

World Leaders Address Asia Pacific Summit 2019 in Cambodia

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Phnom Penh, Cambodia -- The Asia Pacific Summit 2019 – Cambodia was convened in Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia, from November 18 to 21, 2019 with over 500 international guests from 46 nations, in attendance. The theme for the four-day summit was "Addressing the Critical Challenges of Our Time: Peace, Reconciliation, Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity and Universal Values."



Among the dignitaries who attended the event were two current vice presidents (Myanmar and Palau), a current speaker and deputy speaker (Bangladesh and Pakistan), a Nobel Laureate, and nine former heads of state and government (Afghanistan, Colombia, Indonesia, Iran, Nepal, Pakistan, Solomon Islands, and two from Timor-Leste). From Cambodia, in attendance were deputy prime ministers, ministers, governors, mayors, and chief provincial council members, among others. In addition, all diplomatic missions in Phnom Penh were invited and most joined the summit.

At the personal invitation of Cambodian Prime Minister H.E. Hun Sen, the summit on November 19 was held inside the Peace Palace, the office of the prime minister. It was attended by 800 delegates. Just prior to the opening of the summit, H.E. Sen received Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, co-founder of UPF, as the head of the international delegation from 46 nations. She had been personally invited to Cambodia by the prime minister.

Following insightful speeches given by the dignitaries on the dais, the International Summit Council for

Peace (ISCP) for the Asia Pacific region was inaugurated and eight distinguished persons were awarded the ISCP medal, including H.E Sen. Afterwards, the Cambodian prime minister awarded Dr. Moon the Maha Sirivudha, Grand Cross Royal Order of Sahametrei, the highest chivalric order conferred by the Royal Government of Cambodia to a foreign national. The inaugural session concluded with H.E. Sen receiving UPF's highest honor, the Leadership and Good Governance award.

In the evening, the Cambodian government hosted a gala banquet at the Sokha Hotel which was accompanied by exquisite entertainment of Cambodian song and dance. During the evening, the Phnom Penh Declaration was read and the Asia Pacific Union (APU) initiative was launched with unanimous support from the audience. APU will foster cooperation between governments and civil society, including inter-governmental bodies, UN agencies and faith-based organizations, centered on universal values.

The following day, November 20, a Youth and Family Festival was held at the Koh Pich Theater where Dr. Moon officiated over the rededication of marriages for 3,800 dignitaries and the Pledge of Filial Piety for 500 youth. This was followed by the Asian Cultural Festival, which included artistic performances from six nations.



The following report summarizes the main features of the Asia Pacific Summit.

Welcome Banquet

The welcome banquet on November 18 at the Sokha Phnom Penh Hotel was for international guests attending the summit. The master of ceremony was Dr. Lek Thaveetermsakul, vice-chair of UPF-Asia-Pacific.

Welcome remarks were given by H.E. Bin Chhin, deputy prime minister, minister-in-charge of the Office of the Council of Ministers, Kingdom of Cambodia. Following this, Dr. Thomas Walsh, chair of UPF, welcomed the delegates.

Two speakers gave special remarks: Hon. Maria Georgina de Venecia, a former congresswoman from the Philippines, and Hon. Mushahid Hussain Sayed, a senator from Pakistan.

Two Cambodian singers, Ms. Cheat Suchka and Mr. Vy Chivaon, each sang a solo and then concluded with a duet together.



Inaugural Session

The co-founder of UPF, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, and the prime minister of Cambodia, H.E. Hun Sen, walked on stage together to inaugurate the Asia Pacific Summit in Phnom Penh on November 19.

Dr. Moon had been personally invited to co-host the summit in Cambodia by H.E. Sen. This event

followed the first Asia Pacific Summit held in Kathmandu, Nepal in December 2018. Prime Minister Sen led the largest international delegation to the Nepalese capital where seven current heads of state and government inaugurated the Nepal Summit.

On this foundation and at the personal request of H.E. Sen, the summit was held at the Peace Palace, the magnificently ornate Office of the Prime Minister of Cambodia located in Phnom Penh. It was officially hosted by the Royal Government of Cambodia and co-organized by the UPF and the Civil Society Alliance Forum.



The co-master of ceremonies for the inaugural session were Hon. Ek Nath Dhakal, chair of UPF and the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) in the Asia-Pacific region, and Ms. Khieu Sansana from the Cambodian Broadcasting Service company.

