

Forging a Lasting World Peace with the Universal Peace Federation

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Thank you. What a pleasure. Respected Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, thank you for your vision and commitment to building a world of universal and lasting peace. Congratulations on the occasion of your 80th birthday.

Distinguished leaders from across the world, welcome and thank you for participating in Peace Summit 2023. UPF was founded by Reverend and Dr. Moon in 1999. At that time, it was called the Inter-religious and International Federation for World Peace and in 2005 became known as Universal Peace Federation.

I recall the time in 2000, the year of the Millennium General Assembly at the United Nations. Both Reverend and Dr. Moon spoke at the UN in August of that year to share their vision about a renewed United Nations, one that would have political leaders and religious leaders working together collaboratively within the UN system as a kind of bicameral institution consisting of both government officials and religious leaders. This was a bold vision and proved to be prescient, for it has become increasingly clear over the past decades that inter-religious peace is a critical and necessary aspect of any effort to achieve the goal of lasting world peace.

After all, we are not merely political and economic beings. We are also deeply moral and spiritual beings. Over the years, UPF has emerged as a highly respected international and inter-religious NGO. It has developed partnerships and MOUs with not only the UN Economic and Social Council but also the African Union, ECOSOC, the Asian Vision Institute, the Alliance of Civilizations, the Coalition of Faith-Based Organizations. UPF works across all sectors of society, working to build effective networks among not only leaders in government, including current and former heads of state and parliamentarians, but also among religious leaders as well as leaders in the business sector, the private sector, civil society, the media, academia, and the spheres of the arts and culture.

Underlying this work is a recognition that peace has to be approached comprehensively and holistically. UPF work is rooted in a moral and spiritual vision. At its core, this vision affirms the existence of God as a Divine Creator, our common origin, the Heavenly Parent with the will and the intention to create a world of goodness. With this in mind, UPF strives to create one worldwide family under God, a holy community where all people live together in harmony and cooperation.

Such a world does not come about by magic. It requires human effort. As we all know, there are obstacles to overcome. Human beings are not entirely good, and there are, in fact, forces of evil. As such, I hope that we all do our best during this Peace Summit to contribute to building a world of peace. Our program that lies ahead seeks to bring out the wisdom, insight, and recommendations of the leaders gathered here.

In closing, I want to thank you for being here and for contributing to this most noble effort. Our present world appears, most regrettably, to be moving increasingly toward conflict and division. It is no easy task to try to reverse this trend. Let us, therefore, do our very best and work together for the sake of each other, for the sake of our children, and future generations. Thank you. God bless you.