

UPF Europe-Middle East ILC July-August 2022: Executive Summary

Jacques Marion
August 5, 2022



Europe and the Middle East - UPF held an International Leadership Conference titled "Toward Peaceful Reunification of the Korean Peninsula - Creating a Global Culture of Peace."

ILC July-August 2022 was held in four cities of the Europe-Middle East (EUME) region in seven sessions on three days. All the sessions met both in person and online.



Sessions I and II: July 26, 2022 - Berlin, Germany

The ILC began with two sessions in Berlin on July 26 as part of the Peace Road 2022 series of events. The conference, held at the Berlin City Mission Festival Hall, was attended by approximately 200 participants from throughout Europe and the Middle East, including a delegation from Korea and Japan.

Jacques Marion, co-chair of UPF for the Europe-Middle East region, opened the ILC. Welcoming remarks were given by Dr. Michael and Fumiko Balcomb, the EUME president of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), an organization that is affiliated with UPF.

The opening was an opportunity to put in perspective the conflicts in Ukraine and the Korean Peninsula and to explain the significance and background of the Peace Road 2022 motto, "No New Walls in Europe." A tribute was paid to the life and legacy of Japan's former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who, until his assassination on July 8, contributed to UPF activities toward the reunification of the Korean Peninsula.



Session I: "Prospects for Peace on the Korean Peninsula and in Europe"

This session was moderated by Karl-Christian Hausmann, the president of UPF-Germany. The four speakers were Dr. Song Gwang-seuk, chairman of the Peace Road Foundation in South Korea; Dr. Claude Béglé, a Swiss entrepreneur and former member of Parliament; Klaus Kelle, a German journalist; and Professor Angela Mickley, a professor of peace education at Potsdam University.

The presenters analyzed the current conflicts in Europe and Asia in light of 20th-century conflicts, coming to similar conclusions: Peace cannot settle if triumphant victors humiliate losers; military power may bring an end to hostilities, but lasting peace and reconciliation must be based on honestly admitting the crimes and atrocities committed.

Session II: "Peace Road: A Global Project toward Sustainable Peace"

This session was organized by the International Association of Youth and Students for Peace (IAYSP), an organization that is affiliated with UPF. The moderator was Mélanie Komagata, the president of IAYSP-Switzerland.

The session featured youth leaders: Dr. Koji Matsuda, the president of IAYSP International; Dr. Farida Valliulina, a UPF representative at the United Nations in Vienna; Dr. Diana Eşanu, the president of IAYSP-Moldova; Ssruthi Raaja Elange Lehka, a youth representative at the United Nations in Geneva; and Soo-bin Park, a Korean Peace Road activist.

The session focused on the Peace Road Initiative's vision and application. How can young people use innovative tools and resources for conflict resolution and reconciliation, opening the path for an interconnected world peace? Speakers described the growing focus on youth involvement in international institutions and agreed that the key to the development of the Peace Road Initiative will be its genuine outreach beyond national, cultural, or religious self-interest.

Sessions III, IV and V: August 4, 2022 - London, United Kingdom

The second day of the ILC was held on August 4 at the UPF headquarters in London. Three sessions were attended by approximately 100 participants and an online audience from Europe and the Middle East.

Session III, "Exploring the Strategy of the Seoul Resolution toward Sustainable Peace and Prosperity on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia," was moderated by Humphrey Hawksley, a former BBC World correspondent.

The panelists were Keith Best, chairman of the Board of Trustees of UPF-UK; Keith Bennett, deputy chairman of the Kim Il Sung Kim Jeong Il Foundation in the UK; and Yoshihiro Yamazaki from Japan, EUME liaison director for the Institute for Peace Policies.

The panelists reviewed the Seoul Resolution that was signed at World Summit 2022, discussing its possible implications for the resolution of conflicts on the Korean Peninsula and in Ukraine. The UPF

founders' "headwing" philosophy on conflict resolution was introduced, and the role and position of Japan as a major stakeholder in the Asia Pacific region were discussed in the context of current tensions between China and the United States regarding Taiwan.

Session IV, "Conflict Resolution and the Role of Faith-Based Organizations and NGOs: Creating an Interreligious Council at the United Nations," was moderated by Heiner Handschin, the director of the UPF Office for UN Relations in Geneva.



The session began with a discussion of the proposal for an Interreligious Council at the United Nations, first introduced by the UPF founders in 2000. Video messages were given by two of the early contributors to the project: Ambassador Makarim Wibisono, former permanent representative of Indonesia to the UN in Geneva, and Ambassador Dr. Jesus Domingo, the current ambassador of the Philippines to New Zealand.



The panelists were Hon. Ján Figel, former European Commission special envoy for the Promotion of Freedom of Religion; Haleemah Oladamade Ahmad from Nigeria, a senior research associate and chief editor at the Da'wah Institute; Sheikh Dr. Hojjat Ramzy, the director of the Oxford Islamic Information Centre; and Dr. Lakshmi Vyas, the president of the Hindu Forum of Europe.

The panelists developed the theme of religious freedom and its status around the world. They highlighted the fact that, according to a Pew Research Center report, more than three-fourths of the world's believers experience some form of restriction to their religious freedom. Concrete examples of benefits that could result from the creation of an Interreligious Council at the UN were given, such as the resolution of religious conflicts and sustainable solutions to various social problems.

[Session V: "Conflicting Narratives and Values - Perspectives for a Common Vision and Culture of Peace"](#)

This session was moderated by Chantal Chételat Komagata, coordinator of UPF in Europe. The panelists were Caecilia van Peski from the Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies at Juniata College in the Netherlands; Dr. Willy Fautré, the CEO and director of Human Rights Without Frontiers International in Belgium; Hon. Nina Nováková, a Czech member of Parliament; and Paul Gutteridge from the Edward Cadbury Centre at the University of Birmingham.

The discussion focused on the ideological underpinnings of the newly rising East-West conflict, addressing the tensions and different perspectives on individual rights and traditional values seen in some democracies in Europe, and debating how these trends could be harmonized to promote a global culture of peace.



