

University Women's

Volume Two
24 April 2001
MITA No: 281/03/98



Assoc Prof Lui Hah Wah Elena
President (2000-2002)
University Women's
Association (Singapore)

President's Message

schemes, please visit the IFUW internet site:
<http://ifuw.org> for more details.

Overseas visitor Prof Thais Cordoba, President of University Women Association of Costa Rica, was received / accompanied / hosted by no less than eight UWAS members in various events & activities over her 12-day study tour in Singapore in late November 2000. The timing of this visit was just perfect. Through the contacts of our International Hospitality Chair, Ms Chan Fong Kin, Prof Thais had the privilege of staying at the historical Yusoff College, at a very special rate, before it was officially closed in March 2001.

On the local scene, last year the SCWO hosted the exclusive tea receptions for the First Lady of India on Nov 19 and the First Lady of Singapore on Oct 19. In March this year, to celebrate the International Women's Day, UWAS took part in the "Women beyond Borders" exhibition held at the Sculpture Square. Eight UWAS members submitted the miniature boxes showing their creativity in art and passion for life in Singapore and beyond. On March 8, Singapore Council of Women's Organisations presented a prestigious "International Women's Day Award" to our member Dr Elsie Yu in recognition of her outstanding achievement in the art circle and contribution to the society. Our heartfelt congratulations & best wishes to Elsie.

Before the end of year 2000, UWAS held the first ever **Every Woman Counts - a March & Celebration** in Singapore on 12 November (Sunday) at Marina City Park. This pilot project was initiated by the Programme Chair, Eugenia E. Savarese, and fully supported by the Executive Committee. It aimed to honour women of all ages, from all segments of Singapore society, from all works of life, without whose contributions

Singapore would not be the thriving nation as it is today.

Though the sky was covered by layers of dark clouds and several 'mega' events took place in the same afternoon, some 200 women and their supporters joined this match and celebration. From the Marina Bay MRT station, all of us marched / walked to the stage area in Marina City Park, where the multi-cultural entertainment was staged by various groups of women and students.

The Exco members of UWAS and I were grateful to Mrs Sheryn Mah Bow Tan, Vice President of Breast Cancer Foundation, for gracing this occasion and to help us flag off the march. Also a big "Thank You" to Dr Della Lee and Mr Lee Seng Gee of the Lee Foundation for their generous sponsorship. We really appreciated the support from our members, friends, volunteers who have helped UWAS made history, together we marched / walked to honour and celebrate all women's contributions to Singapore.

Two publications of UWAS: **Women's Future, World's Future (WFWF)** and **Women's Inspirations** were displayed at both the start and finish of the march and at the stage. Some 200 packs of UWAS postcards of "Women's Inspirations" were presented to the participants and volunteers as souvenirs at the end of this event.

Since the Publication Chair has not been vacated in the past few months, the distribution of **WFWF** became the shared responsibility of the Exco members. We appreciated Dr Elsie Yu's contribution in promoting this book and **Women's Inspirations** at the United Nations Association (Singapore) seminar in October 2001.

The production of this issue of UWAS WEB (our newsletter) was the fruits of labour of

University Women's Association (Singapore) is committed to promote peace, equality and justice through lifelong education and the development of human potential. It aims to encourage international understanding, friendship and cooperation at all levels and in all aspects of life. Its mission is to advocate for the improvement of status of women and girls. It also enables graduate women to pursue their expertise to effect change in the community, be it local or global.

UWAS is affiliated to the International Federation of University Women (IFUW) and the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO). In the international arena, in December 2000, Prof Rosemary Khoo (UWAS Pro-tem President) graciously accepted the invitation from IFUW to attend (at her own expenses) the UNESCO Regional Conference in Hanoi, Vietnam. The Exco is currently working on a training workshop in June 2001 for Vietnamese women in Can Toh, and also looking into forming a small delegation to the IFUW conference in October 2001 in Canada. In the IFUW March 2001 circular, it was announced that the 2002-2003 IFUW International Fellowships and Grants Competition are open for members to apply. They are intended to help finance short graduate and post-graduate study, research and training projects and to serve as complementary funds for longer programmes. UWAS members who are interested in these



WFWF

(main article – No 1)

UWAS Project 2050 Moving on ...

