

The new Presiding Council of Universal Peace Federation in Albania begins its work

THE FIRST MEETING OF THE PRESIDING COUNCIL OF UPF ALBANIA WAS HELD IN TIRANA: 21 DECISIONS APPROVED

After the successful Assembly of the National Peace Council of UPF Albania in November, the headship of the presiding council elected there, continued with organizing its first meeting. Normally, UPF Albania chairman Mr. Bajram Ibraj likes to plan events in advance. So the date of the meeting was set in the vision of UPF that he presented in his first day as the re-elected chairman of the Universal Peace Federation Albania.

It was December 21st when were called the 21 members of the Directing Council, the executive structure of UPF. The same as two years ago when many important decisions were approved, this time again the Presiding Council approved 21 decisions, among which were the General Plan of Activities, the Budget 2013-2015, the UPF Albania Election Procedure, the Establishment of the Working Committees, the Establishment of the Assistance Office to the Secretary General of UPF.



The meeting was actively attended also by the headship of the National Peace Council headed by prof. Arben Malaj with his vices: prof. Shezai Rrokaj and Mrs. Majlinda Mema. There were present seven from twelve elected members of the Presiding Council and eight out of nine secretaries of the Local Peace Councils and the president of the Women's Federation for World Peace (Mrs. Katarzyna Minollari).

The meeting started in 10:00 AM with the singing of the Albanian national anthem. Afterwards, the opening speech was held by Mr. Ibraj, who first thanked those present and then presented the schedule of the meeting.

The UPF Albania chairman explained through 21 PPT slides, “The Vision of UPF for the next mandate; Development Steps and Strategic Concepts”, where he also explained the importance of Vision 2020.

After this, the members of the Presiding Council attended a short video report from the Assembly of the National Peace Council in Prizren 2013, prepared from the journalist and Ambassador for Peace from Lezha, mr. Rok Lelçaj.



The first meeting of the Presiding Council of UPF Albania was also greeted by the UPF president for Europe, Mr. Paul An through a live Skype connection. “God really loves Albania, like do the founders of UPF, Rev. and Ms. Moon do. Their hope and desire is to see a world in peace where people love each other like brothers and sisters centered on God as their Heavenly Parent. I would like for you to consider yourselves as masters of your nation and to open the way that God’s blessing to come in this people that has suffered that much through history” said president An in his speech.

During the analyses of the decision number 1 “On the objectives and the program of activities of the Universal Peace Federation Albania for the period 18. 11. 2013 – 18. 11. 2015” Mr. Astrit Memia proposed that it should be included in this document, or in another separate one that UPF Albania cannot be accepted to be members individuals that do not believe in God as creator. “I think that that there should not be dualism in our organization. Those who want to join us should at first affirm God as Creator and Parent of humankind”. Mr. Memia also proposed a paper on the relationships of UPF Albania with the governmental institutions.



The first proposal was not supported by the headship of the Presiding Council and the National Peace Council and others who expressed their thoughts. There was a mutual consensus that UPF is a universal organization and that should include all the people and that it tries to approach even those who do not believe and help

them do so. If someone accepts the title as Ambassador for Peace should accept the five principles of peace, among which the first one is “Humankind is one family created by God”.



The second proposal was included in the Decision nr. 14 “For the Establishment of Working Committees of UPF in Albania” where the Committee of Coordination with Institutions and other Organizations will cover those issues that Mr. Memia were concerned with.

Along the discussion of decision nr. 1 was reported for the recent activities in the Local Peace Council in Fier and in Durres, which will plant trees in public sites.

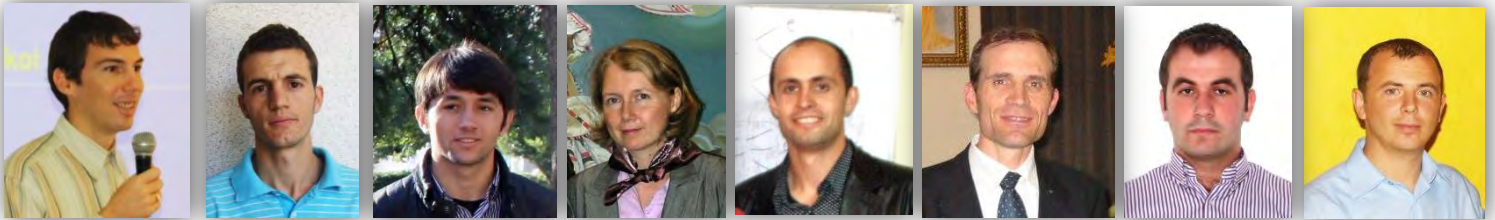
Ms. Elsa Xhai, member of the Presiding Council shared about the experience in Italy where exist projects for sheltering and feeding the children in the streets by proposing something similar that UPF Albania, or maybe the Local Peace Councils, could do. The vice chairman of the National Peace Council, Mr. Rrokaj, proposed that this idea should be proposed in a project with strong foundation and to work in finding the private donators or partnering the governmental institutions.

For this proposal expressed their ideas Mrs. Mema who underlined that street children are a complex issue and that “should be analyzed in details regarding its complexity, the group-ages, etc. and the governmental institutions like the police should be made aware of it, including other groups that work with social services.”

