

## UPF and IAPD Ecuador observes the UN International Day of Human Rights

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Ecuador -- On December 12 2020, UPF-Ecuador's Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD) observed virtually the UN International Day of Human Rights. UPF-Ecuador saw this event as a good occasion to enhance the determination and collaboration among religious leaders toward harmony and world peace.

At this time, the president of IAPD-Ecuador, Bishop Luis Moreno of the Anglican Church of Ecuador, took the responsibility to invite religious leaders who have a relationship with the National Council for Religious Liberty and Equality.

Hon. Fausto Segovia Baus (Former Minister of Education, Republic of Ecuador; Executive Director, UPF-Ecuador), led this event as a moderator.

For the opening of the online event, Rev. Dong Mo Shin (Chair, UPF-South America) gave a message related to the International Day of Human Rights. He mentioned that notwithstanding the hard work of the United Nations, we have not yet achieved true human rights. UPF has been working to realize a peaceful world as "One Family Under God," sharing the concepts of co-existence, co-prosperity, and universal values.

Archbishop Chrysostomos Celi (Metropolitan Orthodox Church, Latin America; World Clergy Leadership Conference-Latin America) gave a congratulatory address, speaking about the history of human rights and religious liberty, highlighting UPF's helpful actions toward the unification of religions under the leadership of UPF Founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon.

Next, Bishop Luis Moreno explained about the 1948 UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and emphasized the outstanding activities of UPF-International by organizing World Summits, the strong

structure of the associations of UPF, and gathering of millions of people for the Rallies of Hope. Furthermore, he mentioned that for the sake of world peace, UPF's work is needed to realize a society having mutual respect for each religion.



Following the speech of Bishop Luis Moreno was a choral performance by his Anglican church.

A special guest of this event, Dr. Freddy Carrión Intriago (Ombudsman, Ecuador; Representative, National Institution of Human Rights, Ecuador) described the mission and works of the National Institution for the protection of fundamental human rights. He mentioned the importance of freedom of religion, which is one of most fundamental human rights to support peace in a society and nation. Also, he gave background on the history of religious liberty in Ecuador, emphasizing the challenge it faces.

Next we heard from four panelists who are religious leaders:

Cástulo Leitón (Pastor, Rose of Sharon Evangelical Church);

Imam Juan Suquillo (Director, Islamic Center in Ecuador);

Marlene Montesinos (Minister of Christian Education, Lakewood Congregation, Texas; "Fuente de Salvación," New Jersey);

Professor Ana Cecilia López (Director, Brahma Kumaris, Ecuador).

Each panelist expressed dismay at the discrimination still existing in the world, spoke about actions and teachings to support freedom of religion, and promised to protect religious liberty.

We had very peaceful atmosphere among all participants and concluded with a pledge to work together toward world peace.

We would like to express special thanks to Rev. Dong Mo Shin, all panelists and our Ambassadors for Peace.