

Inaugural conference of the International Association of Academicians for Peace

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The World Peace Academic Conference, which also served as the inaugural conference of the International Association of Academicians for Peace, took place on February 4–5, at Kintex outside Seoul as part of World Summit 2020. Among the many significant events that were part of the summit, the World Peace Academic Conference was specifically designed to honor and develop the academic legacy of Dr. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon. Beginning in the early 1970s, the UPF founders have invested vast financial and human resources in laying the foundations for a new, God-centered academic culture. Dr. Sung-bae Jin, chair of the Hyo Jeong Academic Foundation, along with an international conference team organized the conference. It was divided into four concurrent sections, representing natural sciences, social sciences, religion and culture and university education.

Explaining the fundamentals

The World Peace Academic Conference was a fitting inaugural conference for the International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAAP), under the auspices of UPF, because the sections of the conference addressed the UPF core themes of interdependence, mutual prosperity and universal values. Interdependence was explored in Section One, with reference to the domain of natural sciences and to an expanded understanding of the environment, both natural and spiritual.

Mutual prosperity was the underlying theme of Section Two in the domain of social sciences, with its academic critiques of the materialist paradigm of the communist movement and demonstrations of the fundamental political importance of religious freedom. Section Three, on religion and culture, explored universal values through inter-religious work. Each of the three sections on academic fields began with an orientation to the founders' purpose for that area of academic endeavor, presented by a seasoned Unificationist scholar.

Addressing real world problems

The World Peace Academic Conference began with an opening plenary featuring a graceful keynote address by Dr. Sun Jin Moon, daughter of Rev. Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon. Dr. Moon, who is the executive vice president of the Women's Federation for World Peace, an organization that is affiliated with UPF, reminded the participants of the responsibility of scholars to contribute to the renewal of the natural and cultural environment.

The next speaker, Sunhak Peace Prize laureate Dr. Modadugu Vijay Gupta, a biologist and fisheries scientist from India, continued the theme of the social responsibility of scholars for the alleviation of human suffering. Then, former ambassador Marc Vogelaar, an international affairs consultant and former diplomat from the Netherlands, placed our gathering in the context of the continuing tension on the Korean Peninsula and proposed concrete steps that could contribute to peace-building between South Korea and North Korea. Lastly, Dr. Heon-young Kim, the chair of the Korean Council for University Education, emphasized the importance of universities in research and education, in Korea and internationally.

A vision for the unity of sciences

Organized by Mr. Greg Breland, the executive director of International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences (ICUS) (1984–2000), Section One began with a panel on the founders' visionary projects related to science. Dr. Andrew Wilson, a professor at Unification Theological Seminary in the United States, pointed out that in the first written manuscript of the Divine Principle in the 1950s, Reverend Moon dedicated over a hundred of the total of eight hundred pages to science. One principle he explained was that every entity is in relation with another entity, whether that be protons and electrons, stamen and pistil or male and female, and even God and humans. This is the philosophy behind the ICUS conferences, seeking to show the connection between science and religion.

Dr. Yoshimitsu Nishikawa, a professor of global and regional studies at Toyo University in Japan, then explained the vision behind the peace highway and the Japan–Korea undersea tunnel. This "connectography" is a core image of overcoming barriers among peoples and between religion and science through practical projects of science and technology.



Where science meets mysticism

In the second session, Dr. William Keepin, a mathematical physicist and founder of the Satyana Institute and Gender Reconciliation International from the United States, showed through fractals in nature that there is an indication of intelligent design. His presentation discussed uniting natural and esoteric sciences, drawing deeply on the mystical traditions of Hinduism, Islam and others. The presentation on physical vacuum given by Dr. Gennady Shipov, director of the Center of Physics of Vacuum, Moscow State University, also came to the point of accounting for psychophysical phenomena, such as the energy of group meditation.

