Citizen of the World:
Soon-Young and the UN
by Soon-Young Yoon

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About the Book

A Feminist Look at Global Development and Social Issues

As a North Korean refugee, Soon-Young Yoon understood from an early age that people's destinies are connected to international events. This book is a collection of her reflections as a feminist who has worked both for the UN and for the international women's movement. Written through the lens of an anthropologist, these essays traverse the boundaries of being an insider and an outsider of the UN. Yoon has seen the struggle for human rights in all corners of the world and has met people in urban slums and in UN offices. She urges us to look at the world through women’s eyes to understand why gender equality and women’s empowerment, particularly for the poorest and most vulnerable populations, is essential to our collective good.

The stories in this book also reflect her belief that one needs to understand a wide range of issues in order to shape our common future. This book includes essays on ending violence against women and girls, finding the Earth’s balance, and claiming the right to social and economic development. Enclosed are stories of collective voices that are changing the world, glimpses of great women leaders, and the many identities of global citizenship.
About the Author

Soon-Young Yoon is the UN representative for the International Alliance of Women and member of the Gender Advisory group of the President of the 75th UN General Assembly. As a visiting Fulbright Professor at Ewha Womans University, she helped establish Asia’s first women’s studies program. Yoon helped organize the NGO Forum at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women that brought together more than 35,000 participants. She previously served as a social development officer for UNICEF in the Southeast Asia office and a social scientist at WHO South-East Asia Regional Office in New Delhi. A former columnist for The Earth Times newspaper, Yoon co-edited the WHO monograph, “Gender, Women, and the Tobacco Epidemic” with Dr. Jonathan Samet. She received an AB in French literature with honors and PhD in anthropology from the University of Michigan. She is married to Richard M. Smith, former editor-in-chief and president of Newsweek and current president of the Pinkerton Foundation.

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