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The G7 Hiroshima Summit was held from May 19 to 21. This issue of Asian Breeze features an article by Ms. YAMAGUCHI, who was involved in the summit as a member of W7 (Woman7).

KFAW also held the debriefing of the 67th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW67) on 30 May 2023. CSW is one of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council. It meets annually around March at UN Headquarters in New York to formulate policies/actions on gender equality. Speakers at the debriefing were Ms. HORIUCHI, President of KFAW, Ms. OKUZAKI, a member of BPW Japan, and Ms. UENO, a staff of KFAW in International Exchange Division. The contents of each report are also posted.

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## Did the G7 Accelerate Gender Equality, or is it Just "Feminist Diplomacy" as Token?

- YAMAGUCHI Satoko  
W7 Japan Steering Committee Member

It is probably fresh in your minds that the G7 Summit was held in Hiroshima from May 19 to 21, 2023, and that Ukrainian President Zelenskyy also participated in the Summit by

surprise. I attended the G7 Hiroshima Summit to see what kind of discussions would take place among the leaders and what would be agreed upon, especially with regard to gender.

The Summit is a forum for the political leaders, and why I was given the opportunity to participate in it was by reason of my commitment in the Engagement Group. In recent years, there has been a lot of activities in making recommendations to the governments within G7 discussions from their respective fields, and the groups that conduct such advocacy in an official way are called the Engagement Groups. One such is the W7, which develops policy recommendations from a gender perspective and the standpoint of civil society. The G7 accounts for 40% of global GDP. Recognizing such impact, the W7 has consistently ensured participations from the Global South. At the same time, the W7 has incorporated the perspective of intersectionality, the idea that discriminations and oppressions intersect based on multiple characteristics such as disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, and ethnicity, and has worked to ensure that those voices that have not been fully heard are reflected in the W7's Communique. As a member of the W7 Steering Committee, I participated in the G7 Hiroshima Summit in order to monitor and lobby the process so that the Leaders' Communique would be as gender-sensitive as possible.

While the major themes of the Summit were the situation in Ukraine and nuclear disarmament, gender issues were also discussed. The Leaders' Communique, the outcome of the Summit, has a

section dedicated to gender<sup>1</sup>, as in the previous Summits, and states a commitment to "providing support for childcare and other field of care work and care economy"<sup>2</sup>. It is also worth highlighting that the Communique recognizes the essential and transformative role of comprehensive SRHR (Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights) in supporting gender equality and diversity, including sexual orientations and gender identities<sup>3</sup>.

On the other hand, throughout the Communique, it does not mention concrete measures to implement these commitments. For example, Paragraph 44 says "to make every effort to collectively increase the share of our bilateral allocable ODA advancing gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment over the coming years", but a specific financial commitment with a clearly set timeframe should be accompanied. It is not enough to simply talk about ideals; the role of the G7 and politics is to take concrete measures including funding.

As for why Hiroshima was chosen as the venue of the Summit, Prime Minister Kishida explained "As the prime minister of Japan, the only country to have suffered the atomic bombings, there is no better than Hiroshima to show our commitment to peace". And it was that Hiroshima where an agreement was reached to strengthen military assistance to Ukraine. The W7, which has called for a non-violent foreign policy, including reduction in military spending, as conflict disproportionately affects women and girls, expresses deep concerns that the Hiroshima Summit, while proclaiming peace, turned into an

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<sup>1</sup> "G7 Hiroshima Leaders' Communique" Paragraph 42 to 44.

<sup>2</sup> Paragraph 36

<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 43

opportunity to increase arms supply.

On another note, following Germany's Presidency last year, this year's Leaders' Communiqué also gave accounts of sexual minorities. We find adoption of the following sentence, "we strongly condemn all violations and abuses of human rights and fundamental freedoms for women and girls and LGBTQIA+ people around the world" as a step forward compared to the previous year<sup>4</sup>.

A new engagement group, P7 (Pride7), was established this year to address the rights of sexual minorities, and W7 and P7 collaborated on joint press conferences and other activities during the Hiroshima Summit. Gender-based discrimination is not only directed between men and women, but also at sexual minorities who are seen as deviating from sexual normativity, so it is essential to work in solidarity.

In Japan, the law for the promotion of understanding of the LGBT was passed and enacted after the Hiroshima Summit. However, the legislation says 'peace of mind' of all citizens and prioritizes rights of majority. Now that the law is in effect, rather than strongly condemning all violations and abuses of human rights, the P7 Committee members castigate the politically driven attacks escalated on trans persons, in particular trans women as if they are threats to the safety and security of women, and question whether the Communique at the Hiroshima Summit was merely a diplomatic performance.

