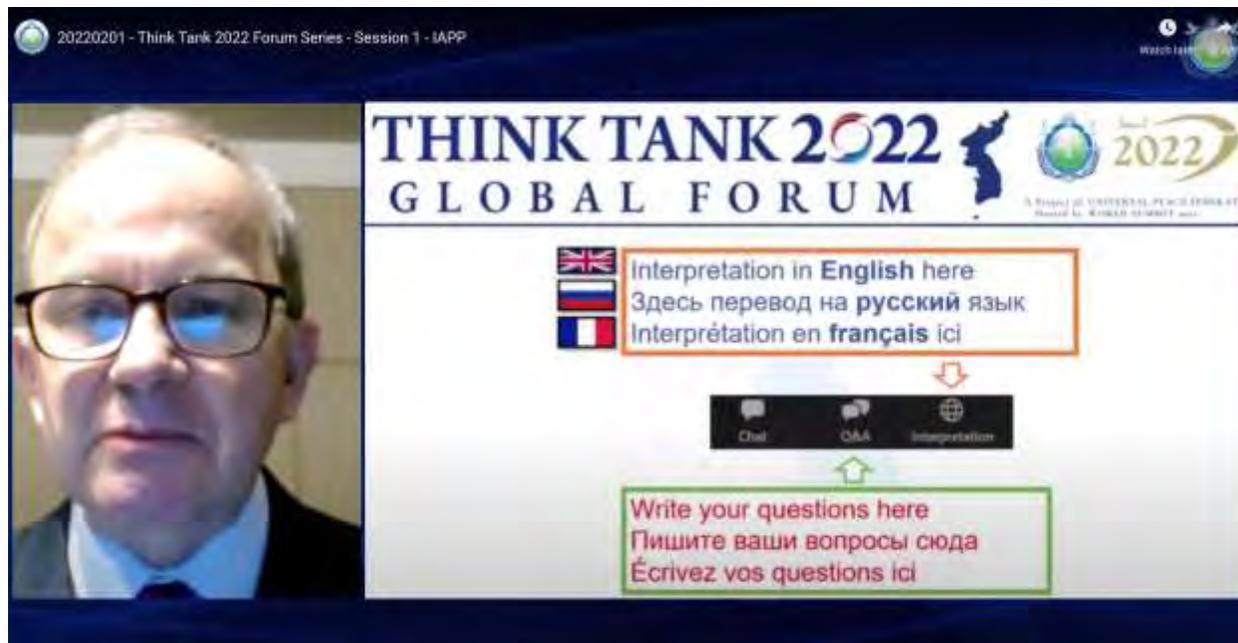


Think Tank 2022 Forum, Europe and the Middle East: Executive Summary

Alan Sillitoe
February 3, 2022



Europe and the Middle East -- The Think Tank 2022 Global Forum held on February 1 to 3 focused on opening the path to reconciliation, peace and development on the Korean Peninsula, Asia and the world.

The eight webinars of the Global Forum were held in preparation for the World Summit 2022, convened in Seoul, South Korea, and online on February 10 to 14 with the theme "Toward Peace on the Korean Peninsula."

Several of the Global Forum's eight sessions were convened in collaboration with UPF and its associations on other continents or nations. The series of webinars had approximately 3,350 views on Zoom and a total of about 400,000 views altogether, including all social networks.

Session I - International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) - February 1, 2022, 10:00 CET

Theme: "Peace and Stability in East Asia and the Korean Peninsula"

The first session was preceded by an introduction to UPF and the Think Tank 2022 Forums by **Jacques Marion** and **Dr. Katsumi Otsuka**, the UPF co-chairs for Europe and the Middle East (EUME). Mr. Marion explained that these continental forums were being held simultaneously around the world. Dr. Otsuka described the UPF approach as being one of empathy, cooperation, dialogue and living for the sake of others without losing parental neutrality.

Peter Haider, the coordinator of IAPP-EUME and the president of UPF-Austria, introduced this session, which was held jointly with IAPP-Japan. **Yasushi Matsumoto**, the president of IAPP-Japan and UPF-Japan, explained that IAPP was now officially registered in the Japanese Diet and included 78 current parliamentarians. It had engaged in two-plus-two forums with US congressmen last year and wanted to do the same with EUME politicians.

The moderator was **Dr. Beatrice Bischof** of the Foreign Affairs Association, Munich, Germany, who has specialized in Asian foreign policy issues including the Korean Peninsula. Her questions to the main speakers revealed a keen understanding of the issues.

