

UPF International - Peace Summit 2023: Session IV-A: Focus on Africa

Louise Perlowitz
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Moderator: Augustin Ghomsi, Secretary General of UPF Southern Africa

Mr. Ghomsi introduced the session, saying, "Africa today has its own challenges in the global context. How can we create what Mother Moon called a God-centered shining and bright Africa that will stand in contrast to the dark continent we know?"



H.E. Dr. Thomas Yayi Boni, *President (2006-2016), Benin; former president of the African Union, and former president of the Underdeveloped Countries at the United Nations*

H.E. Dr. Boni stated, "We are here with a dialogue of religions. The Western model, far from bringing peace, has seen inequalities within states and between states grow. Men have more than ever turned their backs on the Creator in the management of their affairs."

Africa is the weakest link in the chain, even though we are so rich in mineral resources. God gave us iron. We should not use iron to create weapons to kill men.

Africa has been the victim of a global labor organization that impoverished its human resources with nearly four centuries of slavery. The source of tensions on the continent stem from governance based on discrimination of skin color, regionalism, tribalism, ethnocentrism, unequal access to public services and resources in our countries, resulting in the marginalization of the young people and women. We have to bring Africa back to God, restoring spirituality and morality.

Dr. Boni added: "We have to democratize the UN Security Council. I was asking for two permanent seats

and two non-permanent seats for Africa."

Hon. Petros Vusi Mavimbela, *Speaker, Parliament of the Kingdom of Eswatini*

Hon. Mavimbela asked, "What do we mean by 'global order'?" Corruption and nepotism, patriarchal societies, pandemics, violence and political arrests have exacerbated and infringed on the culture of global peace.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, Africa has seen an increase of anger, especially among the youth. There have been high cases of unemployment and poverty, a high crime rate, and a reduction in health and wellness.

In Mozambique, gender-based violence was rife. In Nigeria, with the Bokomo cult, we have seen painful incidences of deprivation of education for girls, sexual assault, and gender-based violence, and the perpetrators are still on the run.

In Rwanda, the UNSC failed to prevent and manage a crisis -- the Rwandan genocide of 1994.

Regional organizations have an important role to play in pursuing global order, as stated by the UN Charter.



Hon. Maimouna Yombouno, *First Vice-President, National Transition Council (National Assembly), Guinea*

Hon. Yombouno observed that human life is fragile everywhere in the world, and especially in Africa. Poor populations are facing conflicts constantly. Peace with the power of love is the solution. With faith and hope, our ethnic groups can co-exist.

Elections that are not well managed are a source of conflict. We have to offer the young people through education the culture of peace. The media should be very serious about spreading a culture of peace everywhere. Also, schools, governments, civil society, and businesses should commit themselves in concrete actions. They must contribute meaningfully to peace, security and development so that we have a better crisis management.

Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, the Mother of Peace, is so active all over the world. This is why we have to especially mention the role of women in conflict resolution. Women need to be present in roundtable discussions for peace.

Hon. Hamidou Traore, *Sixth Vice President, National Transition Council, Mali*

Hon. Traore began by saying that humanity is one community, sharing the same values, the same past and a common destiny. Tolerance is a factor of peace. It demands new policies that respect diversity and pluralism in a multi-faith world.

Institutional capacity building for sustainable development and against poverty are actions to be supported and encouraged to reduce inequalities. Mali has been confronted with terrorism for a decade. The Malian armed forces are experiencing renewed success and the country is becoming stable thanks to

ongoing policies that have given our compatriots unparalleled hope for peace and security.

Hon. Lawrence Songa Biyika, MP, Uganda

Hon. Biyika remarked that wars around the world continue to affect world peace and development. The situation is worsened by climate change which is increasing poverty, increasing food shortage, causing biodiversity loss, pollution and water scarcity, among others. All these are negatively impacting peaceful coexistence in the world and impacting economies.

Human rights are impacted too, especially those of women and children who are displaced or die. What is democracy? If democracy means the will of the majority, then the majority might say, for us our priority in Africa is increasing access to water.

Societies, especially the ones in Africa, have norms and beliefs that govern them. We have to work around those issues if we want to achieve peace. Let us respect each other's culture, religion, traditions, norms and beliefs. Dialogue is the only way we can achieve peace. It must be conducted with respect and openness.



H.E. Dr. Nevers Sekwila Mumba, Vice President (2003-2004); Founder, National Christian Coalition, Zambia

H.E. Dr. Mumba began by saying that Africa needs for Africans to rise up and put a stop to the needless wars that have characterized the richest continent in the world. No one understands the cause of the conflicts better than the Africans themselves. The world that benefits from these conflicts is busy providing weapons on both sides so as to create an environment where Sudan's natural resources of gold, cobalt, natural gas, nickel, uranium, can now be plundered.

We must raise our voices and work with the Africa Union to become more involved in bringing these conflicts to a speedy end. Our goal should be to insist that real peace comes from God. People of faith must lead the way and be more proactive in overcoming the conflicts and not shy away from getting involved in political process. Morality and integrity in political leadership have become very rare.

Democracy remains the most desired system of governance. Unfortunately, most African nations, whose foundation is tribal groups, suffer from tribalization of democracy. It heightens the tribal instincts and pits tribe against tribe. The biased electoral commissions tend to support one group and manipulate elections, bringing controversy, division and a lack of peace. We propose that peace summits in Africa be increased so that unity is promoted among the tribes and different groups.

H.E. Hery Rajaonarimampianina, President, Madagascar (2014-2018)

H.E. Rajaonarimampianina stated that education of the population is important so that they can follow and understand what the leader is doing. But beyond political education is general education at all levels of society. The basis of education must be at the level of the family, at home.

We have many young people in Africa. We say it is good, but it is also a time bomb, because we have to deal with health and education. I can see there is a fracture among generations. There are many young people with technological advancement, with social networks, etc. The young people live in a unique

world with all these technologies. They start to marginalize elders with their culture of wisdom, causing difficulties at the family level, whereas the family should foster peace for humankind. The problem of Africa is how to convey this wisdom. We are a continent with an oral tradition. We have to go back to family values because it is there that we will again have this culture of peace and wisdom. We need the elders. There must be complementarity between the elders and the young people to secure a better future.

We need to learn that the greatest wisdom is to fear God.



Augustin Ghomsi, the moderator, closed the session by saying, "Grandparents and parents and children should live together. That is how we can continue the legacy and make sure that the values and traditions are transmitted and maintained. That is what Father and Mother Moon are promoting. To bring peace in the world, you need to focus on peace in the family."

