

UPF Stockholm, Sweden: Interfaith Dialogue Builds Interfaith Harmony

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Stockholm, Sweden – An interfaith gathering on February 4, 2026, in Stockholm – designated by the United Nations as the International Day of Human Fraternity – celebrated that day and World Interfaith Harmony Week.



Participants represented the Muslim, Catholic, Protestant, Scientology, and Family Federation traditions. Jointly arranged by UPF-Sweden and the Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP), the

evening program underscored the importance of interreligious dialogue for mutual understanding, existential insight, and individuals' spiritual needs.



Mr. Mikael Schöld of UPF-Sweden outlined the background and purpose of World Interfaith Harmony Week. **Mr. Lorenz Jolin** spoke on interreligious dialogue as a path toward a more peaceful world, noting that religion is often perceived as divisive and is excluded from public discourse, which can create an existential vacuum in society. His presentation emphasized how dialogue can strengthen both personal insight and the constructive role of religion in society.

Ms. Britta Houston of WFWP spoke passionately about the need for dialogue and openness and offered insight into how her women's organization can play a vital role in building peace.

Dr. Peter Åkerbäck, director of studies at the Department of Sociology at Stockholm University, delivered the closing remarks. He reflected on the history of religious dialogue in Sweden and his long-standing efforts to foster an open, vibrant culture of interreligious cooperation. He described this gathering as a promising new start for dynamic, sustained interfaith dialogue.

Participants also shared personal experiences from interfaith encounters and reflected on the level of interest and engagement in interreligious dialogue in contemporary Swedish society. Ms. Houston facilitated an open discussion on how dialogue can build understanding, trust and peace.

The evening concluded with informal conversation over coffee and sandwiches, thoughtfully prepared by two women from the Family Federation, contributing to a warm and welcoming atmosphere.