhances effective international cooperation.

In his closing remarks, Mr. Eliasson asked participants to remember one element of his presentation; that global problems would only be solved if the UN, Member States and civil society all work together.

Human rights and NGO participation in post-Summit negotiations were the issues that attracted the most attention by audience members throughout the discussion. Other points addressed included Secretariat and Management reform, disarmament and NGO engagement in the new Capital Master Plan for renovation of the UN Headquarters in NYC. (Briefing can be viewed at www.un.org/webcast2005/html)



Violence, contd from pg. 2

against children in Slovenia is very prevalent. Even so, his country has no hesitation about openness because Slovenian citizens are deeply concerned about solving this problem.

There were three goals in this consultation:

- To bring awareness about the SG's report.
- To mobilize political involvement.
- To form an agenda for action.

The difficulty is that the experiences in each country are very different and at very different stages. Therefore a major outcome from this consultation was the realization that each country needs its own strategy.

The third panelist, Ms. Mali Nilsson, is a representative of International Save the Children. International Save the Children is a member of the advisory committee for SG violence against children. Save the Children works in over 120 countries trying to save children by enforcement of laws regarding conflict, sexual abuse and punishment based on the vision, "The right of every girl and boy is to have a life free of violence".

Q & A period followed. Questions were: 1. How did the cultural diversities effect the consultation, 2. What is the outcome from consultation and what was learned, 3. How was the media coverage? The answers in order were: (1) There are huge diversities in race and age such as generation gaps. Therefore regional consultations are very important. (2) The importance of working together with lawyers, experts and governments was discovered. Also, children fear punishment the most. Regarding outcome, it is only halfway through the process so there is no complete outcome yet. (3) In Europe, there was no media coverage.

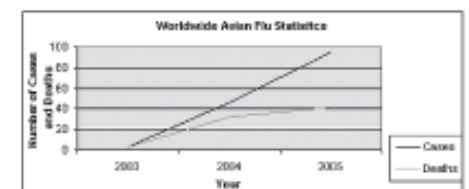
Children bear the future of our world and destiny. We have learned that diversities in how children are raised depend on culture, religions and circumstances. Though it is important to respect diversities, we must find the most positive way of treating and raising children so they can have the brightest of futures.



Avian Flu, contd from pg. 2

farmers about avian flu threats and proper hygienic procedures (e.g. how to wash their hands properly after handling birds) were highlighted as strategies to prevent and reduce the outbreak of the flu. Dr. David Nabarro concluded the briefing by warning that the avian flu could lead to a *global catastrophe*. Visit WHO's website: www.who.org for the latest updates on the Avian Flu. *National Geographic* online is also an excellent source of information on the flu crisis:

www.nationalgeographic.com.



Commission on the Status of Women: 50th Session

February 27 - March 10, 2006
UN HQ, New York City

By Bonnie Berry

The two themes of this year's Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) are Enhanced participation of women in development: an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account, inter alia, the fields of education, health and work; and Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels.

There were official panels of experts on the two themes. In addition, there was a high level round table on the theme: Incorporating gender perspectives into the national development strategies on implementation of the internationally agreed development goals requested in the 2005 World Summit. Also, a high level panel on the theme "Gender Dimensions of International Migration" was held. These panels and roundtable were attended by the CSW member state delegations and observed by NGO representatives. The presentations of the experts provided a starting point for discussion by the delegations on the themes of the current CSW and the final wording of the outcome document.

Ways that NGO representatives participate and give input are by preparing and submitting statements prior to the convening of the CSW, organizing parallel events, lobbying delegates directly about particular issues and participating in caucuses that discuss issues and strategy for caucus representatives to lobby delegates directly. Also, a small amount of time is set aside at the end of the General Debate sessions and expert panels for NGO representatives to give statements as well as ask questions.

In regard to WFWPI participation at this CSW, it was extensive. WFWP Austria participated with other NGOs in the submission of a statement to the CSW (UN document # E/CN.6/2006/NGO/2 or see www.wfwp.org archives). WFWPI co-sponsored a parallel event with WFWP Taiwan (Report in newsletter). Geneva UN Representative, Carolyn Handschin was a panelist at a roundtable discussion organized by Bineta Diop, founder and director of Femmes Africa Solidarite, discussing the Gender Perspective in the **Peace Building Commission**. Also, NY UN Representative, Bonnie Berry was moderator for a panel on Empowering and Enhancing the Development of Deprived Women organized by the International Association of Educators for World Peace. In addition, Dr. Joyce Lin, WFWP Taiwan and Assoc. Prof. at Tamkang

University, moderated a panel on New Feminization of Global Migration and Labour. Through participation in parallel events, caucuses and other networking opportunities, WFWPI UN representatives met old friends, made new friends and developed possibilities for future collaboration. With WFWP delegations attending from US, Austria, Switzerland and Taiwan, there was the opportunity for meeting one another and sharing hopes, aspirations and plans for our joint work with the UN.

