UPF Dusseldorf Program Encourages Personal Action for Peace

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Düsseldorf, Germany – How can individuals help shape a culture of peace? UPF-Düsseldorf addressed this question at a special event on September 21, 2026, at its headquarters. "Peace Starts with Me – How a Global Culture of Peace Develops from Personal Action" was the theme of the event, timed to celebrate the UN International Day of Peace and connected with its motto: "Investing in Peace: For Everyone, Everywhere and Every Day." The focus was on active commitment to a sustainable future and the recognition that the daily, united effort of all is necessary to establish and maintain peace.





After welcoming remarks, **Mr. Sergio Brina** of UPF-Dusseldorf gave the participants an overview of the work of UPF. He pointed out that peace starts not only on an international or political level, but on a small scale, and in interpersonal relationships. Even on this level it is not always simple to live harmoniously and to resolve conflicts peacefully.

In this context, he presented the methods outlined in "The Work" by Byron Katie, which deal with inner reconciliation and the questioning of one's own thoughts and beliefs. It is based on the recognition that it is not necessarily other people who hurt us, but frequently our own thoughts and how we evaluate them. This method suggests four specific questions to check a stressful thought: questioning if the thought is true, whether you can be quite sure of this, how you react when you believe it, and who you would be without this thought. The original thought is then reversed, and concrete examples of a new perspective are sought. This way of looking at things can create new perspectives that help one let go of anger and hurt, to develop more understanding for others and to achieve inner peace.

Then followed several inspiring talks from **Ms. Petra Heuwind, Dr. Alhindawi, Mr. Ender Eker** and **Ms. Amela Halilovic-Eker,** who spoke about different aspects of peace and how each person can be

willing to work for a more peaceful coexistence.

Ms. Heuwind, a UPF ambassador for peace, stressed that true peace begins with the individual's everyday interactions with neighbors and others, by being willing to listen, to forgive and to respect the other without prejudice as a human being. Dr. Alhindawi emphasized that true peace is a daily investment in one's personal sphere of influence, referring to the everyday meaning of the word "Salam" as a promise of respectful and compassionate coexistence.



Mr. Ender Eker, also a UPF ambassador for peace, explained that true peace requires the inner purification of the soul and reflection on the unifying Abrahamic values, through which God gives people orientation in every era through those which He sends. Another UPF peace ambassador, Ms. Amela Halilovic-Eker, called on people to use their hearts to see beyond differences, to live as a community, and to be present for one another, following the principle "one for all, all for one."





These contributions aroused appreciation and applause from the audience. Then followed short talks by **Mr. Herbert Beyer** and **Mr. Josef Francken**. Mr. Beyer spoke from the perspective of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, emphasizing that a peaceful world can only be established through a vertical, spiritual approach centered on God. Mr. Francken, a UPF peace ambassador, underlined the need to approach others with courage and love and to communicate with peaceful intentions in order to build trust, in the spirit that brought peaceful change in the former German Democratic Republic.

Ms. Anja Brina then led a special activity involving all. The participants each chose a piece of paper in the shape of a heart, a dove of peace, or a leaf, and wrote on it their personal thoughts about how they would like to contribute to peace. These included personal resolutions such as treating others with respect,

taking a stand against exclusion, seeking peaceful conflict resolution, and building bridges between people. The papers were then hung on a specially designed "peace tree," as a beautiful symbol of how peace can grow from many small personal contributions. All the participants greatly enjoyed this activity and the chance to reflect on their individual contributions to peace.



To bring the event to a close, Ms. Brina presented the book "Die Welt am Wendepunkt" (The World at a Turning Point), containing contributions from the UPF-DACHL Conference that took place in autumn 2025 in Meersburg, to mark UPF's 20-year anniversary. Contributions address current world challenges, issues of peace, international cooperation, the role of the United Nations, and above all the values that underpin coexistence. The book aims not only to outline problems, but to give hope and orientation. It is an invitation to consider what kind of world we want to leave for future generations and how we can personally contribute. Copies of the book were available for purchase, and several participants took this opportunity.





Over refreshments and stimulating discussion, the event drew to a close in an open and friendly atmosphere. This event was not only an opportunity to discuss peace, but a valuable impetus to start to shape peace in our everyday lives.