

NOVEMBER 2011

# UPF TODAY

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO PEACE  
INTERACTIVE .PDF



Thailand Peace Council

9/11 Remembered

International Day of Peace



A PUBLICATION OF THE UNIVERSAL PEACE FEDERATION

# FROM THE PUBLISHER



## UPF TODAY

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO PEACE

This issue of *UPF Today* features a special report from UPF chapters around the world that observed the United Nations International Day of Peace 2011. Our thanks go out to the 70 UPF Chapters who organized programs, which included youth volunteer and service work, interfaith dialogue and prayers services, sports, and forums and seminars on the main UN theme “Make Your Voice Heard.”



**Dr. Thomas G. Walsh**  
President, UPF

UPF was pleased to join the UN General Assembly special 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary memorial service for the victims of the 9.11.2001 attacks on the United States. The program included interfaith candle lighting and musical offerings, with speakers representing the US and the UN. The Little Angels of Korea also came to New York to offer songs of peace and goodwill both at the UN and at Ground Zero in lower Manhattan.

We also had the opportunity to meet with several heads of state and heads of delegations visiting New York for the 66<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly, and conduct briefings about the work of UPF in their countries and around the world.

In this issue we also note “Summer of Service” projects of the Religious Youth Service in the Caribbean, and in Georgia and Russia; Youth Conferences in Geneva and Vienna; our Founder’s Peace Tour program in Abuja, Nigeria; the formal establishment of the Interreligious Peace Council in Bangkok, Thailand; a new dialogue in the Baltics, and more.

Thank you for your ongoing contributions to the important work of building a world of universal peace.

Chairman  
**Hyung Jin Moon**

President  
**Thomas G. Walsh**

Secretary General  
**Tageldin Hamad**

Executive Editor  
**Michael Balcomb**

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Afghanistan	Congo	Ireland	Nicaragua	Sri Lanka
Albania	Dominican Rep.	Israel	Nigeria	St. Lucia
Argentina	Ecuador	Italy	Norway	Suriname
Australia	Estonia	Japan	Paraguay	Switzerland
Austria	Finland	Kenya	Peru	Taiwan
Barbados	France	Latvia	Russia	Thailand
Belarus	Gabon	Liberia	Rwanda	Togo
Benin	Georgia	Lithuania	Scotland	United Kingdom
Brazil	Germany	Marshall Islands	Senegal	United States
Burkina Faso	Ghana	Mauritius	Seychelles	Uruguay
Cambodia	Guyana	Mexico	Sierra Leone	Venezuela
Cameroon	Haiti	Moldova	Slovakia	
Canada	Honduras	Nepal	Slovenia	
C.A.R.	India	Netherlands	Solomon Islands	
Colombia	Indonesia	New Zealand	Spain	

*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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UPF is an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

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**COVER:**  
Students from four universities in Caracas, Venezuela join the Day of Peace; launch of the Thai Peace Council; 9/11 Memorial at the United Nations; Religious Youth Service build a Peace Garden in Novosibirsk.

# THE UN REMEMBERS 9/11

By Genie Kagawa, UPF-UN Office



## UPF joins the United Nations to remember and honor the victims of the 9/11 attacks on the United States.

On September 9, 2011, the United Nations General Assembly convened for a special Commemoration of the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the attacks of 9/11. This significant ceremony was held in the General Assembly Hall. The United Nations brought together member states to mark this solemn occasion, in hopes of moving forward for a better and more secure future for generations to come.

H.E. Mr. Joseph Deiss, President of the General Assembly, opened the program by stating that September 11 is forever etched in our collective memory, and that the General Assembly had gathered together on this 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary to express compassion and solidarity for all the victims of terrorist acts throughout the world. He called the acts an “intolerable violation” of the purposes and principles of the UN and its ideals of peace, security, and friendship among peoples.

Mr. Deiss was followed by Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro. The Deputy Secretary-General spoke of her personal experience and sorrow with the terrorist attack in her home country of Tanzania. She also mentioned the recent assault on the UN Mission in Abuja, Nigeria, calling the attacks “an assault on humanity itself, and on the universal values of peace and dignity the United Nations was created to promote and defend.” “Terrorism has killed too many of our sons, daughters, and mothers, our fathers, sisters and brothers,” she added “We cannot let it tear apart the human family.”

The final speaker was H.E. Dr. Susan Rice, Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations. She called upon the Assembly to remember the victims and their families, innocent men and women callously killed. She recalled

the great courage of the heroes of Flight 93. “The loved ones of the 9/11 victims walk with wounds that will fade but never truly heal,” she said. “Yet September 11 is also a day to affirm the basic tenet of our common decency and common humanity. 9/11 belongs to those who were slain and those who were left behind. To all who believe in human decency and human dignity, it is a day to bow our heads as one family united in loss and love.”

In addition to the keynote speeches, there was a program of music and poetry. For this component, the UPF played a contributing role, sponsoring the participation of the New York City Symphony and its Musical Director, Mr. David Eaton.

The song “Still I Rise” was performed with deep emotion and resolve by soloist Mzuri Moyo, accompanied by the New York City Symphony. With its message of rising above adversity despite all odds, never giving up, and loving one another, the song was very appropriate for the occasion.

David D’Or, world-renowned singer, songwriter, and composer who received Israel’s highest recognition for excellence in the arts, sang “Amazing Grace.” “The Names,” a poem by Billy Collins, in tribute to the names of the victims of the 9/11 attacks, was recited by Osotira Lenard of the Young Women’s Leadership School of East Harlem.

Interfaith leaders came forward to light one candle, fusing the light of each faith into one light, symbolizing oneness and solidarity. Then all rose to observe a moment of silence.

The commemoration ended with a beautifully rendered *Pavane for the United Nations* composed by New York City Symphony director, David Eaton, a perfect finale for the solemn but uplifting occasion.

UPF was grateful to have supported and contributed to this special commemoration at the United Nations.

# BALTIC DIALOGUE

By UPF-Eurasia

UPF's Baltic Dialogue Initiative is overcoming historical tensions.

The three Baltic nations, now fully integrated in the European Union, consider their history under the Soviet Union between World War II and 1991 as a time of occupation. Yet their common history with Russia goes back centuries, and their economic future is inevitably linked with their powerful neighbor. With important Russian-speaking communities in their midst, the Baltic nations are faced with the challenge of keeping their own identity while maintaining positive relations with their neighbors. At the same time, they are set to play a mediating role between Russia and Europe.

The Baltic Dialogue Initiative includes cultural and educational programs led by local Ambassadors for Peace. UPF-Eurasia Secretary General Jacques Marion and UPF-Russia Secretary General Konstantin Krylov visited Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia during the summer of 2011 to report on UPF peace initiatives and stimulate discussion about encouraging better relations between Russia and its neighbors to the West.

The first gathering took place in **Riga, Latvia**. Among the participants were school teachers, university professors, and leaders of youth grassroots organizations. Tatyana Krasnosumova from St. Petersburg, Russia, talked about the annual cultural exchanges among the children of Russia, Finland, and Sweden. Ambassadors for Peace lead a group of Russian students each December on visits to Finland and Sweden, where they offer concerts and get to know young people from those countries. Her enthusiasm for cultural exchanges stimulated Latvian Ambassadors for Peace to think of creative ways of building bonds with their neighbors.

At a meeting in **Vilnius, Lithuania**, Mr. Romualdas Krinickis, the former Mufti of the Tatar Sunni Muslims, reported about his experiences as a participant in the May European Leadership Conference in Oslo, Norway. He described being deeply impressed the commitment to peace by people of different religious backgrounds.

The idea of the Baltic Dialogue initiative inspired a lively discussion, and Ambassadors for Peace expressed their concerns and offered proposals. Participants agreed that an initiative promoting peace, cooperation, and mutual understanding involving the Baltic nations and Russia was urgent and timely, yet it could only be achieved through mutual understanding and resolving resentments of the past. One Lithuanian Ambassador for Peace encouraged people to speak out honestly and openly about what they think of each other as a basis for building understanding and starting work together to address issues.



