## UPF Ghana Program Couples Pursuit of Peace with Youth Leadership

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**Accra, Ghana** – To commemorate the International Day of Peace, UPF-Ghana partnered with VODEC Africa, an NGO focused on raising youth leaders, to host the National Emerging Leader Economic Forum (NELEF 2026) on September 21, 2026. VODEC is the initiator of the Idea Challenge, which invites young entrepreneurs to submit innovative business ideas in competition. Winners receive funding, technical support and mentorship.



The event was held in the auditorium of the University of Professional Studies, Accra (UPSA) under the theme "Building Africa's Future: Emerging Leaders Driving Inclusive Growth and Regional Transformation." About 1,000 participants attended, including academic and institutional leaders, legislators, youth innovators, entrepreneurs, peace advocates and students. Another 1,000 viewers joined the event online.

The program featured impactful keynote addresses and declarations by distinguished speakers, including

**Nana Barima Champong Sapon II**, traditional chief of Asamanghene; **Prof. John Kwaku Mensah Mawutor**, vice chancellor of UPSA; **Mrs. Kosi Antiwaa Yankey-Ayeh**, former CEO of the Ghana Enterprises Agency under the Ministry of Trade and Industry; and **Mr. Daniel Asomani,** a successful entrepreneur and politician**.**






A central highlight was the address by business consultant **Dr. Waru Mannan,** who serves as the Ghana coordinator for the International Association for Peace and Economic Development (IAED). In his speech, Dr. Mannan anchored economic growth in foundational peace, family values, and sovereign enterprise through initiatives like "Peace Trade."



The program featured dynamic youth fireside chats on topics including integrity, security and inclusive growth, followed by legislative policy pitches from key political leaders. The event concluded with the Idea Challenge awards ceremony and the prestigious Ambassadors for Peace conferment for seven distinguished individuals.