The Parallel event on the Gender Perspective in the **Peace Building Commission** held particular significance. The Roundtable discussion provided a snapshot of the process of negotiations regarding the establishment of the **Peace Building Commission**, which is a part of the UN reform package proposed by Secretary General Kofi Annan last fall. Moderator, Ms. Bineta Diop brought women to speak, who understood various aspects of this process. She stressed the importance of women being involved in the process of creation of the **Peace Building Commission (PBC)**. Her experience has been that women are in the field doing the work, but not in the government involved in decision making. It is a gap that must be closed. Also, the PBC must address prevention of conflict; the economic issues and donor fatigue. She emphasized that women must ask for gender mainstreaming in all aspects and avenues of the process of planning and implementing the PBC.

Honorable Jacquelyne Weatherspoon, former member of the New Hampshire House of Representatives and an international and national election consultant discussed the importance of adaptive leadership in situations where power needs to be shifted or decentralized. She cited significant characteristics of adaptive leadership including: Adaptability of organizations depends on widespread leadership that comes from within, not just from positions of authority, Progress requires responses outside an organization's standard repertoire, narrowing the gap between present and envisioned reality will require difficult learning, part of learning will distinguish between what is of value, what is essential and what can be given up. Furthermore, there is a loss involved and no one gives up power easily, losses involve creating new loyalties and constituencies. Those in authority positions are not in charge, WE are in charge. Adaptive leadership takes longer than "technical" leadership and involves



Women's Federation for World Peace Int'l Delegation to 50th CSW

experimentation, calling in all stakeholders and asking what they need to be successful, and then providing it. Her comment reflected her grassroots experience with bringing change in difficult circumstances and lends insight to how women can influence the PBC process as well as content applicable to the future function of the PBC.

Ms. Carolyn Handschin contributed the perspective that the PBC should network worldwide, giving voice to the needs of communities on the brink of conflict, in conflict and in post conflict situations. She stressed that women's perspective should and must dominate the **Peace Building Commission**, for the advancement of all. She gave examples of brewing conflict situations where women rose to the occasion to hold families together, and organized to sustain communities and provide hope for the broken even across the boundaries of the conflict. She admitted that though a majority of women on the PBC would not guarantee success, the ability of the commissioners to go beyond self-interest and political interests and deeply empathize with those they serve, would be such a guarantee.

Ms. Cheryl Larsen from the UN Office on the Special Advisor on Africa has been involved in some of the negotiations surrounding the development of the PBC. She informed us that the member states and operations players in the process have identified that gender mainstreaming in the PBC is a key to success. Currently the key focus is strategic planning. According to Ms. Larsen, the PBC will be ready by the end of the year to focus on two countries. Ms. Makiko Tagashia, Economic and Social Affairs Officer (DESA) also gave a statement. She pointed out that 90% of conflict is now intrastate (civil war). Following a conflict, the tasks are huge, including rehabilitation, rebuilding, establishing rule of law, reconciliation, gender issues and the social aspect. Her conclusion is that no single agency mandate can manage all these issues, an integrated approach is needed. Ms. Diop concluded that the PBC must be the one to bring redress, and that all aspects of human security are absolutely the agenda of women. This discussion was extremely pertinent and

50th CSW, contd on pg. 6

At the UN in Geneva ...

High Commissioner for Human Rights on Challenges and Opportunities in Promoting Women's Rights

February 23, 2006 - UN Geneva

By Carolyn Handschin

Marking International Women's Day, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, spoke out from the Palais des Nations in Geneva about the work still needing to be done to eradicate discrimination against women in her statement to the press. Although the "Convention to Eliminate all Forms of Discrimination against Women" (CEDAW) has now been accepted by 181 states "our work is far from complete". Where laws do not discriminate, implementation is the stumbling block. These statements resonate with the upgrading planned for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva which will include a Women's Rights and Gender Unit and emphasis on Human Rights Education. (Her complete Plan of Action to meet contemporary human rights challenges was submitted to the Secretary General as called for in "In Larger Freedom: Toward Development, Security and Human Rights for All" (A/59/2005/Add.3).)

