

Thomas G. Walsh
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"Latin America in the Era of the Covid 19 Pandemic: Challenges and Opportunities"

June 3, 2020

To watch the webinar, click on the following link:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=ymDhG7y0--4
(Spanish language)

Greetings from UPF International,

June 3, 2020, UPF-International held a web conference titled "Latin America in the Era of the Covid 19 Pandemic: Challenges and Opportunities." A Conversation during the Time of Covid 19." The conference had over 800 participants from 50 countries.

Dr. Thomas Walsh (*Chairman, UPF International*) gave the opening remarks and **Dr. Simon Ferabolli** (*Regional Secretary General for Latin America*) introduced the panelists. During this time of the coronavirus governments have their hands full addressing the immediate challenges of the crisis. The political and economic impact is equally enormous and widely felt.

We invited panelists to discuss the political, social and economic context of the issues facing Latin America and offer their recommendations for constructive steps toward dialogue, peace and development that might be taken, either by governments or non-state actors such as civil society, the private sector, and faith-based

organizations.

Panelists:



Dr. Charles Yang (*UPF President for Latin America and Caribbean*). He spoke briefly about the current situation saying that we have to think of it as the Pre- Covid 19 period and the Post Covid 19 period. The shutdown we are in now will not be permanent and the new period will be very different to the past. He emphasized the work of the UPF in this time not only with the Webinar series but also mentioned the work of our Founder Dr. Moon and her desire that we establish “One Family under God”. The launching of the Heavenly Parents Holy Community is for her the first step in fulfilling that vision.



H.E. Luis Federico Franco Gómez (*Paraguayan politician who was President of Paraguay from June 2012 to August 2013; He is a surgeon by profession.*) He reminded us that we are facing a new unprecedented (in our lifetime) situation. We are desperately looking for a solution and there is a global focus on the search for a vaccine. He urged all people to follow the lock-down rules – stay at home, social distancing, etc. and he described the areas of human endeavor as being like the 4 legs of a table:- 1. Health 2.Social 3.Economy 4. Politics. We must try to balance all these aspects and he believes that in his country of Paraguay this will only come through reform of the state. It is corrupt and needs to be smaller and more efficient to be effective.



H.E. Jocelerme Privert (*Haitian accountant and politician. He was the Acting President of Haiti from February 14, 2016 to February 7, 2017. He is also the President of the Senate in Economy and Finance.*) He reminded us that we are all affected and even though his region responded quickly to the situation they still face big problems. Especially the poorer people are affected most. He noted that the political situation in many countries was a barrier to effective control of the virus. Emphasizing the need for international cooperation and the need for justice. We need to work together – unity – solidarity – equality, this is the way forward. We should also create regional groups, establish research laboratories across the

world to find the solution.



Hon. Antero Flores Aráoz Esparza (*a Peruvian lawyer and politician. In 2004 he was elected President of the Congress of the Republic of Peru. From 2007 he also served as Minister of Defense of Peru.*) Dr. Antero noted that we were not prepared for this situation, even the most developed nations have been struggling to control it. The world is very unequal, countries without

resources need more support internationally. Even the United Nations was not prepared, it was created to avoid wars and not to respond to pandemics. The numbers of people in extreme poverty is increasing and will continue to rise as people lose their jobs and states are unable to help. In Peru there are a lot of informal workers who cannot even leave their homes at the moment and are in dire situations. Even the government has tried to help with funds the system they created has failed many people. Only by working together globally can we solve the problem, with better education, teaching values, understanding the deeper meaning of life, this is how to create a better world.



Dr. Carlos Heriberto Rivas, (*Pastor, Leader of the TAI International Revival Tabernacle*). Our lives have already been changed by this situation, in the darkness, the silence and the emptiness that we have felt and seen in others. Countries have responded very differently, Brazil ignored it, others have used it to dominate their people, dictators have increased their powers and many countries in

our region are suffering even though they followed the protocols. If we work together, empathize and unite together things will be different. Egoism is a problem, there should be global solidarity. My country was battered by storms as well during this time, it has been very difficult. But we can see opportunity too, if we can work together more, be hopeful not fearful. We have overcome diseases in the past we can do it again with God's help. Also we have to recognize our failures, especially with the environment but let's go forward with faith, hope and love.



Rev. Dong Mo Shin (*President of UPF South America*). He expressed his appreciation to all the panelists, reminding us that the virus does not respect race or religion, we are all involved. He hopes that through this and similar meetings that UPF is making a significant contribution to overcoming the problems that we all face.

The meeting concluded with a short Q & A session, firstly Dr. Thomas Walsh responded to a question from Nicaragua about overcoming the situation. He emphasized the importance of the core values of the UPF:- Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity, Universal Values and the need for us all to apply these principles every day.

Then Dr. Carlos Rivas and Dr. Antero Flores Araoz reflected on the question - what destiny do we face after the virus:-

Dr. Carlos "we must learn from this situation and create a new future with love and solidarity."

Dr. Antero " The future will not be given to us, we have to create it, become new people ready for a new world.

After the presentations, there will be time for Q&A.

Report by Dr. Trevor Jones

Comments may be sent to upf.centralamerica@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

JUN 30: [UN International Day of Parliamentarism](#)

JUL 18: [Nelson Mandela International Day](#)

AUG 19: [UN International Day of Peace](#)

AUG 19: [UN World Humanitarian Day](#)



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