

JANUARY 2009

UPE TODAY

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO PEACE

**Interfaith Cooperation
and the Protection of
Human Rights**

**Global Peace Festivals
in the Philippines,
Brazil, Solomon Islands,
Japan, Korea, United
Kingdom, Malaysia,
Albania, and Moldova**

**South Caucasus Peace
Initiative**

A PUBLICATION OF THE UNIVERSAL PEACE FEDERATION (UPF)



As the Universal Peace Federation gathers in New York this January for the World Summit on Peace, and on behalf of all the members of the UPF Presiding Council, the Global Peace Council, the Regional Offices, the Secretariat and of course the hundreds of thousands of Ambassadors for Peace, it gives me great pleasure to wish our founders, the Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, a very happy birthday. Their continued support, vision and encouragement have been central to the UPF's success.

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UPF TODAY

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO PEACE

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UPF Today is the membership magazine of the Universal Peace Federation, founded by Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon. Envisioning peace as a state of harmonious interdependence among individuals, families, nations and peoples, UPF advocates constructive and original practices that contribute to achieving a unified world of peace, the hope of all ages. The magazine offers a forum for Ambassadors for Peace fostering human development, good governance, public service, and collaborative peace efforts involving religions, nations and nongovernmental organizations.

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A Busy Year



**Dr. Thomas G. Walsh,
Secretary General,
Universal Peace
Federation**

All of us take great pride in the advances made by the UPF in 2008. In the summer we filed our quadrennial report with the United Nations ECOSOC committee, and followed it up with activities in over 45 nations to celebrate the UN International Day of Peace. Next we held several events to mark the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including conferences at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, the UN Offices in Geneva, and other interfaith programs in London and Ottawa.

More than 20 Global Peace Festivals took place all over the world, beginning with a city-wide celebration in Asunción, Paraguay, in July and concluding with the “Festival of Festivals” in Haifa, Israel, in late December. Hundreds of thousands gathered in venues as diverse as the United States Capitol Grounds, the Jomo Kenyatta Center in Kenya, and Sukbaataar Square in the capital of Mongolia, as well as giant sports arenas in Japan, Solomon Islands, Malaysia, and Brazil.

The International Leadership Conferences also went from strength to strength. In a remarkable testimony at the House of Commons in London, Ambassador for Peace Mrs. Ida Odinga, wife of Kenya’s new Prime Minister Raila Odinga, said that the UPF peace principles had played an important part in helping them negotiate the near-miraculous peace deal reached between warring tribes in that African nation.

The UPF character education initiative has continued to make progress in many countries around the world. Educators in the Philippines have translated the *Discovering the Real Me* curriculum for use in schools in several regions throughout the nation. In the USA, programs are being tested in after-school and community-based programs, and in the Caribbean, the Initiative has been integrated into the schools in St. Lucia as well as in summer programs in Dominica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica. Educational initiatives using the character education books are also underway in Africa, Asia, Oceania, and South America.

This issue of *UPF Today* chronicles some of these accomplishments, and we look forward to many more in 2009!



Participants in a character education program in Bangladesh, June 2008



The Global Peace Festival in Haifa, Israel, took place on December 20 as part of the annual “Holiday of Holidays” organized by the city and various NGO partners.

INTERFAITH DISCUSSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AT THE UN

By Genie Kagawa

Over 300 religious, political, and civil society leaders gathered at the United Nations Headquarters in New York December 2 to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to consider how best to respond to the new wave of human rights violations around the world. The event was sponsored by the Permanent Missions of four nations: Guinea, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Nepal and coordinated by Ricardo de Sena, Director of the UPF Office of UN Relations.

The success of the event reflected the growing recognition at the UN that there is an important and growing role for “Track II diplomacy” that engages non-state actors, including faith leaders and NGOs. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recently lamented that faith-based discrimination and racism

show a “dismaying persistence,” and said that for peace to endure, individuals, groups, and nations must come to respect and understand each other – and that religious harmony is crucial to that process.

“Interfaith dialogue is absolutely essential, relevant, and necessary,” said conference Co-Chair H.E. Anwarul Chowdhury, a former UN Under-Secretary General. “If 2009 is to be the Year of Interfaith Cooperation, then UN urgently needs to appoint an interfaith representative at a senior level in the Secretariat.”

Mr. Paul Goa Zoumanigui of the Mission of Guinea called for religious leaders to take initiative to teach about human rights issues in their communities, and to make sure that the rights of

all people were honored, not just those of their own faith. H.E. Madhu Raman Acharya of Nepal agreed. “Peace is the highest calling of the UN,” he said, “and defending human rights for all is one of its highest goals. The UN and all religious leaders have a responsibility to not allow the idea of a ‘clash of civilizations’ to become a reality.

The Hon. Scott Garrett, US Representative for the 5th Congressional District in New Jersey, also urged the United Nations to sharpen its focus in the discussion of human rights. “All rights, including human rights and religious rights, derive from God, and it is the duty of the United Nations, and all governments, to protect those rights,” he said.

Dr. Hyun Jin Moon, Co-Chair of the UPF commented on the excitement surrounding the Obama administration in the US and the

hope of many nations that the USA would now be adopting a new stance in its international relations. “This is also a very good time for the United Nations to reflect upon its own strategies and policies to create peace,” he said. “If the recent atrocities in Mumbai, India, prove to have had a religious as well as a political motive, this will further underline the reality that religion has become one of the most important peace issues facing the United Nations.”

