

UPF UK and Ireland march together on Derry, Northern Ireland Peace Road 2021

Colm Ó Cionnaith
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Derry, Northern Ireland -- representatives and Peace Ambassadors from UPF Ireland and UPF UK joined in a "Peace Road" event organized by UPF-Ireland.

Representatives of the two chapters marched together in the annual "Peace Road" walk on September 26, 2021.

This was followed by a peace forum held at the City Hotel Derry.

The day's events began with the "Peace Road" walk on Derry's historic city walls. Nearly 40 participants took a one-hour guided walk around Derry city, viewing locations and sites of historic and religious significance.



The participants stopped briefly to offer interfaith prayers and to read from the volume *World Scripture: A Comparative Anthology of Sacred Texts*. **David Fraser Harris**, the secretary general of UPF for the Middle East, led Christian and Muslim Ambassadors for Peace from Cavan and Dublin in offering prayers and scripture readings.

As the Peace Walk ended, the participants continued on to the City Hotel Derry, the venue for the Peace Forum, where **Graham Warke**, the mayor of Derry and Strabane, was greeted by **Rev. Dr. David Hanna**, the chair of UPF for Northern Europe.

The theme of the forum was "Ending Conflict in Ireland -- Lessons for the World."

Dr. Hanna opened the program by giving an introduction to the "Peace Road" Initiative founded by the UPF founders.



The forum speakers were:

- **Glenn Doherty**, a historian whose father was shot and killed by British soldiers while participating in a civil rights march in Derry on January 30, 1972 -- the day known as Bloody Sunday;
- **Lord John Alderdice**, a former speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly;
- **Dr. William McComish**, an Ulsterman who for many years lived in Switzerland, where he was dean of the St. Pierre Cathedral;
- **Councilor Yemi Adenuga**, a member of the Council of County Meath in Ireland;
- **David Fraser Harris**, secretary general of UPF Middle East;
- **Abood Al Jumaili ("Bonnar Ó Lionsaigh")**, a young Irish parliamentary intern, dynamic leader and hurling coach from the Dublin Muslim community;
- **Stanley Nwaneri** from the 4C's group (Cavan Cross Cultural Community), a national migrant network coordinator.

The final keynote speaker, and the inspiration behind the event, was UPF-UK Chair **Hon. Keith Best**, a former Conservative member of the United Kingdom's Parliament. He tackled the theme of "Ending Conflict in Ireland" with great wisdom, aplomb and no little personal experience of his time in the British government dealing with "the Troubles" and "civil war" in Northern Ireland.

The Hon. Mr. Best delivered a hopeful message of how the Good Friday Agreement and Peace Process have transformed lives in Ireland and created space for new futures of hope and peace on the island and between Irish and British identities in the North.

The program closed with the awarding of Ambassador for Peace certificates to several of the speakers and other distinguished guests.

