

UPF and WFWP Melbourne, Australia's Peace Seminar Explores 'Headwing'

Greg Stone
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Melbourne, Australia - UPF's Australia chapter, in partnership with affiliate Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP), held its first peace seminar of 2022 on the theme, "'Head-Wing:' Meeting Global Challenges Together, Beyond Religious and Ideological Divides," on April 2 in Melbourne. The event explored the concept of "headwing" put forward by UPF co-founder Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and highlighted that solutions to national and global challenges cannot be achieved through political compromise alone but must involve a commitment to personal change and shared values. Over 40 participants throughout the country took part in the hybrid seminar, of which 30 joined in-person, including members of UPF-Australia's Adelaide chapter.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Thomas Ward, president of the Unification Theological Seminary in New York, who spoke on Adam Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments. Smith argued that moral sentiments, or conscience, must underpin all human activity, including economics. One can say that this lies at the foundation of the "Wealth of Nations" and resonates with UPF's guiding principles of interdependence, mutual prosperity and universal values.

Dr. Ward also gave an insightful presentation about the historical background of the Ukraine conflict. He contended that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States and other Western powers should have actively reached out to Russia and help it become a stable and prosperous democracy. Instead, several American presidents and leaders boasted that the U.S. had won the Cold War, creating a division between Russia and the West that remains today.

Mrs. Anne Bellavance, president of WFWP-Australia and vice president of WFWP International, representing Oceania and Southeast Asia, spoke on the "Cornerstone for Happiness," focusing on men and women relationships. Continuing the theme of headwing, Mrs. Bellavance's interactive presentation emphasized the importance of being good listeners and communicators as a means for reconciliation and good relationships.

The final presenter, Dr. John Bellavance, Oceania coordinator of the International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAPP) and vice president of UPF-Australia, spoke on "'Head Wing' - Moving Beyond Political Divides."

Mr. Bellavance maintained that finding solutions to the critical challenges of our time requires us to move beyond political, ideological and economic theories, and policies of left and right. As a society and nation, we need to transcend these divides to find shared values and solutions that incorporate various religious, political, ideological and economic perspectives.

Also during the event, three peace leaders were appointed as Ambassadors for Peace: Mr. Abdullahi Aden Ibrahim, Mrs. Inaam Barakat and Mr. David Malinda.

In Melbourne, Ambassador for Peace awards were presented to Mr. Ibrahim and Mrs. Barakat.

Mr. Ibrahim is the CEO of Blueshield Technologies and has served society for over 30 years as the vice president of the Somali Australian Council of Victoria and president of the Somali Cultural Association. He is currently undertaking various community projects of the Greater Dandenong City Council funded by state and local governments. In 2001, the International Year of Volunteering, the Ministry of Community awarded Mr. Ibrahim a certificate of honor in recognition of his active contribution as a volunteer to the development of various ethnic communities or groups in Australia.



Mrs. Barakat is the community engagement and community development coordinator of the Brotherhood of St. Laurence, a nonprofit working towards an Australia free of poverty, and has served the multicultural communities in Australia for more than 30 years. She has held numerous leadership roles, including chairperson of the Employment Committee and Victorian Planning Committee, Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs; serving on the Police and Community Multicultural Advisory Committee, advising on ethnicity issues and law and order to the Family Court of Australia; and serving as a leading figure in The Refugee and Asylum Seeker Partnership Program. In 2008, she was conferred the Victorian Multicultural Commission Award for Excellence in Multicultural Affairs and Employment.

Her voice for peace has been heard as a producer, presenter and operator of community radio station 3CR and as a producer and presenter of SBS Radio for 20 years, focusing on women's issues and empowering new migrants. SBS Radio Arabic covered the Ambassador for Peace award in a recent broadcast.

In Adelaide, Rev. Yataka Yamada, chair of UPF-Oceania, and Rev. John Adamedes, president of UPF-Australia, presented an Ambassador for Peace award to Mr. David Malinda.

Mr. Malinda has worked as a research scientist in soil science with the Waite Research Institute at the University of Adelaide. He also worked as a soils research scientist with the South Australian Department of Agriculture and as a senior agricultural engineer with the Ministry of Agriculture of Kenya. In his service to society, Mr. Malinda leads the Pan-African Australasian Diaspora Network's Climate Change, Food Security, and Sustainability Committee as chair and has served as the president of the African Community Organization of South Australia, helping families of refugees by mediating with the federal government, organizing forums, and encouraging community and school participation at forums and sports events. He also has coordinated artists workshops for schools for 13 years, which has reached 35,000 students.

His awards and honors include: Australian of the Year Award presented by the Port Adelaide Enfield Council for his contributions to the community, the Governor's Award for his contribution to community and multiculturalism in South Australia, Australia Day Ambassador, National Living Legend Award in recognition of his contributions to Australian society in the areas of science, and the Order of Australia in recognition for his scientific work and contribution to multiculturalism.