

## Interfaith Peace Blessing in Koh Chreng Commune, Chet Borei, Kratie, Cambodia

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An Interfaith Peace Blessing in Cambodia was held on the small island of Koh Chreng in Kratie province on November 19, 2015. Located along the Mekong River, Kratie, is known for its attractive riverside scenery, green villages and paddies, and river dolphins. The only way to visit the island is to take a boat across the Mekong River from Kratie town.

Mr. Chamroeun Sophal, secretary general of UPF-Cambodia, gave a presentation on “Family as the School of Love and Peace.”

The main program began with the singing of the national anthem of Cambodia. Welcoming remarks were given by Mr. Kao Roerng, chief of Koh Chreng commune.

Following the welcoming remarks, H.E. Ung Suon Raksmeay, advisor to the president of the National Assembly (one of the two houses of the Parliament of Cambodia), gave encouraging words to the couples. Dr. Chung Sik Yong, chair of UPF-Asia, who delivered the opening remarks, spoke about the tradition of “Interfaith Peace Blessing Ceremony,” which was initiated by UPF founders, Rev. and Mrs. Moon.

After a Buddhist monk offered a prayer for the couples, Mr. Hajime Saito, secretary general of UPF-Indochina, and his wife, officiated the Blessing ceremony, in which more than 300 couples participated.

At the end, a music teacher from Koh Chreng offered a congratulatory song to all the participants.

During the Vietnam and Cambodian Civil Wars and the subsequent invasion of Vietnam into Cambodia, intense fighting took place in Kratie province. From 1969 to 1970, Kratie, which was along Vietnamese supply routes, was the target of a U.S. bombing campaign. Recovering unexploded ordinances and de-mining has been a major initiative since at least the mid-2000s. Many participants experienced suffering during the civil wars.