Lithuania — Conversations continue after the formal dialogue in Vilnius.



Teams from nearby nations come to Estonia each summer for the Parnu Summer Cup football tournament.

In **Tallinn, Estonia**, Ruta Pels, representative of the “People to People” organization, emphasized the urgent need for cooperation and grassroots diplomacy. Ambassadors for Peace discussed potential ways to advance dialogue.

One notable example of citizen diplomacy is the annual Parnu Summer Cup competition among youth football teams organized by Estonian Ambassador for Peace Reigo Tonsberg. At the beginning of each tournament, she addresses the teams and calls upon them to practice the principles of fair play and abide by the slogan “Play Football, Make Peace.” More than 100 football players from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, Sweden, Ukraine, and Russia converge in this coastal Estonian town to compete with the desire to become the best of the best.

# THAI INTERRELIGIOUS PEACE COUNCIL LAUNCHED

By UPF-Thailand

**Thailand forms an interreligious council in a country where almost 95% of the population are Buddhist.**

The Interreligious Peace Council of Thailand was formally inaugurated on the International Day of Peace, September 21, in Bangkok. The inauguration at the Main Conference Hall of the Government Complex Commemorating His Majesty the King's 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday was attended by 600 participants from Thailand and other nations of Asia.

In Thailand 94.6% of the people are Buddhist, 4.6% Muslim, 0.6% Christian, and a small but influential number of Sikhs. The council will promote cooperation and harmony among religions in Thailand; help religious teachings uplift the standard of morality, virtue, and ethics; and support the establishment of an interreligious council at the UN.

The program opened with prayers by Buddhist, Muslim, Christian, and Sikh leaders. The Deputy Director of UNESCO-Asia Pacific Headquarters, Mr. Etienne Clément, read UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's message for the International Day of Peace 2011 and expressed his best wishes for the success of the Interreligious Council for Peace.

Gen. Terdsak Maromme, President of UPF-Thailand and Chairman of the Working Committee for the establishment ICP in Thailand, reported about the preparatory work of his committee. Then the following religious leaders expressed their support for the council:

- Prof. Dr. Phra Dhammakosajarn (Prayoon Dhammajitto), the President of Mahachulalongkorn Buddhist University in Thailand, speaking on behalf of the Acting Supreme Patriarch of Buddhism
- Dr. Wisarut Laovithee, representing Sheikhul Imam Aziz Pitakkhumphol, Islam
- Rev. Nirut Chankorn, the Chairman of the Ruamnimit Churches
- Mr. Prasert Sriguruwal, Chairman of the Namdhari Sangkat Association of Sikhism

Dr. Chung Sik Yong, Regional Chair of UPF-Asia, offered congratulatory remarks, and Dr. Lek Thaveetermsakul, Secretary General of UPF-Thailand, read the Resolution to Inaugurate the Council. Buddhist, Muslim, Christian, and Sikh leaders signed the declaration and joined in a ceremony of pouring water into a common container, representing their unity and oneness of heart, love, and goodwill. This was followed by congratulatory remarks by H.E. Sukumol Khunpluem, Minister of Culture.

Religious leaders and government officials expressed their appreciation to UPF and its founder for the vision, foundation, and means to launch this new level of interreligious cooperation in Thailand. They are inspired by the potential of religious teachings to help solve social problems, reduce conflict and violence, and bring harmony and peace.

The program closed with appointments of Ambassadors for Peace and awards for winners of the national video clip contest on the theme of peace.

Since August 18, 2000, Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, the founder of UPF, has advocated establishing an interreligious council at the United Nations. This vision has taken root in Thailand with the inauguration of the Interreligious Council for Peace spearheaded by UPF-Thailand with the full support of the heads of major religions and the Minister of Culture.



# PEACE TOUR VISITS NIGERIA

By Michael Balcomb and Darlington Eguaoje

**Nigeria may face many challenges, but Nigerians remain hopeful for reconciliation and a peaceful future.**

Abuja, Nigeria - The International Conference Center has hosted many prestigious events in the twenty years since the new federal capital was founded in 1991, but the eleventh stop on the UPF Founder's Peace Tour 2011 was surely one of the most memorable. A crowd of around 3,000, including more than 700 from overseas, was on hand to hear Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon speak at length of God's hope that Nigeria will become a model nation of peace and a beacon of light to all of Africa.

Africa's most populous nation is surely in need of a new vision, and many challenges face President Goodluck Jonathan, who is negotiating the difficult task of assembling a cabinet and government that can embrace all Nigeria's cultural, religious and ethnic diversity. That work has been made even more difficult by both human and natural disasters, including an outbreak of terrorist bombing in Abuja and the North, and widespread flooding in Lagos, the former capital and biggest city.

Despite all this turmoil, President Jonathan took scarce time away from his other duties for a substantive meeting with Father and Mother Moon and members of their family and tour party. During this time together, Dr. Moon offered the President three suggestions for the future of Nigeria.

First, he strongly urged President Jonathan to honor God and God's laws and traditions at the center of his government,

and to channel Nigeria's national passion for religion into an asset for peace instead of a source of division. Next, he emphasized the importance of supporting strong marriages and families, so that Nigeria's traditional families are not eroded by a tide of secular and humanistic values threatening to sweep the country. Finally, he voiced the hope that Nigeria will emerge as a model nation for all of Africa, and for the world.

These three themes formed the focus of the July 14 — 17 International Leadership Conference hosted by the Universal Peace Federation, drawing more than 700 participants from Nigeria and 69 other nations. A total of 34 speakers addressed topics such as agriculture and food; health and development; interfaith peacebuilding; and good governance.

At the opening plenary, Dr. Thomas Walsh, UPF President, said that the leadership conference and the peace tour demonstrated the "commitment of UPF in Nigeria and Africa at large to promote interfaith cooperation, good governance, strong marriage and family, and character education for youth."

Dr. Hyung Jin Moon, UPF International Chairman, said that true and lasting peace cannot come from a secular, human origin. "Lasting solutions to the critical problems faced by the people of this region call for a spiritual awakening and the full participation of those who affirm and practice spiritual principles," he said.



International Leadership Conference Opening Plenary



An interfaith field visit to the Abuja Central Mosque

**International Day of Peace**

There are several areas of the country where there is serious civil unrest brought on by political, ethnic, and religious conflict. Following the Conference UPF Ambassadors for Peace started discussing ways that UPF can take steps to help settle the disputes and conflict in each of these areas. The recent International Day of Peace offered an opportunity to put some of the proposals from the July Conference into action.

Perhaps the most significant was in Jos, Plateau State, which has become a beehive of religious crises in recent times with bomb blasts, religious killings, and mayhem. The Peace Day program started on a very sober note with representatives of the Christian and Islamic faiths called upon to offer opening prayers. Bishop Mrs. Iwuk Asuamah prayed with tears rolling down her face; followed by Alhaji (Dr.) Yusuf Sarami, a millionaire bankrupted as a result of the Jos riots, who also offered a tearful prayer. Several topics on security and personal safety were presented by the National Organization for Police/Community Relations Committee represented by Mr. Kingsley Okoruwa, their national Public Relations Officer, and the National Unity and Peace Corps of Nigeria represented by Engr. E. G. Danboyi.

The high point of the event was a time of confession and forgiveness. Ten volunteer youths from both Christian and Islamic faiths offered repentance on behalf of all youths in Nigeria and Jos Plateau in particular for participating in religious killings and mayhem and knelt down asking forgiveness from the Muslims and Christian leaders present. Moved by this example, everyone in the audience, numbering over 200, embraced one another and pledged to continue to forgive each other and work together for peace.

Engr. Kalil, a Lebanese who has become a nationalized Nigerian citizen, described the Christian/Muslim war in Lebanon in which neither side won a victory and left Lebanon indebted to the World Bank to the tune of several billion dollars.



