



WOMEN'S FEDERATION
FOR WORLD PEACE INTERNATIONAL

WFWPI

33RD ANNIVERSARY REPORT

**“Women Charting a Peaceful Future Through
Cooperation, Reconciliation and Healing”**

Date: Saturday, April 12, 2025

Time: 4:30- 6:00 PM KST (1 h 30 m)

Venue: B1, Sapphire Ballroom, Lotte Hotel World, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Participants: VIPs and WFWP Leaders

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WOMEN'S FEDERATION
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WFWPI 33rd Anniversary Celebration

Women Charting a Peaceful Future Through Cooperation, Reconciliation and Healing"

12th April 2025, Lotte Hotel World, Seoul, Korea

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) celebrated its 33rd anniversary on April 12, 2025, at the Sapphire Ballroom of the Lotte Hotel World in Seoul, Republic of Korea. This year marked a significant milestone as WFWPI hosted its anniversary event during the World Summit organized by the Universal Peace Federation (UPF). The session was strategically scheduled following the International Association of First Ladies for Peace (IAFLP) session, emphasizing the commitment to fostering global peace through cooperation, reconciliation, and healing.

The theme for the anniversary, "Women Charting a Peaceful Future Through Cooperation, Reconciliation and Healing," encapsulated the essence of the organization's mission. The event brought together distinguished guests, including VIPs and WFWPI leaders, and featured various segments designed to inspire and cultivate a spirit of unity and collaboration among women globally. This event was the first in-person gathering after the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing WFWPI leaders and guests to share their views and strengthen

friendships.

As an ECOSOC-accredited organization, WFWPI continues to empower women as peacebuilders and leaders in families, transforming communities, nations, and the world. Through education, advocacy, partnerships, 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.

Despite a tight and intense schedule, participants enjoyed the event and took home cherished memories, spreading love and goodwill within their communities. The event concluded on a high note, filled with warmth and inspiration, setting the stage for ongoing collaboration and commitment to peace.

Note: While the Bridge of Peace and Global Women's Peace Ambassador Awards are significant components of the event, they will be detailed later in the report. Their inclusion in this summary may not be necessary at this stage.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW



Mrs. Merly Christina Barlaan, Vice President of WFWP International, graciously hosts the opening ceremony of the 33rd anniversary celebration.

INTRODUCTION

The event commenced at 4:30 PM KST, hosted by Mrs. Merly Christina Barlaan, Vice President of WFWP International. The welcoming remarks set a tone of warmth and camaraderie, acknowledging the collective efforts of all participants in promoting a peaceful future.

The WFWPI 33rd Anniversary ceremony commenced with a heartfelt welcome to distinguished Excellencies, First Ladies, honored guests, peace leaders, and esteemed colleagues of the Women’s Federation for World Peace. Mrs. Merly Barlaan conveyed her privilege in serving as Master of Ceremonies for this momentous occasion. With the theme “Women Charting a Peaceful Future through Cooperation, Reconciliation, and Healing,” we came together to celebrate exceptional leaders and seek inspiration for our continued journey.

OPENING REMARKS



Mrs. Moriko Hori, President of WFWPI International, delivered an inspiring opening address. She highlighted the importance of women's roles in peacebuilding and the need for continued advocacy and action towards achieving global harmony.

MRS. MORIKO HORI, PRESIDENT OF WFWPI

Your Excellencies, distinguished guests, honored colleagues, and cherished members of the Women's Federation for World Peace International, Good afternoon, It is with immense gratitude and heartfelt joy that I welcome all of you to this historic celebration of our 33rd anniversary.

Today, we gather not only to honor the legacy of this extraordinary organization but also to reaffirm our shared commitment to advancing peace, unity, and the dignity of all people across our global community.

For over three decades, WFWPI has stood as a beacon of hope and empowerment, driven by the transformative vision of women-led peacebuilding. Together, we have demonstrated that when women unite, we create bridges across cultures, nations, and ideologies—bridges built on compassion, collaboration, and courage.

Reflecting on our journey, I am humbled by the countless lives we have touched through our advocacy, humanitarian efforts, and educational initiatives. The voices of women and families have grown stronger, more resilient, and deeply influential in shaping dialogues around peace and sustainable development.

Yet, as we celebrate these remarkable milestones, we are reminded of the challenges that remain. The world needs the spirit of WFWPI more than ever. In the face of conflict, inequality, and division, we must continue to serve as unwavering champions of reconciliation, empowerment, and progress. Our mission calls us to rise even higher, to lead boldly, and to amplify the voices of women whose contributions are too often marginalized or overlooked.

