

Ambassadors for Peace Participate in UN's 70th Anniversary Concert

David Eaton
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New York, United States—On June 30, 2015, Ambassadors for Peace Mr. David Eaton and Mrs. Seiko Lee participated in a concert at the UN in New York city in celebration of the UN's 70th Anniversary. The concert featured artists from Asia, Africa, Europe, the Caribbean, and the United States, several of whom performed with Mr. Eaton, music director of the New York City Symphony. For Mr. Eaton and Mrs. Lee, it was very gratifying to meet artists who share a similar passion to use their talent for a “higher cause.”



The orchestra's appearance was made possible in large part by UPF and Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP), both of whom fostered the necessary relationships with UN delegates. The concert was underwritten by the Office of the President of the General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa, of Uganda.

Mr. Eaton conducted the NYC Symphony in the premiere of his composition *70 and Counting* (Op. 54), which was composed specifically for this occasion. Soprano Seiko Lee was a featured soloist in Charles Gounod's well-known aria from his opera *Romeo and Juliet*, and assisted in producing the concert's grand finale, which was the UPF theme song, *One World of Peace*. The song, composed by Kevin Pickard, premiered at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall at the inaugural ceremony of UPF in 2005. It was Mr. Eaton and Mrs. Lee's recommendation to the producers that this would be an appropriate way to

conclude the ceremonial concert. Mrs. Lee arranged the choir music and managed to rehearse with many of the UN performers (via Skype) prior to their first rehearsals in New York.



The June 30 concert was the NYC Symphony's third appearance at the UN since 2011. As Mr. Eaton prepared for the concert, he reflected on the role of the UN and UPF's work in advancing peace: As we understand, there has been little emphasis placed on the need for interfaith dialogue in discussing international relations at the UN. However, as conflicts born of religious enmity in the Middle East and elsewhere continue, the UN has conceded that interfaith dialogue is needed in the peace equation. This affirms the vision of UPF founders Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, and the establishment of UPF and its continued efforts to promote interfaith harmony.

Because music is an especially effective means to evoke a spiritual atmosphere, nearly every religious tradition has utilized it for ritualistic and ceremonial purposes. But the transformative power of music goes beyond that which is ceremonial or ritualistic. In Rev. Moon's autobiography, *A Peace-Loving Global Citizen*, he states:

"People often think that politics moves the world, but that is not the case. It is culture and art that move the world. It is emotion, not reason, which strikes people in the innermost part of their hearts. When hearts change and are able to receive new things, ideologies and social regimes change as a result."

The theme of the UN concert was "The Transformative Power of Music," which was in complete accord with Rev. Moon's vision for the arts. If, as he asserted, using art and culture is the most efficacious ways to change hearts and minds, it seems imperative to support cultural projects that convey the ideals of peace.