

2020 Africa-EUME International Leadership Conference -- Executive Summary

Jacques Marion
September 13, 2020



Africa/Europe/Middle East -- On September 11 to 13, 2020, UPF of Africa and UPF of Europe and the Middle East held an International Leadership Conference on the theme "Opportunity and Hope at a Time of **Global Crisis**: Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity and Universal Values."

The ILC 2020, commemorating the 15th anniversary of the Universal Peace Federation, was held concurrently online in three areas of the world: the Asia Pacific region; the North and South America region; and the Africa, Europe and Middle East region.

The ILC highlighted the work of seven UPF associations: International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP), International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP), Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD), International Media Association for Peace (IMAP), International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAAP), International Association for Peace and Economic Development (IAED), and International Association of First Ladies for Peace (IAFLP).

In the context of the dramatic rise of the COVID-19 pandemic, which is affecting geopolitics, the world economy and all levels of society, the ILC 2020 aimed at bringing forth lessons learned from the crisis and identifying opportunities based on UPF's vision of interdependence, mutual prosperity and universal values, seeking new ways of envisioning our common life together.

Each webinar panel featured prominent speakers from Africa, Europe, and the Middle East, and provided a unique occasion for exchanging views on the need and conditions for interregional cooperation. Speakers included former heads of state and government, presidents and members of parliament, religious leaders, media professionals, scholars, and business leaders. Thousands of participants from 90 nations registered at the ILC to follow the webinars.

Here is a summary of each session with a list of speakers.

Friday, September 11 – 11:00 CET – Opening Session - [Click here to read the report](#)

The Opening Session, on the theme "The World in Crisis – New Horizons for Relations Between Africa and Europe," began with a traditional Interfaith Prayer for Peace by a Christian leader from Nigeria and a Muslim leader from Syria.

The first keynote speaker, H.E. Goodluck Jonathan, the president of Nigeria (2010-2015), outlined some of the values manifested in Africa during this COVID-19 crisis: sacrifice, solidarity, capacity for organizing, creative solutions, identifying opportunities. The second keynote speaker, Dr. Werner Fasslabend, the minister of defense of Austria (1990-2000), spoke of the challenges posed by the demographic growth of Africa and the need for a new basis for cooperation between Africa and Europe, concentrating on economic growth, peace and stability, and governance on the basis of rule of law.

Dr. Thomas Walsh, chairman of UPF International, described the goal of the ILC 2020 as considering

"how we might turn tragic circumstances into opportunities to correct some of our collective deformities and dysfunctions as humanity and build a better world, working together in a spirit of multilateral cooperation."

The session concluded with excerpts from the speech given by UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon at the online Rally of Hope on August 9, 2020, in which she deplored rampant nationalism and selfishness in today's world and emphasized the need to keep God at the center of the community, the family and society in order to solve problems.

Moderator: Jacques Marion, president, UPF Europe and the Middle East

Interfaith Invocation:

Bishop Mbayor Japheth Ndarchang, president, Arewa Pastors Forum for Peace, Nigeria

Asmaa Kftarou, Women's Advisory Board, UN special envoy, Syria

Welcome Remarks:

Katsumi Otsuka, chair, UPF Europe and the Middle East

Katherine Rigney, chair, UPF Africa

Keynote Addresses:

E. Goodluck Jonathan, president (2010-2015) Nigeria

Werner Fasslabend, minister of defense (1990-2000), Austria

Chairman's Address: Dr. Thomas G. Walsh, chairman, UPF International

Founder's Message: Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, co-founder, Universal Peace Federation

Friday, September 11 – 12:30 CET – Session II: Perspectives from Former Heads of State and Government - [Click here to read the report](#)

Session II was hosted by the International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP) on the theme "A New Paradigm for International Relations in the Post-COVID Era."

The former heads of state and government from Malta, Burkina Faso, Gabon and Kosovo described the political, economic and social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic within nations and on the regional and interregional levels. They underlined the effect of the crisis on the outcome of the UN Sustainable Goals Agenda and the need for strengthening state capacity, social trust and solidarity to build up national resilience. They pointed to the role of the state as the main player on the national and international scenes, the geopolitical and economic confrontation caused by the crisis, and the need to adopt new ways of public management based on a new framework of international cooperation. They noted the lack of international solidarity shown during the crisis and emphasized the need for Africa and Europe to build a partnership as equals.

Moderator: Adama Doumbia, president, UPF Africa; coordinator, ISCP Africa

Speakers:

H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, president (2014-2019), Malta

H.E. Paul Mba, prime minister (2009-2012), Gabon

H.E. Albin Kurti, prime minister (2020), Kosovo

H.E. Luc-Adolphe Tiao, prime minister (2011-2014), Burkina Faso

Dr. Katherine Rigney, chair, UPF Africa

Friday, September 11 – 16:00 CET – Session III: Perspectives from Parliamentarians - [Click here to read the report](#)

Session III was hosted by the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) on the theme "Opportunity and Hope at a Time of Global Crisis: Africa, Continent of the Future." The session

was attended by three current presidents of parliaments (Niger, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Uganda) and by parliamentarians from Israel and Russia.

Speakers noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the economies of Africa, and that concerted efforts were needed to fight it within the framework of equality and justice. It was stressed that Africa should fight for the prosperity of its people while observing democratic and social justice. African countries need to mobilize funding through a form of the Marshall Plan, and parliaments should play their oversight roles to see that resources are used effectively. Research and innovation need to be reviewed to address how vast resources found in Africa are used and to anticipate the emergence of future crises. The Russian and Israeli parliamentarians emphasized the need for world nations to empower Africa, where by 2050 a third of the world's young people will live. Business through mutual partnership rather than charity is a priority, they said, and positive awareness about such opportunities needs to be enhanced.

Moderator: Heather Wokusch, author, educator, public speaker, Austria

Speakers:

H.E. Delfim Santiago das Neves, president of the National Assembly, São Tomé and Príncipe

Hon. Hilik Bar, former deputy speaker, the Knesset, Israel

H.E. Ousseini Tinni, president of the National Assembly, Niger

Hon. Gadzhimurad Omarov, member of the State Duma, Russia

Rt. Hon. Rebecca Kadaga, speaker of the Parliament, Uganda

Peter Haider, coordinator, IAPP Europe and the Middle East

Friday, September 11 – 17:30 CET – Session IV: Perspectives from Religious Leaders - [Click here to read the report](#)

Session IV was hosted by the Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD) on the theme "The Spirit of Cooperation, the Way toward Peace."

Emphasis was given to the need to bring the wisdom of all religions to the United Nations, where God, the "Origin of Peace," is rarely mentioned. By religious leaders connecting and working together, the crisis of COVID-19 or any other crisis could be overcome more easily. Representing Islam, Christianity and Judaism, the session speakers reaffirmed the role that religious leaders need to play in uniting people and empowering them, instead of allowing their beliefs to divide them. They need to help communities embrace the Ubuntu spirit, which in African philosophy means "I am because we are." A passionate call was made to recognize the role of women in religion and to accept women as equal in humanity and spirituality.

Moderator: Rev. George Ogurie, Nigeria national president of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), an organization that is affiliated with UPF; coordinator, IAPD Africa

Opening Remarks: Dr. Tageldin Hamad, vice president of UPF International and director of the UPF Office of UN Relations; IAPD international coordinator

Speakers:

Prophet Samuel Radebe, founder, the Revelation Church of God, South Africa

Rubab Mehdi, chair, International Imam Hussain Council, United Kingdom

Aboubacar Thierno Sow, an interreligious preacher and founder of a youth blog, Mali

Rabbi Kevin De-Carli, Center for Interreligious Studies and Interfaith Dialogue, Switzerland

Saturday, September 12 – 11:00 CET – Session V: UPF Anniversary Commemoration - [Click here to read the report](#)

Session V was a commemoration of UPF's 15th anniversary with the theme "Our First 15 Years: UPF's Contribution to Building a World of Peace."

After a video outlining the history and vision of UPF, a presentation highlighted some of the events, starting in the early 1990s, that led up to UPF's establishment in September 2005. It described the

founders' vision to support and renew the United Nations, their UPF inaugural tour around the world, and some of UPF's worldwide activities that culminated in the Africa Summits in 2018 and 2019. "The UPF message is probably more needed now than 15 years ago," testified an African Ambassador for Peace. An Albanian Ambassador for Peace described the development of UPF in his country, from the founders' meeting with the president in 2005 to the 2019 Southeast Europe Peace Summit in Tirana. The session closed with an overview of the numerous peacebuilding activities that laid the foundation for each of UPF's related associations.

Moderator: Marilyn Angelucci, secretary general, FFWPU Middle East

Video presentation

Speakers:

Dr. Paterne Zinsou, vice president, UPF Africa; coordinator, IAPP Africa

Ambassador Simeon Uwa, executive secretary, ISCP Africa, Nigeria

Hon. Gaqo Apostoli, former minister of transport, UPF chairman, Albania

David Fraser Harris, secretary general, UPF Middle East

Saturday, September 12 – 12:30 CET – Session VI: Perspectives from First Ladies and Women Leaders - [Click here to read the report](#)

Session VI was hosted by the International Association of First Ladies for Peace (IAFLP) on the theme "Toward a New Paradigm of Women's Leadership and Cooperation in Response to Global Crises."

"The time has come for the power of women to save the world." After this reminder of the founders' words, the speakers discussed how the pandemic was an opportunity to accelerate women's empowerment, as seen by the positive role taken by women as teachers and providers for the community, and by the fact that countries run by women have strategically dealt better with the crisis. The role of women in peacebuilding was underlined, as well as the mission of IAFLP and Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP), an organization that is affiliated with UPF, as facilitators to support such a role. It is time, concluded one participant, to improve the visibility of women's achievements and refute the idea that they are averse to holding certain professional positions. She urged participants to consider and proclaim this decade as "the decade of women's empowerment."

Moderator: May Sacko Gaye, national TV news presenter, Côte d'Ivoire

Opening Remarks: Dr. Julia Moon, president, WFWP International

Speakers:

Vera Tembo Chiluba, first lady (1991-2001), Zambia, whose speech was read by her daughter

Dr. Nadia Al-Sakkaf, former minister of information; editor in chief of the Yemen Times, Yemen

Hon. Olga Bogomolets, member of Parliament (2014-2019), Ukraine

Hon. Driss Senda, advisor to the president of the Republic of Congo

Carolyn Handschin, vice president, Women's Federation for World Peace International

Saturday, September 12 – 16:00 CET – Session VII: Perspectives from the Media - [Click here to read the report](#)

Session VII was hosted by the World Media Association for Peace (IMAP) on the theme "Assessing the Role of the News Media in the Global COVID-19 Crisis and Beyond."

IMAP addresses the current crisis in media credibility, media standards and ethics, and provides professional development and networking opportunities to media practitioners around the world. The need for a new mindset to address current world affairs was emphasized, that is, to hold a comprehensive view beyond politics, economics, or military matters. Research on current media trends was presented, including the migration of readers from print to digital, the dwindling trust in the social media, and the importance of face-to-face journalism versus desktop journalism, concluding with the words: "Journalism helps to make life-or-death decisions in times of the pandemic. This is the time to invest in journalism and to sell it confidently." Reports were given on the important role of media coverage during the pandemic in

Africa. The role of the media as partners in initiatives promoting peace and social cohesion was underlined.

Moderator: Rita Payne, former Asia editor, BBC World News, president emeritus, Commonwealth Journalists Association, United Kingdom

Speakers:

Dr. Thomas McDevitt, chairman, The Washington Times

H.E. Dr. May Chidiac, former minister of state for administrative development, Lebanon

Aka Saye Lazare, president of the National Television and Radio Company, Côte d'Ivoire

Juan Señor, president, Innovation Media Consulting, United Kingdom

Mamadou Gaye, coordinator, IMAP Africa

Saturday, September 12 – 17:00 CET – Session VIII: Perspectives from Academicians - [Click here to read the report](#)

Session VIII was hosted by the International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAAP) on the theme "Breaking Down the Walls: Pursuing Interdependence in the Community for Peace."

