

UPF Africa: Where Do We Go From Here?

Adama Doumbia
June 16, 2026

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Where Do We Go From Here?

International Law, Global Institutions, and the Search for a New Path Forward



Before Peace Becomes an Agreement

A UPF reflection for UN Peacebuilding Week 2026 on trust, continuity and the channels that keep peace possible

When the [United Nations Peacebuilding Week 2026](#) opens in New York from June 22 to 26, much attention will naturally turn to institutions, financing, inclusion and impact. These attentions are necessary. Peacebuilding requires structures that can survive political pressure, respond to local realities, and support communities before violence returns.

BEFORE PEACE BECOMES AN AGREEMENT

Trust is the Infrastructure of Peace



UN PEACEBUILDING WEEK 2026

Yet one part of peacebuilding is often less visible because it does not begin with a signed accord. It begins earlier, in the period when no

agreement is ready, no side is willing to yield, and public language has already hardened. In that period, the most useful work may be the quiet preservation of channels: channels between communities and channels between regions that have learned to see one another through old fears.

This is where trust first becomes practical. Trust is not sentiment. It is the accumulated evidence that contact can continue without humiliation, that disagreement can be expressed without destruction, and that a person or institution can remain present after the cameras have left. Peacebuilding begins with trust because trust keeps communication alive when agreement is still beyond reach.

This is the space in which the Universal Peace Federation has often worked. UPF is not a negotiating body between governments. Instead, it creates and protects channels where leaders from politics, religion, academia, media, business, youth, and civil society can remain in contact when formal politics alone is too narrow. Founded by [Dr. Hak Ja Han](#) and the late [Dr. Sun Myung Moon](#), UPF carries the conviction that humanity is actually one family into public life through dialogue, service, and cooperation across boundaries.

This conviction does not remove political complexity. It gives peacebuilding a wider horizon. If human beings are viewed only through the conflicts that divide them, peace becomes a temporary management arrangement. If they are viewed as members of one human family, then even difficult diplomacy can be supported by a deeper moral logic: the other side remains human, the future remains open, and reconciliation remains worth preparing for.

This multi-sector pattern matters in 2026. At the same time that Peacebuilding Week gathers in New York, the [Global Sustainable Development Congress 2026](#) meets in Jakarta from June 22 to 25. Its

focus on higher education, research, business, government, and civil society offers a parallel lesson. Sustainable peace depends on more than diplomacy. Jakarta and New York, therefore, point to the same conclusion from different directions. Peacebuilding and sustainable development meet wherever communities ask whether young people can find purpose, whether families can remain stable under pressure, whether economic life gives people a stake in peace, and whether public institutions can be trusted.

For that reason, renewed discussion of a possible [Bering Strait link](#) deserves careful attention. It would be premature to treat such reporting as proof of an emerging peace process. The technical, financial, environmental and diplomatic questions would be substantial. Still, the return of such an idea into public discussion is worth noting because it points to the kind of imagination peacebuilding needs: not only how to manage division, but how to picture connection. The Bering Strait has long carried symbolic weight because it is not only a geographical passage. In [the vision](#) of UPF founders, it is a place where continents nearly touch. Any serious conversation about linking them asks whether nations can still imagine projects that outlive the anger of the moment.



In this spirit, UPF welcomes UN Peacebuilding Week 2026 as a timely space for renewed partnership. The next stage of peacebuilding will require more than declarations of goodwill. It will require durable channels, credible relationships, ethical leadership, and practical cooperation across sectors. UPF remains committed to working with partners who see trust not as a soft ideal, but as the living infrastructure of peace.

 Dr. Tageldin Hamad

President, Universal Peace Federation



As geopolitical tensions rise and international cooperation becomes uncertain, the **International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP)**, initiated by UPF Co-Founder **Dr Hak Ja Han**, will bring together experienced global leaders to discuss the path forward.

The **ISCP** provides a platform where current and former heads of state, government leaders, and peacebuilders can share wisdom and propose solutions to the world's most urgent challenges.

This webinar will address the future of the rules-based global order amid uncertainty, conflict, and institutional pressure.

