

Women's Worlds 2005

Volume 7

<http://www.ww05.org>

Saturday, June 25, 2005

The Grand Finale Envisions a New World

As the visuals of the Concluding Ceremony were shown to numerous participants of WW05 from all over the globe with inspirational images of women striding together for the unison goal of "embracing the earth," the auditorium was filled with anxiety at the prospect of bidding farewell to newly met sisters. Nonetheless, the Concluding Ceremony was filled with the heat of shared energy and a joyous sense of triumph at having achieved something together under the ambitious theme "Embracing the Earth."

Hyaе-kyung Lee (Korea), President of the Korean Association of Women's Studies, delivered the closing address by announcing the success of WW05 in which 250 theses were presented in over 530 sessions with participants from 70 countries. WW05, the first to ever be held in Asia, truly benchmarks a new era for Women's Studies in Asia, especially in South Korea. Besides mainstreaming feminism movements in Asia, another noteworthy result of WW05 in South Korea is the publicizing of women's activities, gender equality issues, and the rights of the marginalized in the media. According to Lee, never before has the women's movement been so highlighted.

The Congress Convenor Pil-wha Chang (Korea) showed much gratitude towards all the individuals in the organizations and committees that devoted their time and efforts to making the congress a success. Special speakers, such as Irene Dankelman (Netherlands), the founding mother of "sustainable development," highly praised the endeavors of the many who made the WW05 possible and said that the congress was a truly happy place to embrace the earth.

The Concluding Ceremony drew its curtains with Lee's empowering speech which stated, "With the vision and passion earned here at



Photo by Yoo-mi Park

Participants pronounce the slogan in their mother tongue.

WW05, we must all take the glorious responsibility of taking them home and making the world a better place." Participants with all different nationalities came to the stage to utter the very potent words, "Let's cross borders together to change the world," in their own languages. With the promise to coexist amidst differences, the 10th Women's Worlds will offset yet another beginning of women's rights as well as the world's ultimate betterment, by raising its grand curtain at Madrid, Spain in 2008. Farewell and see you in Madrid!

by Rhie-young Lim

The Time Has Come to Say Thank You and Farewell

On behalf of our organizing committee, I would like to thank you for your presence and contributions to this conference, making it a warm and rich experience, in which we have had the opportunity to listen to each other and suggest better ways of working to bring our new ideas into practice. Special thanks ought to go to President Shin of Ewha Womans University for having made it a university-wide event, mobilizing all the staff and also breaking the rules including the elimination of curfew for the dormitories.

The thought provoking plenary panels, subtheme presentations, exhibitions, and performances have left us with lasting images and further food for thought. Side events such as the film festival and the WW05 fair have made the event accessible for everyone and I



Pil-wha Chang

would like to thank everyone who contributed their efforts to that end. I believe that in gathering as we have, we have taken a step toward the integration of Eastern and Western perspectives and seen how women's lives are interwoven. Hopefully we can work together to overcome the differences which separate women across borders and regions. I believe that our discussions are the seeds for growth and future collaboration.

It has been a great experience for us to host this congress. The collaboration of many universities, especially with Yonsei, Sogang and Sookmyung was a rewarding experience

and perhaps gave everyone involved in a better sense of what it really means for people to work together towards a common goal – something that I think is important for everyone who envisions a better world.

We feel that this conference has been a success in elevating the status of women's studies and in giving the opportunity to widely publicize our activities. I am very honored to announce that our organizing committee has committed to hosting the secretariat of WOWS and maintaining the Congress website for the next three years.

I thank all who have given their precious time and energy for the Congress, with a special thanks to those volunteers who looked after those with special needs.

by Pil-wha Chang, Congress Convenor



Photo by Yoo-mi Park

Hiroko Sue Hara (Japan) speaks about women leadership at the plenary session.

Guaranteeing a Brighter Future

With the excitement of last night's Farewell Festival still in the air, the final plenary session of the WW05, "Celebrating Women's Leadership – the Way Forward" was held in the Welch-Ryang Auditorium. Five plenary speakers representing East-West, North-South expressed their hopes for the empowerment of women's leadership.