**Dr. Sun Myung Moon with President Goodluck Jonathan**

He asked Nigerians not to wait to be attacked externally before finding their center of harmony as one people. Alhaji Yusuf Sarami, who had earlier prayed with tears, told the audience that what he witnessed today had greatly moved him and that although he had entertained lots of resentment until then, “today I am greatly moved to forgive my enemies who rendered me bankrupt and penniless though I did nothing wrong to them.”

***“I am greatly moved to forgive my enemies who rendered me bankrupt and penniless though I did nothing wrong to them”***

*Alahaji Yusuf Sarami*

Several traditional rulers who attended the forum have invited UPF and the Youth Federation for World Peace to their various kingdoms to promote similar healing and reconciliation. About 16 media organizations were represented and carried the news nationwide.

In attendance were many traditional rulers, members of the Christians Associations of Nigeria, and NGO leaders. This was announced as the start of a three-month peace process that is hoped will eventually bring about lasting peace in Plateau State.



**Hon. Hajiya Turai Umar Musa Yar'Adua, former First Lady.**



**Father Oluwele Abiola and Imam Drame Moussa**



UNITED NATIONS

# International Day of Peace

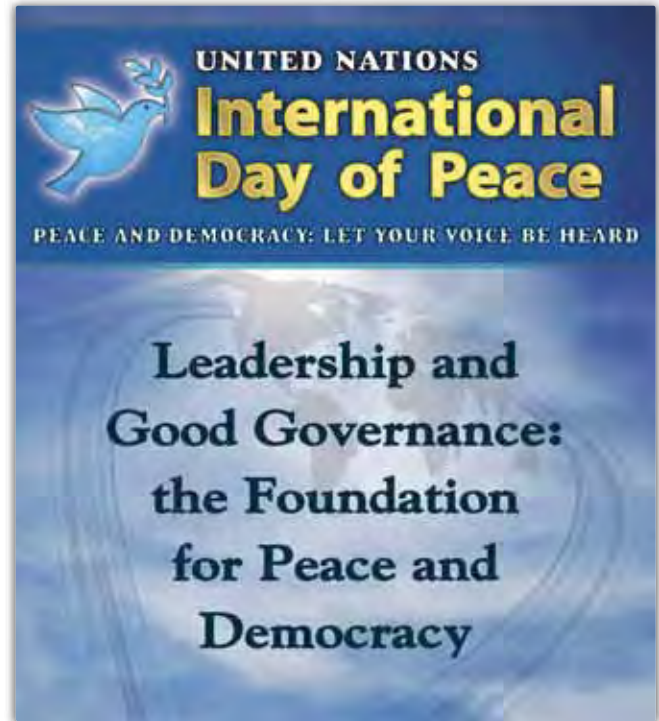
## UPF OBSERVANCES WORLDWIDE

UPF chapters in about 70 nations organized celebrations of the International Day of Peace 2011. It was our best turn-out so far, and we much appreciate all the local chapters for their efforts to hold programs despite having very limited resources.

Perhaps no chapter was more challenged than UPF Afghanistan. On the Day of Peace, September 21, Kabul was in turmoil following the assassination the night before of Former Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani, leader of the High Peace Council working for reconciliation with the Taliban. Somehow, the program went on as scheduled on September 22.

UPF is deeply committed to peace and reconciliation. Peace has its foundation in the quality of human character and human relationships. Our shared moral and spiritual traditions teach us of our common origins, purpose, and destiny. Therefore, in our quest for peace, let us keep in mind that peace will emerge on the foundation of a moral and spiritual awakening and a recognition that we are all brothers and sisters. We are one family under God.

The International Day of Peace is an opportunity to promote interfaith dialogue, mutual respect, and cooperation. On this, and every day, let us work together to build a world that resembles and fulfills our shared hopes and aspirations.



## UN STATEMENT ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

Every year on the International Day of Peace, people around the world commit to non-violence and to harmony among all peoples and nations. Peace is our mission; our day-to-day quest.

This year's theme focuses on the timely issue of peace and democracy. Democracy is a core value of the United Nations. It is crucial for human rights. It provides channels for resolving differences. It gives hope to the marginalized and power to the people. But democracy does not just happen; it has to be nurtured and defended.

The world needs you to speak out: for social justice and freedom of the press; for a clean environment and women's empowerment; for the rule of law and the right to a say in one's own future.

This year, young people have been on the frontlines for freedom. I salute the activists and ordinary people for their courage and determination to build a better future. We at the United Nations will work in common cause to realize our shared aspirations for dignity, security and opportunity for all.

To all those seeking peace, this is your day, and we are with you.



**Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations Secretary-General, rings the Peace Bell in New York on the Day of Peace.**



# UNITED NATIONS International Day of Peace



## AFGHANIS LONGING FOR PEACE

By Rahman Ali Jawed, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission

In the midst of confusion and violence, many have fallen prey to the evil wishes of the perpetrators and entrepreneurs of war and feel violent and confused, many times resorting to retaliation and counter violence.

This was the situation in Kabul on September 21 this year — on the Day of Peace itself — with the tragic killing of the head of the High Peace Council of Afghanistan in his house in Kabul.

It is difficult to fix things when such harm is done, and a comprehensive peace vision is needed to intervene and change the confusing atmosphere. Nevertheless, UPF members went ahead with programs to observe the International Day of Peace in Kabul on September 22, the very next day. Around 100 people participated, including volunteers for peace, teachers, and members of civil society.

The program commenced with a recitation from the holy Qur'an, followed by

a reading of the messages of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and President Hamid Karzai on the International Day of Peace. These were followed by speeches, poems, personal stories, and music on themes of peace, unity, and brotherhood.

Mr. Rahman Ali Jawed, an Ambassador for Peace, expressed his delight that people had come together to respect and honor one another, recalling their faith in the recognition of human dignity and rights. He thanked God for giving humanity the capacity to think, will, and differentiate good from evil, light from darkness, peace from war and violence, beauty from ugliness, and to act upon their innate nature which is inherited from the nature of God.

“Let’s use the opportunity to shake hands with each other within this country and with people throughout the world,” he said, expressing the longing of the Afghan people to live in peace.

Mr. Waleyullah Rahmani, head of the Kabul Center for Strategic Studies, gave examples of other people who achieved peace after long struggles and concluded, “We can also attain peace if we work hard on the various levels of society.”

Mr. Aara, the Chair of the Kabul Private Schools Union and Collaborators of Education, added, “If we can’t bring peace on the political level, we can at least make peace at home and in our schools.”

Then people were invited to stand and share their own stories related to peace. One of the volunteer speakers, Mrs. Hamida, came to the stage and said: “Peace for me means giving us the chance to express our opinions, and today UPF helped me to practice it.”

A music band sang many songs of peace and patriotism, unity, harmony, and brotherhood. Among them was a well-known song of unity: “If we are from Kandahar or Bamyan, we are brothers.”

(Photo): Despite the ongoing war and violence around them, Afghans embrace a vision of peace and security on the UN International Day of Peace.



UNITED NATIONS

# International Day of Peace

## UPF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

**ARGENTINA** — 173 poetry submissions were made for the International Day of Peace Poetry contest. The winning poem was “Utopia” by Teresa Gatti from Villa Angela.

**BARBADOS** — A series of educational and spiritual seminars, tree planting at the A. Da Costa Edwards Primary School, and a discussion on domestic violence at the Ministry of Education.

**BRAZIL** — UPF joined the Commercial Association of Sao Paulo and others for the Commemoration of a Peace Monument dedicated to children. The founder of the project, Luigi Brancati who had lived through World War II as a child, wished the monument to be a reminder for us to promote peace.

**COLOMBIA** — Three programs in Bogota organized by Muslim, Jewish and Christian leaders calling for interreligious cooperation in order to solve problems in society, with a joint declaration for Rosh Hashanah 5772.

**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC** — A commemoration of the International Day of Peace on September 21 in Barahona.

**ECUADOR** — A minute of silence was observed at the Hall of the National Union of Journalists followed by a reading of the message of Lucia Satamea-Palacios, director of UN Women in Colombia and Ecuador and greetings from several congressmen and international diplomats.

