

Assembly 2017 for West Africa Region's Cheon Il Guk Leaders

Dong Ho Cho
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Assembly 2017 for West Africa region CIG Leaders was held from 15 to 20 March 2017 in the Peace Embassy in Cotonou, Benin. This program has had the participation of eleven nations on 17 expected. To the eleven national leaders joined heads of departments of education, blessed families and youth and students. Also attended the Assembly of UPF's Secretaries General and Presidents of the Women Federation's chapters.

A total of 65 leaders, coming from 11 countries of the Western zone, joined the event which has become annual since the 1st edition in 2016. The main objective was to inherit the heart of hope of True Parents and reflect upon the development of the West African family for the next three years.

The Assembly was under the patronage of the Special Emissary, Rev. Katerine Rigney and the Regional President, Dr. Cho Dongho. They were assisted by the regional directors of Witnessing and Education, Blessed families and youth and students.

The meeting started on March 15 at 4: 00 with the opening ceremony which was followed by the reading of True Mother's speech on the Heavenly Parent's day 2017. After that, International President's message was read. These two speeches allowed leaders to glimpse the heart and spirit and the determination of True Parents in the next three years.



March 16 and 17, up to mid-day, the program was focused on presentations of the three region departments. Each regional Director presented his role and responsibilities but especially made an analysis of the strategies of the region to increase membership and gave some recommendations to improve our approach to society. March 17, in the afternoon the national leaders made presentations of their country strategy based on the three main points which are: witnessing and Education, Creating the environment of witnessing and raising future generation and talented leaders. They each showed their determination to make real progress in 2017. Each presentation was followed by Q & A. The session were very passionate.

Saturday, March 18, UPF Africa's Chairwoman, Kathy Rigney did an oral report of the Summit 2017 emphasizing the quality of African VIP who took part in the historic moment. She thanked leaders for the quality work in area of ambassadors for peace and express the need to guide them to become blessed members. Her address was enriched by the witness of a leader who lived a special experience with the special adviser to the President of Senegal; This Advisor who, in front of our True Mother, gave a heartfelt testimony saying that he had found his True Mother.

After this uplifting session, leaders welcomed Mrs. Brou Catarine, in charge of General Secretariat to discuss questions about administration and reports. She explained the monthly report form and the need to present reports at the required times.

In the afternoon of the same day, the Regional president, Dr. Cho Dongho explained his vision for the region and provided guidance to leaders for their mission. He successively presented the current situation of West Africa, the basic strategy of West Africa, the activities in 2015-2016 results and he then gave the 2017 objectives planned by nations and finally he insisted on Strategic keys Providential Nations (Ivory Coast, D.R.C).



Leaders raised concerns and questions to which the regional directors were invited to provide answers.

It is worth noting that every day, after the Hoon Dok Hae, a video on the life of True Parents was presented to leaders; the evening of Saturday 18, leaders have appreciated the entirety of the second act of "Hyo Jeong Culture Festival 2017" the Musical tracing the providential course of restoration completed by the victorious course of True Parents. The leaders were very touched and impressed by the quality of the Musical.

In addition, every night leaders were to meet to discuss their strategies and good practices in their mission field and prepare their resolutions for the closing of the Assembly.

Sunday, March 20 the general Sunday service of Cotonou brought together members of all centres around Cotonou. More than 300 members gathered to take part in the closing ceremony. This ceremony involved the reading of the resolutions by the representatives of the six teams that had been formed at the beginning of the Assembly, the special emissary and the regional president addresses. It was the opportunity for the regional president to present the scholarship to the beneficiaries. The day was concluded with a beautiful and colourful entertainment, showing the variety of cultures in Africa, prepared by second generation and blessed families.