

UPF International: Summit 2022 and Leadership Conference: Session II

Renee Corley
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Seoul, South Korea -- The second session of UPF's Summit 2022 and Leadership Conference featured peace messages from the Asia-Pacific and the Americas.

The latest in UPF's World Summit series, "Toward Peace on the Korean Peninsula: Toward a World Culture of Peace," was held from August 11 to 15, 2022.

Sessions I and II, both titled "Keynote Addresses: UPF Associations and Think Tank 2022," were held on the afternoon of August 11, 2022, in the Lotte Hotel World in Seoul's Jamsil neighborhood.

Session II was moderated by **Hon. Ek Nath Dhakal**, the UPF regional chair for the Asia-Pacific region. In introducing the session, he said: "UPF's approach to peace is not only a fusion of micro and macro, but also multi-sectorial. The eight associations recently created in UPF include heads of state, lawmakers, first ladies, religious leaders, the media, academe, commerce, along with the arts and entertainment. In other words, everyone can and must contribute to peacebuilding."

He continued: "It is becoming clearer the importance of Mother Moon's proposal for an Asia Pacific Union. UPF is working toward that goal. The Seoul Resolution drawn up at the World Summit 2022 in February is now being developed into a Universal Peace Charter. This will be a legal and institutional framework advancing peace in Asia and the world."

H.E. Dr. Siphana Sok from Cambodia, the chairman of the Asian Vision Institute (AVI), said his organization has been working with UPF to promote cooperation on peace-related research, dialogues and training programs.

He described AVI as an independent think tank that promotes peaceful, inclusive, sustainable and resilient societies in Asia.

Dr. Sok said that when UPF established Think Tank 2022 with H.E. Ban Ki-moon as the chair, the Asian Vision Institute was proposed to act as its Asia-Pacific Secretariat. The Seoul Resolution recognizes that the Korean War, which started in 1950, concluded with an armistice, not a peace treaty, which has left the once unified Korean Peninsula divided, despite being populated by a people with a common history, culture, and language.

At World Summit 2021, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen proposed the establishment of a Mekong Peace Park, not just for the Mekong River nations but also for the wider Asia-Pacific region. "I am pleased to let you know that this Mekong Peace Park initiative has received the full support of the UPF," Dr. Sok said.

He went on to say, "As the Secretariat of the Think Tank 2022, AVI has the mandate to provide platforms for dialogue on five peace themes, namely: culture for peace, diplomacy for peace, sustainable development for peace, food for peace, and youth for peace. AVI has persevered in our contribution to the

initiation of the Asia Pacific Union as per the Phnom Penh Declaration that was adopted at the Asia Pacific Summit in 2019. We have also undertaken the implementation of the Seoul Resolution 2022, with all activities aimed at supporting the peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula based on the initiative of the "Two States toward One Nation: One Peninsula, One Culture, One People."

Hon. Professor Sunaina Singh from India, the vice chancellor of Nalanda University, said: "I come from a land of peace. The Upanishad texts that date back 5,000 to 7,000 years speak about the world as a family, where coming together is very important. This is where India has led through the centuries. Through different challenges and crises and invasions, India has been able to survive -- and not just survive but maintain the peace, because every prayer in India ends with '*Om Shanti*,' which means 'Peace be there for everyone.'

"Nalanda itself [in northeastern India] is the land of Buddha, where he preached. At Nalanda University we have courses that are aligned to peacebuilding, that are aligned to our scriptures, to Buddhist philosophy."

Professor Singh mentioned Mahatma Gandhi, who believed in non-violence and non-alignment. "The peacebuilding that Gandhi proposed is still relevant for all countries and all ages," she said. "Maintaining peace and security has been the most important concern of humanity. This concern today has assumed added significance and urgency in the present context of thermonuclear times, with the pandemic hovering over us, with the wars looming large, with the nation-states having their own priorities. It is important that the Indian perspective may also be looked into."