The "Women's Future World's Future" (WFWF) is the proud production of the University Women's Association (Singapore). President Liew Geok Heok and the office bearers and volunteers work very hard during the term 1998-2000 to make this book a great success. The UWAS Project 2050 Steering Committee reached out to the whole world and got some 500 women from 90 countries to contribute their visions of the year 2050. This beautiful world book, 28cm x 28cm, has more than 200 full-colour pages of text and pictures depicting the rich cultures of multi-ethnicity and multi-facets of the global village. It is dedicated to the children of the world and the net proceeds from the sale of the first 50,000 copies will be donated to UNIFEM - United Nations Development Fund for Women.

The book launch of WFWF on 2 April 2000 was a very special occasion of UWAS in the new millennium. The VIPs such as Mrs Elizabeth Choi, Mrs Seow Peck Leng, and Mrs Koh Tin Kok, the sponsors / donors of this project and UWAS members and guests were treated to the CD presentation and the reading of selected quotations in the WFWF. Hundreds copies of this book were distributed at this occasion.

This book launch marked the end of the production phase and the beginning of the distribution phase of WFWF. After the 5th AGM of UWAS on 29 April 2000, the new team of office bearers discussed and explored various ways to help promote the sale of this book. And two members, in particular, (Serene Low & Chong Lay Yen) invested great energy into the accounting and stock taking of this project. As the new President, Lui Hah Wah Elena, has been persistent in pushing the sale and distribution of this book. Former presidents of UWAS, Rosemary Khoo and Phyllis Chew, and the former Publication Chair, Elsie Yu also helped in several occasions to promote it.

In the past year, around 200 copies of this book were sold and another 200 copies were distributed to donors and contributors all over the world. No doubt we are still very far from the original target of 50,000 copies, in a humble way the present Exco members did make some contribution to keep the sale going. The Phase 2 of Project 2050 is moving on...

UWAS President Lui Heh Wah Elena presented a copy of WFWF to the Principal of Beijing BISS International School, Mr in August 2000

WFWF

(main article No 2)



UWAS promoted their landmark book **Women's Future, World's Futur** on 14th September 2000. The occasion was the Seminar on Communication and Globalization organized by the United Nations Association of Singapore (UNAS). There were over 250 participants at the seminar. Almost all of them browsed through copies available at the attractively decorated UWAS stand. Some of them bought copies for themselves.

These lucky buyers were also able to obtain the signature of the editor, Dr Elsie Yu, who was in attendance. Dr Phyllis Chew and her daughter, Peta Yang, also helped with crowd control at the UWAS booth..

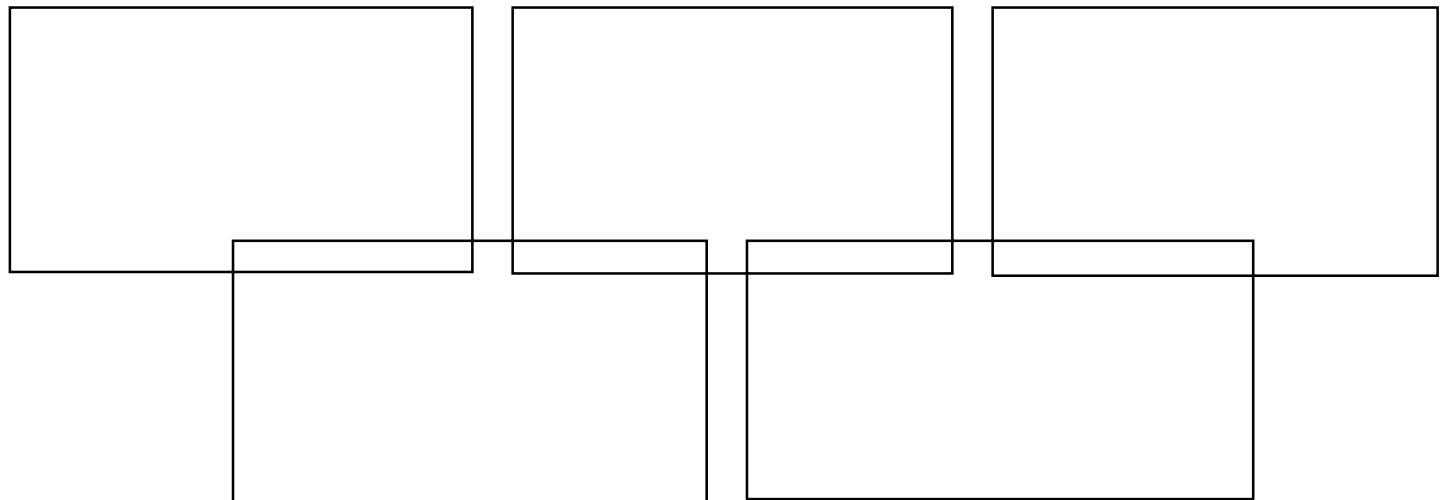
The UNAS seminar attracted CEOs, CIOs, CCOOs, MDs, Directors, and Senior managers of telecommunication companies, IT software and solutions providers, e-Commerce, banking companies, multi-national corporations and community leaders.

