

UPF-Japan Hosts a Day of Togolese Culture and Cuisine

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Matsushima, Japan—Togo’s chargé d'affaires and his wife were the special guests at a seminar on their country’s culture, followed by a lesson in Togolese cuisine, both of which were organized by UPF-Japan.

The seminar, “Study about Africa and Togo with UPF,” took place on the morning of April 25, 2015, in the town of Matsushima, Miyagi Prefecture, which is famous for its scenic bay, called one of the Three Views of Japan.



Mr. Steve Bodjona, chargé d'affaires of Togo, who is also a famous poet in his country, read from his poetry, “From Heart to Heart.” His poems have been published in Japanese, having been translated from French last year.

“Most people have an image of Africa as an area of poverty or conflict. However, in reality Africa is a land of hope and dreams,” explained Mr. Bodjona. He introduced his poem about the diplomatic mission of a peace negotiator in conflict areas and said, “Working for the sake of the nation and peace would give us an honor and happiness.”

After his lecture, a Japanese Ambassador for Peace performed on the koto, a Japanese traditional stringed instrument. Mr. Bodjona tried to play it under her instruction and succeeded in producing a beautiful sound.



Mr. Bodjona also gave his impressions of *As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen*, the autobiography of UPF Founder Dr. Sun Myung Moon, and said he appreciated the UPF members who showed an example of “living for the sake of others.”

Togolese Food Lesson



On the afternoon of the same day, a “Lesson in Togolese Cuisine” was held under the supervision of Mrs. Bodjona, wife of the chargé d'affaires, at a UPF-related facility in the city of Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture. The participants enjoyed cooking fufu, traditional Togolese food, and its sauces.

Because Togo’s Independence Day took place just two days later, the cooking lesson was followed by a celebration of the former French colony’s 55 years of independence.

Following a greeting by the master of ceremonies, Mr. Shigenari Kato, secretary general of the UPF Peace Diplomats Forum, UPF volunteers to Togo sang that nation’s anthem.

Members of the National Diet of Japan and the prefectural assembly offered congratulatory remarks. Mr. Bodjona expressed his wish to build a partnership with local governments, investors and nonprofit organizations.

After that, the participants enjoyed the Togolese food that had been prepared by Mrs. Bodjona and the participants of the cooking lesson. Several guests performed songs, dances and played musical

instruments.

These events were carried out as pre-events of Africa Day, which is scheduled to be celebrated on May 25.