

## UPF Municipality of Odivelas, Portugal: Meetings For Interreligious Dialogue

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Last September's edition of the "Week of Interreligious Harmony and Intercultural Dialogue", promoted by the Municipality of Odivelas, created even better conditions for a greater rapprochement between religions, especially in that municipality that is nationally known for its great cultural diversity.

Continuing their efforts and aiming at better communication and mutual understanding between these different religious communities, a proposal was agreed upon, in particular, to carry out monthly visits to each religious community throughout the year, to participate in each other's activities, or simply to get to know each other better in their history, religiosity, and culture, emphasizing on what unites them rather than what separates them.

The Universal Peace Federation, a UN-ECOSOC interfaith NGO, is a long-standing partner of this municipality and was involved in these interfaith meetings, as an institution committed to this area, so also part of the visit initiatives.

Thus, as the host of this event, UPF Portugal prepared a warm 2-hour program to welcome the confirmed guests: 2 Technicians from the interfaith area of Odivelas Municipality (Dr. Janina Ossmane and Dr. Saida Malato); Teresa Prim (from the Brahma Kumaris Community of Odivelas\_UPF Peace Ambassador); Dr. Mohamed Tayob (President of the Islamic Community of Odivelas) and 2 other representatives of their board; Pt. José Pedro Fonseca (from the 7th Day Adventist Church of Odivelas) and also 2 direct UPF guests:

Mr. Harun Carsane (Vice-President of the Hindu Community of Portugal); and Dr. Ajit Hansraj (Former Vice-President of the Hindu Community of Portugal and also UPF Peace Ambassador).

The Program consisted of two parts, and in the first part Rev. Sérgio Neto (National President of FFWPU), talked about the religious entity and the 3 stages of the Unification Movement, since the spiritual call of the founder (Rev. Sun Myung Moon) by Jesus at the age of 16 for a World Mission mandate; the HSA-UWC in 1954, after his discovery of God's "Divine Principle", which became the main Religious Book with Theological explanations about God's Providence.



After a video summary of the recent Summit 2023, a presentation was made by the National President of UPF, presenting it as a UN\_ECOSOC World NGO of Civil Society Networking for Peace.

Dr. Sérgio Vieira started with the reading of the Summit's main words, of the founder, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon "Mother Moon", to Ambassadors for Peace; and through photos, showed some of the main highlights and some of the main VVIP Speakers, who work closely with UPF's Peace projects. He talked also about the "Character Education" Project; the significance of the simultaneous Marriage of 8000 young Couples around the world and the significance of the founder's creation of the "Heavenly Parents Holy Community" for stronger religious unity in the present critical times.

After a short video about the recent FFWPU main Temple "Cheon Won Gung, Cheon Ill Sanctum" in Korea, the UPF PT Board Secretary, Paula Berto, explained the significance of this Palace dedicated to the coming of Heavenly Parents to Earth, to dwell with all mankind, stating also that in the near future, it will be open to any and all interfaith visitors from all over the world.

The first part ended with a selection of some comparative phrases from the main religious areas in the book "Scriptures of the World", followed in the second part by a visit to the official FFWPU Prayer Room, "Cheon Shin Won", for everyone to pray in their own way for Peace in the World.

After the group photo, we had the final Confraternization. Thank you very much for this fantastic interfaith initiative that made the Unification Movement known in a very clear and barrier-free way.