

APRIL 2009

UPF TODAY

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO PEACE



**World Peace Summit 2009
Mindanao Peace Initiative
GPF Haifa on the "Holiday of Holidays"**

A PUBLICATION OF THE UNIVERSAL PEACE FEDERATION (UPF)

Progress

This issue of *UPF Today* brings encouraging news of real progress in the challenging field of inter-religious peacebuilding. We are proud to announce the launch a new peace initiative in Mindanao, the poverty-stricken island of the Philippines where sporadic armed conflict between government and rebel forces has displaced more than 300,000 people. The initiative, which was announced in the Philippine House of Representatives, has the support of religious and civil society leaders as well as the Department of Education.

Elsewhere, we catch up on the final events of a very fruitful year of activities of the Global Peace Festival. In Haifa, Israel, a cultural festival was held in partnership with the municipal government, and in Beirut and several other Lebanese cities service programs were held in conjunction with charitable and relief organizations.

In Nepal, the UPF's peace principles are proving helpful in the drafting of a new constitution for the landlocked mountain state, and the UPF Secretary General, recently elected to the national assembly, is playing a leading role in the process.

Meanwhile, the World Peace Summit 2009 brought together key Ambassadors for Peace to discuss the UPF's progress in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. With the ongoing global economic crisis on everyone's minds, delegates considered what lessons the richer nations of the world could learn from smaller regional economies more familiar with crisis and instability. The UPF Founder, Rev. Sun Myung Moon, celebrated his 90th birthday at the Summit, calling for a "moral and spiritual awakening" to combat the individual and corporate selfishness and greed that helped create the current crisis.

The Summit also saw the release of three UPF publications: our popular annual report, *Leadership and Good Governance*; a book documenting our human rights initiatives at the United Nations; and a report on celebrations of the UN International Day of Peace. To all of who contributed in ways big and small, thank you very much!



Dr. Thomas G. Walsh,
Secretary General,
Universal Peace
Federation

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UPF TODAY

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO PEACE

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UPF Today is the membership magazine of the Universal Peace Federation, founded by Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon. Envisioning peace as a state of harmonious interdependence among individuals, families, nations and peoples, UPF advocates constructive and original practices that contribute to achieving a unified world of peace, the hope of all ages. The magazine offers a forum for Ambassadors for Peace fostering human development, good governance, public service, and collaborative peace efforts involving religions, nations and nongovernmental organizations.

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Cover photo:
Hopeful faces of the young
people in Mindanao, courtesy of
UPF-Philippines.

PEACE SUMMIT PROMOTES ONE FAMILY UNDER GOD

By Michael Balcomb

The UPF's World Summit on Peace 2009 was held in New York City on the occasion of the birthday celebrations of the founders of the Universal Peace Federation, the Reverend Dr. Sun Myung Moon and his wife, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon. The couple, who share the same birth date according to the lunar calendar, were first honored in celebrations held in Seoul, Korea and then again after their arrival into New York City barely 15 hours later. Over 3,700 religious, diplomatic, and community leaders gathered to welcome them at the historic Hammerstein Ballroom in Manhattan.

Rev. and Mrs. Moon, who were married in 1960, now have 14 children and 46 grand- and great-grandchildren. The family came to the United States in 1971, when Rev. Moon began a national evangelical effort aimed at restoring traditional American values. An early highlight came in 1976 when he spoke on "America and God's Will" before a crowd of 300,000 at the Washington Monument.

In recent times Rev. and Mrs. Moon, their family, and the many organizations they have founded have been focusing on an interreligious effort to renew the United Nations. In a congratulatory message to the World Summit former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali saluted Rev. Moon for "ninety years of rich achievement for the peace and welfare of all humanity bringing together people of diverse racial, religious, ethnic, national, and cultural backgrounds."

Congratulations were also offered by Dr. Julio Maria Sanguinetti, former President of Uruguay. Goodwill messages were received from more than 40 US governors, senators, and congressmen, as well as over 300 greetings from senior statesmen and women around the world.

The Hon. Raila Odinga, Prime Minister of Kenya, whose wife Mrs. Ida Odinga represented him in New York, said that Rev. Moon's principles of conflict resolution had helped them to find a peaceful solution in that nation's recent post election conflict. Mrs. Odinga stressed the importance of second chances and the acceptance of diversity as key factors in the nation's quest for peace. "The beauty of the Kenyan people is in our different ethnicities and cultures of our 42 tribes," she said. "We are different people living as one family."

Rev. and Mrs. Moon are also working to create a culture of service to address the UN Millennium Development Goals, and most importantly to strengthen marriages and families as a long-term solution to hunger, poverty, and racial strife.

The day's festivities concluded with the International Marriage Blessing of over 200 couples from around the world, including many children of the first generation of members who started working with Rev. Moon decades ago.

In a short message, Rev. Moon offered thanks to God for having protected him throughout his life, and called for a moral and spiritual revival to bring a new age of peace. "If the world can come together as 'One Family under God,' the Creator," he said, "all our other problems will be solved. But first we must eradicate selfishness and greed, starting with ourselves."

If the world can come together as One Family under God, the Creator, all our other problems will be solved.

REV. DR. SUN MYUNG MOON



Religious leaders in conversation

A NEW PARADIGM OF LEADERSHIP

Universal Peace Federation objectives include support for partnerships among religions, governments and civil society to foster peace and development. UPF seeks to articulate a framework of universal values necessary to sustain such partnerships and calls the UN to serve as the appropriate global forum. The following excerpts are from speakers at the Summit articulating these themes.



A Need for More Inclusive Approaches to Peace

By Prof. Dr. Din Syamsuddin,
Chairman, Muhammadiyah,
Indonesia

According to the InterAction Council of Former Heads of State and Government, the absence of peace includes accumulated global damages such as poverty, illiteracy, injustice, and environmental collapse. We need global damage control.

To this end, we need new paradigms for inter-faith and intercultural dialogues:

- Dialogues not only among people of different faiths but also among other sectors and actors of civilization, including politicians, business people, academics, and even the media
- Gatherings about peace, interfaith dialogues, and intercultural dialogues that somehow include the radicals and the hardliners
- Leadership that applies a dialogue of action

Regardless of our religious affiliation, ethnicity, race, and even nationality, we are one family under God. While religion is from God, it is not for God but for humanity. While we need rights for peace, at the same time we need responsibilities for peace. Our rights and responsibilities together enable us to

perform our mission as vice-regents of God on earth and work together to establish real peace. We hope to see a new international order based on morality, prosperity, and justice.

A Timely Call for a Spiritual Dimension at the UN

By Dr. Alwi Shihab, Special
Envoy to the Middle East,
Office of the President, Republic of Indonesia



The UPF seeks to establish ever more consistent links among various groups in order to achieve the great dream of bringing together all people of faith, overcoming barriers, conflicts, and prejudices.

One of those noble efforts is the renewal and the reform of the UN, including its call for an interreligious council and the creation of a new intergovernmental organization rooted in universal spiritual principles. The current unpleasant condition of the world serves as solid evidence of the need for such reform in the UN.

*There is no possibility to maintain peace
and to create a new world if humankind is
not filled with a new spirit.*

We are saddened by the plight and suffering of innocent Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip. Indeed the international community rejects all kinds of violence permeating Gaza as a result of the military operations of the Israeli military in response to the Palestinian missiles.

It is imperative to call peace-loving people individually and collectively to empower the moderate

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— DR. DIN SYAMSUDDIN

majority of the Palestinians and the Israelis to come up with a viable and acceptable mandate for coexistence and to achieve grassroots consensus for conflict resolution. Both groups must be able to recognize the pain of both sides, condemn all violence that is practiced, and affirm a desire for a two-state solution.