After the national anthem, the prime minister of Cambodia was first to speak. He highlighted the win-win policy of his government in the mid-to-late-1990s which brought a peaceful end to decades of civil war in Cambodia.

The peaceful win-win policy of the prime minister helped provide peace in the Greater Mekong region of Southeast Asia and laid the foundation for an economic boom in Cambodia which has had a sustained national growth rate of over seven percent for more than two decades.

Prior to the economic wonder, Cambodia suffered greatly. Under the well-documented genocide perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge between 1975 and 1979, as many as 2 million people were murdered -- nearly a quarter of Cambodia's population at that time.

With peace, economic development followed. Prime Minister Sen noted that since then the end of its civil war Cambodia has emerged from a low-income country and in 2015 became a lower-middle income country. The goal, he said, was to become an upper-middle-income and high-income country by 2030 and 2050, respectively.

But peace-making and nation-building require different skill sets. It was highlighting Cambodia's socio-economic marvel that Prime Minister Sen noted that the intact family unit was essential for peace.

Following the introduction of Dr. Moon by five-time Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Philippines Hon. Jose de Venecia Jr., the co-founder of UPF emphasized the same point about the importance of the family, albeit from a different perspective.

Mother Moon, as she is warmly referred to, did not only look at the current social situation, but instead examined the root cause of our social problems, starting with the family of our first human ancestors. Adam and Eve failed to form a God-centered union at the beginning of human history and, regrettably, created a lineage that grew into a culture disconnected from Heaven and full of selfishness and conflict.

"That is why people have been pursuing peace but have not been able to usher in a peaceful world," Dr. Moon explained.

Mother Moon said: "The family must be healthy. This was Heaven's dream (and purpose of creation)." The life mission of Mother Moon and her late husband, Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, is to strengthen the institutions of marriage and family in order to create a culture and world of peace. A God-centered, family-friendly moral and ethical system is the basis for universal values and lasting peace.

At the end of her extemporaneous speech, Dr. Moon called for the formation of the Asia Pacific Union, saying, "Unlike the Atlantic civilization, the Pacific civilization is a movement that embodies the true love of living for the sake of others... with a heart of filial piety toward Heaven." At the gala banquet that same evening, hosted by the Royal Government of Cambodia, this proposal was adopted unanimously.



Also on stage and speaking after the two co-hosts, were:

H.E. U Henry Van Thio, second vice-president, Republic of the Union of Myanmar;

H.E. Raynold Oilouch, vice president, Republic of Palau;

Hon. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, speaker of the parliament, People's Republic of Bangladesh;

Hon. Qasim Khan Suri, deputy speaker of the National Assembly, Islamic Republic of Pakistan;

H.E. Jusuf Kalla, vice president (2004-2009 and 2014-2019), Republic of Indonesia, and; and

H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao, Nobel Laureate, president (2002-2007) and prime minister (2007-2015), Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste; eminent person, g7+.

Dr. Thomas G. Walsh, chair of UPF, read the resolution to establish the International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP) in the Asia Pacific region. It read in part:

That men and women who have served as heads of state or government are uniquely qualified to bring their wisdom and experience to bear in search for solutions to humanity's most serious problems and provide recommendations that offer a path to peace and mutual prosperity based on cooperation, mutual respect and a commitment to universal values.

Mother Moon then proceeded to give ISCP medals to each of the eight speakers in the inaugural session.

H.E. Sen, in turn, honored Mother Moon with a very special award called the Maha Sirivudha, Grand Cross Royal Order of Sahametrei. This is a chivalric order conferred by the government of Cambodia and it is the highest honor to be bestowed on a foreign national.

This same award was then presented to H.E. Dmitry Tsvetkov, ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to Cambodia, by H.E. Sen.

The finale of the inaugural session was Mother Moon awarding the Cambodian prime minister, UPF's highest distinction, the Leadership and Good Governance medal.

Keynote Session

Following lunch, the keynote session was held under the theme, "Addressing the Critical Challenges of Our Time: The Role of Government, Parliamentarians and Civil Society." Hon. Sok Siphanna, senior advisor to the Royal Government of Cambodia, was the moderator.