**GUYANA** — Prime Minister Samuel Hinds spoke on the UN’s theme for this year, “Make Your Voice Heard: Peace and Democracy,” with interfaith prayers and children’s dances.

**HONDURAS** — A meeting in Tegucigalpa.

**MEXICO** — Hundreds of schoolchildren and university students joined an exuberant program at the Universidad Panamericana in partnership with the NGO *Vivir en Paz*.

**NICARAGUA** — A program at the Martin Luther King Evangelical Nicaraguan University with addresses from Dr. Ramiro Cortez, Rector, and former Minister of the Family Lic. Ivania Toruno.

**PARAGUAY** — Dr. Felipe Samaniego (Member of the Senate) and Maria Gonzalez Baez (Secretary of Women, Presidency of the Republic) academics, lawyers, and directors of colleges were among the guests at a seminar on the Principles of Democracy for Peace and Good Governance.

**PERU** — A meeting in the Peruvian Congress organized by Pastor Dr. Orestes Sanchez, UPF Co-chair, was opened by Dr. Daniel Abugattas Majluf, President of the Congress, with other congressmen from all parties attending. Representatives of the major religions offered prayers and lit candles for peace. Mrs. Rebeca Arias, UN Resident Coordinator and the Resident Representative of the UN Development Programme, was a keynote speaker. University students and high school students were among the guests.

**URUGUAY** — An interreligious peace summit featured Muslim, Hindu, Christian, Buddhist and other faith leaders in a program addressed by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Uruguayan Board for Interreligious Dialogue.

**VENEZUELA** — Hundreds of youth and their families from a wide array of partner organizations joined a peace walk.



Mexico — Program at the Universidad Panamericana



Brazil — Peace Monument founder Luigi Brancati (in gray) cutting the ceremonial ribbon



Georgetown, Guyana — Prime Minister Samuel Hinds gives the keynote address.

# UNITED NATIONS International Day of Peace



## UPF NORTH AMERICA

**LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS** — Ambassadors for Peace held an interfaith prayer vigil on the steps of the Arkansas State Capitol. Todd Montgomery of Heifer International, described how the organization has saved hundreds of thousands of people from poverty and hunger through donating animals. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's message was read by UPF State Coordinator Bruce Biggin, and leaders of five faiths offered prayers.

**TAMPA, FLORIDA** — The Tampa chapter of UPF organized a "Family Day of Peace" at the University of South Florida. Sixty people participated, led by seven Ambassadors for Peace, and 13 non-profits displayed information tables. The keynote speaker was Hillsborough County Commissioner Ken Hagan, joined by Dustin McGahee, President of Youth for Human Rights, Florida; Michelle Walker, Founder and President of Miracles Outreach (helping at risk teenagers); Cathy Smith, Hillsborough County Department of Juvenile Justice; and Cynthia Keeton, Hillsborough County Department of Health.

**DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA** — A charity fundraiser, "Peace Expressed through Music" celebrated the International Day of Peace in a program co-sponsored with Lovin' Life Ministries. It was an evening of music, songs, poems, and inspirational readings. Individuals sang and read peace messages from Martin Luther King, Mother Teresa, Father Sun Myung Moon and many others important figures. Proceeds from the evening went to the local Liberia Crisis Center, which offers services to the many Liberian refugees who have made North Carolina their new home.

**RICHMOND, VIRGINIA** — The 30<sup>th</sup> UN International Day of Peace was celebrated with a "Family Peace Festival." More than 60 sponsors, vendors, and non-profit exhibitors participated, and about 1,200 people visited the event. Prominent among the many organizations present were the Interfaith Council of Greater Richmond, Amnesty International, Commonwealth Catholic Charities, the City of Richmond (several departments), League of Women Voters, Falun Gong, VA Interfaith Center on Public Policy, and the Universal Peace Federation.

**SEATTLE, WASHINGTON** — An interfaith water of peace ceremony featured Mr. Sluggo Rigor, a Catholic; Mrs. Cindy Etter, a Baha'i; Mr. Rizwan Samad, a Muslim; Mrs. Alicia Haq, a Buddhist; Mrs. Lavanya Reddy, a Hindu; Pastor Richard Rivers, a Christian; and Rev. Larry Krishnek and Mrs. Noriko Fisher, Unificationists. Following this, Mrs. Cindy Etter gave a talk about the history of the Baha'i Faith and their work for interfaith harmony and peace.



Washington DC — (L to R) H.E. Michael Louise, Ambassador of St. Lucia; H.E. Srdjan Darmanovi, (Montenegro) and H.E. Constancio Pinto, (Timor-Leste) with Mrs. Tomiko Duggan, UPF Washington DC



Tampa, Florida — Family Day of Peace at the University of South Florida

**WASHINGTON DC** — Over 80 guests, including four Ambassadors and representatives from 13 embassies, attended the program at *The Washington Times* building. Among them were nine guests from the Republic of Congo Brazzaville and graduate students from George Washington University in DC. Speakers included Farah Al Atassi, Founder and President of the Arab Information & Resource Center in Georgetown; H.E. Srdjan Darmanovic, Ambassador of Montenegro to the United States; and Amelda Beluli, Program Manager at the National Albanian American Council.

**MONTREAL, CANADA** — Shaheen Ashraf, a member of the National Board of the Canadian Council of Muslim Women, shared her thoughts as a Muslim living in Canada for 35 years. Rev. Bruce Gourlay, a Presbyterian minister originally from the United States, shared how immigration has changed his congregation in Montreal, now composed mostly of Africans from English-speaking West Africa


**UNITED NATIONS**

# International Day of Peace

## UPF ASIA

Interfaith cooperation for peace was a common theme in many International Day of Peace events in Asia as speakers called for a moral and spiritual awakening to accompany the welcome rise of democratic processes throughout the world.

In **Nepal**, Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim, and Christian leaders joined in prayers for peace at an event attended by leaders of the country's diverse political factions.

In **Indonesia**, a conference at a university emphasized the multi-ethnic character of the nation. "Diversity does not always mean disengagement and disharmony, but it induces a more colorful and dynamic picture of reality," one speaker stated; in addition to Muslim speakers, panelists included Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian representatives. Speakers at a **Taiwan** symposium examined UPF's proposal for an interreligious council at the United Nations.

On the International Day of Peace in Bangkok, **Thailand**, the national Interreligious Peace Council was inaugurated, based on the foundation of many months of consultation with religious officials and government ministries. Representatives of several religions poured water into a common bowl, representing their common commitment to promote mutual understanding, respect, and cooperation.

Students in New Delhi, **India**, competed in an inter-collegiate "Play Football Make Peace" tournament and debated the relevance of non-violence as a strategy for promoting lasting peace.

**Cambodian** youth listened to a presentation on the principles of conflict resolution and then visited the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, where they viewed displays and offered prayers for those who lost their lives. Thai youth created video clips on the theme of peace and submitted them to a national contest; prizes were awarded on the National Day of Peace. UPF-**Sri Lanka** organized a character education conference at a university. Traditional music and poetry about peace comforted the hearts of young and old as they gathered to express their longing for a lasting peace in **Afghanistan**.

International Day of Peace celebrations offered opportunities to connect with diplomats. The conference at the Syarif Hidayatullah Islamic State University in Jakarta, **Indonesia**, was attended by representatives of seven embassies. The Ambassador of Afghanistan to Japan described his country's hopes for peace at a seminar in Tokyo, **Japan**.

Afghanistan  
Cambodia  
India  
Indonesia  
Japan  
Nepal  
Sri Lanka  
Taiwan  
Thailand



India — Question and answer session with students



Indonesia — H. E. Mohamed Antar, Ambassador of Tunisia receiving a presentation of peace.