The session began with a reminder of the importance of the family as the seed for creating a culture based on interdependence. Some speakers spoke about the theme of interdependence in the context of the fight against the pandemic in their countries, describing the remarkable and successful efforts of Senegalese scientists and doctors in handling the pandemic, and the all-out mobilization of the faculty and students of Russia's largest research medical school to fight the virus and to test vaccines. Other speakers focused on the role of education in promoting interdependence: the positive impact of online tools on the lives of Africa's young people, breaking down walls and speeding up mutual prosperity, yet the need for moral education to prevent the Internet's destructive effects. A vision of education was presented, empowering people for development, social integration, qualification, and personal satisfaction. The mission of academicians and scientists to support the global drive toward an interdependent global community was stressed, as well as the fact that interdependence results from human maturity and the practice of altruism.

Moderator: Rev. Moruti Ledwaba, coordinator, IAAP Africa, South Africa

Opening Remarks: Dr. Sung-bae Jin, chairman, HJ Academy of Arts and Sciences, Korea

Speakers:

Professor Oumar Coumba Ndong, professor of American Literature and Culture, Senegal

Dr. Olga Safonicheva, Institute of Clinical Medicine, First Moscow State Medical University, Russia

Dr. Simon Bedelo, lecturer at Keio University, Japan

Professor Dr. Carlos Poiares, vice rector, Lusophone University of Humanities and Technologies, Portugal

Yoshihiro Yamazaki, liaison to Europe and the Middle East, Institute for Peace Policies, Japan

Sunday, September 13 – 16:00 CET – Session IX: Perspectives from Business Leaders - [Click here to read the report](#)

Session IX was hosted by the International Association for Peace and Economic Development (IAED) on the theme "Creating Mutual Prosperity -- the Essential Role of Private Enterprise and the Rule of Law to Rebuild Economies and Grow Employment."

"Africa's future depends on how the issue of women is addressed," said the first speaker, stressing that public policies in Africa should support women's businesses, which move the national economies, predominantly in the informal sector. A major African business leader said that the key ingredients of mutual prosperity are: peace, oneness, and shared values; rule of law; property rights; and income security. From Europe and the Middle East, presentations described the negative impacts of COVID-19 on the economy and the need to find a balance between lockdowns and supporting economic and social life. It was also emphasized that the post-COVID era will require a new mindset, and that the private sector already has become more conscious of its social responsibility for bringing people together and

contributing to better stability and prosperity.

Moderator: Dr. Lilian Lem Atanga, chair, Department of Linguistics and African Languages, University of Bamenda, Cameroon

Speakers:

Joseph Makamba Busha, founder and Group CEO, JM Busha Investment Group, Zimbabwe

Dr. Arben Malaj, former minister of economy and finance, Albania

Professor Fatou Sarr Sow, president, African Network for Support to Women's Entrepreneurship, Senegal

Dan Catarivas, chairman, Israel-EU Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Israel

Dr. Thomas McDevitt, chairman, The Washington Times, HJ Magnolia Global Foundation

Saturday, September 13 – 17:10 CET – Closing and Call to Action - [Click here to read the report](#)

At the end of the IAED session, the conference concluded with a message from Dr. Michael Balcomb, regional chair of FFWPU Europe and the Middle East, who spoke of the vision for UPF activities in the coming years. Then a draft resolution was read, compiled from reports gathered from each of the three regional ILCs. Projects to set up interregional working committees to develop each UPF association were introduced.

Dr. Katsumi Otsuka and Dr. Katherine Rigney, the chairs of UPF Europe and the Middle East and UPF Africa, respectively, gave the final closing words.

Moderator: Maria Nazarova, president, UPF-Russia

Dr. Michael Balcomb, regional chair of FFWPU for Europe and the Middle East

Jacques Marion, president, UPF Europe and the Middle East

Dr. Katsumi Otsuka, chairman, UPF Europe and the Middle East

Dr. Katherine Rigney, chair, UPF Africa



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WORLD LEADERS INSPIRE HOPE AT ILC OPENING PLENARY

Written by Renee Corley
 Friday, September 11, 2020

Africa/Europe/Middle East—The first virtual International Leadership Conference (ILC) organized by UPF of Africa and Europe & the Middle East began with world leaders greeting participants at an Opening Plenary.

The online conference, which was held from September 11 to 13, 2020, was one of three concurrent ILCs, with the other two organized by UPF of Asia and the Pacific and UPF of the Americas. All three ILCs were held under the title "Opportunity and Hope at a Time of Global Crisis: Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity and Universal Values."

The Opening Plenary, held on September 11, was titled "The World in Crisis—New Horizons for Relations between Africa and Europe."

Jacques Marion, the president of UPF for Europe and the Middle East, served as the moderator. As he opened the session, he reminded participants that this event was part of the yearlong celebrations marking the centenary of UPF co-founder Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon's birth, as well as the 15th anniversary of the founding of UPF.

He announced that many thousands of people around the world were participating in the ILC, which was the result of close cooperation between UPF in Africa and UPF in Europe & the Middle East.

Explaining that the tradition of the ILCs is to begin with prayer, Mr. Marion invited two faith leaders to offer an interfaith invocation. The first, representing Christianity, was Bishop Mbayor Japheth Ndarchang from Nigeria, the founder and national president of the Arewa Pastors Forum for Peace. The second, representing Islam, was Asmaa Kftarou from Syria, a United Nations consultant on gender equality and the granddaughter of Sheikh Ahmed Kftarou, the late grand mufti of Syria.

Welcoming remarks were offered by Dr. Katsumi Otsuka, the chairman of UPF of Europe and the Middle East, and Katherine Rigney, the chairwoman of UPF of Africa.

Dr. Otsuka said that because the UPF founders experienced the Korean War and also life as refugees, they were motivated to dedicate their lives to bringing peace to humanity.

After conveying greetings and thanks to the participants from UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, Mrs. Rigney said, "This online conference ILC 2020 will serve as a framework for a collective moral leap and the global mobilization of human consciousness in order to respond to Mother Moon's urgent call and to support her many initiatives and programs."

Keynote Addresses

The session's two keynote speakers were H.E. Goodluck Jonathan, the president of Nigeria (2010-2015), and Dr. Werner Fasslabend, the defense minister of Austria (1990-2000).

A third scheduled keynote speaker, H.E. Dioncounda Traoré, the president of Mali (2012-2013), was unable to attend the ILC because of unforeseen situations related to political turmoil in his nation. President Traoré apologized and promised to join the ILC next time.

H.E. Goodluck Jonathan, the former president of Nigeria and currently the chairman of the International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP)-Africa, a UPF project, said, "There is no better time than now to look at opportunities in the time of global crisis."

President Jonathan outlined some values that have been manifested during this COVID-19 period. He said these values give us hope for the future and should be pursued in the post-COVID era:

Sacrifice: Many people have shown their willingness to make sacrifices in the fight against the virus, in particular front-line health workers, many of whom lost their lives.

Solidarity: People of different colors, races and creeds have extended love to one another, offering food items, hygiene kits, medical equipment, and education on how to stay safe.

Capacity for organizing: People showed impressive organizing skills in moving needed items around the world.

Creative solutions: In the face of this deadly disease with no known vaccines, people have devised all manner of equipment to fight the virus and disinfect the environment. In Africa, many people have fought the disease on their own in their homes. Hotels, restaurants, places of worship and gyms have come up with homemade solutions to manage crowds while keeping people safe. "This speaks to the capacity to rise to any challenge," President Jonathan said.

Identifying opportunities: Many people have used this period to discover opportunities for increasing their finances or their skill set. Online meetings are now common, such as Zoom conferences. There are many new online jobs.

Countries, too, have responded to the restrictions by focusing on local production and depending less on imports. However, he said, African nations need improved relations and closer economic cooperation with Europe.

President Jonathan urged European governments to relax stringent quality control conditions which are keeping African produce out of Europe. He also urged European manufacturers to set up cottage industries in Africa to process raw materials.

Most important, he said, is "the need for all countries to up their medical game." The passing of our loved ones is painful and, in most cases, avoidable, he said. Therefore, the lessons we've learned can't be wasted.

Africa and the world should rise from complacency and rise to challenges. "Never again should we get caught unprepared for any eventuality like COVID-19," he said.

Dr. Werner Fasslabend, the former Austrian defense minister (1990-2000) and currently the president of the Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy, said, "We all are suffering, and we all are trying very hard to get out of this situation and into normal life."

He recalled that in 1950, when he was a small boy, the population of Europe was three times greater than that of Africa. Now, however, Africa's population is twice as big as Europe's, and by the end of the 21st century, it is predicted to be five or six times as big.

"This is such a challenge for everyone that we can hardly master it," Dr. Fasslabend said. How can there be enough food, jobs, and living space for all those people? he asked.

In the past there have been very good agreements signed between Europe and Africa, he said, but the words on paper were much better than the actions that actually resulted.

"It is necessary to shape a new basis for cooperation between the two continents," he said. Europe and Africa have so many things linking them, and working together would bring advantages to both continents.

We don't need new agreements ("so many new papers"), he said, but rather the way to put the agreements into action. He recommended that we bring together the best young people with those who are older and experienced in order to work out effective programs.

"Economic growth is possible only on the basis of peace and stability, on the one hand, and good governance, on the other hand," Dr. Fasslabend said. We should concentrate on three goals, he said: economic growth, peace and stability, and governance on the basis of rule of law.

Infrastructure should not exploit natural resources, he said. It should be the basis for economic development, able to provide enough jobs for young people.

After the two keynote speeches, Mr. Marion introduced a music video recorded at a concert in Budapest, Hungary, in which South African singer Lebo M sang "Circle of Life" from the film *The Lion King*.

This was followed by a video about the accomplishments of the Universal Peace Federation over the past 15 years. Following the founding of UPF in New York on September 12, 2005, Rev. and Mrs. Moon traveled around the world on a UPF inaugural tour in which they gave public talks and met many world leaders. The video showed the International Peace Highway and the founders' vision for a renewed United Nations. It spoke about the more than 100,000 UPF Ambassadors for Peace, referring to them as "one global family under one God." The video highlighted the UPF World Summits, which have brought together the highest level of leaders from around the world. It mentioned the establishment of six UPF associations dedicated to cooperation among the leaders of various fields. It ended by showing the first online Rally of Hope on August 9, 2020, with talks by Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and prominent world leaders.

Mr. Marion thanked all those who have contributed to UPF's accomplishments over the past 15 years. "This is only the beginning," he said. "I think UPF has a great future."

In his Chairman's Greetings, Dr. Thomas G. Walsh, the chairman of UPF International, referred to the three concurrent ILCs taking place in different regions of the world. Altogether the three conferences have over 30 sessions scheduled, with more than 200 panelists, he said.

He related that at World Summit 2020, held in Korea in February, UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon "spoke of the need for the world community to reorient itself by moving away from exclusively materialistic and self-serving objectives toward spiritual, moral and other-serving objectives. Only in this way ... will the world find its way through the challenges we face."

Referring to our current times as "troubling, disturbing and tragic," Dr. Walsh said: "Our goal with this ILC 2020 is to explore our way forward. We will consider how we might turn tragic circumstances into opportunities to correct some of our collective deformities and dysfunctions as humanity—extreme inequality, injustice, failures to take responsibility, corruption, disrespect for each other and for the environment. How can we build a better world, working together in a spirit of multilateral cooperation?"

He spoke at length about the ILC themes of interdependence, mutual prosperity and universal values. "These are the guiding principles of UPF, rooted in the vision of our founders," he said.