There are however, reasons to celebrate, she was quick to add. "It is heartening that as a result of recent polls in different countries, the world now has a dozen women elected to the highest political offices", she said. "The election of women as heads of state or government is extremely significant for their countries and resonates powerfully around the world." The recent landslide victories for women in the Rwandan parliament give that battered country the highest representation of women in the world. Women worldwide are looking on in support, hoping that this turn of events might hasten in the healing, reconciliation and reconstruction and provide defense to the

notion that women have a special inclination for peace-building.

International women's human rights NGOs including **Women's Federation for World Peace, International (WFWPI)** were invited to an informal briefing with senior staff of the OHCHR in late February on the subject of developments related to the expansion of the OHCHR, the new **Human Rights Council** which will replace the Commission on Human Rights, and the inclusion of NGOs in the new structure.

Mention was made of a statement that the High Commissioner made at the last CEDAW Session that hinted of closer ties between the two. Although many questions remain unanswered, the message was clear that less important than geographical location is the need to reverse the trends toward fragmentation between structures within the United Nations.

In the High Commissioner's statement of February 23 urging support for the **Human Rights Council**, she noted several advantages to the new body while giving due credit to the historic precedents of the Commission on Human Rights which gave the international community the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and a number of core treaties to protect fundamental freedoms. It allowed the grievances of individuals to be brought to the world stage and provided the only forum for civil society to confront abusers.

The proposal before the General Assembly now, while setting new standards for member countries and providing more sessions over longer periods throughout the year, is still the result of compromise. "But even an institution that is perfect on paper cannot succeed if the international community does not make the



Carolyn Handschin

necessary changes in the culture of defending human rights" stated the High Commissioner.

The whole world was struck by the sadly instructive case of Rwanda. Although the Commission's procedures worked, the Special Rapporteur's warnings were not followed. It will be again the political will and commitment of the international community that "will make the new Council work more than any changes in structure or working methods".

In the closing lines of her Women's Day speech, the High Commissioner reminded all that at the 2005 World Summit, political leaders renewed their commitment to human rights, and specifically recognized the need to pay special attention to the human rights of women which since the 2000 adoption of Security Council Resolution 1325 have substantively expanded to include their rights as decision and policy makers. We must begin by seizing the opportunity to "focus our efforts on ensuring that women's human rights have a central role in the human rights organs of the United Nations".



CSW 50th Session, cont'd from pg. 5

informative regarding the process of creating the new **Peace Building Commission**.

One more particularly inspiring parallel event was a Discussion with Women who were nominated for the 2005 "1000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize". Swiss parliamentarian, Ruth-Gaby Vermot-Mangold spearheaded the collective nomination of 1000 women peace workers, aid workers and women of good works for the Nobel Peace Prize last year. This event brought several of the nominees to speak briefly. The idea behind this nomination is that women typically work without hunger for recognition or power and work together as partners and do not try to claim credit for the work of others, consequently don't really care to be awarded individually for their good works. The atmosphere was celebratory. These women, representing the 1000, are clearly

legendary. The room was full of small pictures and short commentaries of all one thousand women. The last nominee was named Anon. She represented all the women who are working for peace but who are not known or seen. Many dignitaries gave congratulatory remarks including founder, Ms. Vermont-Mangold, UN First Lady, Mrs. Nan Annan, and good friend to WFWPI, Undersecretary General Anwarul Chowdhury. (see www.1000peacewomen.org)

The CSW has been a great forum for women to meet, share knowledge, experience and wisdom, as well as an instrumental catalyst for promoting gender mainstreaming in national governments and the UN system. We begin to see the results of this around the world with an increasing number of women heads of state, parliamentarians and as high level economic decision makers such as cabinet level

finance ministers and budget directors. Attending the CSW provides a bird's eye view of positive progress, an opportunity to exchange ideas, experiences and best practices and compare notes about barriers to progress. Also, it is a great way to see activists in action and realize how important our voices are at the local, national and international levels.

For those who are interested in more detailed reports, the Division on the Advancement of Women website has a wealth of information including a webcast of the opening session of the Commission, text of the draft of agreed conclusions and press releases highlighting the main content of the official panels and high level roundtables. (www.un.org.womenwatch/daw/csw/)



At the UN in Vienna ...

