

## UPF Nigeria inaugurates Traditional Rulers Association for Peace and Prosperity

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September 21, 2019



The Universal Peace Federation (UPF) inaugurated International Traditional Rulers Association for Peace and Prosperity (ITAPP) on Saturday, September 21, 2019 while commemorating the UN International Day of Peace. The event also featured a one-day conference of diverse categories of leaders to look inward and examine the internal aspects of our national malaise. 'The internal climatic disorder.'

The UN announced as the theme for this year's 2019, International Peace Day commemoration – as "Climate Action for Peace," calling on world leaders to rise up to the challenge of climate change and environmental degradation. For UPF Nigeria, it was an opportunity to take advantage of the coming together of such high level leaders from around the country for the International Traditional Rulers Association for Peace inauguration, to look at, and address, especially the current state of violent criminal activities in the country, including terrorism, arms banditry, kidnappings and other youth criminal activities; and, the intra-national disunity causing a serious breakdown of peace and social relations thereby impacting negatively on national development and peace. We thought we should focus the discussions on reflecting more on the internal perspective of the "Climate Action for Peace." This is what informed the decision on the Central Theme of: "Nigeria Unity Convocation: Creating National Climate for Peace and Development."

The aim was to bring to everyone's awareness that the nation, Nigeria stands at a crucially critical turning point and that, whatever decisions leaders (at all levels) make and the actions taken, or avoided, particularly at this time will take the nation either further along a path to increased harmony, prosperity and peace, or along a track of crisis, conflict and want.

We put the conference together with central theme and sub-themes expressing and reflecting on the nation's current vicious social, economic, and religious climate and other circumstances embroiled with all kinds of violent criminal crises including terrorism, kidnappings and youth ferociously dangerous gang groups across the country, with the hope of sharing with the participants, especially the Traditional Rulers the need to come to the realization of their traditional roles and responsibilities, and the understanding that the Universal Peace Federation is guided by the Founders' vision of humanity as one global family under one God, called to live in accordance with core, universal principles; and that, we share a common purpose and destiny; and, that destiny is peace.

The Central Theme of the event was, "Nigeria Unity Convocation: Creating National Climate for Peace and Development." This was with hope of addressing the nationally contentious atmosphere and very worrisome antagonistic relationships being witnessed across the nation in recent times.

Keynote Lecture was on: "The Role of Traditional Rulers In Building A Culture Of Peace and National Unity: Considering Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity and Universally Shared Values."



#### **Sub-Themes included:**

1. "The Role of Politicians in Building a Culture of Peace, Unity and National Development" (From the Politicians perspective)
2. "The Role of Religious Leaders in Building a Culture of Peace, Unity and National Development Through Interfaith Unity and Cooperation" (From the Inter-Faith perspective)
3. "The Role of Scholars in Building a Culture of Peace, Unity and National Development" (From the Academics perspective)

#### **Attendance**

The event that recorded registered participants of two hundred and sixty-five with many others outside the hall who did not register because the capacity of the hall could not hold all the attendees, brought together Traditional Rulers, Religious Leaders, Parliamentarians, Scholars and other invited guests including Ambassadors for Peace from across the country.

Among the participants were 120 Traditional Rulers. It was a diverse audience, that included religious leaders, parliamentarians, Scholars, Government officials, NGOs and others.

#### **There were four parts to the event**

1. The opening plenary which featured – a brief welcome remark by Rev. Imo Essien Nkanta, the National President, Family Federation for World and Unification (FFWPU), Nigeria.

Rev. Nkanta admonished the Traditional Rulers, reminding them that they, "The Traditional Rulers are the custodians of cultures, customs and values, meaning we have a lot to do in the realization of a Culture of Peace in our respective domain."

The Keynote address, based on the Central Theme of the convocation, "Nigeria Unity Convocation: Creating National Climate for Peace and Development," was delivered by Rev. George M. Ogurie, Regional Representative – UPF Africa Region II (Southern West Africa).

Rev. Ogurie reminded the audience that Traditional Rulers are our Royal Fathers, "you are the custodians of ethics and morality, and that the community in which they rule look up to them."

