

## UPF USA Sub-Region 2's Interfaith Iftar dinner program at the Washington Times

Tomiko Duggan  
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**Washington, D.C.** – The Universal Peace Federation (UPF) USA , Sub-Region 2 invited eighty community leaders, friends of UPF and Pakistan American members of the Commongrounds USA to the Interfaith Iftar dinner program on Saturday, June 1 at the Beech Room of The Washington Times building.

This is the third time to host Iftar dinner to our friends and members of the Commongrounds USA founded by Dr. Zalfiqar Kazmi, an Ambassador for Peace, respected by Pakistan American Community nationwide. The program started with the recitation of Holy Quran was by Mr. Asad Kamal and offered an Invocation by Rev Randolph Francis, FFWPU, Baltimore, Maryland.

Iftar is the evening meal with which Muslims end their daily Ramadan fast at sunset. This is their second meal of the daily; the daily fast during Ramadan begins immediately after the pre-dawn meal of Suhur and continues during the daylight hours, ending with sunset with the evening meal of Iftar.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, and is observed by Muslims worldwide as a month of fasting to commemorate the first revelation of the Quran to Muhammad according to Islamic belief.

Tomiko Duggan, Director of UPF USA Sub-Region 2 greeted the participants. She welcomed especially for those who came to The Washington Times for the first time and told them about the visions of the co-founders of late Rev. Sun Myung Moon and his wife, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon who are also the founders of UPF, when they started the newspaper in 1982 as the alternative voice in the Nation's Capital after the closing of the Washington Star. Faith, Freedom, Family and Service are the motto of this newspaper.



Rev. Moon said *"The media must stand at the very forefront in the defense of human dignity and freedom and the crusade against all forms of injustice. Thus, the media must become the conscience of society."* Thomas McDevitt, Chairman, UPF USA presented the PowerPoint slides on the "World Peace Blessing", the importance and strengthening the Marriage and Family. He encouraged people of all races, religions, nationalities and cultures to live as "One family under God".

As the sunsets approaches, Dr. Zulfiqar Kazmi, Founder of the Common grounds USA shared that Mother Teresa's word, "What can you do to promote world peace? Go home and love your family." He concluded with "let's commit to build peace and harmony. Let's celebrate fasting and love. Let's respect and care each other."

Sister Sadaf Shahid gave a recitation to Iftar. All fasting people broke a day of fasting by eating dates prepared at each table. Tomiko Duggan requested all to stand and drink a holy juice with enjoy Iftar. Two couples, Dr. Kazmi and his wife and Mrs. Aisha Khan, candidate House of Delegate for District 44B, MD and her husband representing all couples who were in the auditorium stood on the stage and drank a holy juice in faithful to each other in their marriage.



Iftar dinner was served after the sunset. Afterwards, nine outstanding Pakistan American civic leaders were appointed to become the "Ambassadors for Peace".

Mrs. Aisha Khan, candidate House of Delegate for District 44B, MD expressed her gratitude to the organizers. She said *"I am honored to be named an Ambassador for Peace. This is truly wonderful recognition to receive and I am humbled to stand here before you. Ramadan is a time not only of fasting, but reflection. Each day, I reflect the state of our world, our country, and my state of Maryland. Much of what I reflect on is troubling. We live in trying time. But I remember that it is through strong interfaith bonds that we can bring the world together, end violence, and bring prosperity to all. Fasting together and working together truly can heal our society and the world. In this season of reflection, I invite you all to join me in extending a hand to people of all faith as we pray for a more harmonious future. In our own way, we can all be ambassadors for peace"*

Mrs. Uzma Dar said; *"The quest of peace is becoming universally challenge of this era. Peace and prosperity of our world cannot be achieved with only our exclusive legal effort of our institution alone. It requires much more humanitarian care giving and mentors like Dr Kazmi who has been demonstrating over the years as a good exemplary and also as a good teacher to others and the community. I want to thank the Universal Peace Federation to invite us. Please accept the pledge of my selfless service to others and I humbly accept to become an Ambassador for Peace. I would like to leave to add my favorite phrase to conclude – We can only do better if we know better"*



Iftar dinner was concluded with full of joy and happiness. Lasting happiness and joy comes only through relationship when we invite God as our center and then, we truly become "One Family Under God"