WFWP Austria Receives Grant from UN Women's Guild of Vienna

October 26, 2005

By Elizabeth Riedl

WFWP of Salzburg, Austria has been assisting North Albanian families with warm clothing and donations of Baby food from HIPP, a baby food manufacturer in Germany/Austria since 2003. Several years ago, Fiona Hawlin and Elizabeth Riedl became increasingly aware of the many useful things being thrown away in their own community. Having grown up with very little, and with the awareness of how many people live in poverty, they developed a plan to begin collecting used clothing to be given to those in need. Thus began the partnership and project to help the poor in Albania. Albania was chosen because the Christian Children's Fund contacted



WFWP Austria and asked for help in aiding the poor of Albania.

The primary source of funding to support this project has been fundraising events. Last year we held six events including a concert, dinners, and an auction. In total 8,000 euros were raised during 2005.

The UN Women's Guild Grant Program was brought to Elizabeth's attention at a meeting of the Committee on the Status of

Women in Vienna by another committee member. She encouraged WFWP Austria to apply for a UN Women's Guild grant. In the



Elizabeth Riedl and Fiona Hawlin

application, funds were requested for furnishings for medical rooms and classrooms for an expanded women's and children's community center and school. Eight hundred extremely poor children are served by the center. In the fall of 2005 Fiona and Elizabeth were excited to hear that their project had been approved for a grant.

The UNWG Charity Award Ceremony of 2005 took place on 25 October at the UN Headquarters of Vienna, the Vienna International Center. Certificate of Grants were awarded to 31 projects around the world for a total of •170,000. The Austrian Women's Federation for World Peace, Salzburg plan: "Albania Mother's and Children's Community Center" was honored with an award of 7000 euros. Fiona Hawlin and Elizabeth Riedl attended the ceremony and received the award as representatives of WFWP Austria.

As the program began, the attendees were welcomed by Dr. Shantu Watt, UNWG First

Vice-President and Dr. Revathi Vikram, UNWG President. All were entertained by a lovely selection of classical music for violin solo as well as a Russian Children's Choir. The UNWG Charity Presentation was given by Olgica Cekic, UNWG Second Vice-President.

Presentation of Certificates and Closing Remarks were by Dr. Revathi Vikram.

Note: The United Nations Women's Guild was founded in 1967 as a voluntary organization of women connected with the United Nations. The purpose of the Guild is to foster friendship, to encourage appreciation of each other's traditions and customs, and to work for the welfare of needy children. The UNWG sponsors and organizes an annual International Bazaar as its principal fundraising activity. Since the first Bazaar, held in 1969, the UNWG has raised more than three million Euros. This is achieved through the voluntary efforts of its members who work in close collaboration with the UN agencies and permanent missions in Vienna, the Austria Center in Vienna, and the business community in Vienna. Typically, over 25,000 visitors attend each bazaar. All proceeds from all fundraising go to projects for children in need.



6th WFWPI International Leaders Conference



6th WFWPI Annual Leaders Workshop

"Embracing the World with a Mother's Heart"

Moscow, Russia

October 10 -13, 2005

Moscow, October 10 - 13, 2005

Activities Around the World in 2005

WFWP Japan Youth Volunteers for International Cooperation 2005

By Chica Yasojima

WFWP Japan has been conducting youth volunteer projects in developing countries since 1997, in cooperation with other NGO groups so that Japanese youth can experience the "Global Family". WFWP Japan selects participants from children of WFWP members so they can inherit their mothers' volunteer spirit. Despite the culture shock

the young people may encounter, they undergo important life experiences not easily found in Japan, by shedding sweat together and communicating with the local people they meet. In 2005, youth volunteers were dispatched to Philippines, Cambodia, Thailand and Paraguay.

Cambodia Team

August 1-8, 2005

Nine high school and university students built kidney bean arbors for families of AIDS patients at the Self Help Center for the Disabled which is managed by a local NGO in Siem Reab. Those who were maimed by landmines or are HIV/AIDS patients live with their families and support their families through agricultural works at the center. Here, the youth volunteers experienced agricultural work for the first time in their lives. While working with the Cambodian people, youth volunteers witnessed the harsh reality of poverty in Cambodia. Without public assistance, people disabled by landmines or

ill with AIDS still have to support themselves. Volunteers learned a lot from the Cambodian people. The students were moved by the strong family ties they saw which inspired them to rethink their relationships with their own parents. Their hearts were touched by the strength of spirit in the children, shown in their sparkling eyes even in the face of such difficult circumstances. As a result of this effort, the kidney bean arbors are making \$45 profit each per harvest, successfully contributing to the eradication of the poverty of the families at the Self Help Center.



