

International Day of Peace Observed in Central African Republic

Noël Mathias Salogba
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Bangui, Central African Republic—UPF observed International Day of Peace by welcoming as new Ambassadors of Peace the leaders of an armed militia.

On September 22, 2015, the 43 leaders of the Christian militia Anti-balaka, who had fought Muslim militias since 2013, were awarded the certificates of Ambassador for Peace.

On August 21 the 43 leaders—five women and 38 men—had attended a UPF peacebuilding seminar in the capital, Bangui. One of the leaders, Mr. Come Hippolithe Azounou, later testified that he was able to apply the UPF Principles of Peace in the field almost immediately to avert conflict and save human lives.

“Forgive—Love—Unite” was the title of the August conference, the third held by UPF to encourage peace and social cohesion in the Central African Republic. The UPF Principles of Peace and Character Education were the focus of the conference, which was held at the World Evangelization and Awakening Mission Church, located in the Kagamangoulou neighborhood of Bangui.

The International Day of Peace 2015 was also observed on September 20, 2015, as Rev. Noël Mathias Salogba, the secretary general of the Central African Republic branch of UPF, read the UPF statement on the United Nations day on national radio.

The testimony of Mr. Come Hippolithe Azounou of the Anti-balaka militia

Hello, everyone. My name is Come Hippolithe; I am responsible for the administration of the armed militia Anti-balaka, and an Ambassador for Peace.

After the UPF seminar of August 2015 on the five Principles of Peace, I had to travel in the Ombella Mpoko Region and Lobaye, precisely the sectors of Bonaguero, Zoumbele and Boguere, areas where there were conflicts between the militia, villagers and Muslim Fulani.

It should be recalled that the Anti-balaka movement was born following the abuses by the Seleka (armed group close to the Muslims) against the Christian population in order to end this state of thing. Some Muslims in this conflict are innocent.

So after the seminar, I wanted to experience all that we had learned with UPF. The purpose of my traveling was to try to solve some problems that persisted in these villages.

Indeed, in the village of Zoumbele, Boganagone District, there is a Muslim who never took part in anything that happened. Alerted that people were preparing to kill him, I went to this village as Ambassador for Peace and I convened the parties in the conflict and, based on my advice, the two parties resumed cohabitation.

In the village of Boguere I also managed to bring to reason an Anti-balaka who continued to terrorize the population.

What I have learned with UPF gave me the opportunity to educate our Anti-balaka brothers to stop the abuses and favor peace.

I thank UPF of the Central African Republic for the education!