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June 18, 2026 | 1 PM GMT



The Future of the Rules-Based World Order Where do we go from here?



FEATURED SPEAKERS



**H.E. GLORIA
MACAPAGAL ARROYO**

14th President of the
Philippines from 2001 to 2010.



**H.E. DR. GOODLUCK
JONATHAN**

President of Nigeria from 2010
to 2015.



**H.E. ANTHONY
CARMONA**

5th President of Trinidad and
Tobago from 2013 to 2018.

**DR TAGELDIN
HAMAD**

International President of the
Universal Peace Federation



**DR. FRANCO
FAMULARO**

Global Coordinator -
International Summit Council
for Peace



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14:00 Nigeria

THE AMERICAS

07:00 a.m. Costa Rica, CA
09:00 a.m. Trinidad and Tobago, New York
10:00 a.m. Sao Paulo

ASIA-PACIFIC

21:00 Manila

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15:00 Paris

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PROPOSAL FOR A BERING STRAIT PEACE TUNNEL



A Bridge for a New Era of International Cooperation

Reports of a possible meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and U.S. President Donald Trump in Alaska have sparked renewed discussion about the long-envisioned Bering Strait tunnel, a project seen by many as a potential symbol of peacebuilding and cooperation. Supporters argue that such an intercontinental link between Russia and the United States could serve as both a practical transport route and a gesture toward improved relations.

In a time of renewed calls for stability and constructive engagement, few projects match the symbolic and practical potential of the proposed Bering Strait Peace Tunnel. This rail and infrastructure link connecting Alaska and Russia's Chukotka region would unite the American and Eurasian continents. According to proponents, it has the potential to mark the beginning of a new era of dialogue and collaboration between the United States, Russia, and other nations, offering a channel for improved communication and cooperation.

The idea of linking Eurasia and North America across the Bering Strait dates back to the late 19th century. In 1890, William Gilpin, the first territorial governor of Colorado, proposed an intercontinental railway with a tunnel under the Bering Strait as part of a global transportation network. Canada also explored northern rail expansion concepts in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, such as routes toward Dawson City, which could have been integrated into a wider transcontinental system.

The Russian Czar Nicholas II gave provisional approval in 1905 for exploration of a rail tunnel, but by 1907, amid political instability after the 1905 revolution and fears of American encroachment, his government withdrew support. In 1906, a consortium of Russian, American, and French interests announced an ambitious project, reported in The New York Times, but archival evidence suggests it remained a preliminary concept.

At the 1945 Potsdam Conference, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin proposed to U.S. President Harry Truman that they link their rail networks through a tunnel or bridge, but Truman declined amid Cold War tensions. In the mid-20th century, engineer Tung-Yen Lin promoted the idea of an "Intercontinental Peace Bridge." Joseph Strauss, chief engineer of the Golden Gate Bridge, also publicly discussed the potential of a Bering link.

In 1981, Dr. Sun Myung Moon announced his vision for a Peace Tunnel – an 85-kilometer link under the Bering Strait estimated at US\$200 billion at the time – as part of a global peace highway. He reiterated this vision during the 2005 inauguration of the Universal Peace Federation and the inaugural tour through 100 nations. His advocacy was one of several factors that revived interest in the idea. The International Bering Strait Regional Group (IBSRG) and its successor IBSTRG have since provided a multilateral platform for engineers, economists, policymakers, and peace advocates to explore feasibility.

The Council for the Study of Productive Forces (SOPS), a joint body of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Ministry of Economic Development, has been a key driver of the modern Russian rationale for the Bering Strait project. Under academician Alexander Granberg in the 1990s, SOPS coordinated multidisciplinary studies, including aerial route surveys, geotechnical mapping, and energy concepts. The council projected additional benefits such as energy efficiency gains from grid integration and major resource development in the Russian Far East, making SOPS a central knowledge hub in advancing the project in Russia.

