

Celebration of the UN International Day of Peace in Denmark 2022

On Sunday Oct. 9th, UPF Denmark celebrated the UN International Day of Peace in the Danish parliament with the theme “**End Racism. Build Peace.**” Over 200 leaders, Ambassadors for Peace and peace activists attended the event.

Karen Ellemann, deputy Speaker of the parliament and host of the event said: “we are gathered for peace, and it is our obligation to work for peace regardless of affiliation, gender, race, age or whatever, not only in Denmark or Europe, but in the world”. After her welcoming remarks she introduced the moderator, Yildiz Akdogan.

Yildiz Akdogan, former MP and Ambassador for Peace said: “in a world with turmoil and scary things happening we cannot take peace and freedom for granted and we need to find ways to accommodate each other’s differences”.

Lotte Heise, a popular radio host and speaker elaborated on “*Fight racism in your own everyday life create peace close to you.*” It is important to raise our children and grandchildren to be ambassadors for peace and teach them to pay attention to others – for example, a smile is the shortest distance between two people.

Peter Thisted Dinesen, professor, Department of Political Science, University College London and University of Copenhagen asked the question: “*Social trust: Denmark’s raw material - but is it threatened by immigration?*” and talked about the importance of immigration for social cohesion. The Nordic countries have a high degree of social trust that disposes us for cooperation, which then leads to a well-functioning society. Studies show that immigrants take over the level of trust in the country they come to.

Isabel Bramsen, deputy director of Peace and Conflict Studies, Department of Political Science at Lund University in Sweden, and member of Nordic Women Mediators spoke on “*Peace and structural violence from a micro-sociological perspective*” from her book recently published by Cambridge University Press (open access). We need to seek a positive peace which among other things includes the presence of righteousness, equality and balance. We need to actively create micro-moments with peace; this can consist of listening, practice, symbolic acts, dialogue, solidarity, an extended hand, reconciliation rituals, or all possible ways in which we stretch ourselves to reach out to others. Such universal peace can then spread to our environment and society. Peace is not the absence of conflicts, peace is “no enmity”.

A musical feature presented **Isam Bachiri**, a Danish vocalist, rapper and songwriter, formerly of the famous hiphop group Outlandish, of recent years a solo artist. Isam Bachiri is a Muslim of Riffian descent, whose father came to Denmark from Morocco as a factory worker in the 1960s. During his school and youth years Isam B experienced racism firsthand. His father resigned himself to it and said: “You did not come here to show your religion, you came here to work a few years and then we go back again”. He was from the silent “guest worker generation”; they were considered as useful workers, but not as people with feelings and experiences . . . therefore, Isam B decided to publish his father’s biography and tell his and his family’s story. His deeply moving songs were about sharing ‘*your story*’.

After the break **Helle Thun**, a professional singer, mezzosoprano and performing artist, called the audience together again using “*Kulning*”, a domestic Scandinavian music form, originally a herding call, however in our setting a call to the wind and our original nature.

Dr. **Thorkil Christensen** from UPF introduced the Peace Ceremony by saying “we live in a world with division, conflicts and uncertainty, the climate and nature agonize, therefore more than ever we need a united UN with strength to solve problems; this will only be possible when we experience and feel as one big human family. Such feelings come to us when we contact nature and the forces of Heaven which influence us to open our hearts and inspire to a life for all living creatures.”

During the **Peace Ceremony** nine representatives from religions of the world gathered their hearts and prayers before each one poured their water in a common bowl to music of J. S. Bach.

Peter Hervik, professor in anthropology, docent in International Migration and Ethnic Relations with an international carrier where he researched and taught abroad for many years, spoke on the topic “*That's just it - anthropological perspectives on combating strategic ignorance of racism.*” He said that requests for professional knowledge about racism are rare. Intentional or strategic ignorance are used in order to obscure, obstruct or remove attention to factual knowledge about racism.

Already in 1846 Søren Kierkegaard expressed that “the country is characterized by nihilism, life is without objective meaning, purpose or intrinsic value, the serious, the existential is met with skepticism . . . a limited identity rather than a universal pure human base of identity. We must move from de-humanization to re-humanization”.

The last musical feature was with **Metta Carter Jazzmosphere**, Søren Lee, legendary Danish Jazz guitarist and composer, and Maciej Szymczynski, a leading jazz bassist from Sweden. Metta was adopted from Korea by a Danish family in 1969. Her mother was Korean and her father an African-American soldier. In the first 15 years of her life, she didn't meet anybody similar to herself; though she saved her life in Korea, she landed in extreme isolation, alienation, racism and suffering. By withdrawing into herself, she could surrender and find security and creativity. During a time in USA, though also a racist place, she experienced freedom, a form of togetherness in a multicultural society; and that diversity makes us unique. She expressed that in moments of song and dance, we feel each other's hearts and melt together, there we find joy and togetherness. Thus, Metta and Jazzmosphere led all the participants through songs with love and peace.

The program ended with all participants joining in singing John Lennon's song, Imagine.

Many participants who had attended Day of Peace events before said that this was the best program so far, and that everything came together into greater unity. Everybody felt peace and a sense of belonging to a common human family.