Proceeds from the seminar helped to fund a UNAS IT Fellowship to enable deserving persons from developing countries to acquire learning experience in IT and IT operations. The Fellowship meets an urgent need and represents a tangible contribution to international cooperation.

UWAS is proud to be associated with the UNAS. The parent-bodies of UWAS and UNAS have consultative status with the UN agencies and are involved in the promotion of peace and the maintenance of human rights irrespective of race, culture or gender.

On the evening of the same day, UNAS members enjoyed a sumptuous dinner prepared by the chef of the Mandarin Hotel. The dinner was organized by the UNAS. They were part of a crowd of over 500 people who came to celebrate UN Day. This was also an opportunity for UWAS members to network with representatives of other NGO's in Singapore.

UWAS looks forward to working more closely with like-minded organizations in Singapore in the future.



1. Work for a Good Cause

Dr Rosemary Khoo

I see a shrinking world and an expanded consciousness, as the world becomes a global village. I like the term 'global village' as it immediately conjures up the idea of a world outlook combined with community values. But we have to be careful of the kind of community values that are evolving. We need to safeguard our essential humanness as we engage in the surreal world of computers to access information and transact with people. For even as developed countries are reaping vast material benefits and improving their standard of living from the advances of technology, the gap between these countries and those of the Third World is being further widened to an alarming degree by these same advances. Let us not forget the real people beyond the windows of our computers and our houses, who have feelings, hopes and needs. So while I have breath, I will take time to smell the roses, dream a little, send a hand-written letter and enjoy the company of family and friends. And work for a good cause!

2. Beginning of Dawn a Time of World-Embracing Friendships

Dr Phyllis G I Chew

After three catastrophic events, the First, Second and Third World Wars, as well as the universal fragmentation and horrendous social upheavals experienced throughout the 20th century, the year 2050 can only be the calm after the storm. Since the 20th century was the darkest depths of distracted humanity, 2050 can only be the beginning of dawn. Nationalism and racism will have been shown to be false gods. Unbridled materialism will have become untenable. 2050 will herald the beginning of the golden age of a long-divided humanity. It will be a time when different races will at long last be united and be regarded as true equals. It will be a time when peace, rather than divisive conflict, will be looked upon as the normal state of affairs. It will be a time of world-embracing friendships in a truly global village.

3. Birth and Rebirth

Ms Liew Geok Heok

In 2050 AD and beyond, as a world citizen of Planet Earth, I will dutifully donate a few droplets of my blood and faithful copies of myself will be made available. The copies will be better than the original. *I need not dream. I need not imagine. I know it will come to pass.* Immortality through posterity will be altered for all eternity. Will the gestation period be nine months? My guess is, "No, it will be shorter".

Being "blood-marcotted" so immaculately and effortlessly, the human race will be venturesome enough to look upon life on earth as but only a phase in a longer journey. Laws will make the termination of one's sojourn on Earth simple. The act of dying will be made similar to the act of going to bed every night to rest. When the rightful time comes, you go to your designated niche in the laser-craft. You turn off the lights; get into a reclining position; and like a baby, sleep and slip away.

The next moment you hear yourself murmuring –
"I am moving on – off to another Orbit".

4. Community Care

Associate Prof Elena Lui Hah Wah, PBM

The world in the year 2050 will become a cosmopolitan community of caring, capable and creative creatures closely connected by one common creed challenging countless changes and committed in continuity.

5. All in One Card

Ms Low Bee Leng, Serene

Today, I have a wallet full of plastic cards, some cash and keys. With consistent research and development by the leading entrepreneurs in the business, technology will be so advanced that, by year 2050, I anticipate that I only need just one tiny plastic card to incorporate all the daily needs of my life.