Hon. Yoshiaki Harada, a member of Japan's Parliament, described the status of the Korean Peninsula as a very important issue for Japan. Japan is watching and hoping for North and South Koreans to get together, but does not have an effective role in this issue, he said. The North Korean missile tests are a concern for Japan, which would like the DPRK to be much more established within the international community of nations.

Hon. Glyn Ford from the United Kingdom, a former member of the European Parliament, explained that he has made just under 50 visits to the DPRK, many as part of a European Union parliamentary delegation. He explained that DPRK President Kim Jong Un believes he faces two existential threats: externally from the United States, South Korea and Japan, and internally from the people who matter in

Pyongyang, due to the difficulty of maintaining their standard of living. He said he sees new hope for a six-party talks format, possibly with other bodies such as ASEAN or South Asian states.

Dr. Yevgeny Kim (Kim Young Woong), a leading researcher at the Center for Korean Studies, Institute of the Far East, Russian Academy of Sciences, agreed with Hon. Ford that the imbalance of military spending between the DPRK and South Korea, Japan and the United States has led to the current situation. He explained that the threat of an attack by the DPRK was very unlikely, given that it would lead to its destruction.

Hon. Nina Nováková, a member of Parliament in the Czech Republic, spoke of her passion for peace and the prevention of the crime of war. She considered the plight of the divided Korean Peninsula in relation to the experience of the people of Germany and other peoples of Central Europe. She spoke of the tension between the strong identity that the 5,000-year history of the Korean people brings and the dwindling desire of the South Koreans to reunite with North Korea now that the separation has lasted more than 70 years.

Session II - Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD) - February 1, 2022, 13:00 CET

Theme: "Can Peace Be Achieved by Human Means Alone? – Ending 70 Years of Painful Division on the Korean Peninsula"

Heiner W. Handschin, coordinator of IAPD-EUME, in his opening remarks said that IAPD, on this first day of the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week, was celebrating interreligious harmony. Subsequently, a music video of the WIHW anthem "The Gift of Love" was played. Mr. Handschin then introduced the moderator of the session, **Gabriela Mieli**, the regional coordinator of UPF for Southern Europe.

Rev. Dr. William A. McComish, the dean emeritus of St. Peter's Cathedral in Geneva, Switzerland, described the tragic situation on the Korean Peninsula as being caused against the will of the Koreans, unlike the division of his homeland, Ireland, which resulted from discord among its own population. There are vested interests in a divided Korea among the major powers concerned, he said. So far, secular leaders haven't come up with any plausible solutions. Without the power of God, humans cannot make it.

Emina Frljak, the program coordinator for Youth for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, said that to achieve unification on the Korean Peninsula, reconciliation must happen both in politics and in the hearts of the people. Faith-based organizations, religious people, and people of faith must raise awareness among politicians and the people about the situation on the peninsula. As the youth are part of the present and the future, Ms. Frljak called for an intergenerational dialogue in the peace process.

Nikolay Kizimov from Russia, the director of the "Great Nation" spiritual and moral center, explained that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, many were searching for spiritual knowledge. He discovered in the sacred books that, among other things, many norms of communist ideology were taken from the Bible, that sacred books are a font of knowledge, and that not only scientists who discover the laws of nature should be admired, but also the Lord who created them.

Lejla Hasandedić-Dapo from Turkey, a psychologist, psychotherapist, and URI Europe CC liaison officer who grew up in war-torn Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 1990s, explained that her peacebuilding journey began when she met a man whose father had been responsible for the death of her grandmother and she decided to forgive him and his family. She thus changed from being a person who hates others to someone who is forgiving. She said she hopes that young people in North and South Korea, who are living separated from each other, may soon cross the border and bridges in their minds and live peacefully together.

Venerable Dr. Michel Thao Chan from France, the president of *Cercle de Réflexion des Nations*, described two main points concerning Korean reunification. First, the problems of reunification cannot be solved at the same level of consciousness where they were created. Secondly, actions and projects made justifiable in the name of reunification must be gradually removed from the information and education in the two Koreas. Solutions must be rooted in the convergence of the soul of the Korean people.

