

## First Sunhak Peace Prize is Awarded In Seoul

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**Seoul, Korea** - The first Sunhak Peace Prize was awarded to Kiribati President Anote Tong and fisheries scientist Dr. M. Vijay Gupta on August 28, 2015.

More than one thousand dignitaries, including current and former presidents, vice presidents, and other leaders of parliament, academia, business, media and religion from Korea and around the world attended the Inaugural Sunhak Peace Prize Ceremony, which was held in the Grand InterContinental Hotel Seoul Parnas.

Founded by **Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon**, the Sunhak Peace Prize honors the legacy of her husband, Dr. Sun Myung Moon, who dedicated his life toward realizing world peace, prosperity and coexistence. Dr. Moon formally proposed the Sunhak Peace Prize on February 20, 2013. The preparatory committee met on January 22, 2014. The winners, who were announced at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., on June 8, 2015, will share the \$1 million international peace prize.



According to the Sunhak Peace Prize Committee press release: “The 2015 Prize celebrates and seeks to

promote the link between sustainable development practices and global peace and justice. In the 20th century, peace was threatened by world wars and regional conflicts. The threats to peace and human security in this century prominently include not only territorial disputes and the rise of extremism but also climate change and its impact on food security and clean water for the world's most vulnerable citizens. The Prize emphasizes the critical role of interfaith and international cooperation based on respect for human rights as an essential foundation for peace.”

The emcees for the award ceremony were **Mr. Shin Young-il**, Korean Broadcasting System (*KBS*), and **Ms. Jung Saemi**, Arirang TV, Korea.



**Dr. Il-Shik Hong**, former president of Korea University and current chair of the Sunhak Peace Prize Committee, welcomed the laureates and the participants of the World Summit. He said, “The present generation must let go of their greed and selfishness, and transcend race, nation, ideals and religion in order to create a peaceful civilization based on love for humanity.” Dr. Hong revealed his hope for the Sunhak Peace Prize, saying, “Under the motto ‘Making the World Better for Future Generations’ we will go beyond the limits of civilizations that humanity had constructed until the 20th century, and, pursuing the peace of the human community, we will earn our spot as a prize that will open new horizons for peace.”

**Hon. Chung Ui-hwa**, speaker of the National Assembly of Korea, stated in his Congratulatory Address: “Along with national, regional, ethnic and religious conflict, there are new global threats, such as climate change, appearing concurrently and threatening the hope for peace. Meanwhile, I believe that the vision of the Sunhak Peace Prize, which aims for a world in which the love for humanity and nature and the community is based on solidarity and communication, has big implications for us all.”

**Hon. Dr. Jusuf Kalla**, the vice president of Indonesia, praised the founders for their vision and generosity. He spoke about the need for peace in the world. “It is referred to by many names—for example, ‘peace,’ ‘shalom,’ ‘salaam alaikum,’” he said. There is a direct connection between hunger and crime, according to the vice president. “There is a disbalance in our world and a lack of harmony on many levels.” He spoke about the disharmony between individuals, the environment and governments. All the tragedy and misfortunes in the world are due to this lack of harmony, he said. Water scarcity, refugees, pollution, climate change, etc., all can be traced to a disharmony. Dr. Kalla expressed particular concern for the most vulnerable groups – women, children and the elderly. He commended the Sunhak Peace Prize for focusing on the global problems, especially the feasibility of the oceans to serve as a sustainable source of protein for people around the world.

A video described the achievements of H.E. Anote Tong, president of the Republic of Kiribati, an island nation in the central Pacific Ocean. The president has been raising awareness of the seriousness of the effects of climate change and is leading the search for a global solution, beginning with the threat to his own country, which is on the verge of being submerged due to the rising sea level.

President Tong received the Sunhak Peace Prize medal from Founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and a plaque from Committee Chairman Il-Shik Hong.

In his acceptance speech, **President Tong** began his remarks with the Kiribati traditional blessing of “Kam na bane ni Mauri,” which translates as “May we all be blessed with good health.” The president praised the works of Dr. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon. “If the whole world were to embrace the visions ... promoting reconciliation, coexistence and cooperation, the world would certainly be a better and a more peaceful world.” As the elected leader of his nation, the president said he accepted the responsibility that came with it, namely, “to guide [the nation] towards a safe, secure and prosperous future.” Being a co-recipient of the Sunhak Peace Prize, he said, “gives me great hope that indeed the world has taken heed of my people’s struggles, my people’s plight and, most importantly, that my people are not forsaken by the world as a whole.” The president reiterated the gravity of climate change, which “affects all of us in varying degrees of severity, but for my people and all those who live on atoll islands, we are at the frontline of this global calamity with the very real possibility that our islands, our livelihoods, our homes, our identity as a people and as a culture may not exist within this century.” President Tong described his duty “to protect and nurture our people” as a moral obligation to protect the future of his nation.



This was followed by a video presentation on the career and accomplishments of Dr. M. Vijay Gupta, who has been addressing ways to avert future food crises by developing methods of aquaculture which benefit small-scale farmers. The aquaculture methods he has developed have helped lead the poverty-stricken masses, particularly women, in Southeast Asia and Africa to achieve greater independence and self-sufficiency.

The Sunhak Peace Prize medal was presented by founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, and a plaque was given by Committee Chairman Il-Shik Hong.

In his acceptance remarks, **Dr. Gupta** thanked the Sunhak Peace Prize Committee for recognizing “the importance of food security, environmental integrity and overall socioeconomic development as essential prerequisites for a peaceful society.” He pointed out that as the global population continues to increase, the demand for food can only increase but at the same our natural resources can only decline, all of which will impact and threaten “the fragile ecosystem and lives and livelihood of a large number of people if appropriate actions are not taken.” Dr. Gupta graciously expressed his gratitude to “Madam Moon for her vision in establishing this award and reminding the global community for the need to act fast for a food-secure and peaceful world.” Citing technological progress in recent years, “whether it is in industrial revolution, information technology, rocket technology, space science or agriculture,” Dr. Gupta said there is still too much hunger and poverty around the world. “One in three people globally suffers from hidden hunger or micronutrient deficiencies, especially women and children,” he said. “A new approach of inclusive and sustainable growth,” he said, is needed to “provide livelihood to all and preserve the environment for future generations, leading to a peaceful world.” He believes that “small farms and farmers in developing countries are the backbone of food security, and hence my work over the years has been in this direction, developing low-input, low-cost technologies that could be adopted and sustained by small aquaculture farmers, especially women, leading to their empowerment.”

To the delight of the audience, the ceremony ended with a performance by the famous dance troupe the Little Angels Children’s Folk Ballet, and Ms. Sumi Cho, a world-class soprano.

For more information about the Sunhak Peace Prize, go to <http://Sunhakprize.com/eng/>