Sessions VI: August 5, 2022 - Larnaca, Cyprus

On the third day of the ILC, August 5, two sessions were held: in Larnaca, Cyprus, and Tirana, Albania.

Session VI, in Larnaca, was held on the theme "Outside the Box - Taking a New Look at Peacemaking across the Middle East," and was moderated by David Fraser Harris, secretary general of UPF Middle East.

The panelists were Hon. Zuheir Bahloul, former member of the Knesset; Hon. Kais Zayadin, former member of the Jordanian parliament; Hon. Taleb Al Sana, former member of the Knesset; and Hon. Skevi Koukouma Koutra, former member of the House of Representatives of Cyprus.

In a region where nations and lives are still torn apart by conflict, and many people see little hope for real change, the conference aimed at giving a voice to peacemakers from across the region. In a lively discussion, panelists reviewed various conflicts in the Middle East between Israelis and Palestinians or Greeks and Turks, and discussed peace initiatives such as the Abraham Accords, bicomunal projects in Cyprus, and the yearly "Football for Peace" project organized by UPF in San Marino with Jewish and Arab children.

Sessions VII: August 5, 2022 - Tirana, Albania

The ILC concluded on August 5 with Session VII at the Balkans Peace Embassy in Tirana, Albania, attended by around 100 guests and Ambassadors for Peace. The theme was "Peace and Security in the Western Balkans - Towards Integration into the European Union." The session was moderated by Dr. Saemira Pino, chairwoman for Albania of UPF's International Association of Academics for Peace (IAAP). Dr. Eva Çipi, chairwoman of UPF-Albania, gave the welcoming remarks.

Former Albanian President Alfred Moisiu, for health reasons, had declined to attend but sent a speech that was read at the conference. Other prominent panelists were Professor Dr. Nano Ružin, former ambassador of North Macedonia to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO); Associate Professor Dr. Enver

Hoxhaj, former deputy prime minister of Kosovo; Hon. Klajda Gjoshaj, former Albanian minister of European Integration; Admiral Dragan Samardžić, former chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Montenegro; and Dr. Flora Brovina, former speaker of Parliament and the chair of UPF-Kosovo.



In the context of the war in Ukraine and recent clashes at the Kosovo-Serbia border, the panelists addressed the issues of Western Balkan nations' security and stability. They highlighted the presence of NATO in the region and discussed the prospects of integration into the European Union. Emphasizing that the resurgence of war in the region was caused by the lack of core solutions to the conflicts in the 1990s, they called on European nations to give high priority to the current crisis in the Balkans.

The session ended with nine VIPs, from the panel and the audience, being awarded Ambassador for Peace certificates.

The conclusion of the ILC2022 at the Peace Embassy in Tirana was a reminder of the central role that the Balkans play as a crossroads of the powerful trends deciding war and peace in Europe and the Middle East.

View all the videos of the sessions at: vimeo.com/showcase/ilc2022-8





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EUME ILC July-August 2022: Berlin Session 1

EUME ILC July-August 2022: Berlin Session 1

Written by Yvo Bruffaerts, coordinator, UPF Western Europe

26 July 2022



e Béglé



Photos from the two Berlin sessions - click on the images to enlarge them.

Berlin, Germany—The Europe-Middle East International Leadership Conference ILC2022 opened in the city that symbolizes the hope of reunification.

“From Swords to Ploughshares—Prospects for Peace on the Korean Peninsula and in Europe” was one of two sessions of ILC2022 that were held in Berlin on July 26, 2022.

Three more sessions were held in London on August 4, and the final two were held in Larnaca, Cyprus, and Tirana, Albania, both on August 5.

The Europe-Middle East (EUME) ILC was one of many, with an International Leadership Conference being held in every region of the world in the summer of 2022, with the overall theme “Towards Peace and Security on the Korean Peninsula: Building a Global Culture of Peace.”



Mr. Jacques Marion, the co-chair of UPF for Europe and the Middle East, said in his welcoming speech that Berlin was chosen for the conference as it once was a symbol of division and then became a symbol of peaceful reunification when the Berlin Wall came down.

Due to the war in Ukraine, there is a threat that new walls may be erected in Europe again, Mr. Marion said. Berlin therefore was chosen as the site of a giant Peace Road event that was held on the following day, July 27, with the motto “No new walls in Europe.”

Mr. Jacques Marion,
Co-chair, UPF Europe &
Middle East, France



Dr. Dieter Schmidt,
Medical doctor,
Chairman of UPF
Central Europe

Dr. Dieter Schmidt, the president of UPF for Central Europe, said that, as a student at the Berlin Free University, he participated in campaigns against communism. In 1987, World CARP (College Association for the Research of the Principle), an organization affiliated with UPF, held its convention in Berlin, calling for the Berlin Wall to be brought down.

Even though nobody at that time believed that the reunification of East and West Germany was possible, UPF co-founder Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon was the driving force behind the World CARP convention. Two years later the wall did come down. Dr. Schmidt reminded the audience of the ILC2022 goal of finding prospects for peace on the Korean Peninsula, which, despite an armistice signed in 1953, is still divided today.

A video about the World Summit for Peace on the Korean Peninsula, which UPF held in Seoul, South Korea, in February 2022, then was shown.



Dr. Michael Balcomb,
Regional President,
FFWPU Europe and the
Middle East, United
Kingdom

Dr. Michael and Fumiko Balcomb, the EUME presidents of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), another organization affiliated with UPF, spoke about their participation in the summer of 2021 in a Peace Road walk across England, from the west coast to the east coast, following the ancient Hadrian’s Wall. Little did they realize at that time that one year later there would be a hot war in Europe.

Mrs. Balcomb, who is Japanese, spoke about former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the shock wave that his assassination on July 8 has sent throughout Japan. Mr. Abe was very sympathetic to the suffering of people and always ready to provide help, she said. He encouraged people of all walks of life to support efforts for peace.

One minute of silence was observed to honor all those who have sacrificed their lives for the sake of peace.