Philippines Team

March 23-April 1



Eight high school and university students performed educational assistance activities including renovating school facilities, building volleyball courts, and introducing Japanese culture to Philippine children in Camatchille Village, Pampanaga and Antipolo City, Rizal. Through the experience, youth volunteers realized how much Japan is materially blessed. In home stays with Philippine host families, the students were moved by the pure hearts of the humble people of the Philippines and developed deep family ties with them. At the time of departure volunteers found it difficult to leave and could not hold back their tears.

Activities Around the World in 2005

Thailand Team

August 4-12

Seven high school and university students helped with restoration work in the northern village of Phann Nga, Phuket, the area stricken by the big earthquake off the coast of Sumatra and Tsunami disaster. They worked on cement pasting and painting homes for the survivors. They also supported mental care activities for orphans who lost their parents in the tsunami, and introduced Japanese culture in some elementary schools. Youth volunteers



visited the coast in an afflicted area, finding many destroyed buildings lying neglected and were overwhelmed by the tremendous destructive power of the tsunami. When the child victims, who had lost their ability to express emotion since the loss of their parents, regained their smiles as they communicated with the youth volunteers, the volunteers were struck by the realization of the importance of their volunteer efforts.



Impression of a Volunteer

"There are things still happening in the world that I could not even imagine. When I actually saw that, I felt I wanted to help these people become happy. I was happy that I could grow up through the volunteer activities. I was more than happy when I saw the Cambodian people, inspired by our hard work for them; use the inspiration to focus on improving their situation, themselves. I think this volunteer project was an opportunity to grow as a person and unite with others focused on a common goal. I would really like to continue to invest myself in these activities."

(A high school boy)



Paraguay Team

August 25-September 14

Ten university students spent 45 hours to get from Japan to Catorce de Mayo Village, an Indian village and the team's work site. Youth volunteers helped with construction work of a school in the village. They worked very hard leveling land, reinforcing steel and carrying heavy cement bags. Although it was very hard work under the burning sun, children in the village were very friendly and lifted the tiredness

of volunteers by engaging them in play. In addition to the construction work, the volunteers experienced fishing for huge catfish, horseback riding, and driving horse drawn carts, experiences they would never have in Japan. After these youth volunteers returned to Japan, they had the opportunity to share their precious experiences with many people at a series of WFP meetings.

50th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

Parallel Event Workshop on: "Creating and Enabling Environment for Women's Participation"

Cosponsored by WFWPI and WFWP Taiwan

February 27, 2006 - UN HQ, New York

By *Bonnie Berry*

Moderator: Ms. Motoko Sugiyama, Vice President WFWPI

Panelists: Dr. Lan Young Moon Park, President WFWPI

Ms. Mei Nu Yu, Atty. At Law, Founding Pres. National Alliance of Taiwan Women's Associations

Dr. Lih-Rong Wang, Chair of Dept. of Sociology, Taiwan University

Ms. Bonnie Berry, WFWPI UN Representative

Moderator, Ms. Sugiyama began her introduction of the panel; the meeting room was completely full, with standing room only. The four panelists provided varying perspectives on the theme, Creating and Enabling Environment for Women's Participation. This topic corresponded to one of the focuses of the CSW, which was Creating an Enabling Environment for Women's Participation in Development.



Dr. Lan Young Moon Park was the first to speak. Her very relevant topic was "An Enabling Environment, with Balance". Dr. Park outlined a brief history of WFWPI and informed the audience of our mission of strengthening families centered on the role of women as mother and educator. She also briefly discussed our reconciliation work and humanitarian aid and service activities in developing nations. Dr. Park stressed the importance of these activities as aiding in the accomplishment of the Millennium Development Goals. She went on to acknowledge and praise the sacrificial efforts of the many WFWP volunteers who have left their homes and families to bring hope and help facilitate the attainment of the dreams of women in poverty. She testified that although this sacrifice weighed heavily on her heart at times, she knows that this effort and the parental love of these volunteers is the very energy for realizing peace in the true sense, starting from the foundation of society.

Dr. Park continued by illuminating advances in the numbers of women in leadership roles around the world. She also stressed the importance of educating women to become experts in the fields of economy, media, law, science, education and others, in order that they qualify to take part in policy formation and decision making on the highest levels. She noted that there are women presidents in 6 nations, 2 women prime ministers and other women in high level posts in government including growing numbers of women parliamentarians.

