

## UPF UK's Africa Day brought together African leaders and peacemakers

Robin Marsh  
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**London, United Kingdom** -- UPF's Africa Day celebration brought together diverse communities, African leaders, and individuals passionate about promoting peace, cultural exchange, and development in Africa.

The event, held on May 27, 2023, at UPF's London Peace Embassy, showcased the richness of African culture and the collective commitment to building a peaceful and prosperous future. The event was marked by engaging presentations, captivating performances, and heartfelt discussions.



After recognizing volunteers and staff, UPF-UK leaders **Margaret Ali** and **Robin Marsh** welcomed the audience. A procession of dancing and waving of African nations' flags, led by moderator **Lorna Marah**, a musical artist and a UPF Ambassador for Peace, infused the atmosphere with a vibrant sense of unity and pride.

Distinguished speakers, including **Dr. Yehoeshahfaht Ben Israel**, highlighted various aspects of Africa's development and the reassertion of its own identity after throwing off its colonial past. Their insights resonated deeply with the audience, fostering a greater understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing African nations.

(Dr. Ben Israel's talk: [youtu.be/xZjc5NOsq2M](https://youtu.be/xZjc5NOsq2M))

**Robert Williamson**, who was born in what is now Zambia, recalled his experience of returning in 1975 and spending several decades there while developing a sausage factory to provide greater food security and employment for Zambians. He explained that UPF had grown to perform a critical role in Africa in partnership with the African Union, mobilizing African leaders in pan-African summits and promoting character education and youth development activities.

(Mr. Williamson's talk: [youtu.be/b-yjEW1dpwU](https://youtu.be/b-yjEW1dpwU))



**Rev. George Ogurie** joined the event via a recorded message from Abuja, Nigeria, to explain UPF's nationwide character education program in partnership with the Nigerian Ministry of Education. He was grateful for UPF-UK's continuing support for that program, which currently is undergoing several pilot projects. UPF-UK ([pa@uk.upf.org](mailto:pa@uk.upf.org)) is looking for those who would like to support this project.

(Rev. Ogurie's talk: [youtu.be/5F525dCFBh8](https://youtu.be/5F525dCFBh8))



One of the event's highlights was the presentation of Ambassador for Peace awards, recognizing outstanding contributions to peacebuilding and unwavering commitment to promoting harmony and understanding:

- **Mohammed Khuram Riaz**, a celebrity from Pakistan with a big heart for humanitarian support for the poor, invited by the investigative journalist **Aurangzeb Akbar**;
- **Caroline Mukaka**, the founder of Ladies of All Nations International (LOANI), which supports victims of domestic violence;



- psychologist **Aneta Buckthought**, the founder of Pure-Ception Ltd.

(Ms. Mukaka's talk: [youtu.be/eL2alZ6ssnM](https://youtu.be/eL2alZ6ssnM))

The event provided a platform for representatives from African nations -- such as **Reuben Johnson** from Ghana, **Suzy Longer** from South Sudan, **Lorna Marah** from Sierra Leone, and **Ernst Kamga** from Cameroon -- to express their perspectives and shed light on their respective countries' unique experiences.

Africa Day 2023 also addressed critical issues affecting the continent. **Charlotte Bosawa Eyenga Simon** discussed human rights concerns in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, emphasizing the need for concerted efforts to protect the rights of women in conflict-affected areas. She emphasized that even the name "Africa" had been given by colonial powers and did not represent the promise and potential of the continent. Together with her daughter, she supports rape victims through the TG Foundation, which has homes in eastern DRC.

(Ms. Simon's talk: [youtu.be/rF3KZ5VSmZ8](https://youtu.be/rF3KZ5VSmZ8))



In an emotional address, **Dr. Mekki Elsayed** drew attention to humanitarian relief efforts in Sudan, underscoring the importance of international cooperation and support. He presented several awards to supporters of Sudan's humanitarian needs. He is working with the Red Crescent and Red Cross and looking for funding support. Please contact us ([pa@uk.upf.org](mailto:pa@uk.upf.org)) if you would like to help.

The event concluded with lively music and dance performances that captured the spirit and vibrancy of African culture. We were very grateful for **Anthony Everest**, who entertained the audience with his singing. Attendees then were invited to engage in networking opportunities while enjoying traditional African cuisine.

The Universal Peace Federation UK extends its heartfelt gratitude to all participants, volunteers, speakers, performers, and attendees who contributed to the success of Africa Day 2023. The event served as a testament to the shared commitment to peace, development, and cultural understanding among diverse communities in the UK and Africa.

Photos ([bit.ly/3P1DoQ3](https://bit.ly/3P1DoQ3))