Mr. Karl-Christian Hausman,
Chairman,
UPF Germany

As the moderator, **Mr. Karl-Christian Hausmann**, the Chairman of UPF-Germany, explained why the title of Session I contains the words of the prophet Isaiah—“from swords to ploughshares.” History is not an endless sequence of tragedies, he said, but has a clear and unchanging goal: a peaceful world predestined by God. For this to come to fruition, human beings have to take the portion of responsibility that God has given us. God creates opportunities, and we have to act accordingly. We need to strengthen ourselves to cope with the obstacles encountered on the way, he said.



Dr. Gwangseuk Song,
Executive Chairman,
Korea Peace Road

Dr. Gwang-seuk Song, the president of Peace Road Korea, recalled that 35 years ago he also came to Berlin to attend the World CARP Convention and its rally at the Berlin Wall—the largest ever held in West Germany for the unification of Germany, with over 3,000 participants from 70 countries. The rally was led by Rev. Moon’s son Hyo Jin Moon, who urged Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to bring down the Berlin Wall immediately. The fall of the Wall in 1989, Dr. Song said, was largely due to Secretary Gorbachev’s reform policy and the strong desire of the East Germans for reunification.

Dr. Song reminded the audience that in 1992, the 10th anniversary of *The Washington Times*, the daily newspaper founded by Reverend and Mrs. Moon, former U.S. President Ronald Reagan said: “At the most important time of the century we fought together and won the Cold War. It was *The Washington Times* that told the truth to American citizens. The founders of *The Washington Times*, which contributed to the end of the Cold War,

Dr. Song also said that on July 27, 2013, to mark the 60th anniversary of the armistice signed on the Korean Peninsula, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon started the Peace Road Project in 190 countries in support of her husband’s earnest desire that humankind should become one family under God.

[Click here for the full intervention of Dr. Gwangseuk Song](#)



Dr. Claude Béglé,
Founder and President,
Symbioswiss; former
Member of Parliament,
Switzerland

Dr. Claude Béglé from Switzerland, the chairman and CEO of the company SymbioSwiss and a former member of Parliament, said that history tends to repeat itself. Good news often turns into bad news. For instance, the Treaty of Versailles that was signed at the end of World War I led to Hitler’s rise and World War II. Likewise, the Allies won World War II, but Stalinism arose, Berlin was split and the Cold War started. More recently, the crisis in Ukraine has emerged in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union.

To prevent victories from turning into new problems, he said, the victors should not humiliate the defeated. Neither side in a conflict should lose face. Moreover, he said, no power vacuum should be left, as happened after the collapse of Japan at the end of World War II, which led to its former colony Korea being divided.

Warring parties need to realize there is an interest for each in having peace, Dr. Béglé said. Economic bridges should be built, as common interests and shared wealth lead to cooperation. Neutral mediators should be allowed to facilitate dialogue. Forgiveness and reconciliation are essential, he said, as we all belong to the same human family.

Many of today’s tensions and conflicts illustrate a growing divide between liberal democracies and autocrats, as well as the irreversible rise of the Asian economic powerhouse and the decline of Western nations.

[Click here for the presentation of Dr. Claude Béglé](#)



Mr. Klaus Kelle,
Journalist; Editor in
Chief, Online-Daily The
GermanZ

Mr. Klaus Kelle, a journalist and the editor in chief of the online daily TheGermanZ, spoke about witnessing the fall of the Berlin Wall. He realized then that, after 28 years of enforced separation, people still strongly wanted to live together in freedom. Proponents of a reunited Korea should know that unifying Germany and building the future together were not easy for the Germans, he said.

Because of the war in Ukraine, Europe and NATO have awakened to the realization that they have mishandled relations with Vladimir Putin’s Russia, Mr. Kelle said. The West must take the Ukrainian crisis as an opportunity to build on its newfound strength in alliance with the United States and Canada, and its friends and partners in Southeast Asia, he said.

While Russia is now perceived as a major threat, we are all ignoring China, the big dragon in the room, Mr. Kelle said. Determined to overtake the US as the world’s biggest superpower and to expand its power and strength, China constitutes the biggest challenge for the future. All states that advocate freedom must defend freedom anew every day, he

said.

[Click here for the full intervention of Mr. Klaus Kelle](#)



Dr. Angela Mickley,
Professor for Peace
Education, Conflict
Resolution and Ecology,
Potsdam University of
Applied Sciences,
Potsdam, Germany

Dr. Angela Mickley, a professor of peace education, conflict resolution and ecology at Potsdam University of Applied Sciences in Germany, described her experience with peace-making over several decades.

As a small child, she lost contact with all her relatives, except her parents, when the Berlin Wall was built. When they managed to meet again after the Wall came down, they noticed how much they had grown apart by living in two entirely different systems.

When Dr. Mickley was invited to South Korea in 2000 as a mediation trainer, she was not asked which conflicts they had in Germany, but how they had dealt with them, as the Koreans wanted to learn from Germany and prepare well for the unification of the peninsula.

Dr. Mickley said that the past should not be forgotten or covered up. One cannot merely look into the future. A good example is South Africa, she said, where a Truth and Reconciliation Committee was established to allow South Africans of all races to come to terms with the past. A similar committee did not exist in Namibia, where she was working for several years after its independence from Germany. There were difficulties with the

returning exiles who had studied abroad and whose differing concepts needed to be

discussed and clarified. Dr. Mickley was training people, black and white, of all strata of society, how to manage conflicts.

From experience, she advised that it is better not to wait for the politicians to make their move. It is important to define and celebrate differences, she said. When the majority prevails over the minority in making decisions, at least some of the interests of the minority group should be included.

Youth and children tend to be more flexible and receptive to new ideas. Therefore, they should be trained in peaceful conduct as an investment in the future, she said.

The question-and-answer session produced the following observations:

At times of conflict, there are stages in which dialogue is not possible.

Peace or negotiations are not possible if one side is forced to lose face.

According to basic Christian teachings, the dignity of a person should always be respected, regardless of what they do, while legal regulations will limit what someone does or intends to do.