Cambodia — Students visit the Genocide Museum



Japan — Celebration hosted by the Afghanistan Embassy

# UNITED NATIONS International Day of Peace



## UPF EURASIA

Since peace education is a key element of UPF's work in Eurasia, many International Day of Peace programs took place in schools and universities. In **Russia**, young UPF volunteers taught classes about conflict resolution and peacemaking in schools. Art, music, poetry, and crafts helped bring to life the UN's message for the International Day of Peace, and innovative activities included students in Sverdlovsk building a "wall of peace" and students in Volgograd creating multimedia presentations in English and French and lining a boulevard with drawings of peace. High school students in **Estonia** were encouraged to think of themselves as peacemakers, and programs at universities in **Moldova** encouraged students to volunteer to help make their communities more peaceful and harmonious.

Other Day of Peace activities addressed the legacies of conflict. In **Belarus**, conference speakers examined the history of destroyed villages, and a ceremony at the Memorial to the Anti-Fascist Coalition in Moscow included speeches and laying wreaths in memory of the honored dead. Activities in **Georgia** assisted the children of internally displaced families. The Peace Embassy in **Latvia** hosted an informal gathering of families.

Forums in Moscow, Nizhny Novgorod, and Novosibirsk, Russia brought together academics, NGO representatives, and religious leaders to promote cooperation and coordination of efforts of different organizations in creating a culture of peace; in Chelyabinsk, participants addressed strategies for reducing litter and alcohol abuse. Women's groups in Moscow, Perm, and Yekaterinburg visited orphanages, rehabilitation centers, and programs for immigrant children, bring gifts and activities to uplift their spirits.

The "Hour of Running" programs raised public awareness of the International Day of Peace as youth and families distributed fliers to people in the parks and boulevards of Moscow, Nizhnevartovsk, Nizhny Novgorod, Novosibirsk, Rostov on the Don River, Vladivostok, and Yekaterinburg. In addition to spreading the ideals of peace, these activities promote a healthy and moral lifestyle, family values, and cooperation.

Belarus  
Estonia  
Georgia  
Latvia  
Moldova  
Russia

Russia — Running for Peace



Belarus — Peace Fund and UPF representatives



Moldova — A seminar on examples of peacemaking


**UNITED NATIONS**

# International Day of Peace

## UPF EUROPE

**IRELAND** — People from many different religions and nationalities assembled at the Lantern Interfaith Center. The talk of the evening “From a culture of conflict to a culture of peace” was given by Mr. Alan McCann. Groups discussed the question: “What we teach our children to make them people of peace?” Participants sang verses from “This Is My Song,” and people from different backgrounds lit the peace candles.

**SPAIN** — Fauzi Fates, a philologist at the University of Tripoli, and a representative of The House of Libya in Catalunya, Spain, spoke on the topic “Libya: Present and Future” at the program in Barcelona. “Libya is being reborn,” he said. “Although there is much work ahead, we have confidence we can build a nation that follows the path of peace.”



Albania — Gifts of school supplies for Roma orphans



Scotland — International Day of Peace in Perth



Finland — A speaker from the Loviisa Peace Forum



Germany — Interreligious prayers in Munich

**NORWAY** — On this UN International Day of Peace, we focused on how we could strengthen and develop peace and democracy, both in Norway and globally. Around 70 people from various sectors and backgrounds gathered for the program.

UPF-Norway Secretary General Steinar Murud spoke on the theme: “Focus on similarities rather than differences!” “We do not want cultures in a society to develop into ghettos,” he said “But we want the different cultures to find their similarities and work together in building the common society they are all part of.” Representatives from Sikh, Baha’i, Muslim, Christian, and Buddhist backgrounds also spoke at the Oslo Central Mosque.

**GERMANY** — Bonn - A colorful group of people from Asia and Africa heard presentations on Jeremy Gilley’s “Peace One Day” and the worldwide activities of UPF.

**Dusseldorf** — An interreligious gathering included a Hindu meditation and peace prayer and an explanation of the importance of the Day of Peace by Anja Brina.

**Munich** - UPF-Munich and the Association of Islamic Cultural Centers organized a peace prayer at the Fatih Mosque.

**Stuttgart** — A “House of Religions” event featured Ban Ki-moon’s message and a talk by Karl-Christian Hausmann, Secretary General, UPF-Germany.

# UNITED NATIONS International Day of Peace



**SLOVAKIA** — Volunteers bought creative material and encouraged students in two primary schools in Nitra, the Prince Pribina Primary School and the Beethoven Primary School, to commemorate the International Day of Peace by creating postcards on the theme of peace.

**ITALY** — UPF organized programs in Bergamo, Milano, Monza and Torino. UPF Italy also participated in the annual Assisi congress for peace.

at UPF's Lancaster Gate offices, and in the South London borough of Bromley.

**FRANCE** — France has made the headlines recently with news of resistance towards its increasingly secular response toward religious and cultural expressions of faith in one of Europe's most diverse societies. The Women's Federation for World Peace and UPF-France organized a Day of Peace forum on the topic "Does Multiculturalism Still Contribute to Peace?"



Italy — An hour of collective prayer in Monza



Norway — An interfaith panel in the Central Mosque of Oslo



Slovenia — Lighting candles for peace



UK — Discussing peace initiatives in London

**ALBANIA** — UPF-Albania and the Family Federation for World Peace commemorated the International Day of Peace by distributing school supplies to Roma orphans in Tirana on September 27 and again in Shkodra on September 28. Volunteers spent a month raising the funds to purchase the supplies.

**NETHERLANDS** — Programs took place at the Dialogue Center in Amsterdam and at Cristus Triumphator Church in the Hague.

**UNITED KINGDOM** — Peace activists from various parts of the world talked about their work during forums

Albania	Norway
Austria	Scotland
Finland	Slovakia
France	Slovenia
Germany	Spain
Ireland	Switzerland
Italy	United Kingdom
Netherlands	



UNITED NATIONS

# International Day of Peace

## UPF OCEANIA

**MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA** — The UPF celebration began with a traditional aboriginal welcome, followed by a discussion of the historical decision of the UN General Assembly to establish the Day of Peace 30 years ago. Marisa Vedar, director of Gawad Kalinga (GK), the Filipino service and community-building organization spoke about the organization’s work in Australia and with the international Filipino community.

**MAJURO, MARSHALL ISLANDS** — A program sponsored with the College of the Marshall Islands and the UPF Peace Embassy on the topic Democracy and Peace. Hon. Eldon Note, an Ambassador for Peace, lawyer, and former mayor of the Bikini atoll, read the UN statement on “Peace and Democracy: Make Your Voice Heard.” The keynote speaker was the Hon Kessai Note, former President of the Marshall Islands and member of the UPF presiding council.

One interesting note: some students asked why the Marshall Islands, which have not experienced conflict or bloodshed in recent times, even need a peace initiative – a happy challenge for UPF Director Kenichi Ito, who spoke about inner peace and peace in the family as the foundation for all peace.

**AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND** — A diverse audience gathered at the Maori Anglican Church to mark this important UN day. Cannon Lloyd Popata opened with prayer, and Paula Jakeman, a Maori church elder, offered welcoming remarks. MC Geoffrey Fyers, UPF, introduced the event and spoke about the meaning of the day.

Speakers included Member of Parliament Su’a William Sio; Gary Russell, co-president of the UN association of New Zealand; Ngatamariki Lulia of the Women’s Federation, and Rangi Mclean, a Maori leader from South Auckland, who spoke about his initiative to open up his Maori marae (a community meeting place) to the wider community so it can become a place where all people could gather.

**HONIARA, SOLOMON ISLANDS** — A school assembly for 300 students at the Vura Community High School included an explanation of the International Day of Peace, the message of Ban Ki-moon, One Minute of Silence, a peace quiz and a song. A second event was held at New Hope Academy on September 24 with Alice Hou as MC. Pastor George Tafoa offered the opening prayer, followed by remarks by UPF director Chihiro Midorikawa and interfaith prayers. Both events were covered by the *Solomon Star* newspaper.



