

## UPF-Canada inaugurated the Vancouver chapter of the IAPD in Richmond

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Richmond, Canada -- UPF-Canada inaugurated the Vancouver chapter of the Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD) on June 1, 2019 at the Hilton Vancouver Airport Hotel. About 50 guests from various faith-based organizations, including Ambassadors for Peace, attended the event, whose theme was "On Divisions and Differences."



The program opened with a Points of Light candle-lighting ceremony in which participants lit candles and placed them to float in a large, colorful ceramic dish filled with water. Afterwards, a video was shown in

which UPF Founder Rev. Sun Myung Moon called for universal recognition that everyone, regardless of their race, nationality or religion, is part of the family of God. "God is colorblind," he emphasized.

Capt. Augustine Rebello, a long-time Ambassador for Peace, gave the welcoming remarks, which were followed by an introduction to the IAPD given by Mr. Alan Wilding, director of UPF-Western Canada.

The emcee, Mr. Julius Gicole, then invited each of the six panelists to offer their views on the theme.

Among the panelists were

Stefano Piva, pastor, Bethany Baptist Church in Richmond, British Columbia;

Musa Ismail, former president, British Columbia Muslim Association;

Sherry Leslie Marceil, director of public affairs, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in Surrey, British Columbia;

Jean DeDieu, pastor, Kindness Church of God in Vancouver;

Jamil Popatia, family relations mediator and certified conflict resolution specialist; and

Katsumi Kambashi, director of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) Western Canada.

After the panel discussion, key participants took part in a Water of Peace ceremony, in which each poured water into a common bowl, symbolizing peace and harmony among faith communities.

The event concluded with lunch and musical performances which were given by folk singer Peter Paulus and by Ms. Toese Tusitala Thornton and her Polynesian dance group.

The IAPD chapter will seek to foster new levels of cooperation among those in attendance and the communities they represent.