This card will contain my personal particulars and be encrypted with programmed functions to meet my needs. It could:

- act as a driving licence, identity card and passport, when read through a special reader
- serve as a membership/affinity card to a club, association or departmental store
- open the gate to my comfortable condominium
- unlatch the door to my home and office
- dispense a drink or a newspaper at a vendor machine
- swipe through the entrance to a train ride
- clock in the fare of a bus ride
- pay for my credit purchases at all retail outlets at home and overseas
- debit my bank account for direct non-credit purchases
- undertake banking facilities at ATM machines
- perform many more tasks and activities

6. Knowledge Advancement

Dr Ng Seok Hui

By 2050, the knowledge tree will be fully grown in its every branch and root, and will have blossomed to mighty maturity. This ranges from commercialised tourism in the universe to cloning of human beings; to successful robotic automation in every niche of human activity.

7. Jack and Jill

Mrs Ong Yoke Yin

11:00 am, Sunday morning, Jill opens her eyes, kisses and wakes Jack up. Looking at the very important chart on the wall that reminds the working couple of the children, Jill asks, "Hey! It's our free day, so what shall we do with our children? Develop all-rounded children physically, socially, emotionally and intelligently, so says the chart ... Jack answers, "Let's check our e-mail and browse the Internet for some great ideas." The built-in computer, which is in a drawer in their room, connected to a big TV screen, is switched on. Then a song begins:

Jack and Jill went through e-mail, to fetch a pail of wonders.

Jack suggested and Jill decided, and created the family's wonder.

Jack and Jill, still loving, in a different way, in the year 2050.

WOMEN BEYOND BORDERS

8 March to 13 May 2001
Sculpture Square
Exhibition Hall and Gallery

Women Beyond Borders was launched in 1992 and is the brainchild of American artists Lorraine Serena and Elena Siff. The project is aimed at connecting and honouring women's visions, building community through dialogue and collaboration and inspiring all women to express their creativity through the use of a small wooden box.

Singapore is the first Southeast Asian destination of the **Women Beyond Borders** exhibit. It showcases artwork by women artist from 31 nations dealing with women's issues that cross cultural boundaries. Singapore's contributions to the exhibit include those by invited women artists, community groups and an open section with contributions by women from all walks of life.

1. Oteogenesis

Dr Rosemary Khoo

The box documents the development of one woman's awareness of woman's potential and its realization. The formation of UWAS – University Women's Association (Singapore) – represents both male and



female efforts, and in conceiving this box, I pay tribute to my late husband, Vincent, my hero and inspiration for 30 years, who gave me wings to fly,

secure in his love. Thus, the box, a happy and auspicious home, is a testimony to love which reaches outwards and upwards – unconditionally – from self to others, from home to community, and from community to world. Passion and inspiration. And where there are no steps, the woman looks for a ladder of opportunity to reach the stars.

Eight UWAS members submitted boxes for the exhibition under the Women's Communities Section. Each member was given a small wooden box and asked to use it as the basis for their piece of art. Singapore's contributions were added to the over 125 art pieces from around the world and UWAS is proud to have been asked to take part.

For further information regarding the exhibit and the talks, forums and workshops which are a part of the project designed to encourage dialogue, involvement and exchange, please visit the website at www.sculpturesq.com.sg We hope our members will have a chance to visit the exhibit and see the contributions submitted by UWAS members.

2. "Hey! Look"

Elena Lui Hah Wah

Hey, Look!
 UWAS is here
 Meeting you,
 Far or near.

In the Year 2000,
 Singapore turned 35 on 9 August,
 UWAS became five on 29 April.
 And on 12 November, we marched to celebrate.

"Every Woman Counts !!!"
 from the very old to the very young.
 Mother, grandma, sister, aunt
 Do think without borders,
 And attempt all the mounts.



Left to Right: Susie Wong (10-Curator), Elena Lui (UWAS), Patricia Chen-Law, Lorraine Serena (Women Beyond Borders, USA) and Mrs Goh Chok Tong



Left to Right: Elena Lui with Mrs Goh Chok Tong (In the foreground) (Background) Mr & Mrs Ajay Bhalla (MasterCard International)

Eugenia E. Savarese
 Programme Chair
 UWAS

3. A Chinese Bridal Chest

Chan Fong Kin



In ancient China the mother of the bride had to give her daughter two chests of clothes on her wedding day to accompany the bride when she went to the bride-groom's home. The two words "Double Happiness" had to be pasted on

the two chests. These beautiful decorated rectangular chests would be carried manually behind the bridal sedan chair followed by a group of musicians. These chests would be supported by long poles placed on the shoulders of the two male carriers. On arrival at the bride-groom's home the mother-in-law and other relatives would inspect the contents of the two chests. Then the bride's family background would be assessed or usually criticized because of the poor quality of the clothes in the chests. How the mother-in-law would treat her daughter in future would depend to a great extent on so called "dowry" of the bride.