New Zealand— A gathering at a Maori meeting hall



Solomon Islands — Peace education at the Vura school



Australia — A forum on community building



# UNITED NATIONS International Day of Peace



## UPF AFRICA

UPF Chapters in 15 African nations conducted Day of Peace programs in 2011, the highest tally to date. Some of the highlights of several days of conferences, service programs, festivals, and seminars—

**COTONOU, BENIN** — A week of conferences and discussions on the theme “Peace and Democracy: Let Your Voice be Heard,” culminating in an interfaith choir performance and awards ceremony.

**NANGREONGO, BURKINA FASO** — The Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, the Hon Jean Kouliadiaty, served as patron for a large tree-planting festival attended by 1500 people.

**BANGUI, BIMBO AND GABABAJA, CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC** — A series of peace conferences for youth, university students and NGO leaders and the launch of a fish-farming project, coordinated by Ralph Oppenheimer.

**BRAZZAVILLE, CONGO** — Four hundred people attended a program at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; messages were read by UNAIDS representative Mr. Traore and UPF’s Zodzi Augustin. Meanwhile, a delegation from UPF-Congo visited the UN and UPF headquarters during the opening of the 66<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

**ACCRA, GHANA** — A two-day peace seminar led by UPF-Ghana’s Helen Osei included a visit to bring gifts of food, clothing, and toys to the Hope Children’s Orphanage in Gomoa Fetteh in Central Ghana.

**NAIROBI, KENYA** — Mohammed M. Mwinypembe, Secretary General of the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO, was the keynote speaker at a joint celebration of the International Day of Peace and the Muslim holiday Eid ul-Fitr. Dr. Markandey Rai, Chief of Global Parliamentarians, UN Habitat, read the 2011 message by Ban Ki-moon.

**HARPER, LIBERIA** — Gerald B. Coleman, UPF-Liberia and Dean of Engineering & Technology at Tubman University, led a tree-planting ceremony celebrating the nation’s return to peace after a decade of conflict. A few days later the country’s President, Ellen Sirleaf, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

**QUATRE-BORNES, MAURITIUS** — Children’s dances, creole songs and Hindu lamp ceremonies brought a festive spirit to a program in partnership with Brahma Kumaris and the Women’s Federation for World Peace.

**CASAMANCE, SENEGAL** — A call for peace on the theme “Let’s unite in heart.”

**VICTORIA, SEYCHELLES** — A program at the National Theater on the theme of community building with speeches by the chair of the national NGO committee, a bishop, and the Seychelles’ founding president, Sir James Mancham.



Yaounde, Cameroon — Members of Parliament, journalists, students, and representatives of the Baha’i community joined UPF in local celebrations.



Kigali, Rwanda — Planting of a “peace pole” and other ceremonies at the New Hope Technical Institute.



Freetown, Sierra Leone — UPF volunteers conducted a transformational cleanup at the Connaught Teaching Hospital, built in 1912. The project was featured on national TV, and hospital manager Mr. Foday Musa congratulated UPF on “a practical demonstration of interfaith in action.”

**LOME AND KARA, TOGO** — Over 500 Ambassadors for Peace attended two conferences on the theme “Leadership and good governance for peace and democracy.”

# MODELING AN INTERRELIGIOUS COUNCIL

By Carolyn Handschin, UPF-Geneva

## Geneva - University students model the work of the proposed interreligious council at the UN

*“We are not nearly as different as some in this world would like us to believe”*

*Cathleen Dumas Bell*

During the September 23 multiculturalism conference in Geneva, which coincided with the International Day of Peace, a number of youth delegates participated in a role-playing exercise to examine how a future interreligious council might assist the UN in its work in the aftermath of a major social crisis, such as the recent shooting tragedy in Norway. Role-playing is an effective way to examine the challenges and eventual UN Council might face.

Omar Bawa (law student, Geneva), playing the role of the President of the Interreligious Council (IRC), reminded the Council of their role and the decision to call for this special session. He then called upon the Secretary-General of the UN to address the council.

Role-playing the UN Secretary-General, Ms. Rachel Brady (degree in International Development and Conflict Management, USA) began, “In the last century we saw the clash of cultures and nations in two world wars, and yet out of this dark period came new calls for cooperation and mutual prosperity as embodied most clearly in the founding of this great institution. International organizations are on the rise and the creation of intergovernmental organizations defies rationalist political thought. It seems to be the destiny of humanity to come together as one.”

Representing the Director General of the International Organization for Migration, Ms. Houda Balti (Ph.D. student and NGO lawyer on migration issues, Vienna) had prepared a PowerPoint presentation assessing assimilation and multiculturalism.

“Ensuring the existence of diverse cultures and promoting a harmonious relationship among them has provided enrichment to both migrant and host communities,” she said. A project of the International Organization for Migration, “Mentoring for Migrants,” was recommended as a best practice and a possible joint initiative.

The next speaker, role-playing the Director General of UNESCO, Ms. Elisa Ingrosso (a Masters student in History and Politics at the University of Zurich), explained that the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity states that “cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature.” UNESCO’s International Coalition of Cities against Racism may be considered as a best practice and as a driving force in proving diversity to be a motor of development when functioning under unifying core principles.

These initial presentations were followed by the simulation of Council debate among the standing members of the Interreligious Council.



[Above] Playing roles of UN officials (L to R) Ms. Rachel Brady, MR. Jesus Domingo, Mr. Omar Bawa, Mrs. Carolyn Handschin, and Ms. Houda Bal.  
[Far Right] Roleplaying the interreligious council.

The delegate for Catholicism, Ms. Lica de Guzman (a high school student in Geneva, graduate of Little Dreams Foundation), asked the question, “Has multiculturalism failed us, or we who have failed multiculturalism? Referring to the hate propaganda posters of right-wing political parties in Switzerland, which depict scenes such as black hands trying to grab a Swiss passport, she described the frightened reaction of youth in her constituency. Yet in classrooms where nearly 60% of the students are of different origins, all generally manage to get on well together. Remembering the 87 youth gunned down in Norway, she said: “I call on the United Nations and its member states, all non-governmental organizations and world religions to reinforce their commitment to multiculturalism at the heart of the global fight against discrimination and xenophobia.”

The delegate for Sikhism, Sundeep Singh (Law student at Oslo University and leader of “Young Sikhs”), reported that the recent events in Norway call into question the impact of nurturing a strong critique of minorities. Such political parties collected 30% of the vote in his country. Norway has decided, in response to violence, that it needs more democracy and respect, bringing participation and dialogue to all citizens. How can one expand the representative democracies? By letting people interact and ordinary people interact more effectively with their government and the UN. He believes that an Interreligious Council can help promote this.

The delegate for Hinduism, Karthik Ragavan (assistant priest in Geneva Hindu temple, IT professional at UN International Computing Centre) opened with a Hindu chant: like rivers flowing across the country, all flowing to the ocean, religion should provide a world view that

connects the individual to the whole. “I call upon the Interreligious Council and the United Nations to inculcate and blend education with human values on all levels” he said. “Violence can only succeed when we dehumanize others. It is imperative to emphasize actions that give value to others.”

Protestantism was represented by Mr. Mutua Kobia (a student at Geneva University). The delegate of Islam described how people of faith stood together to defend their businesses and places of worship during the recent riots in UK. The delegate of Judaism was Ilja Sichrovsky (completing studies for a Masters in International Development, Founder and Secretary General of of the Muslim Jewish Conference).

The delegate for Unificationism, Cathleen Dumas Bell (Graduate in Global Peace and Justice Studies, Trainer with a performing arts-based AIDS-prevention education program), stated that recent tragic events, such as the assassination of former Afghan president Rabbani, remind us of the importance of this session. “Espousing the

belief of thinking and acting like a family to create a global family is not unique to my faith community; and herein lies our great strength: we are not nearly as different as some in this world would like us to believe.”

Cathleen recommended: (1) Urging the General Assembly to acknowledge the essential value of marriage and family, and their role in peacemaking; and (2) using the media, arts, and culture to aggressively disseminate the Council’s message, taking note of the successful media campaign of the Committee on the Rights of the Child in Italy.