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EUME ILC July-August 2022: Berlin Session 2

EUME ILC July-August 2022: Berlin Session 2

Written by Sandra Skrodzki, secretary general of IAYSP-EUME

26 July 2022



Photos from the two Berlin sessions - click on the images to enlarge them.

Berlin, Germany—The second session of the Europe-Middle East International Leadership Conference 2022 was held under the title “Peace Road: A Global Project toward Sustainable Peace.”

Sessions I and II both took place on July 26, 2022, in the ballroom of the Berlin City Mission.

Three more sessions were held in London on August 4, and the final two were held in Larnaca, Cyprus, and Tirana, Albania, both on August 5.

An International Leadership Conference was held in every region of the world in the summer of 2022, with the overall theme “Towards Peace and Security on the Korean Peninsula: Building a Global Culture of Peace.”

In Session II, the Peace Road Initiative was introduced as a global campaign that brings together young people from nations with a history of conflict. How can young people turn the situation around by using innovative tools and resources for conflict resolution and reconciliation? How can they mobilize leaders from the fields of politics, religion, and civil society, and contribute to transforming “swords into ploughshares” in Europe, Northeast Asia, and around the world?

The speakers of this session, mainly young leaders and youth representatives of international organizations from Europe and South Korea, brought complementary perspectives on the topic of young people’s role in the Peace Road Initiative.



The moderator was **Mélanie Komagata**, committee member of the Swiss chapter of the International Association of Youth and Students for Peace (IAYSP), an organization that is affiliated with UPF. Ms. Komagata introduced the platform to which participants could submit their answers to two questions connected to the topic of the conference.



Mrs. Mélanie Komagata,
Postgraduate Student,
East Asian Studies,
University of Geneva



Mr. Koji Matsuda,
President, IAYSP
International, Japan

Dr. Koji Matsuda from Japan, the president of IAYSP International, recalled that, as a student, he first came to Berlin 35 years ago to participate in a rally calling for the fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of East and West Germany.

He then gave an introduction to the International Peace Highway, which the founders of UPF and IAYSP first proposed in 1981 at the International Conference on the Unity of Sciences. "The construction of such a Peace Highway would unite the entire globe on the day of its completion," Dr. Matsuda said. "The world would be one village interconnected by one road system."

The process of constructing the highway would provide a common purpose for the governments and the people of the world, opening national lines of commerce and recreation which would stimulate the exchange of culture and goods and encourage living together in harmony as neighbors. Dr. Matsuda mentioned that in 1996 a pilot tunnel construction already commenced and that until now 500 meters have been excavated.

He also called for an immediate stop to military aggression in Ukraine, emphasizing the role of Ukraine in the global project as a country connecting Europe and Asia. In conclusion, he read a quote from *Mother of Peace*, the memoir of UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon: "The passion of youth transcends borders and breaks down walls."

[Click here for the full intervention of Dr. Koji Matsuda](#)



Dr. Farida Valliulina,
Lawyer; UPF
Representative to the
UN in Vienna, Austria

Dr. Farida Valliulina, a lawyer specializing in public international law and human rights law, currently representing UPF at the United Nations in Vienna, started her presentation by reading statistics from the UN 2019 World Population Prospects, according to which an estimated 1.3 billion people between the ages of 15 and 24 were affected by conflict.

"Considering that 65 percent of the population on the African continent consists of young people, it is becoming increasingly important that, rather than seeing young people as agents of conflict and destruction, they are seen as agents of peace, intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, and advocates for social cohesion in their communities," Dr. Valliulina said.

She emphasized that "enhancing structures that promote the participation of youth in peacebuilding will actively contribute to their engagement with decisions that affect their well-being." Referring to the 2015 Amman Youth Declaration on Youth, Peace and Security, she said that young people are key agents of change and crucial actors in the implementation of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Dr. Valliulina also explained the five pillars of young people's "meaningful participation" in peace processes and dispute resolutions: participation, protection, prevention, partnership, and disengagement and reintegration. To conclude, she showed examples of youth participation in decision-making processes around the world and suggested the next steps in which the UN can contribute to empowering young people.

[Click here for the full intervention of Dr. Farida Valliulina](#)

[Click here for the PowerPoint presentation of Dr. Farida Valliulina](#)



Soo-bin Park, a student and a youth activist of Peace Road Korea, told of his personal experiences taking part in Peace Road activities in South Korea and around the world.

As a son of Korean and Japanese parents, he often felt heartbroken whenever Korea-Japan relations became difficult, or whenever he thought of the division in Korea. Therefore, he said, "the vision of the Peace Road project represents hope."

He took immediate action when he heard about the Peace Road 2022 activities launching in Germany. He flew there right away with the hope that his homeland, Korea, one day will reunite just as Germany reunited in 1990. The audience was stunned when Mr. Park

Mr. Soo-bin Park,
Activist, Peace Road
Korea

described bicycling 1,200 kilometers with a fellow Korean student, carrying the Peace Road banner with them through Germany, Austria, and the Czech Republic, arriving in Berlin just in time for the ILC.

He concluded by expressing that world peace cannot be accomplished solely by the efforts of governments; there needs to be a change within individuals as well.

[Click here for the full intervention of Mr. Soo-bin Park](#)



Ms. Srruthi Lekha, Youth
Affairs Coordinator and
UN Representative,
Women's Federation for
World Peace
International,
Switzerland

The next speaker was **Srruthi Lekha**, a youth affairs coordinator and representative to the United Nations in Geneva of Women's Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI), another organization that is affiliated with UPF.

She expressed her delight in meeting all those attending the conference. Because youth engagement often is used by institutions as just a "decoration" in declarations, she said she was grateful to UPF and IAYSP for taking actual steps toward engaging youth.

Ms. Lekha explained the concepts of positive and negative peace, as well as the theory of global humanism in international relations, according to which people interact prioritizing global humanity. Although global humanism often is criticized in politics, she found the Peace Road Initiative to be deeply rooted in this theory of international relations and global politics.