In 2014, China's state-run Beijing Times reported a proposal by Chinese engineers for a high-speed rail line from Beijing to Alaska via a 200-kilometer Bering Strait tunnel, informally dubbed the "China-Russia-Canada-America" route. While not an official government plan, it aligned with China's Belt and Road vision.

Russia's Amur-Yakutsk Mainline reaches Nizhny Bestyakh, opposite Yakutsk in the Russian Far East. The rail bridge over the Lena River is under construction (2024–2028), but there are no rail lines east toward Magadan or Chukotka. Extending to the Bering Strait remains a long-held concept, though facing challenges such as permafrost thaw, seismic activity, remoteness, and lack of supporting infrastructure.

From Frontier of Division to Corridor of Peace

Historically a line of separation, the Bering Strait could become a symbol of partnership. The two Diomed Islands – one in U.S. territory and one in Russia – are only about 4 kilometers apart, offering a powerful image of potential reconnection for indigenous communities divided by the Cold War "Ice Curtain." A tunnel could contribute to dialogue and cooperation, while requiring clear agreements on management, security, and governance involving all stakeholders, including Indigenous communities.

During World War II, the Bering Strait region already played a role as a symbolic bridge between the United States and the Soviet Union. Through the Lend-Lease program, American aircraft were flown from Alaska to Siberia via the Alaska-Siberia (ALSIB) route, crossing near the Diomed Islands. These deliveries strengthened the Soviet war effort against Nazi Germany and turned the strait into a gateway of wartime cooperation. For many veterans and historians, it remains a reminder that even in the most difficult times, the two nations found ways to work together toward a common goal.

The proposed 6,000-kilometer intercontinental corridor might integrate electrified rail, power transmission, fiber-optic communications, and possibly pipelines. According to preliminary estimates cited by proponents,

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the project could cost between US\$50 and \$100 billion, and potentially generate significant transit revenues. It might shorten travel times between Asia and North America compared to all-water routes via the Suez or Panama Canals. Benefits for remote regions would depend on parallel investment in local infrastructure, and all forecasts remain preliminary. It could also serve as an alternative or complement to the Northern Sea Route during certain seasons.

Skeptics and Challenges

The tunnel’s feasibility faces numerous obstacles. Funding of US\$50–100+ billion would require unprecedented international cooperation. While the Bering Strait itself is relatively shallow and stable, the main challenge lies in building thousands of kilometers of access rail through the Arctic tundra with extreme cold (down to –50°C), permafrost, and short construction seasons. Corrosion from saline exposure adds further complexity. Freight volume estimates, such as Russian Railways’ claim that the tunnel could carry 3% of global cargo, are considered overly optimistic by analysts due to cheaper maritime alternatives.

Finally, while Russia has long-term plans to develop transport corridors toward Chukotka, Alaska and Canada currently lack equivalent federal initiatives or funding for connecting infrastructure, creating a significant imbalance in preparedness.

Feasibility and Impact

A functioning link could encourage tourism, cultural exchange, and research collaboration. Electrified rail could reduce emissions compared to shipping, but must incorporate permafrost-stabilization technologies and strict protections for migratory bird routes and marine ecosystems, particularly in the Bering Land Bridge preserve. Proceeding with the project would require shared funding commitments, rigorous technical studies, and phased implementation. As of 2024, there are no official agreements or dedicated financing, and the political climate presents serious obstacles.

A Call to Visionary Leadership

The Bering Strait Peace Tunnel is not a cure-all, but it could become a practical symbol of what the Universal Peace Federation calls “the hope of reconciling long-separated nations and ideologies” through shared infrastructure. It would require coordinated participation from Canada, Asian partners such as China, Japan, and Korea, potential European or Nordic stakeholders in Arctic development, as well as the United States and Russia.

Governments, international institutions, investors, and civil society are encouraged to consider the Bering Strait Peace Tunnel with clear eyes – recognizing its challenges while exploring its potential. We urge establishing an international technical commission to conduct feasibility studies and foster dialogue beyond current political constraints, determining whether this vision can be transformed into a viable project that benefits all of humanity, with careful verification of historical precedents, technical feasibility studies, and comprehensive assessment of economic and environmental impacts.