In conclusion, Dr. Park emphasized the importance of women as a nation's economic power source. But she also stressed the important leadership role of parenthood and the essential contribution to society of homemaking and childrearing that women make. "After all," she stated, "raising children and forming loving families creates the essential unit of a peaceful world."

Dr. Wang reminded us of the many statistical disparities between men and women in the work force. A significantly higher percentage of men than women are in the workforce in all developed nations. Far more men than women are in management. Salaries of women tend to be approximately 70% of those of men in similar jobs. To combat these realities, Dr. Wang recommended policy changes that allow for positive changes and practices. These good practices include the importance of balancing work and home life, eliminating disparity between genders, promoting women to managerial levels and enhancing access to opportunities and resources. Government policies that allow for these good practices, many of which have been implemented in Dr. Wang's home country of Taiwan, are Gender Equality Employment Act, Minimum Wage Protection Act, Female Employment Promotion Policy, setting up machinery to monitor Gender Equality achievements, and Gender Equality Education programs. Work place policies that encourage balance include parental and family leave, corporate/public childcare, flexible working hours/ work place, and compressed work hours. Some programs to help in advancement of women in the work place are capacity building, career counseling, role models and

gender sensitivity training for employers. In addition, Dr. Wang stressed the need for local employment services, special programs for minority and disadvantaged women as well as a clear system for handling reporting of discriminatory situations.

Ms. Mei-NuYu has been pioneering women's rights in Taiwan for over 20 years. She was one of the lawyers who initiated the drafting of the Gender Equality in Employment Act in Taiwan. The focus of her presentation was the process of legislative change in support of women's rights in the workplace in Taiwan. Indeed, before the mid 70s, discrimination against women was legal in Taiwan. Starting in 1987, women's groups began lobbying and demonstrating for equality in the work place. In 1990, the draft resolution of the Gender Equality in Employment Bill was signed by legislators, and in 1999 it was ratified. At the end of 2001 it was passed into Law. Meanwhile



Dr. L. Y. Park, Ms. M. Sugiyama, Dr. L.R. Wang, Dr. M. N. Yu, Ms. Bonnie Berry

women's groups continued to speak out and demonstrate about inequalities and sexual harassment. In addition to law change, monitoring mechanisms have been put into place. Other programs to help women have been instigated jointly between government and nongovernmental organizations including human resource pools to provide employees while women are on maternity leave and child care worker training programs. Also, programs to enhance employment rates of women and train women in entrepreneurship, (strategic planning, writing business plans, acquiring loans, business registration, management, technology, etc.) mentor and networking programs have been instigated to help women business owners and workers with a support system. This public and civil society partnership has created a multi faceted effort to advance women in the workplace and business world in Taiwan.

Final panelist, WFWPI UN Representative, **Ms. Bonnie Berry** gave an overview of the work of several international nongovernmental organizations that have projects that enhance and empower women and poor people with economic development and political participation and leadership, including the projects of WFWPI. She informed us about two projects in Afghanistan. One empowers women with cottage businesses, the other

Workshop, continued on pg. 12

implemented as one integrated whole. The essential policy for HIV Prevention is that everyone must be aware of their own and others' responsibilities. Plans for addressing this issue must be based on each national situation. If we don't properly address the problem, 30 million young people, especially young women will be affected. If we do what we should, there is hope for the future. (Dr. Johns' PowerPoint slides can be found at www.wfwp.org)



Topic II. Mr. George M. Ogurie stated that there are barriers to effective HIV prevention. They range from lack of governmental disposition and will to tackle the problem to cultural and attitudinal factors within a given society. Generally, these barriers could be described as "Human Barriers". Scaling up HIV prevention will involve dealing with these barriers at their root. The report of Rapid Assessment in Selected Local Government Areas of Lagos State, Nigeria, summarized that there is generally a high level of awareness about HIV/AIDS among the population but a very low level of behavior change in response to the awareness.

Mr. Ogurie's presentation was based on IIFWP's program "Living Aids Free" given in schools and churches in Nigeria over the past several years. He introduced a unique approach to AIDS awareness education that includes character education. This approach encourages young people to practice abstinence before marriage and faithfulness within marriage. It is allied with the universal value that is a tenet of every major religion that all human beings are both spiritual and physical and require proper care and discipline for the development of both mind and body. A person of good character is likely to be better equipped to establish harmonious relationships with others which can lead to a lasting marriage. Having an ideal for marriage and family can also be a motivation for self-discipline in sexual behavior. This program encourages students to consider their future life goals and their future responsibilities as spouses and parents for their own families. The "Living AIDS Free" approach introduces the concept of true love which involves living for the sake of others. If an HIV positive person has a heart of true love, that person would be very conscious about conducting himself/herself in a manner that would pose the minimum risk to others. This program reflects a fundamental and essential approach for the scaling up of HIV prevention.

