

UPF Norway marked International Day of Families with a program

Steinar Murud
May 22, 2016



Oslo, Norway—UPF Norway marked International Day of Families with a program titled “From a Child’s Perspective – Good Environment for Children’s Development.”

UPF Norway Chair Knut Holdhus welcomed the audience to the May 22, 2016, meeting and gave an orientation on the UN International Day of Families.

The background for the choice of topic, he said, is that many new laws seem to benefit adults more than children.



The special guest was Ms. Nazish Khan, who is from a Pakistani background but grew up in Norway. She is the author of a book about Pakistani marriage traditions. She has wide experience in working with

immigrants and is the mother of four children. Thus she could share much about the differences in upbringing in different cultures.

Probably the main difference between the Pakistani and Norwegian cultures is that one is collective and the other is individualistic. She elaborated on the point that in Pakistan children tend to do as they are told, while in Norwegian culture children and youth often ask, “Why?”

She spoke about the difficulties that immigrants have in coming to a completely new culture. And she pointed out the Norwegian people’s difficulties to understand that. In extreme cases of such misunderstandings, our authorities can even take the children from the parents. In her work Nazish Khan could help solving such misunderstanding because of her multicultural understanding.

Ms. Khan’s speech was followed by a cultural performance by Victor Lorentzen singing Bob Dylan’s “Make You Feel My Love” in Norwegian translation.



Steinar Murud, secretary general of UPF Norway, spoke on “Children, Families and the Society.” The common factor in all societies is the family. Even though there is diversity in family patterns, there is always a core. That core is parents and children. In some cultures we see extensions of the core, as in three-generational families. However, in our culture the pattern is more a breakup of the core, such as divorce, single-parent families, stepparents, etc.

However, the family, with its investment in children has, according to Nobel laureate James Hackman, “a higher return than standard returns on stock market equity.”

But there are threats to children’s development. Mr. Murud mentioned, among other points, the sexualization in society and the rising gender ideology.

Setting the needs of children first can be a valuable compass for all policymaking, he said.

Maybe we need to define human rights for children, Mr. Murud said. If so, he suggested the following points: 1) the right to be wanted; 2) the right to be able to live with one’s father and mother; 3) the right to be raised in a harmonious atmosphere; 4) the right to receive good guidance in values and morals.

Taking care of children will help set the whole society straight and contribute to a peaceful world, Mr. Murud said.

Many comments were shared and questions raised. As a conclusion our guests received our founder’s autobiography and a box of tea. The event closed with refreshments and conversation, as well as the sales of Ms. Khan’s book.

Photographs by Ole Toresen