Concluding the simulation, the Council President thanked all the speakers, stating that the secretariat had taken due note of all interventions and recommendations.

***“It is imperative to emphasize actions that give value to others.”***

*Karthik Ragavan*



# LEADERSHIP AND SOCIAL CHANGE

By Peter Haider, UPF-Austria

## A conference at the UN in Vienna honors the International Year of Youth



Mr. Janos Tisovszky



Neelam Rose



Nicole Heydari and Karim Rihan

**C**ommunicating Change: Youth Perspectives on Peace” was the theme of a European Leadership Conference at the United Nations building in Vienna.

NGO activities at the UN in Vienna generally involve much smaller meetings of the older generations. In striking contrast, this event attracted over 200 participants, 70 percent of whom were under 30 years of age. The defining character of the July 1-3 conference was the part that youth played in its organization and operation and their sense of being supported and encouraged by the wisdom, experience, and appreciation of their elders.

The conference was designed to support the UN International Year of Youth that began in August 2010 and was promoted by the United Nations Information Service, leading to 250 participants registering online.

The Director of United Nations Information service in Vienna, Mr. Janos Tisovszky, welcomed participants and described how social media is providing a new dynamism for social change and empowering youth to implement this change. The youth speakers included:

**Karim Rihan** – An 18-year-old of Egyptian family background who just finishing high school in Vienna and spent his one-week midterm holiday in Tahrir Square in Cairo: “I saw old and young, women and men, rich and poor, Muslims and Christians fight for freedom and dignity in unity. For the first time I saw Muslims and Christians praying and eating together.” His heart had compelled him to support change and to take his seat on an empty Austrian Airlines jet airliner bound for Egypt when everybody else was leaving Cairo.

**Nicole Heydari** – A cultural analyst in support of the US, Polish, and French forces

in Afghanistan, now studying at Vienna’s prestigious School of Diplomacy: “I had to build my own credibility with Afghan leaders – eventually I became the resident expert and the military recognized the value of the information I gathered. I realized that many families’ land and property were being damaged by the road building, and. I could arrange a scheme of compensation to resolve this issue.”

**Neelam Rose** – A 20-year-old Muslim social entrepreneur and member of the Birmingham (UK) Youth Parliament: “From 13 years of age I wanted to change the world. My mother told me: ‘change our community as a start’. I saw lots of funding for youth centres but nobody attending. I started to work to get young mums more involved in the community, and next with youth who felt they did not have a voice. They were interested in media and journalism. We now produce educational programs and publications for use in schools. To succeed you need the community on your side – you need to listen first to what young people and parents want.”

**Andre Hackett** – a South London-based social entrepreneur in his 20s who founded a company called Make A Change: “My journey started trying to solve the gun and knife crime that was killing my friends or putting them into prison. We sold hundreds of T-shirts and had 750 knives and guns melted down into key holders with the slogan ‘Education is the Key,’ and auctioned them to fund youth projects.”

**Mr. Sri Ranga**, a Member of Parliament from Sri Lanka, said he used to work as a journalist when it was life-threatening to do so. During the civil war, he conducted interviews in Sinhalese and translated them into Tamil, since he believed that dialogue is essential to resolving any conflict.



# LIGHT AT BOTH ENDS OF THE TUNNEL

By Konstantin Krylov

**The visionary project to create a rail link between the United States and Russia across the Bering Strait recently edged a little closer to reality**

The visionary project to create a rail link between the United States and Russia across the Bering Strait recently edged a little closer to reality with an International Conference on “Complex development of the infrastructure of the North-east Russia” taking place in Yakutsk on August 17 – 19.

Upon the invitation of Yegor Borisov, President of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia), the Universal Peace Federation participated in the work of the conference. During the event, among a number of subjects, participants discussed the issue of creating a tunnel under the Bering Strait to connect Russia and US.

The idea for a tunnel, first proposed over one hundred years ago, was championed by UPF Founder Dr. Sun Myung Moon during his UPF Peace Tours of 2005 and 2006 as a way to bring peace by breaking through cultural and religious boundaries as well as geographic and political divisions. Several speakers at the Yakutsk conference noted with appreciation this support for the project from countries far from the Bering Strait.

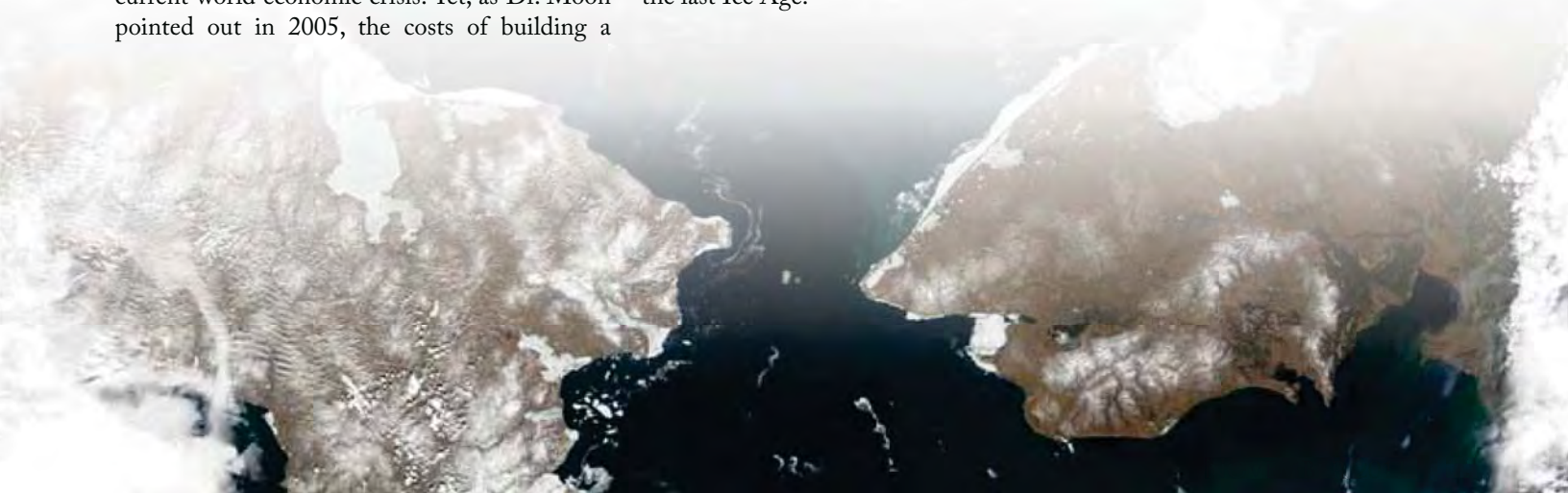
A project of this size could only move forward as part of a combined international effort of will, and for several years the USA and Russia, as well as Europe and China, have been preoccupied with other issues, including the current world economic crisis. Yet, as Dr. Moon pointed out in 2005, the costs of building a

tunnel – estimated at around \$100bn – are quite small compared to the costs of all the conflicts in the world, which run into trillions.

“Transport connection between Eurasia and the Americas through the Bering Strait, with the simultaneous economic development of huge northern territories in Russia, the United States, and Canada, is a unique opportunity to fundamentally strengthen transcontinental and inter-civilization integration,” said Senator Aslanbek Aslakhanov, a long time proponent of the tunnel.

In addition to a full range of Federal and regional government ministers, the conference also included representatives from USA, Germany, UK, India, Israel, China, South Korea, Poland, Czech Republic, Finland, Japan, Sweden, international organizations; leading scientists of Russia and from abroad, heads of Russian and International production companies in the fields of industry, energy, transportation, and businessmen.

The Bering project received further attention in 2010 when it was awarded the Grand Prize for Innovation at the Shanghai World Expo. In addition to Russia and the United States, China, South Korea and several Arab states have expressed interest in the possibilities of reopening the Bering link for the first time since the last Ice Age.