4. Bridging Cultures

Eugenia & Danielle Savarese

This box represents the journey of an expatriate American family currently living in Singapore and the bridging of the two cultures and involvement in each. The "Bridge" from the US to Singapore is made up of two woven strips – each strip representing the intertwining of cultures in each respective country. Both the US and Singapore are made up of many nationalities and cultures woven together to make a whole. Each of these strips is then intertwined with the other to represent the meeting of the two cultures and forming a bridge from one country to the other. By "bridging" the two cultures each learns valuable lessons from the other and helps to break down the stereotypes each nation may have about the other. If we all reach across the world and reach out a hand of understanding to each other, wherever we go, we will increase the chances for tolerance and understanding in the world.

5. Today Women

Patricia Liew



Women in today's world have various facets, she is expected to fulfill multiple roles and there exist many issues which demands her time and energy. The 4 sides of the box depict today women various circles of concern;

Family – She has to fulfill the role of good daughter to her parents, a loving wife to her husband and of course, a caring mother to her children. She doesn't only spend quality time but is also expected to keep in touch with their worlds, traditions and trends. Hence, observing traditional customs such as Chinese New Year, celebrating Valentine's day, knowing the difference between Ash, Pikachu and

Teletubbies ... the list goes on.

Career – She is naturally the co-bread winner, especially in Singapore's society. In a knowledge based economy, she has to fulfill the expectations and obligations of a model employee. She is expected to be efficient, innovative, receptive to the ever changing corporate identity (mergers and acquisitions making it more exciting), requirements and culture.

Social – In between all the juggling, she keeps herself updated of the news, happenings, fashion, trends, movies, television programs (even if she has no time for them, at least she must know what's showing!) And definitely, squeeze in time for friends, neighbors, and maybe even some charitable work.

Self-Intellectual/Spiritual/Physical – In an increasingly borderless world, life long learning is becoming the norm – continuous education, for the diploma holders – the dream is to obtain a degree. For the degree holders, the aim is to complete an MBA, for the MBA and MSC holders – a PHD? Today, women must keep in touch with the internet world, or else she would be lost in the sea of information. Health is important too, so time is needed for exercise. Of course, not forgetting spiritual needs as well.

Reflection – Today, for women to perform her roles well – is that a challenge or an expectation? In today's society, there is no other alternative, so women must make the best of whatever resources she has, develop her skills, increase her knowledge and extend her circle of influence with the sole objective of playing her roles well.

6. Island of Many Pleasures

Brenda Goh

Welcome to Singapore, truly inspiring city where East meets West. A Country with a unique array of rich ethnic cultures. A vibrant city with many exotic, exciting and extraordinary attractions for visitors.

Visitors should be able to feel the spirit of harmonious Singaporean living together as

ONE UNITED PEOPLE REGARDLESS OF RACE, LANGUAGE OR RELIGION.

Let the World be UNITED like Singapore and there shall be PEACE & HARMONY.

7. Fond Re-collections with the Passage of Time

Tan Chor Suan

The box has many stickers pasted on all four sides externally and internally. The lid is attached loosely to the box using strings so that it can be opened and closed with ease. Again the lid has stickers pasted on the outside as well as inside. The stickers capture the participant's fond re-collections with the passage of time of her childhood, puberty, adolescence, adulthood and current womanhood. The item on each sticker evokes a series of re-collections that bring to the participant memories of joy, hope, excitement, trepidation, challenge, happiness, contentment, exhilaration, disillusionment, fear, pain, embarrassment, wonder et cetera. The box should be viewed from its sides anti-clockwise starting from Childhood years: draw circles ... street wayang; Puberty years: filial piety ... awkwardness; Adolescent years: baptism ... Polytechnic; The lid should then be viewed externally before internally followed by reading the stickers on all sides inside the box: Adulthood years: John Robert Powers ... sense of humour; Current womanhood: travel ...



Conference on Asian Women for a Culture of Peace In Hanoi

Dr Rosemary Khoo



Plenary Session

Five Years after the Fourth World Conference on Women

The Regional Conference on Asian Women and the Culture of Peace was held in the historic city of Hanoi from 6-9 December 2000 and significantly took place in 2000, during the International Year dedicated to the Culture of Peace. The Conference was organized by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in cooperation with UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) and ESCAP (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) and I was privileged to represent the International Federation of University Women (IFUW) at this important Conference.