In the third session, Dr. Martin Ramirez, the chair of the Center for Conflict Studies, Nebrija University, and chair of the Pugwash Movement, Spain, argued that human violence is not biologically determined, and thus we are capable of achieving lasting peace. Professor Yoshiyuki Amemiya, professor emeritus at the University of Tokyo, aptly summarized the concerns of session one by observing, "Every existence in nature is organically connected, being neither independent nor dependent, but interdependent. The same is true of every existence in the ideals of human civilization."

Facing dark aspects of science

Other speakers, such as Dr. Nglandu Ngatu, associate professor at the International University of Health and Welfare, Japan, and Dr. Se-wohn Lee of Korea, touched on more traditional topics related to "Science and Values," warning us about the dangers of air pollution and water pollution, respectively. One fact from Dr. Lee's presentation that surprised many was the lasting effects of the herbicide Agent Orange, which the US military used during the Vietnam War. There are still areas in Vietnam that have not recovered; the pictures were heartbreaking.

When ICUS started in the 1970s, not much emphasis was placed on interdisciplinary work on the effect science has on society's values. Today it is hard to apply for a grant without addressing these issues. One can infer that Reverend Moon's concern about this topic was cutting edge and will have even greater impact in the future.

Residue of the cold war

The organizer of Section Two, A Vision for World Peace, was Dr. Thomas Ward, the president and professor of Peace and Development Studies of Unification Theological Seminary in the United States. In the first panel, Dr. Ward focused on the role played by Reverend Moon both in challenging the ideological foundations of Marxism and in fostering positive ties with former Soviet republics and

Pyongyang following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Investigative reporter Dr. Bill Gertz documented the role of the *Washington Times* in the continuing critique of left-wing ideologies. He pointed out that Soviet publications such as *Pravda* repeatedly attacked him and the *Washington Times*, confirming the effectiveness of the *Times'* work. Former Austrian minister of Defense Dr. Werner Fasslabend, who is the president of the Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy, described his personal life experience of the tragedy of the Iron Curtain separating Eastern and Western Europe. He also proposed ways that Northeast Asia might benefit from the European experience.

Our world in transformation

In the second panel, Dr. Emmanuel Dupuy, the president of the Forum for European Prospective Studies, France, provided a regional perspective on the changing dynamic of strategic relations among Western Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. He noted that Europe was facing a dramatic population deficit across the continent, while populations could rise dramatically in the Middle East and in Africa in the coming decades, a situation that poses challenges but has every potential to be a positive one if handled correctly. Professor Choon-heum Choi of Korea, in his comments, expressed interest in the dynamic of international and political relations affected by the expanding role of China on the international scene.



Woman and families

In the third panel, Dr. Rima Salah of Jordan, a former UN secretary general in Africa and UNICEF emissary, addressed the impact of violence on families and communities. She noted that in peace and conflict studies, more attention is needed on the role of child development and the family in building a disposition for fostering peace. Erna Hennicot-Schoepges, a former speaker of Parliament, Luxembourg, also called for a comprehensive approach to peace that recognizes the central role of the affective dimension. Commentator Dr. Walter Feichtinger, the director of the Institute for Peace Support and Conflict Management of the Austrian National Defense Academy, spoke on the need for more appreciation for the role that women can play in conflict transformation and the need for inclusion of a community perspective in advancing peace.

Caring for the social fabric

In the closing section, Professor Joseph Dunne, a trial attorney from New York and an adjunct professor at the University of Bridgeport in the United States, pointed out the benefits of the adversary justice system in protecting human rights and enhancing human security. Professor William D. Lay, the director of the School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Bridgeport, United States, compared the past US government practice of non-interference in economic affairs with the present non-interference in changing moral views. Professor Cole Durham, the founder of the International Center for Law and Religion Studies, Brigham Young University, in the United States, documented the pivotal role of religious liberty in serving as the foundation for all other forms of freedom.