There is no possibility to maintain peace and to create a new world if humankind is not filled with a new spirit. To allow this spirit to develop within us is the task we have taken upon ourselves, individually and collectively.



An Interfaith Council at the UN

By Congressman Jose de Venecia, Jr., Chairman, CDI-Asia Pacific

The idea of interfaith dialogue that the Universal Peace Federation espouses — that of bringing together the world’s moderates and hence isolating the radicals who would use religion for political ends — is gaining ground in the world.

King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia has started potentially far-reaching dialogues with Sunni Islam’s estranged Shiite brethren, by meeting in Mecca with a Shiite leader, Ayatollah Hashemi Rafsanjani, who is also ex-President of Iran. He also sponsored Muslim-Christian conversations in Madrid, together with Catholic Spain’s King Juan Carlos I.

A broader concept of interfaith dialogue is also gaining ground at the UN that is not only between religions but also between entire cultures and civilizations.

A broader concept of interfaith dialogue is also gaining ground at the United Nations. This is the concept of dialogue not only between religions but also between entire cultures and civilizations.

In 2006, the General Assembly approved a Philippine proposal to organize a “focal unit” for inter-faith, inter-cultural, and inter-civilizational dialogue, either in ECOSOC or in the Office of the Secretary-General. A Council for Inter-Faith, Inter-Civilizational, and Inter-Cultural Dialogue in the UN system would facilitate dialogues between religions, cultures, and civilizations.



FOUNDER’S ADDRESS

This is the “era of revolutionary change after the coming of heaven,” when people will no longer be beyond the influence of heavenly law. We must lead transparent lives of goodness with our every action being as clear as a crystal. We must accomplish a “pure love revolution” by educating all people about the value of absolute sexual ethic centered on God, our heavenly parent. This is the only way to pass on the lineage of goodness to all of humankind, and the path to achieving God’s ideal of true families.

We will eliminate the walls and barriers that divide this earth and reinstate harmony and peace between political parties, religions, races, cultures and nations. The United Nations should become elevated to a higher dimension and become a “Peace UN.” War, disease, hunger, and all other problems confronting the world will be resolved. Self-centeredness will be completely eradicated, leading to the realization of a world governed by our conscience and by natural reason.

In the end, reconciliation and peace will come about through lineage. When blacks and whites, people from the East and West, Buddhists and Christians, and Jews and Muslims intermarry and carry on the blessed marriage tradition that True Parents have established, this world will naturally become one family. An ideal, heavenly kingdom based on the ideal of “One Family under God” will come about.

Finally, God created us as His counterparts in love, and He prepared the natural world as a gift for us. That is why all people have the duty to preserve and love the natural world. You should be able to experience resonance and harmony with nature, even with a simple cluster of wild flowers. This will be the shortcut to restoring human nature.

Excerpt of Rev. Sun Myung Moon’s keynote address to the World Summit on Peace

PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE AMERICAS

Latin America cannot come out of this crisis without the US, and the US cannot come out of this without the rest of the world.

— H.E. JULIO MARIA SANGUINETTI

Relations between the US and Latin America have always been important, but there are challenges. There is a segment of Latin America unsympathetic to the US, based on perceptions that the US has been aloof and self-serving. As well, some countries are moving away from democracy. Clearly we see a need for better communications between north and south. There is also a need for increased cooperation on development issues, including from broad interfaith cooperation. The following excerpts were from the Summit session that examined prospects for a north-south association for the study of issues of the Americas, encouraging democracy and co-prosperity for all.



Democracy and the Current Crisis

By Julio Sanguinetti,
President of Uruguay, 1985-1990, 1995-2000

We all know that it is easier to have good dialogue, political relationships, and social life in times of prosperity. Now, we are going to experience a time of tension. Unemployment is rising in the US, Europe, and the Americas. This is very serious because all normal social values have been questioned. We have to look at this crisis from our perspective and an inter-American perspective:

In Latin America we are not experts in normal situations, but we are quite expert in crisis situations. And on various occasions we have had to apply all these solutions we are hearing about.

The crisis cannot be solved by the US, Europe, or China acting alone. The crisis, it is true, originated in the US, but it became universal, and consequently, only multilateral solutions can address the situation. Latin America cannot come out of this without the US, and the US cannot come out of this without the rest of the world.

The biggest responsibility of the new US president is to start regulating the US market and try to

balance its finances. That will already be a contribution. Secondly, he has to establish the mechanisms of dialogue so Europe, Japan, China, and Latin America can cope with the situation together.

And fortunately, now we are speaking not only about the big G-7 nations but also the G-22 nations, which include three Latin American nations — Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina. A new balance has to be generated.

Peace in the Americas

By Dr. Oscar Alvarez Araya, Professor, National University of Costa Rica



Much has been said about the issues that make harmony between North and South more difficult. But in our quest for peace, we have much in common:

- A great continent territory with huge human and natural resources.
- Values, principles and institutions based on freedom and democracy.
- Christian values, even though with different nuances in the North and South.
- An inter-American system of institutions based on the values and principles of freedom, justice, democracy, peace, human rights, the rule of the law, and sustainable development.

Peaceful coexistence, dialogue, communication, cooperation at the government level, both bilateral and multilateral, have to be promoted. Dialogue, communication, and cooperation among the civil organizations is essential for stable development, prosperity, democracy, human rights, the rule of law, ethics in public positions and a democratic good governance.

The Universal Peace Federation has been making some of the greatest contributions to dialogue and

cooperation between North and South America of any NGOs.

We are building an Internet-based Inter American think tank that will incubate ideas that can become public policies and civic initiatives. We will promote civil society cooperation throughout the Americas based on universal principles that come from the different religions. Our mission will be to generate innovative political ideas and civic solutions in areas such as peace-building, freedom, democracy, and human rights. We will work also to strengthen the family, develop character education, and promote a culture of service in the Americas in order to advance the UN Millennium Development Goals.



Building a Global Culture of Service

By Catalina Soberanis Reyes, Political Advisor, UN Development Program, Guatemala

We must combat the real threats posed today to international security: exclusion, poverty, rural decline, environmental degradation, new pandemics, and arms and drug trafficking. We need to overcome inequalities and to stop the spiral that makes the poor poorer and the rich richer.

It is necessary to promote lifelong education and vocational training and to foster scientific and technological development so that each country may become the architect of its own destiny. It is also necessary to facilitate urban rehabilitation as well as rural development.

We need to build a new culture: a global culture of rights and responsibilities, a culture of accountability, a culture of service, even a culture of love.

Finally, it is necessary to ensure respect for the law and freedom of expression, the independent functioning of justice, and the realization of democratic principles in everyday life.

Those purposes can only be achieved if we build a new culture: a global culture of rights and responsibilities, a culture of accountability, a culture of service, even a culture of love.

The UPF is advocating the formation of a “global service corps,” a new cross-sector international alliance to promote peace and reduce global poverty by growing and nurturing a global culture of service. In Guatemala, for example, we have benefited from the Religious Youth Service work in Santiago Atitlan, an indigenous village, and in urban areas. We think that young people have time, idealism, and courage to do the hard tasks.

But volunteerism does not only refer to young people nor does it grow by itself. We are all responsible to build a better world. Adults should work in volunteerism, giving a good example themselves. Working globally and locally, we will have the capacity to transform threats and difficulties into challenges, cooperation, and growth.

It's Time to Achieve Peace

By Rev. Paul A. Murray, President, Vision Ministries International



The world is looking for leadership to bring us out of the economic, political, and religious conflicts that are besieging us on every front. No one world leader can do this. No political mechanism can sustain this weight of such change, for our history is filled with the rise and fall of many kingdoms.

