

UPF and IAPD Sydney, Australia's Towards Peaceful Unification of the Korea

Gregory Stone
March 6, 2021



Sydney, Australia -- UPF and the Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD) in Oceania held a webinar on the theme of "Towards Peaceful Unification of the Korean Peninsula - A New Approach" on March 6, 2021 with 40 participants.

One of the central themes of the life work for world peace of UPF co-founders Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon has been to bring about the peaceful reunification of their homeland, the Korean peninsula. Their approach to this has a distinctive spiritual element.

In his opening remarks, UPF-Oceania chairman, Rev. Yutaka Yamada, spoke about two remarkable meetings that took place between Rev. and Mrs. Moon and Mikhail Gorbachev and Kim Il Sung in 1990 and 1991, respectively. At that time, Gorbachev was the leader of the Soviet Union and Kim, the supreme leader of North Korea. A rapport and trust was established between what could only be described then as arch enemies. The friendship that was formed in those meetings lasted for decades and even became intergenerational in the case of the son and grandson of Kim Il Sung, both of whom have honored and respected Rev. and Mrs. Moon. Rev. Yamada explained that that was the reason that the webinar theme included the words "A New Approach" -- a unique component of winning the trust and friendship of a former enemy through love, good timing and wisdom.

To explore this "new approach," the webinar featured an unusual combination of pragmatic political analysis and a religious perspective. The webinar sought to look at how this "new approach" might be applied to the peaceful reunification of the Korean peninsula and have ramifications for achieving peace more broadly in the world.

Each of the five panellists contributed something special based on their experience. The former first lady of Fiji, Madam Adi Koila Mara Nailatikau, moved everyone as she spoke about the four coups she had lived through in Fiji. Rev. Jenny Chalmers, vicar of St. Andrew's Church in Taupo, New Zealand, gave a profound reflection on Christian pacifism and love of neighbor based on the Sermon on the Mount. Amb. Adrian Buzo, a former Australian diplomat to both North and South Korea, gave a sobering but very clear, insightful and realistic overview of the situation on the Korean peninsula. Dr. Thomas Ward, president of the Unification Theological Seminary, presented profound and thought-provoking content, condensing decades of history into just seven minutes. UPF International chairman, Dr. Thomas Walsh, spoke at the end to present a broad ranging and powerful overview of the seminar's theme and bring the event to a stimulating conclusion.

Overall, the webinar highlighted a promising approach to the problem of the peaceful reunification of the Korean peninsula. The impression of the attendees can be summed up in the reflection of Rev. Chalmers, who said: "Thank you so much for inviting me to be part of this extraordinarily stimulating webinar. What an unexpected gift on a Saturday morning. Thank you so much."

To read Madam Adi Koila Mara Nailatikau's speech, [click here](#).



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March 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
28	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3

MAR 30: UPF-USA - "Healthy Marriages Don't Happen by Accident"

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MAR 31: UPF-South America - For the Peaceful Reunification of Korea and World Peace through Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity and Universal Values

MAR 31: UPF-Austria - Faith, Ethics & Education

MAR 31: WCLC - Building a Unified Global Community: The Responsibility of Christianity

APR 9: UPF-EUME - The Constructive Role of Religious Minorities to Peace and Development in the Society and the Nation

APR 15: UPF-EUME - 3rd Webinar on The Abraham Accords: Toward Peace in the Middle East

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Speeches

A. NAILATIKAU: ADDRESS TO UPF WEBINAR

Written by Madam Adi Koila Mara Nailatikau, Former First Lady of Fiji
 Saturday, March 6, 2021

Address to UPF-Oceania Webinar "Towards Peaceful Unification of the Korean Peninsula – A New Approach," March 6, 2021

In preparing for today's webinar I was posed with the question: "If we cannot clearly proclaim victory and if we're unwilling to accept defeat—how and when does a war or conflict end?"

In my small island nation of Fiji, this question has been brought up many times: How does conflict truly end? Having lived through four coups—three military and one civilian, I do know that it does not end or end well by force.

When we force a conflict to end with arms, human loss and devastation, without properly taking into account the needs and wants of all the people on both sides, we lay an unsteady and weak foundation for the future.

We must look at all angles of the situation and the events in the years [leading up to] the Korean War from 1950 to 1953. The roots of the problems were growing long before then, and that is important knowledge to take into consideration.

In wars and conflicts, it is said that brute force and armed weapons is the only power and way forward. Therefore, it is rightly assumed that in order to gain the opposite of conflict and war—a true peace and a prosperous nation—the opposite of that type of power [is needed]. It is not guns or armies that will bring true peace, but knowledge, understanding and love—that is the power for moving forward. That is, **knowledge** of the conflict in its entirety, **understanding** of both sides and what they really want and **a love** of humanity, a people, a nation and its history of being one Korea. This may seem difficult considering where both sides are at—a standoff and long-standing armistice. However, to quote the late Rev. Sun Myung Moon: "Remember that the Unification Church rose, not in freedom, but from a prison, the pit of suffering."

If we can fathom and understand that, much can be achieved, even from the darkest of places, and [we will] not lose hope and can bring about true change and a lasting and true peace. It is often asked: "Should religious organizations be involved in politics and political conflicts at that?" Absolutely. Because, at the very crux of it all, all religions desire the end goal of peace and the preservation of the greatest gift given to us by God: the gift of human life. Where states value economic gain and gain of territory and power, it is through religion and the understanding of and desire for peace as the absence of war where we will succeed.

Knowledge and understanding will allow us to penetrate where armed weapons cannot, and there is no better way to do this than through soft diplomacy tactics.

In 2013, Pope Francis spoke of the victims of historical divisions and concluded: "It is difficult for them to accept our invitation to forgiveness and reconciliation since they think we are ignoring their pain and asking them to give up their memory and ideals. But if they see the witness of authentically fraternal and reconciled communities they will find that witness luminous and attractive."

We cannot force either [the North or South] to see and appreciate the beauty of unification, but we can show them this, and this was wonderfully illustrated by Rev. and Mrs. Moon.

By introducing a united church and family, and with their dedication to the reunification of Korea beginning over 30 years ago, they planted a seed of hope that has fostered engagement with the North which many others were incapable of doing.

Rev. and Mrs. Moon have understood that at the heart of Korea is a spiritual heritage as well as a common culture, tradition, language and one people.

Through their creation of peace zones with opportunities in the sporting, cultural, humanitarian and political sectors, Rev. and Mrs. Moon formed a depth of engagement and mutual trust that will be the foundation for change and unification in the years to come.

We must also take note that when barriers come down and there is peace and unity, there is also a void of a life that once was.

It is therefore crucial that this void be filled with a unified Korea founded in a source of freedom, rights and values for all its citizens to ensure a lasting peace and true movement forward.

We, as an international family, must always support and guide the peninsula to unite. Whereas in the past the international influence was part of the cause of division, in the present and future we must stand united as a cause of unification.

And, we must always keep faith. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things unseen."

However, in this case, we have seen a unified Korea before, wars end, countries return to a peace they once knew and families and people reunited. I truly believe this can happen again.

If there is one thing we have learned from this post-COVID world, it is that the unthinkable can happen. States agreed to shut down days [after the pandemic emerged], bringing the world to a standstill for a greater good, and with that, a new global precedent has been set.

New opportunities unfold for all nations, and I believe that one of those opportunities we will see come to fruition is a united, independent and free Korea.

Kam-sa-ham-ni-da, vinaka vakalevu, thank you.

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