Hiroko Sue Hara (Japan) proposed her agenda for women's leadership development through inter-generational ties and international networks among women. To this point, she reemphasized the role of WW05 as a critical link in improving the status of women in society.

Chen Lanyan (China) then reflected on the development practice she has been involved in while working as the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) Gender Adviser. She viewed women's participation in leadership development important in the process of grassroots activism. Using her research on Chinese rural women, Lanyan asserted that in order for women in a less open society to actively voice their own opinions, channels to influence policies and a balanced course of development should be initiated. Lanyan stated that once women in restricted countries can cast a ballot in an unbiased electoral system, both women and men will be able to nominate themselves or be nominated by others.

Kyung-wha Kang (Korea) explained that although women are still under-represented and women's leadership is the exception rather than the norm in the UN system, the benefit of reaching a 50/50 gender balance in the near future is

worth the challenge. Clarifying that the core role of the UN is inter-governmental coordination, Kang pointed out that a transparent and inclusive process is significant. By linking the typical characteristics of women leaders, she claimed that the UN inter-governmental process could be greatly enhanced with many more women chairs and presidents. Kang received applause from the audience with her final remark, "It shouldn't be too long before the UN has its first woman Secretary-General."

Ayşe Feride Acar (Turkey) shared her hopes to ensure the spirit of a gender-equal society through utilizing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Acar stated that the CEDAW is the offspring of the women's national and international movement. "As we make connection through this legal instrument, any distinction or exclusion against women can be eradicated."

Mary Hartman (U.S.) expressed her certainty towards a brighter future for women by declaring, "Young people, you are the hope of the future." Hartman conveyed that although women are still considered second and their advancement is moving forward at a very slow pace, she believes that these "storm clouds" carry a silver lining toward a brighter day in women's leadership. In her final thoughts, she said, "We'll still have to focus on leadership, even when we no longer have to focus on it. And that should keep us busy: being accountable as leaders and keeping others accountable."

by Na-hyun Kim

Farewell Message

Few academic conferences in the world have ever received the news coverage of this congress. That includes live broadcast of the Opening Ceremony on SBS national television, daily reports in national newspapers and on the Internet.

Every day, the Women's Worlds 2005 student newspaper presented a highly professional, well-designed glimpse into WW05 events, personalities and highlights. The small team of dedicated Ewha Voice staff reporters worked under the able direction of Seo-my Kang and Sook-young Park. Eating fast food, sleeping on the couch, and hunkered down in the basement of the Alumnae building, they toiled late into the night. Helping them were two English-speaking volunteers – Hannah Chang and Dr. Johndre Jennings. Nearby in the POSCO building, the professional press team, Kyung-hee Kim and Duck-kyu Lee with the help of Professor Jaekyung Lee were guiding reporters to key stories and facilitating access to brilliant scholars from around the world.

Bravo to you, all. You have created a communications superhighway that connects feminist intellectuals to the public – and records the first draft of this congress's history.

Soon-young Yoon
International Coordinator

To our readers...

The participation of Ewha Voice in the 9th IICW will remain as one of the greatest experiences its members have ever encountered. It expanded our view of society and provided us with a source of inspiration by giving us the opportunity to meet visionary women whom we could identify with.

As a student newspaper published once a month, the first of many worries when starting this project was how the reporters would adjust to a daily publishing schedule. However, Ewha Voice had been blessed with people. The 18 reporters were responsible in accomplishing tasks assigned to them. International coordinator Soon-young Yoon, organizing committee secretariat coordinator Hyun-gyung Kim, and our two copy editors Hannah Chang and Johndre Jennings made valuable contributions to making the paper.

As women embrace the Earth, we embrace you all with thanks.

-Ewha Voice Staff-



Dorothy Fernandes
(India / speaker)

"It has been a very interesting opportunity to meet women across the world, look at what is happening to us, women, and see how we can collaborate together to bring about some kind of a change in our paradigm. I would like to congratulate the organizers and the young people of Korea. When I look at the young people of Korea, I see a lot of hope for the future."