We have conflict and crisis within our homes, our communities, our nations, and around the world. Is there any hope? I believe with all of my heart that this is a time of great opportunity for all of humanity to move from conflict to resolution, from hatred to peace, from war to love. As a minister of the Gospel, I along with people of many faiths represented in this room, serve a loving God who cares and gives guidance, wisdom, and discernment to His people. A global service alliance has been birthed for such a time as this.

This global service alliance is positioned to ensure that the changes that are most important are brought to light with an understanding that no peace can come from one individual, but by each of us locking arm in arm, picking up shovels, serving on the food lines, distributing clothes and medical supplies. If we do all within our means and with our personal and professional resources, this great alliance can usher in a genuine realization of peace and prosperity for all of mankind.

If we do all within our means and with our personal and professional resources, this great alliance can usher in a genuine realization of peace and prosperity for all of mankind.

— REV. PAUL A. MURRAY

CRITICAL ISSUES FACING AFRICA

The Summit addressed critical issues facing Africa, issues such as poverty, family breakdown, corruption, interfaith and intertribal conflict, and the role of the African Union. The following excerpts were from a Summit session that explored hopeful signs of emerging democracies and prospects for an economic revival.



The Challenges of Leadership

By Hon. Gen. Malimba N. Masheke, Former Prime Minister of Zambia

Poverty is a scourge or a curse that has engulfed the entire continent of Africa. The majority of our people wallow in abject poverty and are crying for help. Chaos and confusion reign supreme on the African continent. The levels poverty has assumed have reached alarming proportions and dimensions.

There is no country with sufficient infrastructure, such as roads, schools, hospitals. The education system left by the colonial masters was not designed to prepare the recipients of independence and freedom with the management and technical skills or the controls required for the tasks ahead.

While our leaders have been unprepared for leadership, the time has come for us to look at their performance and ask them to account for some of their failures. Some of our leaders have allowed manipulation, corruption, tribalism, and nepotism to accompany their leadership. Some have stolen public funds to place in overseas banks and/or build mansions. Some leaders are still exploiting tribal or regional politics.

We must demand a better deal from the leadership if we are to attend to the poverty

levels of our people. A new leadership must emerge to protect Africa from further devastation of our peoples' resources.

The Beauty of Diversity

By Mrs. Ida Odinga, Chief Executive Officer, Spectra East Africa, Kenya



Across Africa and other parts of the world, nations are at war because citizens and leaders have failed to accept diversity either in leadership or in the ethnic compositions of their nations. In politics, citizens just want their tribesmen and women in leadership. Leaders just want to hang onto power or hand it over to either family members or those who share similar views. It has only led to chaos.

Yet, before we are a member of one nation or tribe or political faction, we are first and foremost children of God. Common sense dictates that membership in the human family makes us brothers and sisters. Discrimination of all forms is not part of nature. It is not part of God's plan for mankind and His entire creation.

Just look at our game parks. No tourist would go to the famous Maasai Mara National Park in Kenya more than once if all there is in the park is one type of animal. We tour the parks because we know that



A new leadership must emerge to protect Africa from further devastation of our peoples' resources.

— GENERAL MALIMBA MASHEKE

in this corner we will see the lion, the king of the jungle. We move on to another part hoping to meet the rhino, the antelope, and then the buffalo. We stare ahead knowing that somewhere in the park stands the giraffe. We stay in parks because of the variety.

We love our gardens more when they have a variety of flowers. We want to see the roses blossoming, but we are also happy to see that the rose is letting other plants flower in the garden. We enjoy our world better when we accept that the Christian, the Hindu, the Muslim, the Jew, and the unbelieving are part of this planet.

In my part of Africa, we stand to have a happier nation when we accept that the Luo, the Kikuyu, the Kalenjin, the Hutu, the Tutsi, the Acholi, and the Baganda exist in one territory not by mistake but as part of our Great God's grand plan to make the world a diverse place to live in. In that diversity lies the beauty that God intended the earth to manifest.



Rebuilding Liberia

By Hon. Jenekai Alex Tyler, Speaker, House of Representatives, Liberia

Every civilized nation on earth, Liberia being no exception, preserves its coherent national character by the rule of law. However, recent history is replete with records of government officials and private individuals flaunting the rule of law, giving rise to the culture of impunity, which is not healthy for national unity.

Liberia, Africa's oldest independent republic, has been plagued with a myriad of political, economic, social, and religious problems that conspired over the years to subject its citizens to numerous obstacles to sustainable growth and viable national progress.

Tribal disputes were common in the past and were sometimes caused by land border claims and disenfranchisement. In this age, disputes are the result of enmity cultivated by war and after the war. Certain tribes are now agitating to reclaim land that was sold to citizens of other tribes who peacefully settled in during times of peace. This is a potential source of national upheaval. The government has set up commissions to investigate these disputes.

The current government has formulated a strategy aimed at reducing poverty. It has disarmed, demobilized and reintegrated ex-combatants into the society. It canceled or renegotiated concession agreements with multi-national corporations

to ensure that the country gets her fair share of the resources. Roads are being rehabilitated, educational institutions are being renovated, and new ones are being built. Health facilities are also being improved. Efforts are on the way to restore pipe-borne water and electricity.

Signs of Hope

Hon. David Kilgour, Director, Council of Democracies, Canada



The full effects of the present economic crisis on the world are yet unknown. While the rest of the world focuses on themselves, what investment was available for African countries is likely to drop sharply. The developed economies this time must not reduce their official development assistance to Africa.

While working as Canada's Secretary of State for Africa and Latin America between 1997 and 2002 and ever since, I have followed the progress of the African Union. Multiparty democracy has now swept through much of the continent. Botswana and Mauritius have experienced long-term growth rates while enjoying the longest period of democratic governance. Positive growth has returned to Benin, Ghana, Mozambique, and South Africa, where the resurgence of democracy has been strong. Other reasons for optimism include:

1. Africa's talented people. The continent has had seven Nobel Prize winners. If conditions allow, many daughters and sons of Africa in the diaspora are ready to return to the continent.
2. If talent and enterprise is unleashed among Africans regardless of regional or ethnic origin, it will attract attention at home and abroad.
3. Africans can demand much more of authoritarian or incompetent governments without resorting to bloodshed. Peaceful civic resistance can lead to durable democracy.
4. Friends of Africans abroad can champion independent media, emphasize improved primary education, and fight HIV/AIDS.
5. The approximately 40 percent of the African continent's savings held abroad is potentially available for investment in countries that have good governance and the rule of law.
6. The continent continues to enjoy the good will of many governments, NGOs and charities.

The current government has formulated a strategy aimed at reducing poverty. It has disarmed, demobilized and reintegrated ex-combatants into the society.

— HON. JENEKAI ALEX TYLER

THE MINDANAO PEACE INITIATIVE

By UPF-Philippines

“I have found a strong ally with the coming of the Universal Peace Federation and the Global Peace Festival to Mindanao. We are now in a renaissance period; this is a dawning and an awakening of a new era.”

— DR. ESTRELLA BABANO

Building on the foundation of the successful Global Peace Festivals in Manila and the southern Philippine island of Mindanao last year, the Universal Peace Federation launched the Mindanao Peace Initiative in a session at the Philippine House of Representatives, the Araneta Coliseum, and in cities in northern Mindanao.

The initiative is chaired by Dr. Estrella Abid Babano, Director for the Department of Education in Region 10, and co-chaired by Father Benjamin Beltran, Director of the Sandiwaan Foundation in the province of Lanao Del Norte. The multi-sectoral coalition also includes representatives of Muslim, Christian, and indigenous communities, the Armed Forces, business, academia, and youth leaders.

An international delegation of Universal Peace Federation leaders then traveled to Mindanao. Governor Mohammad Khalid Dimaporo of Lanao Del Norte and thousands of youth welcomed the delegation to Tubod, the capital city of the province. Global Peace Festival Chairman Dr. Hyun Jin Moon was accompanied by leading R&B singer Jay-R, who has joined in support of the GPF peacebuilding initia-

tives across the Philippines. Governor Dimaporo noted that the mass GPF events and cross-cultural initiatives in Mindanao last September represented a turning point in efforts to show that the people of Mindanao desire a lasting culture of peace.

