

Latin America and the Caribbean ILC: Peaceful Reunification on Korea

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Latin America -- On June 29 and June 30, 2021, UPF Latin America and the Caribbean held an International Leadership Conference (ILC) with the theme "The Influence of the Peaceful Reunification of the Koreas in Peace and Security, Diplomacy and Economic Development in the World."

Day One

"Northeast Asia Peace and Security: Focus on the Korean Peninsula" was the theme for the first day of ILC on June 29, 2021. The conference was sponsored by the International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP), the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP), and the International Association of Academicians for Peace – IAAP.



The UPF initiative to sponsor conferences is developing around the world. Despite the pandemic caused by COVID-9, UPF has not ceased its efforts to sow seeds for peace and harmony, currently holding a series of conferences on the topic of "The Peaceful Reunification of the Koreas and World Peace." UPF has worked in all spheres of society -- political, religious, academic, media, business and artistic -- to spread the culture of peace, seeking to discuss and propose best practices that help us to advance as a single human family through interdependence, prosperity mutual and shared universal values. With the objective of disseminating proposals and recommendations related to the peaceful reunification of Korea, the event took place online through the Zoom platform and was broadcast on YouTube, with the participation of 1,452 participants from all over Latin America and the Caribbean.

The moderator of the panel was **Dr. Simão Feraboli**, secretary general of UPF South America, who explained UPF's vision and its work with the different leadership areas of society to lay the foundations for a culture of peace. He concluded by thanking the exhibitors and the audience who followed the meeting online.

The opening prayer was given by **Rev. Amilton Gomes de Paula**, president of the National Secretariat for Humanitarian Affairs. We have to find true peace first within us, which we need today more than ever, he said. He thanked the Ambassadors for Peace, who are "sharing this desire to radiate the light of peace, in every home, in every nation, in every society and community."

After the presentation of a background video about UPF, we started the event with the welcome words of **Rev. Dong Mo Shin**, chairman of the UPF in South America, who recalled that 2021 marks the 30th anniversary of the visit of Reverend Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon to North Korea in 1991. He noted that "we celebrate the spirit and practice of this true love" of that historic meeting.



The first speaker was **H.E. Luis Federico Franco Gómez**, former president of Paraguay, who referred to the words of Reverend Moon after his visit to North Korean President Kim Il Sung in 1991: "The Korean peninsula is a small version of the world. To speak of the world is to speak of Korea. If Korea bleeds, the world bleeds. If there is no reconciliation in the Peninsula, there will be no reconciliation in the world". In the end, he expressed his conviction "that with the effort of each one of us, with our prayers and what is being promoted" through UPF and its different areas of leadership and organizations, "that sooner rather than later, there will be peace in Korea".

Hon. Betty Beatriz Yañiquez Lozano, national deputy of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, highlighted the importance of sovereignty. "When we speak of sovereignty, we say that sovereignty resides in the people, because it is so inalienable and imprescriptible. And what is the purpose of sovereignty? To build a fair, harmonious society, with full social justice, guaranteeing the development, security and dignity of people," she explained. She pointed out that unification must be peaceful and that it needs the attention and support of the international community.

Hon. José Alberto Alfaro, former president of the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica, contributed his perspective. He noted the importance of dissuading a conventional militarized or nuclear confrontation and stressed that the solution should not emanate exclusively from the median concordance between the two Koreas but should be evaluated and agreed upon by the countries that are exposed to a possible shock or conflict and also by the international community.

Dr. Roger Guevara Mena, former Ambassador of Nicaragua to the European Union and the Benelux Union, recalled that Korea is a nation that throughout history was oppressed and punished in many ways, being a victim in the last century of other surrounding powers that suppressed its identity. That identity represents a single spirit, a single nation and although the world sees it split in two, it tells the world we are a people willing to live together."

After all the presentations, the emcee thanked all panelists and listeners and invited them to continue the event on June 30. Also the emcee emphasized that this same type of event was happening concurrently on all continents.

Portuguese broadcast link youtu.be/1u-ZxPwyXvw

Spanish broadcast link youtu.be/JMMa-gAF1sQ

Recording: www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMMa-gAF1sQ

Day Two

"The Peaceful Reunification of Korea and World Peace" was the theme of the second day of the online ILC organized by UPF Latin America and the Caribbean, sponsored by the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) and the International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAAP). The online event had a participation of a similar number as the first day, that is, 1,452 participants from

all over Latin America and the Caribbean.

