

UPF International: In Memoriam: Pelé

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December 29, 2022



The Universal Peace Federation (UPF) joins the world in offering condolences to the family of Brazilian soccer legend, Pelé, winner of a record three World Cups, who died on December 29, 2022, at the age of 82.

Pelé is considered to be one of the greatest soccer players in history. Over the 1960s and 1970s, as a player with the legendary Brazilian club Santos, the New York Cosmos in the US, and the Brazilian national team, Pelé delighted fans all over the world with his stylish play. He was known as the king of the "beautiful game," a phrase he coined.



UPF's late co-founder Rev. Sun Myung Moon always had a vision of promoting world peace by connecting people of different religions, nationalities, and races. With this idea, after the 2002 World Cup in South Korea and Japan, he launched the Peace Cup competition in 2003, with Pelé's support.

Pelé and Rev. Moon had much in common: a love for peace and soccer. They met on several occasions, and Pelé sent condolences to Rev. Moon's family when the religious leader died in 2012.



In his autobiography, *As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen*, Rev. Moon, who in his lifetime founded professional soccer teams in Korea and Brazil, wrote about his meeting with Pelé and how the Brazilian star was instrumental in establishing the Peace Cup. The biennial event went on to attract world-renowned clubs such as Real Madrid, Juventus, Porto, and Tottenham.

"We are reminded at this time," said Dr. Thomas Walsh, chairman of the UPF, "of the passion and importance Rev. Moon, and his wife Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, placed on the role of sports as an instrument for world peace."

"Mrs. Moon, co-founder of UPF, often praised Pelé's achievements, especially his work in

establishing the inaugural Peace Cup in 2003 in South Korea, which brought joy to soccer fans around the world. Along with Mrs. Moon, the UPF family admires Pelé's achievements and believes his efforts to use soccer as a means for world peace will be remembered for a long time to come," said Dr. Walsh.