Lanao Del Norte officials and tribal leaders awarded Dr. Moon the honor of “adopted son” in the region, in light of the successful Global Peace Festival in Mindanao that immediately followed the wake of terror attacks after the breakdown of the peace process in August 2008.

“The Global Peace Festival promotes a tri-fold platform of interfaith cooperation, strengthening the family, and a culture of service for the sake of renewing our communities and nations,” Dr. Moon declared. “We are looking for nothing less than a moral and spiritual awakening rooted in the universal vision of One Family under God. The family is the cornerstone of peace.”

He urged the Philippine leaders to “build on these efforts and create a grassroots movement that will spread into a global culture of serving others.”

“Finally, I have found a strong ally with the coming of the Universal Peace Federation and the Global Peace Festival to Mindanao,” Dr. Babano stated at a March 5 gathering at the Pryce Hotel in Cagayan De Oro City, the largest city in northern Mindanao. “We are now in a renaissance period; this is a dawning and an awakening of a new era.”

A Mindanao leader donated two hectares of land during a tree planting ceremony welcoming the peace delegation to help expand the Department of Education Peace Villages and peace initiatives in additional Mindanao communities.

Dr. Estrella Babano, right, with Dr. Hyun Jin Moon and Mindanao youth



4 MAR 2008

MINDANAO PEACE INITIATIVE ANNOUNCED IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Following a packed rally with young leaders at the Araneta Coliseum in Manila on March 2, the opening plenary of the Mindanao Peace Initiative was convened in the Philippine House of Representatives

The event was attended by prominent leaders, both local and international, in the fields of religion, government, NGOs, education, business, culture, and arts who are standing on common ground for the establishment of peace in the country and the world.

The program started with prayers offered by different religious leaders representing Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and Hinduism, followed by a patriotic rendition of the National Anthem by the Philippine Army Band.

In an interreligious "Water of Peace" ceremony, religious leaders each poured a cup of water into a large bowl symbolizing the unity of all religions, recognizing each other not for their uniqueness but for their common destiny.

Top congressmen from different provinces, especially districts in Mindanao, postponed other engagements in order to attend the conference. They included the Former Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon. Jose de Venecia, Jr., who has been working with Dr. Moon for the cause of peace; Hon. Datu Pax Magudadatu, Congressman of the 1st District Sultan Kudarat; Hon. Simeon A. Datumanong, Congressman from the Lone District of Maguindanao; and many other champions of peace, including Dr. Estrella Abid-Babano, Regional Director of Region X of the Department of Education.

Leaders who came from different countries included Dr.

Thomas Walsh, Secretary General of UPF International; Dr. Charles Phillips, President of Service for Peace International; Mr. David Caprara, Executive Vice President of the Youth Federation for World Peace; and Hon. Ek Nath Dhakal, Member of the Parliament of Nepal.

Various speakers shared with a receptive crowd their views on establishing lasting peace in Mindanao and the country in general. Hon. Jose de Venecia exclaimed, "What we need today is what we are doing here today! It has been 30 long years since I worked for the peace agreement between the government of the Philippines and the Moro National Liberation Front of the Bangsamoro people, but sadly, conflicts in Mindanao have not been resolved."

UPF, according to Dr. Moon, affirms that the dream of "One Family Under God will be the clarion call of our age!" He strongly believes in what his father, Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, has said that the time has come "to tear down the man-made walls of race, culture, religion and country and establish the peaceful, ideal world of God's cherished desire."

At the end, Dr. Moon, struck a gong calling for an end to the conflicts in Mindanao and the entire country and bringing rays of hope to the people of Mindanao and the Philippines in general.

UPF leaders bestowed peace awards and awarded Ambassador for Peace certificates to people from various fields who have made noteworthy achievements in service to others, so that they can be at the forefront in the process of building a peaceful world.

Participants in the opening plenary of the Mindanao Peace Initiative held at the Philippine House of Representatives.



GLOBAL PEACE INITIATIVE PROMOTED IN JAPAN

By Shunsuke Uotani,
UPF-Japan

The Universal Peace Federation in Japan began a new year of activities with an International Leadership Conference, service projects, and a huge convention in Saitama.

The main program took place on March 1 at the Saitama Super Arena, where 20,000 gathered to celebrate the vision of one family under God. Rev. Walter Fauntroy who served for 20 years as a member of the US Congress, inspired the audience when he spoke of the convergence of the vision of US civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., with that of Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon. He added that a new generation was arising 40 years after the assassination of Dr. King in 1968, and he referred to this as a “Joshua generation” that overcomes the challenges they face and moves humanity into a new promised land.

Fauntroy spoke about the Obama presidential campaign in the US and the spirit of “yes we can.” He called people to apply the “yes we can” spirit to solve problems in Darfur, the Middle East, the Korean peninsula, and east Asia. He said that “yes we can” applies to ending “the barbarism of war, the decadence of racism, and the scourge of poverty” if we center on the vision of One Family under God.

Earlier, conference sessions considered themes such as “Peacebuilding in the Asia-Pacific Region and the Role of Japan” and “The World in Crisis and the Direction of Japan.” Professor Masahisa Hayashi of Waseda University spoke about the vision of the

Universal Peace Federation and its emphasis not only on interfaith cooperation and international cooperation, but also on interdisciplinary research among scholars from all academic fields with an aim of solving critical global problems. Former Congressman Michio Ochi spoke of going to a Christian Church during his childhood and encountering Christianity. It was an overwhelming experience of “culture shock,” he said, to

*Former US
Congressman Rev.*

*Walter Fauntroy said
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One Family under God.*



hear them teaching about “loving your enemy.”

Dr. Hyun Jin Moon shared with the delegates his vision for the Global Peace Festival, rooted in his father’s teaching and life work, and the tri-fold platform of building interfaith cooperation, God-centered families, and a global culture of service. He also spoke about the United Nations’ noble ideas and its limitations in terms of bringing about effective solutions to global problems.

He described the potential of the Global Peace Festival, as a coalition of partners and faith-based organizations, to bring about substantial change in diverse contexts and described developments of the Global Peace Festival in 2008. Looking ahead in 2009 he pointed to plans for the December Global Peace Convention in the Philippines and peacebuilding efforts on the Philippine island of Mindanao.

“The Universal Peace Federation and Global Peace Festival are not merely bringing an idealistic vision but building a movement that is bringing substantial change, in collaboration with many NGOs, faith-based organizations, and governments,” he said. “The vision of One Family under God is becoming a living reality. If Japan can embrace this vision, it can stand on a world platform as a leader not only in terms of financial power, but moral, spiritual power to change the world.”

Buddhist prayers for peace.



UPF MOSCOW CONSIDERS NEW PHILOSOPHY OF PEACE

By Jacques Marion, Regional Secretary General, UPF-Eurasia

New insights about peace and reports about the work of the Universal Peace Federation inspired Ambassadors for Peace and distinguished guests at a March 1 peace gathering in Moscow. It was a welcome opportunity to gather Ambassadors for Peace and new contacts and convey the UPF vision. Several notable social projects were also held, including a dynamic program and sports tournament for children on February 27, connected with the traditional Russian holiday *Maslennitsa*.

The main conference took place at the Oxana Hotel and began with an International Leadership Conference on the theme of a “New Philosophy of Peace.” After the welcoming remarks from UPF-Chairman Dr. Katsumi Ohtsuka, Dr. Vladimir Petrovsky, President of the Russian National Peace Council, spoke on “Unification Thought and Marxist-Leninist Philosophy.”

