

## UPFs Philippine One Million Rally of Hope - World Leaders Call for Peace

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Manila, Philippines -- Millions of people from 63 nations joined the online Rally of Hope Philippines convened by UPF with the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) on February 6, 2021, on the theme, "One Million People Praying for the Healing of the Nation and the World." The event was broadcasted live on PTV 4, the national government TV channel, and on various social media platforms, as well as by partner radio and cable TV stations in different parts of the nation.

This Rally of Hope, which was also held in celebration of the UN's World Interfaith Harmony Week, was a virtual interfaith gathering that brought together Filipinos and other citizens from different corners of the world to collectively pray for the healing of the world from the COVID-19 pandemic, the healing of Mother Earth from climate change, and the healing of social divisions.

The event highlighted the joint efforts of UPF and its partners to support the communities that were affected by the typhoons that struck the Philippines last year through the True Love in Action Project inspired by the vision of UPF co-founder, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon. In addition to the relief operations that were conducted, Dr. Moon offered a donation of \$40,000 for this cause through the Philippine government's Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), which was represented at the event by Mr. Clifford Cyril Rivala, director of the Disaster Response Management Bureau.

The UPF co-founder's address from Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon was delivered by Dr. Robert S. Kittel, chair of Cheon Eui Won and co-chair of UPF in the Asia Pacific. In her speech, Dr. Moon commended the resolution of the rally which calls for the necessity of strengthening the foundation for character education for the youth and building stable, loving families. She thanked the Philippine president, H.E. Rodrigo Duterte, for his written message commending UPF, supporting the Rally of Hope and emphasizing the vital role of leaders and citizens alike to work together to build a strong and empowered global community that upholds the best interests of the future generations.

The program started with a "Water of Harmony" ceremony and an interfaith prayer offered by leaders of different faiths in the country. Rev. Masaichi Hori, regional president of FFWPU Asia Pacific 2 and co-chairman of UPF-Asia Pacific, gave the welcome remarks.

Five-time speaker of the Philippine House of Representatives and international co-chair of the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP), Hon. Jose De Venecia Jr., gave an opening message in which he mentioned that in the face of today's threats which transcend national, regional and even hemispheric boundaries, there is a greater need for organizations like UPF to promote

peace, solidarity and cooperation.

The featured keynote speakers were leaders in Oceania: the former prime minister of Fiji, H.E. Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka, and the speaker of the House of the Assembly of the Republic of Kiribati, Hon. Tangariki Reete Tekiaa. H.E. Rabuka underscored the power of prayer in overcoming our present circumstances: "There is power in prayer. And when many people pray together, it is a powerful synergy for a purpose, mostly a positive purpose. I promise to pray for the healing of the people of the Philippines, the healing of the nation of the Philippines, and for the healing of the people of the world."

Hon. Reete boldly declared that "We are a team: rich, poor, developed, developing we are diverse but at the root we are indeed one human family under God."

Leaders of the Philippine government also gave their special messages during the program:

Hon. Lord Allan Velasco, current speaker of the Philippine House of Representatives, mentioned that we need the power of prayer to overcome adversities that come our way. We need to rally our hope and love and unite for a brighter future for the Philippines.

Hon. Jose Ruperto "Martin" Andanar, secretary of the Presidential Communications Operations Office of the Philippines, said that the value we create as a collective voice is immense and should be maximized to its potential to increase the success of our endeavors to bring about changes in our society, as well as to generate, innovate and improve communication among each other.

Hon. Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go, current senator of the Philippines and a long time special assistant of President Duterte, encouraged everyone to work together to overcome all adversities and make sure that no one is left behind so that we can emerge from this experience as a stronger, more resilient and more united people.

The official written message of Philippine President H.E. Rodrigo Duterte was read. He commended UPF for uniting people from various faiths in a common platform for prayer and reflection. He also said it is imperative for leaders and citizens alike to work together to build a strong and empowered global community.

Several renowned personalities in various fields in the Philippines also shared their messages of hope, including incumbent Philippine senator, Hon. Ramon "Bong" Revilla, Jr.; president of IAPP-Philippines, Hon. Leopoldo Bataoil; and congressman Hon. Faustino "Inno" Dy.

In addition, the winner of the recent Asia Pacific S!NERGY competition organized by the International Association of Youth and Students for Peace (IAYSP) read an excerpt of her winning speech. Furthermore, the online event highlighted the campaign to support the "Billion Tree Planting and Growing Project" to be carried out in partnership with national and local government units in the Philippines.

World-class entertainment from Mr. Jed Madela, 4th Impact, Ms. Gerphil Flores, Reo Brothers, Baliktanaw Dance Company and the Philippine Meistersingers was also showcased during the event as well messages of hope and inspiration from youth and local leaders, front liners and other social media personalities and influencers.

This Rally of Hope forged partnerships between UPF and different government agencies and civil society organizations, including with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Social Welfare and Development, the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the National Youth Commission, which all united to support and endorse the event at the national level.