

UPF and IAPD-Brazil's World Interfaith Harmony Week: Building Bridges

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Brazil -- On February 6, 2021, the International Association for Peace and Development (IAPD-Brazil) held the program "World Interfaith Harmony Week: Building Bridges Beyond the Frontiers, with the aim of solidifying a unified world of peace under the tutelage of God, our Creator, regardless of one's religion. To watch the entire program, [click here](#).

World Interfaith Harmony Week was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly and adopted on October 20, 2010. In the resolution, the General Assembly emphasizes that mutual understanding and interreligious dialogue are important dimensions of a culture of peace. The resolution established the first week in February as World Interfaith Harmony Week as a way to promote harmony among all people. In reference to this date, we invited religious leaders to participate in the event to share words and views from different denominations, held online by the Zoom, Youtube, and Facebook platforms and broadcast by the Global News TV channel. The event was attended by 2,225 people through social networks, in addition to the audience of TV Global News.



The emcee was Mr. Walisson Delano, opening the event with his words of welcome and congratulations in celebration of Interfaith Harmony Week. The ceremony started with the singing of the National Anthem of Brazil by Major Hardalsson Araujo de Oliveira. After that, we received Bishop Patricia Redó interpreting the song "I Will Sail."

In the opening prayer, Mr. Boubacar Diallo (President, International Association for Peace and Development- South America and Brazil), was thankful for the opportunity to be present together with so many authorities, while reading a biblical passage written by the apostle Paul presenting true love as the main reason for holding this event. In his prayer, uttering words of gratitude, he asked for the presence of God in our hearts, illuminating and guiding our meeting.

Then we received the words of Dr. Neudir Simão Ferabolli (Secretary General, UPF-South America; President, UPF-Brazil). Thanking everyone present, he spoke about the creation of the UPF and the work developed to add efforts in the construction of the culture of peace. Commemorating World Interfaith Harmony Week in communion with the United Nations, UPF has a vision about the kind of work that can bring harmony among all religions, based on the Divine Principle, starting with the necessity of knowing about God. He explained the heart of God in the Bible: truly knowing God as the parents of humanity, we become brothers and sisters within a human family under God.

Mr. Jonas de Melo Florêncio (President and Founder, Mission Christ Returns Church; Founder, Love Mission Recovery Institute) said that we are living in the time when each religion has built its own path, but there is a need to create bridges that bring joy and love to overcome the sea of tears and despair, fulfilling the mission that God has left us.

Hon. João Campos Araujo (Congressman) emphasized that the discussion on this topic is very auspicious because it proposes to create an environment of respect, tolerance and understanding from a principle of love and faith. In his opinion, today the United Nations pays more attention to violence and human rights than to conflicts among religions. For this reason, politicians must have the courage to highlight this in the UN General Assembly.

Ms. Eliza Ferreira (President, UPF-Brazil Public Relations) emphasized the theme of this event and stressed that by overcoming religious and racial barriers we can build an alliance of hope for the unification of spiritual and material dimensions, in addition to establishing a coexisting life in harmony.



Bishop Patrícia Redó (UPF Ambassador for Peace; Evangelical Bishop, Adoration), presenting her opinion on this theme, showed us that we must open our eyes to understand that love is a practice independent of religion; through love, we can open our minds to understand and fulfill true peace. This is what UPF accomplishes.

Rev. Almiton Gomes (Rector, Faculdade Batista do Brasil) presented us with the vision of brotherly love between religions that he experienced through an event held in Brasilia, which had several religious denominations in the same place sharing an ideal. Only with love is it possible to bring together all religious leaders and religious organizations.

A video about the founding of IAPD was shown at this point in the program.

Then, Dr. Carlos Limonge Sterse (UPF Ambassador for Peace; Judge and Founder, Crusade for Dignity, Goiás State) questioned about what we must do to achieve interreligious harmony. We have some things that separate us, but

we have many things that unite us; these are the things that we must emphasize, honoring our Heavenly Parent by truly working together in love and harmony, transforming ideas into actions.