Next, Dr. Oleg Mironov, former Ombudsman of Russia, gave a talk on “Human Rights in Russia.” Finally, Mikhail Kabatchenko, former Russian representative at UNESCO and President of “Educators for Peace and Mutual Understanding,” spoke about the “UNESCO Convention Project on Peace-Building Education.” UPF-Russia Secretary General

Konstantin Krylov concluded with a report on the UPF South Caucasus Peace Initiative.

After entertainment by past laureates of the Mr. and Ms. University Beauty Pageant, UPF-Eurasia Secretary General Jacques Marion gave a message introducing UPF and the concept of a “Parent UN.” Then, after a short video presentation, A. Saveliev read the keynote address, entitled “One Family under God.”

Three distinguished participants were given Ambassador for Peace Awards. First honored was Mr. Chimit Dorji Ondar, former President of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tuva and current Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Assembly of the Peoples of Russia. He was joined by Mr. Vartan Gevorkovich Mushegyan, President of the Union of Diasporas in Russia, and Mrs. Natalia Sergeevna Kosminskaya, an honored artist of the City of Moscow and advisor to the Russian Peace Fund.



Winners of Mr. and Ms. University Pageants perform for conference participants.



Ambassadors for Peace at the March conference in Moscow

UPF PRINCIPLES AND THE DRAFTING OF NEPAL'S CONSTITUTION

By Dr. Robert S. Kittel, Director of Peace Education, UPF-Asia

If we do not create the spirit of the family in our nation, then people will feel excluded. The nation is like one big family where there are many differences, including race, religion, ethnic background, and caste.

— HON. EK NATH DHAKAL

Nepal is a nation being reborn, and UPF is playing an important role in that process. Elections last year were a significant step forward in the on-going peace process that brought militant communist insurgents into the political mainstream. But the roadmap to peace began November 22, 2005 with two significant events taking place simultaneously, one in New Delhi and the other in Kathmandu.

In the Indian capital seven political parties signed a comprehensive 12-point peace agreement that brought an end to the ten-year-old civil war that left at least 13,000 people dead.

On the same day the UPF founder, Father Moon, came to Nepal on his world speaking tour that took him to over 120 nations. In the capital, Kathmandu, he explained the internal or spiritual conditions that would bring lasting peace to the land where Buddha was born.

Over the next four years, UPF-Nepal held seven South Asia Peace Initiative programs that brought together national leaders from all political ideologies to dialogue freely among themselves and learn UPF's principle of peace.

The climax was a meeting inside the Nepalese parliament last year. Before more than 120 Members

of Parliament the Hon. Chitralekha Yadav, then Deputy Speaker of Parliament, declared, "As a Member of Parliament and as a Nepalese citizen, I would like to express our gratitude to Father Moon for helping to bring peace in Nepal."

Yadav, one of the highest-profile women politicians in Nepal, knew the job was just beginning. She told fellow law-makers, "If we really try to put Father Moon's principles into practice, then we can be very instrumental in achieving lasting peace for our nation."

Now that time has come.

Nepal is writing a new constitution. The Chairman of UPF-Nepal, Hon. Ek Nath Dhakal, 35, is a Member of Parliament and also on the constitutional drafting committee. In the following interview, he highlighted how UPF's universal principles of peace can provide insights in drafting the founding document for the rebirth the world's newest republic.

UPF Today: *What unique insight does the UPF's perspective offer in the process of writing a national constitution?*

Dhakal: There are many problems in our country: corruption, inequality, injustice, no rule of law, poverty, illiteracy and the violation of fundamental human rights. These, of course, are not unique to

Rev. Sun Myung Moon delivers his peace message in Kathmandu, Nepal on November 22, 2005.



Nepal. But UPF's principles of peace clarify the underlying cause of these social ills.

Without addressing the root cause, problems cannot be solved. They would reappear at different times and in different forms. In drafting Nepal's constitution we are attempting to solve the problems of the Nepalese people. UPF's principles of peace provided guidelines that can help us analyze the essential elements needed in writing our nation's highest legal document.

UPF Today: What does UPF see as the fundamental cause of our social ills?

Dhakai: The root cause is selfishness. Selfishness is not found in just one party, one religion or one ethnic group. It is also not just a Nepalese problem; it is a universal problem. Of course in writing the Nepalese constitution we must address the specific issues articulated by the people — and we will do that.

It is not uncommon for politicians to put themselves above their party and even their own nation. When they do this, they are putting the desire for personal wealth above the well-being of the nation. To bring things back on the right track we must understand the core principle of living more for others than for ourselves. The greater good must always be placed in the higher position.

I am confident that if we can apply the principle of unselfish giving to our nation's legal framework, then we can truly address the fundamental problems of this nation.

UPF Today: What can be added to the constitution to address the issue of selfishness?

Dhakai: The most important institution that teaches unselfishness and creates a spirit of altruism is the family. Among family members there is love, respect, transparency and trust. There is also a clear vertical and horizontal order. These are very natural principles in our families. So the culture and spirit of the family will help solve our nation's problems.

The emphasis on individual freedoms can be balanced by also mentioning the importance of the family. Many constitutions, including Nepal's interim constitution, focus on individual freedoms and the structure and function of the government. We see the consequences of omitting any reference to the family in many developed nations today; there is an over-emphasis on the individual.

In the Nepalese constitution the word "family" is mentioned in reference to families or family members who have been victims of civil conflict and the prop-

erty of the former royal family, which is to be put in a public trust now that the monarchy has been abolished. But the importance of the family as a social institution is not mentioned.

If we do not create the spirit of the family in our nation, then people will feel excluded. The nation is like one big family where there are many differences, including race, religion, ethnic background, and caste. The family model can help promote social integration, reconciliation, and harmony.

To balance the rights of the individual with the obligations to help preserve the values inherent in our Nepalese families, one or two sentences should be added to the constitution which address this concern.

UPF Today: What role has UPF played in nation-building in Nepal?

Dhakai: UPF has many programs that teach good governance and character development. But education has to be put into practice. So parallel to our education programs we have many activities that apply these principles. This balance of education and practice is very powerful and is making a change in Nepal. Because of this, UPF has built a reputation of trust among the Nepalese people.



An example of the diverse factions brought together by the South Asia Peace Initiative: Mr. G.M. Gurung, Minister of the Government of Sikkim, addresses the December 2, 2007 meeting. Other panelists included (left to right): Mr. Sudip Pathak, President of the Human Rights Organization of Nepal; Ambassador Mr. K.V. Rajan, former Ambassador of India to Nepal; Mr. Ek Nath Dhakal, Secretary General, UPF-Nepal; Mr. Prakash Man Singh, Vice-Chairman of the Nepali Congress Party; Mr. Krishna Gopal Shrestha, Leader, Nepal Communist Party-UM; and Dr. Robert Kittel.

Hon. Ek Nath Dhakal, a member of Nepal's Constituent Assembly, was born August 13, 1974 in the beautiful and historical district of Gorkha, where the modern Nepal nation was united under the Shah dynasty in 1768. His great grandfather was the chief Hindu priest and religious adviser to the king, and his father was a Gorkha soldier who fought in World War II with the Royal British Army in Burma.



Hon. Dhakal received his formal education from the Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu, where he studied political science for two years followed by three years of study in sociology and anthropology. His wife, Mrs. Blessie Gadon Dhakal, is from the Philippines and they have four children.

GPF HAIFA ON THE “HOLIDAY OF HOLIDAYS”

By Hod Ben Zvi, Secretary General, UPF-Israel

*It is amazing that
in such a short
time a group of
total strangers from
different nations and
religions can become
such a close family.*

— JEREMY JORDAN

The Global Peace Festival was celebrated in Haifa, a multicultural city in northwestern Israel, on December 20, 2008, as part of that city’s annual December celebrations. The program was conducted jointly with Haifa’s municipal company, Ethos, which produces the yearly *Hag Hachagim* event, the “Holiday of Holidays.” This month-long series of events every December honors and respects the four Abrahamic faiths, drawing large crowds of Jews, Muslims, Christians, and Druze from Haifa and all around the country.

