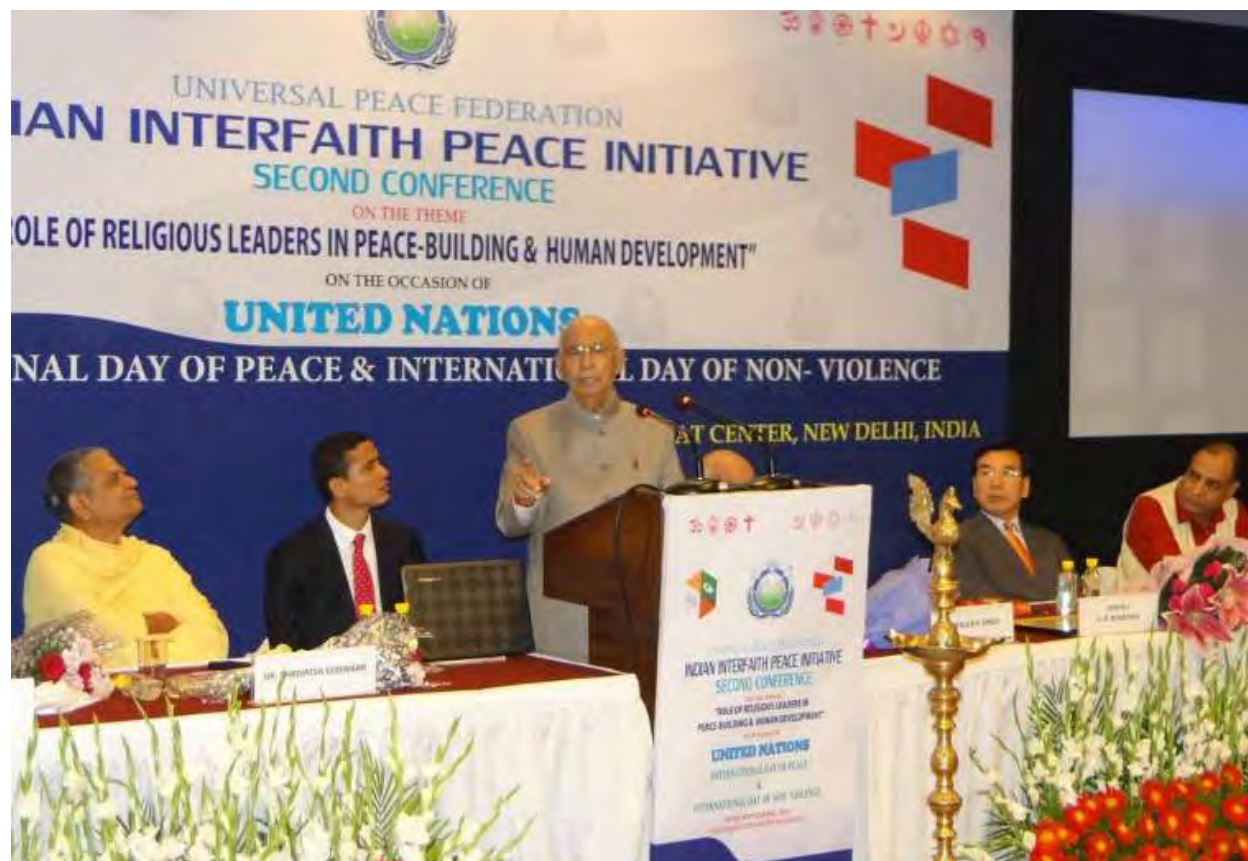


Religious Leaders Gather for Second Indian Interfaith Peace Initiative Conference

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New Delhi, India—On the occasion of the UN International Day of Peace and International Day of Non-Violence 2016, UPF held its second Indian Interfaith Peace Initiative conference on the theme, “Role of Religious Leaders in Peace Building and Human Development.” The conference took place on September 30, 2016 at the India Habitat Center, and is the continuation of the Indian Interfaith Peace Initiative, which was launched in August 2015 in the presence of Dr. Jitendra Singh, minister of State for the Prime Minister’s Office of India; Dr. Thomas G. Walsh, president of UPF-International; and prominent religious leaders in India. About 180 people attended the event.

The inaugural address was given by Hon. Dr. H. R. Bhardwaj, former union minister and governor of Karnataka state, who expressed appreciation for the work UPF is doing in the field of interfaith peace building. The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Chung Sik Yong, chair of UPF-Asia, and was followed by speeches, given by Hon. B. P. Singh, former governor of Sikkim state and chair of UPF-India;

Dr. Shrivatsa Goswami, a Hindu scholar and priest from Vrindavan, Uttar Pradesh;
Mr. A. M. Kazi, an Islamic scholar from New Delhi;
Rev. Dr. R. R. Bhaskar, a Christian scholar from New Delhi;
Dr. Robert S. Kittel, education director of UPF-Asia;
Mr. Alok Mehta, chief editor of Outlook Hindi magazine; and
Amb. K. V. Rajan, a former Indian diplomat.

All the speakers thanked UPF for the Indian Interfaith Peace Initiative and the initiative’s work to promote interfaith harmony and cooperation for peace and human development. Each speaker also emphasized the important role religious leaders can play in promoting the initiative. During the program, Dr. Bhardwaj was appointed as an Ambassador for Peace.

The program was coordinated and emceed by Mr. Krishna Adhikari, secretary general of UPF-India.

At the end of the program, Dr. Parmod Kumar, associate professor of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and secretary general of the Professor World Peace Academy (PWPA)-India delivered the closing remarks and thanks everyone for contributing to the success of the program.

The third Indian Interfaith Peace Initiative conference is expected to be held in April 2017.