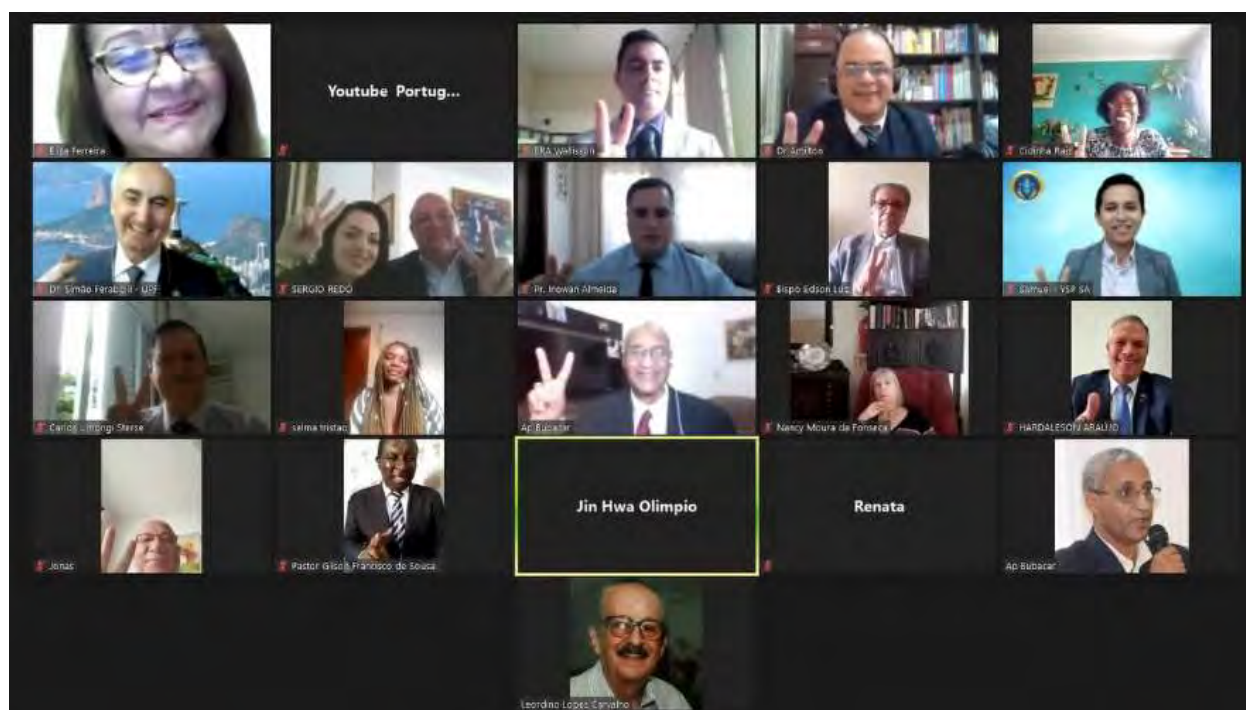
Mr. Leordino Lopes de Carvalho (President, Council of Pastors, Anapolis – Goiás) said to seek peace, we

must first seek love. Religions tend to teach us this, so we must plant the unity of the forces of good in society. That is why we are together in this movement.

Mr. Samuel Ota Linhares (President, Youth and Students for Peace-Latin America and Brazil) said that despite all the differences that separate us, there are points that present more similarities. Since we believe that we are children of the same God, having this bond of siblings ensures us that we have many things to share together.

Mr. Inowam Almeida (President, Pastor Elias Foundation) said that we live in a time when everyone seeks to justify their actions through their religious concept, but we are all fighting for our ideals. Even though Christian doctrine teaches us that we are children of the same parents, we have been unable to live peacefully. To overcome this, we must be a family that practices what Jesus taught us: Love God and love our neighbor as yourself.

Prof. Cidinha (UPF Ambassador for Peace) in her words emphasized that love is the only possibility for coexistence. Love is an attitude placing itself at the service of the other; only in this way can we build perfect religious harmony.



Bishop Edson Luiz showed us that we must first find the peace within us through our union with God. If we are one with God, we can form unities with others who also aspire to this union with God, becoming true citizens of Heaven.

Selma Tristão (UPF Ambassador for Peace; Pastor, Hebrew Community) stressed that the topic addressed is of paramount importance, and it is up to religious leaders to bring love and build bridges between religions, working with one goal to achieve union with God.

Gilson Francisco de Sousa emphasized that to build bridges, there must be certain ingredients. To establish interreligious bridges, we need love, unity and peace; in addition we have to follow the plans of the main architect who in this case is Jesus. Following this recipe, we can build great bridges.

Dr. Sérgio Redó (President, Brazilian Press Association) presented that no one preached peace more than Jesus Christ, because he came by God's will to save humanity from the sin committed in the Garden. So it is undeniable that we have the example of Jesus for dedicating our life to peace, love and harmony, serving each other at all times.

Gilson Francisco closed the event with prayer.