By Tageldin Hamad, President, Universal Peace Federation
August 11, 2025

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INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT COUNCIL FOR PEACE (ISCP)



International Summit Council for Peace

The International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP) was initiated by UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon on February 8, 2019 on the occasion of World Summit 2019 in Seoul, Korea. ISCP is an international network of 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.

The ISCP provides a meeting place for world leaders where their wisdom and experience can be utilized and their initiatives can be discussed in the service of global peace and the betterment of humankind.

ISCP is committed to building a world of peace in which everyone can live in freedom, harmony, cooperation and prosperity. ISCP upholds the core principles of interdependence, mutual prosperity, and universal values, and acts as a facilitator and advisor for the achievement of peace and development.

A crowning project of the Universal Peace Federation, the ISCP works in close cooperation with the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace, the Interreligious Association for Peace and Development, the International Association of Traditional Rulers for Peace, and other UPF initiatives.

[The Founding ISCP Resolution \(2019, South Korea\)](#)

[Backgrounder and Purpose of the ISCP](#)

INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT COUNCIL FOR PEACE INAUGURAL RESOLUTION

February 7-11 at the Lotte World Hotel, Seoul, South Korea

As participants in World Summit 2019 sponsored by the Universal Peace Federation and convened in Seoul, Korea, on February 7-11, 2019, on the theme, "Addressing the Critical Challenges of Our Time: Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity and Universal Values," we affirm the urgent need for responsible leadership and good governance in bringing about a world of lasting peace, a world in which people of all nationalities, ethnicities, races, cultures, and worldviews may live together in mutual respect, harmony and cooperation as one family under God.

We applaud the leadership of Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and her late husband, Rev. Sun Myung Moon for their vision and work over many decades to create "one family under God," and recognize the contributions to peace that have been achieved through the Universal Peace Federation, an NGO in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

We have gathered in Korea, in the year of the Centenary of the March 1st Independence Movement, and we support the Korean people in their quest for peace and the reunification of the Korean Peninsula.

As current and former heads of state, government and world leaders from diverse nations and political systems, we recognize that humanity faces serious challenges that must be met and overcome through cooperation, mutual respect and a commitment to universal values.

We live in an interdependent world. No nation and no government exists in isolation. Many of our most difficult problems—terrorism, cyber-crime, climate change, poverty, inequality, food insecurity, conflict—are transnational in nature. We must work together collaboratively in order to resolve global, regional and national problems. Moreover, in order to carry out a comprehensive approach to peace and development, we

must work across various sectors of society, including government, civil society, faith-based organizations, academia and the private sector.

Men and women who have served as heads of state or government are uniquely qualified to bring their wisdom and experience to bear in the search for solutions to humanity's most serious problems and the effort to provide recommendations—to national governments, to inter-governmental organizations, to regional associations of nations such as the European Union, the Arab Leagues, ASEAN, and to the United Nations—that offer a path to peace and mutual prosperity for the whole human family and generations to come.

On this day, February 8, 2019, at the Opening Plenary of the World Summit 2019, we endorse the proposal to establish a new association of current and former heads of state and government, known provisionally as the International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP). The ISCP will work in concert with the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP), the Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD) and the International Association of Traditional Rulers for Peace (IATP) throughout the world. Following this inaugural program, the UPF will convene inaugural ISCP programs on the regional and national levels throughout 2019; the first World Assembly of ISCP will be convened in 2020, one year from now. We welcome the inauguration of this initiative and trust that it will contribute greatly to lasting peace for the whole human family.

Signed this day, February 8, 2019, in Seoul, Korea.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE ISCP

Purpose

The forerunner of the ISCP was the Summit Council for World Peace, founded in 1987 by Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon as a means to harness the extraordinary wealth of knowledge, experience, intelligence, and goodwill of former heads of state and heads of governments. After a distinguished record of more than two decades working with the world's top leadership, the Council's activities were brought under the umbrella of the UPF when it was founded in 2005.