Session III - International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP) - February 1, 2022, 15:00 CET

Theme: "Enlisting Global Cooperation on the Issue of the Peaceful Reunification of the Korean Peninsula"

This session was organized collaboratively between ISCP-USA and ISCP-EUME. **Dr. Franco Famularo**, the coordinator of ISCP for North America and the president of UPF-Canada, gave a brief introduction and introduced the moderator, **Ambassador Christopher Hill** from the United States, a professor of international relations at Columbia University and a former U.S. ambassador to the Republic

of Korea.

Ambassador Hill described the ISCP session as going right to the heart of the problem, which is the failure so far to be able to bring North Korea into the overall international community and, in particular, the failure so far to achieve peaceful reunification.

The Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper, prime minister of Canada (2006-2015), commended South Korean President Moon Jae-in for pursuing a peace treaty with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. However, he advised deep caution and restraint when it comes to North Korea. He also insisted that reunification by invasion must never be allowed to happen. Mr. Harper concluded by emphasizing the importance for South Korea to stay close to its allies, especially the United States, while not forgetting its many other friends in the world, including Japan.

H.E. Kjell Magne Bondevik, the prime minister of Norway (1997-2000; 2001-2005), who visited both North and South Korea in the 1990s, described the succession of efforts from the "sunshine policy" of ROK President Kim Dae-jung who met Chairman Kim Jong Il in 2000, to the meeting between ROK President Roh Moo-hyun and Chairman Kim Jong Il in 2007, and the summit between Kim Jung Un and U.S. President Donald Trump, in which the U.S. side seemed ill-prepared. Mr. Bondevik recommended a new approach in which the participants in the six-party talks must play a role, but said that confidence-building measures were needed to kickstart such talks.

H.E. Anthony Carmona, the president of Trinidad and Tobago (2013-2018), pointed to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco) as a solution to the current predicament. This treaty led to the founding of the Organization for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), establishing Latin America and the Caribbean as a nuclear-weapons-free zone. Mr. Carmona affirmed that the Caribbean, as a zone of peace, can facilitate future peaceful negotiations on the Korean Peninsula.

Doug Bandow from the United States, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute, mentioned the upcoming presidential elections in South Korea and the recent missile tests by North Korea. Dealing with these tensions today will help prepare for the reunification of tomorrow, but this will require the help of other states in the region, he said: the allies -- the United States and China -- as well as the countries close by -- such as Russia and Japan -- and international organizations -- such as the UN and World Bank.

Hon. Salvador Nasralla, the vice president of Honduras, pointed to sports, such as football, as a means to bring countries together, citing such experiences as that between the United States and Iran. Honduras is a small nation, he said, and therefore in some ways feels closer to North Korea than to South Korea. Therefore it can help these two countries to come together, especially by proposing some sports events.

Dr. Niklas Swanström from Sweden, the executive director of the Institute for Security and Development Policy, said he held a pessimistic view about reunification, explaining that the German experience, in which a strong economy effectively swallowed a struggling one, was not a good one. We need to look at a version of the Helsinki Process, which he dubbed the "*Arirang* process," in which we can work on different issues, such as confidence-building measures, the economy, and aid, he said.

Session IV - International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAAP) - February 2, 2022, 10:00 CET

Theme: "The International Highway Project: A Global Peace Road – Northeast Asia – Europe – Africa"

Yoshihiro Yamazaki, the coordinator for IAAP-EUME, briefly explained about the session's background, focusing on the International Highway Project, now commonly known as the Peace Road Project.

After a short video titled "Peace Road 2018," Mr. Yamazaki introduced the session's moderator, **Dr. Vladimir Petrovsky**, the chief researcher of the Russia-China Center, Institute of Far Eastern Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences. Explaining the history of the International Highway Project, which first was advocated in 1981 by UPF founder Dr. Sun Myung Moon, Dr. Petrovsky described how China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) could fit into this vision.

Dr. Artur Victoria, a professor from Portugal and a specialist on China's Belt and Road Initiative, explained that the BRI adopted in 2013 is a transcontinental, long-term policy and investment program, aiming at infrastructure development and economic integration with a network of roads, railways and maritime routes. It has invested in about 70 countries and international organizations. Essential in the further development of the BRI are, among others, respect for national sovereignty, bilateral and multilateral agreements in economic and financial areas, environmental management and cooperation for world peace, happiness, mutual prosperity and universal values, he said.

