

UPF-Australia Starts Peace Council in Victoria State

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Melbourne, Australia—UPF-Australia has inaugurated a Peace Council in the state of Victoria as a model for other Australian states and eventually for a National Peace Council.

A select group of Ambassadors for Peace gathered to be part of this inaugural meeting, held on April 18, 2015. The participants represented various faith traditions, including Christianity, Islam and Hinduism.

The members of the Victoria Peace Council represent Australia, Canada, France, Japan, Pakistan, India, Egypt, Iraq and several African nations. Additionally, the council has representatives from state and local governments, leaders of NGOs, academics and professionals in the fields of education, business, interfaith development, psychology and health.

This event followed two UPF conferences held in Melbourne and Sydney in 2014 on “The Role of Religion in Peacebuilding.”



The Victoria Peace Council was based on the UPF proposal for the establishment of an interfaith council at the United Nations which would work alongside the General Assembly in support of the UN’s peacebuilding efforts. National and state Peace Councils can model what could occur at the UN.

The Victoria Peace Council will take an interfaith, interdisciplinary, and interprofessional approach to peacebuilding, essentially modeling how diverse approaches can work alongside the political dimension. It will meet every three months.

Mr. John Bellavance, the vice president of UPF-Australia, was elected as the chair of the council for one year. The council adopted the following values: peace, love, humility, respect, trust, openness, truthfulness, integrity, the public good, equality, justice, interdependence, human dignity, freedom and security.