

Think Tank 2022 Session VIII: The Korean Peninsula: African Voices for Peace

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South Korea - Think Tank 2022 Forum Session VIII of the World Summit 2022, co-hosted by UPF and the Royal Government of Cambodia, was held on February 12, 2022. The forum featured nine leaders from Africa, among them current and former heads of state, first ladies and spiritual leaders, who addressed the theme "The Korean Peninsula: African Voices for Peace."

The session was introduced by UPF International chairman, Dr. Thomas Walsh, who spoke of the African region as the strongest pillar of UPF's global foundation. He noted the heart of affection the African leaders hold for UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, who is known worldwide as the "Mother of Peace." In a recorded video message, each speaker expressed their earnest desire to come in person to Korea for the Summit despite the COVID-19 pandemic, which ultimately precluded their visit. The moderator of the session was Dr. Tageldin Hamad, Vice President of UPF International and Chairman of the World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (WANGO).

Speakers

Two of the nine speakers were spiritual leaders, while the other seven represented their nations as presidents, vice presidents or first ladies.

Prophet Samuel Radebe, founder and leader of The Revelation Spiritual Home in South Africa, said: "We are in the midst of a terrible pandemic and millions are suffering and looking for hope. The essential need at this time in history is for all people to return to the Creator, our Heavenly Parent. This is the central responsibility of spiritual and religious leaders. Without the Creator, problems of this world cannot be solved. We need spiritual guidance from people who are gifted spiritually to lead and guide. Politics alone cannot solve the problems. We are seeing the world enter into a darker phase; there is no moral compass, no direction in order to solve world problems because of lack of spiritual guidance. Our True Mother, Mother Moon has been working tirelessly, investing blood, sweat and tears. She has brought us hope. If we can unite with her and support her in building the Heavenly Parents Holy Community, we can transform this world and build one cosmic family of humanity. That is why I once again call upon the political leaders of Korea to seek True Mother's anointing and blessing."

Common themes emerged among the voices of African leaders. One of these was the feeling of existential threat brought about by the pandemic and other forces - perhaps most eloquently spoken by Hon. Nevers Mumba, Vice President (2003-2004) of Zambia, but shared with seriousness by all: "Never in the history of our world has mankind faced such strained relations and pandemics as today. War drums are beating in Europe with great potential for devastating effects on the entire globe; in Africa we have experienced six military coups in the past 18 months - an unprecedented number. We see poverty, family breakdown, climate change and the list goes on....I encourage the two-track approach to peace that involves civil society, trade and commerce, humanitarian relief, interfaith dialogue, cultural exchange and tourism. This multilateral approach is the way to peace. May God guide and inspire all the participants to go the extra mile in the search for peace."

In response to the imminent threats and challenges, the leaders expressed that humanity is one family and called for worldwide cooperation. H.E. Alassane Ouattara, president of Côte d'Ivoire, said there is a need for "interaction among civilizations which require peoples to have a common course of action and inclusive view on issues relating to peace and human development."

H.E. Mohamed El Baradei, Nobel Peace Prize laureate; Vice President (2013) of Egypt; and director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (1997-2009), congratulated UPF for the World Summit 2022 and Think Tank 2022 as examples of Track II diplomacy which can lay the groundwork for official negotiation and dialogue between the two Koreas away from geopolitical competition. "We need to change our mindset and internalize that whatever our ethnic, ideological or religious differences, we are in the end one human family and that what unites us is far greater than what divides us. We have no option but to find a way to live together. International cooperation is a moral imperative for our interconnected world."

Mdm. Monica Chakwera, First Lady of Malawi, stated that there is "no success in a divided world; we are all one family. In challenging times like these we must work together to heal the wounds of the past and engage fully in the transformation of present conditions and create a future of unparalleled dignity and beauty for all beings and all life."

The speakers articulated a deep understanding of history and the many conflicts and disputes between powers that separate people, including in Korea. They expressed that it is imperative that North and South

Korea be reunited and share their rich culture beyond the border that presents itself as an artifice inherited from history. The speakers also conveyed that, however commendable the efforts the two countries have made towards reconciliation, they must be supported by the entire international community.

H.E. Kwassi Klutse, Prime Minister (1996-1999) of Togo said, "The profound challenges we face require us to go beyond our borders." Regarding Korea, he urged, "Let all the peoples of the world stand up as one to call upon the brotherly people of the Korean Peninsula and their allies to use the power of true love and mutual understanding to achieve reconciliation and peace on the peninsula."

Dame Patience Jonathan, First Lady of Nigeria (2010-2015), said: "Without peace there will be no prosperity and no human development. I believe that women and children are the main victims of the recent crisis and therefore should be part of the solution. As women we are home builders and peacebuilders. We are naturally designed for this role and have risen up to the occasion in the past. We, of the International Association of First Ladies for Peace, are ready to fulfill our God-given role to work for peace on the Korean Peninsula."

Hon. Delfim das Neves, President of the National Assembly of São Tomé and Príncipe, and many of the speakers agreed that the significance of pursuing peace on the Korean Peninsula is of great importance at this time. The realization of peace on the peninsula would give hope that peace can be achieved anywhere and everywhere. The steps that are being taken by Dr. Moon and UPF can be applied in other conflict centers of the world.

All the speakers expressed gratitude for the conveners of the World Summit 2022 and in particular to the host, Dr. Moon, for her dedication and resolve for finding a real and lasting solution to the very important issue of peace on the Korean Peninsula.

Sheikh Mansour Diouf, representative of the Grand Khalif of the Murid Brotherhood in Yoff, Ouakam et Ngor in Dakar, Senegal, shared: "This conference expresses for me that God's Will is always to help his people with dignitaries and individuals like you who, despite conflicts in this world - be they military, ethnic or social conflicts - always stand firm, to alert and say no to violence and yes to peace. Despite all that has devastated humanity, Mother Moon, you still hold your head high and you call upon humanity to hold out hope, to try to transgress these violent rules and these terrorist rules in order to continue to work for this ideal, which is peace in this world. For this I, and I am sure others, can only express gratitude for the importance you attach to human life. Mother, my dear Mother, the one whom I call the 'Mother of Humanity,' I wish you a long life, solid iron health and a great success at this summit, of which I have no doubt."