

ECWF CONFERENCE LIEGE 2022

“Bridging the Divide and Empowering Women: the sharp contribution of skilled women to humanitarian action”

PANEL DISCUSSION 28/10/2022 with

HE Irit Rozenzweig-Abu, Israeli new Ambassador to Belgium- Luxemburg:

Vivianne Teitelbaum, Member of the Brussels Parliament and former President of the Francophone Women Council of Belgium CFFB

Christine Defraigne, former President of the Belgium Senat and actual Mayor Deputy of Liège

Hanni Seifert from WIZO UK introduced and moderated the debate.

HS What opportunity do you see to persuade young girls to go to professions usually chosen by men?

Irit Rozenzweig-Abu

Women should take any place in the society and the question is why not. Why would you limit only girls? If we claim equal rights then we also claim the same share of the burden.

Vivianne Teitelbaum

Gender based roles were a tool of cooperation and then turned to patriarchal stereotypes.

We need to fight by the means of **legislation, making sure that the law makes women equal in every area**, with access to everything, and that public money equally benefits to boys and girls.

Education starts at the earliest age. From the day care centers girls should know that they can have same access to the world than boys.

Legislation and education will make the change in mentalities.

Christine Defraigne

Education is key.

After 40 years being involved in politics equality is an ongoing debate. We didn't reach the goal. Now **I am in favour of quotas**, 50% of women on the ballot lists.

HS Quotas? Women have to come because they are qualified!

Christine Defraigne

It's a necessity otherwise there is no place for them. Women are 52% of the society, they must be at least 50% on the lists.

Vivianne Teitelbaum

Quotas help change mentalities. Not only 50% women on the list but **on good places on the list. Parity has to remain permanent.** Men are on the frontline in politics, they are coopted on boards. We must help **empower the women to claim those seats.**

Irit Rozenzweig-Abu

The system was built by a patriarchal society. Why are the meetings held at 5pm and not at 9? **There is no choice but having quotas. Give me a seat and then I'll do my way.**

HS How would you educate?

Vivianne Teitelbaum

Education is a catalyst for social change. When you can implement all the ideas then you see the world differently. **Women don't have the mentality of asking. Raising awareness is key.**

HS WIZO is doing a lot

Irit Rozenzweig-Abu

I cannot emphasize enough how WIZO is important. WIZO does a holy work. So many women that wouldn't have money left at the end of the month if not WIZO.

Education starts at home, children remember what they heard from their parents

Christine Defraigne

There are feminist men but they still don't lend a hand at home!

"My demand as a woman is that my difference be taken into account so that I am not forced to adapt to a male model" (Simone Veil)

HS What about Orthodox women in Israel?

Irit Rozenzweig-Abu

The feminist revolution is coming to the Orthodox. Several Orthodox women are political leaders. Orthodox women interfere with seculars much more than men because they go out to work. 14% of the young ultra-Orthodox become secular.

Christine Defraigne

The right to protect religious freedom is as strong as the right not to choose a religion.
Civil law is above religious law.

Vivianne Teitelbaum

Democracies have to keep religion separate. **We have to guarantee religious right. In no way religion can infringe over democracy's principles.** Legislation is not clear enough.

There is no equality within religion, so keep religion into the private sphere!

Christine Defraigne

Law has to be written in the constitution to guarantee it's stability.

Vivianne Teitelbaum

In the Parliament women are leading the fight but more and more men are supporting.

Hanni Seifert closed the debate and the exchanges with the speakers carried on during the coffee- break.