The religious leaders from many faiths present included Sikhs, Buddhists, Hindus, Jews, Muslims, Christians, and a number of smaller groups. “We need true tolerance, not just putting up with each other but becoming intimately connected,” said Rabbi Michael Weisser from Flushing, New York. “Religious and human rights are for everyone, not just those who look like us.”

I would like to see the United Nations encourage every nation’s faith-based and community partners to join with those of other countries to establish a Global Peace Corps.

— DR. HYUN JIN MOON



Dr. Hyun Jin Moon addressing a forum at the UN. On the left: Amb. Anwarul Chowdhury. On the right, Ricardo de Sena and Genie Kagawa.

RELIGIOUS YOUTH CALL FOR ACTION, NOT JUST WORDS

In the 60 years since its signing, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has been honored more in word than in action. Perhaps young people can be catalysts for change and bring about peace in ways that older people cannot.

With this hope, UPF invited young leaders from various faiths to consider how the wisdom of their faiths can help promote human rights and dignity. Forums took place at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, during the Global Peace Festival in London, and at the UN headquarters in New York. Some common themes emerged from this diverse group of youth:

Religious basis for respect for human rights

Buddhism: “Buddhism welcomes a diversity of beliefs as something that enriches humanity ... we believe that all religions that have peace as their central value teach people ways to behave more humanely and balance material and spiritual progress.”

– Esther Garibay

Christianity: “Religion should be a source of respect and openness to welcome the other person in his or her deepest identity, which is as a worthy, free, and responsible human being.” – Emmanuel Nacheff

Hinduism: “If I asked any of the religious leaders what the basis of their respected religion is, they will all say truth, duty, peace, love, and nonviolence.”

– Niraj Pabari

Jainism: “By understanding the divinity that lies within each soul, the only way for a Jain to live is by respecting each and every human.” – Krupa Shah

Judaism: “Jewish tradition teaches us that all humanity is created in the same image and that to destroy a human life is a desecration of all that we hold to be sacrosanct.” – Adam Branson

Difference between beliefs and practice

Buddhism: “So-called Buddhists do not always follow the Buddha’s teachings of peace. The bitter ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka and the experience of military dictatorship in Burma are violations of human rights by self-titled Buddhists.”

Christianity: “The religious dimension is often an aggravating factor in conflicts.”

Islam: “In the Lebanon war of 2006, Jewish and Muslim adherents were violating the rights of individuals to live peaceful lives. How can people who believe in one God, but have different means of expressing their beliefs, do this?” – Oznur Aycil

Youth as agents of change

Hinduism: “Why is it that youths from different faiths, cultures, and religions can sit down together and look for solutions for peace, while many of our elders cannot sit down and find peace?”

Islam: “It is our responsibility, especially the young people of today, to make this change. The longer we fool ourselves into believing that someone else will tackle this problem, the worse the situation will get.”

Need for action, not just words

Christianity: “This is our desire: a better and more just world. The road is long, but every road begins with one first step.”

Rama Engle, a student at The New Seminary in New York, said, “We have talked too much and our words lack intent. Now is the time when action has more power than the word. It is time to act.”

Speaking at the forum in New York, UPF Co-Chair Dr. Hyun Jin Moon emphasized both principles and action: “We need a new, spiritual vision of peace for the 21st century that can bring all people of faith together as one. That vision, I believe, is One Family Under God. A true interfaith experience is a celebration of the core principles that bind all God-affirming people together as one family. A practical task of all religions is to create a global culture of service, based on living for the sake of others. I would like to see the United Nations encourage every nation’s faith-based and community partners to join with those of other countries to establish a Global Peace Corps.”



GLOBAL LEADERS ENDORSE “ONE BIG FAMILY UNDER GOD”

By Leonard D. Postrado,
Manila Bulletin

Religious and political leaders from various nations shared the limelight on December 13 in front of thousands of people at the Quirino Grandstand in Manila in a show of unity and symbolic breaking of cultural barriers to become “one big family under God” during the Global Peace Festival.

During the occasion, Dr. Hyun Jin Moon announced to festival delegates the holding of the first ever World Convention of the Global Peace Festival in Manila by the end of 2009.

“London, Washington, Tokyo and Seoul were all strong candidates. But in the end, I am pleased to announce to you this evening that this GPF World Convention will be held right here in Manila,” he said to the cheering crowd.

According to Moon, the peace festival in Manila which opened last December 11 was to serve as a “great awakening” for the people worldwide to stand up and be united in eradicating strife and poverty worldwide.

“The dream of ‘One Family Under God’ will be clarion call of our age. The time has come to tear down the man-made walls of race, culture, religion and country, and establish the peaceful, ideal world of God’s cherished desire,” he said.

“It can end the strife and poverty of Africa, the conflict in the Middle East, and the final remnant of the Cold War on the Korean Peninsula. The power of one human family united with the Will of God can quell the turmoil of conflict throughout the world,” he explained.

Political leaders took a break from politics to join the global peace celebration. Former Speaker of the House Jose De Venecia, Jr., former Senate President Manuel Villar and Senator Miguel Zubiri shared the same stage as they joined religious leaders in the



Religious representatives, entertainers, and NGO leaders join together at the finale.

symbolic lighting of Peace Candles.

At least 81 governors, 18 congressmen, six senators and 30 mayors were cited by organizers in their efforts to promote peace.

In his welcoming remarks, Senator Villar reminded the public that peace should start from one’s self before it resonates to others. “We share a noble dream of creating a world at peace where love resonates all over, where we focus more on the many things that unite us rather than on our differences, where harmony prevails over discord and where everyone becomes his brother’s keeper,” he said.