Although it was in mid-winter, a perfect day welcomed families and individuals to the picturesque Wadi Nisnas, where multiple festival activities took place. The crowds began to fill the streets from 10:00 in the morning. Walking through the narrow streets, one saw numerous stalls with colorful tables displaying a large variety of products to attract the crowds.

The all-day program featured more than 24 groups and individuals performing on two stages. There were rock bands, choirs, martial arts demonstrations, dance groups, singers, and ethnic musicians.



Altogether, police estimated that some 40,000 people participated.

Everybody seemed to be having great fun. Massoud, one of the neighborhood residents, said, “We haven’t seen such a celebration in years.”

On one stage surrounded by historic buildings, a special Native American ceremony took place led by Dr. Shuki Ben Ami, the well-known Israeli writer and theologian. Twelve people were invited to the stage and paired with representatives of “enemy” nationalities, religions, or races. Each pair was then handed an authentic arrow and asked to break it as a signal of ending hostilities.

To the sound of a Native American slowly beating her drum and singing a haunting melody, each pair broke an arrow and raised the pieces high above their heads before placing them in the urn at the center of the stage and embracing each other. When all had finished, the master of ceremonies set fire to the broken arrows, and the crowd cheered. The Mayor of Haifa, Yona Yahav, participated in the ceremony and also embraced several of the pairs.

Dr. Thomas Walsh, Secretary General of the Universal Peace Federation, spoke about the role of the family as “the school of love,” the place where we develop the skills of healthy relationships that

One Haifa resident commented: “We haven’t seen such a celebration in years.”



can be applied in society at large. The crowd raised their hands in agreement to the motto of “One family under God.”

A dazzling array of performances continued, and there were more willing performers than the time allowed. The audience filled every available space, including the road overlooking the area as well as windows and balconies of nearby buildings. All stood together as the final song, “Seeds of Love,” was performed by Naty Rosenfield with the whole crowd joining in.

Service Projects

The Global Peace Festival included various conferences and service projects throughout Israel.

In a Druze village on Mount Carmel, the local Boy Scouts and volunteer instructors transformed an old school wall into a beautiful peace mural. In Haifa, another group of young leaders from the Reali School joined Youth Federation for World Peace volunteers in a painting project at a home for elderly people. The residents were so moved that they didn’t let the young people leave without inviting them to share a meal together.

In the Beit Hagefen Theater a special awards ceremony was held on December 18 to honor 43 NGO leaders with a special service award for excellence in community service and preservation of the environment. “It is one of life’s greatest pleasures to be among people who make it their goal to serve others,” said Haifa City Councilor Dr. Moshe Becker. Master of Ceremonies Dr. Eliezer Glaubach read out loud each NGO’s mission statement, and Dr. Walsh, UPF Regional Chair Dr. Sang Jin Lee, and UPF-Israel Chair Dr. Masatoshi Abe handed out the awards.

Conferences for Peacebuilders

Two conferences were held at the Dan Panorama Hotel overlooking the beautiful Haifa Bay. The International Youth Leadership Conference gathered some 30 participants, including Israelis, Palestinians, and other nationalities. Mr. Omar Halasa and Mr. Alex Gabb chaired a dynamic forum exploring the theme, “Youth Leaders Spearheading the Culture of Peace.” A second session was devoted to “The Role of Service in Promoting Peace.”

About 80 religious leaders representing Judaism, Islam, Christianity, and Druze as well as other faiths gathered for a conference in a nearby room. The participants were greeted by Sheik Ali Birani, President of the Interreligious Federation for World Peace chapter in Israel. Ms. Nurit Hirschfeld,

program organizer, described the plans for the day. Dr. Frank Kaufmann chaired a session dealing with the vision of “One Family under God,” and Mr. Taj Hamad led a session exploring the meaning of “True Leadership.” Round-table discussions followed each presentation, and summaries of the deliberations were offered to the entire plenum.

Swami Parameshananda commented, “If we look only at each others’ religion we see differences, but when we look up to God we realize that we are all His children.”

The conferences were part of a week-long Middle East Peace Initiative program on the theme of “Religious Leaders Forging a Path for Peace.” International delegates visited religious and historical sites in Jerusalem, Nazareth, and the Sea of Galilee. They also participated in orientation sessions, dialogues, and symposiums.

In Ramallah, the delegation met with Sheik Taysir Tamimi, head of the Sharia courts, as well as two Palestinian government ministers and six parliamentarians. In Jerusalem, the delegation was hosted in the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, by Deputy Speaker Yitzhak Ziv and Member Ran Cohen.

Tour leader Mr. Jeremy Jordan commented afterwards, “It is amazing that in such a short time a group of total strangers from different nations and religions can become such a close family!”



Young volunteers paint a mural at a high school in Jerusalem.

If we look only at each others’ religion we see differences, but when we look up to God we realize that we are all His children.

— SWAMI
PARAMESHANANDA

Conferences offered opportunities for interfaith discussions.



A WEEKEND OF SERVICE FOR LEBANESE YOUTH

By Thomas Schellen, Secretary-General, UPF-Lebanon

The service weekend was billed as chance to “do something good together with many people and have a whole lot of fun doing it.”

— NATASCHA SCHELLEN

Planting trees, singing songs, playing games, and clearing a park were some of the projects that volunteers carried out as part of the Lebanon Youth Service Weekend under the umbrella of the Global Peace Festival’s national service program.

Billed as a chance to “do something good together with many people and have a whole lot of fun doing it,” the weekend attracted several hundred volunteers from schools, universities, scout groups, and public-spirited families mostly around Beirut. The service weekend was organized by the Universal Peace Federation in Lebanon in partnership with a national NGO, the Association of Volunteer Services, and entailed collaboration with civil society partners and municipalities.

These service initiatives culminated in an exhibition and celebration of service in mid-January at the Global Peace Festival, Lebanon.

UPF Ambassadors for Peace served as project monitors, visiting the different projects, taking photographs, and writing reports.

Nabatieh

One hundred and thirty scouts from different parts of Beirut traveled to the south Lebanon town of Nabatieh, which suffered during the war of 2006. There they were welcomed by the Women’s Progress Association for Motherhood, Children, and the Elderly, which runs a nursery, a kindergarten, and a community center for the elderly.

Project Monitor Natascha Schellen, reported: “The scouts split up, each group working on one part of the recreation area. Mostly they had to pick up trash and get rid of spiky weeds. I admired the way they worked together. They had a first aid kit to take care of scratches (there were a few). It was the first time most of them had done this kind of work.”

The municipality provided tools and help with heavy lifting. Mayor Mustafa Baderiddine told the

scouts how proud he was of their work and talked about his dream to plant more trees there and develop an urban oasis.

Home of Hope

Volunteers from the Jamhour School visited the Home of Hope, a residence for homeless children. It can shelter 150 children at a time, and 2,500 children have passed through its doors in the past nine years. Children are brought to the home by police and social workers after being neglected, abused, or exploited on the streets. Some of their parents, illegal aliens or destitute Lebanese, had turned them out on the streets to fend for themselves. The staff at the Home of Hope offer love, a safe place to live, and education.

The Jamhour students organized games including a sack race, filling bottles with sponges soaked in water, basketball, football, circle games, blindfold games, dancing, and singing. They also offered face painting. The mood was fun and playful, and everyone had a great time with the children.

“The children were some of the warmest and most loving children I have ever encountered,” reported Project Monitor Priscilla Chahine. “They especially liked posing for photos and taking photos. It was hard to believe that anyone could turn these beautiful innocent children out onto the street.”

