

PEACE ROAD peace conference at Schlaining Castle August 29th, 2021



Under the motto Building Bridges - Overcoming Division, more than 50 members and prominent personalities came together for a peace conference on August 29th, 2021 at the Castle Hall of the Peace Castle Schlaining, near the Austrian-Hungarian border.

Schlaining Castle is 750 years old and is known for the peace institute **"Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution" (ASPR)**, which was founded almost 40 years ago on the edge of the iron curtain to develop solutions in a very critical time of the Cold War.

The Castle Hall and the entire palace have been completely renovated in the last two years. The PEACE ROAD peace conference was the first peace event at the castle after a two-year break.

In the historic and imposing castle room, presentations by well-known personalities were presented.



Johann Rechberger, Chairman, UPF-Burgenland headed the event and introduced the speakers. He gave an introduction to the history of the Peace Castle and a summary of the meaning of Peace Road, explaining that the late Dr. Sun Myung Moon, founder of UPF, had presented the vision of an International Peace Highway

at a science conference in Seoul on November 10, 1981 to 800 scientists from 100 nations. The Highway will connect Japan and South Korea and will go from there through North Korea and the Asian region. He expanded this proposal in 2005 in New York on the occasion of the founding of UPF, with the suggestion to connect Eurasia and North America through a tunnel over the Bering Strait.

In 2012 **Rev. Moon's** wife, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon then launched the Peace Road Initiative to particularly promote these two projects in order to overcome the separation on the Korean peninsula.



Mrs. Gamauf-Eberhardt, Program Director of the Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution (ASPR) spoke about the history and tasks of the Peace Institute, as well as her personal experiences and tasks and the international significance of the Peace Institute.



Dr. Leo Gabriel, a well-known journalist, professor of political science and peace activist spoke about his experiences at a peace conference with conflicting parties from Syria at Schlaining Castle, including the Russian Foreign Minister. Unfortunately, these peace efforts were not successful at the end. He also explicitly praised the interreligious aspect of UPF, stating that peace can only be achieved if people are understood in their hearts and beliefs and their beliefs are also respected and valued.



Mr. Johannes Reiss, Director of the Jewish Museum in Eisenstadt, reported on the negative development of the Jewish community in Burgenland. 100 years ago, there were more than 8,000 Jews in Burgenland. In some communities the Jewish population was more than 60% of the total population. Today there are only a few Jews left in the whole of Burgenland. The Jewish Museum in Eisenstadt is the only one in Burgenland that has synagogue status. He also explained a lot about the culture and history of Judaism in Burgenland.



Mr. Peter Haider, President of UPF Austria, spoke about the vision of a 2nd Chamber of Religious Leaders in the UN and about the worldwide peace highway, as well as UPF's work and the interreligious dialogue. He particularly emphasized the importance of a united Korea.



Dr. Fazel Rahman, chairman of the Afghan cultural association in Austria, spoke about the current situation in Afghanistan.

At the end of this historic event, a group picture was taken with all participants.



The idea of holding a larger UPF event for the 100th anniversary of Burgenland belonging to Austria has existed since last year. The aim of UPF-Burgenland was to organize an event together with other Burgenland organizations to present UPF.

Due to Corona19, all other organizations have withdrawn and ceased their activities.

But we had a strong desire to do something this year to set a good example and to show that UPF Burgenland is still alive und fully active.

When I read about the opening of the newly renovated Schlaining Castle, I had the strong desire to hold an event at the Peace Castle. Thanks to our very active Women's Federation for World Peace, it was possible to get in touch with Mrs. Gamauf. Mrs. Gamauf was extremely helpful. She gave us the information we needed to rent the historic and beautifully renovated Castel Hall and also offered to speak at the peace event.

Next, Mr. Johannes Reis, director of the Jewish Museum of Eisenstadt, promised to speak as well. Peter Haider, President of UPF Austria, invited Dr. Leo Gabriel to give a presentation and he offered to speak at the event himself.

Burgenland is a border strip with Hungary that is not very wide, but is almost 400 km long from north to south.

We are a small team from UPF Burgenland and our members from the south came by bike, covering 160 km in 2 days.

Elisabeth and Tony Cook were also very supportive. Elisabeth helped to mobilize members of the Family Federation and Tony used the equipment of the Family Federation to broadcast the event live via Zoom and Face Book.

One Week before the Event we had almost no registrations and we were praying for

PEACE ROAD – STERNFAHRT UND
FRIEDENSKONFERENZ
THEMA: ÜBERWINDUNG
DER TRENNUNG



**29. Aug. 11:00 Uhr
Burg Schlaining**

Anmeldung Tel.:
0699-12040800
oder
upf@worldpeace.at
Alle Teilnehmer, die
mit dem Fahrrad
kommen, erhalten
ein PEACE ROAD
T-shirt gratis



People to come to the Event. But God created a miracle so that the planned Number of Participants was reached.

Marinela Stefanc supported us at the reception, which was also a challenge as all guests had to show their green passport.

We were so happy to welcome the Family Federation President of the city of Győr, Hungary, among the guests. After all, Burgenland had been a part of Hungary before it was allocated to Austria after the First World War, and for many centuries the Castle of Schlaining belonged to the Hungarian aristocratic family of the Batthanys.

Thanks to the good cooperation of our heavenly organizations, a great event finally came about. Without the help of God and the great support of our members and organizations, such an event would not have taken place during Covid times! Therefore I would like to thank everyone who supported this event and was committed to it.

Johann Rechberger, UPF Burgenland