“To build a peaceful world, we must start laying the foundation of peace in ourselves,” Villar added.

As to the Philippines being chosen for the GPF world convention, Robert Kittel, a GPF Public Relations director, said the country is the leading global peace advocate in the world and a perfect example of a nation with diverse cultures and religions that can live peacefully in one place.

“Take a look at the people in Mindanao. I think that’s the best way to explain how people, no matter what their race is, can live harmoniously,” he said.



Former President of the Senate Manuel “Manny” Bamba Villar

During the start of the festival, spectators were entertained by marching bands and street dancers donned in colorful costumes. Flags of different countries were paraded by Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) members.

Despite efforts to promote peace through becoming a single, unified family, Moon warned that attaining peace might be hampered should the basic fundamentals of family be eroded.

“Divorce and family breakdown are at an all time high. Every nation faces major challenges with its youth. The social and economic cost of the breakdown of the family is staggering,” he lamented.

“The healing of the family is a spiritual task. We must make it our priority to bring God back into every family. When God is at the center of our families, all our other problems will fade away,” Moon added.

SMALL ACTS OF SELFLESS SERVICE IN MANILA

By Robert Kittel

Partnering with government and agencies of social change, the Global Peace Festival is helping create a new sense of civic pride. At the Manila Bay Coastal Clean-up, International GPF Advisor Ms. Akiko Ikeno from New York inspired students at the inauguration of the project saying, “You are here not only to clean Manila Bay, but you are here as youth leaders to change this nation.”

She challenged the audience to think in bigger ways: “When you pick up garbage, you should think you are removing the ugly barriers that have segregated our societies, nations, and world.”

Service projects took place throughout the barangays (districts) of Metro Manila. “A lot of service programs had been held here, still this project is very different,” remarked Barangay Chairman Danilo Aquino, from Barangay 385 Zone 39, in Quiapo. As he watched the children participate in the project, he continued, “It makes children not only enjoy and feel the spirit of Christmas, it also helps us all realize the true value of having inner peace that will only be attained if it starts first from our home.”

Other projects included an adopt-a-park, adopt-an-historic-wall, community service as part of the Mister & Miss University Pageant, the medical mission in the Boystown in Marikina City, community immersion and gift-giving in Barangay 385, and a free medical and dental program. The biggest project, on December 11, involved elementary and high school students participating in a massive and simultaneous campus cleanup.

There’s a church song we Filipinos sing that serves to remind us we are all responsible for one another: that none of us lives — or dies — for himself alone. We are all God’s children — beyond race, beyond religion, beyond nationality, beyond culture. For we belong to one great human family under God.

— HOUSE JOSE DE VENECIA, JR.
FORMER SPEAKER, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, PHILIPPINES



As part of the medical mission, Ed Mallanao, a student at the International Peace Leadership College, carefully listens while Mrs. Maria Del Rosario, 66, shares her experiences.

The Mr. and Miss University program “really enhanced our ability to deal with other all kinds of people. It opened my heart and taught me the joy of living for the sake of others.”
— Ms. Maricor Olimpo, Makati University, Philippines



ECUMENICAL VISION TAKES ROOT IN THE AMERICAS

By Michael Balcomb

This program has been very well-supported by our community. Together with our police and fire departments, community health agents, and schools, it's good to see representatives of our federal agencies come here to help.

— DONIZETE ANDRADE,
MAYOR OF GAMA, BRAZIL

With more than 20,000 Brazilians of all ages filling the Nelson Nilson stadium with noise and enthusiasm on December 7, Bishop Manoel Ferreira, the tireless chairman and promoter of the Global Peace Festival held in Brasilia, could perhaps at last afford himself a quiet smile of satisfaction. "This is a very important time for Brazil," he told reporters. "We are one of the fastest growing nations in the world, and it is time for us to show the world what we can do." Although Brazil has its full share of social and economic problems, the most urgent problems facing its 180 million people are not primarily material or economic, but moral and spiritual, Ferreira said.

Bishop Ferreira, who not only serves as a Federal Deputy in the Brazilian Congress but is also life President of the nine-million member Assemblies of God fellowship in Brazil, might be one of the busiest men in Latin America. But in the previous five months the task of preparing the Global Peace Festival in Brazil was one of his main preoccupations, with several hundred volunteers coordinating a vast array of programs across the nation.

"Governments can't solve these problems alone," Bishop Ferreira said. "We have to empower our nation's youth and heal our families. We need to restore our traditional values." In fact, Brazil has been a leader in faith-based programs with churches tackling problems such as substance



abuse, alcoholism, family breakdown, and domestic violence with notable success.

The celebration in the nation's capital December 7 was a fitting conclusion to those long months of effort. The representatives of 50 nations, all 26 of Brazil's states, and hundreds of churches, mosques, synagogues, schools, and communities were treated to a festive gala that included traditional indigenous dances, a father-and-son horse parade, and performances by many of Brazil's top Christian and country music entertainers, including crossover multi-platinum singer and artist Frank Aguiar.

International Leadership Conference

An International Leadership Conference was held at Brazil's National Museum December 5-7. Participants came from throughout North and South America. Brazilian Christian leaders were inspired at the opportunity to meet visiting North American religious leaders.

Dr. Hyun Jin Moon talked about a new future opening up for Brazil because Bishop Ferreira had taken ownership of the GPF vision of One Family Under God. He urged participants to help bring together people from North and South America centering on that vision.

