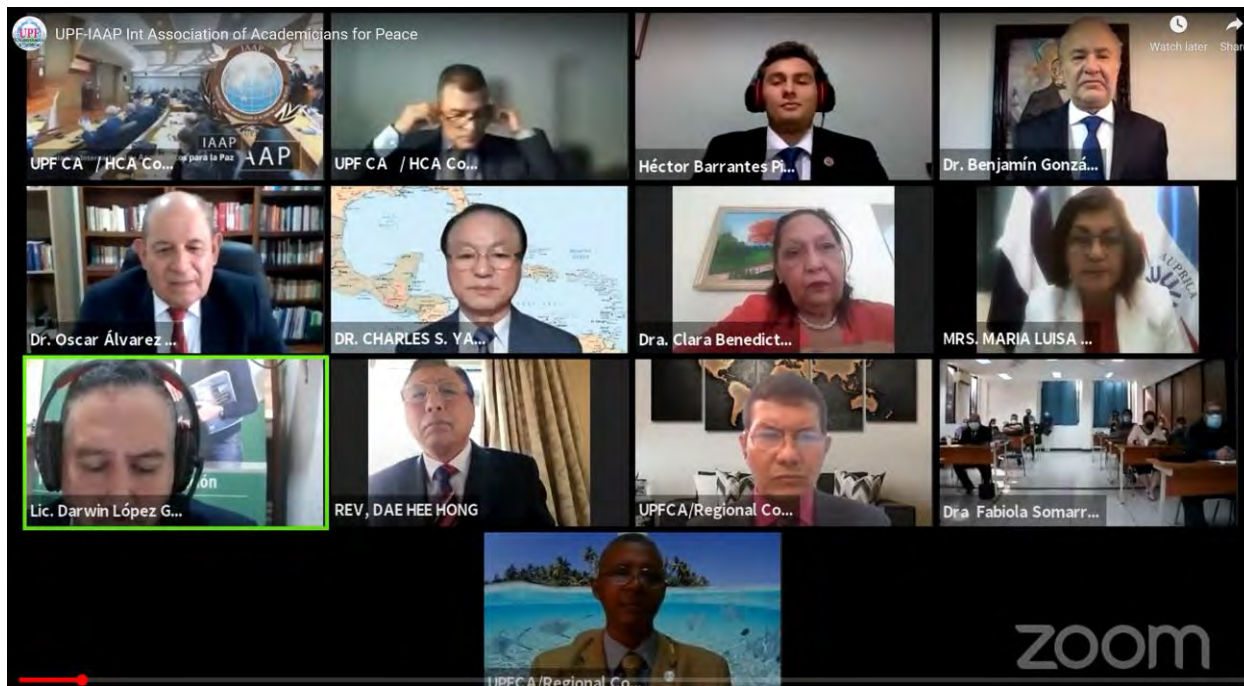


UPF-Central America and the Caribbean holds Inaugural Ceremony of IAAP

Chang-shik Yang
October 26, 2021



UPF-Central America and the Caribbean -- On October 26, 2021, UPF-Central America and the Caribbean held an Inaugural Ceremony of the **International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAAP)** at the regional level on the theme: "The Role of Academicians in the Formation of Morally and Ethically Healthy Citizens and Societies." The event was attended by university presidents and academics, and was viewed by more than 189 people.

Moderator:

Dr. Darwin Lopez Galeano, institutional communications coordinator, University of Commercial Sciences, began the program with a brief overview of the vision and mission of IAAP and gave a warm welcome to the group of panelists and guests.

Rev. Leonidas Belliard, president of Subregion 5, Caribbean, offered the opening invocation.



Welcoming Remarks

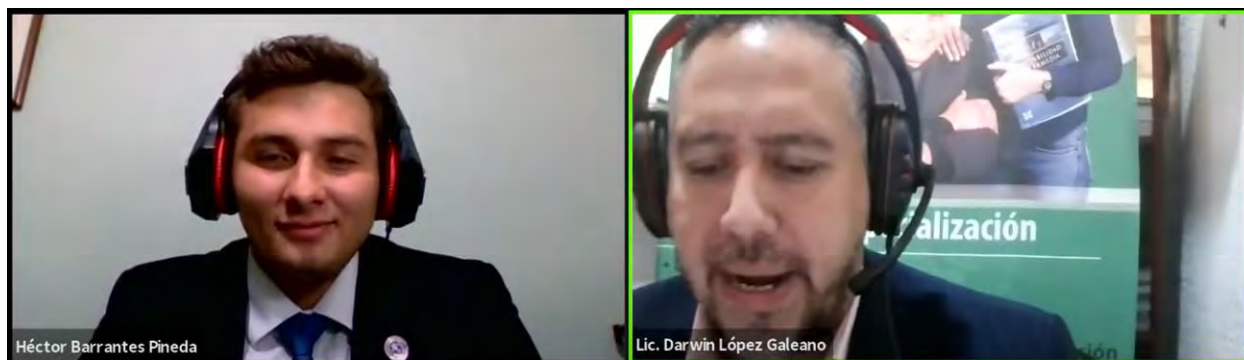
Hector Barrantes Pineda, a student of political science at the University of Costa Rica and vice president of IAYSP Costa Rica, stated, "Sharing with these distinguished leaders dedicated to educating, guiding, training and empowering young people from their early years, and of course also adults to continue learning, for me personally, makes them an example to follow. Now, we as human beings are members of the same family where the younger ones always view the older ones as a reference. Therefore, I fervently ask you not to forget the immense value of education as a pillar in our society and the duty we all have so that this pillar can be further developed as a support to the family in the formation of good, responsible and altruistic young people and citizens, capable of realizing a future of lasting peace for all."

