

2019 UPF World Summit welcomed over 600 delegates in Seoul, Korea

William Selig and Ollie Davies
February 9, 2019



The 2019 Universal Peace Federation (UPF) World Summit centered on the theme of "Peace, Security and Human Development" welcomed over 600 delegates from around the world, representing governments, religious organizations and those active in civil society on February 8 and 9 at the Lotte Hotel in Seoul, South Korea.

With the opening program being guided by emcee Dr. William Selig, Communications Director for UPF International, participants were welcomed to a banquet, entertainment and some welcoming remarks.



Dr. Thomas Walsh, President of UPF International, welcomed the participants and presented an overview of the UPF World Summit program; an address from True Mother, International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP), Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD),

sessions focusing on peace in Northeast Asia and the Korean peninsula, and the introduction of the International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP).

Inspirational messages were given by Hon. Yoshinori Ohno, former Minister of Defense, Japan, who spoke about the way to bring about peace on any scale is to be open to others from different cultures and countries, and H.E. Dame Pearlette Louisy, former Governor General of Saint Lucia described the family as a school of love where the principles of peace and harmony are nurtured and developed. These messages, combined with wonderful entertainment and delicious food, culminated in an air of anticipation for the conference ahead.



The following day, the Opening Ceremony was a regal event. True Mother along with forty heads of state entered the ballroom of 1200 participants. After interfaith prayers and the national anthem performed by the Little Angels, Dr. Walsh congratulated the participants and set the tone for the conference. "We can make history," he said, "Peace can only come when all sectors of society are engaged, particularly the religious leaders. Billions of believers aspire to a world of peace."

Speakers such as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon. Myong Gyon Cho, former U.S. speaker of the house Newt Gingrich, and former U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney each spoke on topics related to the reunification of North and South Korea. Mr. Cho said, "Families remain separated due to ideological differences, but there is a spirit of hope in the air that the peninsula will be reunified."

True Mother called the participants "peace makers," "historical people," and "pioneers in building God's kingdom." She described the many programs in 2018, which brought her to Brazil, Austria, Nepal, South Africa, Zimbabwe and the United States. "I want to encourage leaders to reflect on the words of Jesus, and that we must live a life of true family values. Let us join hands as one family under God."

A cornerstone of the opening ceremony was the introduction of the ISCP, a new association of current and former heads of state, government and world leaders. Inaugural ISCP programs on the regional and national levels will be held throughout 2019 and the first World Assembly of ISCP will be convened in 2020. The afternoon sessions included keynote addresses from the current and former heads of state and government who shared their personal ideas and practical solutions to build peace and the need for respect and love as the foundation for world peace.

The representatives of many nations and diverse religions expressed their concern for the challenges facing our societies and particularly the crisis affecting the Korean peninsula today. At the same time, there was a profound sense of gratitude to True Mother and UPF for the spirit and opportunity to foster just and lasting peace on the Korean peninsula and the world.