

International Women’s Day Observed in Nigeria

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Abuja, Nigeria — Approximately 100 distinguished guests attended a Special Women’s Assembly held by UPF-Nigeria to mark International Women’s Day.

Participants from government as well as from nongovernmental, faith-based and community organizations attended “Beyond the Challenges of Our Time: The Role of Women in Transforming the Family, Society and Nation.” The assembly was held on March 10, 2015, at the National Merit Award House in the Maitama district of Abuja, the nation’s capital.



Ambassadors for Peace and their spouses were among the audience, as were women leaders of religious, political and nongovernmental organizations. Delegations from the National Council of Women's

Societies, the Defense and Police Officers Wives Association, the Prison Officers Wives Association, and the Fruitful Homemakers Association attended.



Goodwill messages were sent by the Federal Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development and from the presidents of several of the participating organizations.

The assembly began with a reading of the words of UPF Co-Founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon at a recent International Leadership Conference in Korea. This was followed by a reading of messages from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and from the executive director of UN Women (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women), Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka.

Next came an overview of women's role in the governance of Nigeria, from Flora Shaw, the British journalist who coined the name "Nigeria," to current first lady Patience Jonathan.

Presentations focused on the role of women in transforming the family, society and nation as well as issues of women's inclusion in national governance and in Nigeria's upcoming general elections. Several women leaders were awarded certificates as Ambassadors for Peace.

The closing session featured the inauguration of the UPF-Nigeria committee on women's affairs, which will facilitate the launch of the UPF-Nigeria Women's Initiative. The assembly called on women to ensure the transformation of their families, societies and the nation.

The assembly also endorsed a proposal to the federal government to rename the National Center for Women's Development in honor of Mrs. Maryam Babangida, the late wife of the former military president, in recognition of her pioneering role as the first woman to serve as first lady in Nigeria.

The assembly agreed with the UN secretary-general's message: "The world will never realize 100 percent of its goals if 50 percent of its people [women] cannot realize their full potential. When we unleash the power of women, we can secure the future for all."

The assembly was covered by several national media entities, including the National Television Authority, the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria and Kapital FM 92.9.