Quoting Victor Hugo's statement that "Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come," he called One Family Under God the message of



A GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR PEACE

Bishop Manoel Ferreira, Member of Congress, Brazil



this era. He invited everyone to become owners of the dream of One Family Under God and spread it to their communities.

On December 5, the GPF convened a special invitational program in the National Congress to consider ways in which faith and community leaders could help bring fresh perspectives to the nation's political challenges. Intrigued by the rare opportunity to participate in such a diverse gathering, representatives from the diplomatic missions based in the Brazilian capital, NGOs, and other community leaders swelled the attendance to more than 400.

Dr. Moon explained to the Congress that the GPF had three main objectives: interfaith cooperation, strengthening the family, and creating a culture of service. He urged the assembled deputies and guests to consider the creation of a "Global Peace Corps" that would give young Brazilians an opportunity to serve the region and the world.

Social Impact Projects

Earlier in the day, the idea became a local reality in the nearby city of Gama when 150 trees were planted and band shelters and playgrounds were painted in GPF's recognition of the United Nations International Volunteer Day. The young people who came out to volunteer were delighted to find themselves joined by an enthusiastic group of elderly people more than ready to help with the planting and to dispense gardening and other advice.

"This program has been very well-supported by our community," said Donizete Andrade, Mayor of Gama. "Together with our police and fire departments, community health agents, and schools, it's good to see representatives of our federal agencies come here to help." Several NGOs in attendance were coordinated by John Breyer, director of the Brazilian chapter of the International Relief Friendship Foundation. The event was covered by many local TV stations and the newspaper, *Tribuna do Brasil*.

We would like to once again celebrate the excellent work done by the Universal Peace Federation and the great global alliance that it is assembling for the task of building a world of peace and harmony, with all people united as brothers in the name of God.

Year by year, it is consolidating a global network of individuals and organizations committed to world peace through dialogue, education, and social service. In various parts of the world, it has set up programs for leaders of the entire society including the government, religious bodies, the media, the private sector, academia, and professionals.

The Universal Peace Federation seeks to establish ever more consistent links among the various Christian groups, in order to one day achieve the great dream of bringing together all people of faith. It has been working tirelessly in favor of dialogue among all faiths in the certainty that God's power and love transcends denominations, cultures, and faiths, and should be the fundamental quest of all civilizations.

It is multiplying geopolitical initiatives, involving Ambassadors for Peace working in Peace Councils on the national, regional, and global levels. The goal is to build a global network of leaders who represent well the ethnic and religious diversity of the great human family, with a view to overcoming barriers, conflicts, and prejudices, and consolidating a new era of peace, reconciliation, and harmony among all peoples.

The Global Peace Festival has shown a remarkable capacity for mobilizing and involving local communities in activities for peace and development based on universal values. We reiterate our commitment to promote justice and equality, preserving the right to life and dignity of future generations. When priority is placed on peace and the preservation of life, a new era for humanity will finally begin in which we are one family under God.



Bishop Manoel Ferreira (right) with Dr. Hyun Jin Moon

MAKING A MODEL NATION OF PEACE IN OCEANIA

By Greg Stone

The Global Peace Festival is a very powerful avenue in which individuals can come together and experience the diverse cultures and uniqueness and share with each other in joyous celebrations as one family under God.

— WILLIE PALUSI,
STUDENT, SOLOMON
ISLANDS COLLEGE OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

Parade to the festival site



Under the motto of One Family under God, everyone can learn to live in harmony, according to Hon. Augustine Taneko, a Member of Parliament and chair of the Global Peace Festival-Solomon Islands.

The GPF comes on the heels of a tumultuous time of civil war and riots in the Solomon Islands. The capital Honiara is still recovering from the wounds of ethnic conflicts between the indigenous population of Guadalcanal and migrants from the island of Malaita. The Global Peace Festival with its theme “One Family Under God” could not have come at a better time.

Rev. Sun Myung Moon Moon has stressed the role of the Solomon Islands and other small island nations of Oceania as setting the precedent to build unity among the nations of the Pacific and the world. The spiritual foundation of the Solomons was instrumental in the festival’s tremendous appeal.

The International Leadership Conference, whose theme was “Towards a New Paradigm of Leadership and Good Governance for Development and Peace,” brought together leaders from all spheres to discuss and consider good practices of good governance that lead to peace. The Head of State, H.E. Sir Nathaniel Waena, addressed the audience that included ministers of government and members of parliament, as well as major religious, women and youth leaders.

The November 29 celebration at Lawson Tama Stadium was preceded by a parade led by the police band and various cultural groups that drew hundreds of on-lookers, well-wishers and participants. They came to watch some of the brightest and most popular cultural groups and musical bands from



Next Generation Christian dancers

around the region as well as to hear national and local politicians speak of the significance of the day and the importance of the Global Peace Festival for the future of the Solomon Islands.

Outreach teams and advertisements informed schools, the media, and the general public about the GPF’s social impact activities, which included the National Song Competition, the Computer Assistance Program, the service projects, and scholarships to the Queensland Institute of Commerce and Technology.

The Global Peace Festival held a series of clean-up efforts together with schools to demonstrate an ethic of “living for the sake of others.” Those who joined the clean-ups drew curious gazes from the people in Honiara City, who encouraged the volunteers in their efforts and sometimes even joined in. One resident of Honiara congratulated the volunteers for their good job, exclaiming: “Show the people of Honiara how to clean their city!” Schools also invited the character education and HIV/AIDS prevention team to give presentations to raise awareness about critical issues facing the Solomon Islands.

