

# Japanese Cultural Event

Hamburg, Germany, 20. June 2015

By Ulrich Ganz

Numerous guests and friends of the UPF, including several ambassadors of peace, responded to our invitation to an event **on the subject of 'understanding different cultures'**.

Some Japanese and German women had started over an hour earlier to dress in the kimono, a traditional item of Japanese clothing. This is not simple procedure, and was guided by Masae Markmann.

After a few introductory words about the peace principle of the UPF, the importance of intercultural cooperation, the colourful kimonos were presented. The women—those of German descent as well as of Japanese—looked extremely elegant.

Then Masae and Mieko Toelke presented a tea ceremony. The focussed and silent actions created a meditative atmosphere, almost like a church service. Of course, the audience could taste some "green tea", a certain type of tea specifically brewed for the ceremony.

Temo Groening, (whose mother comes from Japan), dressed in a man's summer kimono, demonstrated „Origami" – the art of paper folding. He folded a "crane" while a video played simultaneously in the background.

Three Japanese songs accompanied by a guitar, rounded out the first part of our introduction into the Far East Japanese culture.

For the karate demonstration from Samuel and Camilla Pries, we went outside on the lawn. This gave the

opportunity for physical relaxation, and following the well-practiced martial arts presentation, we could enjoy Japanese delicacies of all kinds.

Meanwhile a group of African bishops of the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star arrived and brought African conviviality into our room.

We were now a group of approximately fifty people, young and old, from Mongolia, Japan, India, Africa, America and various European countries. Gospel songs were sung, and over coffee and cake, there was ample opportunity to get to know each other, to take pictures and enjoy the informal atmosphere.

This was a successful afternoon that will long be remembered as a first class cultural experience and peace festival.