Calling the growth and development of UPF over the past 15 years "nothing short of miraculous," Dr. Walsh said: "It has a mighty wind at its back that derives from more than human effort, or human intelligence. You may call it a *Zeitgeist* or a Holy Spirit. But in any case, it is at play. We feel the guidance and the blessing of Heaven, and we pray that we can remain faithful to the founding vision, acting always in service to the world, to the ideal of creating a world of universal peace, one family under God."

The Opening Plenary concluded with excerpts from the speech given by UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon at the online Rally of Hope on August 9, 2020:

"Until now, human history has been a sad one of continuous conflict. Even now, around the world, conflicts are happening everywhere. Why is it that at this time it is difficult to see a future filled with hope? Originally the Creator had a dream. Heavenly Parent wished to realize the ideal of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth together with His beloved children. ... [A]s long as Heavenly Parent remains the center of any community or family or society, all problems can be solved.

"However, in today's world we can see that nationalism, selfishness are rampant. These are characteristics that are far from Heaven's wish. Our earthly life is limited. How can we live a heavenly life while on this earth? The primary duty is to lead heavenly lives on this earth in preparation for the eternal life in the spirit world. ...

"God the Creator is love, God is our Parent. The Parent cannot see the children dying and suffering. As a Parent, how painful must God's heart be to see His beloved children suffer? We, from this moment—let us really repent on our knees for our shortcomings and really render glory unto Heaven."

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EUME-AFRICA HEADS OF STATE, GOVERNMENT MEET AT ISCP WEBINAR

Written by Yvo Bruffaerts, UPF coordinator for Western Europe
Friday, September 11, 2020

Africa/Europe/Middle East—The former president of Malta and the former prime ministers of Burkina Faso, Gabon and Kosovo were the distinguished speakers at the International Summit Council for Peace webinar held on September 11, 2020.

The ISCP online webinar was the second of nine webinars that made up the International Leadership Conference 2020, which took place from September 11 to 13, 2020, and was dedicated to the theme “Opportunity and Hope at a Time of Global Crisis: Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity and Universal Values.”

ILC 2020 commemorated both the centenary of UPF’s co-founder, Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon (1920-2012), and the 15th anniversary of the Universal Peace Federation, inaugurated on September 12, 2005.

Each webinar was held jointly by UPF Europe and the Middle East and by UPF Africa and featured prominent speakers from both regions.

The speakers at the ISCP webinar were:

H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, president of Malta (2014-2019)

H.E. Paul Mba, prime minister of Gabon (2009-2012)

H.E. Albin Kurti, prime minister of Kosovo (2020)

H.E. Luc-Adolphe Tiao, prime minister of Burkina Faso (2011-2014)

Adama Doumbia, the president of UPF Africa and coordinator of ISCP-Africa, introduced the panelists and served as moderator.

H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, the president of Malta (2014-2019) and currently the president of the Eurochild network, said the COVID-19 pandemic has shown the fragility of our world by affecting the socio-economic development of our human family. It has shown the lack of resilience, solidarity, and lack of good leadership of some countries. Communities of children and women, which were vulnerable even before the pandemic, have been much affected. Children’s rights and gender equality are at stake, she said.

COVID-19 undoubtedly has changed the goal posts set by the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, President Coleiro Preca said. State capacity, social trust and solidarity, unity, and leadership are essential to limit the damage and to create the necessary resilience for our nations to face unprecedented challenges.

Division promoted through populist and nationalistic rhetoric leads to tension and international conflict, the former president said. However, global solidarity is key to fighting COVID-19 and its consequences. A constructive partnership is imperative between Europe and Africa, which are twin continents, as former European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker described them in his 2018 state of the union speech. SDG 17 emphasizes the need to revitalize global partnership for sustainable development as a first step to overcoming the present crisis. Unfortunately, we are still too far off this goal, with fewer than ten years to go, she said. The pandemic has revealed the injustices, the inequalities, and the lack of equity in our world and has further compounded them. Today’s choices will determine how far-reaching the negative effects of the pandemic will be in the future.

President Coleiro Preca said that collective action is essential to rebuilding economies that deliver economic growth, prosperity, and holistic well-being for all. This crisis should be tackled through increased multilateral exchanges of experience, knowledge sharing and joint action.

She reiterated that the international community needs to be concerned about children’s lives. The lockdown of schools has affected more than 1.5 billion children and youth, and the digital divide has never been so evident. Governments, local authorities and non-governmental organizations must support those who have been badly affected to ensure that fundamental human rights are rightfully enjoyed by all. Both Europe and Africa can benefit from each other’s potential and experiences, Mrs. Coleiro Preca said. A prosperous Africa would provide new opportunities for investment and a supply of a skilled new workforce. However, Europeans must acknowledge this and also realize that Africa should not be exploited. It is encouraging to note that according to European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, the European Union wants to establish [greater political, economic and investment opportunities between Europe and Africa, and move toward a partnership of equals beyond the donor-recipient relationship](#). The relationship between Africa and Europe has indeed to be built on a partnership of equals. As the EU’s foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell, said: “If we don’t solve the problem in Africa, we will not be able to solve the problem in Europe. Africa is of particular concern to us.”

H.E. Paul Mba, the prime minister of Gabon (2009-2012), said the measures taken against COVID-19 have impacted not only the behavior of people worldwide but also geopolitics. The spreading of COVID-19, being a corollary of globalization, is now a threat to globalization and world order. In this difficult context, ideas of a new paradigm and of deglobalization are emerging. The virtues of the old order have been overshadowed by the emergence of the state as the main player that monopolizes leadership on national and international levels. States have been given a privileged place in times when supranational organizations have behaved passively in the worst case. Reactions to the pandemic go beyond health measures and also lead to nationalism and xenophobia.

Africa has to adapt to the consequences of the pandemic, if it does not want to stay on the margins, the prime minister said. To reach their development goals, the African countries have to adopt new ways of public management based on the creation of a new framework of international cooperation and solidarity, with a focus on sustainable development such as education, culture, healthcare, industry, ecology, social security, the oceans. Moreover, domestic production should be boosted, especially in vital sectors such as health, food, energy. E-governance and telecommunications should be promoted in the light of better social integration.

Prime Minister Mba said there is a need for cultural and personal identity. As development is an endogenic process, no progress can be made by rejecting one's culture or identity. The organization of our political system or educational system, for instance, is the result of our culture. Most importantly, peace should be promoted, as it is coming increasingly under threat. Only in a climate of peace can the world develop.

H.E. Albin Kurti, the prime minister of Kosovo (February to June 2020), said that we have been hit by three crises. First, there is the health issue. Second, there is the economic crisis, which is deepening the depression of the global economy, already in stagnation since 2008. Third, and not least, is the crisis of democracy and the rise of authoritarian leaders.

However, as every crisis brings opportunities, we should keep our hearts and eyes open so as not to miss them, he said. Businessmen, understandably, will find their way to profit and will hold to their opportunities. Politicians, however, rather look for opportunities to benefit the society, nation, region, or entire continent, instead of one-sided profit.

The deepening economic crisis has exposed what didn't work and how we can bring a progressive change. We have come to realize that this change must happen on an international level.

The prime minister then spoke about Kosovo and the Balkans, where small businesses are engaged in an unequal fight against powerful monopolists, or oligarchs. Good governance and democratization of the economy are therefore indispensable.

COVID-19 has worsened an already hopeless situation, he said. Kosovo's GDP is expected to shrink by 3 percent this year, which will further increase unemployment. During the four months that Mr. Kurti was prime minister, his government managed not only to contain the spread of the virus but also to bring new hope for change in the country and the region. Unfortunately, the relationship with the Serbian government remains problematic. Its ability for disruption and destruction outperforms its ability to cooperate and build, he said.

In conclusion, he said, poverty, hunger, genocide and disease are no longer issues that countries can solve on their own. When there is a conflict in one country, there is a refugee crisis in other countries. Diseases in one country travel beyond national borders. Therefore, we must not act merely as citizens of one country but as citizens of the world.

H.E. Luc-Adolphe Tiao, the prime minister of Burkina Faso (2011-2014), was the last panelist to speak.

Our debate today, he said, invites us to reflect deeply on the theme "Opportunities and Hope in Times of Crisis: Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity and Universal Values." In fact, he said, the elements of this theme have always been at the heart of the thought and vision of UPF co-founders Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and his wife, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon. COVID-19 has confirmed the interdependence of nations, the relevance of which has always been revealed in their teaching, he said.

Prime Minister Tiao explained how he experienced the epidemic as an African citizen. First, he mentioned fear-mongering by the great communication channels of the North (Europe) while solidarity with Africa has been weak. The second observation he made is that COVID-19 has been used as a weapon of war in the geopolitical and economic confrontation of those in power in this world. This is illustrated by, among others, the competition between states in vaccine development. Hence, the urgent need for transparency in the management of information on the international scene.

The coronavirus has confirmed the marginalization of Africa on the international scene, he said. However, Africans no longer want to be mere spectators of major global issues. The coronavirus, as it strikes without distinction between rich and poor, north and south, east and west, black and white, calls for a cultural revolution to face the new challenges. A paradigm shift in international relations, a global and united approach, and worldwide solidarity are required. The teaching of Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and her late husband call for a new culture centered on God, the family, universal values and living for the sake of others. If humanity lives up to these values, peace, solidarity and fraternity will prosper. Therefore, the initiatives of the Mother of Peace deserve our support. The prime minister said that the debates organized by UPF should have an echo in all international bodies at the level of each country.

To conclude, he quoted former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon: "UPF will become a cornerstone in building lasting peace in the world."

Question-and-Answer Session

To former **President Coleiro Preca**: As a prominent leader of Malta, the European nation in closest proximity to Africa and one that has a significant African diaspora, what are the two best things Europe can do to right past and present failings toward Africa?

The president answered that two main things come to mind. First and foremost, Europeans should look differently at Africa. It should not be a donor-recipient relationship. The African continent is a land of opportunity, she said. Besides this, children, communities and nations should be empowered. We need to ensure that we include and appreciate each other's cultures when relating to one another.

President Coleiro Preca said she would like to see Europeans engage in sustainable partnerships of equals between African and European states, between the European Union and the African Union. We need a holistic approach in the way we approach and help each other and especially the young people in Africa, she said. Africans know best what their needs are and how they can develop. Therefore, they should be given more space in their dialogue with Europeans. Most importantly, she said, without peace there can never be prosperity. Therefore no European state should facilitate or fuel conflicts on the African continent.

To **H.E. Albin Kurti**: Would a policy of European nations making a much greater investment in Africa, in order to create jobs and prosperity there, help to solve the refugee crisis and be better for both Africa and Europe, instead of spending much money on preventing illegal migration into Europe?

Prime Minister Kurti answered that people want to stay and work together. They want to integrate. In a globalized world we should integrate the economy, which implies integrated investment and fewer inequalities, he said. People will integrate and be peaceful if they feel equal. The Mediterranean is a factory of civilizations. It is not something that divides Europe and Africa; it is rather something we have come from.

To **H.E. Paul Mba**: What are, in a nutshell, the main areas in which Europe and Africa can best cooperate to mutual advantage?

Prime Minister Mba answered: "I will tackle just two aspects, even though there are many. First, we need to make the utmost of the mutual capabilities that exist both in Africa and Europe. Notably in the field of health and medicinal herbs, Africans can make a great contribution. Communication is poor in Africa. Education has an important role to play in that regard. There should be joint educational programs to meet the needs in both continents. Conflicts may not be avoided 100 percent, but they should be avoided as much as possible."

To **H.E. Luc-Adolphe Tiao**: How could the COVID-19 crisis lead to reconciliation in Africa? What have we learned in terms of the common destiny of nations? How does it impact our future way of thinking and promoting reconciliation in Africa?

