

## Religious Leaders launch Inter-religious Association for Peace and Development in Portugal

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June 19, 2021



Lisbon, Portugal -- Leaders from four religious spheres took part in the national inauguration of the Inter-religious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD).

UPF held the online program on June 19, 2021, with the theme "Contributions of Inter-religious Harmony for Peace and Development."

After the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP), another UPF association, was inaugurated in the Portuguese Parliament in 2018, the work of the inter-religious association intensified in 2019. Good ties of proximity and friendship were created with various religious leaders.

The event had an online audience of nearly 80 participants and the involvement of leaders from

four religious spheres: Christianity (four denominations), Hinduism (two communities), Eastern philosophies (two entities), and Islam (one community).

UPF invited four distinguished speakers:

**Professor Paulo Mendes Pinto** – Lusophone University, Science of Religions;

**Dr. Ajit Hansraj** –Hindu Community of Portugal;

**Teresa Prim** – Brahma Kumaris;

**Elder Joaquim Moreira** – Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

In addition, eight Portuguese religious leaders took part in a beautiful "peace offering," which was filmed and shown at the inauguration. Leaders of the Hindu Community of Portugal, Brahma Kumaris, Sheicho no-Ie, the Catholic Church, the Congregation of Marist Brothers, the Anglican Church, the Lusitanian Church, and Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) each offered a representative prayer.

Ten leaders from the inter-religious area were appointed as Ambassadors for Peace -- including a representative of the Municipality of Odivelas, our longtime partner in the inter-religious area.

The inauguration received institutional support from six partner organizations: the Lusophone University, Science of Religions, two main associations of Hindu communities in Portugal, and the Association of the Islamic Community of the Municipality of Sintra, as well as our national partners FFWPU and Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP).

The IAPD Resolution was signed by 24 leaders of this inter-religious area, including one of the members of the Board of the Lusophone University of Lisbon, an Ambassador for Peace, Professor Dr. Esmeraldo Azevedo; the president of the Association of the Islamic Community of the Municipality of Sintra; the national leaders of FFWPU, the national president of WFWP and also three prominent leaders of UPF for Europe and the Middle East.

UPF-Portugal is very grateful to all those who made this moment possible. May it be the continuation and the harbinger of a steady growth in the prosperity of our joint work for inter-religious harmony and peace, from our national level. Thank you very much!

"We are together!"