Filomina Steady
(Sierra Leone / speaker)

"This conference, I think, by having the theme, 'Embracing the Earth, East-West, North-South,' has pointed us in the right direction, because this is the time where all women come together from all grassroots movements and struggles of people. I believe that the feminist struggle is the core element in this global struggle for a just and equitable world."



Marilyn P. Safir
(Israel / speaker)

"I am overwhelmed. I think that this congress gave the people a chance to feel the warmth, closeness and excitement. It is unbelievable what has been done here. I want to come back and spend more time in Korea. It was so significant in terms of all the warmth and the closeness among participants. I thank you all for it."



Ana Sabate
(Spain / participant and also organizer of the next WW05 conference in Madrid)

"It was well organized and the work of the organizers was wonderful. Everybody is surprised. The planning of the participants and the speakers have also been good. We have truly enjoyed the conference."



Eun-sil Kim
(Korea / Congress Coordinator)

"It had been a long preparation and I'm so glad that so many people came and made the best out of this congress. As always, I'm so sad that it's over already. I hope this Seoul congress would be remembered by many people."



Wu Qing
(China / speaker)

"This was very successful and I can see that the Korean government really supported this women's conference. I do hope that every person will take with them the message that we all have to be active and try hard to make things happen. Everyone should be a verb and an active verb."



Joanna Bigfeather
(U.S. / speaker)

"I was able to encounter issues of different people I would have never known, if it were not for this conference."



Ikpeze Ogugua
(Nigeria / speaker)

"The Conference was a huge success. It was a challenging event for women all over the world. All participants could exchange ideas and this helped us look towards the future. I must thank the volunteers especially. We should remember that we have a future in women."

Photo by Yoo-mi Park, You-jin Cho



Yang-ji Lee and Deok-won Kang (Korea / volunteers)

“It was a really enjoyable event. It was strenuous but we were able to make a lot of friends and also listen to sessions during our spare time. We could feel the passion during those sessions. All volunteers are people who have at least some interest in feminism or women’s studies, so it was encouraging to see that there are so many feminist activists and scholars around the world.”



Jessica Brooks (U.S. / participant)

“Everyone here has just become my role model. If I can accomplish even a tenth of what the other participants and speakers have done, I would be doing something big in my life. Seeing that people care this much gives me hope that things can change.”



Siti Aisyah (Australia / participant)

“The congress was really great. I thank the organizing committee for the wonderful sessions, accommodations, services and everything. I hope the next conference would be successful too!”



Participants to the Congress enjoy their elaborate buffet dinner before the Farewell Festival.



Yuma Fujii (Japan / participant)

“As a student studying gender studies, this had been a new experience for me. I’ve never met so many people before, and I could learned the importance of cultural differences.”



Phyllis Artiss (Canada/ participant)

“I don’t see many students/adults eating ice cream on the streets or chocolate as I do in North America. People seem more disciplined, more healthy and SLIM! Maybe that’s why they climb the hills on campus without puffing and panting like I do.”

Photo by Yoo-mi Park, You-jin Cho, Ji-sun Kim



Shashi Pandey (Thailand / participant)

“Very good! Excellent! One of the best conferences I have ever attended. It was evident that a lot of effort went into organizing the event. It showed the world the power of Korea, that it can organize world events. The speakers and plenaries were good and there were various events.”



Chang-kyu Lee (Korea / volunteer)

“As one of the few males volunteering in this WW05, I experienced what it felt like to be the minority or the marginalized. I really think more men should be aware of problems regarding the marginalization of women, because they are something, which should be resolved by both men and women.”

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Publisher: Organizing Committee of Women’s Worlds 2005
Editing Coordinator: Seo-my Kang / Editor-in-Chief: Sook-young Park / Senior Editors: Mi-ri Kwon, Chae-gyung Jun, Youn-seung Lee / Editors: Bo-mi Kim, Soo-hyun Kim, Eun-joo Lee / Staff Reporters: Na-hyun Kim, Tae-yeon Kim, Eun-a Lee, Rhie-young Lim / Cub Reporters: Ji-young Kim, Hye-won Song, Keum-jo Shim, Kyurhee Lee / Photographers: Yoo-mi Park, You-jin Cho, Ji-sun Kim
Copy Editors: Hannah Chang, Johndre Jennings