The prime minister answered: "Burkina Faso has also seen massive terrorist attacks, which will have a great impact on the upcoming elections. It is not certain yet whether it will be possible to properly organize them or whether they will be organized at all, which is a great problem for democracy. The coronavirus has hit the economy hard and has forced us to totally review our way of governance. Our lack of communication makes it difficult to put in place prevention campaigns to fight the pandemic. We therefore need to develop our own strategies and reimagine our ways of communication."

To close the ISCP webinar, Katherine Rigney, the regional chair of UPF-Africa, gave a message of goodwill. She thanked the heads of state and government, as well as Ambassadors for Peace, for showing the way forward to build a peaceful and unified world by working together in the International Summit Council for Peace.

Indeed, the ISCP, initiated by UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon in February 2019, is an international network and meeting place for current and former heads of state and government, who, through dialogue and collaboration, explore solutions and offer recommendations to address the world's critical problems, including climate change and environmental issues, religious conflicts, poverty, war, corruption and family breakdown.

To conclude, she shared the content of the declaration made by Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon at the first Rally of Hope on August 9, 2020. In front of many heads of state and government and world leaders, Dr. Moon said: "If Heavenly Parent is at the center of a community of people united under the values of interdependence, mutual prosperity and universal values, all problems can be solved. Peace can be achieved only with God at the center of the universe."

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EUME-AFRICA PARLIAMENTARIANS MEET AT IAPP WEBINAR

Written by David Ngeno, Parliament of Kenya
 Friday, September 11, 2020

Africa/Europe/Middle East—Session Three of the ILC 2020 organized by UPF of Africa and UPF of Europe and the Middle East was “Perspectives from Current and Former Parliamentarians,” the webinar of the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP).

The webinar, which was held on September 11, 2020, was titled “Opportunity and Hope at a Time of Global Crisis: Africa, Continent of the Future.”

The moderator of the session was **Heather Wokusch** from Austria, an author, educator and public speaker.

The speakers were:

H.E. Delfim Santiago das Neves from São Tomé and Príncipe, the president of the National Assembly

Hon. Hilik Bar from Israel, a former deputy speaker of the Knesset

H.E. Ousseini Tinni from Niger, president of the National Assembly

Hon. Gadzhimurad Omarov from Russia, a member of the State Duma

Rt. Hon. Rebecca Kadaga from Uganda, the speaker of the Parliament

Peter Haider from Austria, the coordinator for IAPP of Europe and the Middle East

H.E. Delfim Santiago das Neves, president of the National Assembly of São Tomé and Príncipe, observed that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the economies of many countries, and Africa has not been spared: It was time for concerted efforts to fight it. He stressed that the African continent should fight for the prosperity of its people while observing democratic and social justice. He noted that UPF, at the moment, had created opportunities for nurturing dialogue among all stakeholders to build peace. He stressed that education was a critical ingredient in shaping a civil and democratic society.

Hon. Hilik Bar, a former deputy speaker of the Knesset in Israel, noted that it is necessary for all to promote peace. He said that he was passionate about Africa and its people, having had experience with the people of Uganda. His association with an organization that empowers Africa was a testimony to his passion. It was important to empower Africa to have oneness, he said, since Africa was central to the world and a third of the young people will live in it by 2050.

He further observed that since Africa was home to the fastest-growing economy, the international community needs to act now to come up with sustainable solutions to empower it. People in Africa move from rural areas in search of better services, but a lot of potential in business through mutual partnership rather than charity is a priority. This could be done by enhancing positive awareness about such opportunities, he said.

H.E. Ousseini Tinni, president of the National Assembly of Niger, observed that the topic was a paradox, and though COVID is a pandemic, he was seeing opportunities and hope. He noted that countries in West Africa had their economies shrunken, and it was high time that the fight against the pandemic was intensified within the framework of equality and justice. African countries need to mobilize funding through a form of Marshall Plan, he said, and parliaments must fulfill their oversight roles to ensure that policies take into account social issues and harmonize legislations that promote trade. Lawmaking must be participatory to gain ownership among the citizens and to take into account environmental issues as well as fostering messages of peace and human values.

Hon. Gadzhimurad Omarov, a member of the State Duma of Russia, noted that Russia was first in culture change and that Africa needed more assistance in the backdrop of COVID-19, more so in areas such as education. He observed that Africa needed peace and that investing in Africa would help build stability. He thanked all of those who united to provide the necessary assistance to the Lebanese following the recent deadly explosion in Beirut.

Rt. Hon. Rebecca Kadaga, the speaker of the Parliament of Uganda, observed that Africa has maintained resilience to the COVID-19 pandemic, contrary to expectations. Research may be done to unravel the source of resilience. She noted that containment measures such as lockdowns affected the economy and loss of livelihood. There have been, however, opportunities occasioned by regular sanitization and wearing of masks. The local industries that produced these essential goods thrived, and there is no longer any need to import them. Lockdowns and curfews also made families stay together for longer hours, though they affected social functions such as weddings.

The Ugandan Parliament established a Parliamentary Task Force to quickly look at the possible impacts of the lockdown. The task force came up with proposals to address various sectors of the economy. It changed its procedures to adapt to the changes brought about by the pandemic and passed the necessary legislation to

enable the government to handle the situation. Parliaments should fulfill their oversight roles to see that resources are used effectively, she said.

Hon. Kadaga said that research and innovation need to be reviewed, both to address the use of Africa's vast resources and also to prepare African countries to handle any future crises when they arise. Parliaments will play an active role to see these are realized.

Peter Haider, the coordinator of IAPP for Europe and the Middle East, noted that UPF works closely with parliamentarians, since they deal with issues from the grassroots to the national level. Parliamentarians identify the root causes of problems, and because problems are endemic, they need to build hope among the citizens. IAPP and other political leaders must portray moral character, and leaders must be united for the sake of peace.

The question-and-answer session produced the following comments from the speakers:

Africa has a lot of potential, and there is the need to unify and empower Africa through diverse expertise.

Connecting people through innovative ways.

The number of people starving in Africa has doubled; hence there is the need to unite to save the people.

Invest in Africa so as to add value.

Africa needs to have its own agenda on the basis of its needs and to end political power, set agendas with deadlines, and provide education for a qualified work force.

After a crisis there will be innovations. Africa should be analyzed in the post-COVID era.

Africa is behind in education, innovations, etc.

International aid organizations should prioritize Africa.

To go back to the executive summary for the Africa-EUME ILC, [click here](#).

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EUME-AFRICA RELIGIOUS LEADERS MEET AT IAPD WEBINAR

Written by Joyce Wanjiru Maina

Friday, September 11, 2020

Africa/Europe/Middle East—“Perspectives from Religious and Faith Leaders” was the fourth session of ILC 2020 organized by UPF of Africa and UPF of Europe and the Middle East.

The webinar of the Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD), a UPF project, was held on September 11, 2020, under the title “The Spirit of Cooperation, the Way Toward Peace.”

The moderator of the session was **Rev. George Ogurie**, the coordinator of IAPD Africa and the president for Nigeria of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), an organization that is affiliated with UPF.

The speakers of the session were:

Prophet Samuel Radebe from South Africa, prophet of the Revelation Church of God, author and businessman

Rubab Mehdi from the United Kingdom, a human rights barrister and interfaith activist

Aboubacar Thierno Sow from Mali, an interreligious preacher and member of the cultural committee of the Generation of the Three Testaments

Rabbi Dr. Kevin De-Carli from Switzerland, a theologian and historian.

Abstract

The session focused on addressing opportunity and hope in times of global crisis. The speakers brought out the real need for religious leaders to play a role in uniting people. It was noted that, for the longest time we have allowed our beliefs to divide us instead of uniting us.

The panelists elaborated on the need for religious leaders to focus on peacebuilding and help communities to embrace the *Ubuntu* spirit (“I am because we are”).

Opening Remarks

Dr. Tageldin Hamad, the vice president of UPF International, opened the meeting with special appreciation and greetings to the distinguished speakers.

He recognized UPF co-founders Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon, who established many organizations to contribute to world peace. IAPD assembled global religious leaders and tapped into the profound wisdom found in humanity’s spiritual heritage. Religious leaders and faith-based organizations, he said, provide the moral compass to deal with the social problems in contemporary society—racism and exploitation, crime, hunger, terrorism, environmental destruction, and more. IAPD harnesses the goodwill and wisdom of the religions that play a unique and essential role in bringing about a world of lasting peace, in which people of all nationalities, ethnicities, races, cultures and worldviews are called to live together in mutual respect, harmony and cooperation—a world that the UPF founders call Heavenly Parent’s Holy Community. Peace is the hope for all ages, but it seems to be so distant, even now, he said. “Peace” is a magical word. Peace is emotional; it is like love: You have to live for the sake of the others.

IAPD is needed at this time to bring oneness, compassion, comfort and security. While nations are individually racing to find the vaccine for COVID-19, IAPD could help nations to race toward unity, togetherness, and love, the ultimate vaccine for all ills. It must be emphasized that by connecting and working together, we can overcome this crisis of COVID-19, and any other crises we may face in the future. The wisdom of all religions is needed in all multilateral institutions, especially at the United Nations, where God, the Origin of peace, is rarely mentioned or called to help bring the peace that the UN originally was created to achieve.

This is a good opportunity for IAPD to work in partnership with the UN, Dr. Hamad said. After all, the role of religious leaders is to be peace-builders, peace-makers, and peace-givers.

Moreover, for this partnership to succeed, women and youth must be included as very important partners. Dr. Hamad referred to the words of UN Secretary-General António Guterres: “There is no peace without development, and there is no development without peace. Most important, there is no peace or development without women and youth.”

Presentations by Panelists

Prophet Samuel Radebe of the Revelation Church of God in South Africa reminded the attendees that the role of religious leaders is to establish hope through instilling the spirit of tolerance and peace. Leaders become great because of the ability to empower others.

The power of acceptance is a powerful state of mind, he said. The unwavering fight for peace has inspired us to work hard; despite the shift in this pandemic, we have

sought each other to meet our needs.

Dr. Radebe said that religious leaders need to accept that we are different and must work together. Our global goal should be to help people understand that spirituality is not a religion but the freedom to reason without the influence of doctrines.

In South Africa, he said, we live by the motto *Ubuntu*, which means “I am because we are.” We aim to live in acceptance, love, respect, humility, tolerance as well as focusing on unity and teamwork in doing away with tribalism.

As we engage with people from different walks of life, we need to view life with a different lens, lead people and help them acknowledge failures and provide them with a reason to strengthen their resolve, he said.

Rubab Mehdi, a human rights barrister and interfaith activist from the United Kingdom, agreed with previous speakers that the role of Ambassadors for Peace is to continue building cooperation and see how it leads to peace from a religious perspective.

Ms. Mehdi explained that the word *Rahim* means Muslim unity, while *Rahman* means the all-inclusive God who provides and gives sustenance. His mercy extends to those who do not believe. *Rahman* also means the womb of a woman. Therefore, the spirit of cooperation is from women, and all humanity cries for the work of the woman. Hence, we need to accept women as equal in humanity and spirituality.

Agreeing with Prophet Radebe, she said that the *Ubuntu* spirit encourages us to get over inequality. Cooperation begins when we realize that others are our equals and when we recognize the important role they play.

History shows the need for peacebuilding for cooperation, the spirit of inclusiveness and harmony in order to sail through tough times. Harmony helps us realize that both rich or poor are all equal, based on respect for diversity and inclusiveness.

Ms. Mehdi urged us to create conditions conducive for women: cooperation, trustworthiness and integrity.

Without integrity, she said, a person can't be real, cannot prosper and a government cannot develop.

The next scheduled speaker, Sheikh Soufi Bilal Diallo, the vice president of the National Islamic Council in Mali, was unable to join the IAPD session because of a political situation in his country. He was replaced by **Aboubacar Thierno Sow**, the founder of a youth blog in Mali.

Mr. Sow introduced himself as an interreligious preacher with a blog titled No Constraints in Religion, which is based on the Quran.

