

## **Report on the 7<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conference of University Women of Asia (UWA) held in Manila, 25 - 27 May 2006**

### **Introduction**

The Philippines Association of University Women (PAUW) hosted the 7th Triennial Conference of UWA from 25 to 27 May 2006 in Manila. The theme of the conference was “Women as Agents of Change in International Peace Efforts”. The participating countries included Australia, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore. University Women’s Association of Singapore (UWAS) was represented by a delegation of three members, namely, Ms Brenda Goh, Ms Quek Geok Cheng and Ms Chan Fong Kin. Ms Quek Geok Cheng presented a paper entitled [“Ordinary Women, Extraordinary Qualities”](#).

### **Objectives of the Conference**

The conference aimed to

- encourage women leaders in National Federation Association (NFA) and other organizations to be agents and role models of peace.
- integrate peace concepts in community work and in school
- promote the culture of peace through an action plan for women to practise and share with others.

### **Papers presented at the conference**

The following papers were presented at the conference:

- Women as Agents of Change in International Peace Efforts by Ms Rosemary Everett of Australia
- Women as Agents of Change by Dr Ranjana Banerjee of India
- The Family as a Structural Model for Initiation of Peace Studies by Dr Panna Akhani and Mrs I Shembekar of India
- Peace in the Context of the Philippine Experience by Dr Fe Nazareno Martinez of Philippines
- International Peace Efforts and Foreign Students-Understanding Cultural Diversity and Mutual Exchange by Ms Yumiko Makishima of Japan
- Through Women’s Empowerment : Technical and Vocational Education by Dr Masako Tanaka of Japan
- Women as Agents of Change by Ms Jin Choi of Korea
- Peace from the Kitchen by Dr Ratna Malar Selvaratnam of Malaysia
- Women as Agents of Change by Dr Lilia Arbues-Torres of Philippines

- Ordinary Women, Extraordinary Qualities by Ms Quek Geok Cheng of Singapore
- Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund Paper by Dr Sudha Padhey of India

PAUW had indicated that a compilation of all the papers would be sent to the various delegates who attended the conference.

### **Conference Programme**

The conference venue was the Garden City Suites Hotel. The conference opened with a welcome cocktail party on 25 May 2006 which provided a good opportunity for the participants to introduce themselves and establish networking. The evening ended with a UWA Council meeting chaired by the PAUW president, Dr Teresita Quirino.

During the Council meeting the following issues were raised:

- the proposal for the increase in membership subscription fee as the present US\$20 per year per country was insufficient.
- the need to improve communication among member countries
- the hosting of the next conference in 2009, possibly in Singapore

The Council agreed that these issues would be raised and discussed further at the IFUW conference in Manchester in 2007.

All the papers were presented in four groups on 26 May. There were two Open Forums at the end of the second and fourth group presentations. Each forum was punctuated with questions and lively discussions. During the lunch break, the participants were treated to live music with audience participation. Fong Kin, very sportingly participated in the sing along. The conference closed with a lively rendition of folk songs from different cultures.

The foreign delegates were taken on a city tour of Manila on 27 May. Unfortunately, the Singapore delegates were unable to join the tour as they had to catch the flight home.

### **Conclusion**

Overall the conference provided the opportunity for UWA members from various countries to communicate effectively face to face, build closer ties and relationships and discuss issues that concern the welfare and role of women in today's world. This is the first step in forging closer ties and cooperation and hopefully it may lead to inter-country cooperation in regional projects.

Reported written by  
Ms Quek Geok Cheng  
With inputs from  
Ms Brenda Goh and Ms Chan Fong Kin

