

## **WCP Board report 2014 about the United Nations**

Submitted By: Dr. Judy Kuriansky

WCP has been included in and gotten credit for co-sponsoring, many events at the United Nations. WCP members participated years ago in a session/workshop; Over the past few years, active participation has been due to the efforts of the report author.

### **Leadership in the newly formed Psychology Coalition at the UN**

A Psychology Coalition has been formed of psychology-related accredited NGOs at the UN. This has fostered collaborative efforts of the members of the individual NGOs, to allow more to be accomplished. This report author, Judy Kuriansky, serves as Chair for the past year and was requested to continue as Chair for the coming year.

### **Sponsorship of, and Statements for, Major UN Commissions and high level meetings and others**

WCP continues to be included as a co-sponsor of important advocacy statements written and distributed at important UN Commissions (e.g., on Social Development and the Commission on the Status of Women, as well as at the International Day of the Cultures of Peace and to the UN General Assembly High-level Meeting on “Disability and Development” and other meetings, as outlined below). In addition, WCP was signed on as co-sponsor of many prestigious panels/side events/parallel events at the NY UN headquarters associated with the meetings related to these statements. (Note: Sponsorship means support, in principle; only sometimes does it involve some financial commitments (rental of room, equipment, shared preparation of materials, etc.) These events include:

1. Side event at The Commission on the Status of Women, a major annual two-week conference at UN NY headquarters held 10-21 March 2014 on the topic “Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls.” The event organized by Judy Kuriansky, entitled “Accomplishments of NGOs of the First Ladies of Africa towards the Advancement and Achievement of the MDGs: Psychosocial and Human Rights Projects and Perspectives,” featured projects of First Ladies of Africa related to the MDGs, including eradicating poverty, improving access to education, empowerment of women and girls, maternal and child health. A video about these projects, at a health summit in February 2013 by U.S. Doctors for Africa, and at a gala in May 2013 organized by Voices of African Mothers, which IAAP co-sponsored is at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s2k7BvxtbnI&feature=em-upload\\_owner](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s2k7BvxtbnI&feature=em-upload_owner)) and press coverage at: [http://blacktiemagazine.com/society\\_march\\_2014/commission\\_on%20the\\_status\\_of\\_women.htm](http://blacktiemagazine.com/society_march_2014/commission_on%20the_status_of_women.htm).
2. Interventions at the 2013 Commission for Social Development. Advocacy statement, “The Importance of Psychosocial Empowerment in Achieving Poverty Eradication, Social Integration, and Full Employment in Decent Work,” distributed at meetings of the Commission 6-15, 2013, and Side event held on 15 February 2013 on “Promoting Resilience, Health and Empowerment for Social Development: A Psychosocial Perspective”
3. Interventions during the 2013 Commission on the Status of Women in March 2013. Advocacy statement, “Psychological Perspectives on the Elimination and Prevention of All

Forms of Violence Against Women and Girls” distributed at the CSW meetings, 4-15 March 2013.

4. Participation in the International Day of Happiness, panel discussion, a conversation on “Happiness and wellbeing: Essential for a sustainable future” 20 March 2013, organized by the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) in association with the Permanent Mission of Bhutan to the United Nations. Panelists included Dr. Judy Kuriansky and UN Ambassadors, DPI and UNAI staff, academicians and youth.

5. Interventions during the 2013 46th Commission on Population and Development. Advocacy statement distributed, “Towards the Inclusion, Development and Contributions of International Migrants” and Side event, a panel discussion, held on April 23, on “Vulnerabilities of Children in International Migration: Human Rights and Psychosocial Perspectives”

6. Panel Presentation & Discussion at the Commission for Social Development, 2-10 February 2012: entitled “Psychological Contributions on Empowerment for the Eradication of Poverty,” 2 February, with presentation by Judy Kuriansky on “Well-Being and Poverty Alleviation”

7. Interventions at the Commission on the Status of Women, 27 February – 9 March 2012. Advocacy with governments and UN Agencies; submission of Statement included with UN logo in documents sent to governments: “Psychological Perspectives on the Empowerment of Rural Women and Girls as a Strategy for eradicating poverty”; Side Event: “Transforming Communities through Psychosocial Empowerment of Poor Rural Women and Girls”

8. Intervention at the Second Round of Informal-Informal Negotiations on the Zero Draft of the Rio+20 Outcome Document, 23 April – 4 May 2012. Advocacy Statement distributed to government delegates on “Psychological Contributions to the Achievement of Sustainable Development.”

9. Interventions at the Commission on Population and Development, 23-27 April 2012. Advocacy Statement distributed to government delegates on “Psychological Contributions to the Development of Adolescents,” and oral Statement by Judy Kuriansky

10. Interventions at the ECOSOC 2012 Annual Ministerial Review on Promoting Productive Capacity, Employment and Decent Work, 2-27 July 2012. Advocacy Statement

11. Interventions at the GA High Level Forum in Commemoration of 14 September, Culture of Peace Day, 14 September, and International Day for Peace 21 September. Advocacy statement distributed at the Forum, “Psychological Contributions to Building Cultures of Sustainable Peace.”