On this 33rd anniversary, let us draw inspiration from the principles that have sustained us—principles of universal love, unwavering respect for human rights, and the belief that peace begins in the heart of each individual. May we leave here today renewed in our resolve to build a world where every woman, man, and child can thrive in harmony and mutual understanding.

Thank you for being part of this incredible journey.

Together, we will continue to fulfill the vision of our founders—a true and lasting peace that lies at the heart of WFWPI. Let us come together to celebrate, reflect, and move forward with unity and purpose.

Through our activities, let's inspire women to relieve from suffering and become ambassadors of peace in their families and communities, and world.

Thank you.

CONGRATULATORY REMARKS



Mrs. Myung Huh, President of the Korean National Council of Women, gave the congratulatory message

MRS. MYUNG HUH, PRESIDENT OF THE KOREAN NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN

Hello, I am Myung Huh, President of the Korean National Council of Women.

Greetings to the First Ladies, esteemed guests from around the world, President Moriko Hori of Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI), WFWP leaders, and members from across the globe. Thank you.

Thank you for inviting me to this meaningful occasion celebrating the WFWPI's 33rd anniversary. I extend my heartfelt congratulations on reaching this remarkable milestone.

WFWP is a proud women's organization that began in Korea and has grown

into an international movement. Founded in 1992 in Korea, it dispatched volunteers to 160 countries by 1994, and was granted general consultative status with the United Nations in 1997—a status it continues to hold today. Domestically, WFWP Korea was registered with the Ministry of Unification in 1995 and has been leading efforts for the peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula under the vision “Women Make Peace.”

While the term peaceful reunification is commonly used today in Korea, in the 1990s, it was more common to see “reunification” paired with terms like “nationalism” or “self-reliance.” The fact that the co-founders, Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, had the foresight to emphasize peace at that time shows their remarkable vision. It is also astounding that, in the early 1990s, before gender equality had firmly taken root, they focused on educating and empowering women and advocated for women-led peacebuilding.

Thanks to the dedication and tireless efforts of women leaders around the world, WFWP has grown and thrived over the past 33 years. It is truly remarkable, almost miraculous, that WFWP has made tangible contributions in the fields of poverty eradication and education for underprivileged women and children around the world. Let us give a round of applause to all the members who have worked behind the scenes, often without recognition or spotlight.

The Korean National Council of Women was established in 1959, shortly after the Korean War, and is the first umbrella organization for women in Korea. For the past 66 years, we have worked to empower women, and to improve their status and rights in society. Our Council envisions a society free of gender discrimination, where women can fully express their capabilities. In this sense, WFWP is our sister organization, working toward the same goals.

As an affiliated organization of our Council, WFWP Korea has long been a valued partner. I hope that, moving forward, the global network of WFWP and the domestic foundation of the Korean National Council of Women will continue to create even greater synergy together.

Once again, congratulations on the 33rd anniversary of WFWPI. I wish everyone here good health, lasting happiness, and a beautiful day ahead.

Congratulations!

Thank you.

SPECIAL REMARKS AND TOAST



Dr. Lan Young Moon, President Emerita of WFWP International, gave special remarks and proposed a toast wishing for the success of the event's commencement.

DR. LAN YOUNG MOON, PRESIDENT EMERITA OF WFWP INTERNATIONAL

Hello, everyone. My name is Lan Young Moon, President Emerita of the Women's Federation for World Peace International.

I warmly welcome and thank the First Ladies gracing this meaningful occasion celebrating the WFWPI 33rd Anniversary, the distinguished guests from around the world, President Moriko Hori of WFWPI, and all WFWP leaders and members across the globe.

Congratulations on this remarkable 33-year milestone.

My journey with WFWP began in 1994 when I was appointed Secretary General. From that time until 2014, I had the privilege of serving as International President—traveling across the world, shedding tears and sharing laughter with my beloved WFWP sisters. It has been one of the greatest honors of my life to have participated in this 33-year journey of women working for peace.

As some of you may know, I was born in North Korea and fled to the South during the Korean War. My roots remain in the North, which is why it was deeply meaningful for me to return there 19 times, representing WFWP's dedication to reconciliation and peaceful reunification.

One of my heartfelt wishes is to someday ride a bus with all of you to my hometown, along the beautiful shores of Wonsan. And I truly believe that if we unite our strength as sisters gathered here today, that day will come in the near future.

Today is a day of joy, a day of celebration. Let us raise our glasses together:

First, I would like to raise a toast of gratitude to the co-founders, Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, for establishing WFWP.

