

IAPP Launched in Port Vila, Vanuatu at the Warwick Le Lagoon Hotel

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Port Vila, Vanuatu -- The national inauguration of the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) took place at the Warwick Le Lagoon Hotel in the country's capital of Port Vila on the evening of November 20, 2017.

About 40 guests attended the program, including the speaker of the Parliament of Vanuatu, a state minister, five members of the parliament, a former head of state and other government officials, as well as religious and community leaders, youth and women leaders and representatives of the media.

The conference, which was emceed by Mr. Peter Onis, secretary general of UPF-Vanuatu, began with an opening prayer by Pastor Pakoa Maraki, former secretary general of the Vanuatu Christian Council and an Ambassador for Peace, which was followed by welcoming remarks, given by Mr. Abraham Nasak, vice chair of UPF-Vanuatu and director of Vanuatu's National Disaster Management Office (NDMO).

In his inaugural address, Mr. Alfred Moa, Vanuatu's minister of internal affairs, expressed his support for the purpose and vision of the IAPP and wished every success for UPF and the IAPP in Vanuatu.

Rev. Shang Seon Park, chair of UPF-Oceania, who gave the congratulatory address, stressed the role and significance of the IAPP.

Rev. Gregory Stone, secretary general of UPF-Oceania, gave a presentation on UPF and the IAPP and on family values and world peace.

After enjoying dinner, everyone convened for the panel discussion. Hon. Andrew Solomon Napuat, a member of parliament and parliamentary secretary for the Ministry of Internal Affairs, moderated the panel featuring

Silas Bule, a member of parliament and parliamentary secretary for the Ministry of Education;

Gracia Shadrack, a member of parliament and parliamentary secretary for the Ministry of Health;

Jacob Matanegwele, a member of parliament for Ambae constituency;

Uri Warawara, member of parliament for the Malo/Aore constituency;

Pastor Pakoa Maraki, former secretary general of the Vanuatu Christian Council, representing religious leaders;

Paramount chief John Tari Lama, president of the Port Vila Council of Chiefs, representing traditional leaders; and

Leas Cullwick, CEO of the National Council of Women, representing women leaders.

The discussion was vibrant and inspiring. Many of the speakers underscored the importance of strong family values and righteous, moral leadership in society and on the national level. A question and answer session followed during which some participants offered their comments on the topics that were discussed.



Afterwards, Hon. Saimon, speaker of the Parliament of Vanuatu, gave remarks and officially launched the IAPP in Vanuatu.

The program concluded with UPF presenting Ambassador for Peace awards to 10 guests -- including Hon. Saimon, Hon. Moa and five members of parliaments -- and with the reading and signing of the resolution launching the IAPP-Vanuatu.

Note: The Parliament of Vanuatu is made up of 52 members. An extraordinary session, or a special session, of parliament had commenced at the time of the launching of the IAPP in the country.