PANELISTS

The first panelist was **Dr. Charles S. Yang**, chair of UPF Central America and the Caribbeans. He

offered a few words to the panelists and all the guests: "There are many critical challenges facing our world at this time, from poverty and climate change to conflict and inequality. At the same time, the rise of civil society initiatives and the expansion of Track Two diplomatic efforts involving people-to-people relations, provide new dynamics that can complement and support the work of governments in the search for solutions to our world's most pressing problems.

Today our sessions will focus on the launching of the International Association of Academicians for Peace CA and Caribbean Chapter. The IAAP affirms the belief that academicians, scholars and educators have played a part in and continue to contribute to the intellectual, moral and spiritual development of humanity, and provide an essential role in the building of a good society. IAAP is dedicated the ideals of interdependence, mutual prosperity and universal values."



The second panelist was **Dr. Benjamin Gonzalez Roard**, former congressman, president of the Mexican Academy of Academic Education and treasurer of the National Autonomous University of Mexico Foundation. He began by speaking about the family: "The family is a value in itself. It is the nucleus and origin of society. The family is the greatest value of societies, its heart and soul. Our duty is to preserve it, believe in it, give it strength and ties. The family is, by principle, the center of human affectivity, where the most important emotional ties of the human being are learned and generated. In it, the best of human relationships must prevail, and in it the healthiest coexistence must prevail."

He then stressed love of nature: "It is not enough to know the misfortunes that can occur if we continue to wear down nature. It is important to recover the example of the ancient indigenous people of America, who truly loved Mother Earth. All the biodiversity of the planet requires our respect, but each human group must begin in their environment. It is essential to generate a new love of nature because in it everything has a reason for being, everything plays a role in balancing our home, the Earth."

The next panelist, **Dr. Adrian Meza Sozo**, president, Paulo Freire University, Nicaragua, stated: "What can we do from the world of academia to contribute to universal peace? That is the question that occupies us today. I think the answer is both simple and complex. I summarize it in a single sentence: The best contribution of academics to the cause of peace is the critical and serene unmasking of the true reasons that have led us to war.

Our role as academics who want peace is: the truth about war, anywhere, at any time, and assuming the risk of the consequences.

Yes, God gave us the privilege of understanding and science. If he gave us the privilege of knowledge and light whereas others suffer from darkness, then let's put that privilege at the service of what Heaven's desire has always been: A world where humanity learns to live at peace, with herself and with all of us who belong to her, to also give the universe that surrounds us its natural breath and calm. This is the least that the great architect of the universe expects from us."

Dr. Angela Marieta Sosa Veroy, professor and international human rights advisor, Honduras, stated, "Regarding the role of the academicians in the shaping of morally and ethically healthy citizenship and societies, my approach is that in the face of the social crisis in which we academicians find ourselves, we are called to get involved in spaces that move us out from our comfort zone. We are in the era of pragmatism, we are in the era of 'do it now.'

Under such conditions, let's ask ourselves: Who shapes citizens today? How is a morally and ethically healthy society perceived today? What is moral and ethical today? What aspects of society could be an example of being healthy?

- The individual domain: the proposed measures should be oriented towards self-control and the identification of leaders who can exercise powers of coordination, organizing the community and promoting good citizenship.

- Family domain: the proposed measures should be aimed at strengthening the family environment with

programs dedicated to the formation of values and the promotion of empowerment on current family issues, such as intrafamily violence, domestic violence, violence against minors, sexual education, preventing premature pregnancies, and responsible parenthood.

Academics have the power to influence the family, the community, education, also power relationship exchange be it public or social, with an influence in the world in general, to achieve a basic health that involves not only stopping damaging ourselves as humanity, recovering values and morals, but above all to scrutinize what made us sick and then know what medicine we are going to prescribe."

Dr. Clara Emilia Benedicto Guzman, director of the postgraduate department, Autonomous University of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, stated: "Universities are the crucible for the emergence of new ideas for answers to the essential problems of society and of course they are the bastion where the desire to 'I live to give to society part of what I have received from it' arises. In this sense I agree with the panelists who have preceded me that 'we have to listen to the cries of society and give answers from science and knowledge to the problems of climate change with its effect on crops, to the problems of hunger, to the problems of the economy and seek solutions to the many diseases that we face today.' It should not only be a training in specific knowledge but a training for life.

It is time then for the academics of the world to start working together for those solutions that will bring answers to the great crises that humanity is going through."

Dr. Oscar Alvarez Araya is a Costa Rican political scientist and writer, and currently a professor at the Universidad Miguel de Cervantes in Chile and Costa Rica University, Costa Rica. He stated: "Those of us who have been serving as academicians for a lifetime know that from our different disciplines we can contribute to a better society through our activities and work as educators, as researchers, as authors of articles and books, as lecturers in training workshops and forums, and as active participants in the media and social networks, among others.

Through these activities and works, we can contribute to the dissemination and promotion of universal values and principles such as the dignity of the human person, the general wellbeing, freedom, justice, and peace.

Universal values must inspire us and must be the basis of public policies and actions. Our actions must be at the service of the dignity of people. People must be the center and the end of international society.

To promote an ethical society, we must base ourselves on the ideals of peace, interdependence, mutual prosperity and universal values."



Denilson Gulston, who holds a bachelor's degree in performing arts from the University of Trinidad and Tobago and is a very talented young artist from Trinidad and Tobago, performed two songs during the program.

At the end, we read and signed the Resolution of Inauguration of the International Association of Academicians for Peace.