Zvartnots Center

Thirty students from the Aksar Kassardjian School went to the Zvartnots Center for mentally disadvantaged children. The students were greeted by Arexy Dabaghian, the center’s director, who told the 11- to 13-year-old visitors that about 40 persons participate in the center’s programs. They learn skills, receive medical care, and have access to psychologists, speech therapy, and physical therapy. They learn to

make handcrafts, which they sell at a bazaar every December.

The students interacted with the people at the center, singing songs, eating cakes that the students had brought, and picking fruit together. "There was a lively atmosphere," reported the Project Monitor. "As some of the boys from both schools started to play football together, the director told me she was very happy with the project."

Project Hope

Volunteers also partnered with the Hope Foundation to put on a play for a group of orphans. When they arrived, there was little light in the room due to one of the frequent power outages. Unfazed, Mr. Ghosn, the director, described the foundation's work to provide assistance to needy people, both Muslims and Christians.

The 33 children, ages 5-12, sang the national anthem with great enthusiasm. Forming one big circle, they sang together while making actions with their hands. Then four volunteers performed a skit about respecting nature and not littering. After the skit, the children drew images of peace on white cardboard. There were pictures of families, hearts, and birds.

"It was great to see how involved the kids all got," the Project Monitor reported, "and I admired the patience and energy of those volunteers who even taught the children some dancing. The electricity came back in the meantime."

School for the Blind

Ninth-grade students at the Beirut Evangelical School for Girls and Boys spent a morning at the Lebanese School for the Blind.

Being told that that the blind students would benefit from listening to taped stories in English and Arabic, the ninth-graders enthusiastically recorded over 50 stories in both languages and presented them to the children, along with a plant for each child as a token of friendship. They chatted together, sang, and played games.

Back at their own school, the ninth graders began raising funds to buy some personal items the children need. Project Monitor Amal Ibrahim reported that their enthusiasm has spread to all of the school's secondary students.

Shatilla

Two Palestinians, a doctor and a student, invited Palestinian children to join them in planting olive trees at the Shatilla cemetery, the site of a horrific

massacre more than 25 years ago. This activity expressed hope for a better, more peaceful future, and the response was very enthusiastic. An official from the Palestinian embassy and the director of Amnesty International's Lebanon office served as Project Monitors.

Sarafand

Inspired by the call to service, 35 students and several teachers at the high school in Sarafand, on the coast of southern Lebanon, decided to treat 27 orphan girls to a lunch and outing in the City Park. The girls enjoyed riding the carousels in the park. Japanese Project Monitors gave origami birds to the children and taught them how to make these bright little paper cranes. The high school volunteers also gave the orphans gifts.

*The children
were some of the
warmest and most
loving children
I have ever
encountered.*

— PRISCILLA CHAHINE

Students from the Beirut Evangelical School for Girls and Boys spending time with students at the Lebanese School for the Blind.



MDGs AND THE ROLE OF WOMEN

By Genie Kagawa, Deputy Director, UPF Office of UN Relations, New York

Without lifting up the status and dignity of women, the Millennium Development Goals cannot be accomplished.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are “a blueprint for international cooperation” and “a worldwide mandate for change,” according to H.E. Mr. Hamid Al Bayati, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations and member of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. However, there is a distressing lack of progress towards such goals as reducing women’s illiteracy, HIV infection, and death in childbirth.

Ambassador Bayati spoke at a Women for Peace gathering at the United Nations Plaza in New York on March 15, one of a number of NGO meetings in conjunction with the 53rd Session of the UN’s Commission on the Status of Women.

“Education brings many positive benefits to women and their children, not only economically but also regarding their health and well-being,” Ambassador Bayati said. “Without lifting up the status and dignity of women, the MDGs cannot be accomplished.” He offered recommendations including assigning a female UN Under-Secretary-General to monitor women’s issues. He reported improved status for women in Iraq, where the new constitution requires 25 percent of the members of parliament to be women.

“Women have a way of supporting each other that can contribute a lot to peacebuilding,” said Dr. Bobbi Nassar, chair of the NGO Committee on Human Rights at the UN. The United Nations

system is heavy on the male side and light on the female side, she explained. Its focus and budget are heavy on the security side and light on the human rights side. “Women need a voice in how resources are allocated,” she stated.

Nassar told the audience of about 100 people advocacy tools, such as the opportunity citizens have to report violations of rights in their countries during the periodic reviews of human rights.

“I’m glad I’m still alive and can be here with you,” said Ms. Marie Claudine Mukamabano. A survivor of the Rwanda genocide, she founded the Kuki Ndiho Rwanda Orphans Support Project.

“I want to talk about what every woman can do to make a difference,” the vivacious young woman said. “They killed an estimated million people in 100 days, including my parents and family. I was 14 years old when I survived. Remember, what does not kill you makes you strong. My focus was to go back to school and then figure out what to do with my life.” She talked about how she found guidance from reading her mother’s Bible: “I am here today in the strength of my mother’s love and God.”

Mrs. Lynn Walsh, head of Women for Peace, said that the challenges facing women are rooted in the human heart. “We can only resolve problems through universal principles, based on an awareness that we are one human family under God.”

“Women and men have equal value, but there are different characteristics,” the marriage and family educator explained. “As we look around the world, do you think we need more of the masculine fight-or-flight reactions, or do we need more connectedness and nurturing?”

Women for Peace, a project of the Universal Peace Federation, promotes interpersonal relationships characterized by mutual respect and cooperation. It brings together women from all walks of life to build alliances working for stable marriages and families, a culture of service, and interreligious cooperation.

Speakers, left to right:
Mrs. Genie Kagawa, Mrs. Lynn Walsh, H.E. Hamid Al Bayati, Ms. Marie Claudine Mukamabano, and Dr. Bobbi Nassar



KENYA YOUTH SUMMIT

By Shelby Jennings, Youth Federation for World Peace

Hundreds of young leaders and professionals from all over Africa and the world converged on the United Nations Office in Nairobi, Kenya on March 20 to launch a movement of Young Ambassadors for Peace and to gain the knowledge and tools to build peace and achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals.

Speakers included at the International Young Leaders Summit included:

Mrs. Ida Odinga, Wife of Prime Minister Raila Odinga

Dr. PLO Lumumba, Founder of PLO Lumumba Foundation, Kenya

Mr. Martin Luther King, III, Founder and CEO of Realizing the Dream, Inc.

Sir James Mancham, Founding President of Seychelles

Professor Helen Sambili, Kenya's Minister of Youth and Sports

Mr. Michael Marshall, Editor in Chief of United Press International

Mr. Philbert Seka, Director of Service for Peace Africa

Mr. David Caprara, Executive Vice President, Youth Federation for World Peace

Attendees included:

Hon. Jimmy Akena, Member of Parliament from the Lira Municipality, Uganda

Hon. Aziza Ali and Hon. Mohammed Dewji, Members of Parliament, Tanzania

Hon. Hafsa Mossi, Government Minister, Regional Integration and East African Community Affairs, Burundi

Four representatives from King Abdullah II's Fund for Development, Jordan

Dominique Kambetch Diaman, Vice Chair, National Youth Council, DR Congo

Mr. Steve Itela, Executive Director, Youth for Conservation, Kenya

Ten representatives from the NextGen Academy, USA

Mr. Vincent Rapando, President of Junior Chamber International-Nairobi Central

The summit built on the successful Global Peace Festival that Prime Minister Raila Odinga welcomed to Kenya last August, during which over 10,000 people joined together to support the vision of peace and prosperity for all tribes and to participate in service through a massive Nairobi River clean-up project.

