

UPF Sydney, Australia Ambassadors for Peace Conference on Landmine Epidemic

Greg Stone
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Sydney, Australia - On May 12, 2021, Australian Ambassadors for Peace joined a virtual conference on the landmine epidemic co-hosted by HOPEMAN Consultants UK and the Global Institute for Water, Environment, and Health (GIWEH), an international NGO based in Geneva, Switzerland.

The conference, titled, "The Landmine Epidemic and Virtual Contemporary Art Exhibition of Humanitarian Disaster Caused by Anti-personal Landmines" was convened to increase public awareness at the regional and international levels about the potential risks of anti-personal landmines, discuss possible opportunities for eliminating those risks and find best practices for ensuring public safety.

The increasing number of casualties caused by the use of landmines in many other war-torn countries has changed the landmine use issue from a political to a humanitarian one. Humanitarian crises start at the local level; therefore, early preventive actions need to be taken to avoid risks escalating and transforming into challenges of global proportions. Speakers from around the world noted that the consequences and potential risks of anti-personal landmines is a matter for all countries. The conference also underscored the importance of rapid, joint action at the international level to cope with rising challenges. The organizers hope that they will be able to develop a common vision on cooperation and coordination in the field of anti-personal landmines, ensuring the security and sustainable use of liberated zones.

Among the more than 20 speakers were:

Leyla Gasimova, senior advisor, HOPEMAN Consultants UK

Nidal Salim, founder and director, Global Institute of Water Environment and Health

Bruno Donat, chief, United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) Geneva Office

Ambassador for Peace Dr. Apollo S. Nsubuga-Kyobe, fellow, Institute of Managers and Leaders Australia, and Justice of the Peace

Ambassador for Peace Dr. Steve Ratmetse, CEO, Nelson Mandela Organisation, and president, Nelson Mandela Day Australia

John Bellavance, coordinator, International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAAP)-Oceania, and vice president, UPF-Australia

Lala van der Kolk, co-founder, Mine Mark Foundation, Hague, Netherlands

Naji Moulay Lahsen, executive director, Network of the Independent Commission of Human Rights in North Africa

Lord Duncan McNair, senior consultant and advisor on education and human rights, and founder and director, Peaceful Planet Human Rights Education

Imran A. Chowdhury, founder and CEO, Centre for Policy Promotion and Prevention

Burcak Basbug Erkan, associate professor of statistics, Middle East Technical University; academic director, Institute of Civil Protection and Emergency Management (ICPEM) UK; and special advisor to former Turkish Prime Minister H.E. Ahmet Davutoglu, chairman of the Future Party

Michela Pugliese, migration and asylum researcher, Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor
Ambassador for Peace Dr. Waseem Ahmed, CEO, HOPEMAN Consultants UK

The conference was covered by the [London Post](#).