Greg Stone is the new Regional Secretary General of UPF-Oceania.

FIFTY THOUSAND STAND UP FOR PEACE IN TOKYO

By Hiroyuki Koshoji

Fifty thousand people crammed into Tokyo's Ajinomoto Stadium on November 15 for the latest in a series of spectacular successes for the Global Peace Festival. One of the largest interfaith gatherings ever held in Japan highlighted months of community service and outreach aimed at encouraging Japan to become a global force for peace.

In his welcoming remarks, Professor Hiroo Suzuki, Chair of the GPF Japan Executive Committee, thanked the more than 100 local NGO and community service partners. Notable among the many community service projects held nationwide in the weeks before the Global Peace Festival was a bottle-cap-recycling drive started by schoolchildren in the Tokyo area. Spurred on by a goal of collecting 400 caps each, children arriving at the stadium turned in more than a million caps, enough to provide vaccinations for thousands of needy children throughout Asia.

Professor Suzuki also welcomed the large delegation from the International Leadership Conference, which included former heads of state, as well as congressional and religious leaders from 55 countries. Religious leaders joined in the popular “merging of the waters” ceremony for the unity and harmony of the world's major faiths.

Among the keynote speakers at the Festival, Jose de Venecia, Jr., long-term Speaker of the Philippine

House of Representatives, suggested that the “Golden Rule” — basically, do unto others as you would like them to do unto you — is a common ethic in all religious traditions and thus could be the basis for a new peace ethic to be promoted in the United Nations and governments around the world.

The Global Peace Festival Chair, Dr. Hyun Jin Moon, also praised Japan for its strong record of Official Development Aid and called for ordinary Japanese citizens to become more involved in voluntary peacemaking and service efforts both in Japan and on the world stage.

“I'd like to see Japan's community and volunteer partners joining with those of other countries to establish a Global Peace Corps,” said Dr. Moon. “Imagine if young people from enemy nations worked side by side in service. Any initial misunderstandings and hatred would fade away as they sweat, cry, and laugh together with a common purpose and cause.”

Cleanup and service campaigns were conducted as part of the festival. On November 9, 880 people gathered in the Adachi City, a part of metropolitan Tokyo, to clean the banks of the Arakawa River that flows through the eastern part of the city. Following the orientation and opening remarks, 150 families from eight different community volunteer groups started collecting garbage that had been dumped along the riverside.

After collecting rubbish, each family counted the quantity of material and recorded the type of rubbish. Through these investigations it is possible to identify and track a community's social and environmental problems.

This project was not only about solving environmental issues; it aimed to strengthen families and provide character education for both parents and children. The project organizers envision developing the cleaning project into an educational program for a larger number of elementary and secondary school students, with the support of the local community.



The festival was one of the largest interfaith gatherings ever held in Japan.

There are so many international meetings, but not with the breadth of participants that are at this conference. Here there are not only political and economic leaders but also scholars, religious leaders, and various specialists. This combination is what is needed in the 21st century.

— NAGAO HYODO,
FORMER JAPANESE
AMBASSADOR TO POLAND
AND BELGIUM



Parents and children worked together to pick up trash along the seashore in Toyoma City.

RENEWED HOPE FOR KOREAN REUNIFICATION

By Ricardo de Sena

Can Korea ever be reunited? That was the urgent question posed separately to a crowd of tens of thousands at the Global Peace Festival in Seoul's Yoido Plaza, and to a smaller but highly placed group of more than 600 people at the Korean National Assembly.

Congressmen and women and representatives of the international diplomatic community in Seoul gathered November 7-9 for a frank and often outspoken debate on the need for new strategies for the reunification of Korea. The UPF's International Leadership Conference also included 177 delegates from 55 nations gathered in Seoul to celebrate the Global Peace Festival.

The Hon. Young-sun Song, a National Assemblywoman and Co-chair of the International Leadership Conference, outlined the case for a new approach to peacemaking. "The current Six-Party Talks are producing only one winner, and that is North Korea," she said. "The more we talk, and the more aid we send to the North – more than US\$6.7 billion already – the more the North develops its nuclear and military capabilities."

Mr. Cheol-hwan Kang, a defector from North Korea who now works for the *Chosun Ilbo* newspaper in Seoul, agreed that the North Korean leaders were being manipulative, but explained: "The reality is that the ordinary people of North Korea are in a disastrous situation. More than three million have already died from hunger. Human rights are almost non-existent, and even the

deployment of more and more troops on the Chinese border is failing to prevent the flow of North Koreans wanting to defect."

The seminar featured panelists from each of the nations participating in the Six-Party Talks that are the current framework for the peace process on the peninsula. In turn, each panelist outlined the primary and often conflicting concerns of their nations. With common land borders with North Korea, China and Russia are very cautious about any sudden changes. In contrast, the Japanese focus on the human rights abuses in the North, especially the much-publicized abductions of Japanese citizens to train as North Korean agents.

Dr. Victor Cha, former US National Security Director for Asian Affairs at the White House, sounded a more optimistic note. "The US-ROK alliance remains one of the most underrated," he said. After a low point in 2002 following death of two Korean girls accidentally run down by a US military vehicle, the alliance has gone from strength to strength, with ROK troops a key US ally in Iraq and playing peace-keeping roles in other nations.