Having attended the UPF-organized Africa Summit in Niger in November 2019, Mr. Sow said he appreciates the initiative of Father and Mother Moon to create peaceful communities. The UPF principles invite us to create unity which goes beyond religious barriers, he said. Religions at times have caused violence, but people of faith should work for the greater good. We also need other virtues, apart from faith—such as humility and openness to other people's opinions.

We need to give people the will and hope to go over prejudice and hatred and show the strong power of faith. Mr. Sow quoted verses from both the Quran and the Bible that touch on loving our enemies and doing good. In conclusion, he agreed with Mahatma Gandhi when he said, “Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can.” Hatred is the highest form of symbolic violence, he said. When we understand that we have the same Origin in God, we can go forward.

As Ambassadors for Peace, he said, let us work to encourage such efforts person to person, to go over barriers and develop true friendships.

Rabbi Dr. Kevin De-Carli, a theologian and historian from Switzerland, noted that in the past months we all have experienced firsthand how interdependent we really are. This time of crisis has enabled us to witness both the good and ugly sides of religions and of secular communities.

As a spiritual adviser to the Swiss army, he recalled that some hospitals treated soldiers with respect, while others expected them to work 12-hour shifts without a break, so that their employees could work shorter shifts, as the work was so taxing on their bodies and minds.

As a commanding officer, Rabbi De-Carli narrated how he reached out to religious communities in the canton of Ticino to ask for support, food and rations, some decorations, to celebrate religious holidays with soldiers. The rabbi and the local imam worked together, and not only did the small Jewish and Muslim communities provide special meals for the Jewish and Muslim soldiers on their holidays, they brought enough food for everyone to celebrate on the Jewish holiday of Passover and the Islamic evening meal of Iftar during Ramadan. There was even enough left over for an Easter celebration for the Christian soldiers.

The rabbi reminded people that God is not punishing us this season. God makes people poor so we can be charitable; He makes people hungry so we can feed them; He makes people sick so we can heal them. God puts people in danger so we can save them. God gets angry at people and tells us they deserve punishment; He wants us to argue in their defense, just as in the case of Moses and the golden calf.

In conclusion, he called on people to live their lives and support others, to make their house a home and a place of worship. He also addressed the misconception that life is short and miserable and death is eternal. Life is eternal and death is temporary, he said. Each and every immortal soul lives on.

Question-and-Answer Session:

The participants asked how to overcome the struggle between people of different

religions. The panelists reminded people that no religion is superior to another.

We need to embrace the *Ubuntu* spirit and mutual respect in recognizing and respecting other people's beliefs.

The speakers further emphasized the need to have understanding and respect for everyone's belief and not look down on others. There's more that unites religions than divides.

UPF is playing an important role, reaching out to different religions in an effort to unite humanity. It is not easy being a peace-maker, and the path of truth and peace has always been lonely, but keep building bridges without compromising.

Conclusions

In their concluding remarks, the panelists encouraged participants to strive to be more spiritual than religious; then the world will be a better place. We call God one, and we are all dependent on Him.

In his concluding remarks, Dr. Hamad mentioned he was encouraged to see the zeal in everyone. He urged the participants to walk away from self-centeredness and called them to live a life in service to others. In this way we shall be closer to God.

The moderator, Dr. Ogurie, summarized the session by highlighting key words from the panelists regarding the need for religious leaders to become spiritual healers. He also emphasized the need for UPF and IAPD to engage in more such discussions.

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EUME-AFRICA ILC CELEBRATES 15 YEARS OF UPF

Written by Perpetual Karanu
 Saturday, September 12, 2020

Africa/Europe/Middle East—The first online International Leadership Conference 2020 held by UPF of Africa and UPF of Europe and the Middle East dedicated a session to celebrating the 15th anniversary of UPF's founding.

"Our First 15 Years: UPF's Contribution to Building a World of Peace" was the title of the special session, held on September 12, 2020.

The moderator was **Marilyn Angelucci**, the secretary general for the Middle East of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), an organization that is affiliated with UPF.

The speakers were:

Dr. Paterne Zinsou, the vice president of UPF Africa and the coordinator for Africa of the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP)

Ambassador Simeon Uwa from Nigeria, the executive secretary for Africa of the International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP)

Hon. Gago Apostoli from Albania, former minister of transport and currently the chairman of UPF-Albania

David Fraser Harris, the secretary general of UPF for the Middle East

The focus of the session, as introduced by the moderator, was showcasing the accomplishments of UPF since its founding on September 12, 2005.

The program began with a commemorative video on the UPF 15-year journey. The foundational pillars were articulated in the inaugural speech of the founders as "breaking the barriers to world peace by fostering the realization of one family under God." The main efforts of the UPF founders in the last 15 years were covered including the founders' speaking tour establishing UPF operations; the appointment of Ambassadors for Peace; and the formation of partnerships for peace around the world.

The range of UPF programs includes conflict resolution and prevention, interfaith dialogue, and partnerships with governments, NGOs, and other organizations.

The multinational outlook of UPF operations was showcased by the World Summit series involving the highest level of leaders around the globe.

As envisioned by the founders, UPF has continued to spread its message of peace, and has been received well around the world, as depicted by the words of former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at a UPF event earlier this year. He said that he believes UPF will become a pillar of building peace in the world.

The moderator, Mrs. Angelucci, commented that the UPF road has been truly amazing.

Presentations by the Panelists:

Dr. Paterne Zinsou, the vice president of UPF Africa and the coordinator of IAPP Africa, recognized that the work of UPF being witnessed today is the fruit of many efforts and investments by the founders, who played a true parental role in education, poverty alleviation, and peacebuilding.

After the launching of UPF in 2005, the founders set off on a world tour to transfer the vision of UPF to the world in a series of events. In 2011, UPF held a conference in Nigeria that opened Africa to embrace the vision of UPF.

UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon inaugurated the Sunhak Peace Prize in 2013 to recognize individuals and organizations for their work to serve, expand and spread the vision of peace in relation to three key banners: respect for human rights, conflict reconciliation, and ecological conservation. This, highlighting as it did the rich diversity of UPF's programs, led to UPF gaining recognition as an NGO in general consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

The 2018 conference in Dakar, Senegal, was the first to be presided over by a head of state. It brought about what was branded the "Heavenly Africa Project" – a peace and sustainable project, working with heads of government through a Memorandum of Understanding with the president of Senegal.

In 2019, UPF's World Summit hosted the third Sunhak Peace Prize Award ceremony, which was dedicated to African leaders. This became a springboard for UPF partnerships with Africa. Following were a series of activities initiated by Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, starting in Johannesburg, South Africa, where former Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan was appointed Ambassador for Peace. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed based on a number of activities including the implementation of African projects. The summit had participants of a model nation where an ambulance was gifted, and a Memorandum of Understanding signed with representatives of the government of Niger present.

During the Niger meeting, marked by the presence of six heads of state, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the president of Niger in the presence of government authorities and the prime minister.

In concluding his presentation, Dr. Zinsou showed a song by the Little Angels, whose singing beautifully represented the founders' message of peace – singing as they did a Senegalese song in the local tongue.

Ambassador Simeon Uwa, the executive secretary of ISCP Africa, said we are living at a critical time in history where peace is concerned. "The UPF message is probably more needed now than when the founders declared it 15 years ago. With the level of uncertainty of our times, the latest being COVID-19, we can say that great responsibilities are on us to achieve world peace."

The participants were urged to consider COVID-19 as a kind of equalizer in which we all have no option but to turn to our Creator.

The principle of mutuality and interdependence is now the new normal. The only sustainable solution which we have neglected, internal spiritual power, is now what we have to pursue.

Humanity has been in search of peace since the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. To attain lasting peace, we need to live by the foundational principles envisioned by the UPF founders.

African leaders were urged to commit to these principles of peaceful coexistence. These can be adopted in our schools, which, as an academician, Ambassador Uwa believes can be done.

Reference was made to the words of Mother Moon during the Dakar summit: "We are in an open era when Africa will become the new center of the world as it centers on God, becoming the light of the world." These words were given as a confirmation of the promise of Africa, in beginning a new history in which all humanity can connect to God as our source, attaining "heaven on earth." Participants were encouraged to commit to working together to attain this and to invest together in Africa. This year was declared a new start for Africa, which is destined for greatness.

Hon. Gaqo Apostoli, the former minister of transport and UPF chairman, Albania, recalled that he had been present at the UPF inauguration in 2005, representing his country. From the launching of UPF in Albania in October 2005, in which 3,000 people participated, to Mother Moon's declaration of "Heavenly Albania" in 2019, there have been enormous gains toward peace through UPF Albania, he said.

Within the first two years of launching UPF Albania, 1,200 Ambassadors for Peace were appointed. Since 2006, when the Balkans Peace Initiative was launched, a total of 24 national and European Balkan conferences for peacebuilding have been organized. Top leaders in the region have participated in these initiatives, and it is believed that UPF has made a huge contribution to fostering peace in the Balkan countries.

Other initiatives made by UPF Albania include the Balkans Peace Road and the Albania Diaspora, in which Albanians appoint Ambassadors for Peace and identify notable peace contributors in the countries in which they reside. The diaspora initiative boasts 16 Albanian Peace Councils in other countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Italy, Greece, North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Kosovo.

There are 5,000 proud Ambassadors for Peace in Albania, Hon. Apostoli said. There is also a Peace Council established in each of the 61 Albanian municipalities. This became a foundation to invite Mother Moon to Albania. In 2019, UPF Albania organized a Balkan peace conference with the participation of eight former presidents and prime ministers of Balkan nations. This led to the organization of the Southeast Europe Peace Summit in October 2019, under the patronage of the prime minister of Albania, with 400 VIPs coming from 55 nations.

More than 2,000 young people from 40 nations participated in a family festival at the end of the summit as a way to strengthen family values. Mother Moon declared "Heavenly Albania" by urging Ambassadors for Peace in Albania to become peace-loving people to the Balkan countries.

Mother Moon's memoir, *Mother of Peace*, serves as a guide to the realization of the mission of peace, not only for now but also for future generations in Albania and other nations.

Before concluding, Hon. Gaqo Apostoli asked us to let him sing a song which expresses his longing for peace: "Imagine."

David Fraser Harris, the secretary general of UPF for the Middle East, entitled his presentation "The Story behind the Photos," explaining, "Part of my approach will be to take the different pillars of UPF and say, 'Where do they come from?'" He began with two photos: the 2005 inauguration of UPF and this year's World Summit 2020. World Summit 2019 brought together leaders from enemy nations, all sharing the same respect for UPF's founder and UPF as an umbrella for peace. The International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP) traces its roots back to the 1980s, when Summit Council programs were already bringing leaders from Costa Rica and Canada to dialogue with North Korea's leadership.

Next, a 1987 photo of youth demonstrating against the Berlin Wall was followed by a 2020 photo of a session of the International Association of Youth and Students for Peace. Between those two dates, photos showed youth work in 1982 (Youth Seminar of the World's Religions), 1991 (Religious Youth Service in Hungary), 2006 (Football for Peace in Jordan) and 2016 (Israeli and Arab youth playing football in San Marino). Examples followed of character education materials used in Russia, China, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Palestine, among other places.

Today's Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD) comes on the

foundation of years of multiple celebrations of the UN's World Interfaith Harmony Week, part of a history of interfaith engagement which can be traced back to the world's first multifaith seminary (1975) through such bodies as the Council for the World's Religions—intra-faith conferences for Christians (Moscow 1989); Jews (Switzerland 1986); Hindus (Varanasi, India, 1986); and Buddhists (Thailand 1986); and Muslim-Christian Friendship (Istanbul 1991). The International Religious Foundation organized a series of conferences on "God: The Contemporary Discussion" and published in 1991 the groundbreaking *World Scripture*. In 2001, just three months after the 9/11 attacks, a World Summit of Muslim leaders met in Jakarta, Indonesia, to discuss "Islam and the Future of World Peace."

