

UPF Odivelas, Portugal Hosts Interfaith Leaders at its Peace Embassy

Sergio Vieira
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Odivelas, Portugal -- As part of an ongoing series of interfaith visits promoted by the city of Odivelas, UPF welcomed 16 visitors to its Peace Embassy.

The Interreligious Dialogue Meetings, an initiative of Odivelas, a city that is known throughout Portugal for its great cultural diversity, originated in the October 2022 edition of the city's Week of Interfaith Harmony and Intercultural Dialogue.



With the goal of better communication and mutual understanding, religious communities agreed to visit a different religious community every month, participating in each other's activities or simply getting to know each other better, with the emphasis on what unites them rather than what separates them.

The latest of these interfaith visits took place on June 24, 2023. As the host of this event, UPF-Portugal prepared a warm two-hour program to welcome the confirmed guests:

- two representatives of the interfaith area of Odivelas Municipality, **Janina Ossmane** and **Dr. Saida Malato**;
- **Teresa Prim** from the Brahma Kumaris Community of Odivelas, who is also a UPF Ambassador for Peace;



- **Mohamed Tayob**, the president of the Islamic Community of Odivelas, along with two representatives of their board;
- **Pastor José Pedro Fonseca** from the Seventh-day Adventist Church of Odivelas;
- and also two guests who were invited directly by UPF: **Harun Carsane**, the vice president of the Hindu Community of Portugal; and **Ajit Hansraj**, the former vice president of the Hindu Community of Portugal and a UPF Ambassador for Peace.

In the first part of the program, **Rev. Sérgio Neto**, the national president of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), an organization that is affiliated with UPF, talked about the Unification Movement and its founder, Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon.

After a video summary of the recent Peace Summit 2023, which was held in Seoul, South Korea, in May, **Dr. Sérgio Vieira**, the national president of UPF, gave a presentation about UPF, which he introduced as an NGO in General Consultative Status with the United Nations' Economic and Social Council.

He started by reading excerpts of a speech given by UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon to Ambassadors for Peace. Through photos, he introduced UPF's activities and also some of the world leaders who are working closely with UPF's peace projects. He talked also about the character education project; the simultaneous marriage of 8,000 young couples around the world; and the founders' creation of Heavenly Parent's Holy Community for stronger religious unity in the present critical times.

After a short video about the recent opening of the FFWPU main temple in Korea, UPF-Portugal Board Secretary Paula Berto explained the significance of this temple, which is dedicated to Heavenly Parent's coming to Earth to dwell with all humankind. She stated that in the near future the temple will be open to all interfaith visitors from all over the world.

The first part of the program ended with the reading of comparative phrases from the book *World Scripture* representing the main religious areas, followed in the second part by a visit to the official FFWPU prayer room for everyone to pray in their own way for peace in the world.