

Trinidad and Tobago IAPP launched at Queen's Hall in Port of Spain

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Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago -- The Trinidad and Tobago chapter of the International Association for Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) was launched at Queen's Hall in the country's capital, Port of Spain. The event, whose theme was "Let's Make Peace Our Responsibility as Leaders in Establishing a Lasting Peace," took place on September 28, 2017 with more than 60 participants, including members of parliament as well as civil society and religious leaders, in attendance.

Before the event, UPF-Central America and the Caribbean president, Dr. Charles S. Yang, and UPF-Latin America regional chair, Dr. Sang Suek Kim, met with the President of Trinidad and Tobago H.E. Anthony Thomas Aquinas Carmona. Dr. Yang presented the IAPP initiative and shared the vision of UPF.

The launching of the IAPP-Trinidad and Tobago opened with a prayer, offered by Mrs. Marcia Belgrove, minister of religion of Trinidad and Tobago, and was emceed by Mr. Sterling Belgrove, chairman of the Rose Foundation.

Dr. Kim gave the welcome remarks and spoke about UPF's and the IAPP's work in the region. He said: "It is time for the national, regional and international communities to contribute to the realization of peace in the region and the world. Demonstrate the example to follow the path of cooperation, mutual prosperity and living for the good of others, thereby building the basis for a sustainable world of lasting peace that can be bequeathed to future generations. The IAPP provides a forum for parliamentarians, who are decision-makers, to present their solutions to help to solve the problems that face our world today."

Hon. Rushton Paray, an MP for Mayaro, a county on the southeastern part of Trinidad, spoke on the "The Role of Parliament to Achieve Stable and Lasting Peace." He emphasized the importance of the family unit in creating the foundation for peace.

Hon. Dr. Bhoendradatt "Bhoe" Tewarie, an MP for Caroni Central, a county in the west central part of Trinidad, gave a presentation on "The Role of Leaders, Global Vision of World Peace and the Challenges

of Our Time." He spoke about the critical issues facing the world today, from climate change and extremist ideologies and terrorist attacks, to humanitarian disasters and nuclear conflict.



Mrs. Gillian Wall, CEO of IBB Global and co-founder of the nonprofit Powerful Ladies of Trinidad and Tobago (PLOTT), spoke on "The Role of Women in the Establishment of Peace." She talked about the nurturing effect of a mother's womb as the starting point of caring and leadership. "Empower women to contribute to the just and peaceful resolution of conflict....and enable the effective participation of women in non-violent conflict resolution," she said.

Dr. Yang reported on the development of the IAPP around the world. To date, chapters have been launched in the capitals of more than 40 nations. He said: "Good governance is secured not only by the policies and laws of the political system. It is also necessary that those who hold positions of power be people of good character, guided by their conscience and universal moral principles. Good governance also depends upon a well-educated and morally responsible citizenry."

The Resolution in Support of the Formation of the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace was read by Mr. Belgrove and then was signed by all the participants.

Afterwards, new Ambassadors for Peace were appointed, and Hon. Paray was appointed as the president of the IAPP in Trinidad and Tobago.

Dr. Dawn Bacchus-Horan, in her closing remarks, noted the presence of seven clergy and religious leaders who represent the diversity of faiths in Trinidad and Tobago, and emphasized the importance of spiritual guidance in the decision-making process of parliamentarians.