"The key task facing the United States now is to prepare for change in the North," Dr. Cha said. "Kim Jong-il is not well, and there is no clear line of succession. The US and the ROK may very soon need a 'concept plan' to deal with the possibility of a collapse or implosion of the regime."

"The relationship between Korea and the United States is at a new turning point," said Hon. Hyong O Kim, Speaker of the Korean National Assembly, "and we hope that the election of Barack Obama will provide an opportunity for a new beginning for our two nations."

A highlight of the seminar was a moving ceremony to honor 21 Korean War veterans representing all 16 nations of the United Nations Forces that defended South Korea after the North Korean inva-

Bicyclists promote the Global Peace Festival





sion in 1950. “Australia is intimately involved with the Republic of Korea,” said H.E. Peter Rowe, the Australian Ambassador to Korea, in a greeting to the veterans. “We are proud to have spilled both blood and treasure here to help a young nation be free, a decision that has been vindicated by the progress this country has made.”

“The Philippines is also proud to have been a member of the UN Command,” said Ambassador Luis T. Cruz. “Over 7,000 Filipino soldiers served here in Korea, and for 116 it became their final resting place. We must not let the young generation forget the price of freedom.”

Bishop Jim Swilley and Bishop William Sheals, leaders of two fast-growing mega-churches in the United States, representing the many faith leaders supporting the Global Peace Festival, strongly agreed. “Peace is always possible with God,” said Bishop Swilley, speaking later that evening at an Opening Banquet for the Global Peace Festival, “even when it seems impossible from the perspective of men.”

On Sunday, November 9, the Global Peace Festival took its message of hope and reunification



Hon. Hyong O Kim, Speaker of the Korean National Assembly, welcomes Global Peace Festival participants to Korea.

to the streets in a rousing appeal to the citizens of Seoul and Korea to stand up for peace. Tens of thousands came out to voice their support for a peaceful reunification with the North.

“It is no coincidence that today a Korean, Ban Ki-moon, serves as the Secretary-General of the United Nations,” said UPF Co-chair Dr. Hyun Jin Moon. “I believe that it is God’s will for Korea to work anew with the international community of nations and lead the peace process. Together, we can dare to dream the greatest dream of all, to create One Family under God.”

A MESSAGE OF PEACE

Today, I am declaring that it is time for all nations and religions to break down their barriers. With the help of heavenly fortune, under the auspices of the “Abel UN,” we will now make rapid progress toward a world transcending religions and nations. It will be God’s kingdom on earth.

For example, what do you think will happen if people from rival nations such as the United States and Russia marry across the boundaries of their nationalities and become one family under God, the eternal, absolute Lord of all Creation? They could no longer harbor antagonism or point weapons at each other, since many millions of grandchildren from their own lineage will come to make their home in both nations.

The holy task of building the ideal kingdom of heaven, the sacred reign of peace on earth, is being now carried out enthusiastically in all corners of the world. At this critical junction of human history, what will you do? Would you live foolishly for the rest of your life, merely seeking for your own comfort and self-interest? Or will you join with me on the victorious march toward the dawning of the substantial kingdom of peace?

Some may laugh and say that this is impossible. Yet, where there is a will there is always a way, especially if it is the will of God.

— REV. SUN MYUNG MOON

Excerpt from a message given at the Opening Ceremony of the Global Peace Festival in Korea

PROMOTING SPIRITUAL VALUES AND PEACE

By Joy Pople

The Global Peace Festival in London brought together Ambassadors for Peace from throughout Europe, Africa, and the Middle East to a wide range activities from conferences in elegant settings to service projects in inner-city parks and a rousing concert in the ExCel Centre.

It began on November 20 with a plenary discussion hosted at the House of Commons on the topic “New Paradigm in a Time of Global Crisis.”

The panel discussion, which featured several representatives from Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, was hosted by Dave Anderson, MP. Anderson, who represents Blaydon in Northeast England, recently attended the GPF in Kenya and warmly welcomed the delegates from over 50 nations. “People who want

to make a difference in this world are always welcome in this House,” he said.

“This work is most important if we are to find peace,” said Rev. Marcus Braybrooke, President of

the World Congress of Faiths, the opening speaker. “We must address the moral vacuum at the center of our society, and we need leaders whose humility is reflected in their public and private life.”

Several speakers expressed a sense of urgency over the need for a fresh approach or a new paradigm for peaceful change. The Hon. Amjad Ali Majali, MP from the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, expressed profound frustration with the slow pace of change in the Middle East. “We have to make a frank and objective assessment of current peace strategies in our region,” he said. “We need to build up an infrastructure for peace and we desperately need to teach our youth about peaceful coexistence. In short, we need a ‘new moon’ of peace.”

“Obviously we all agree that good governance is desirable,” said H.E. Ahmed Kabbah, President of Sierra Leone for eight years until 2007. “Leaders should always realize that they are servants of the people, including their own staff and associates. However, making good governance an absolute prerequisite for financial aid and support for peaceful development still may not be the best policy.”

The next speaker was Mrs. Ida Odinga, wife of the Prime Minister of Kenya, the Hon. Raila Odinga, and herself chair of Kenya’s League of Women Voters. “Kenya has seen great changes in the past decade, moving from single-party rule to a multiparty democracy and the current governing coalition,” she said. “But after the unexpected outburst of post-election violence last year, we realize that our work is just beginning.” Mrs. Odinga also noted that the work of the International Leadership Conference and the success of the recent Global Peace Festival in Nairobi had also played an important part in stabilizing the country.