Topic III: Practice I. H.E. Mr. Brown B. Chimphanba,

gave an overview of the epidemic situation in Malawi. He reported that one million people are living with HIV there. Every year around 110,000 people become infected with HIV in Malawi. Every year around 86,000 people die of AIDS related complications in Malawi.



"A person of good character is likely to be better equipped to establish harmonious relationships with others which can lead to a lasting marriage. Having an ideal for marriage and family can also be a motivation for self-discipline in sexual behavior."

George M. Ogurie

Over 650,000 people have died of AIDS since the first case was diagnosed in May 1985. Every year 7,000 children become orphans, adding to the pool of about 850,000 orphans 45% of whom are orphaned due to HIV/AIDS. Ambassador Chimphanba stressed that with no cure in sight, prevention remains the cornerstone to controlling the spread of the epidemic. Because of this, the government of Malawi encourages the involvement of all sectors of society to promote reduction of high risk sexual behavior. He also informed us about the institutional framework in Malawi which includes the Cabinet Committee on HIV/AIDS and the National AIDS Commission which has a Board of Commissioners from faith-based organizations, the business community, civil society and NGOs. The focus of prevention programs is to involve all sectors of society to promote interventions that reduce high risk sexual behavior, enable people to know their HIV status through voluntary counseling and testing and teach people how to protect themselves and others.



Practice II. Ms. Fatima Ahmed agreed that prevention is still the key to controlling the epidemic because there is no cure and millions of people living with HIV/AIDS do not have access to any kind of medical treatment. More

effort must be made to scale up prevention, especially for vulnerable groups including youth. She reported on the HIV/AIDS situation in her country of Sudan. Sudan is conservative in nature. Culture and religion play a very important role in people's lives. The good interaction between different religious groups and the strong family ties and values have kept the rate of HIV/AIDS infection very low compared to other Northern African countries. However, because of the civil war in the south, family structures are being destroyed and women and children are becoming more vulnerable to HIV infection. The first case was diagnosed in 1989. Now more than 100,000 people are living with HIV/AIDS in Sudan.

She introduced the missions of her organization, Zenab for Women in Development's (ZWD). They are: empowerment of women's livelihoods, advocacy for women's rights, promotion of girls' education and education for children with special needs; embracing the reproductive health of women and fighting against bad traditions like FGM as well as fighting the outbreak of HIV/AIDS. She told us that ZWD arranges classes and lectures for high school boys to raise awareness about the dangers of HIV/AIDS because many men engage in sexual activity outside of marriage. In most cases they bring the virus to the women and girls, so the strategy of working with men and boys is a key strategy for prevention.

As the forum came to an end, it became clear that intensification of HIV prevention is the very key to solving this serious issue, which is in agreement with the conclusion of the UNAIDS policy position paper "Intensifying HIV Prevention", produced after the 17th meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordination Board (PCB) in June 2005.



Mr. Ricardo de Sena of IIFWP, member of the forum organizing committee gave closing remarks, expressing deep appreciation to the moderators and panelists for their marvelous job with this forum and also to the 150 participants (half of whom were from the UN system). Then he picked up his guitar, asked us all to hold hands and we sang "We Shall Overcome" with the determination to overcome "HIV/AIDS".





The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women

60 years of work for equality, development and peace



United Nations commitment to the advancement of women began with the signing of the United Nations Charter in San Francisco in 1945. Its Preamble declared faith "in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small..."

In 1946 the Commission on the Status of Women was established to promote the advancement of women throughout the world. The Commission met for the first time at Lake Success, New York, in February 1947.

Initially, the Commission focused on legal measures to protect the human rights of women and develop awareness of the status and situation of women around the world.

By the mid 1960s, the Commission had begun to address women's role in economic and social development. Delegates from developing countries drew attention in particular to the situation of women in rural areas and the need to enhance their contributions and address their priorities and needs.

In 1975, at the urging of the Commission and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the United Nations observed International Women's Year with the theme "Equality, Development and Peace". The culmination of the year was the first global Women's Conference in Mexico City which adopted a global plan of action to improve the status of women.

The United Nations Decade for Women from 1976-1985, and the following world conferences on women, created an unprecedented momentum for change. The Platform for Action adopted in Beijing in 1995 consolidated the consensus and commitments achieved through the work of the Commission.

