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**Roswith Roth, PhD**, Univ.-Prof. at the University of Graz studied psychology and education. Her specialization is in gender psychology and clinical and health psychology, where she got a license to practice in psychotherapy (behavior and client-centered psychotherapy). She served in ICP as board member, president (2001-2002), editor of 9 proceedings of the Annual Conventions, Chair of the NGO Committee on the Family at the UN in Vienna, Member of the Committee on the Status of Women at the UN in Vienna and held positions at the University of Graz as Chair of Working Group of Gender Equality for the entire University of Graz, Vice-head of the Department of Psychology, Head of the Working Group of Health and Gender Psychology etc. As visiting professor, she stayed at the University of Little Rock, AR, USA, Hiroshima University, Japan and as Erasmus teacher at the University Padua, Italy. Her research focuses on health and gender including cross-cultural collaborations.



## Behavioral Sciences at the United Nations

**Julian McBride\***

On March 9-10, 2018, over 100 people from as far as Alaska converged on St. Francis College in New York City for a Conference on International Psychology. This two-day conference celebrated two great anniversaries: 20 years of

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Dr. Uwe Gielen's Institute for International and Cross-Cultural Psychology (IICCP), and 30 years of Dr. Ani Kalayjian's Association for Trauma Outreach and Prevention (ATOP). One invited symposium at this conference assembled five experts to examine this question: "What is the role of behavioral scientists at the United Nations?"

The first speaker in this symposium was Dr. **Leslie Popoff**, the Chairperson of Psychology Day at the UN, who described "Planning Psychology Day 2018 at the United Nations." She noted that her UN team combines interns, fellows, graduate students, and professionals. Their job is to coordinate with other NGOs attached to the United Nations and foreign diplomatic missions for collaborations on humanitarian missions. For 2018, the 11th annual Psychology Day at the United Nations was on Thursday, April 12, focused on climate change and its impact on the earth.

The next speaker was **Roxanne Moadel-Attie**, who focused on "Development of the UN Sustainability Development Goals (SDG) Expert Database." She described the challenges to create a large network of psychology experts who can consult on the 17 SDGs.

Next, **Julian McBride** spoke about the history of the United Nations and human rights. McBride noted the flaws the United Nations has constantly ignored. The UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) and Geneva Conventions came shortly after World War II, primarily because of the Holocaust, which remains the first genocide to be universally accepted. Prior to the Holocaust, the world had a history of ignoring horrific human rights abuses, such as colonialism, slavery, chemical warfare, indiscriminate bombing, and other genocides, such as the ones faced by the Native Americans, Armenians, Greeks, and Assyrians. Even when the Human Rights Council was created, there still remained major flaws in the system. Some of those flaws in the system include historical references to the Rwandan Genocide in 1994, in which the United Nations knew a genocide was taking place, yet the only action the U.N. took was to evacuate all foreign nationals. Close to one million Tutsis were killed in the genocide. Another critical flaw includes the overwhelming power of the United Nations Security Council, which includes five permanent member nations. These nations include the United States, England, France, Russia, and China, which are all global superpowers with traumatic history of human rights violations. All five member nations are the 5 biggest exporters of military grade equipment around the world which causes most of these horrific conflicts.

The last panelist was **Sowmya Kshtria**, a fellow in the ATOP Meaningful World, who spoke about "Postgraduate fellowships for students." Kshtria also mentioned the humanitarian mission the ATOP conducted in Puerto Rico, Haiti, Armenia, and other regions. The last topic was the application process in which motivated youths and scholars can apply to the Meaningful World and the events the NGO partakes in. The panel discussant was **Dean Elaine P. Congress** of Fordham University.

After this panel, the panelists spoke further about ATOP Meaningful World humanitarian global relief efforts. For

example, Dr. **Daria Diakanova** discussed the humanitarian relief effort in Armenia, where suicides increased by 100% since 2003 due to a crumbling economy and a national identity issue post Armenian Genocide. The Meaningful World successfully created a suicide hotline during the relief efforts, since Armenia has too few psychologists. Dr. Popoff talked about the Syrian refugees in Armenia and how Armenians consider them family. This is because of a historical reference as the Syrians were one of the few ethnic groups to help shelter the Armenians and give them sanctuary from the wrath of the Ottoman Empire. Julian presented on the Puerto Rican relief mission, which was such a success, as ATOP formed a branch of the Meaningful World in Puerto Rico, which they will verify this April. Sowmya finished off the last lecture by presenting on the humanitarian mission in Haiti and how the ATOP gave hope to the locals after a disastrous earthquake.

As the ATOP Meaningful World continues to go strong 30 years later, we thank those who made this organization such a beacon of light in a dark world. For details, check [www.MeaningfulWorld.com](http://www.MeaningfulWorld.com).



Panelists (l to r): Dean Elaine Congress, Leslie Popoff, Roxanne Moadel-Attie, Sowmya Kshtria, Julian McBride.



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ICP,INC President 1998



Ani Kalayjian  
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