The Conference was to provide a forum for discussion and an opportunity for Asian women to work on a possible plan of action to strengthen their impact and contribution to achieving a culture of peace. The staging of the conference was part of a continuous effort after the Beijing Platform for Action 1995 to mobilize women and men for the transformation of societies away from expressions of war and violence and to focus on women's contribution to a culture of peace and sustainable development.

The Conference was attended by

approximately 150 participants comprising women leaders, politicians, gender and peace researchers, educators, writers, national and community peace promoters, media and communication professionals, as well as other organizations of the UN system, national governments, NGOs and regional institutions, which were invited to participate as partners and observers.

Conference Proceedings

On the first day, participants from each Asian country presented a five-minute country-specific account each of 'The role and status of women in building peace and non-violence in Asia five years after the Fourth World Conference on Women'.

The theme of women's role and potential for building peace and non-violence in Asia was explored on the second day, Four working groups focused their discussions on the following areas viz

1. Education, training, socialisation and research: learning the tools for living together peacefully and with respect for differences;
2. Engaging women in the mass media and communication in Asia against violence and for peace building;
3. The identification of strategies, initiatives

- and partners that promote access to greater economic opportunities for women and reduce poverty focusing on the family and community; and
4. A gender perspective on peace building and political decision-making.

On the final day, participants discussed the Draft Plan of Action which reflected their strategic thinking as well as the concrete actions that they as well as non and intergovernmental organizations and governments would implement to build gender equality and a gender-sensitive culture of peace in Asia. The Plan was adopted before the Closing Ceremony. It is hoped that political commitment and support for concrete follow-up activities will be sought from the Asian Heads of State and Government, major regional organizations as well as other national, regional and UN bodies, including the governing bodies of UNESCO and ESCAP.

The **Conference Proceedings** as well as the **Hanoi Declaration and Asian Women's Plan of Action for a Culture of Peace and Sustainable Development** will be made available in the form in due course.



With Mme.Ha Thi Khiết, President of Vietnam Women's Union (center) and Dr Ngo Ban Thanh, M.P. and also 'International Woman of the Millennium' (2000) (right).



President of the UNESCO Executive Board, Ms Sonia Mendieta de Bardaroux being presented with a copy of *Women's Future, World's Future*. Looking on is Ms. Ambika Pant, Member Nepal's National Assembly.



With delegates from China (center) and Japan.

Glimpses of Vietnamese culture

It was a delight to be able to catch a glimpse of Vietnam's rich cultural heritage in the unique traditional water puppetry performance at the Thang Long Puppetry Theatre and the visit to the Museum of Ethnology that were organised after the day's official proceedings. On the first evening the Vietnamese Foreign Minister, H.E. Nguyen Dy Nien hosted a dinner and cultural performance. We were made familiar with the sounds of the Vietnamese language as although the official conference language was English, bilingual translation between Vietnamese and English was available, and enjoyed the delectable dishes of the Vietnamese cuisine that was served at lunch and dinner.

Personal Impressions

I left the Conference with the indelible impression of the tremendous commitment and dedication of the large numbers of Asian, in particular, Vietnamese, women who

were involved in the cause of women's development. Coming from a country where many women assume important positions in the State power apparatus at all levels, Mme.Ha Thi Khet, President of Vietnam

Women's Union, played a major role at the Conference. To quote her "Vietnam has one woman Vice President of the state, one National Assembly deputy chairwoman Politburo member and six women ministers. Women account for 30% of members of the executive boards of social organizations and 325 heads of enterprises." Equally inspiring for me was the fact that two top UNESCO positions are occupied by women, who were both present at the Conference. They were the President of the General Conference of UNESCO, Ms Joroslava Moserova, and the President of the UNESCO Executive Board, Ms Sonia Mendieta de Bardaroux, who was presented with a copy of our UWAS publication ***Women's Future, World's Future***. The publication was displayed at the Conference book exhibition table for participants to browse through and order copies.

I must not end without paying tribute to the hardy determination of the hundreds of Vietnamese women and children who ply the dusty congested streets of Hanoi each day to eke out a living. This represents one stark reality among a host of other grim scenarios in Asian countries that we, the privileged women participants inside the cool and comfortable Hanoi Horizon Hotel, were confronted with and had worked hard to find solutions for, in our deliberations.



Hanoi's famous water puppet theatre.