Dr. Yulia Kharlamova, an associate professor at the Russian University of Transport, referred to Pyotr Semyonov-Tyan-Shansky, an outstanding Russian geographer and academician who, early in the 19th century, paid great attention to the problems of creating and controlling transport routes. He predicted what he called a "transcontinental" or intercontinental organization, in which Russia would play an important role. Given its geographical position, Russia can be a balance holder between Europe and Asia, she said. Dr. Kharlamova believes Russia should be open to international structural works, especially on land, as they allow regions to develop.

H.E. Mamadou Kone, the honorary consul of the Republic of Mali in Austria, said that for governments to come to sustainable solutions, and for people to live peacefully, the economic, political and social needs and aspirations of the local people must be taken into consideration. Collaboration in terms of infrastructure would improve the quality of life of the local people. Most importantly, he said, much-needed international transportation infrastructure projects must be developed in the broader context of human security, human development and the needs of the population. Projects like the International Highway Project are aimed precisely at improving people's lives, he said.

In his closing remarks, Dr. Petrovsky suggested organizing a small interdisciplinary research team of experts from countries interested in this project. The publication of the findings of small-scale targeted studies into a number of topics might give rise to further discussion, he said.

Session V - International Association of First Ladies for Peace (IAFLP) - February 2, 2022, 12:00 CET

Theme: "Co-Creating Spaces for Peace and Reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula. What Steps Are Women Taking toward Sustainable Peace?"

Carolyn Handschin, coordinator of IAFLP-EUME and vice president of Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI), spoke about the unique role of first ladies, who can have a great impact on peace and development in ways that often are overlooked. She then introduced the moderator, **Dr. Colette Mazzucelli** from the United States, an adjunct associate professor at New York University specializing in conflict resolution, radicalization and religion.

H.E. Elsie Christofia, first lady of Cyprus (2008-2013), explained that her country has been divided for almost 48 years, with 37 percent of its territory under Turkish occupation. However, via the Missing Persons Committee, Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot scientists combined forces to identify the remains of 1,023 missing people and return them to their families for burial, a strong positive example for the future of Cyprus. She concluded that creating a physical, bicomunal space of political equality for women of the two Koreas could establish a similarly positive example for the Korean people.

Professor Anna Grichting from Switzerland, a professor of architecture and landscape urbanism, spoke about the Korean Peace Incubator for women, peace and the environment in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) between the two Koreas, which she is developing in collaboration with WFWPI and other stakeholders. She emphasized the importance of environmental peacebuilding, an emerging field. Having created an ecological "belt" on the site of the former Berlin Wall, she looks at how to transform spaces of division into hubs of biodiversity, conservation and a commemorative symbol of hope.

Hon. Christine Muttonen from Austria, the president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (2016-2017), explained that 22 years ago the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 was intended to involve women in conflict and peace negotiations. She argued that this has failed to be implemented, speaking of the common neglect of women in daily life and public spaces, let alone in peacemaking. She also argued that art and culture can play a major role in breaking down barriers and allowing for deeper connection. "We can see that the opportunity to meet physically will greatly accelerate these developments," she said.

Following the talks from the three main speakers, a question-and-answer session was held during which students of Dr. Mazzucelli, as well as the virtual audience, were able to ask the board some questions.

In the second part of the session, **Teson Chon**, a North Korean youth representative from Japan, explained that his paternal grandfather was originally from North Korea and at 16 fled to Japan, never to see his family again. When discussing Korean unification, he said it was important for him to include those displaced Koreans in nations such as Japan. They also have a strong desire to reclaim their ancestors' country. Mr. Chon described a dance that had been created by displaced children, showing their desire for reunification. He believes these young people are the key to a successful reunification.

Dr. Heung Soon Park, a professor and the vice president of the UN Association of the Republic of Korea, spoke about the proposal for a fifth UN office to be situated in the DMZ. International solidarity is key to improving tensions between North and South Korea, he said. South Korea is a dynamic country with a booming economy, whereas North Korea is isolated, maintaining tensions mainly through weapons

development. Although the South is willing to cooperate, the North still needs to give up this nuclear weapon development for relations to progress further, he argued.

The session concluded with remarks by **Dr. Zoe Bennett**, vice president of WFWPI in the Middle East, who promised a follow-up event following such fruitful discussions.

Session VI - International Association for Peace and Economic Development (IAED) - February 2, 2022, 17:00 CET

Theme: "Economic Proposals to Open and Facilitate the Relationship of North Korea and the World"

This session was organized collaboratively between IAED-USA and IAED-EUME. The moderator, **Roger Wetherall**, the coordinator of IAED for the United States, challenged the presenters to offer constructive ideas on actions that could facilitate and incentivize economic development on the Korean Peninsula and lay a foundation for future peaceful integration.