Anton Rop, Prime Minister of Slovenia from 2002 to 2004, spoke about the new challenges posed to peace by the current global financial crisis. “Today the well-being of entire nations is being threatened by what Warren Buffet has termed ‘weapons of financial mass-destruction,’” he said.

I’m a Rotarian and am very proud of it. I was appointed a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons. To be appointed an Ambassador for Peace is the greatest honor. When it was given to me, I spent the next 24 hours thinking that I had to do something to justify this great honor. I believe that this organization is going to change the pattern of thinking in the world.

— DR. MOHAMMAD ABDUL RAHEEM KHAN,
AMBASSADOR FOR PEACE

Arriving at the House
of Commons



“The task of building a world of peace must start with faith leaders and people of faith,” said Dr. Hyun Jin Moon in his keynote address. “My father has always believed that God works through all faith traditions. We need to identify, promote, and celebrate our many common and universal principles and work to create One Family under God, one family at a time.”

International Leadership Conference

The International Leadership Conference was held in the legendary Palm Court Terrace at the London Waldorf Hotel. Senior statesmen spoke about their experiences addressing a variety of conflict situations, hoping that a new generation of leaders will benefit from their insights. Jan-Willem Bertens, a former Dutch Ambassador in Central America, described working behind the scenes to defuse tensions and bring armed conflicting parties together. H.E. Alfred Moisiu, former president of Albania, talked about ways people in the Balkans have been working together to rise above historic conflicts.

Other speakers included Ambassador Makarim Wibisono, former president of the UN Human Rights Council, and Rev. Marcus Braybrooke of the World Congress of Faiths, who spoke about the spiritual impulse behind the creation of the United Nations. Youth representatives from six religious traditions said that young people had a particular responsibility and opportunity to move beyond barriers created by differing religious practices and rituals, and allow the wisdom and universal values of their religions to promote human rights and dignity.

A second session reviewed the quest for common values in Europe throughout 2008, which has been designated the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. Iman Abduljalil Sajid, Chair of the Task Force for the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, challenged the audience to seek new opportunities for interaction among different cultures.

Main Event

At the exhibition hall at the ExCel Centre, art displays and information booths attracted much attention. There were six focus sessions on a variety of topics. The 3,000 seats in the auditorium quickly filled up, and another 1,000 people watched the program on a screen in an overflow room. Musicians from various backgrounds and styles performed, to the delight of the audience. Dhol drums and bagpipes opened with an exciting East/West fusion perfor-



The opening session of the International Leadership Conference took place in a committee room of the House of Commons

mance, followed by the string section of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by David Eaton playing Benjamin Britten’s “Simple Symphony.”

Then top UK soul singer Ola Onabule and the Austrian Peace Choir took to the stage to sing Josh Groban’s “You Raise Me Up.” Other singers included “New Generation” from the DaVinci’s band, Dawud Wharmsby, Steve Balsamo and The Storys, the teen rap star Chipmunk, and Patti Boulaye.

Jhr. Drs. Pieter Beelaerts van Blokland, a former Dutch government minister, welcomed Dr. Hyun Jin Moon, who spoke extemporaneously on the theme of “One Family Under God,” a message he has been delivering throughout the year to Global Peace Festivals on five continents. He called upon the crowd to make a commitment to interfaith unity, strong families, and selfless service.

This keynote address was followed by a Beatles tribute band. The music proved irresistible, and people of all ages got out of their seats to dance and mingle with one another to some of the most memorable songs. For once, it was not a “Hard Day’s Night,” and the evening concluded happily with the appointments of many new Ambassadors for Peace.

Below: The string section of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

Bottom Right: Representatives of different faiths pour water into a common bowl, symbolically bringing together the resources of their faith traditions.

Bottom left: Spectacular ball control by World Free Style Football Champion, John Farnsworth



MALAYSIA ASPIRES TO BE THE WORLD CAPITAL OF PEACE

By James Poon

Space has definitely changed my view on life,” Malaysian astronaut Datuk Dr. Sheikh Muszaphar Shukor told the packed and attentive audience at Kuala Lumpur’s Bukit Jalil stadium at the Global Peace Festival Malaysia on October 19. “When I was in space, I felt very sad,” he said. “I saw how small, how perfect our planet really is, and then I reflected on all the conflict and suffering we cause each other. I started to be more concerned about the suffering of women and children, and I decided I had to do something about it.”

*We must anchor peace on earth,
and that can only come through faith.
Religions’ purpose is to advocate the
brotherhood of man, and if you are a
brother you don’t fight against each other
and you have to live in peace.*

— TUN DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMMAD,
PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA, 1981- 2003



Former Prime Minister of Malaysia,
Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohammad

Sheikh Muszaphar and a host of the nation’s most influential citizens were gathered to celebrate the latest in the Global Peace Festival series and to promote the GPF vision with the slogan “Let’s make Malaysia the world capital of peace.” The Festival was jointly sponsored by the Universal Peace Federation, the Ministry of Unity, Arts, Culture and Heritage, and the United Nations Association of Malaysia.

“We’re proud of the fact that our multi-cultural, multi-racial, and multi-ethnic society – Malay, Chinese, and Indian – has managed to live together in peace for 50 years since independence,” says Tan Sri Datin Paduka Zaleha Ismail, chairperson of GPF Malaysia. An energetic Muslim woman with enthusiasm all over her face, Tan Sri Ismail says the Festival’s simple message of “One Family Under God” can help spread the Malaysian success story to other nations in the region, where racial and religious tensions all too often erupt into violence and bloodshed. “We

need a new generation of leaders to bring peace,” she said.