Continuing this thought, Mrs. Eva Nita, chair of Elbasan Peace Council said that at first we should study the problem and present statistics and following those statistics a project should be prepared.

Mr. Malaj proposed that the whole activities program should be transformed into a calendar of monitored activities to be followed in a team. Mr. Ibraj supported this proposal by emphasizing that this should be prepared until December 27th.

The decisions nr. 4 to nr. 11 were the appointments of the new secretaries of Local Peace Councils and specifically of Mr. Gabor Vasmatics (in Tirana), Mr. Arjan Haziraj (in Durrës), Mr. Ajet Bosi (in Elbasan), Mrs. Suzana Sulejmani (Fier), Mr. Arben Duraku (Kukës), Mr. Bruno Rexhaj (Lezhë), Mr. Lubin Argjir (Vlorë), Mr. Gentian Qarri (Shkodër). Mr. Ermir Hoxha will continue to serve as the secretary of Local Peace Council in Korça.



The decision-projects nr.2 to nr. 13 were approved with no objections and decision nr. 14 brought a discussion for the establishment of 12 working committees where the most important is the committee of compiling the projects and fund rising. Even though the 12 proposed committees were approved, still they are not completed with its members. For this, the secretariat will work in the next days to complete with leaders and members from the nine Local Peace Councils. The approved committees were:

1. *Committee of Family Protection*
2. *Committee of Coordination with Institutions and other Organizations*
3. *Committee of Conflict Prevention and Reconciliation*
4. *Committee of Public Relationships, Media and Promotion*
5. *Committee of Good Governance and Transparency*
6. *Committee of Interreligious Harmony*
7. *Committee of Projects and of Fund Raising*
8. *Committee of Justice and Protection of Human Rights*
9. *Committee of Youth, Sports and Health*
10. *Committee of Charity and Social Solidarity*



Professor Rrokaj said “The institutions that ask for donations should know how to get them. We have the chance and should include people that have power in politics and economy. Otherwise we cannot implement any projects.” Mr. Rrokaj highlighted that “specifically the team or the committee of projects and fund raising should

have as members important and known ambassadors for peace.” Chairman Ibraj supported the idea by saying that with the creation of the database we will find and identify all those ambassadors for peace that can be included in this committee.

During this discussion, the chairman of Local Peace Council in Durres, Mr.Hidri said that in one of these committees should also be included the problems of health, idea that was supported by mr. Rroshi who proposed that these issues can be included in the committee on Youth, Sports and Health.



In the decision nr. 20 for the Organization of the National Conference for Leadership was added in the team Mr.Kurti, Mrs. Ruci, Mrs. Xhai. It was also proposed that this conference should be organized in Balkan level.

After the approval of the 21 decisions, the meeting continued with the presentation of the program of National Peace Council from Mr.Ali Laçej who reported over the establishment of the Albanian Peace Council in Prizren in November 17th, 2013 and he read from the Declaration of this initiative in Prizren. He highlighted that: “The Albanian Peace Council is a coordinative instrument of the ambassadors for peace with Albanian nationality. After we declared that only peace can serve for the solution of the historical problems of the Albanian nation, by analyzing the fact that many of the misfortunes of the Albanian nation came from wars of different backgrounds. Mr.Laçej also said that Albanians represent strongly the idea of UPF founders of a nation under one God, considering that for hundreds of years they have lived in peace and harmony, even though with different religious composition. We can be good promoters of the idea that there can be coexistence and cooperation between different religions and ethnicities.”



Mr. Ibraj appreciated the great contribution of the three former presidents: Mr. Alfred Moisiu (President of Albania 2002-2007), Mr. Rexhep Mejdani (President of Albania 1997-2002) and Mr. Fatmir Moisiu (President of Kosovo 2006-2010) for the foundation of the Albanian Council of Peace. He also appreciated the presence and the words of “Albanian Mandela”, Mr. Adem Demaçi, and the representatives from Montenegro, Presheva,

Macedonia and Western Greece. After him it was Mr. Gani Rroshi who presented the budget proposal for 2014. Mainly, the budget of UPF is based in the following resources: membership fee, donations from ambassadors for peace, projects sponsored from International UPF and UPF Europe in the form of attendance in international conferences of AfPs from Albania, sponsorships from the FFWPU Albania and donations from different institutions for specific projects (EU, USAID, the ministries, municipalities, communes, etc.).



Some of the members of the Presiding Council stopped and talked about the membership fee in yearly basis that should be offered to and collected by the headship and secretaries of Local Peace Councils. They should aim that all the ambassadors for peace should offer this yearly fee. They proposed that the membership fee should be connected also with other rights of membership. Mr. Ibraj and Mr. Apostoli highlighted that “all those who have sponsored or have donated should be recorded and thanked officially.”

Afterwards, Mrs. Elsa Xhai emphasized that UPF should find a way to present itself in the media, especially in the public media, where it is possible to be included in the daily programs to present its activities.

Mr. Gani Rroshi, president of FFWPU in Albania and member of the Presiding Council of UPF, talked about the establishment of the Holy Grounds in Tirana, Durrës, Elbasan, Korçë, Shkodër, Vlorë and Prishtina. In this occasion, the ambassador for peace, Mr. Lulëzim Brahja donated some saplings which were planted in the National Park in Tirana.

Reported: Sokol Rexhepi