Ms. Lekha gave the example that instead of being ready for war, building trust between all parties is key to creating a world of peace. She also related her own experience, showing that young people today are more interconnected than ever, thanks to technology and globally available channels of communication. She concluded by saying that all human beings make one big family. "Differences, distinctions, and borders are all man-made realities which can be and should be changed into one identity, which is humanity." Young people and the Peace Road Initiative could be the tool for it, she said.



Dr. Diana Eşanu, Sub-
regional Director, IAYSP
East Europe

Dr. Diana Eşanu from Moldova, a medical doctor and cardiologist who is also the director of IAYSP for Eastern Europe, talked about the historical importance of the Roman Empire's road system and the Silk Road.

The roads the Romans built were essential for the growth and maintenance of such a vast empire. Around 400,000 kilometers in total length, these roads were built with durable stones, most of which still exist in today's Italy.

Similarly, the Silk Road, a network of Eurasian trade routes, over 6,400 kilometers in total length, has played a central role in facilitating economic, cultural, political, and religious interaction between East and West.

Today such routes can be found in the European Union (international E-road network) as well, which she personally had a great delight in using for her travels.

Dr. Eşanu described Moldova's situation, where customs and border control cause great inequalities (difficulty of mobility, limited access). This was especially clear when Ukrainian refugees, many of them children, tried to cross the border with Moldova in the spring of 2022 and had to stand in line for sometimes days to be able to enter Moldova.

IAYSP Moldova, however, responded immediately to the great influx of refugees from Ukraine, through volunteering and donations, cooperating with the national refugee centers and establishing the Sunflower Center, which was created to help refugees, in the Peace Embassy. Dr. Eşanu described the main activities of IAYSP Moldova, which supports Ukrainian mothers with their children. She concluded with reflection questions as food for thought.

[Click here for the presentation of Dr. Diana Eşanu](#)

Question-and-answer session

To the first question—"What are the prerequisites for the International Peace Highway to be realized?"—Ms. Komagata read the top answers submitted by the audience: money, cooperation, trust, vision, confidence, forgiveness, love, hope, peace, unity, and reconciliation.

Ms. Lekha added that there is also a need for dialogue between the main actors, and cultural openness among people, giving the example of Indian and Pakistani citizens.

Dr. Valiullina commented that channels of communication between religious leaders are also crucial, as well as hard work, a clear vision, and leaders who are open, motivated, focused, resilient, and brave – people who are willing to break down walls between nations.

Dr. Eşanu said personal contribution is also necessary. Through investment, she said, one can feel that one is the

owner of a project.

To the second question—“What would be the consequences if the International Peace Highway were realized?”—many answers were submitted by the audience. One person expressed that “people would get to know each other more and learn to work together. This would help them realize how many similarities people have, and that would motivate them to work even more together.”

Another inspiring answer was that such a highway would “resolve anxiety connected to opening oneself to the rest of the world and to explore and understand it.



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EUME ILC July-August 2022: London Session 5

Written by Yvo Bruffaerts, coordinator, UPF Western Europe

04 August 2022



Photos from the three London sessions - click on the images to enlarge them.

London, United Kingdom—Session V of the 2022 Europe-Middle East International Leadership Conference was titled “Conflicting Narratives and Values – Perspectives for a Common Vision and Culture of Peace.”

The session was the last of three held in London on August 4, 2022, in the Peace Embassy. The Europe-Middle East (EUME) ILC was one of the International Leadership Conferences organized worldwide in the summer of 2022 on the overall theme “Towards Peace and Security on the Korean Peninsula: Building a Global Culture of Peace.”

The first two EUME sessions were held in Berlin on July 26; sessions 3, 4 and 5 were held in London on August 4; sessions 6 and 7 were held in Larnaca, Cyprus, and Tirana, Albania, both on August 5.



Moderator **Mrs. Chantal Chételat Komagata**, the coordinator of UPF-Europe, in her welcoming remarks recalled her shock at the outbreak of the war in Ukraine on February 24. And yet, unsolved tensions and opposing narratives and value systems between liberal democracies in the West and countries once under the influence of the Soviet Union were bound to surface, she said.

We have indeed failed to properly address these issues, Mrs. Komagata said—for instance, individual rights and freedom vs. responsibility and traditional values, as well as globalization vs. safeguarding national sovereignty and cultures. A higher – universally applicable – vision may be needed to transcend these seemingly contradictory value systems.

Mrs. Chantal Chételat Komagata,



Ms. Caecilia van Peski, Academic Fellow, Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies, Juniata College; Member, UN Senior Women Talent Pipeline, The Netherlands

The first speaker was **Ms. Caecilia Van Peski** from the Netherlands, an academic fellow at the Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies at Juniata College and a member of the UN Senior Women Talent Pipeline.

As an educational cultural psychologist and a military commander in the Royal Dutch Navy, she always has been greatly interested in cultural relativism as well as the integrity of nations to make their own decisions. She mentioned a visit to the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) between North and South Korea with students of South Korea's Sungkyunkwan University, where she was teaching. At first, the students appeared to be 100 percent in favor of Korean reunification, but on closer inspection doubted its feasibility, especially considering the difference in mentality between the North and the South and the costs that unification would involve.

When working with *Pora!*, one of the biggest democratic youth movements in Ukraine, after the Orange Revolution, she was very inspired to see the aspirations those young people had for their country.

Children are not blank sheets of paper, Ms. Van Peski said. They inherit concepts and stereotypes from their environment and education, which sometimes need to be dealt with to level the road to peace. Bringing youngsters together at a very young age with projects

such as those organized by CIVS International (Children's International Summer Villages), a non-religious, non-political organization, allows them to learn from each other and to put things into perspective.

Ms. Van Peski said the war in Ukraine is likely to last for a long time. She called upon the participants to take care of the refugees and to educate young people from an early age about universal values. She called for better leaders in society – both men and women – who do not aim solely at wealth and self-interest, but show thoughtfulness, empathy, respect and compassion.



Dr. Willy Fautré, CEO and Director, Human Rights Without Frontiers International, Belgium

Dr. Willy Fautré from Belgium, the CEO and director of Human Rights Without Frontiers International, reflected on the link between conflicting values and narratives, on the one side, and the outbreak of certain wars, on the other side. Internal conflicts and wars between neighboring countries do not suddenly emerge from a vacuum, as can be seen in Ethiopia or Ukraine. They are often the result of ongoing tensions deeply rooted in history or conflicting narratives.