Consisting mostly of former heads of state and government, the speakers included:

H.E. Tep Ngorn, second vice-president, senate, Kingdom of Cambodia;

Hon. Tevita Lavemaau, minister for finance and national planning, envoy of the prime minister of the Kingdom of Tonga;

H.E. Andrés Pastrana Arango, president (1998-2002), Republic of Colombia;

H.E. Jose Ramos-Horta, president (2007-2012) and prime minister (2006-2007), Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste; Nobel Peace Prize Laureate (1996);

H.E. Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani, prime minister (2008-2012), Islamic Republic of Pakistan;

H.E. Gordon Darcy Lilo, prime minister (2011-2014), Solomon Islands;

H.E. Mohammad Karim Khalili, vice president (2004-2014), Islamic Republic of Afghanistan;

H.E. Hassan Ghafouri Fard, vice president (1989-1994), Islamic Republic of Iran;

H.E. Parmanand Jha, vice president (2008-2015), Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal;

H.E. Oyunbaatar Tserendash, former deputy prime minister, Mongolia; and

Hon. Dr. Nalinee Taveesin, standing committee member, ICAPP (International Conference of Asian Political Parties); minister (2012-2013), Kingdom of Thailand.



Concurrent Sessions

Three concurrent sessions, also held in the Peace Palace, followed. Each had nine speakers. The themes for each of the three sessions were:

Paradigms of Peace and Economic Development;

The Role of Media and Education in Nation-building and Peace; and

The Role of Faith-based Organizations, Youth and Civil Society in Peace and Reconciliation.

The following are the moderators and speakers for the concurrent sessions.



Concurrent Session I: Paradigms of Peace and Economic Development

Moderator: Dr. Robert S. Kittel, international chairman, Youth and Students for Peace

Session Speakers:

Sok Siphanna, senior advisor to the Royal Government of Cambodia;

Chuol Rambang Luoth, chairperson, Peace and Reconciliation, Republic of South Sudan;

Ram Narayan Bidari, member of parliament, chair of the parliamentary committee, Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal;

Damcho Dorji, foreign minister (2015-2018), Kingdom of Bhutan;

Sahasak Phuangketkeow, former permanent secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Thailand;

Gulnora Boboeva, member of parliament, Republic of Tajikistan;

Hai The Phan, economic expert, CBM Tai Phu Joint Stock Company, Socialist Republic of Vietnam;

Ajay Kumar Poddar, managing director, Synergy Environics, Ltd., Republic of India; and

Christian Baverey, business and civil society leader, France.

Concurrent Session II: The Role of Media and Education in Nation-building and Peace

Moderator: Dr. Thomas McDevitt, chairman, Washington Times Foundation

Session Speakers:

E. Huy Vannak, secretary of state, Ministry of Interior; president of the Union of Journalist Federations of Cambodia;

Shova Gyawali, director, Nepal Republic Media Ltd., Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal;

Alexes Joseph Bendijo, broadcast journalist, People's Television Network, Republic of the Philippines;

Dr. Sun Jo Hwang, president, Sun Moon University, Republic of Korea;

Quanyi Zhang, professor of political science, Zhejiang Wanli University, People's Republic of China;

Ka Joo Chook, vice president, Tunku Abdul Rahman University, Malaysia;

Mahendra Prasad Lama, former founding vice chancellor, Sikkim Central University, Republic of India;

Thomas Selover, international president, Professors' World Peace Academy; and

Vijay Jolly, standing committee member, ICAPP (International Conference of Asian Political Parties); Republic of India.



Concurrent Session III: The Role of Faith-based Organizations, Youth and Civil Society in Peace and Reconciliation

Moderator: Dr. Shrivatsa Goswami, chairman, Interreligious Association for Peace and Development, Asia-Pacific; head priest, Sri Radharamana Temple, Republic of India

Session Speakers:

E. Chhem Rethy, minister delegate attached to the prime minister, Kingdom of Cambodia;

Dr. Nasaruddin Umar, grand imam of Masjid Istiqlal Jakarta, Republic of Indonesia;

Mukut Mithi, member of parliament, Republic of India;

Dr. Sobhita, founder, International Buddhist Education Center, Republic of the Union of Myanmar;

Pandit Damodar Gautam, president, World Hindu Federation, Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal;

Dr. Bellanwila Dharmaratana Thero, chief monk, Buddhist Temple, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka;

Cao Thi Thanh Huyen, trainer for discipline, Full Gospel Church, Socialist Republic of Vietnam;

Keooudone Sengmanivong, director-general, Central Committee Lao Youth Union, Lao People's Democratic Republic; and

Koji Matsuda, international president, Youth and Students for Peace, Japan.

