

UPF Hosts Asian Leadership Conference in Thailand

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Bangkok, Thailand -- UPF held an Asian Leadership Conference (ALC) on “Providing Vision and Leadership for Nation-building and Peace” from September 15 to 19, 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand.

Ninety government leaders participated in the program, the largest number ever to have attended an ALC. Among the attendees were

- 14 current members of Parliament;
- five governors and deputy governors;
- three under secretaries of state who serve under the Ministry of Religion and Cults, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Royal Palace;
- a four-star general who is the director general of the Ministry of Defence and counselor to the Deputy Prime Minister of Cambodia; and
- two deputy director generals from the Ministry of Information and the Senate of the Kingdom of Cambodia.



In addition, these leaders brought with them many high-level officers from their ministries. The

Cambodian delegation alone comprised of 43 participants.

Another unique feature of this ALC was that 14 participants brought their wives and participated in the Interfaith Peace Blessing. In fact, Sri Lankan MP Mr. Ajith Mannapperuma and his wife, who had participated in the Blessing ceremony at the last ALC, brought 10 MP couples.

The Opening Session captivated the participants, many of whom asked for copies of the presentations that were delivered. Dr. Chung Sik Yong, chair of UPF-Asia, gave the keynote address and Dr. Robert Kittel, education director of UPF-Asia, gave a presentation on UPF Founder Rev. Sun Myung Moon's universal principles of peace and how to apply these principles.

The participants were also deeply impressed by the presentation from Rev. Kamol Thananopavarn, president of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU)-Thailand, who spoke about the Interfaith Peace Blessing.

The conference also included a special session on "The Founders' Vision for the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP)." Hon. Ek Nath Dhakal, convenor of the IAPP-South Asia and a former cabinet minister of Nepal, explained the vision and purpose of the IAPP and encouraged all the participants to launch the IAPP in their own nation. Two government leaders who had participated in the launch of the IAPP in Nepal also spoke.

After participating in the Blessing ceremony on the third day of the conference, Hon. Mannapperuma, who was one of the representative couples at the ceremony, invited Dr. Edgar Tanate of FFWPU-Sri Lanka to hold a Blessing ceremony with 1,000 couples in his constituency. He proposed the program be similar to the program of the ALC and include an education session in the morning and the Blessing ceremony in the afternoon.

Ms. Angela B. Thaug, secretary of Religions for Peace in Myanmar, said, in her reflections during the Closing Session, that she was "thrilled by the Interfaith Peace Blessing...and learned that marriage and love is utmost important factor to attain a peaceful society."

She also requested UPF invite MPs and policy makers from Myanmar to future conferences, as reconciliation is needed between various races and religions in the country. She expressed her confidence that with the support of UPF and the wisdom of the universal principles of peace she learned at the ALC, peace can become a reality in Myanmar.

Mr. Dissaphol Nantarid, a retired prison superintendent of Mahasarakam province, Thailand, was so deeply moved by the content of the ALC presentations that he wrote a letter to his daughter, who was going to begin university the following day:

My dearest daughter Lucky,

I was chosen to attend a seminar in Bangkok from September 15-18, 2016 on "Pure Love-stop problems, develop society." There were lecturers from the USA, Germany, Korea and Thailand. The content was excellent and impressive. They were all about the importance of strong, healthy families, parents living an exemplary life for their children to follow. They emphasized the dignity and honor of women and the need for keeping purity until the wedding day...This content moved me so much. That is why I would like to encourage you, my dearest daughter, to be strong. Do not easily be a slave to someone's emotions. You are going to spend your life in university until your graduation in about 5 years. Please keep your purity and chastity just as a king cobra highly values its eggs. You can associate with friends but please choose good and moral persons. If you can do so, I will be so proud of you.

With great love and care, from Father