

UPF Buenos Aires, Argentina's Virtual Ambassadors for Peace Meeting

Miguel Werner
April 15, 2020



Buenos Aires, Argentina -- On April 15, Ambassadors for Peace gathered for the first time in a Zoom call sponsored by UPF-Argentina. They were glad to meet again through a virtual meeting but were also concerned about what is happening around the world. They were also hopeful in using this technology that can bring us together in the current circumstance of mandatory social distancing.

The meeting began with words given by Carlos Varga, director of UPF-Argentina, after technical adjustments and an explanation of the meeting's modality. In his brief message, he emphasized the difficult moment humanity is going through, which reveals that "we need the collective, the community, the family (...) and we cannot solve things by ourselves." He linked this to the peace principles that are the foundation of UPF's work and mission, showcasing the work of every Ambassador for Peace in the current context.



Then, we had the report session. Patricia Pitaluga, president of *Acercando Naciones*, spoke about her experiences at World Summit 2020 (1); Rosetta Conti, president of the Argentina chapter of the Women's Federation for World Peace, reported on the celebration of the UN International Day of Women in Buenos Aires City and General Lavalle (Buenos Aires Province); along with Horacio Daboul, president of the Corporate Social Responsibility Area of Parque de los Patricios' Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Tourism and Services; and Marta Formichella, from Women for World Peace, who could not give her

testimony due to technical issues.

Miguel Werner, secretary general of UPF-Argentina, thanked Ambassadors for Peace who shared messages of peace (reflections, poems, videos, etc.), as a way to spread warmth, solidarity and hope in this difficult moment we are facing (2). He explained that UPF International encourages us "to be of service to our brothers and sisters near and far" and "share your best practices and stories in the weeks ahead." UPF will be convening a variety of social networking opportunities, including online working groups, conference calls, webinars and roundtables featuring expert presenters on relevant topics (3).



In upcoming virtual meetings, planned for every Monday, Mr. Werner encouraged participants to share a reading from the "Peace Messages" book (Pyeong Hwa Gyeong), after which participants can share their thoughts and finish with prayers. This is a way of maintaining close relations among Ambassadors for Peace and relatives to inspire anyone who may be needing help in such challenging times.

On this occasion, we launched the Ninth International Poetry Contest. As a subject for reflection, we are using UPF's theme "interdependence, mutual prosperity and universal values," in support of the UN International Day of Peace 2020 and the centenary of UPF's co-founder. The deadline to send poems, drawings, paintings, musical creations and dances is July 15, 2020 (4).

The contest jury consists of the following distinguished artists: literary critic Bertha Bilbao Richter, vice-president of the ILCH (Hispanic Literary and Cultural Institute) and vice-president of the AALIJ (Argentinian Academy of Children and Youth Literature); writer and plastic artist Martha Candiotti, pro-secretary of Culture of SADE (Argentinian Society of Writers) and coordinator of Imagen y Palabra (SADE); narrator and poet Graciela Licciardi, coordinator of the Misterio y Palabr' course (SADE) and A.L.E.G.R.I.A Group; writer Jorge Alcaraz, coordinator of Almafuerte's Literary Circle (SADE) and SADE's union secretary; and a representative of UPF-Argentina's Executive Committee.

Godmothers of the contest include writer Juana Alcira Arancibia, founder and president of ILCH and director–editor of the international literary magazine "Alba de América"; poet and writer Nélida Pessagno, current coordinator of SADE's literary groups, being a former president and currently an honorary member; bilingual poet Marina Fagundes Coello, founding member of the society ProArte y Cultura de Uruguayana (Brazil) and member of many literary circles in America; and poet and plastic artist Mabel Fontau, member of the ILCH and the Committee Gente de Letras. The godfather is poet Donato Perrone, representative of the Group Poetas Livres de Santa Catarina (Brazil) and member of SADE Mendoza. All of them are Ambassadors for Peace.

