

500+ students inaugurate Peace Club at the College of Education Gindiri, Nigeria

Raphael Ogar Oko
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Gindiri, Nigeria—More than 500 students attended the inauguration of a Peace Club at the College of Education Gindiri in Plateau State.

Staff and management officers of the college also attended the program, which was held by the UPF-Nigeria College Ambassadors for Peace on February 16, 2017.

Mrs. Maria Dauda Jev, UPF-Nigeria director of women's affairs and the program officer for the partnership with the organization Women in Colleges of Education, read aloud an address on

behalf of the UPF-Nigeria secretary general (see below).

Ambassador for Peace certificates were awarded to the College of Education provost and registrar before the crowd of students who gathered to witness the event and to sign up as members of the Peace Club.



Address from UPF-Nigeria Secretary General Dr. Ralph Ogar Oko to the Inauguration of the College of Education Peace Club, Gindiri, Plateau State, Thursday, February 16, 2017

The Acting Provost, Registrar, Principal Officers, Management, Academic and Non-Academic Staff of the College of Education, Gindiri, our distinguished College Ambassadors for Peace, officials and members of Women in Colleges of Education, dear students, members of the peace club, ladies and gentlemen!

On behalf of the Registered Trustees and Ambassadors for Peace of the Universal Peace Federation, I am delighted to have the opportunity to address this special assembly today during the inauguration of the Peace Club in the College. I bring you greetings of peace from the UPF Founders, Dr. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Mrs. Hak Ja Han Moon, the international leaders and national officers of the organization.

We are gathered here today to inaugurate the Peace Club, and I believe this is a special moment in the history of the College and our organization too. This gathering today is unique in several ways and will remain a reference point in the history of this great institution.



The Universal Peace Federation is an interreligious and international network of individuals, organizations and institutions dedicated to the building of a peaceful world where all people live together as brothers and sisters of one global family based on shared universal spiritual and moral values. We are currently represented in over 185 countries and have members in every state in Nigeria. The UPF was launched in the year 2005 during the 60th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

Dr. Moon, who founded the UPF, was called at the young age of 16 to work with all people to bring about a peaceful world that God originally intended and which all human beings yearn for. Since his calling, he has not relented for one day without working for the sake of world peace. He passed on at the age of 93 years in 2012, and his wife, Dr. Mrs. Hak Ja Han Moon, has taken the responsibility to keep the vision alive. Our work is to work with everyone to build a world of peace. I am delighted that we have been welcomed in your College as we begin this journey together. Our young people gathered here today should be excited that this organization began with a young man who was called at the young age of 16. Each of you is being called today to become champions of peace in your department, college and community and even throughout the country.

As a background to this gathering, you may be aware that in 2014, the National Commission for Colleges of Education approved the proposal by the Universal Peace Federation to establish Peace Clubs in Colleges of Education in Nigeria. At the first instance, 43 Colleges of Education were selected by the National Commission for Colleges of Education, and the College of Education Gindiri was among the selected Colleges. As a follow-up to the approval, we signed a partnership with the national association Women in Colleges of Education to implement the approval. Our gathering today is the outcome of that partnership. We are grateful to the College authorities for the consideration to welcome this initiative. We are most thankful to the leaders and members of Women in Colleges of Education for their strong determination to keep the flag of peace flying and have planted it here in the College.



The idea of the establishment of Peace Clubs in Colleges of Education is based on the realization that teachers have critical roles to play in the building of a peaceful nation. The UNESCO Constitution states that “since wars begin in the minds of men and women, it is in the minds of men and women that the seeds of peace will be constructed.” We are aware that it takes a teacher to save a village, and the future of our nation depends on the capacity of our teachers.

This is why we believe that by establishing Peace Clubs in Colleges of Education, we will be working with trainers of teachers and teachers in training to cultivate the right attitude, knowledge and skills for building a peaceful nation. With the enormous challenges that our nation is facing, the best place to begin the response is to work with educators. This is why we are inspiring the establishment of Peace Clubs in Colleges of Education in Nigeria.

Our hope is that the Peace Clubs will become special organizations that will transform the Colleges to become peaceful communities. We are hopeful that through the programs of the Peace Club in the College, we can work together to ensure that students are peaceful and focused on their studies. We are hopeful that we can begin a peace education certificate program in the future and work to establish a College Peace Education Center in the College of Education Gindiri. Our victory will be testimonies that management, staff and students are working together harmoniously to facilitate learning.

The Peace Clubs are open organizations and not secret societies. The clubs are open to people from all religions, ethnicities and political affiliations or professions. It is a club to encourage staff and students to work together, learn to live in peace, live for the sake of each other and grow in love. We shall be promoting several activities through the Peace Club and will connect staff and students to our international network. We welcome interested students to join the club and live by the ideals of the club. We shall be promoting the Peaceful Students Scholarship Programs and support seminars, workshops and conferences on building a culture of peace in the College.

Let me use this opportunity to once again thank the leaders and members of Women in Colleges of Education, as well as the staff and management of the College of Education Gindiri for this opportunity today. As part of this inauguration, we shall be designating the Acting Provost and Registrar as International Ambassadors for Peace. They shall be joining our growing international network of peace leaders. Let me congratulate them in advance and wish them success in their endeavors.

Finally, we are an organization for peace, and our purpose of establishing Peace Clubs is for the sake of peace. As you all know, everyone without exception needs peace, and as someone has said, “There is no way to peace; peace is the way.” Let us use this moment to renew our commitment to say no to violence and say yes to peace. The UPF International office is currently developing the Youth and Students Federation for World Peace, and we are hopeful that when the formal launch will take place, our student members will be part of this international students’ movement for peace. As members of the Peace Club, you are all Student Ambassadors for Peace. Please keep the flag of peace flying. Become peaceful citizens. Strive to establish peaceful families and ensure that you utilize your knowledge and skills as well as resources for the sake of peace.

I wish you all a peaceful inauguration. Thank you.