In 2020, academics gathered under the umbrella of the International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAAP). The roots of this lie back in the 1970s, with the International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences (ICUS). One such academic commented then on the ICUS experience: "The ecumenical spirit that pervades this conference is a revelation and a delightful surprise to me."

The 1981 ICUS was where UPF founder Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon first proposed the International Peace Highway, a visionary project to link the world's peoples by road, including bridges and tunnels linking Korea and Japan and crossing the Bering Strait between Russia and the U.S. state of Alaska. This project was proposed again in the founding speech of UPF in 2005, by which time Japan had constructed an exploratory tunnel. UPF co-founder Mother Moon in recent years launched the Peace Road program, which has promoted the highway throughout the world—from local governments throughout Japan, to a summer 2020 reconciliation tour of the United States, to a peace marathon linking Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, to a 1,000-kilometer peace marathon reaching 20 Russian cities, and even to a 2019 Peace Road team of 12 people reaching Pyongyang in North Korea.

The 2020 gathering of the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) has a history too: Photos illustrated just four of the many IAPP inaugurations in national parliaments; highlighted UPF's key 2008 role ("with the ex-MPs club") in facilitating vitally important dialogue between monarchists and Maoists in Nepal; and also documented UPF's fundamental bridge-building role between Europe and Eurasia (Moldova, 2014), and between Syria's government and opposition (Cyprus, 2016), as well as Israel and Palestine (Middle East Peace Initiative—from 2003).

UPF's focus on building and strengthening partnerships has included agreements with the UN's Alliance of Civilizations, the African Union and the World Tolerance Summit, not to mention a 2019 reception at the Vatican. The real credit for all of this, however, lies with those in the field who have realized all UPF's great programs: our distinguished and impressive network of Ambassadors for Peace.

Way Forward and Conclusion

Participants were encouraged to roll up their sleeves for the attainment of peace.

In conclusion, participants were reminded that UPF being 15 years old can be likened to a teenager who has many more years ahead to pursue his dreams to the utmost.

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EUME-AFRICA FIRST LADIES, WOMEN LEADERS MEET AT ILC 2020

Written by Mitty Tohma, Marcia De Abreu, Sara Silva, Renate Amesbauer and Mary Hinterleitner, WFWPI
 Saturday, September 12, 2020

Africa/Europe/Middle East—The ILC 2020 organized by UPF of Africa and UPF of Europe and the Middle East dedicated its sixth session to “Perspectives from Current and Former First Ladies and Women Leaders.”

The webinar was held on September 12, 2020, by the International Association of First Ladies for Peace (IAFLP), an association that is part of the Universal Peace Federation as a project of the International Summit Council for Peace.

The session was hosted by the Women’s Federation for World Peace International, an organization that is affiliated with UPF.

The title of the session was “Toward a New Paradigm of Women’s Leadership and Cooperation in Response to Global Crises.”

The moderator was **May Sacko Gaye** from Côte d’Ivoire, a national TV news presenter.

The speakers were:

Dr. Julia Moon, the president of WFWPI International

Vera Tembo Chiluba, the first lady of the Republic of Zambia (1991-2001)

Hon. Driss Senda, advisor to the president of the Republic of Congo

Hon. Dr. Nadia Al-Sakkaf, former editor in chief of *Yemen Times*

Hon. Dr. Olga Bogomolets, a member of Parliament (2014-2018), Ukraine

Carolyn Handschin, the vice president for Europe of WFWPI, gave the opening remarks. She noted that in preparing for this ILC, women in Africa, Europe and the Middle East, through listening and considering others’ situation, successfully transcended barriers, built bridges and produced something better than they could have done separately.

Mrs. Handschin observed that UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, as the wife of a spiritual peace leader, learned what it is to be in a supportive role. From that experience Mother Moon came to understand the value and potential of that position, while gaining and developing wisdom and a heart of concern for others, as well as many leadership skills.

Mrs. Handschin gave the example of the first lady of the South Pacific island nation of Palau, who uses her influence, mind, heart and time to promote awareness about environmental issues and to train the youth to engage in projects related to the environment.

Mrs. Handschin said it is the vision of IAFLP to create a network of solidarity at the highest levels, bringing greater empowerment to the grassroots, that can influence decisions and attitudes as a new paradigm of leadership and a peace culture.

Dr. Julia Moon, the president of the Women’s Federation for World Peace International, began by saying how honored she was to participate in this session together with first ladies and prominent women leaders from Europe, the Middle East and Africa. She also recognized the excellent work that the Universal Peace Federation has been doing to develop the International Association of First Ladies for Peace. She explained that the founders of UPF and WFWPI, who are affectionately called Father and Mother Moon, worked for 50 years with one single-minded purpose—namely to build a world of lasting peace. Since the passing of Father Moon in 2012, Mother Moon has shouldered the burden of “bringing to fruition all the seeds planted by her husband as they established organizations in every field of human endeavor.”

Reminding us of the IAFLP goals, Dr. Moon called for unity and solidarity in response to today’s challenges, invoking the UPF vision of interdependence, mutual prosperity and universal values. She explained that these are no longer a choice but the only way forward if we are to overcome the many threats that we face.

Dr. Moon pointed to the recent tragedies in Lebanon, Belarus and Africa and to the world COVID-19 pandemic. In closing, she quoted Mother Moon: “Upon maternal love and affection, the world of the future can be a world of reconciliation and peace. The time has come for the power of women to save the world.”

The speech of **Vera Tembo Chiluba**, a former first lady of the Republic of Zambia, member of Parliament of Kasenengwa Constituency, chairperson for women’s affairs and deputy minister of environment, was read by her daughter. Mrs. Tembo Chiluba’s speech reminded the audience of the difficult time that the world is facing with a global pandemic. She urged a global response focusing on the concept of humankind in which race, religion or nationality should not divide us and said we should find a common ground, turning interdependence into the norm.

Those who have been blessed with positions that allow them to give a voice to the

voiceless should be encouraged to take meaningful action toward change, Mrs. Tembo said. There must be a shift in the narrative, we must begin to change, and change begins with us, she said.

The former first lady called for change in the way in which women perceive themselves, arguing that traditional stereotypes should be left behind. Women should realize and appreciate their potential, she said, because, given the chance, they will rise to the occasion. She gave the example of how women during the pandemic have taken on the roles of teachers and providers for the community. She also mentioned that countries run by women have systematically and strategically dealt better with the pandemic. To conclude her inspirational and driven speech, Mrs. Tembo declared that the dark times in which we are living must be seen as an opportunity to accelerate the empowerment of women as the great achievers and multitaskers that they are.

Hon. Driss Senda, an advisor to the president of the Republic of Congo and the president of UPF in his nation, said that in light of the current global crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, women are now faced with unprecedented challenges. However, the crisis also highlights the role of women in society, particularly in decision-making, where women take a more comprehensive view resulting in better outcomes. Representing 50 percent of the population, women's input is invaluable.

Mr. Senda emphasized that women should no longer be marginalized or seen as victims. Taboos of the past should be erased, he said, and women should be enabled to serve in key roles in society, both practically and spiritually—for example, through advising political leaders. This should become more apparent in the aftermath of the pandemic, he said.

He also mentioned the crucial role of women in peacebuilding and their ability to create space for exchange and dialogue while serving as agents of change, peace and goodwill, noting that the platforms of the IAFLP and WFP support such roles. Finally, he reinforced the message that, to face the current challenges, words must be followed by actions through using our unique skills and modern technology. In conclusion, he pointed to the vision of UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, whose ambition is the realization of universal peace.

Dr. Nadia Al-Sakkaf became Yemen's first female minister of information in 2014 and was previously editor in chief of the Yemen Times.

She began her speech with the following riddle, "A father and a son were in a car crash. The father died, and the son was rushed to the hospital. At the hospital the surgeon stopped and shouted, 'That is my son.' Who was the surgeon?" The response was confusion, so Dr. Al-Sakkaf explained that the surgeon was the boy's mother and the reason why we did not realize that sooner was due to our deep-rooted prejudices whereby we continue to associate the male gender with certain professions. That is why, for example, we say, "Madam President" and not just "President." She explained that in Arabic, the situation would be different, since it is a more gendered language. This is one of the reasons why she loves Arabic and also why she decided to learn Spanish, also a language with gender differentiation, she said.

Dr. Al-Sakkaf explained that she wanted to work toward improving the visibility of women's achievements and demystifying the idea that women are averse to holding certain professional positions. She pointed out that women tend to be perfectionists and are often not comfortable committing to something that they do not feel 100 percent capable of doing, unlike men who are content to learn on the job.

To conclude her passionate speech, Dr. Al-Sakkaf urged the public to join her on her quest to make this decade the decade of women's empowerment. She challenged everyone to contemplate how they would complete the following sentence: "This is the time for women to become___."

Hon. Dr. Olga Bogomolets, a former advisor on humanitarian issues to the Ukrainian president, spoke briefly of the tragic consequences of war as experienced by the thousands of widows and orphans in her homeland. She referred to her period of frontline service to the military as a medical doctor and her unsuccessful bid to become Ukraine's president. Undaunted by her defeat in politics, she determined to move on, as she was convinced that there are opportunities for women to lead where kindness will prevail over conflict. She spoke of four steps for women to effect change, namely: communicate, plan, act together and analyze results. She urged women to work to end ecological problems and war and promote peace and love to save the planet earth, our common home.

The closing remarks were offered by **Susan Kone**, the vice president of WFP International for Africa and the coordinator for IAFLP in Africa.

Mrs. Kone stressed the role of women in supporting and complementing their husbands, brothers and fathers in their roles. She referred to the global spread of the COVID-19 virus, originating in China, reminding us of our common destiny.

She emphasized the need for dialogue, noting that isolation has no place in the world. The foundation of the IAFLP by Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon has provided a platform for such dialogue and exchange of ideas, and Mrs. Kone hoped that such dialogue will enable us to apply best practices to save the planet which is our common home. She encouraged further similar discussions on relevant topics, followed by action. She further emphasized women's and men's complementary roles.

Mrs. Kone concluded her remarks by referring to Mahatma Gandhi, reminding us of the sentiment: "Be the change that you wish to see in the world."

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EUME-AFRICA ILC DISCUSSES NEWS MEDIA'S RESPONSIBILITY

Written by Yvo Bruffaerts, UPF coordinator for Western Europe
 Saturday, September 12, 2020

Africa/Europe/Middle East—A session of the International Leadership Conference 2020 was devoted to the theme "Assessing the Role of News Media in the Global COVID-19 Crisis and Beyond."

The online webinar on September 12, 2020, was organized by the International Media Association for Peace (IMAP), a UPF project.

It was the seventh of nine webinars jointly held by UPF Africa and UPF of Europe and the Middle East, featuring prominent speakers from both regions.

The speakers at the IMAP webinar were:

Dr. Thomas McDevitt from the United States, the chairman of *The Washington Times* newspaper

Juan Señor from the United Kingdom, the president of Innovation Media Consulting

Aka Saye Lazare from Côte d'Ivoire, the president of the National Television and Radio Company

Dr. May Chidiac from Lebanon, former minister of state for administrative development

Mamadou Gaye from Côte d'Ivoire, the coordinator of IMAP Africa

The moderator was **Rita Payne** from the United Kingdom, the former Asia editor of BBC World News and the president emeritus of the Commonwealth Journalists Association.

Dr. Thomas McDevitt, referring to the theme of the webinar, asked whether there really is opportunity in this crisis. Will people really find hope, and, most importantly, what is the role of the media?

Our world is facing huge disruption following the COVID-19 pandemic, he said. It is most important that journalists cover this situation well.