Dr. Raghavan Seetharaman, the CEO of Doha Bank, a global investment bank that is active in India, China and Europe, said that in Korea we can see a lack of social justice and freedom, and there are many needs and possibilities: infrastructure must be built up, the value system adjusted. There should be education, tourism, sports, cultural expansion, private-public partnership opportunities. We have to open the international economy to North Korea, and reopening the Kaesong Industrial Complex is key to that.

The first of the three respondents, **Audra M. Hajj**, the CEO of Ascension Exchange, said that we often forget human "capital" in pursuit of economic development, and she asked about the integration. In response, Dr. Seetharaman pointed out the need for moral and ethical values both for individuals and companies.

Jose Ramón Riera, the CEO of Whats Media Inc. and Whats Cine SL, and a writer on economic analysis of public sector budgets, asked Dr. Seetharaman what measures he would propose to deal with the economic gap between the two Koreas? In response, Dr. Seetharaman said that a long-term vision is needed and that the international community should invest in North Korea.

Joseph Busha, the founder and CEO of the JM Busha Investment Group, asked what can be done to bring peace and security on the Korean Peninsula? Dr. Seetharaman replied that we need to reassure the North Koreans about the future of their regime.

The second presenter was **William Brown** of the Board of Directors, Economic Institute of America; and the chair of George Washington University's North Korea Economic Forum in the Institute of Korean Studies. Mr. Brown explained that the DPRK banking system needs reform and that the "partial" marketization of the economy is not working smoothly, trapping the economy in an inefficient state. Their problem is low productivity, and this is due to the command economy system.

Ms. Hajj said she understood the need to introduce a reward system based on productivity, but wondered how productivity can be acknowledged and rewarded for resourceful North Koreans? Mr. Brown replied that North Koreans are hardworking and disciplined and build things incredibly fast (at "Pyongyang speed"), but the system does not reward them.

Mr. Riera asked Mr. Brown: If he had a wish that could be implemented immediately in North Korea, what would it be? Mr. Brown replied that the DPRK should privatize parts of the country and reform its agriculture.

Mr. Busha asked if starting an internal change in the DPRK would not be defeating the purpose of integration? Opening to the rest of the world is important, Mr. Brown answered, but opening before reforms are done can be catastrophic!

Session VII - International Media Association for Peace (IMAP) - February 3, 2022, 10:00 CET

Theme: "Assessing the Prospects of the Korean Presidential Election"

Peter Zoehrer, coordinator of IMAP-EUME, explained that IMAP stands for a free and independent press, fundamental human rights and accuracy in reporting, and that it promotes family values, peacebuilding, intercultural dialogue and reconciliation.

He then introduced the session moderator, **Rita Payne**, former Asia editor for BBC World News (TV) and president emeritus of the Commonwealth Journalists Association. Mrs. Payne described the search for peace on the Korean Peninsula as an elusive process and acknowledged the efforts of UPF and IMAP to bring reconciliation between North and South Korea.

Young-jin Oh, the president and publisher of *The Korea Times*, an English-language daily newspaper published in South Korea, said that among the factors blocking reunification is the U.S.-China rivalry. "For China, North Korea poses a dilemma," Mr. Oh said. "Pyongyang is needed to bolster its hand against the United States in the unfolding great game, but it is hard to control. And having an uncontrollable leader with his hands on the nuclear weapons next door is not a comforting thought. And the scenario of tens of thousands of North Koreans crossing the border into its territory when the regime collapses makes Beijing lose its sleep."

Dr. Felix Petrovich Kim from Russia, head of the board of trustees of the Russian information service known as Korean Radio, explained that the German model of reunification would not be acceptable for North and South reunification. Dr. Kim suggested a confederation, in which each part would decide its foreign policy and economic policy. For example, free market economy in the South, state economy in the North, but for international communication and cooperation there would be one unified state. However, achieving that would require a great deal of effort, he said.

Chad O'Carroll from the United Kingdom, the chief executive officer of the Seoul-based news and information service Korea Risk Group (NK-News), compared the two leading candidates for the South Korean presidency -- the conservative Yoon Seok-young of the People Power Party and the liberal Lee Jae-myung of the Democratic Party -- in terms of their stance toward North Korea. They both are focused on constructive ways to find peace with the DPRK, but with important differences, he said. The former has criticized the efforts of the Moon Jae-in administration, whereas the latter is in favor of mirroring most of its policies.