Next, I offer a toast of love for the health and happiness of all the sisters around the world who have been tirelessly working on the frontlines to build a peaceful and loving world.

And finally, I raise a toast of hope for the bright future of WFWP, as we work hand in hand with the next generation toward the peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula and a world of lasting peace.

When I say, "To the advancement of WFWPI!" please raise your glasses with me.

To the advancement of WFWPI!

BRIDGE OF PEACE CEREMONY



Mrs. Kaeleigh Moffitt, WFWPI USA President and International Vice President, explained the importance of reconciliation in the Bridge of Peace initiative.

OVERVIEW OF THE CEREMONY

The Bridge of Peace Ceremony was a profound highlight of the WFWPI 33rd Anniversary event, embodying the spirit of reconciliation and understanding among nations. This segment featured four symbolic crossings, each representing different historical themes, allowing participants to reflect on the past while envisioning a collaborative future.

Mrs. Kaeleigh Moffitt highlighted the vital role of reconciliation in peacebuilding, emphasizing its complexity beyond justice and the challenge of achieving forgiveness. A notable example is South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, where Bishop Desmond Tutu remarked, "Without forgiveness, there is no future."

The story of Father and Mother Moon exemplifies radical forgiveness. Both endured significant suffering—Mother Moon fled North Korea, and Father Moon was imprisoned for his faith. Their commitment to peace led them to prepare emotionally for a meeting with President Kim Il Sung, focusing on forgiveness.

Mother Moon emphasized seeing President Kim Il Sung not as an enemy but through a maternal lens of love. Their mission to share true love resulted in historic changes, including the end of "Hate America Month."

Mrs. Moffitt stressed that this spirit of love and forgiveness is often missing in modern peacebuilding. "The upcoming Bridge of Peace ceremony will foster reconciliation among women from conflicting backgrounds through humility and empathy."

Each pair of distinguished women crossed the bridge, sharing their unique narratives and fostering connections that transcend borders. Details of these meaningful crossings will be shared below.

SYMBOLIC CROSSINGS



Mrs. Bettencourt highlighted her deep connection to the peace initiative, stating that true peace begins with understanding and mutual respect. She expressed her commitment to love and embrace her Russian sister, recognizing their shared values and dreams for peace. In her eyes, Maria was not an adversary but a fellow woman, mother, daughter, and sister.

In response, Mrs. Terekhova spoke from her Christian faith, sharing a dream in which God revealed that the soul of every country resides in its women. She called for global unity through prayer, believing it can foster harmony. The ceremony concluded with a heartfelt embrace between the two women, capturing a moment of unity and healing that resonated deeply with all present.

International Crossing: Russia & USA

Theme: History of War and Ideological Conflict

- *Mrs. Caroline Bettencourt (USA), Former Vice President of WFWP USA, currently Chairwoman of WFWP San Diego*
- *Mrs. Mariia Terekhova (Russia), President of "Women Are a Treasure of the Nation"*

In this poignant crossing during the WFWPI Bridge of Peace Ceremony, Mrs. Mariia Terekhova from Russia and Mrs. Caroline Bettencourt from the United States shared their personal narratives, illuminating the longstanding ideological divides between their nations.

Their heartfelt stories illustrated the profound impact of war on families and communities, emphasizing the critical need for dialogue and cooperation. The audience was visibly moved, with many shedding tears of empathy.

Interracial Crossing: Ivory Coast & France

Theme: History of Colonization

- *Ivory Coast: Mrs. Cady Wassa Traore, Founder & CEO, Women for Peace in Africa*
- *France: Mrs. Marie-Françoise Mitchell, Former Chairwoman, WFWP Hawaii*



Mrs. Traore and Mrs. Mitchell shared their experiences related to the legacies of colonization. Their narratives illustrated the resilience of women in overcoming historical injustices. Mrs. Traore spoke passionately about the strength found in unity and the importance of healing wounds from the past. The emotional depth of their exchange resonated with the audience, fostering a sense of collective responsibility for a more equitable future.

Northeast Asia Crossing: Korea & Japan

Theme: Healing Historical Tensions

- *Korea: Mrs. Myung Huh, President, Korean National Council of Women*
- *Japan: Mrs. Moriko Hori, President, WFWP International; President, WFWP Japan*



This crossing was particularly touching as Mrs. Hori recounted her experiences studying in Korea during her early teens. With tears in her eyes, she reflected on the historical tensions between Korea and Japan. Her heartfelt acknowledgment of the pain and misunderstandings that have persisted over the years resonated deeply with the audience, many of whom felt the weight of this shared history.