On June 24-25, about a month after the Hiroshima Summit, Japan's first Ministerial

Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment was held. The three W7 representatives were given the opportunity to participate and engage in the discussions throughout the Meeting, as were the Ministers from each country. The W7 appreciates the meaningful engagement of the W7, composed of civil society organizations in the Gender Equality Ministerial Meeting as a way of inclusive decision-making.

The Joint Statement of the G7 Gender Equality Ministers adopted at the end of the Meeting, provided analysis that gender-based discriminations and violence have become increasingly complex and difficult to resolve due to COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing conflicts around the world, and emerging technologies. Given these situations, the Joint Statement concludes that "We will continue our efforts toward realizing a society where the human rights and dignity of all women, girls and LGBTQIA+ persons, are fully respected, promoted and protected. We are committed to fighting the backlash against gender equality."

As a member of a civil society organization, I will continue to monitor governments and raise my voice to ensure that the G7 countries and, of course Japan take substantive action promised in these Communiques.

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<sup>4</sup> Paragraph 43

**【Profile of Ms. YAMAGUCHI (she/her) 】**

W7 Japan Steering Committee Member/  
Generation Equality Youth Task Force Member/  
Member of Board of Trustees, ICHIKAWA  
Fusae Center for Women and Governance

She was a former member of the Generation Equality Youth Task Force set up by UN Women (August 2019 to November 2021) and a young women's program coordinator at YWCA of Japan, where she has worked on youth-led and intergenerational movements building, developing strategies, coordinating programs and campaigns, and conducting lectures at various levels from grassroots to international political arena for gender equality.

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## **CSW67 Meeting Summary Report**

- HORIUCHI Mitsuko  
President of KFAW

The priority theme of CSW67 is “Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls”

Because this was discussed only by the delegates, UN Women sees the challenges of the digital world as described before. There is much discrimination and exclusion of women in the digital world: only 22% of the AI-related workforce is female, and 44.2% of AI systems are said to have a gender - bias.

This year's CSW67 was the first time Youth Forum was held. Although I do not have enough information on the details, youth involvement in gender equality is much wanted.

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw67-2023>

## CSW Field Report

- OKUZAKI Reia

GOTEN Resort, Inc. and member of BPW Japan, graduated from the University of Kitakyushu

I participated in CSW67 from March 5 to March 16. I would like to introduce some of the events that left a deep impression on me.

One was a discussion on digital education hosted by the Canadian NGO. An NGO speaker said that digital education in compulsory schools is good until the age of 15, and that exposure to digital in childhood changes attitudes toward digital. She also talked about gender gap in digital is creating a new gender inequality. I felt that digital education must be provided at an earlier age in Japan.

Another thing is about the International Women's Day. There was an events organized by UN WOMEN and held in the General Assembly Hall. One of the memorable moment was to say "You are beautiful" to each other, and the entire Hall echoed with voices saying "You are beautiful." I felt very happy to be there.

During participating in CSW67, BPW Japan held a parallel event under the theme of "How to make actions for gender mainstreaming in entrepreneurship." We had a presentation by Ms. KIKUCHI Moana who runs a business in Tanzania, and had a group discussion. Forty-two people attended the event, including those from United Kingdom, Republic of Kores and France.

Participating in CSW67, I was very much impressed by great energy shown by participants. I got encouragement and confidence to continue my activities. The participants with a variety of backgrounds and role models will open up new possibilities for my future. I had the opportunity to meet youth reporters from other NGO, who had different reasons and identities for participating, which stimulated me and motivated me to continue my activities.

## NGO Forum Parallel Event Participation Report

- UENO Mayuko

### A staff of KFAW in International Exchange Division

On 11 March, I participated in a parallel event organized by Japanese Association of International Women's Rights (JAIWR). The theme of my own presentation was "Online Training on Gender Mainstreaming Training for Government Officers in Developing Countries." KFAW is commissioned by JICA Kyushu to provide training to government officers in developing countries. The training has continued for 30 years, from 1992 to 2022, with 486 administrative officers from 91 countries.

The advantage of online training is that there is no need to travel. It is also considered effective for people with disabilities, caregivers and childcare providers. As stated in Article 10 of the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, "elimination of discrimination in education," online training can be used to provide opportunities for those who have not had access to education for various reasons. In addition, by recording videos, trainees can watch programmes over and over again resulting better understanding.

However, there are challenges with online. One of the challenges might be internet access in developing countries. In light of the above advantages and challenges of online training, I would like to apply this experience to my future work. In general, it goes without saying that face to face meetings are really much better than Video conferences.

In light of the above advantages and challenges of online training, I would like to make use of this experience to my future works.

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Thank you for reading. Any comments and suggestions are welcome.

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