Dr. Ikpot emphasized the traditional responsibility of the Traditional Rulers as the custodians of the land, culture and values. He also drew the attention of the Traditional Rulers to the high level of youth criminal activities within the communities and the larger society explaining that these unwholesome activities point to the fact of the indiscriminate breakdown in familial relationships and loss of authority of the parental figures (like the Traditional Rulers) in the communities. He



further implored the Traditional Leaders to take the establishment of the new ITAPP very seriously and join the body as members; and that through this new body offered to them by the Founder, Dr. Mrs. Hak Ja Han Moon, the authority of the Traditional Rulers can be restored and broken families can be restored and saved thereby bringing peace to the communities.

Special Message by The Royal Father of the day: His Royal Majesty, Oba Rufus Olugboyega Akinrinmade (FCNA, FCPA); Adebusoye 1, The Orunja of Odigbo Kingdom; Ondo State (Interim President ICAPP)

2. The inauguration of ITAPP and the signing of the ITAPP resolution – Conducted by Rev George M. Ogurie – representing the UPF African Regional Group Chair.

3. Lecture Presentations

i. "The Role of Traditional Rulers In Building A Culture Of Peace and National Unity: Considering Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity and Universally Shared Values" – His Royal Highness Amb. Musa Barde – The District Head of Galadimawa.

ii. "The Role of Politicians in Building a Culture of Peace, Unity and National Development" (From the IAPP perspective) – Hon. Benjamin Mzondu; Hon. Member Federal House of Representatives

iii. "The Role of Religious Leaders in Building a Culture of Peace, Unity and National Development Through Interfaith Unity and Cooperation" (From the IAPD perception):

(a) Christian Perspective – Bishop Aaron Dauda

(b) Islamic Perspective – Mr. Momoh Muhammad-Bashir – Islamic Cleric/Director Al-Bayan Interfaith Center

iv. "The Role of Scholars in Building a Culture of Peace, Unity and National Development" (From the Academics perspective) – Amb. Dr. Effiong Joseph Udo, Federal University of Uyo.



4. Ambassador for Peace Award

Fifteen (15) distinguished Nigerians and a serving Zimbabwean Diplomat (from the Zimbabwean Embassy), Mrs. Monila Kuchena were inducted as Ambassadors for Peace. A senior Immigration officer, Mr. Gubio Abba Jiddim was also among the recipients. There was a very special case with a touching story among the award recipients. A currently serving police officer Mr. Mohammed Jibrin Ndangi, was among the recipients. He was among a special police task force that was sent to patrol a particularly crime-ridden area when their team ran into an armed robbery squad operating. On approaching the scene on the highway, the robbers attacked the police team. Mr.

Ndangi wrestled firearm from one of the robbers and there was exchange of fire.

While other officers fled off and Mr. Ndangi fought the robbers and got several bullet shots that fell. At this point the leader of the robbery squad walked up to Mr. Ndangi who was writhing in the pool of his blood and in pains, of course Ndangi had thought that his life is ended at that point when the robbery team leader looked at him and said "you are a true Nigerian, and, for his braveness and fearless fight they will not kill him, and stopped a vehicle and ask the driver of the vehicle to drop Mr. Ndangi at the hospital. This was how Mr. Ndangi survived and decided to establish an interfaith organization, the Al-Bayan Interfaith Centre for Peace and Dialogue. He was later made the Chaplain at the Police National Headquarters. He is still serving in the Police Force.

### **Goodwill Messages**

A Nigeria Scholar from a Costa Rican University spoke

A director from the Ministry of Health gave a goodwill message on behalf of the Minister

Dr. Edet Ekpenyong, Deputy National Commandant of the Peace Corps of Nigeria, spoke representing the National Commandant.

Mrs. Monila Kuchena, Minister Counselor, Zimbabwean Embassy. gave appreciation remarks on behalf of the award recipients.

Certificates of membership were issued to the participating Traditional Rulers present. Certificate of participation was also issued to each participant. The event was brought to an end with a prayer by a Christian Traditional Ruler. The program has been aired by the two major national radio stations.