Mrs. Hori's mother emphasized the importance of reconciliation between Korea and Japan, encouraging her to work towards fostering harmony between the two countries. During her time in Korea, she noticed many lingering resentments and came to understand the pain of those who have lost their

homeland. While she has written academic papers on the Korea-Japan issue and reconciliation, she felt drawn to join WFWPI where she could engage in practical peacebuilding efforts. Through WFWPI, she is actively involved in initiatives aimed at promoting genuine peace.

Mrs. Huh echoed these sentiments, emphasizing the vital role of women in reconciliation efforts. She highlighted the importance of understanding and empathy in healing historical wounds, inspiring participants to actively contribute to peace in their own communities. Drawing from her experiences living in various countries, including Japan, she expressed that she holds no negative feelings toward the Japanese people. Instead, she emphasized that what truly matters is our collective commitment to come together and create a peaceful world.

Intercultural Crossing: Asian & Hispanic
Theme: Embracing Diverse Cultures and Heritages

- *Paraguay: Hon. Emilia Patricia Alfaro de Franco, First Lady of Paraguay (2012–2013); Senator (2013–2018)*
- *Sri Lanka: Madam Shiranthi Rajapaksa, First Lady of Sri Lanka (2005–2015; 2019–2022)*



In this crossing, Hon. Alfaro de Franco shared her journey to Korea, detailing an unexpected challenge she faced when her luggage was lost at the airport. This experience, initially a source of frustration, turned into a testament to resilience and problem-solving. She humorously recounted the obstacles she overcame to retrieve her belongings, highlighting the importance of adaptability and the support of the local community.

“Paraguay is a land that has endured deep wounds throughout its history, often at the hands of neighboring powers. Yet, despite the pain and loss, our people have always kept their hearts open—welcoming souls from every corner of the world with warmth and dignity.

Today, it fills me with profound joy and gratitude to embrace a sister from a culture so different, yet so beautifully rich. In this moment of unity, I offer her a simple yet meaningful gift: a bracelet crafted by the hands of indigenous women from our homeland—a symbol of our shared humanity, resilience, and the bond that now connects us as sisters.”

Madam Rajapaksa’s reflections on the beauty of cultural diversity resonated with all, reinforcing the significance of embracing different heritages. Together, their stories illustrated that even in adversity, there is a path to understanding and shared joy.

The Bridge of Peace Ceremony not only highlighted historical tensions but also celebrated the strength found in reconciliation. As participants shared their personal experiences filled with tears and joy, the collective atmosphere was one of healing and hope.

The stories exchanged emphasized the vital role women play in fostering peace, inspiring all to continue their efforts towards unity and understanding in their own communities. The ceremony concluded with a renewed commitment to collaboration and the belief that through shared experiences, lasting peace is attainable.

GLOBAL WOMEN'S PEACE AWARD PRESENTATION

The Global Women's Peace Award Presentation was a distinguished segment of the anniversary event, honoring exemplary leaders who have made significant contributions to peace and humanitarian efforts across the globe. President Moriko Hori had the honor of presenting the awards.



ESTEEMED RECIPIENTS:

- Madam Fátima Vila Nova: First Lady of Sao Tome and Principe (2021-present)
- Madam Dr. Dame Patience Jonathan: Former First Lady of Nigeria (2010-2015)
- H.E. Callista Jennie Mutharika: Ambassador to Kenya of the Malawi High Commission; Former First Lady of Malawi (2010-2012)
- Dr. Ida Betty Odinga: Spouse of the Prime Minister of Kenya (2008-2013)
- Mrs. Maria del Carmen Icka Araki: Councillor, Easter Island Municipality (2016–2024)
- Ms. Maria Arenales Serrano Arguello: Senator, General Courts of Spain
- Mgr. Renata Valachova: Head of Language Department, Ministry of Defence, Slovakia
- Mrs. Katarina Mikitova: Manager, SKY4you Travel Agency, Slovakia

Each awardee has exemplified outstanding leadership and dedication in their respective roles, contributing to the advancement of peace, social justice, and women's empowerment. Their efforts have not only uplifted their communities but have also inspired women around the world to take action in the pursuit of a more peaceful and equitable society. The ceremony celebrated their remarkable achievements and underscored the importance of collaboration in the ongoing quest for global harmony.

“As we conclude the 33rd Anniversary celebration, I, Mrs. Merly Barlaan, encourage our First Ladies, esteemed leaders, members, and guests to embrace the power of one woman, one voice, and one act of love to transform history. The journey to peace begins within our hearts and communities.”

