

## UPF's Asia Pacific Leadership Conference Virtual Education Program

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Bangkok, Thailand -- The Asia Pacific Leadership Conference (APLC), held from January 16 to 30, 2021, was the third virtual education program UPF convened for the region since the beginning of the pandemic nearly a year ago and the first one in this New Year. Its theme was "Providing Vision and Leadership for Nation-Building and Peace."

The two-week curriculum explained the need for universal values and, more precisely, clarified exactly what those two universal values are and how they apply to social and historical situations. This was done in six presentations.

The education content also included: one sociological study; three motivational speeches; and four case studies which highlighted the work of UPF globally as well as in Cambodia, the Philippines, and among first ladies and women leaders. Each lecture was between 20 to 45 minutes in length.

Halfway through the program there was a live online Open Forum for a QandA discussion. At the graduation on January 30 were 37 graduates from 14 nations.

Of the 36 people who completed the course and took the survey, 89 percent said the content was either "excellent" (37 percent) or "good" (52 percent). Eleven percent marked it "average" and one percent "substandard." No one evaluated the program as "very poor," the lowest rating on the 5-point Likert scale. This was very encouraging because of the diverse cultural backgrounds of the participants.

At the Closing Session on January 30, the chairman of UPF-Asia Pacific and former minister of government from Nepal, Hon. Ek Nath Dhakal, gave an overview of recent activities of UPF. He also highlighted upcoming activities in 2021, especially the newly established UPF "ThinkTank 2022," which will support the reunification of Korea with experts from Korea and the international community.

### Reflections:

Dr. Archana Bhattacharjee, associate professor and head of department, Kakojan College in Assam, India, said the program was "wonderful and excellent." She noted that the content emphasized the importance of basic elements of character education particularly the importance of responsibility and the fact that peace must start from within. Her catchphrase was "mind your own mind." She closed by offering pranām (Hindi for respectful salutation) to UPF's founders, Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon.

H.E. Ur Ry, head of Battambang Provincial Council, Cambodia, spoke in English explaining that the heart and spirit of UPF is to create the culture that we are all part of a global family. One of the key components to accomplish this is the interfaith marriage rededication program. "We believe that without forming good families, there is no peace," he emphasized.

Mr. Will Abdo, CEO of Webtrade Marketing Pty Ltd and executive director of the Australian Arabic Council, said he was delighted with the APLC, especially the quality of the material, which he felt was informative and enlightening. He especially enjoyed the issues that dealt with controversial subjects in today's society, particularly the importance of moral values. The often-used phrase he applied to this educational program was "character is power."

Mr. Dhruba Prasad Paudyal, senior divisional engineer, National Reconstruction Authority, government of Nepal, felt "highly indebted" to attend this online program. He understood more clearly why stable, loving families need to be at the grassroots of building peaceful and prosperous nations. He also realized that conflict prevention was a much more effective approach than conflict resolution. This could be developed primarily by building a culture where living for the sake of others, the motto of Rev. and Mrs. Moon's life, becomes a social norm.

Dr. Amado L. Magsino, president, Philippine Association of Collegiate Schools of Business and executive director, Philippine Council of Deans and Educators in Business, congratulated all the staff and graduates of this third APLC. He noted highlights of each of the graduates who gave a reflection (the four persons mentioned above) and appreciated UPF's role in supporting moral and character education in the Philippines.

Mr. Masaichi Hori, regional president, Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, Asia Pacific, gave the closing remarks thanking the organizers and participants. He then explained that there were several stages to peace, but focused his comments on peace within, or peace of mind at the individual level. He observed that the common base for peace-building was discovering and applying universal values in our personal lives as well as in relationships.