He gave the example of Vladimir Putin's well-known and well-oiled narratives in his successive wars. Already when leading the second Chechen war, 1999-2000, the Russian president would not call it a war but a "special anti-terrorist operation" against separatists to preserve the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation. In 2008, Russia fomented the separatist war in South Ossetia and Abkhazia in Georgia, recognized their independence and has since provided them with so-called military protection. Putin's narrative to justify his aggression was that he wanted to save the Russian-speaking Georgians.

Joseph Stalin's annexation of Crimea to the Soviet Socialist Republic of Ukraine happened by mistake, according to Putin, who said that the inhabitants of the peninsula are historically Russian. This is the narrative Putin has been serving up to the entire Russian population and to the international community.

As to conflicting narratives, Dr. Fautré said that totalitarian or dictatorial societies do not tolerate a confrontation of ideas. For instance, religious diversity in Russia has been progressively eliminated. The independent media have been closed, or have survived only abroad.

In Putin's narrative, the Slavic-Orthodox identity of Russia must be protected against the decadent West. At this stage of the war in Ukraine, it is not the time to think about a common vision of a culture of peace for Russia and Ukraine. We should have done better in the past, Dr. Fautré said.

The viewpoints of Russia and Ukraine have become irreconcilable. Perhaps they will co-exist in their respective territories behind a cultural iron curtain after the war, Dr. Fautré said. This being said, the great dictatorial and conquering empires of the past are waking up in Moscow, Istanbul and Beijing. Both China and Putin's Russia oppose the expansion of Western values at home and in the world. It may be time now to think about avoiding a new hybrid global war.

[Click here for the full intervention of Dr. Willy Fautré](#)



Hon. Nina Nováková, a member of Parliament of the Czech Republic, said that Europe



Hon. Nina Nováková,
Member of the
Parliament of the Czech
Republic

has been a melting pot for philosophy, science and the arts, from where new ideas could spread rapidly. However, "anti-human" ideologies also have originated in and spread from Europe.

Europeans have moved away from the clear awareness that there is a God who is not only the creator of natural laws but also loves humans, Mrs. Nováková said. Europeans have come to believe that everything is governed by human laws. Individualism and freedom, selfishness and an ideology that relativizes truth, justice, and ultimately good and evil, may prevail. This paves the way of mediocrity.

Another model is totalitarianism, in which freedom of thought, belief, speech and religion is considered unnecessary, if not dangerous. Certain opinions and positions will be supported; all other opinions and expressions will be banned.

[Click here for the full intervention of Hon. Nina Nováková](#)



Mr. Paul Gutteridge,
Former UK Director,
Initiatives of Change;
Honorary Fellow,
Edward Cadbury
Centre, University of
Birmingham

Mr. Paul Gutteridge, the former UK director of Initiatives of Change and an honorary fellow at the Edward Cadbury Centre, University of Birmingham, mainly focused on the rise of Nazi and far-right activities in the UK and Europe, and brokering relations between people in religious, political and business contexts.

Experience has shown that there are three ways to harmonize ideological differences and positions, Mr. Gutteridge said. First, there is the environmental approach, i.e., making agreements between groups of people who are in conflict over land or trade, for example.

Secondly, after an agreement has been reached about what to do environmentally, there is the question of how to implement it. In the event of a disaster, for instance, immediately applicable solutions to problems are needed.

Thirdly, the philosophical way looks at the reasons for a specific situation, how we look at life and each other, and within which frame we act and behave. This is actually a very difficult way to go. We must be mindful of other people's backgrounds. There may have been a power imbalance, favoritism, violation of the law, a lack of trust.

Mr. Gutteridge gave three ways to cooperate between religion, economics, ideological differences and politics. First, there is the cultural approach, which expects the other to integrate and adapt.

Next, there is the crusader approach, according to which we believe that we can export, if not impose, our value system and way of life to other nations. This is a more aggressive version of the cultural approach.

Mr. Gutteridge said that we need a third, philosophical way and an understanding that we are all different. This is the best way to bring to the table faiths, political, economic and structural thinkers, in an environment in which we are prepared to be the first to step back and cross the road to the other.

UPF and other international organizations, proponents of a better world, encourage national and international dialogue between different worldviews and philosophies, he said, because there is a desire for a better world in each and every one of us.

The question-and-answer session included the following:

Question: How to deal with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in individuals, families and veterans after the Ukrainian war ends?

Ms. Van Peski said we don't know when the war will be over. Even though the Ukrainian population is relatively young, vibrant and very energetic, prolonged stress will be very harmful. Therefore, we have to start working on reconstruction and psycho-social care already now.

Question: New rights have been added to the legislation of our liberal democracies in an attempt to increase the sense of freedom and to solve discrimination toward minority groups. Nations in Africa and former East Bloc countries are rejecting exactly this. What is your viewpoint on the trend of expanding these individual rights and the consequences thereof?

Dr. Fautré: First, we have unchangeable and inalienable universal natural rights granted to all humans, such as the right to live, to freedom of movement, freedom of thought, religion or belief.

We also have a so-called new category of rights, such as the right to pure air, abortion, euthanasia and same-sex marriages, which are widely and freely debated in our liberal democracies.

The European countries, often characterized by a kind of historical messianism, want to share, or sometimes impose,

their values on other parts of the world. Churches established in former colonies often have retained their traditional values inherited from the past. They will more easily oppose those new laws, as they are sometimes perceived as a new phase of cultural colonialism. This trend, which also can be found in Muslim countries, has been accelerated by Putin's war against Western values.

Question: The UPF founders teach that opposing trends found in the world can be healed and overcome only if we understand that we all come from the same origin, the same Heavenly Parent. What do you think of this, and how can we make it happen?

Mr. Gutteridge: The UPF founders are right indeed. Anthropological studies have shown that the family, education, politics, business, spirituality and religion all have an influence. To create any systemic change in society, spirituality and religions need to be addressed.