Dr. McDevitt said that in his decades of working with UPF co-founders Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and his wife, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, he has come to appreciate their insights. For instance, speaking before some 80 members of the US Congress in 2016, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon made a statement that is pertinent to the time we are in now: "We look at this world and see unspeakable, inarticulate misery happening all over the world. It is impossible to solve these problems with just human power. What do we do from here on forward? We need to start a movement and an awakening that accents the existence of the Creator, a higher realm of truth and insight."

Dr. McDevitt said we are witnessing a new global Great Awakening that requires a new mindset. We should have a comprehensive view, beyond politics, economics, or military matters. Moreover, we need new leadership, especially that of women. He referred to the evangelical historian and philosopher Os Guinness, who said, "Contrast is the mother of clarity." The necessity of a new view of life centered on the highest ideals of true love, transcending the barriers of race, religion, culture, and national boundaries, is now becoming more evident with each passing day. This is equivalent to, or even greater than, Einstein's discovery of the theory of relativity, he said.

In 1978, Reverend Moon launched the World Media Conference, in 1975 the *Sekai Nippo* newspaper in Japan, in 1982 *The Washington Times* in the United States, and in 1989 the *Segye Ilbo* newspaper in South Korea. In February 2020 the International Media Association for Peace was launched under the banner of UPF, and it has focused on interdependence, mutual prosperity and universal values. IMAP was launched, at Mother Moon's behest, with the mission to address the current crisis in media credibility, media standards and ethics, and the seemingly never-ending upheavals and innovations in journalism.

Dr. McDevitt explained that IMAP seeks to provide professional development and networking opportunities to media practitioners around the world. It also encourages the development of a responsible global media industry that is highly trusted, independent, prosperous, and accessible to all. There is a strong commitment to encouraging news media to shine a light on dialogue, collaboration, conflict resolution and, most of all, solution-oriented thinking to promote human development, God-given human rights, social well-being, freedom and responsibility.

Juan Señor, the president of Innovation Media Consulting, gave insights from the book *2020 Reimagining the News*, a special edition of the Innovation in Media World Report published on behalf of the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers. It is based on many years of research and media-consulting experience.

Mr. Señor listed some findings of the research:

Manage what you can control. What is out of control should be treated as

superfluous.

Trends that used to take much time to become the norm now take less time to do so. The massive migration of readers from print to digital, and the migration from ad revenue to reader revenue, are just two examples of this.

Trust in the social media has dwindled.

Journalism cannot be done merely from home in times of lockdown. It happens in the field, by being an eyewitness to events. Face-to-face journalism, not Facebook or desktop journalism, is what creates journalism worth paying for.

Even though print has come very much under pressure, it should not be given up as long as a digital first revenue has been established.

The rise of fake news, e.g., in political campaigns, is being stopped. The trusted news media are fact-checking and exposing it.

Journalism is valuable and must be paid for. This moment must be seized; if not, it will be lost forever. Journalism helps to make life-or-death decisions in times of the pandemic. This is the time to invest in journalism and to sell it confidently. Up till now we have been selling volume and ads, instead of journalism. In this pandemic, we must change or die.

Aka Saye Lazare gave some context about the health crisis in Ivory Coast, where the authorities acted quickly and vigorously to fight the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic surprised the whole world with its speed and magnitude. The media, which often play the role of watchdog, faced many challenges. However, once the effect of shock was over, all categories of media in Ivory Coast fulfilled their duty of informing, reassuring, and sensitizing the population about the COVID-19 pandemic.

Of course, they also had to deal with another pandemic, i.e., fake news. Every day, the media would report from testing centers and hospitals about the health situation, which gradually made the people understand the reality of the pandemic. The media played a key role in fighting the pandemic alongside health and government authorities. Never before have the media around the world been unanimously mobilized to defend the same cause. People have become much aware of the importance of the media. In conclusion, Mr. Lazare said that the media can also be partners in all initiatives that are taken to promote peace and social cohesion.

The next speaker was **Dr. May Chidiac**, who said that she was taken ill by coronavirus, from which she has almost entirely recovered. She also mentioned the difficult situation journalists had to work in, due to health precautions, when covering the devastating explosion in the harbor of Beirut on August 4.

Mrs. Chidiac said that freedom of expression, media independence, and open deliberation, rather than information control, are the core principles of a functioning democracy. In times of great uncertainty, the media are needed more than ever, as the public will turn to sources they can trust to make informed, and sometimes life-saving, choices.

Media development and government responsiveness are strongly linked. The media have to check that elected representatives uphold their oaths of office and carry out the wishes of those who elected them.

In times of crisis, news media, data journalism, fact checkers and investigative reporting save lives. Journalists have been facing unprecedented professional challenges, as well as the so-called first "dis-info-demic." Trusted media sources should not merely ignore misinformation but counter it by thinking who their audience may trust and by providing expert and transparent news.

Mamadou Gaye said that the media throughout history have played a major role in promoting both evil and peace. The media must be in the forefront to promote the projects of Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, which offer solutions to the problems of today's world. The current crisis has exposed the greed and selfishness of countries and human beings. Dr. Moon, however, is teaching that there is no future without living for the sake of others and, more importantly, without involving God. To conclude, Mr. Gaye appealed to the media to access the recently published book titled *Mother of Peace*, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon's memoir, in order to better understand her dedication, sacrifices, and total investment in promoting interdependence, mutual prosperity and universal values.

Question-and-Answer Session

Asked about the role of social media, Juan Señor, who has conducted a global study of the impact of social media, said that the social platforms should be held accountable for what they publish. Actually, they are media companies and not merely distributive platforms. They should be treated as publishers and be held accountable for the confusion and fake news they have spread. Human beings are responsible for publishing disinformation and slander, misinformation, and so should digital platforms.

Final Take-Away Messages:

Dr. Thomas McDevitt quoted the founder of *The Washington Times* and UPF: "Before you are a journalist, you are a human being." What matters is your moral character, your ethical orientation, and your sense of truthfulness. This is essential in every discipline, especially in the media.

Dr. May Chidiac said the media have to cover the pandemic in a professional way to keep the public well informed and in good spirits at the same time.

Aka Saye Lazare said the role of the media should not be neglected, especially when it comes to promoting peace. Journalists themselves should be sensitized to become

conscious and responsible partners, especially in countries where there are frequent political crises. Journalists in Africa should make sure that organizations such as UPF can give the tools to support politicians on the road to peace. Mr. Lazare said he is looking forward to the day when UPF organizes a summit in Ivory Coast on the media and peace. Many journalists in Ivory Coast are actually willing to defend peace and should know about the vision and the projects of the Universal Peace Federation, he said.

To go back to the executive summary for the Africa-EUME ILC, [click here](#).

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'PURSUING INTERDEPENDENCE' IS FOCUS OF ACADEMICIANS AT ILC

Written by Renee Corley
 Saturday, September 12, 2020

Africa/Europe/Middle East—A webinar of the International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAAP), a UPF project, comprised the eighth session of ILC 2020 organized by UPF of Africa and UPF of Europe and the Middle East.

"IAAP: Perspectives from Academicians," held on September 12, 2020, was titled "Breaking Down the Walls: Pursuing Interdependence in the Community for Peace."

The moderator, **Rev. Moruti Ledwaba** from South Africa, the coordinator of IAAP for Africa, introduced the session's seven speakers:

Dr. Sung-bae Jin from South Korea, the chairman of the HJ Academy of Arts and Sciences

Professor Oumar Coumba Ndongo from Senegal, a professor of American literature and culture at Cheikh Anta Diop University

Dr. Olga Safonicheva from Russia, a doctor of medical sciences and a professor at the Institute of Clinical Medicine, I.M. Sechenov First Moscow State Medical University

Dr. Simon Bedelo from the Democratic Republic of Congo, a lecturer at Keio University, Japan

Professor Dr. Carlos Piores from Portugal, the vice rector of *Lusophone University of Humanities and Technologies*

Yoshihiro Yamazaki from Japan, the liaison for Europe and the Middle East at the Institute for Peace Policies and the coordinator of IAAP for Europe and the Middle East

Dr. Thomas Selover from the United States, the president of SunHak Universal Peace Graduate University in South Korea, and the international co-coordinator of IAAP

Dr. Sung-bae Jin, the chairman of the HJ Academy of Arts and Sciences, gave the welcoming remarks. He focused on interdependence, especially as exemplified in the family.

"The family is the beginning point and source for practicing love and for creating all kinds of culture," he said. "Therefore, an attempt to create a new culture without reconstructing a loving family would surely end in failure. Indeed, the family is where we learn how to live together and interact selflessly. In fact, the family is where we learn about the important principles of joint ownership and interdependence. ...

"The COVID-19 pandemic has allowed us to consider the concept of interdependence, and how we can solve elements of selfishness and greed in our larger society, based on the family. In our confinement at home, we are beginning to think about the seeds that we are sowing within our family. Please consider your family's conscience, and how it can become a seed for creating a new culture based on interdependence."

Professor Oumar Coumba Ndongo of Senegal spoke on "Opportunity and Hope at a Time of Global Crisis."

Professor Ndongo said that "due to demographic (a young population) and other environmental factors, the health impact of COVID-19 appears much less severe in Africa than in the USA, China, or in European countries." He cited a recent article in the *USA Today* newspaper (September 6, 2020) that ranked Senegal second among 36 nations for successfully handling the pandemic.

The pandemic, he said, has "brought to light names of local medical doctors who became famous because of their dedication and talents in the fight against the virus. In Senegal, our heroes were neither European nor American in their well-equipped labs but Senegalese doctors and anthropologists from local, seemingly poorly equipped universities."

Professor Ndongo said: "The fight against COVID-19 is also a period of great spirituality. Only the Heavenly Parent can save humanity from this calamity caused by a virus so minute but so ferocious to kill people in large numbers." He referred to the message of UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon who said in a recent address, "We wish for a community of all people, one family of humankind centering on the Heavenly Parent, united under the values of interdependence, mutual prosperity, and universal values."

Dr. Olga Safonicheva of the First Moscow State Medical University, Russia, spoke on "Education in the Post-COVID-19 Period: Challenges and New Solutions."

Dr. Safonicheva's presentation described the Sechenov University of Life Sciences, where she works, as "the largest research medical school in Russia."

During the past five months, she said, the university "has been at the forefront of the fight against the pandemic. All four university clinical hospitals have been redesigned into COVID-19 clinics."

"Students and scientists fought for the life and health of patients, together with the doctors of the clinical centers and scientists."

She said: "Students were transferred to distance learning from March 16, 2020. The university organizes the work of students and teaching staff through an electronic information and educational environment."

Dr. Simon Bedelo, a lecturer at Keio University in Japan, spoke on "Impacts, Both Positive and Negative, of Digital and Online Methods on the Youth and Their Culture of Learning, Lifestyle and Values."

He noted the positive impact of online tools on the lives of Africa's young people: "In the area of learning and promotion of culture, Africa's youths are relying on the Internet in lieu of a 'physical library' to conduct research. They are also using it to promote their culture. There are plenty of YouTube channels in which the people of Africa showcase and market their music and fashion to the world."

However, he said, "The new frontiers are not without challenges. ... In Africa, the Internet is making it easier for people to promote immorality and plot scamming schemes. There are also issues of cyber bullying and violence against girls and women. ..."

"Online tools have the potential to break down walls and speed up mutual prosperity, as they allow information to be shared instantly, effortlessly and even cheaply. However, given the reality of how easily these tools can ruin people's lives, it is crucial that a sustainable standard be set to safeguard the well-being of all users."

Young Africans, Dr. Bedelo said, "should consider utilizing current challenges from COVID-19 to reboot both the usage and the goal of their online communication tools."

Professor Dr. Carlos Alberto Poiras, the vice rector of Lusophone University in Lisbon, Portugal, spoke on "Peace, a Social and Human Construction in the Chess of Solidarity."

Professor Poiras said: "Peace requires the promotion of inclusion in an egalitarian register, finding its primordial atoms in human relationships and interactions, in the citizen-state and citizen-community relational composition. Therefore, an education policy for citizenship and fundamental rights is essential. ..."

