

## UPF New Zealand commemorated the UN International Day of Peace 2018

Adel Jamati  
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Universal Peace Federation New Zealand (UPF-NZ) commemorated the UN International Day of Peace, on Saturday, September 22, 2018 at Te Mahurehure Cultural Centre, Point Chevalier, Auckland. It was co-sponsored by Women's Federation for World Peace New Zealand (WFWP-NZ) and this year's theme was 'Communities Together for Peace and Friendship'.

Well over 100 participants from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds gathered for the event which was graced by the presence of Councilor Penny Hulse and enriched by a number of dedicated charitable and religious organizations who, with display tables, were able to share with everyone their services to society.

A solemn Powhiri led by Rev. Bill and Violet Tangariki representing the Marae and Mr. Geoffrey Prentice representing UPF-NZ set a beautiful spirit for the event. Opening remarks by Mr. Adel Jamati, UPF-NZ Director, set the tone for the event by emphasizing the culture of "Peace Through Service" and pointing out that the essence of all religions is one: Love God and Live for the Sake of Others.



Councilor Penny Hulse, as the chief speaker, gave warm and gracious words of acknowledgement and encouragement to all present, enveloping the Marae with a spirit of unity, peace and friendship. She reminded us of the need for Peace building in the very uncertain and sometimes hostile political environment. She has been serving the Waitakere communities for 27 years and has great passion for their diversity.

UPF-NZ recognized selfless individuals who have contributed greatly to their communities through a life

of service and presented them with the Ambassador For Peace Award. The recipients are Mr. Prithi Pal Singh MNZM, Mrs. Anne Pala QSM and Datin Dr. Nor Hafizah Ismail. Launched in 2001, Ambassadors for Peace® is one of the largest and most diverse network of peace leaders worldwide.

Next, WFWP-NZ conducted their signature Bridge of Peace ceremony which was officiated by its President, Mrs. Felicity Cairns. She explained the deep meaning of the ceremony: Ceremony participants meet a sister from a former enemy nation, a different faith, culture or race and commit themselves to bridge the gaps of heart between them, forgiving and repenting for anything they or their ancestors have done to cause pain to the other. It is a new and effective way of healing the wounds of the past. Three pairs participated in the ceremony: Pauline Jamati (Europe) and Violet Tangariki (Maori), Anne Pala (Islam) and Cornelia Goijarts (Christianity), and finally, Keiko Watanabe (Japan) and Chan Ju Lee (Korea).

The audience was then dazzled by Ambika Krishnamurthi, a Year- 12 student at ACG Strathallan when she presented a beautiful Indian classical khatak dance symbolizing a peacock's graceful movements. Her captivating performance added an ethnic charm, reminding us of the cultural diversity of New Zealand.

Afterward, Mr. Andrew Halim, UPF-NZ Youth Coordinator, presented the local chapter of Peace Road, a global peace project. He briefly shared the background of Peace Road which aims to actualize the International Peace Highway originally proposed in 1981 by Dr Sun Myung Moon, founder of UPF. That segment was concluded by an exciting promotional video encouraging the participants to join the 2019 Peace Road.

As all the main components of the event concluded by then, everyone was encouraged to stand up and sing "We Are the World" by Michael Jackson. An atmosphere of warmth and joy brought us together as one family.

UPF-NZ, with its network of Ambassadors for Peace and in collaboration with leaders and like-minded organizations, seeks unity among all people and endeavors to strengthen the Family Ideal.



Photos for the event, courtesy of Mr Barry Noel, [can be found here.](#)

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