Ambassador Warwick Morris, a former ambassador of the United Kingdom to South Korea, was more skeptical about the prospects for reunification, because very few South Koreans still alive have a strong personal link to North Korea and because younger South Koreans have observed the enormous cost of reunifying East and West Germany. Even though North Korea has nuclear weapons and is launching missiles almost weekly, "Life goes on. People accept these as part of daily life," Mr. Morris said. He described the upcoming election as unusual, in that neither of the two leading candidates is a politician.

Session VIII - International Association of Arts and Culture for Peace (IAACP) - Closing - February 3, 2022, 13:00 CET

Theme: "Overcoming Division on the Korean Peninsula through Cultural Diplomacy and the Arts"

After a video of a choir singing the Beatles song "Here Comes the Sun," the moderator, **Mélanie Komagata** of UPF Europe and the Middle East, explained the background of the webinar and introduced the keynote speaker and panelists.

Dr. Mark Donfried, director general of the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, based in Germany, began by describing the concept of "cultural diplomacy" and its evolution throughout history.

In the case of the Korean Peninsula, he offered three suggestions. First, he recommended indirect cultural diplomacy as the most efficient and appropriate way of practicing cultural diplomacy between the two Koreas, rather than applying the classical form. Second, he highlighted the importance of including civil society in cultural diplomacy when the political situation is complex, as is the case on the Korean Peninsula. Finally, the newest form of cultural diplomacy is that of listening rather than speaking, and Dr. Donfried emphasized this as a humble and easy way to build trust on the Korean Peninsula.

The session continued with musical and artistic performances. First, through a recorded video, **Hye-ryun Jung**, a pianist and composer originally from South Korea, played the Korean folk song "*Arirang*."

Then **Réamonn Bateman**, a British musician and events technician, led a presentation on the culture and art of Korean food. He introduced Ji-eun Park, a Korean national living in the UK. Through a video, Mrs. Park showed how to prepare *Bibimbap*, a very traditional Korean dish enjoyed both in North and South Korea, which Mr. Bateman said is easy for anyone to make and enjoy at home.

Next, a video was shown of the **Little Angels Children's Folk Ballet of Korea**, which was founded in 1962 by Dr. Sun Myung Moon to share the Korean culture with the world. The video, which showed the Little Angels' performance in North Korea in 1998, was followed by a written testimony of Jong-hun Kim who was part of that visit. Years later, he became the stage manager of the Little Angels School in Seoul.

"Music as a Means to Overcome Division" was then presented by **Benjamin Lajda**, a Czech cellist and pianist from the Conservatory of Fine Arts and Music in Prague, who also has studied Korean language, culture, and history. He presented an international musical project which he co-organized in summer 2017 in South Korea.

The poems of South Korean poet Ko Un were shown through a creative visual production put together by

Carlos Badosa, an audio technician from Spain. Born in 1933, Mr. Ko lived through the Korean War, became a Buddhist monk, and remained so for 20 years. Mr. Badosa then introduced six poems from Mr. Ko's book *First Person Sorrowful*.

The last presentation was given by **David Gonzalez Tejero** from Spain, the director of the Children's Choir of the Jesuit school Nuestra Señora del Recuerdo. Mr. Gonzalez Tejero explained that over many centuries, Koreans have created and preserved the ideal of their country with dance and music. Next the children's choir, in their auditorium in Madrid, sang "*Tongil*" ("Song of Unity"), a very famous song that the Korean community sings all around the world. The lyrics describe the desire of the Korean people to be one country and not be divided any longer.

Following a short comment on the performances and presentations by Dr. Donfried, pianist Hye-ryun Jung returned to play her composition "Forgiveness," whose purpose is to melt the pain away for a new history of a reunified Korean Peninsula to begin.

The IAACP session led into the Closing Session, at which **Dr. Michael Balcomb** from the United Kingdom, the regional president for Europe and the Middle East of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), an organization that is affiliated with UPF, offered some words.

Dr. Balcomb observed that this series of webinars presented many different perspectives. He pointed out the importance of having "faith in each other's goodness and the desire to seek peace, not just in Korea but wherever we are." In this manner, we can become peacemakers, also by taking what we've learned in these last three days and applying it wherever we are, "because surely peace starts with me."