"Education must privilege, in its genesis, equality right from the start, from basic education to the highest levels of schooling, as our constitutional framework requires. Of course, in terms of gender parity. An education that promotes social integration and qualification ... that allows social elevation and personal satisfaction."

"The education of this millennium must prioritize the intention of not only training and informing but also equipping it professionally, while educating for development, for citizenship and for each person to be an agent of change, a non-conformist actor in the fight for fundamental rights, not resigned to poverty as if it were an immutable destiny. ..."

"With education, great avenues will open where free people will pass, to build a better society—that peace, that dream so often postponed, will be the natural and serene consequence."

Yoshihiro Yamazaki, the coordinator of IAAP for Europe and the Middle East, said that the UPF founders have had great respect for academicians as "the backbone of creating the ideal world."

Mr. Yamazaki said: "The conscience shared in a family, society, nation and the world is critical in developing ... stability, peace and cooperation among their members. And it is partly the role of educators, academicians and scientists to formulate such shared conscience by exploring and disseminating knowledge."

He recalled that the UPF founders sponsored the International Conference on the Unity of Sciences for 20 years, starting in the 1970s. Then, in 2020, Mother Moon set up a new project, the International Association of Academicians for Peace.

Two important declarations were made at ICUS conferences, Mr. Yamazaki said: in 1981, the announcement of the International Highway Project; and in 1985, the startling declaration of the "End of Communism."

Mr. Yamazaki called interdependence "a testimony of human maturity and worth in society" and said it is "relevant to the highest value and norm of altruism or 'true love.' It may belong to a realm of heavenly wisdom."

He said that "the mission of academicians and scientists [is] to support the global drive toward the interdependent global community."

He concluded by saying: "I do hope our IAAP in the nearest future will confidently issue a 'Declaration of Interdependence' in one of our forums. Let us work together!"

The final speaker was **Dr. Thomas Selover**, the international co-coordinator of IAAP, who thanked UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon for the "motherly push that has brought us together."

Dr. Selover said: "In whatever academic field we are working, we must strive to be peacebuilders who contribute to the recognition of interdependence, mutual prosperity and universal values."

He referred to the Canadian philosopher Marshall McLuhan's famous statement that "the medium is the message," saying: "Here we are, concerned scholars from many countries and many fields who are interacting together, mutually striving toward world peace, using the medium of Internet webinar technology. This is what we have done together today, and this medium is also a key part of our message—that this is indeed what we OUGHT to be doing under the present circumstances of our world."

"At the heart of the core concepts of 'interdependence, mutual prosperity and

universal values' is 'mutuality' itself, which we are manifesting today. 'Mutuality' is that bond of togetherness which links us not only to one another but also to the world of all beings and to the great Being, our Heavenly Parent."

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BUSINESS LEADERS DISCUSS MUTUAL PROSPERITY AT ILC

Written by Renee Corley
 Sunday, September 13, 2020

Africa/Europe/Middle East—A webinar of the International Association for Peace and Economic Development (IAED), a UPF project, was the final session of ILC 2020 organized by UPF of Africa and UPF of Europe and the Middle East.

The session "Perspectives from Business Leaders," held on September 13, 2020, was titled "Creating Mutual Prosperity—the Essential Role of Private Enterprise and the Rule of Law to Rebuild Economies and Grow Employment."

The IAED session led directly into the Closing Session of the International Leadership Conference.

The moderator of the IAED webinar was **Dr. Lilian Lem Atanga** from Cameroon, the chair of the Department of Linguistics and African Languages at the University of Bamenda.

The speakers were:

Professor Fatou Sarr Sow from Senegal, the president of the African Network for Support to Women's Entrepreneurship

Joseph Makamba Busha from Zimbabwe, founder and group chief executive officer of the JM Busha Investment Group

Dr. Arben Malaj from Albania, former minister of finance and minister of economy

Dan Catarivas from Israel, chairman of the Israel-EU Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Dr. Thomas McDevitt from the United States, the chairman of *The Washington Times* and the HJ Magnolia Global Foundation

The first speaker, **Professor Fatou Sarr Sow**, the founder and director of the Gender and Scientific Research Laboratory at the University Cheikh Anta Diop in Senegal, spoke about the difficulties that businesses run by women face in African nations.

"The businesses that interest me are the so-called informal ones, since I run a women's organization in this sector," she said. "They are mainly in agricultural production, food processing, catering, clothing, hairdressing, trade, crafts, services. ... With COVID-19, some activities have slowed down and many have gone bankrupt. These micro-enterprises are confronted with ... inappropriate legislation, unfair competition, difficult access to finance, corruption, poor access to technologies."

She cited various studies that showed a link between gender equality and economic growth.

Professor Sow said: "Africa's future depends on how the issue of women is addressed. This is why public policies must support women's businesses, which are predominantly in the 'informal' sector."

Zimbabwean businessman **Joseph Makamba Busha** in his presentation said the key ingredients of mutual prosperity are: peace, oneness, and shared values; rule of law; property rights; and income security.

When these four ingredients are present, he said, "Private enterprises create not only jobs (employment) but personal value (financial security). They are the foundation on which great economies are built.

"Successful private enterprises thrive on the rule of law and property rights, including intellectual property and innovations."

Professor Dr. Arben Malaj from Albania, a former minister of finance and economy and the president of the Institute on Public Policy and Good Government, began his presentation by saying, "Peace is a precondition for prosperity, but without prosperity we can't provide sustainable peace."

He continued: "To eliminate conflicts and to work together for peace and prosperity would be the priority not just for political leaders but also for academics, private business and our society."

Dr. Malaj outlined the negative impacts of COVID-19 on the economy: declining consumption, declining investment, increasing government expenditure, and declining net exports. He also mentioned the spike in uncertainty and capital flight.

In reaction to the pandemic, he said, we must find a balance between protecting people through lockdowns and supporting economic and social life.

The challenges ahead, Dr. Malaj said, are:

1. Public credibility—reforms against corruption and state capture
2. Private business—reduce the costs of COVID-19 and restart economies
3. Use monetary and fiscal policies carefully

4. Economic and political environment should not increase uncertainties and instability
5. Structural reforms—to promote more competition and a vibrant economy—are more effective than monetary and fiscal policy.

Dan Catarivas, the chairman of the Israel-EU Chamber of Commerce and Industry, addressed the role of the private sector in bringing people together and strengthening peace, understanding, and mutual benefit.

“There is no question that the COVID-19 has demonstrated how interdependent the world is and how no one can actually solve his own problem or concentrate only on his own problem,” he said.

“The world is a small place. Everybody is connected to each other. If we don't work together and act together, then we cannot overcome the problem.”

Mr. Catarivas said: “The post-COVID era is going to be different from the pre-COVID era. Definitely the world is changing, and we have to adapt to it.”

The private sector has become conscious “that it has to take responsibility and not just concentrate on making money. Making money is not bad, but more and more around the world the business community definitely feels that it also has a social responsibility ... for bringing people together and contributing to better stability, to better prosperity.”

He continued: “The idea that business is a very important vehicle for bringing people together, working together, acting together – this is something that will promote more understanding.”

Mr. Catarivas said: “It is important to use the economic vehicle and technology as a promoter of peace and prosperity. ... People working together is the best way to create prosperity and promote peace and understanding.”

Dr. Thomas McDevitt, the chairman of *The Washington Times*, addressed the webinar through a pre-recorded message.

He explained that IAED seeks “to build a network of business, government and economic thought leaders committed to driving economic development toward establishing a global environment of interdependence and mutual prosperity.”

“We do this in three ways: Number one is professional development and thought leadership. We want to provide the best content that can inspire and motivate young entrepreneurs and seasoned veterans, like many of you, to take hold of the role of business and the question of purpose of economy, the purpose of wealth and that our businesses can make a difference in society. ...

“We think that it is a time of international synergy like a grand strategy with global awakening of how we all fit together. ...

“Number two, building a community and network. We bring each other together, we can cross-fertilize, we can learn from one another, do business with each other.

“And, most important, create a community, a network ... [in] every country, of people like yourselves who ascribe to that value perspective that life is more than just what you see in the physical realm and we really are responsible for future generations.”

Dr. McDevitt referred to UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon's statement that the problems of the world cannot be solved by human efforts alone.

“We need to realize that there is a Creator,” he said.

“Greater than all [the] technology in the physical realm of change, there is a great revolution of the human spirit that is taking place beyond race, beyond religious boundaries, beyond national ethnic boundaries.

“It's not just in the faith arena or the mental consciousness arena. It also involves business, it involves politics, culture, media, youth, women, academics. We have to transform culture, which is upstream from politics. And we have to do it together. We are truly a global family under one Creator.”

ILC Closing Session

The IAED session was followed by the ILC's Closing Session. UPF-Russia Secretary General **Maria Nazarova**, as the moderator, introduced several leaders of UPF and its affiliated organizations who offered closing remarks.

Dr. Michael Balcomb, the group chair for Europe and the Middle East of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), an organization that is affiliated with UPF, gave a presentation titled “What Have We Learned?”

He started by saying, “One thing we have learned is that Africa and Europe make great partners!” He added, “One thing we have learned is that we do better when we're working together.”

The main points of his presentation were “Peace Is Everyone's Responsibility,” “Peace Is My Responsibility” (“It can't be left to the 'professionals'”), “Peace Starts with Me,” and “Peace Is Beyond Human Effort Alone.”

Speaking about why the Universal Peace Federation was founded, he listed the “external” reasons: to create partnerships and alliances for peace; to support the success and address the shortcomings of the United Nations; and to start innovative peace projects such as World Summits and the Peace Road.

He added the “internal” component: to promote the family as the cornerstone of peace; to acknowledge the fundamental limitations of human effort and capability; and to be humble before God (but not advocating for any particular faith).

Dr. Balcomb read the words of UPF co-founder Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, spoken at UPF's 2005 inauguration: “Heaven is summoning you to be the wise leaders who will

set aright this world of evil and establish a new heaven and new earth, a new culture and an ideal kingdom.”

Dr. Balcomb commented: “These [words] are a battle cry to a spiritual battle but also a diplomatic battle, a peace battle – to be wise leaders who will set aright this world of evil. Yes, we have to be honest about the state of the world we live in. Not to be afraid of it but to recognize that there is a need for lasting and profound change.

“I think that’s exactly what we’ve been doing in this International Leadership Conference. We have indeed set aside the barriers of our race, our nation, our language, and we have joined together in a commitment to be peacebuilders.”

Jacques Marion, the UPF regional president for Europe and the Middle East, then read the proposed resolution of the International Leadership Conference, which recommended a working committee for each of the UPF-related associations.

Dr. Katsumi Otsuka, the UPF chair for Europe and the Middle East, expressed his thanks to all the participants and his deep appreciation for all the staff who had worked for the success of the three-day conference.

Katherine Rigney, the UPF chair for Africa, recognized Dr. Bakary Camara, the African group chairman for FFWPU, as the main force behind many peacemaking efforts in Africa.

She said, “In order for all of us to experience happiness, we must solve the problem of our ignorance of God, our Heavenly Parent, and His providence. ...

“The age we are in at this moment is a time of extreme change for humanity, like almost no other time in human history,” she said. “Therefore, a new dialogue must begin, and we must search for solutions that heretofore have not been part of our dialogue worldwide. We must experience a necessary revolution of the human spirit, and now is that time.”

Mrs. Rigney concluded by saying: “We must become active members of this world family and participate in the important discussions that can truly change our world. [This is] a time of spiritual emphasis that can bring us together as one human family under one Creator. And that is God.”

Closing Session moderator Mrs. Nazarova then announced: “We conclude our conference, and at the same time we open the door to a whole new level of development for the Universal Peace Federation. Fifteen years is just the beginning!”

To go back to the executive summary for the Africa-EUME ILC, [click here](#).

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