

IAPP and IAPD Latin America Summit in São Paulo, Brazil's Renaissance Hotel

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São Paulo, Brazil -- Participants at the opening banquet of the first Latin America Summit praised the evening's spirit of fraternity and friendship.

More than 400 representatives from over 40 countries registered for the summit, which was scheduled to continue from August 2 to 5, 2018, at the Renaissance Hotel.

The summit, held under the title "Peace and Development in Latin America: Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity and Universal Values," was organized by the Universal Peace Federation and sponsored by the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) and the Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD).

In addition to the presentations given at the Renaissance Hotel, on August 4 the conference was scheduled to include a family festival at the Palmeiras Allianz Park Stadium featuring a message conveyed by UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon.



At the opening banquet on August 2, the welcoming remarks were offered by Rev. Sang Suck Kim, the Latin America regional chair of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), an organization that is affiliated with UPF. Rev. Kim reported about UPF's many initiatives around the world.

Speaking from his heart, he emphasized that humanity should adopt universal values and follow the path of cooperation and mutual prosperity without forgetting "the strengthening of the family as a fundamental unit of stable societies" and the improvement of "educational systems and methods for our young people."

Dr. Thomas G. Walsh, the chair of UPF International, spoke of the summits that UPF has developed in different regions, such as the historic Africa Summit in January 2018 in Dakar, Senegal. These summits will culminate in the World Summit in Seoul, Korea, in February 2019.

Dr. Walsh thanked Rev. Dong Mo Shin, the UPF regional director for South America, and Dr. Charles Yang, the UPF regional director for Central America and the Caribbean, as well as the staff of UPF's affiliated organizations, for organizing the Latin America Summit. He then gave an overview of the program and sessions that were scheduled for the next two intense days.

After dinner there was a musical performance by Hanna Sethunya Modise, who sang two songs with deep feeling. This was followed by messages from the Brazilian legislator Hon. Eros Ferreira Biondini, a federal deputy from the state of Minas Gerais; Mrs. Graciela Rompani de Pacheco, who is the executive

director of the Montevideo Biennial; Dr. Antero Flores-Aráoz Esparza, president of the Congress of the Republic of Peru (2004-2005); Senator Dionis Alfonso Sanchez Carrasco, vice president of the Senate of the Dominican Republic; and Mr. Jong-seong Lim, a member of the Korean National Assembly.

Hon. Biondini from Brazil stressed the importance of the "recovery of the human being," including prevention of drug abuse and crime and providing opportunities for young people. But he emphasized that "the culture of peace is dedicated, above all, to the restoration of the family." He said that he was very grateful to be part of this select group of guests and showed his sensitivity and artistic talent in singing Sueño de paz ("Peace Dream").



Mrs. Graciela Rompani from Uruguay expressed her regards and respect to Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, who "with a herculean effort" carries on her back the legacy left by her husband, the Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon. Mrs. Rompani greeted members of the UPF Global Council and ended by relating an anecdote from Rev. Moon's autobiography, *As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen*: When, as a child, he was carried on his father's back, he felt a sense of "protection, peace, security and love" -- a feeling that Mrs. Rompani said she understood to be the basis of the movement that Rev. Moon created.

Dr. Antero Flores-Aráoz from Peru departed from his written speech to state that the atmosphere of the conference gave him hope that a change in the world is possible and that each participant could take this spirit of fraternity and friendship back to his or her country. He referred to Pope Francis' statement that although many speak of peace, unfortunately the proliferation of weapons leads in the opposite direction. Dr. Flores-Aráoz invited the participants to take the road to peace through concord, friendship, respect for human rights, caring for the environment, defense of democracy and unity of the family. "Without unity of the family, there can be no peace," he reiterated.

Senator Dionis Sanchez from the Dominican Republic reviewed the transformation of Latin America's nations since independence after "displacing the iron dictatorships." He valued the social and political changes, the consideration of the environment, "which Latin Americans conceive as a human right," as well as the evolution in the protection of fundamental human rights, the advances in the inclusion "of all the social classes, as they are in the cases of Peru and Bolivia," and a "greater empowerment of the governed and surveillance of the performances of the governors."

Hon. Jong-seong Lim, a member of the Korean National Assembly, spoke about the current relationship between Korea and Latin America. Hon. Lim said that Korea can offer many lessons on economic development and that Korea is ready to engage with Latin America in all areas of endeavor.

Dr. Trevor Jones, the president of UPF-Peru, who served as the evening's master of ceremonies, said the leadership of men and women like those at the opening banquet would help generate the peace and progress that the region needs and deserves.

The Right Reverend Altamiro Pereira de Amaral, a bishop of the Anglican Catholic Church of Brazil, offered a prayer before dinner. An introductory video about the Universal Peace Federation was presented, which gave an account of the areas of action of UPF on the global level.

All in all, the Latin America Summit began with a profound sense of warmth and hope.

Dr. William Selig contributed to this report.