The moderator of the panel was **Víctor Castillo Hernández**, secretary general of UPF-Mexico, who explained that the task that UPF has been carrying out is interreligious strengthening, creating spaces for all religious and faith denominations to come together and have constructive dialogues for a culture of peace. He thanked the panelists and participants who followed the broadcast on Zoom and other platforms.

Pastor Juan Carlos Hasbun, from the Kemuel Church in El Salvador, offered the opening prayer: "We are going to start by invoking the Lord so that in this hour he may allow that each one can express thoughts that add that of wisdom to each panelist. May this stage from continental America serve as an important and necessary contribution to this time in Korea."



After the presentation of a video of the UPF presentation, we started the event with words of welcome from **Rev. Dr. Charles S Yang**, president of UPF for Central America and the Caribbean, who thanked everyone for coming and encouraged us to continue our efforts as peace leaders to achieve the peaceful unification of the Korean Peninsula. He also presented some of the work of UPF's founders and gave a brief historical account of the Korean War, specifically how the United Nations intervened to preserve democracy in South Korea.

The first speaker was **Hon. Humberto Benedetto**, parliamentarian of MERCOSUR (Argentina), who said that he understood the conflict on the Korean Peninsula from trips to Korea together with UPF. He expressed that the Korean conflict seems to be very far from Latin America, but at the same time it is very close. "I don't know if there is a more symbolic conflict in the world than what the division of Korea means," he confessed. He argued that leaders are often divided by ideology, but that people are united by needs and that the Korean people need to be united. "It is true that it will be difficult to resolve all the conflicts in the world, but it seems to me that Korea could be a good start to say that another world is possible."

Mr. Yeo Jun Kim, president of the Taekwondo Federation of the State of São Paulo (Brazil) and president of the National Unification Council of the Koreans in Brazil, explained that the main function of the National Council for the Unification of Koreans is to advise and make proposals to the president of South Korea to develop and implement peaceful and democratic policies for reunification. He reported that the work focuses on young people and women, as well as promoting harmony and well-being within Brazilian society. He concluded by highlighting the importance of peace and the denuclearization of Korea, as it will also bring benefits for international peace.

Mr. Luis Elías Caballero, general in the Peruvian Army and former military attaché in Korea, said that "the only thing that remains for us is to continue trusting, we as Christians. Trusting that peace must be maintained, that we must prepare to go to Korea in the event of a hostile situation or war conflict". But he reflected that violence should not come, but rather the hope of reunification, and that Korea may have the opportunity to grow, as did Germany and so many countries that, "when they are subjected, they know and recognize that lost time has to be recover quickly".

Following this same atmosphere, panelist **Hon. David Armando Reyes**, a member of the National Assembly of Honduras, underscored UPF's values of interdependence, mutual prosperity and universally shared values for the peaceful reunification of Korea. This will open the doors to world unification. He

pointed out that "China can help keep the peace or dissolve it. This is where the UN Security Council should aim, because, in a way, China feeds a regime that keeps half the population of North Korea under poverty and misery" In the end, he stressed that what should prevail "is frank dialogue, tolerance and prudence in international diplomatic language and influencing China on this issue."



Hon. Laura Paula López, former deputy of the Congress of the State of Nuevo León (Mexico), offered her perspective and suggested that the United Nations, world powers and the international community must find a way to help rescue the country from the conflict because Koreans have the right to aspire and to live in peace. "When I think of the conflicts in the world and the difficulty that human beings have to understand each other, I also think of the progress of the will to do good, in a world where men and women of all races, of all cultures and all religions can live in peace." So the Korean people are deserving to reunite their country peacefully, to leave conflicts and hatreds behind and move forward where education, justice and love can finally reign, she concluded.

The last panelist was **Mr. Maykel Marengo**, professor at the Catholic University Redemptoris Mater of Nicaragua, who highlighted the economic development of South Korea and its incredible postwar recovery. He reflected that the benefits of reunification outweigh the costs, highlighting the experience that has already been had with the fall of the Berlin Wall, "which reminds us that no system is permanent.

We thank the invited panelists, and everyone who followed this program.



Portuguese broadcast link youtu.be/PJ63d3-wIxE

Spanish broadcast link youtu.be/h7amo0129jk

Recording: www.youtube.com/watch?v=h7amo0129jk