In February 2019 in Seoul, Korea at the World Summit 2019, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, who has been integrating and refining the global mission of UPF, relaunched the International Summit Council for Peace as a separate initiative and with a renewed mission to bring together current and former world leaders and develop recommendations for the problems confronting humanity focused on three main areas – peace, security and human development.

International Inauguration

At World Summit 2019 held from February 8 to 11 at the Lotte World Hotel in Seoul, South Korea, 1200 participants from 110 nations, including 40 current and former heads of state and government, enthusiastically responded to Dr. Moon's challenge "to join hands as one family under God." Among the many prominent global leaders, she invited keynote speakers, U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney (2001-2009) and U.S. Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich (1995-1999) to share their wisdom and experience on the most pressing issues in our world today.

A resolution was approved to establish a new association of current and former heads of state, heads of government and other world leaders known provisionally as the International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP). The ISCP would work in concert with the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP), the Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD) and the International Association of Traditional Rulers for Peace (IATP).

Awardees

Dr. Moon presented ISCP Distinguished Award medals to ten current and former world leaders:

- Hon. Dick Cheney, Vice President (2001-2009), the United States of America
- Hon. Ousmane Moutari, Ambassador of Niger to the United Nations
- H.E. Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Efi, Head of State (2007-2017), Samoa
- H.E. Luis Federico Franco, President (2012-2013), Paraguay
- H.E. Anthony Carmona, President (2013-2018),Trinidad and Tobago
- Hon. Stanislav S. Shushkevich, Chairman (1991-1994), Supreme Soviet, Belarus
- H.E. Alfred Moisiu, President 2002-2007), Albania
- Hon. Iakoba Taeia Italeli, Governor General of Tuvalu
- H.E. Evaristo Carvalho, President of São Tomé and Príncipe
- H.E. Jerry Rawlings, President (1981-2001), Ghana

African Inauguration

At the Africa Summit and Leadership Conference (ASLC), held on June 7 and 8, 2019 at the Hilton Sandton hotel in Johannesburg, South Africa, heads of state and dignitaries from all over the continent were invited to sign a resolution to inaugurate ISCP's African regional chapter. In recognition of their lifetime of public service and willingness to dedicate their experience, Dr. Moon presented the leaders with the ISCP Distinguished Award medal.

Awardees

- Hon. Gwede Mantashe, Chairman of the African National Congress (Representing President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa)
- H.E. Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, President (2010-2015), Nigeria
- H.E. Dioncounda Traoré, President (2012-2013), Mali
- H.E. Mahamane Ousmane, President (1993-1996),Niger
- Hon. Dr. Speciosa Kazibwe, Vice President (1994-2003), Uganda
- H.E. Prime Minister Kwassi Klutse, Prime Minister (1996-1999), of Togo

- Hon. Clara M. Ferreira de Bom Jesus, wife of Prime Minister of Sao Tome & Principe
- Hon. Alex C. Grant, Member of Parliament, Representing President George Weah of Liberia
- Hon. Josiah Dunira Hungwe, Provincial Governor of Masvingo, Representing President Emmerson Mnangagwa of Zimbabwe

Inaugural ISCP programs on the regional and national levels will be held throughout 2019, and the first World Assembly of ISCP will be convened in 2020.

NEWS

Association's activities

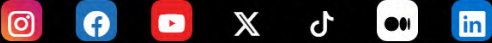
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We are an international and interreligious network of individuals and organizations, including representatives from religion, government, civil society and the private sector dedicated to achieving world peace. UPF supports the work of the United Nations, particularly in the areas of interfaith peacebuilding, peace education, and the strengthening of marriage and family.





UNIVERSAL PEACE FEDERATION



International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP)

Webinar Registration

Event Information

Organizer: International Summit Council for Peace

Theme: “The Future of the Rules-Based World Order - Where do we go from here?”

Date: 18 June 2026 (Thu)

Time: 2.00pm (London), 9.00pm (Manila), 11.00pm (Sydney)

US & Latin America Time Equivalents:

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Chicago | 8:00am US Central (CDT)
Los Angeles | 6:00am US Pacific (PDT)
Mexico City | 7:00am
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