

30 attend Four-day Asian Leadership Conference (ALC) in Bangkok, Thailand

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Bangkok, Thailand -- Thirty participants and staff from five nations attended a four-day Asian Leadership Conference (ALC) in Bangkok, Thailand from February 24 to 27, 2017. Seventeen participants came from Cambodia; four from the Philippines; three from Indonesia and Nepal; and one each from Korea, Germany and the U.S. The conference concluded with an Interfaith Peace Blessing ceremony.

The delegates included high-level guests, including: an advisor to the prime minister of Cambodia, provincial directors, the president of a university youth organization, government officials, a school principal from Nepal, political leaders from the Philippines and a pastor from Indonesia.

The question-and-answer session that followed the presentations on the second and third days were lively and engaging. Participants said they realized that UPF's Principles of Peace can really solve fundamental problems at the individual, social or global levels. They asked questions about raising children, preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS and expanding the work of UPF in their country. Most importantly, everyone recognized that we all have to work together to create a culture of peace.

Reflections from the participants:

Bijaya Raj Sharma Kadhel from Nepal thanked the organizers and presenters. He noted that UPF's founders, Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, were well respected throughout Nepal. He concluding his remarks by reciting the poem, "My Loving Country." He drew pictures describing the hills and valleys, the yaks and flowers, and the cool Himalayan water rushing down the mountains. Everyone was reminded of the love they have for their own country.

Rolando A. Aya-ay from the Philippines said, "This was the best conference I ever attended. My wife asked me to accompany her and, even though I did not know what type of conference this was going to be, I'm so glad I attended it. I never imagined in my entire life that people from such different religious backgrounds could come together as one... This is the place where I discovered that this was not impossible." He concluded by saying that he wanted to support UPF in the Philippines.

Rev. Lisar Kumendong from Indonesia explained that he came from a small island that is just 42 kilometers (26 miles) wide, where some of the most intense inter-religious fighting in his country, in which churches and mosques were burned down, occurred. Since then, the island has been struggling to find a way to restore social harmony. He said, "For me personally, it was miracle to attend this high-quality UPF event. The conference gave me hope, and I will disseminate this content to religious leaders in my community. I hope UPF can come to and hold a similar program on my island."

H.E. Say Sorphea, president of the World School Cambodia thanked UPF's founders for holding this program. At the closing session, she said, "Today, what we learned is more important than anything else. It really, really impressed me; it touched my heart deeply. It taught me how to be a good parent and love others. When I return to Cambodia, I will share this UPF program with my friends and colleagues."