
	<p>Civilian Peace Service Canada (CPSC) Conference: "Women Building Peace" February 15 to 17, 2009, Saint Paul's University, 223 Main Street, Ottawa</p> <p>This conference followed from the very successful dinner hosted by the Canadian Department of Peace Initiative (CDPI) held in September, honoring the contribution of women to peace. The conference is developed in cooperation with the CDPI, Saint Paul University, the Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution (CICR), the Rideau Institute, Canadian Voice of Women for Peace, and One World Inc. Organizers acknowledge, with appreciation, the PSAC Social Justice Fund contribution to the conference. Xxxinsert others</p>	
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Presentation by Jean Augustine,
February 17, 2009

Biography:

Hon. Jean Augustine was appointed as the first fairness commissioner for the province of Ontario in March 2007. Ms. Augustine was born in Grenada and came to Canada in 1960. She attended the University of Toronto, where she earned Bachelor of Arts and Master of Education degrees. She was an elementary school principal with the Metropolitan Separate School Board in Toronto. From 1988 until 1993, she was chair of the Metro Toronto Housing Authority. Ms. Augustine was the first African-Canadian woman to be elected to the House of Commons. She was elected in the riding of Etobicoke-Lakeshore in 1993 and sat in Parliament until 2006. During this time, she served as parliamentary secretary to the prime minister, secretary of state and minister of state for multiculturalism and the status of women, sat on several standing committees, and was a deputy Speaker. She has shared her expertise and enthusiasm with others as a member of several community boards, including those of York University, the Hospital for Sick Children, the Donwood Institute and Harbourfront Corporation. She is a former national president of the Congress of Black Women of Canada. Every year, she makes a better future for one young woman through the Jean Augustine Scholarship, a fund that helps single mothers attend George Brown College in Toronto. In March 2007, she was named chair of the Ontario Bicentenary Commemorative Committee on the Abolition of the Slave Trade. Ms. Augustine has donated her archival and parliamentary materials to York University's Faculty of Education, thus creating the opportunity to establish an innovative academic position, the Jean Augustine Chair in Education in the New Urban Environment. She has been honoured by many organizations for her leadership and community involvement and was awarded an honorary doctor of laws degree by the University of Toronto.

Presentation:

On the issue of the culture of peace: The focus has been on the impact of culture on the role of women in conflict. There is a pamphlet on Canadian women and how they helped us to move towards the cultural theme, amongst them Rosemary Brown, ? Duckworth. It outlines the work they were doing on gender sensitivity and culture. The destructive element of war was my earliest memory and my training in 60s and 70s involved studying a lot of documentation. This documentation is helping us to keep the memory alive of those early pioneers. It is the voice of women and early organizations. I remember talking about the importance of getting communities involved in peace. We cannot get rid of conflict in far away places until we get involved right here, including: through conflict workshops about conflict arising as we tried to define the principles and theories of non violence; including trying to apply the principles and theories of non violence, not only to my own life but also in the sphere of race relations; expanding on that later, working as a member of Toronto conflict community, on coming together with the conflict community to see how we could benefit from the early Ghandian thinking. Those served

me well as Minister Responsible for the Status of Women in dealing with our own issues here in conflict. Continuation for that work includes statements by conflict women's organizations???: "We women's organizations, from a broad spectrum of political views demand an end to the bombing and to the tools of death, etc. We demand that war no longer be an option. As a society, what we want is no longer to be excluded. The time is now".... 90-95% of casualties of war are civilians and many of them are women. 80% of refugees, women and children, are victims of war; deprived of all of their basic needs; subjected to physical and emotional abuse. Rape is used as a weapon of war. There are horrendous stories. We cannot truly understand these stories in our daily lives until we focus on what it might be to be in those horrible situations. Women are identified as victims. They are not victims. They are organizing to be part of the way forwards, with recognition of cultural and other means that get in the way of full recognition; get in the way of ensuring that women's role in peace building and peace making are assured, not just at the top, but also at the grass roots level. There are community development issues, including repressive cultural conditions, suppressing leadership opportunities.

Let me end by talking about the Declaration ??? In June, 2003 we talked about role of women in peace building and reconciliation; that there was an urgent need to recognize women's creative and effective contribution in waging peace, because women's capacities are too often overlooked and underutilized: their cultural skills, their conflict management skills, at home and in society at large. These should be brought to play around the table. We should call on nations in conflict to give women actors formal education, leadership roles; on the mass media to recognize the role of women; and on women to liberate themselves on cultural and peace issues. My main thrust is to take it from the global and say how can I the concerned, the educated, the religious leader, the individual person who wants to see a culture of peace in the world be involved. What can I do to reinforce that culture of peace?

Questions and Answers:

Question: The discussion is all about "here" and "over there". Is there an assumption that women in Canada are working together and are good... etc. I feel we have not worked together; that there is fragmentation. What are our struggles?

Answer: We have to begin with ourselves, our community, our institutions. We have no history of war in Canada. Cultural transferability is so important. We need to understand culture, social gender issues....

Question: I have always been very disappointed that someone else has to represent me (speaking as a student originally from Africa) when I know exactly what I want; disappointed in the concept of Canadians being carriers of peace in other cultures....(Remember, there are 2000 international NGOs working in Africa. African Governments don't have the funding and infrastructure, so the responsibility is given to international NGOs. That means it is given to foreign bodies, rather than to local bodies.) My question to Lauryn and Jean: what do you think about building peace and identifying indigenous institutions through immigrants from those countries to Canada. Every country is represented in Canada, so we can have Canadian resources from all those cultures.... maybe that would be a new strategy?

Answer: Two things... Canada is diverse, multicultural. We come from all parts of the world. Sending a Liberian to Liberia has its down side. It depends on the situation and the culture. In some places, they prefer to hear from an international. The Liberian Canadian may be from the wrong tribe, etc. On the other hand, in Africa, where I was introduced as a government minister, they could really identify with me; people felt comfortable to bring out their issues, because they felt that as an African woman I would be better able to understand the issue. _