

## Albanian and Kosovan UPF launch Peace Council in regions of Montenegro

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Gusinje, Montenegro -- The Albanian and Kosovan chapters of UPF held a meeting to launch the Albanians Peace Council in the Plav and Gusinje region of Montenegro.

On October 28, 2016, a total of 15 Ambassadors for Peace traveled to Gusinje, a small town located in the Albanian Alps. They came from Albania, Kosovo, and Serbia's Preševo Valley, joining around 40 local people at the Rosi Hotel.

The welcoming address was given by Mr. Binak Ulaj, a retired professor, longtime Ambassador for Peace and the main organizer of the event. The recently elected mayor, Mrs. Anela Ćekić, also came to greet the participants and welcome them to the city.

The first session, moderated by the co-chair of the Albanians Peace Council, Mr. Hydajet Hyseni, explained the mission and vision of Universal Peace Federation and its founders, Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon. After a short film about UPF was shown, Dr. Nail Draga, the chair of the committee for the establishment of UPF in Montenegro, spoke about Father Moon's vision of peace, his suffering path and his contribution to world peace. Dr. Gaqo Apostoli, the chair of UPF-Albania and a former government minister, emphasized that Father Moon is the prophet of our times and that, according to Father Moon, peace will be established only when we practice living for the sake of others and sacrifice ourselves for others.

The second session, moderated by the other co-chair of the Albanians Peace Council, Mr. Ali Lacej, explained why Albanians have the potential to become peacebuilders in the Balkan region. Mr. Lacej explained the need for Albanians to embrace the Universal Principles of Peace at this time in order to bring to fruition the centuries-long cultivated tradition as one of the oldest nations in Europe. Mrs. Hatixhe Hoxha, the chair of UPF-Kosovo and a former member of Parliament, spoke about the work of UPF and the Ambassadors for Peace in Kosovo and the urgent need for sustainable peace in the region. She said that sustainable peace can be realized only when there is righteous peace, by respecting the principle of reciprocity. Mr. Ahmet Bektashi, the chair of the Humanitarian Fund for Eastern Kosovo, who had traveled from Switzerland to attend the event, modestly testified about his and his colleagues' determination to help build 100 houses for needy families in Preševo Valley. Dr. Samira Pino, a founding member of the Albanians Peace Council and a former government official, spoke about the value of Ambassadors for Peace. She said that Albanians should connect to and uplift their centuries-long traditions to connect to universal principles, thus giving meaning to their long suffering and struggles.

Mr. Gani Rroshi of the UPF-Albania Presiding Council presented the activities of the Albanians Peace Council since its establishment and also the five Universal Principles of Peace. Dr. Astrit Memia, a founding member of the Albanians Peace Council, spoke about the long struggle of Albanians for peace, emphasizing the fact that they never invaded or attacked other nations and the contribution they could give to sustainable peace in the region once respected by others. The last message was given by Imam Raexhep Lushta, the imam of Mitrovica city in Kosovo. He talked about peace from the religious perspective. Citing the Holy Scriptures, he stated that anyone who violates others, uses or even kills others in God's name doesn't have anything to do with God or religion.

At the end of the event, 12 persons were appointed as Ambassadors for Peace, thus creating the Albanians Peace Council in the region of Plav and Gusinje.