Gala Banquet

The gala banquet was hosted by Prime Minister Sen. It was held at the luxurious 700-room Sokha Phnom Penh Hotel located at the tip of the Chroy Changvar peninsula, overlooking the Mekong River. One-thousand guests had been invited.

The Phnom Penh Declaration and the Asia Pacific Union

The Phnom Penh Declaration ([PPD-click here](#)) was drafted by a committee composed of one chairman, three advisors, and 12 members from 12 different nations. The latest addition to the PPD was suggested directly by H.E. Sen on the morning of November 19. He wanted the declaration to support the "ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific." This was gladly adopted.

Mother Moon also had a keen interest in the PPD. She planned to use it as the instrument to launch the Asia Pacific Union ([Click here](#)), a point she mentioned in her inaugural address in the morning and prior to this on other important occasions. The ninth point of the PPD addressed this specifically, and read:

In this regard, the Summit underlines the need for strengthening the family of nations belonging to the Asia Pacific rim so as to reinforce cooperative relations and expand the environment of mutual trust and social harmony in order to advance universal peace and prosperity in which the region could achieve its true potential on the global stage. The Summit calls for a bold new regional vision of a community of Asia Pacific nations, a government and civil society partnership to create an Asia Pacific Union, characterized by a social and cultural renaissance that builds on the strong filial bonds prevalent in Asian societies.

Amb. K.V. Rajan, a former ambassador from India, read the declaration. In preliminary remarks he noted that this summit gave "a new vision and direction for Asia, with Mother Moon and the prime minister of Cambodia setting the tone in the inaugural session itself." He called it a road map for an Asian Community deriving strength from its civilization, culture and history which honor the family and nurtures filial piety in children.



Youth and Family Festival for Nation-Building and Peace

More than 4,300 people filled the prestigious Koh Pich Theater for the Youth and Family Festival For Nation-building and Peace.



ASIA PACIFIC SUMMIT 2019-CAMBODIA

Government and Civil Society Cooperation

The Phnom Penh Declaration

Whereas, the Universal Peace Federation in partnership with the Royal Government of Cambodia, the Civil Society Alliance Forum, the Asian Cultural Council, and the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace jointly organized the *Asia Pacific Summit 2019 – Cambodia*, built on the successful Asia Pacific Summit held in Nepal in 2018;

Whereas, with the theme “Addressing the Critical Challenges of Our Time: Peace, Reconciliation, Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity and Universal Values,” in attendance were current and former Heads of State and Government, speakers of parliament, cabinet ministers, lawmakers, along with representatives from faith-based organizations, civil society, youth and the media;

Whereas, we sincerely appreciate the complete and unreserved support of Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Cambodian people for hosting this historical event, and we wholeheartedly endorse the recommendation for Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen to receive UPF’s Leadership and Good Governance Award;

Whereas, all participants express their utmost gratitude and appreciation for the efforts being undertaken by UPF, co-founded by the late Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and his wife, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, towards establishing a world of peace, happiness, harmony and mutual prosperity; and

Whereas, due to the urgent and growing awareness among people throughout the world for visionary initiatives and bold leadership to resolve the critical issues of our time we, the delegates of the *Asia Pacific Summit 2019 – Cambodia*, hereby affirm the following:

1. Urgent and effective action must be taken by the world community to address the critical challenges related to climate change and other environmental issues which threaten the very existence of the human race and our planet, our only home, and, if ignored, are done so at our own peril;
2. This Summit noted with concern the increasing threats to global peace and security due to a variety of social, political and economic causes and stressed the need for mutual tolerance, understanding, accommodation and recognition of civic space to resolve conflicts and ensure a more peaceful, equitable and inclusive world order, acknowledging the important role a responsible media plays in achieving this goal;
3. The nurturing of the institutions of marriage and family is crucial to achieving lasting peace and happiness, in addition to advancing sustainable development, and took note that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights calls the family

