

UPF Oceania: IAACP Launch in Asia-Pacific Showcases Region’s Diversity

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IAACP Asia-Pacific – An online program titled “Peace Through Arts and Culture: Building Trust and Understanding” served as the official launch of the International Association of Arts and Culture for Peace (IAACP) in the Asia Pacific region on August 1, 2026.

The program began with a warm welcome by the MC, **Ms. Mee Hwa Atimalala Yamada**, president of the International Association of Youth and Students for Peace (IAYSP) in Oceania. This was followed by an introductory video, “The Diplomacy of Beauty,” which outlined the growth and development of the movement founded by Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han, starting in 1962 with the founding of the Little Angels children’s folk ballet.



The video showed how the movement evolved into a comprehensive cultural network that includes the New York City Symphony, hailed as one of America’s finest; the Universal Ballet, partnered with Kirov legend Oleg Vinogradov; and the Kirov Academy of Ballet in Washington, D.C. This evolution signaled a shift from representing a single nation to celebrating the beauty of global diversity and the rigor of international standards.

On November 22, 2020, the IAACP was officially established by Dr. Hak Ja Han to serve as an umbrella for these diverse streams, with a mission to leverage culture as an instrument for global peace.

The introductory video was followed by opening remarks by **Ms. Ursula McLackland**, president of UPF-Asia-Pacific. She emphasized that arts and culture are uniquely equipped to bypass manmade barriers by touching the inner heart.

Maestro David Eaton, global coordinator for IAACP, gave congratulatory remarks. He articulated the association’s philosophical foundation through the framework of "beauty, truth and goodness." Citing the famous American composer Leonard Bernstein, Maestro Eaton noted that while art cannot change events, it changes the people who change events – enriching, ennobling and encouraging them to act, vote and think differently.



This was followed by four featured speeches with accompanying performances.

The first speaker was **Ms. Maryjane Schwenke**, co-director of Matavai Pacific Cultural Arts. She explained how Pacific island dances can foster "mafana" – a sense of joy and connection – that serves as a vehicle for youth social support and mental health.



The second speaker was **Mr. Ananda Karki** from Nepal, known in his country as the “King of Ghazal.” Ghazal is a poetic form featuring rhyming couplets. Mr. Karki explained and demonstrated how a song can heal wounded hearts and build bridges across religious and national divides, transcending words through melody.

The third speaker was contemporary symbolic artist **Mr. Krisana Chavanakunakorn** from Thailand. He described how his work cultivates seeds of peace through children’s art competitions, using contemporary symbolic fine art to encourage viewers to find inner harmony.



The fourth presenter was Cambodian artist and musician **Mr. Vy Chivoan**. Through his speech and song, he stressed the importance of protecting his people’s Apsara dance and the Khmer heritage not as isolated treasures, but because it is the duty of global citizens to protect each other's cultural spirit.



In his closing remarks **Mr. Santosh Paudel**, vice president of UPF-Asia-Pacific, officially declared the formal activation of IAACP Asia-Pacific, which aims to serve as a non-political platform for restoring trust, humanizing the stranger, and building sustainable bridges across the ideological, religious and ethnic divides of the 21st century.