Commonality in faith traditions

The organizer of Section Three, The God Conference and God as the Parent of Humankind, was Dr. Frank Kaufmann, the president of Professors World Peace Academy, United States. In the first session,

Dr. Kaufmann posited that the interfaith work of Dr. and Mrs. Moon is not epiphenomenal to their religious work and vision, but rather ineluctably extends Divine Principle teaching, its ontology and soteriology. Divine Principle teachings affirm oneness of the world's religions everywhere, especially in the doctrines of restoration and returning resurrection. Dr. Charles Selengut, a humanities fellow at Harvard University, described the differing approaches of two rabbis seminal to modern Jewish thought and practice, Rabbi Shammai, who focused on the laws and their application in great detail, and Rabbi Hillel, who focused on love and mercy. The two were able to harmonize despite their differences, enriching Judaism as a result. Dr. Selengut said he found the same level of love and harmony in the massive history of Unification interfaith efforts.

Dr. Jason Wasden, a finance and policy professional from the United States, spoke about the perceptions and precepts of his faith tradition, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, including its understanding that God is both Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother. We know the name of Heavenly Father, Elohim, but do not know the name of Heavenly Mother, he said. Dr. Drissa Kone, an assistant professor at the Unification Theological Seminary in the United States, as commentator, raised the question of how to foster religious dialogue between religions that have different starting points and fundamental disagreements about the purpose of religion and human salvation.

The presenters joined together as a panel to entertain questions from an engaged audience, ranging from the method of engendering dialogue between sworn enemies to the importance of face-to-face encounter with the living God.

In Sessions three and four, the speakers were Dr. Cheryl Lau, a commissioner on the State of Nevada Commission on Ethics, the United States; Dr. Joseph D. Terwilliger, a professor of neurobiology at Columbia University Medical Center; and Dr. Hanoch Ben Pazi, chair of the Department of Jewish Philosophy at Bar Ilan University, Israel. Dr. Lau spoke on Unification teachings pertaining to the providential rise of the Pacific Rim culture. Dr. Terwilliger spoke on Korean racial genetics and dynamics impacting the pursuit of Korean unification. And Dr. Ben Pazi spoke on the impact of modern technology on ethical society and spiritual growth development.

Mobilizing university presidents

Organized by Dr. Sun-jo Hwang, the president of Sun Moon University in Korea, the World University Presidents' Congress addressed two large questions: "What Will the University Do for World Peace?" and "How Should University Education Change in the Next One Hundred Years?"

After congratulatory remarks by Dr. Heon-young Kim, chair of the Korean Council for University Education, the theme of universities and world peace was explored in a roundtable of Dr. Aaron Benavot, a professor at the State University of New York, United States; Dr. Woo-seung Kim, the president of Hanyang University, Korea; and Dr. Jae-shin Park, vice president, the Korea International Cooperation Agency. The discussants were Rector Victor Andrushchenko from Ukraine, president of the Association of Rectors of Pedagogical Universities in Europe; Besa Shahini, the Albanian minister of Education, Sport and Youth; and Kathmandu University Vice Chancellor Suresh Raj Sharma of Nepal. There was general agreement on the importance of promoting interest in peace education.

After a keynote speech by Doh-yeon Kim, a former minister of Education, Science and Technology, Korea, the second roundtable on how university education should change consisted of innovative cases presented by Director Young-bin Cho of Dassault Systèmes Korea; Director Kenn Ross of Asia Minerva Schools; Advisor Dr. Minu Ipe from Arizona State University, United States; and Professor Ki-yong Yoon of Sun Moon University, Korea. Overall, it was agreed that universities all have a role to play in the development of a new academic culture responding to the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

After summary reflections representing each of the several sections, Dr. Sung-bae Jin, president of the Hyo Jeong Academic Foundation gave special remarks, as an orientation for future academic projects.

Then, I, Dr. Thomas Selover, president of Professors World Peace Academy-International in Korea read the shared resolution to form the IAAP as a new network of scholars committed to peace building, under the auspices of the Universal Peace Federation. Dr. Thomas G. Walsh, chair of UPF-International, offered congratulatory remarks, and Nobel laureate in chemistry Dr. Mario J. Molina led the signing of the Resolution for the International Association of Academicians for Peace, thus concluding the World Peace Academic Conference.