Christian Oreb, general coordinator of Red Cooperar of civil society organizations in Buenos Aires City, discussed a solidarity campaign proposed by Red Cooperar along with UPF-Argentina for the day after the quarantine. Then, he mentioned an early registration of blood donors, the need of proper outfits for medical staff and volunteers, and a weekly newsletter with relevant, official information about proper precautions during this emergency.

Luba Opeka, volunteer of the Akamasoa Association in Argentina, briefly talked about an initiative: When we meet once again, we should celebrate by wearing white handkerchiefs, olive branches and the Argentinian flag (5). María Helena Rodríguez Sivera offered the FM Radio TV Diamante in case there is something to report; Susana Segovia, from Scientology Argentina's PR, provided virtual contents on

health prevention and free courses; Esteban Fauret and Amalia Daibes, directors of the literary–ecological program Y volverán a ser árboles, invited us to join the literary initiative "en tiempo de ausencia" (in times of absence).

Eduardo Borri and Jackeline Giusti, coordinators of the Pacis Nuntii movement, shared a chat message with an invitation to send artistic creations (poems, songs, drawings, sculptures, collages, mandalas) with values promoted through the Universal Peace Flag. Francisco Silva, press officer of the Coordination Unity of the GCBA Strategic Planning Council (UCPE), expressed that the current situation of social isolation will accelerate the processes of digitalization and the use of technological applications for long-distance work and participation.

At the end, Graciela Almada, creator of Música por la Paz, performed with her guitar and her voice a cover of "La oración." Prayers were in the charge of Inderveer Kaur, from the Sikh Dharma community in Argentina; Silvina Rodríguez, from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; and Julio Nardini, from the Movement of the Word of God's Intercession Ministry.

Emanuel Sayavedra, who coordinated the meeting, introduced the participants, including Ambassadors for Peace who joined from other cities and provinces, and the staff of young people: Ailen Marquesano, Erika Alcaraz and Patricia Seput. He said that the young Ambassadors for Peace from Japan, who are always present in the meetings, had to travel back during the global lockdown. He showed images of the meetings held by the Executive Board, the Peace Council and of Pastor Alba Rosa Contardo, member of the global and local UPF Peace Council, who passed away on February 9 (6).



Quotes:

1) Review of UPF World Summit 2020: www.slideshare.net/UPFArgentina/cumbre-mundial-corea-2020-230661356

2) Some of the "Peace Messages" shared by Peace Ambassadors during the quarantine:

Quedémonos en casa - Luba Opeka: www.youtube.com/watch?v=V-qACg8jhos

Música para la Paz - Graciela Almada: www.youtube.com/watch?v=siN0SSrTQfM

Alas - Silvia Gabriela Vázquez: www.youtube.com/watch?v=3asaH8GDWV4

El poder de un minuto - Javier Nicolao: www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZ5qLAttXs

Volver a empezar - Marina Fagundes Coello: www.youtube.com/watch?v=suxKAaRp3fg

Mensajes de Paz - Inderveer Kaur: www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Ay69pTwdWQ

Esperanza - Luis Carmona: www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_mCnADSr0U

Escuela de Bien Común - Julio Nardini-Rosa Holgado: www.youtube.com/watch?v=eDM0y_TvCns

3) Statement of UPF International "A Circle of Light: Moving Through and Beyond the Coronavirus Crisis": www.facebook.com/upfargentina/posts/1500471686798592?_tn_ =K-R

4) Rules of the 9th International Poetry Contest – UPF-Argentina: www.escritores.org/recursos-para-escritores/29918-ix-concurso-poetico-internacional-upf-argentina-argentina

elperiodistadigital-cultura.blogspot.com/2020/04/ix-concurso-poetico-internacional-upf.html?m=1

5) Invitation from Ambassador for Peace Luba Opeka: www.youtube.com/watch?v=gcrlseevsl4

6) Sharing the best memories of Pastor Alba Rosa Contardo: www.youtube.com/watch?v=lb7TLTnwzQA

