

World Interfaith Harmony Week Observed at a Program in Ecuador

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Quito, Ecuador—UPF-Ecuador held an event in observance of World Interfaith Harmony Week 2016 on February 4 at the Peace Embassy in Quito. Among the participants were representatives from the Muslim faith from Ecuador and Egypt, pastors from different churches, leaders of Brahma Kumaris and educators.

The main part of the event was a discussion on the topic, “How to Achieve Happiness?” Mr. Marco Aldana of the Islamic Center (Centro Islámico) said that when we selflessly help others, we develop our spirit and feel peace and tranquility in our heart: this is our happiness. Mr. Eduardo Granja, a clergy member of the Episcopal Church, spoke about the importance of forgiveness in reconciliation and realizing peace and happiness. Mrs. Ana Cecilia, a representative of Brahma Kumaris in Ecuador, said that when we constantly self-reflect can we create peace within ourselves and find our true selves in front of God. Having peace in our heart is indispensable to sharing peace and happiness with others. Peace and harmony in the world begins with peace within us.

Dr. Eduardo Villarreal, a psychologist, added that happiness is not the final destiny in our life but how we live. Therefore, to achieve happiness, we need practice the universal principle and value of tolerating and respecting others. Dr. Cecilia Vaca, an educator, said that we can create happiness when we maximize the value of life and minimize negative experiences—and learn from them.

All the participants agreed on the importance of removing egocentrism and tolerating and respecting other religions and cultures in creating peace and harmony in the world. This is the foundation for happiness.

After the discussion, everyone prayed and lit candles for world peace under God, and reconfirmed their promise to and engagement with God to practice the universal principle and value of respecting others.