- “the natural and fundamental group unit of society” which is “entitled to protection by society and the State;”
4. The need to upgrade the status of women who have endured violence at home, discrimination in the work place, reduced access to education, as well as other disenfranchised opportunities, and that government officials at all levels of society address gender inequality at its root by understanding the harmonious and complementary nature of the masculine and feminine attributes of all things in creation;
 5. The necessity to include youth and students in transformational leadership roles, calling on them to practice social responsibility, moral integrity, and to take initiative in building a culture of peace, by developing a public mindset;
 6. The importance of recognizing and honoring the successful peace initiatives by the government and the private sector, including individuals, noting the win-win strategy pioneered by Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, which has helped advance the well-being of its people;
 7. The support of the “ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific” as a means to complement regional cooperation and to help promote an enabling environment for peace, stability and prosperity;
 8. The ideal of living for the sake of others is an effective means to help people reconcile differences and overcome divisions in human relationships at the family, social, national and world levels, and can foster reconciliation in order to establish a culture of one global family; and
 9. In this regard, the Summit underlines the need for strengthening the family of nations belonging to the Asia Pacific rim so as to reinforce cooperative relations and expand the environment of mutual trust and social harmony in order to advance universal peace and prosperity in which the region could achieve its true potential on the global stage. The Summit calls for a bold new regional vision of a community of Asia Pacific nations, a government and civil society partnership to create an Asia Pacific Union, characterized by a social and cultural renaissance that builds on the strong filial bonds prevalent in Asian societies.

This Summit appreciated and noted comments and suggestions made during the sessions by the participants, particularly the recommendation to follow-up and continue the momentum initiated here.

We, the participants of this *Asia Pacific Summit 2019 – Cambodia*, do hereby adopt unanimously this

Phnom Penh Declaration

on this Tuesday, the 19th day of November 2019
at the Peace Palace in Phnom Penh, Kingdom of Cambodia.

Asia Pacific Union

A Concept Brief

The proposed Asia Pacific Union (APU) will be a broad-based, independent, non-political body that draws together like-minded individuals and organizations (government, NGO and FBO) from among the community of Asia Pacific nations. It will address common challenges and concerns, not unique to this region, such as: corruption, terrorism, clashing civilizations, poverty, illiteracy, moral decline of families, environmental exploitation, climate change, etc. However, unique to the Asia Pacific region, the APU will draw on the region's common cultural values—filial piety, family and faith—to seek answers to the critical challenges we all face together.

The cooperation between government and civil society is indispensable for creating social harmony and economic sustainability. Each body plays a different, yet, vitally important role. Governments govern. They have administrative and financial management responsibilities. They have the power to act through their executive, legislative and judicial branches. Surprising to many, governments also have responsibility to protect and defend the institution of the family. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 16.3, calls the family “the natural and fundamental group unit of society” and says that it is “entitled to protection by society and the State.” But how can a State or government do that?

This is where cooperation between government and civil society is essential. Civil society, especially organizations of faith, have the responsibility to give the moral and ethical standards which are foundational to, and deeply impact, human relationships. It is, for example, the job of civil societies to provide character education for youth, promote marriage and strengthen families. The key is that these initiatives must be interreligious in nature. Governments cannot and should not favor one faith tradition over another.

Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon is proposing the establishment of the APU. As co-founder of the Universal Peace Federation (UPF), she is asking UPF to support and promote this initiative. UPF has general consultative status with the United Nations and a global network of peace advocates. The unquestioned need for an interreligious approach to address critical challenges of our times, plays to one of UPF's unique strengths. In fact, the co-founder of UPF, the late Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, advocated for a bicameral system at the United Nations, with the second wing of the UN body made up of representatives from the world's great spiritual traditions. The Philippines took the lead in bringing this proposal to the UN and raised the issue three times at the General Assembly.

As the APU develops and takes on a formal structure (which it will during the World Summit in Seoul, Korea in 2020) it can be a venue to share best practices, encourage economic growth, promote tourism, and impart to nations and regions a renewed hope for a unified world of peace. It will work in collaboration with already existing inter-governmental organizations, UN agencies and civil society. The APU can be a think tank for innovative concepts that help reshape the world priorities, grounded in the traditions of the Asian value system. A union of Asia Pacific nations, the APU, can help prepare this region to lead the 21st century.