

UPF Philippines' Ambassadors for Peace Assembly in Quezon City

Leo Angelo Halog
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The Ambassadors for Peace Assembly, held on November 7, 2023, at Seda Vertis North Hotel in Quezon City, Philippines, was a significant event organized by the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) - Philippines, uniting 95 attendees from diverse leadership roles. Themed "Re-vision: Towards Peace and Nation-building," the assembly emphasized the shared commitment to global peace.

This Ambassadors for Peace Assembly was conceived and executed with the explicit goal of reiterating and reinforcing the pivotal roles and responsibilities that the awardees bear within society. This event serves as a poignant reminder of the significant impact they have the potential to make in promoting peace, harmony, and positive change, and underscores the continuing importance of their commitment to these values."

Before the event, Hon. Ek Nath Dhakal, UPF Chair for UPF Asia Pacific, alongside the selected UPF Leaders, conducted a courtesy call to the Senate House of the Philippines, where they had the privilege of meeting esteemed senators: Hon. Sherwin Ting Gatchalian, Hon. Ronald "Bato" Dela Rosa, Hon. Robinhood "Robin" C. Padilla, Hon. Ramon "Bong" Revilla, Jr., and Hon. Imee Marcos. The meeting served as a platform for meaningful discussions, introducing UPF and highlighting its upcoming events. Additionally, the delegation discussed the role of Ambassadors for Peace in fostering positive change and collaboration within the community.

The assembly commenced with a warm welcome by Prof. Richell Jalipa, the Master of Ceremonies, and a Prayer for Peace led by Fr. Raul B. Barcelá, the event set a harmonious tone. Dr. Leo Angelo Halog, President of UPF Philippines, highlighted the crucial role of Ambassadors for Peace in addressing global conflicts and building God-centered ideal families for lasting peace.

Speakers like Hon. Ek Nath Dhakal, UPF Chair for UPF Asia Pacific, focused on the vital cooperation needed between government, civil society, and the faith-based community. Governments should be "benevolent to the people and committed to building a cultured, prosperous and egalitarian society." Civil society supports this by helping to resolve conflicts, monitor elections, and oversee the functions of the state at all levels. Finally, faith-based communities must take responsibility to educate society with spiritual enlightenment and promote a universal fraternity of humankind.

In his video message Dr. Charles Yang, the International Chair of Universal Peace Federation, read from UPF's Response and Call to Action on Israel and Gaza. "Based on the spiritual teachings of the Holy Land that include repentance, forgiveness, mutual respect, and even the recognition that in the eyes of the Creator, we are all members of one family of humanity, a permanent reconciliation and peace can surely emerge for Palestine and Israel."



Dr. Robert S. Kittel, Co-Chair, UPF Asia Pacific, addressed adolescent pregnancy in the Philippines, advocating for comprehensive educational initiatives and the establishment of a unified religious council.

Special remarks from Mrs. Blessie G. Dhakal, International Coordinator of IAFP, and Mr. Ronnie Sodusta, President of IAYSP Asia Pacific, highlighted the vital contributions of women and youth in peace efforts.

The appointment of 18 Ambassadors for Peace, congratulated by prominent figures, marked a pivotal moment.

Senator Robinhood Padilla, a prominent figure in the Philippines Senate called for a moral renaissance in the Philippines. He noted that this Republic was likely "the most religious nation in Southeast Asia." At the same time, the movie star-turned-politician lamented that young people seem to have lost a sense of value for religion as well as for the history of their country. "It is not about being Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, or a Hindu," Senator Padilla advised, "It is about believing in God. We have to go back to God." Senator Padilla offered his unwavering support and promised to stand by the cause of peace, especially among the youth, reiterating, "If you need me, just call me. I'll be there." His commitment underscored the significance of the event in promoting peace and unity in the Philippines.

Filipino Ambassadors for Peace resolved to organize UPF's peace activities in all three major regions, Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao in the near future.

The assembly symbolized a renewed dedication to peace and unity, recognizing the roles of faith leaders, women, and youth. With the newly appointed Ambassadors for Peace, the event marked a new era in collective endeavors, aiming for a world united in the pursuit of lasting peace and nation-building under the vision of "ONE FAMILY UNDER GOD."