

## FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Berlin Peace Road Calls For Peace In Europe

Michael Balcomb  
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**Participants from over 50 nations gathered to call for the end to the war in Ukraine, the reunification of Korea and for freedom and peace in Europe.**

The international event included a series of programs, centering on the Peace Rally held on July 27 in front of the Brandenburg Gate and attended by 1,000 participants who had come from 50 nations. With the slogan "No New Walls in Europe," the rally called for stopping the war in Ukraine, for the reunification of Korea, and for freedom and peace in Europe.

The rally celebrated the 10-year anniversary of the declaration of the global Peace Road initiative by Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, UPF and IAYSP. The Peace Road initiative raises public awareness of the International Peace Highway project, which aims to connect cities, nations, and continents around the world, tearing down the walls that divide humanity.



Held on the anniversary of the armistice that officially concluded the Korean War (July 27, 1953), the rally was a reminder that the armistice did not put an end to the division on the Korean Peninsula. Berlin was chosen as the location for the Peace Rally, as it is the city that symbolizes peace and reunification in Europe, even at a time when the war in Ukraine raises fears of a new Cold War and of new walls rising on

the continent.

On the morning of July 27, preceded by police cars, approximately 100 Peace Road participants on bicycles, holding banners and chanting the slogan "No New Walls in Europe - Remember Korea!," arrived at the Brandenburg Gate where a stage had been set up. Hundreds of other participants arrived on foot. The rally began, alternating speeches by peace activists and songs of peace by the German pop-music band Berge and the soul-music band InTune, to which the crowd responded enthusiastically.



Speakers from throughout Europe and Asia called the crowd's attention to conflicts in Ukraine, in the Middle East, in Africa and on the Korean Peninsula. German journalist Klaus Kelle spoke of the immense hope he felt when, at the same location 33 years before, the German people celebrated the collapse of the Berlin Wall.



The crowd then marched to the Parliament building, where the rally concluded with more speeches and songs. "We must not repeat in Ukraine the division of Korea," said Dr. Michael Balcomb, FFWPU president for Europe and the Middle East and the leading organizer of the event. "The Berlin Wall and the

Iron Curtain were visible. But today the wall is invisible yet no less real. It is a wall in the hearts of men and women," he concluded.



The Peace Road 2022 program began on the afternoon of July 26 with a conference held at the Berlin City Mission on the theme "From Swords to Ploughshares - Prospects for Peace on the Korean Peninsula and in Europe." Approximately 200 participants had gathered from Europe and the Middle East, including a delegation from Korea and Japan.



In his opening remarks, Dr. Dieter Schmidt, UPF president for Central Europe, reminded the audience that the Berlin Peace Rally also commemorated the largest international march to the Berlin Wall ever held during the Cold War. Organized in 1987 by World CARP, the student movement created by Dr. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon, the demonstration called for the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of Germany - which became a reality two years later. Several international speakers and participants at the July 26 conference were among the marchers 35 years ago.

Dr. Michael Balcomb put in perspective the challenges caused by conflicts in Ukraine and the Korean

Peninsula, while his wife, Fumiko, a native of Japan, expressed her sympathy and gratitude for the life work of Japan's recently assassinated former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.



The first session, "Prospects for Peace on the Korean Peninsula," featured four international speakers: Dr. Song Gwang-seuk, chairman of the Peace Road Foundation in South Korea; Dr. Claude Béglé, a Swiss entrepreneur and former member of Parliament; Klaus Kelle, a German journalist; and Professor Angela Mickley, a professor of peace education at Potsdam University.



