

Celebration of the United Nations Day of the Family

Oslo, Norway, 22. May 2016



On Sunday the 22nd May the UN International Day of Families were celebrated under the topic: «From a child's perspective – good environment for children's development».



Knut Holdhus welcomed the audience and gave an orientation on the UN day program.

The background for the choice of topic is that many new laws seem to benefit the adults more than children.



The special guest was Ms. Nazish Khan. She has a Pakistan background but has grown up in Norway. She is the author of a book about Pakistan marriage

traditions. She has wide experience in working with immigrants and is a mother of four children. Thus she could share much about the differences in upbringing in different cultures.

Probably the main difference between the Pakistan and Norwegian culture, is that one is collective and the other is individualistic. She elaborated on the point that in Pakistan children tend to do as they are told, while in our culture children and youth often ask «why»?

She spoke about the difficulties immigrants have in coming to a completely new culture. And she pointed out the Norwegian people's difficulties to understand that. In extreme cases of such misunderstandings, our authorities can even take the children from the parents. In her work, Nazish Khan could help solving such misunderstanding because of her multicultural understanding.

Ms. Khan's speech was followed by a cultural performance by Victor Lorentzen singing Bob Dylan's «Make you feel my love», in Norwegian.



Steinar Murud, UPF Norway, spoke on «Children, families and the society». The common factor in all societies is the family. Even though there is diversity in family patterns, there is always a core. That core is parents and children. In some cultures, we see extensions of the core, as in three generational families. While in our culture the pattern is more a breakup of the core, in divorce, single parent families, step parents etc.

However, the family with its investment in children has, according to Nobel laureate James Hackman, «a higher return than standard returns on stock market equity».

But there are threats to children's development. Murud mentioned, among other points, sexualization in society and the gender ideology.

Setting the children's needs in the center can be a valuable compass for all policymaking.

Maybe we need to define Human Rights for children. If so, these points could be a suggestion: 1. the right to be wanted – 2. the right to be able to live with one's father and mother – 3. the right to be raised in a harmonious atmosphere – 4. the right to receive good guidance in values and morals.

Taking care of children will help set the whole society straight and contribute to a peaceful world.



Many comments were shared and questions raised. As a conclusion our guest received our founder's autobiography and a box with nice Eid tea. The evening was finally closed with delicious refreshments and valuable sharing, as well as the sale of Ms. Khan's book.

Report: Steinar Murud
Photos: Ole Toresen