When atheists describe the God they do not believe in, and believers describe the God they do believe in, they sometimes find out, to their great surprise, that they believe in the same principles. Excluding the religious aspect from society is like cutting one leg of a table.



To conclude the session, **Mrs. Patricia Earle**, the UK vice president of Women's Federation for World Peace (*WFWP*), an organization that is affiliated with UPF, spoke about a Peace Garden service project that the federation has launched in the city of Birmingham. Young people of different ages, with different upbringings and cultural backgrounds, are creating a park together that is to become a meeting place, a place of relaxation, an oasis of peace. Through teamwork they learn to get along with each other and forge close friendships. As a token of appreciation, they receive a certificate and are encouraged to do something in their community or congregation. They also are offered the opportunity to speak at the national parliament and to receive a special award.

Mrs. Patricia Earle, vice president of Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP), United Kingdom



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EUME ILC July-August 2022: Tirana Session 7

EUME ILC July-August 2022: Tirana Session 7

Written by Artan Kurti, UPF Europe and the Middle East

05 August 2022



Tirana, Albania—The seventh and final session of the Europe-Middle East International Leadership Conference 2022 was titled “Peace and Security in the Western Balkans: Towards the Integration in the European Union.”

The session took place on August 5, 2022, in the UPF Peace Embassy.

Previous sessions were held in Berlin on July 26, in London on August 4, and in Larnaca, Cyprus, also on August 5.

An International Leadership Conference was held in every region of the world in the summer of 2022, with the overall theme “Towards Peace and Security on the Korean Peninsula: Building a Global Culture of Peace.”

Session VII panelists assessed the impact that the Ukraine war and heightened East-West tensions would have on the Western Balkans. They offered recommendations and action steps toward peace and stability in the region. They also discussed whether the conflict would open new opportunities for integration into the European Union.



The session was moderated by **Dr. Saemira Gjipali Pino**, the chair of the Albanian chapter of UPF’s International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAAP).

Dr. Saemira Pino,
Chairwoman of IAAP
Albania



Dr. Eva Çipi,
Chairwoman of UPF
Albania

Dr. Eva Çipi, the chair of UPF-Albania, greeted the audience and introduced the panel. She then spoke about the background of UPF, its founders, and its main Ideals.

She expanded on the three main principles promoted by UPF: interdependence, mutual prosperity and universal values.



H.E. Alfred Moisiu,
President of Albania
(2002 – 2007)

H.E. Alfred Moisiu, the president of Albania (2002-2007), was not able to participate in person due to health issues. Instead, he sent a written speech which **Gani Rroshi**, the secretary general of UPF-Albania, read on the president's behalf.

In his speech Dr. Moisiu remarked on the current situation in Ukraine as well as the necessity for the European Union to take the necessary measures to not allow a similar occurrence to happen in the midst of the European continent, namely in the Balkan Peninsula.

"Nationalism ... should be fought in a better organized manner by the political leaders of the region," Dr. Moisiu wrote. "However, this can only happen if these leaders will be less focused on votes" and more responsible to work for stability.



Prof. Dr. Nano Ružin,
Ambassador of North
Macedonia to NATO
(2001 – 2008)

Professor Dr. Nano Ružin, the ambassador of North Macedonia to NATO (2001-2008) as well as a UPF Ambassador for Peace, reminisced on the Balkan countries' Euro-Atlantic integration process.

"In 1989, when the Iron Curtain fell, a world order led by economic motives was established, freed from military conflicts and rivalries between the great powers," Professor Ružin said.

"It was an order in which economic gain and mutual protection were guaranteed through international law, the self-determination of peoples, and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. ... In such an international order, it is impossible to believe in violence and interstate wars and invasions."

He closed his remarks with hope for the future: "In the Western Balkans, solidarity and cooperation are essential elements for improving trust and prosperity as well as for overcoming the crisis that arose from the war in Ukraine.

"That's why I look at the Western Balkans option with great hopes—although without our brothers from Montenegro, Bosnia & Herzegovina, and Kosovo, the picture is not complete."



Prof. Dr. Enver Hoxha,
Deputy Prime Minister
of Kosovo (2017 –
2019)

Professor Dr. Enver Hoxha, the deputy prime minister of Kosovo (2017-2019), remarked on the conflict in Ukraine as well as the parallels to the situation in the Balkans.

Not only are West-leaning countries such as Bosnia & Herzegovina, Albania, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo hampered in accessing international organizations by Russian and Chinese vetoes, he said, but also Serbia as a Russia-leaning country continues to stir the unsettled conflicts of the 1990s in an effort to advance its own expansionist agenda.

Dr. Hoxha said that the relationship between two countries is more important than the problems between them.

"A relationship leading to mutual recognition is more important than dealing with the problems," he said, "because when you have the philosophy and the vision of establishing a relationship of mutual recognition – and Kosovo will always be an independent country – then we can have different scenarios of solving problems, because such a relationship

would also determine the way toward a resolution of conflicts."



Hon. Klajda Gjoshja,
Minister of European
Integration of the
Republic of Albania
(2013 – 2017)

Hon. Klajda Gjoshja, the Albanian minister of European integration (2013-2017), touched on the crucial importance of the integration of the Balkans into the Euro-Atlantic structures. Peace and stability in the Balkans are in a direct correlation to the Euro-Atlantic integration of the region as a whole, she said.

Ms. Gjoshja said that Albania supports the establishment of regional stability, in which Serbia's recognition of Kosovo's independence is essential.

She said the time has come for Kosovo's citizens to feel equal with the rest of the Western Balkans.

"The time has come for Kosovo to gain membership into NATO, because the latest events in its conflict with Serbia have shown how unsure Kosovo and our whole region are."

Ms. Gjoshja said that the only way to ensure peace and stability is for the Balkans to become part of Europe, which is of the highest interest of Albanians.