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Link to photos: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/uWtZZVhuZey5ZvfR9>

Text to the photos:

- # 1 UN International Day of Peace 2022: “End Racism. Build Peace”
- # 2 UN International Day of Peace 2022: “End Racism. Build Peace”
- # 3 (audience)
- # 4 Karen Ellemann, host, MP

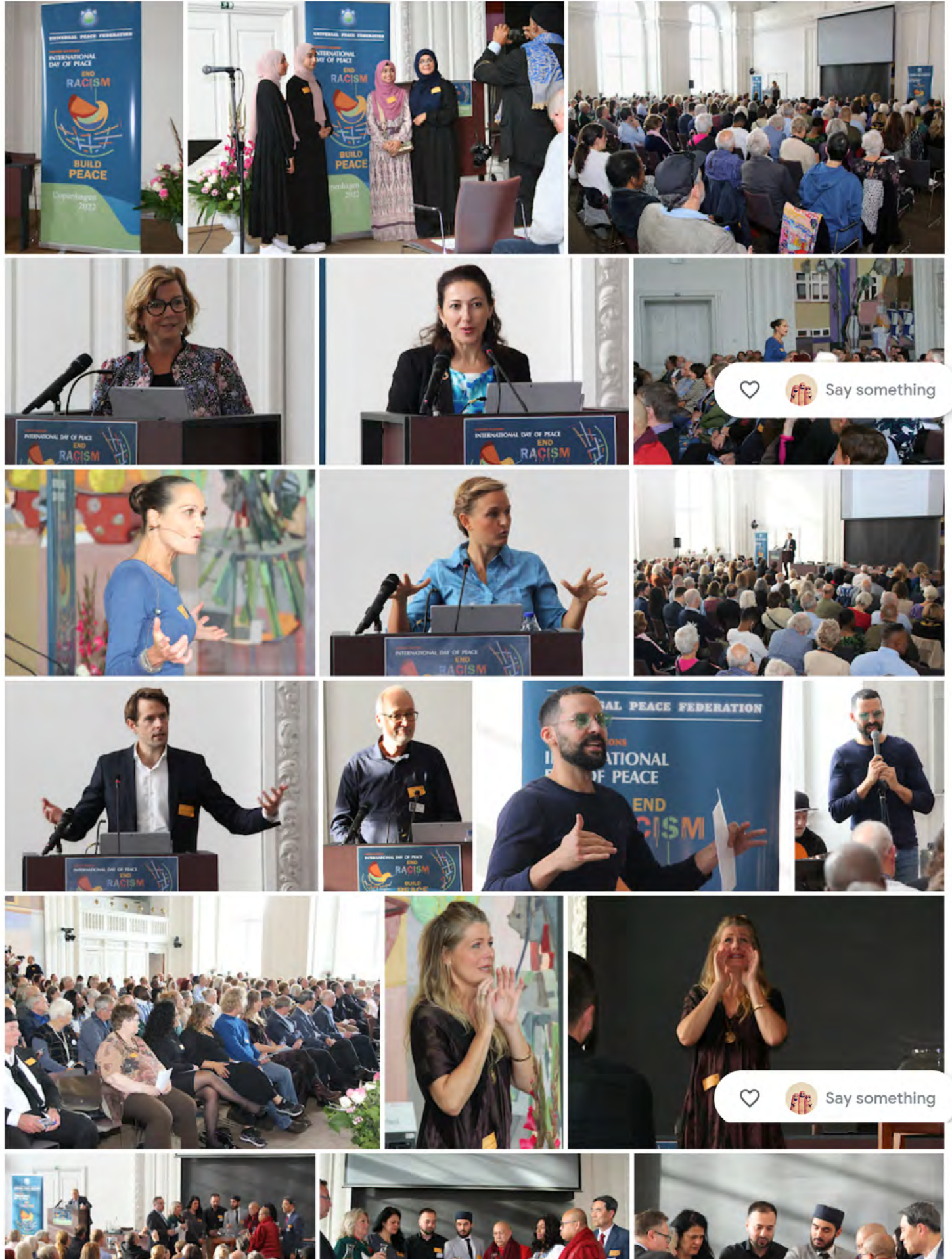
- # 5 Yildiz Akdogan, moderator, Ambassador for Peace, former MP
- # 6 Lotte Heise, radio host and speaker
- # 7 Lotte Heise, radio host and speaker
- # 8 Isabel Bramsen, deputy director of Peace and Conflict Studies, Department of Political Science, Lund University
- # 9 Peter Thisted Dinesen, professor Department of Political Science, University College London and University of Copenhagen
- # 10 Peter Thisted Dinesen, professor Department of Political Science, University College London and University of Copenhagen
- # 11 Peter Hervik, professor, docent in International Migration and Ethnic Relations
- # 12 Isam Bachiri, vocalist, rapper and songwriter
- # 13 Isam Bachiri, vocalist, rapper and songwriter
- # 14 (audience)
- # 15 Helle Thun, singer and performing artist
- # 16 Helle Thun, singer and performing artist
- # 17 Thorkil Christensen, UPF introducing the peace ceremony
- # 18 Peace Ceremony with religious representatives
- # 19 Peace Ceremony
- # 20 Peace Ceremony
- # 21 Metta Carter and Jazzmosphere
- # 22 Metta Carter and Jazzmosphere
- # 23 Metta Carter





UN International Day of Peace 2022 - Denmark

Oct 9

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