Major Achievements

The Commission's 60-year history is marked by significant achievements. The Commission ensured that provisions for equality between women and men were included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights - a milestone in the struggle for equality.

In 1979, after four years of preparatory work by the Commission, the General Assembly adopted the historic Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). This landmark treaty entered into force in 1981 and by February 2006 had been ratified by 181 countries. The Optional Protocol to the Convention, was adopted by the General Assembly in 1999. The fact that 76 States are now party to this instrument attests to the willingness of Governments to adhere to the terms of the Convention.

The Convention has been an inspiration for women in all parts of the world. It has had a positive impact on legal and policy development at national level, for example through the strengthening of provisions in constitutions, the establishment of commissions to review legislation, and the development of temporary special measures to enhance women's participation in different areas.

World Conferences on Women

The Commission has made a decisive contribution in organizing and following-up the world conferences on women in Mexico in 1975, Copenhagen in 1980, Nairobi in 1985 and Beijing in 1995. The world conferences set in motion an important and continuing cycle of research and analysis; goal-setting; progress review to identify achievements as well as gaps and obstacles; and renewal and expansion of commitments.

The world conferences offered a forum in which women's organizations could broaden their participation and increase their voice in shaping the work of the United Nations. The number of NGOs involved in the work of the Commission grew dramatically during the Decade for Women.

Over the past ten years the Commission has systematically reviewed progress in implementation of the twelve critical areas of concern identified in the Platform for Action at its annual sessions, and has adopted recommendations for action to facilitate increased implementation.

The ten-year review held during the 49th session of the Commission indicated that while progress

had been made at national level and gains could be seen in relation to each of the 12 priority areas in all regions, serious obstacles and challenges were reported in every area.

In the Declaration adopted during the ten-year review, Member States reaffirmed the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly and pledged to ensure their full and accelerated implementation.

New Challenges and Opportunities

World leaders assembled at the United Nations Millennium Summit in September 2000, emphasized their commitment to promote gender equality and empowerment of women. The 2005 World Summit reiterated this resolve to eliminate discrimination against women and renewed commitment to the gender mainstreaming strategy.

The Platform for Action continues to represent the global policy framework for gender equality and empowerment of women and guides the work of Member States, the United Nations, international and regional bodies, and civil society. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women provides the normative framework. The synergies between the two instruments were recognized by the Commission on the Status of Women in its 49th session and are regularly highlighted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. A major challenge for the Commission is ensuring accountability for implementation of existing policy recommendations and human rights standards at national level.

The framework of the Millennium Development Goals provide new opportunities for the Commission's work through mobilization of governments, international organizations and NGOs around time-bound, measurable targets, and through increasing the visibility of gender issues in national development planning and reporting, facilitating the development of alliances with new partners and increasing access to resources.

Further information on the Commission on the Status of Women is available on www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw

Workshop, contd from pg. 10

educated women candidates and voters in the recent parliamentary elections. Finally she shared about Peace X Peace's Global Network. Common threads in all these projects are that they began with a woman or women with a desire to serve and help others create peace. Efforts were made to identify the needs of those to be served, Plans were formulated. Partners and resources were sought among personal networks to implement the plans. Plans were implemented on a nonbureaucratic, grassroots scale. The outcome was that the women served gained power, were empowered by the gift of knowledge, resources, opportunity and support, sustainable economic means, education for their children, healthcare for themselves or children. These are simple steps

that each one of us can take to make a difference in the lives of others.

Dr. Park encouraged us as women to contribute our potential in all levels of the public realm, while still providing leadership in our homes and with our children and families. Ms. Yu and Dr. Wang informed us about policy and procedure changes that stemmed from grassroots activism that has helped to create an enabling and empowering environment for women. Ms. Berry reminded us that each one of us can assist in the creation of an enabling environment for women by finding a heart to serve and by using our resources to create opportunities for others.



Upcoming Events 2006

- April 10: 14th WFWP Anniversary
- May 10: International Day of Families
- July 3-28: ECOSOC Substantive Session, Geneva
- Aug. 12: International Youth Day
- Sept. 6-8: 59th DPI/NGO Conference, New York
- Sept.*: Midday Workshop at 59th DPI/NGO Conference
- Sept.12: Opening Day of 61st Session of the General Assembly
- Sept.: International Day of Peace
- Oct.*: WFWP 7th International Leaders' Workshop in Bangkok

**Date to be confirmed*