



# Universal Peace Federation

## Europe and Middle East

**To: UPF Representatives, Ambassadors for Peace and Friends**

**From: UPF Europe and the Middle East**

**Re: Peace Talks – June 9, 2020**

**Date: June 5, 2020**

Greetings from UPF Europe and the Middle East

We are happy to invite you to join the panel of the Peace Talks webinar organized by UPF Europe & Middle East, that will take place on Tuesday, June 9, 2020 at 18:00 CET (Central European Time).

The Peace Talks webinar series was launched to provide a platform for leading figures from the worlds of religion, politics, academia, business, and the media to contribute to the process of outlining the kind of world that needs to emerge from the current crisis, highlighting the values of interdependence, mutual prosperity and universal values.

The Webinar will be hosted by the International Media Association for Peace (IMAP), a project of the Universal Peace Federation.

**THEME:** “Assessing the Role of News Media in the Global COVID-19 Crisis”

**DATE and TIME:** Tuesday, June 9, 2020 at 18:00 CET (Central European Time)

**BACKGROUNDER:** Every nation faces continued lockdowns due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and massive health challenges and economic systems have stalled or teeter on the edge of a major collapse. During this civilization-level crisis, the media has played a vital role as a source of reliable information for billions of citizens. Information shared by mainstream and social media has been of paramount importance, not only for medical professionals but also for governments, our business environment, essential institutions and thousands of NGOs, which provide infrastructures to save lives of affected people.

At the same time, the media has come under severe criticism for allegedly exaggerating the size, impact, morbidity and mortality of the pandemic, thus inducing irrational fears and panic among many people. Furthermore, numerous journalists and media outlets have faced accusations for not sufficiently questioning government interests and even propagating conspiracy theories.

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*UPF is an NGO in General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations*

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On a global scale, we are witnessing a fierce information war and battle of narratives concerning the origin of this new strain of coronavirus, the supposed cover-up in Wuhan by the Chinese communist regime and the belated reaction of the World Health Organization (WHO).

The International Media Association for Peace (IMAP), a new global project of UPF, provides an audience platform for media thought leaders to reflect on the challenges faced, lessons learned and recommendations for change to navigate the pandemic-tempered world.

**PANELISTS:**

- **Mrs. Cheryl Wetzstein**, Senior Advisor, International Media Association for Peace (IMAP); former Senior Editor, The Washington Times, USA
- **Mr. Humphrey Hawksley** Author, former BBC correspondent and Asia Bureau Chief, United Kingdom
- **Mrs. Lyudmila Fomicheva**, President, Interfax-North-West; Chairperson, Union of Journalists of St. Petersburg and the Leningrad Region, Russian Federation (tbc)
- **Mr. Willy Fautre**, Director, Editor in Chief, Human Rights Without Frontiers (HRWF), Belgium
- **Dr. Rubina Möhring**, President, Reporters Without Borders, Austria

After the presentations, there will be time for Q&A. Questions may be sent to [peacetalks@europe.upf.org](mailto:peacetalks@europe.upf.org)

Please find below the [link to register for the Peace Talks webinar](#)

[https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_SgLw\\_eFQQayF3dKUS4dr3A/](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_SgLw_eFQQayF3dKUS4dr3A/)

We hope you will join us for this important and timely discussion.

Sincerely yours,



Mr. Jacques Marion  
President,  
UPF Europe and Middle East



Mr. Peter Zoehrer  
Coordinator,  
International Association Media for Peace