This summit had a strong focus on Kenyan unity, "Kenya We Want," and new Nairobi River tree-planting projects. An open invitation was extended to the public to participate in the planting on March 21. One project took place near the Global Roundabout towards the National Museum and another near Pindolia Academy (Nairobi West) towards Mombasa Road.

A DREAM COME TRUE

A dream came true as Ambassadors for Peace led a tree-planting festival along the Nairobi River. T-shirts with the motto "One Family under God" signaled serious business. Perhaps the most interesting thing was the big turn-out of volunteers who showed up and helped plant hundreds of trees. Even some individuals who were caught in surprise and found themselves in the midst of the multitude joined in. Dr. Hyun Jin Moon must have thought along these lines when he said, "We must look beyond our differences to the things that unite us and can bind us together."

— JUSTUS NJUKI,
AMBASSADOR FOR PEACE



Conference sessions took place in the UN offices in Nairobi

MALAYSIAN CHILDREN RAISE FUNDS FOR CHILDREN IN GAZA By UPF Malaysia

Children in Malaysia are taking the lead in showing how they can make a difference in the life of underprivileged children. Through the “Power of 10 Sen” campaign, the collective action of contributing a small coin is becoming a nationwide movement of peace that is set to help children around the world.

The Power of 10 Sen promoted its “Gaza Will Be Cared for by Children for Children” charity drive at a March 9 Peace Convocation at the University of Malaya. More than 1,500 participants filled to capacity the Dewan Tunku Chancellor Hall of the University of Malaya. They were from 12 universities and colleges, secondary schools, NGOs, and government departments.

This campaign is collecting donations to help Palestinian children suffering because of the armed conflict in Gaza. The charity drive also aims to inculcate a culture of peace and a deep realization that we are one global family. Thus, the pain and suffering experienced by someone from another part of the world is also our immediate concern.

Datin Paduka Seri Rosmah Mansor, wife of Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, promoted the campaign at the Peace Convocation. “It is very timely to launch this campaign as children are always the biggest victims of war. They deserve to grow up in a peaceful environment with parental love and

Datin Paduka Seri Rosmah Mansor, wife of the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, joins a Malaysian child in donating a symbolic coin.



Student enthusiastically donates 10-sen coins for Gaza children.

good education,” she said in her address. She also believes that peace can only be attained when the power of love replaces the love of power, adding that the “Power of 10 Sen — By the Children for the Children campaign is heading towards the goal of peace.”

The charity drive is jointly organized by the Universal Peace Federation of Malaysia and Malaysian Red Crescent Society. Tan Sri Zaleha, President of UPF-Malaysia, said that the goal of the campaign is to raise RM300,000 which will be channeled through the Malaysian Red Crescent Society International Relief Fund and used for humanitarian programs in Gaza. The donation drive began February 25 and will end on May 12.

As part of this year’s campaign, the Malaysian Red Crescent Society distributed 10,000 donation boxes to schools and the National Unity and Integration Department distributed 5,000 donation boxes to their kindergartens nationwide.

Tan Sri Zaleha said in her welcoming remarks: “All a child has to do is to drop in 10 sen a day. To set a good example, the parent of each child should



More than 1,500 attended the Peace Convocation at Tunku Chancellor Hall, University of Malaya.

Below: Dr. Lek Thaveetermsakul, Co-chairman of UPF-Asia, delivers the Peace Message.

drop in 10 sen 10 times a day. So, let us educate our children to express compassion and to affirm the righteous path of peace by encouraging them to give something of theirs to other children who are suffering in depressed parts of the world.”

Two Gaza children, Muhammed and Mo'men, ages 6 and 5, made an appearance on stage when the campaign was launched. They had arrived from Gaza just a week earlier with their parents. Their home was damaged in the recent conflict and they hope to start a new life in Malaysia. According to the father, most of the children in Gaza are still living in poverty and lack a proper education.

Also present at the Peace Convocation was UPF-Asia Co-chairman Dr. Lek Thaveetermsakul. Representing the UPF International Chairman, he conveyed the Chairman's Peace Message. He emphasized that “the vision to create One Family under God is not the dream of just one man, one woman, one family or one religion, but the dream of all humanity and, most of all, the dream of God. The ‘Power of 10 sen’ program is a great start in cultivating this culture of peace, towards One Family under God among the youths and children of Malaysia.”

Also present were the convocation were Ambassador from the Palestine embassy; representatives from the embassies of Croatia, Timor-Leste, and Azerbaijan; the Namibia High Commissioner; and wives of government ministers

During the Global Peace Festival in Malaysia last year, the Power of 10 Sen campaign raised funds for humanitarian aid in Cambodia.

An initial check of RM10,000 was presented on behalf of UPF-Malaysia by its President to the Malaysian Red Crescent Society and received by its National Chairman, Tunku Tan Sri Shahrman Tunku Sulaiman.

UPF-Malaysia and the Malaysia Red Crescent Society would like to thank the University of Malaya for lending its support and the Ministry of Education and the National Unity and Integration Department Ministry of Unity, Culture, Arts and Heritage for

their enthusiasm in seeing this as a project as a way to instill a sense of collective responsibility in children. Appreciation is also given to all the celebrities and performers who performed for charity, including Jaclyn Victor, Suki, host and emcee Juliana Ibrahim, Sri Saraswathi Devi Bharathalaya, the National Culture and Arts Department, and the KL Children's Choir.

A note of thanks is also offered to the sponsors, Patco Malaysia Berhad and Ribena.



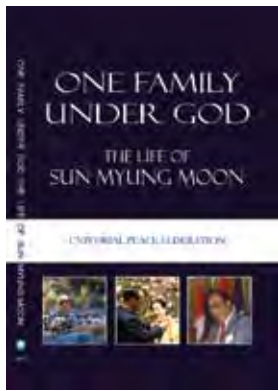
During the event, Ambassador for Peace Awards were conferred upon six leaders in various fields for their noteworthy service to others. They were (left to right): Hon. Dr. Peter B. Woodroof (Executive Vice President of the Genting Oil & Gas Berhad), Dato' Azman Amin (Director General of the Department of National Unity & Integration), Tunku Tan Sri Dato' Shahrman (National Chairman of Malaysian Red Crescent Society), Dato' Jimmy Lim Thaw Chay (Past District Governor of Rotary International District 3300), Datin Nursiah Sulaiman (Hon. Secretary General of the National Council of Women's Organizations), and Lt. Gen. Datuk Hj Shahron bin Hj Ibrahim (RMAF Chief of Staff, Malaysian Armed Forces Headquarters, Ministry of Defense).



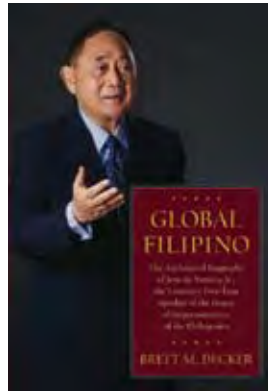
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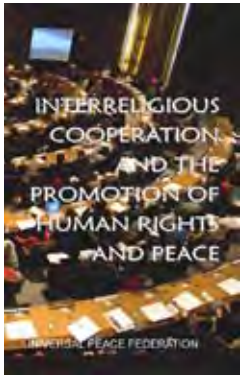
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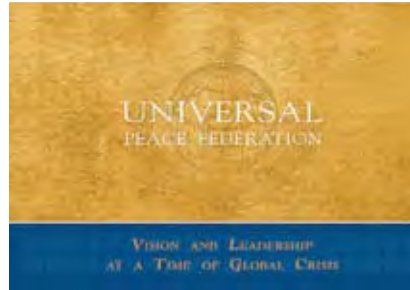
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The present time marks an important milestone in the development of civilization. We stand at a critical junction of human history where we can complete the providence of building God's fatherland and peace kingdom.
— Dr. Sun Myung Moon

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