Mme. Adi Koila Nailatikau, the first lady of Fiji (2009-2015), asked: "How do we cultivate a culture of peace? And how do we continue to nurture it, despite everything that gets thrown at us, our people, our countries, with political issues, division, natural disasters and everyday matters? ...

"I believe it is choice and practice. You choose to practice something until it becomes a habit, and the habit becomes a culture with the continued practice of it."

Regarding Korean reunification, the former first lady said it "needs to be led by the Korean people with a diversified world support." She continued: "With over 30 years of experience as a civil servant and politician in my own right, I can honestly attest that the work done here surpasses barriers and obstacles that governments and politicians face, as it comes from the heart, it works without wanting anything in return, and is from one stable and fortified foundation. Additionally, it is distinct in what [UPF co-founders] Rev. [Sun Myung] Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon have achieved internationally for the last 50 years.

"With Reverend Moon's passing, Mother Moon has continued this incredible work and is a living example for women and also speaks to what women are capable of, continue to do and have an integral role in achieving peace and passing it on to the next generations."

Referring to the region of her birth, the first lady said: "As a Pacific people, we have a way called 'the Pacific Way' that best describes how we achieve things: 'People of different races, opinions and cultures can live and work together for the good of all – people who can differ without rancor, govern without malice, and accept responsibility as reasonable people intent on serving the interests of all,'" she said, quoting her father, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, Fiji's first prime minister and later president.

In conclusion, Adi Koila said: "In this room now we are all of different races and backgrounds, but we all have a common vision that allows us to see beyond our differences for the common good. As long as we continue to believe in this, commit to this, and practice it individually as well as a collective, I truly believe we can achieve the peace we want in our lifetimes."

Hon. Patricia Terrazas Baca from Mexico, a member of parliament, declared: "There's no peace in the family, in the home, in society or the world when every day there are crimes and violence. There's no peace when fathers and mothers are crying because of the absence of their children because they disappeared or they had to leave their country one way or another. There's no peace when there's violence against women and children, and when they're being sold."

She said, "The most important factor to solve the problem is to recognize the problem."

In response to the "great violence, drugs and corruption" in Mexico, she stated ways that government should respond: "We have to have a national plan to improve the betterment of all people." This plan would include providing opportunities for young people; protecting the environment; securing the health of all citizens, including mental health; and taking steps to end corruption.

"I love God, our Creator, and the life he gave to me. I will always defend life and family. The family is the center of life and peace," she said.

Dr. Ann Higgins from the Bahamas, the president of the World Dance Congress, UNESCO, began her presentation by dancing across the stage and then joking, "That's two minutes out of my seven minutes!" She then asked the audience to wave their arms in unison, and said: "You're dancing! In one accord, unity!"

"Now for that moment that you were doing that, you thought about nothing else. You didn't think about hating your neighbor or if you were mad [at] your brother or your sister. All you thought about was waving. That's a part of being peaceful. If you do that together, you won't be able to do anything else. Your hands are to hold and to love and not fight."

Dr. Higgins spoke about "the young boys [in the Bahamas] that are getting in trouble with gangs and shooting each other." She proposed, "Take the guns from their hands," replacing each gun with something that will let them express their creativity. Even though gangs are at war with each other most of the year, when the time for the Bahamas' main festival comes, the gang members work together peacefully to prepare.

She reminded the audience that whenever people have a celebration of any kind, they call for musicians, because on important occasions people want to sing and dance. "That shows you that the arts can bring people together in peace," she said.

Dr. Higgins then read from the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights from 1948. That document's Article 27, Part 1 states that everyone has the right to participate in the cultural life of their community freely and that all art forms can be used to bring about peace.

Hon. Dave Laksono from Indonesia, a member of parliament, spoke on "The Role of Indonesia in the Reunification and Peace Efforts on the Korean Peninsula."