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The 33rd Anniversary celebration of the Women's Federation for World Peace International marked a historic moment as members and guests gathered for the first time worldwide since the COVID-19 pandemic. This gathering not only reinforced our commitment to peace but also highlighted the importance of sustainable development through cooperation, reconciliation, and healing.

While the event was a resounding success, there is room for improvement. Enhanced time management will ensure that all segments are effectively showcased, allowing for deeper engagement among participants. Additionally, to foster greater participation in future events, early registration should be encouraged, with a focus on expanding outreach to invite more attendees.

Moving forward, it is crucial to build on this momentum by continuing to empower women as leaders and peacebuilders. By fostering these connections and ensuring sustainable development initiatives, we can create a lasting impact on communities worldwide. We hope to see increased participation in future gatherings, enhancing our collective efforts toward a more peaceful and equitable world. Together, we can transform challenges into opportunities for growth and collaboration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the following committee members, listed in alphabetical order, for their invaluable contributions to the success of the WFWPI 33rd Anniversary event:

COMMITTEES

Merly Christina Barlaan

Young Sun Choi

Blessie Gadon Dhakal

Moriko Hori

Kaeleigh Moffitt

Paris Moon

Mitty Tohma

Administration and liaison efforts with the Universal Peace Federation

Hwajin Song

Mion Tsuchiaka

APPENDICES

GALLERY



REFLECTION

Mrs. Eriko Inada, Director of International Cooperation WFWP Hiroshima, and Overseas Volunteer for Costa Rica

This reflection was prepared by Mrs. Eriko Inada for the WFWPI 33rd Anniversary Celebration, held on April 12, 2025, at Lotte Hotel in Seoul. In her message, she shares the inspiring journey of outreach and cooperation with the First Lady of Costa Rica and offers a powerful testimony of women's leadership and global peacebuilding.

It is a great honor to offer my greetings before the First Ladies, former First Ladies, and esteemed women leaders gathered here today.

My name is Eriko Inada, an overseas volunteer for Costa Rica with WFWP. I am speaking on behalf of Mrs. Shiratori and Mrs. Masaki, who are also in attendance.

I would like to share the background of how we were able to welcome the First Lady of Costa Rica, Madam Signe Zeikate, to today's event. On November 22 of last year, she graciously received a set of hina dolls we brought from Japan and expressed great joy. More recently, she kindly asked whether we would be attending this gathering, a gesture that touched us deeply. I would like to begin by expressing our heartfelt gratitude. Thank you very much.

This year marks the sixth year since we began our Character Education Project in Costa Rica. As we continued the project, we came to recognize that many of the women we encountered were struggling with deep loneliness, had lost sight of their self-worth, and were suffering, often from domestic violence. These experiences brought to light the pressing social issues women face in Costa Rica.

As early as July 2024, we had sent an invitation to the First Lady and introduced WFWP to her. During our stay in Costa Rica in November, we earnestly hoped to meet her in person.

On November 11, together with President Ana, we had the opportunity to meet Ms. Yerlin Zúñiga, President of INAMU, the National Institute for Women, which operates directly under the First Lady. President Ana introduced WFWP, and we were able to learn in detail about INAMU's work and share the serious issues facing women. President Yerlin kindly reported the meeting to the First Lady immediately. Thanks to the unwavering efforts of President Ana and our cheongseong, the First Lady graciously promised to visit Korea on the very day of our departure, November 22, 2024.

This kind gesture warmed our hearts and filled us with gratitude.

Hearing the First Lady's speech today, we have come to realize that she is an even more extraordinary and admirable person than we imagined. We are deeply thankful that she traveled all the way to Korea to be with us.

Inspired by the life of our beloved Mother of Peace, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, we have walked this path with conviction. Now, our dreams expand even further, to become mothers of peace for the world.

Lastly, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation and pride in having worked together through many challenges with Mr. Roy Sánchez Benavides, Secretary of UPF Costa Rica, and Mrs. Ana Zúñiga Marín, President of WFWP Costa Rica, who have been in dialogue with the Costa Rican Presidential Office since 2023.

May God's blessings be upon you all.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.



Mrs. Kefilwe Lebepe, Leader of WFWPI Young Professionals Team

The celebration of the WFWP's 33rd anniversary was a wonderful event. Dr. Lan Young Moon, Dr. Julia Moon, and Mrs. Moriko Hori shared a common vision of unity through different stages of our movement. It also shows that WFWP has always been ahead of its time. The bridge of ceremony was genuine, and that made it powerful. I don't think there was a dry eye in the room. WFWP is a safe space that allows us to share our pain, have our feelings validated, and it also heals us!

Thank you to all who made it possible.