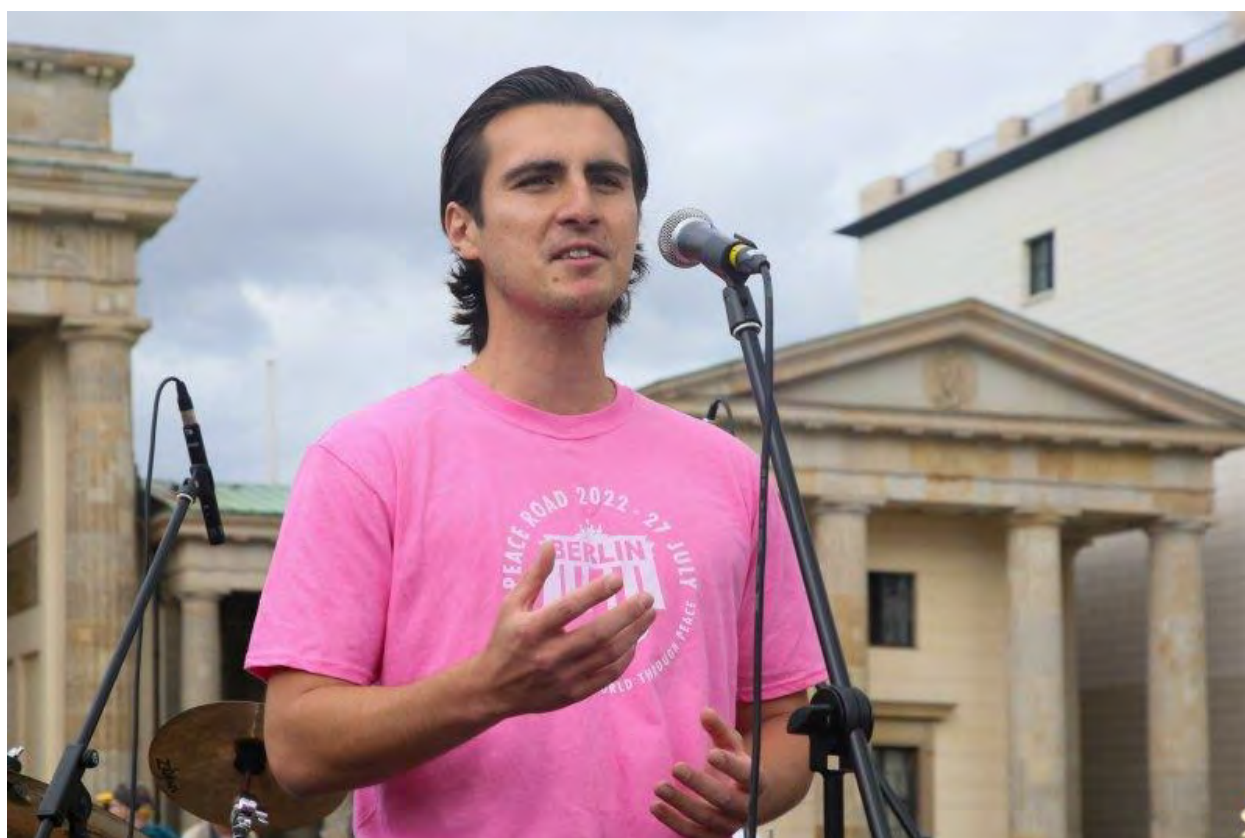
The presenters analyzed the current conflicts in Europe and Asia in the light of 20th century conflicts, coming to similar conclusions: Peace cannot settle if triumphant victors humiliate losers; military power may bring an end to hostilities, but lasting peace and reconciliation must be based on honestly admitting the crimes and atrocities committed.

The second session, "Peace Road: A Global Project toward Sustainable Peace," featured youth leaders: Dr. Koji Matsuda, head of IAYSP International; Dr. Farida Valliulina, a UPF representative at the United Nations in Vienna; Dr. Diana Esanu, the president of IAYSP Moldova; Ssruthi Raaja Elange Lehka, a

youth representative at the UN in Geneva; and Soo-bin Park, a Korean Peace Road activist.



The session focused on the Peace Road initiative's vision and its application. How can young people use innovative tools and resources for conflict resolution and reconciliation, opening the path for an interconnected world peace? Speakers described the growing focus on youth involvement in international institutions and agreed that the key to the development of the Peace Road initiative will be its genuine outreach beyond national, cultural, or religious self-interest.



The conference closed with a ceremony of reconciliation organised by Concerned People, an NGO dedicated to liberation from the historical weight caused by ethnic, national and religious conflicts.

To view more photos from the event, please visit our gallery: [familyfedcommunity.co.uk/berlin-peace-road-2022/](https://familyfedcommunity.co.uk/berlin-peace-road-2022/)

Peace Road 2022 was launched in Berlin, Germany, between July 26 and July 28, 2022, co-organised by the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) and the International Association of Youth and Students for Peace (IAYSP).

To watch a recording of the event, please visit: [vimeo.com/735024568](https://vimeo.com/735024568)