

The Assembly of Ambassadors for Peace in Shkodra region

October 19th 2013, “Zani i Shkodrës” High school

In morning of October 19th, in a warm and friendly atmosphere in Shkodra city was held successfully the Local Assembly of Ambassadors for Peace of the region. Even though the time to organize everything was very short, since October 5th, the leadership of Shkodra Peace Council headed by Prof. Mit’hat Dibra together with some active Ambassadors for made it possible that over 50 people could attend the event which took place at the private school “Zani i Shkodrës” owned by Mr. Dibra who has become already a meeting place of UPF activities during these last two years.



The event was moderated by the national famous dramaturge Mr. Fadil Kraja who said that Shkodra city has changed greatly these past two decades with lots of people coming to live in Shkodra bringing lots of social changes. Together with these huge comings and various habits, dialects, ways of speaking and traditions many social problems have been created. In this way Shkodra suffers, its good people suffer and its history as well suffers. In this context I find appropriate the Latin saying *vis visī*, “live and let me live”. I think this proverb fits very well to the mission of Universal Peace Federation and here in Shkodra we need peace, we need to live and let others as well live.

As the famous historian Strabon said – let’s make Shkodra a Gift of God. Shkodra was not changed by the nature, but by the people that lived there. I have been part of UPF since many years already and since we received the title of AfP together with my wife, we have attended all the activities of UPF and have learned a lot and tried to give something as artist, as dramaturge and as a citizen in general. Today the financial resources are reduced a lot, but we have to keep the organization alive, we should carry its mission and I think that these last two years Prof. Dibra has done very well as chairman of Shkodra Peace Council. Two years are too little for a person who works and invests sincerely for Shkodra, for UPF, even organizing all UPF events in this school with a very significant name “Zani i Shkodrës” *“The Voice of Shkodra”*.



Today we are gathered together to see what have we done and what didn't do yet and also to appoint new Ambassadors for Peace. Also today we will have the election of new Peace Council and its leadership.

After his warm welcoming words, Mr. Kraja invited on the stage Mr. Bajram Ibraj the Chairman of UPF Albania to give the congratulatory address. Mr. Bajram congratulated first Mr. Dibra for his sincere work and dedication as the Chair of Shkodra Peace Council and all Ambassadors for Peace of Shkodra who had been quite active. "For me is a great pleasure to be here together with you and discuss the work done by your Peace Council. To talk about peace, family and love you cannot but include God and Holy Scriptures. God is the source of Peace and Holy Scriptures are the text books where we can learn about peace & love."

Then Mr, Ali Laçej, one of the founders of UPF Albania and Peace Council in Shkodra talked about the organizational consolidation of UPF Albania and its field of action. Mr. La[ej said that UPF Albania will suggest that the mandate of Peace Councils and its leadership can be prolonged from 2 to 4 years based on the experience of previous mandates when many ideas and projects couldn't be realized on time during the mandate.



We have decided to specify and work of UPF in Albania by focusing on the spiritual and mental health of Albanian society. Our work will consider the fact that all Albanians have the same spiritual heritage and come from the same spiritual and material culture. Besides the harmonious cohabitation of different religious communities we will expand it toward the harmonious cohabitation between those who believe and those who do not believe, between people of science and people of faith in order to make them give and take with each-other and no one should show the finger toward the other, because the history has shown that division between "them" and "us" leads to conflicts & conflicts end in wars."



Mr. Laçež said that we have to be more visible in the written and visual media and should work hard to influence the Albanian society, because it is our duty to love the nation. Mr. Laçež also mentioned that we should apply for different projects in different national and international institutions so that we can become independent financially and partner with UPF HQ. Albania has been chosen as Strategic Country by the HQ of UPF and as such we, the Ambassadors for Peace should become more responsible for the development of UPF and contribute more by starting with the membership fee which makes the AfP feel more ownership toward the organization.

Afterwards, the floor was taken by Mr. Mit'hat Dibra the Chairman of Shkodra Peace Council. Mr. Dibra made a resume of activities done by the Local Peace Council during the last two years and the contribution given by the Shkodra Ambassadors for Peace on national and international events. He emphasized the establishment of Lezha Peace Council (May 2012) with the support of Shkodra AfP and the Establishment of Tuzi Peace Council in Montenegro (January 2013). Regarding Shkodra Peace Council and UPF he said: "Knowing that it has not been easy to bring together so many people of good will and knowing that these people could do many great things for the country, we should find the way how to maintain and keep them active through activities.



Mr. Gentjan Qarri
Secretary of Shkodra Council



Moments from the meeting of Peace Council members



Group photo of new Peace Council of Shkodra



New Leadership of Shkodra Peace Council

After the video presentation, through which the participants could have clearer understanding of the work of UPF and its founders, the initiatives, areas of work and the sense of inclusiveness and practical solutions UPF presents to this world in crisis, Mr. Gani Rroshi, member of UPF Presiding Council and President of FFWPU, gave a general presentation of UPF activities during the last two years in Albania and main events on international level focusing especially at the Seonghwa Ceremony of Father Moon last year, Summit of UPF this February and 1 Anniversary of Father Moon's Ascension in August.

During this Assembly 7 new Ambassadors for Peace were appointed. Among them was Imam Haxhi Shaban Lekaj, a Muslim religious leader for 70 years, now 88 years old. Other Ambassadors for Peace appointed were: Mr. Zihni Djepaxhia, Mr. Zamir Laçež, Mrs. Liljana Luani, Mrs. Alfrida Uruçi (the daughter of one AfP who passed away this year Prof. Dr. Gëzim Uruçi), Mr. Bruno Rexhaj and Mr. Fatmir Burgaj. Also the new Secretary General of Shkodra Peace Council was introduced to everybody Mr. Gentjan Qarri who is also the Director of FFWPU in Shkodra.

Mr. Laçej read the proposed names for members of the Shkodra Local Peace Council and after being approved by everybody, the elected ones then elected the Chairman of two Vice Chairs of the Peace Council. The Chairman was re-elected Mr. Mit'hat Dibra and two Vice Chairs were elected Mr. Lumturi Matlia and Mrs. Liljana Luani.



During his closing address as re-elected Chairman Mr. Dibra said that we will work hard together with all of you to fulfill those objectives which we couldn't fulfill last mandate. "I hope we will have also the attention of Head Office of UPF knowing that Shkodra has a historical position in national history."

At the end of the event, all AfP paid the membership fee for the year 2013 giving in this way a concrete contribution toward development of Universal Peace Federation in Albania.

Reported by,
Sokol Rexhepi