He said that Indonesia, which currently chairs the G20 (Group of Twenty) intergovernmental forum of countries with the largest economies, "will further exercise the mandate of [its] 1945 Constitution to actively participate in the creation of world peace, particularly for the peaceful situation on the Korean Peninsula region."

He said, "Hopefully, the voices of more countries in the world will be able to urge the warring parties to resume dialogue and avoid options that lead to open armed conflict. ..."

"Indonesia has the basic beneficial capital as a country that has good relations with warring countries. In this case, Indonesia can bridge a communication in a good diplomatic manner for all parties, both for North and South Korea. It is also necessary for Indonesia to continue to encourage both parties to promote peaceful dialogue and diplomacy."

Hon. Laksono said that Indonesia will be the host of the G20 Summit on its island of Bali on November 15 and 16, 2022. "I believe that this is a golden opportunity for Indonesia to continue to promote world peace," he said.

Hon. Ross Robertson from New Zealand, a member of Parliament (1987-2014), said: "Peace in the Pacific Rim region dictates the restoration of humanity and world peace. The Korean Peninsula is the cornerstone to its success."

Hon. Robertson said: "In my twenty-seven years as a member of the parliament of New Zealand and my nine-years as a member in local government, I found in times of crisis, conscience and catastrophe the family was always there."

Quoting Eva Burrows, the Australian-born 13th general of the Salvation Army, Hon. Robertson said: "'In family life, love is the oil that eases friction, the cement that binds [them] closer together, and the music that brings harmony.' Faith sustained me, prayer ignited me and love lifted me to stay strong, steadfast and willing."

Hon. Robertson asked: "Can there be peace and good will, can there be mutual prosperity and a core set of universal values? Of course, there can (and UPF can lead it), but how do we accomplish such a task in a world that stumbles from one crisis to another? For we live in a world of 'irresponsible entitlement,' a world completely turned upside down, a world that has redefined so many things, from marriage, social justice, morality and ethics. At the heart of these redefinitions is the redefinition of truth, and truth is under attack; yet it will set us free."

He continued: "We live in a secularized, materialistic millennium where a decline in faith, responsibility and ethics is in progress. ... We lack a core set of universal principles. When society stops doing what is best for the collective, we are in trouble. ..."

"The world is crying out for a leader, a person of vision, who has the ability to motivate and inspire others to follow. ... We need solidarity, we need to stay strong, we need to be sure and steadfast, and we need to be willing, for family building is nation building."

Dr. Subash Kaji Shrestha from Nepal, the deputy secretary general of the Asian Regional Institute of Juche Idea, spoke on "Establishment of Sustainable Peace in the Asia-Pacific based on Universal Humanism."

"As everyone knows," he said, "the Korean nation is now standing at a crucial crossroads; whether to advance along the road of peace and reunification after breaking the serious deadlock in the North-South relations or continuously suffer the pain resulting from division in the vicious cycle of confrontation and the danger of war.

"It is not an exaggeration to say that the current inter-Korean relations have been brought back to the time before the publication of the Panmunjom Declaration [in 2018] and the dream for national reunification has become more distant.

"I think that the present frozen North-South relations cannot thaw by the efforts of one side nor be resolved by themselves with the passage of time. If one sincerely aspires after the country's peace and reunification, being concerned for the destiny of the nation and the future of posterity, one should not look with folded arms on this grave situation but take proactive measures to repair and improve the present North-South relations [that are] in catastrophe. ...

"I think we who are gathering here to promote peace and the peaceful reunification of Korea should try our best to correctly understand the main cause why the North-South relations, which had developed on good terms in the past, were frozen abruptly and brought back to confrontation and help to get rid of all obstacles and hurdles in the way of peaceful reunification and world peace. ...

"The efforts of the Universal Peace Federation, founded by Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and her late husband, are very much appreciated for their Track II diplomatic peace initiatives to bring peace in the Korean Peninsula. I am confident that our discussions here today will make a positive contribution to advancing the search for a new pathway to achieving sustainable peace in the Asia-Pacific based on Universal Humanism."