12. Co-sponsorship with the NGO Committee on Children’s Rights a statement entitled, “Controlling the Exposure of Children to Toxic Stress to Ensure their Rights to Physical Health, Mental Health and Psychosocial Well-Being,” as a contribution to the Report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to the Human Rights Council on Children’s Right to Health, 1 October 2012

13. Statement on “Psychological Contributions to the Eradication of Poverty” distributed on 17 October 2012 at the UN program to commemorate the United Nations International Day for the eradication of Poverty

14. Statement on “Psychological Perspectives on the Elimination and Prevention of All Forms of Violence Against Women and Girls” distributed at the UN Women CSW Stakeholders Forum, 13 & 14 December 2012

---

#### **Presentations at UN events convened by the Economic and Social Council**

WCP's Judy Kuriansky was selected by the office of the President of the General Assembly to present in April 2014 at the 4th Interactive Dialogue on Harmony with Nature. The event was webcast and is on the [un.org](http://un.org) site.

### **Mission meetings and collaboration with other international Groups**

Meetings about psychological contributions to the global agenda, and psychology-related projects were held with various UN missions (Brazil, Spain, Portugal, Chile and Mexico) in collaboration with the Federacion Iberoamericana de Asociaciones de Psicologia (FIAP) and the Order of Portuguese Psychologists, represented by President Telmo Baptista and Vice President Samuel Antunes. Multiple psychological issues and projects were discussed for partnerships.

Meetings were also held at UN missions of African states, in collaboration with IUPsyS President Saths Cooper (who was in NY to speak at Psychology Day). Discussions about the importance of psychology particularly in Africa were held with Ambassadors, Deputy Permanent Representatives or Minister/Counselors of countries including South Africa, Zambia, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Benin.

### **Psychology Day**

WCP was signed on (Judy paid the minimum contribution of \$100 to insure WCP's presence) as supporters of the annual Psychology Day at the UN. The theme of this year's conference on 24 April was "*Psychological Contributions to Sustainable Development: Challenges and Solutions for the Global Agenda*," chosen to coincide with the focus on the new agenda. Last year's Psychology Day was on the topic of "Violence in a Global Context: Antecedents, Consequences and Prevention." It was highly significant that a message was presented by the Deputy Secretary General of the UN, Jan Eliasson, with comments highly positive about psychology: "*Thank you for your efforts to help us address the roots of these complex and crucial challenges. I welcome your emphasis on introducing psychology students to the global implications of their newly chosen field of study. We at the United Nations look forward to learning more about your work and finding scope for your expertise to be utilized.*"

**Advocacy.** An intense focus is now on the new global agenda being set at the UN for the years 2015-2030. The new post-2015 agenda will focus on three pillars of sustainable development: social, economic and environmental. The post-2015 agenda, consisting of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will replace the Millennium Development Goals, which guided the UN agenda during the years 2000-2015.

WCP UN rep Judy Kuriansky has been leading the advocacy campaign for including "mental health and wellbeing" in the new agenda. This campaign has been transformative and is achieving great success. Awareness has been raised such that mental health and wellbeing was supported verbally on the floor of the UN at the Open Working Group meetings where member states are determining the new agenda document. Over 17 statements were made by countries representing all parts of the world, and including major groups -- CARICOM, SIDS (Small Island Developing States), the LDCs (Least Developed Countries), as well as troikas (e.g., made by Cyprus on behalf of Singapore and the U.A.E.) and individual member states from the EU, Asia and other regions (e.g., Slovenia, Malaysia, Romania, Greece, Jordan). Discussions have been held with over 60 countries who expressed interest and support for mental health and wellbeing. A "Friends of Mental Health and Wellbeing" group was formed, under the partnership of Dr Judy Kuriansky for the Psychology Coalition at the UN with Ambassador

Caleb Otto of Palau, who is also a medical doctor. Three meetings were held, attended by delegates from all regions of the world, including Spain, Costa Rica, Vietnam, Greece, Cyprus, the Philippines, Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Afghanistan, Angola, Benin and Burkina Faso, Timor-Leste, Saudi Arabia, Israel and Japan. These Friends helped shape the advocacy strategy, that has resulted in the groundbreaking success. The member states by consensus agreed to put “and promote wellbeing” in the title of the Proposed Goal on health, and to add the words “promote mental health and wellbeing” in a target under that goal. Kuriansky also participated actively with civil society groups, under the auspices of DESA, and the umbrella of the Stakeholder Forum, to form alliances with other civil society groups in formulating civil society’s response and input to the document. Kuriansky was one of the selected presenters of recommendations to the co-chairs (Ambassadors of Hungary and Kenya) during the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Open Working Group.

There are more steps to insure this success through the General Assembly in September – which will take place after the WCP meeting in Durban – and the year-long negotiations, contributions and advocacy of other groups until the new agenda is finalized for 2015.

**Team requirements.** A team needs to be assembled that can participate actively and that can attend meetings in the UN headquarters: New York, Vienna and Geneva. Clear qualification criteria must be sent to applicants. At this time, the report author has paid personally for WCP responsibilities to keep active at the UN; a budget needs to be assigned to the UN team activities prospectively in order for WCP to continue to be part of UN activities.

**Other Recommendation/s: Apply for association with The Department of Public Information/NGO conference**

WCP could apply to be associated with the UN Department of Public Information. The criteria would have to be met which involves two-way communication about the UN, both letting groups know about work of the UN, and communicating/contributing work of the organization to DPI. Of note, the upcoming 65th UN DPI/NGO Conference is being held the exact time as this Durban conference: 27-29 August at NY UN headquarters. It is on the topic "2015 and Beyond: Our Action Agenda." Judy Kuriansky contributed to the "zero draft" Conference Action Agenda produced by the working group.