

## UPF Zurich, Switzerland: Swiss Religious Leaders Stress Multifaith Cooperation

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Dübendorf, Switzerland - The Zurich chapter of UPF-Switzerland, in cooperation with Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP), marked World Interfaith Harmony Week in Dübendorf on February 7, 2026. Representatives of diverse religious traditions gathered to promote dialogue, cooperation, and shared responsibility for peace in an increasingly multicultural society.

The program featured faith-based reflections, musical contributions, a symbolic interfaith ceremony, and the nomination of new Ambassadors for Peace, reaffirming the role of religion as a constructive force for peace and social cohesion.



Mr. Gabriel Beutl, community coordinator of FFWPU Zurich, offered welcoming remarks, introducing the historical background and mission of World Interfaith Harmony Week and UPF's long-standing engagement in interreligious initiatives throughout Europe and the Middle East. An opening musical performance by a singer, dancer, and music teacher from the Catholic Church of St. Anton Zurich created a reflective and inclusive atmosphere.

Representatives of different religious traditions shared their perspectives on the event theme, "The Importance of Interreligious Cooperation in a Multifaith Society." Ven. Banthe Annuruda offered traditional Buddhist chants invoking peace, health, and blessings for all humanity. Miss Kaur Singh, of the Sikh tradition, emphasized dialogue, shared values, and respect for differences as foundations for peaceful multicultural coexistence.

Mr. Joshua Wegmann of the Church of Scientology reflected on the capacity of faith to promote peace, and stressed that cooperation among religions can yield greater global impact than isolated efforts. Mrs.

Aisha Mushtaq, from the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, highlighted mutual acceptance as a prerequisite for living together peacefully in an increasingly diverse society.

Following a musical contribution by Ms. Xelina Canteazarina, the keynote address was delivered by Mr. Heiner Handschin, president of UPF-Switzerland and EUME coordinator of the Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD). Quoting theologian Raimon Panikkar, Mr. Handschin stated that "to be religious today means to be interreligious" and emphasized that religious wisdom and cooperation can serve as part of the solution to contemporary conflicts, wars, and global challenges.



After a period of audience interaction and dialogue, representatives of ten faith traditions participated in a symbolic Interfaith Water Ceremony. Each representative poured water into a common bowl, symbolizing shared wisdom, inclusivity, and the unity of one human family under God.



In accordance with UPF tradition, Mr. Vincenzo Leggio, director of UPF-Zurich, and Mr. Heiner Handschin nominated five individuals as Ambassadors for Peace, encouraging them to actively engage in service-oriented leadership and contribute to community peace and well-being.