Admiral Dragan
Samardžić, Former
Chief of the General
Staff, Armed Forces of
Montenegro

Adm. Dragan Samardžić, the former chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Montenegro, said: "The long-term process of European integration of the Western Balkans leaves additional room for all those actors that want to destabilize the region and stop the process of democratization of our countries.

"Here I refer to Russia and organized criminal groups, which 'keep the sea rough' because they swim best in it. That is why the EU's active role and commitment to the Western Balkans is extremely important, because there is no doubt that Russia will know how to use any European weakness," Adm. Samardžić said.

"Just as the accession of Albania, North Macedonia and Montenegro improved the security of our region, the accession of Finland and Sweden will make it safer, NATO stronger, and the Euro-Atlantic area more secure. Furthermore, it will contribute to better cooperation between NATO and the EU. Confirmation of NATO's open-door policy at the summit in Madrid may be one more reason for some countries of the Western Balkans to reconsider their security policy and finally take the right track."



Dr. Flora Brovina –
Chairwoman of UPF
Kosovo, Speaker of
Parliament (2014),
Kosovo

Dr. Flora Brovina, the speaker of Kosovo's parliament (2014) and the chair of UPF-Kosovo, said that the peoples of the Western Balkans especially feel the suffering of Ukrainians because of the many unhealed wounds caused by the Yugoslavian wars.

"The same crimes against humanity, such as the raping of women, happened here too," she said.

"How much do we want peace, how much do we think that we may forgive just because of peace, though many people have disappeared?"

"When I said being able to forgive, I didn't mean being able to forget, because we cannot forget."

Dr. Brovina said, "For the sake of our children's security who never saw the war, and to ensure their future, we never indoctrinated them nor did we feed hate to them.

"Today Kosovo follows the path of development that is the path of the European countries, and we are a part of this family."

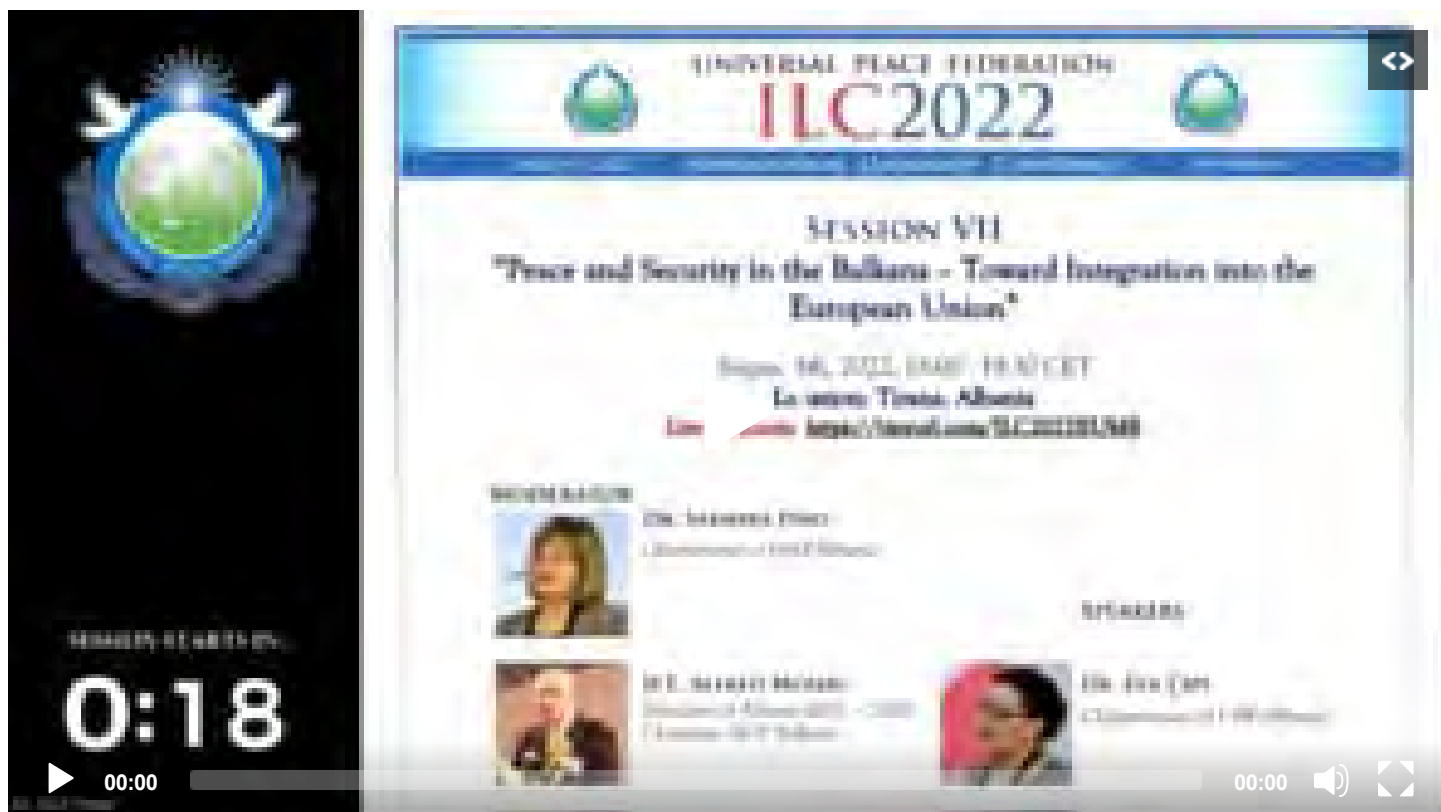


Before a ceremony appointing new Ambassadors for Peace, **Jacques Marion**, the co-chair of UPF for Europe and the Middle East, appeared in a recorded message to officially close the ILC.

He thanked all the participants and particularly former Albanian President Alfred Moisiu, who had helped to organize the ILC session in Tirana. Mr. Marion said it was significant that the ILC was concluding in the Tirana Peace Embassy, "which represents our hope, our expectation, that the Balkans can play an important role in overcoming conflict in Europe.

"Thank you again, and I sincerely wish you a summer of peace."

Mr. Jacques Marion,
Co-chair, UPF Europe &
Middle East, France



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