

The Weapon for Guaranteeing Peace in the World Is In Our Hearts

Goodluck Jonathan

February 3, 2020

Keynote address to the World Peace Conference, World Summit 2020



Let me first sincerely commend the effort of Dr. Thomas Walsh, the chair of UPF-International, and Michael Jenkins, our president of UPF-International and the management staff of UPF, for putting this World Summit together. And let me also sincerely appreciate all of you, all leaders, who are here, in Seoul. You will be here for five days to interrogate this unique and precious commodity called peace, that is needed in the world today.

I am pleased to be at this epoch-making World Summit 2020, which we are holding here in Seoul. Beyond focusing on the very important themes of 'Peace, Security and Human Development,' it also marks the Centenary of Universal Peace Federation co-founder, the late Rev Sun Myung Moon. I am grateful to the leadership of UPF, especially Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, the other co-founder of UPF, for her vision and an unyielding crusade for sustainable peace in this our world.

I commend and appreciate the considerable number of high-level participants -- of serving and former presidents, prime ministers, and vice presidents -- as well as top government officials and business executives who are here. As a democrat and peace advocate, there is no doubt that the theme of this conference and those of other International Leadership Conferences I have attended, resonate viscerally with my personal ideals and peaceful disposition.

Love, peace, unity and development

Four years after I left office as president of Nigeria, I was invited to the International Leadership Conferences (ILC) held in Johannesburg, South Africa, last June. The high point of this conference was the launching of the African wing of the International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP) for which Mother Moon graciously appointed and inaugurated me as the council chair. Being the first ISCP chapter chair to be inaugurated, I hit the ground running by establishing an ISCP Secretariat from where we have been leveraging the platform provided by UPF to constantly reach out to both serving and former African leaders. We have continued to engage them individually and collectively at conferences on the desired values of love, peace, unity and sustainable development on the continent of Africa.

Through these engagements, we have demonstrated ISCP's preparedness to promote mutual understanding and cooperation between African serving and former leaders, in the interest of peace and developments on the continent. We are encouraged by the kind of confidence reposed on us and our capacity to lead the push for peace across Africa by the good people of the continent. This is evident in the overwhelming support we get from fellow Africans wherever we attend the ILCs in the world. In some places, we have received a request to intervene in existing conflicts between the incumbent heads of the government and their predecessors. We are willing to take up such assignments because it is the determination of ISCP to discourage such misunderstanding and promote mutuality and cooperation among all leaders.

Our greatest weapon

I am delighted that at this conference, the Universal Peace Federation is bringing world leaders to renew their commitment to peace through the instrumentality of the Federation's key projects, especially ISCP, the global body of which is being formally inaugurated at this time. I am persuaded that through its promotion of interdependence, mutual prosperity and universal values, UPF has presented a different and refreshing approach to peace-building efforts, which renews the hope and the expectation that lasting peace is indeed possible in our world.



I believe that the weapon for guaranteeing peace the world needs today is not in our intimidating armory and sophisticated nuclear sites but in our hearts. The world looks up to us as leaders to reach in to the innermost recesses of our hearts to leverage our common humanity and embrace one another in true love and sincerity to save our people.

It is obvious that military capability alone has not served the intended purpose of securing our world. In the Middle East and Africa, more than other parts of the world, insecurity, insurgency and terrorism have continued to get worse despite all efforts to combat them and enforce peace by affected nations and their allies. This is partly because we have paid more attention to our military might than we have given to the imperative of building honor, love and affinity in our families and societies. A peaceful family unit entrenched in strong bonds of kinship, ethics, and a well-established tradition of honor will fight insecurity and terrorism better than any weapon.

This is because if we pay more attention to the imperative of producing well-adjusted rational human beings, it will dry up the human supply lines that feed the cells of terrorists. They will no longer be able to recruit misguided and uneducated youths who are willing to either kill or be killed in the dastardliest and most bizarre method, in pursuit of dark and hideous ideologies. With well-educated and properly aligned young people who are future leaders, the world will then have fewer leaders who will prioritize war over peace. Without global peace, the world will continue to spend more resources, which should have been channeled into development purposes, on either generating or managing crises.

Let us build harmony among us

In closing, I wish to express my unalloyed support for this mechanism being championed by UPF to bring serving and former world leaders together to tackle the issue of peace as a collective. There is no doubt that both serving and former leaders have critical roles to play in this regard.

They should, therefore, engage much more under the ISCP umbrella, in a type of solidarity that will begin to dissolve our prejudices and differences. Current leaders should leverage the experiences and time available to former leaders to orchestrate the kind of understanding that will teach love, unity, understanding, mutuality, and seek to restore human dignity. Let me sincerely congratulate the winners of the fourth Sunhak Peace Prize that will be given within the week of this global body celebrating peace in the world. I thank you for listening.