# A SUMMER OF SERVICE AND FRIENDSHIP

## HAITI — OFFERING HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION

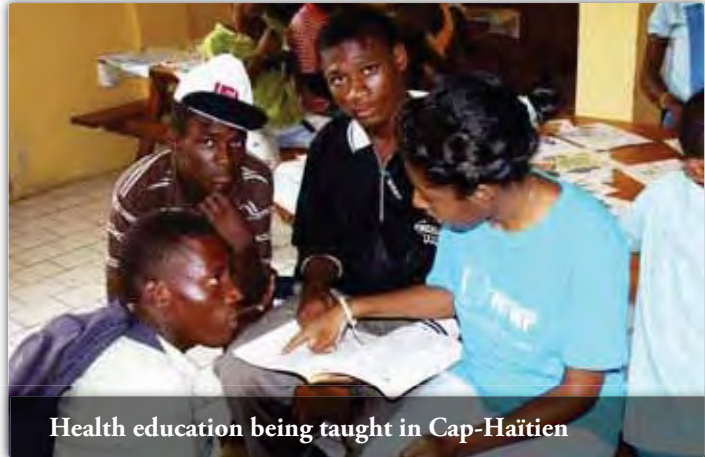
*By Evelyne Drake*

A dozen nurses and students from the US offered health education and care to people in impoverished sections of Cap-Haitien, in a program in partnership with the Women's Federation for World Peace's fourth annual service project in Haiti.

The nurses and university students from across the United States were welcomed by Mayor Joseph and three Haitians: Gardy Charles, Douyon Dameus, and Dimache Jackson. Intensive health education was offered to 250 civic leaders, women leaders, and midwives.

Mrs. Beatrice Abbott talked about hypertension, diabetes, infectious diseases, and malnutrition. Her husband spoke about first aid, CPR, and the Heimlich Maneuver. Mrs. Julia DePauw taught midwifery, Mrs. Lydia Martin dental hygiene, and Mrs. Margaret Brewster homeopathic first aid. Then they joined doctors from Alameda in holding clinics in Nan Banaan, an impoverished area of the city treating 150 patients with many kinds of ailments.

The students visited schools giving demonstrations about brushing teeth, distributing toothbrushes and toys, and playing games and singing with the students. We parted with great satisfaction at being able to help people physically as well as uplift them spiritually.



Health education being taught in Cap-Haïtien

## ST. LUCIA — FIXING HOMES AND MAKING FRIENDS

*By Remy Taupier*

Seven young Americans arrived in St. Lucia in August to spend a week in the small fishing village of Anse-la-Raye. They were joined by ten St Lucians for a Religious Youth Service experiential learning program, staying at the Anse-la-Raye Primary School, where the accommodations were very humble.

The first two days of the program were dedicated to learning more about each other, using various activities to help build trust and respect. The focus was on sharing and creating an atmosphere of openness while having fun. The young people painted ten houses belonging to senior citizens or disabled persons and gave a face-lift to the Catholic parish hall, which also serves as a community center.

Often young persons from the village joined in. When you sweat and endure the heat side by side, caring for others you can see the best in one another and feel closer to each other. In the process, people come to respect and appreciate each other.

The afternoons included visits to the beach, waterfalls, and the capital city; they also organized a village talent show. At the mass at the Anse-la-Raye Catholic Church, the participants sang for the congregation.

Dr. Rosemarie Mathurin, speaker of the St. Lucia House of Representatives visited the project site and challenged the volunteers to become responsible leaders in their communities.



A facelift for a senior citizen's cottage in St. Lucia

## SURINAME — HOSTING A “FRIENDSHIP AMERICAS” CONCERT

*By Georgia Pearson*

Alumni of Religious Youth Service projects, under the distinguished patronage of the Director of Youth Affairs in the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs, gathered at the Cultural Center in Paramburo for a “Friendship Americas” concert on May 14.

A Brazilian singer powerfully offered up her version of “We Are Family,” a song that reached the hearts of the audience dissolving barriers. Mr. John Sandriman, Director of Youth Affairs, delivered a very touching testimony, thanking Religious Youth Service for its work Suriname exemplifying the spirit of living for the sake of others. He stated that only through altruistic service will the people of the Americas – North and South – develop true and lasting friendship and brotherhood.

## GEORGIA — UNITING IN ACTIONS OF LOVE AND SERVICE

*By Vitaly Maksimov*

The Religious Youth Service project “Peace in South Caucasus: Unity through Actions of Love and Service” was held July 16 to 25 at Zugdidi in western Georgia. Twenty participants and eight staff members from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Ivory Coast, and Russia represented Armenian, Georgian, and Russian Orthodox Christianity as well as the Catholic and Muslim faith traditions. They lived and worked together as an interfaith and international community.

The orientation helped generate the spirit of “one family under God.” Participants visited a Georgian Orthodox church, a synagogue, and a mosque and learned from the leaders about the relevance of a spiritual life and religious traditions to the task of peacebuilding.

The volunteers renovated classrooms at the Zugdidi Orphanage and cleaned and improved the school environment. They also held basketball and soccer training sessions and read books to the children. A cultural program showcased the various cultures of participants.

The children at the orphanage supported the efforts, helped plant fruit trees, and organized a concert. Local officials attended the final program and listened to reflections from the participants.



Teaching African dances to children at the orphanage

## RUSSIA — CREATING A PEACE PARK IN SIBERIA

*By Dmitry Oficerov*

“Cherish Friendship, Create a Peace Park” was the theme of a Religious Youth Service Project August 15 to 21 in Novosibirsk, the largest city in Siberia. Many nationalities of people have long lived in Russia, and while many friendly relations exist, there are increasing armed clashes, some with a pronounced religious character. This project at the Veterans’ Home of Novosibirsk challenged participants to be agents of positive change by overcoming barriers, developing friendships, and helping to reconcile people on conflicting sides.

There were about 70 participants, mostly students from Iran, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, USA, and different places of Russia.

Each day was marked by practicing a value, such as purity, beauty, love, life, unity, peacemaking, and family, in hope that people of different nationalities and traditions can recognize common values, learn to coexist in peace, and form lasting bonds.

Daily projects for the benefit of the veterans included repair work, planting flowers, and painting benches and pavilions. The schedule included visits to religious and cultural sites. Some participants came to understand their own religion more deeply. Others who knew little about religion gained some first-hand understanding.



Volunteers working together to layout a garden

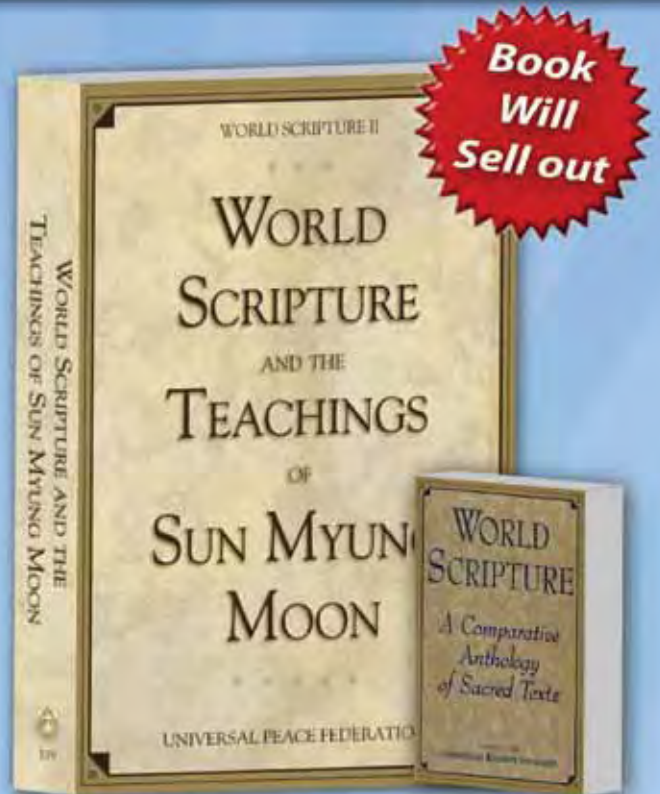
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