Several of Malaysia’s top recording artists, including ‘Malaysian Idols’ Danell Lee (2005) and Jaclyn Victor (2004), along with Ella, the ‘Queen of Rock,’ offered free performances at the Festival and helped record public service announcements in the weeks leading up to the celebration. The Royal Malaysian Air Force Band and the Cultural Dance Troupe of the Malaysian National Department of Culture and Arts, together with a host of rising young stars, kept the crowd of 15,000 on their toes.

International Leadership Conference

Speakers at the International Leadership Conference called for a greater understanding between Islam and other Abrahamic faiths. “We share the same two commandments,” said Imam Faisal Abdul Rauf of the Cordoba Initiative. “We are to love God, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. Today, everyone is my neighbor. But we are not actually living the commandments.” Imam Rauf, a leader of US/Muslim dialogue, heads a mosque near the World Trade Center in New York, and is author of the book *What’s Right with Islam*.

The Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohammad, Malaysia’s Prime Minister for 22 years from 1981 to 2003, agreed that religious and political leaders need to work together much more closely for peace. Denouncing radical interpretations of Islam that seem to call for violence, he said that Islam must be a force for peace. “We must anchor peace on earth,” he said, “and that can only come through faith.”

Social Impact Projects

Meanwhile, thousands of students were engaged in a far-reaching campaign of community service



Malaysian astronaut Datuk Dr. Sheikh Muszaphar Shukor with Dr. Hyun Jin Moon

aimed at conquering poverty and despair in the region. “Every young person can make a difference,” says Dr. Teh Su Thye, who serves as the Executive Director of GPF Malaysia. “When high school and college students can give just 10 cents a day we can say ‘Bye to Poverty’ once and for all.”

“One Family Under God should be the clarion call of this age,” said GPF Founder, Dr. Hyun Jin Moon. “It is not the dream of just one family, religion, or nation. It is the dream of all humanity, and more than that, it is the dream of God. If Malaysia can take ownership of this dream it can bring hope to all of Asia.”



The ‘Power of 10 Cents’ campaign is a student-led effort to raise money to alleviate hunger and poverty.

THE ROOT OF PEACE

*Tan Sri Datin Paduka Zaleha Ismail
Co-Chair, Global Peace Festival, Malaysia*



When the Global Peace Festival was supported by eight ministries of the government and other agencies, it opened the eyes of many people. I feel that with the support of the government we can accomplish a great deal. We had 2,500 young people coming for community service at one time, and they are asking, what next? Where are we going to have our next project? When will it

be? This means that we have created interest in peacebuilding in many levels of society.

In Malaysia, many projects have been carried out for families, youth, and children yet nobody tied them in with peace. Nobody thought of them as part of peacebuilding.

When you go back to the root of peace, it has to be from the family. I am heading a government agency, the National Population and Family Development Board. Our main objective is to ensure stable families. Our agenda is family development and improving the quality of life, which means basically a healthy society. This institution that I am heading can do a great deal to strengthen the base of families and promote peace-building initiatives.

One model that’s been developed is Smart Start. If you want to have smart marriages and happy families, you must start with smart singles. I think it is true that two smart singles can really build smart marriages and have happy families.

I am sure that with the support of the ministries of higher education and of primary and secondary education, UPF’s character education initiative can be carried out in the whole country. In fact, before the Global Peace Festival we had started looking at UPF’s character education initiative. We had the support of some university professors, we are adapting it to our multi-racial, multi-cultural, and multi-ethnic nation. We think it will make a great contribution.

I think there’s a great future for peacebuilding in Malaysia. The response of local people and conference participants to proposals for peacebuilding in Malaysia has been good. I’ve been asked for the modules we’re using. We can really be an exporter of peacebuilding initiatives.

THE WORLD IS OUR ONE HOME

By GPF-Albania

Approximately 4,000 people joined a high-spirited peace march through the ancient Albanian city of Korça to mark the Global Peace Festival on October 18. The throng of peace marchers joined the main celebration in the Sports Hall, where the master of ceremonies, nationally-known musician and producer Dhimiter Orgocka, moved people's hearts with his appeals for peace.



Many well-known singers and performers from Albania and neighboring countries highlighted the Main Event, culminating with Alban Skenderaj, the leading young singer in Albania at the moment, who came directly from Germany to participate in the event.



Life in Korça was very lively from October 11 to 18. The festival week opened with an event sponsored by UPF in partnership with the Mary Potter Palliative Care Center to raise funds for those in need of cancer treatments. In addition, an Exhibition of Figurative Arts promoting talented new artists in the city opened on October 13, attracting hundreds of visitors.



The morning of October 15, a Student Convention was held at the University of Korça. Approximately 200 students attended the event on the theme “Mankind One Family, the Earth One Home.”

That afternoon, the district director of the Ministry of Education hosted an award ceremony for the winners of the high school essay competition on the theme, “Mankind One Family, the World One Home.”

A sculpture of 400 origami cranes was given to the mayor of Korça. Origami cranes are symbols of peace and hope in Japan. They were tied harmoniously into one whole and linked to a globe, representing the theme of “Mankind as One Family and the World as One Home.”

On October 17, 1,500 young people and students joined in a social impact project to increase the green areas in the city by planting trees and cleaning schoolyards. All of the schools of the city were involved in the project.

The same day, a scientific conference on environmental protection entitled “My City, My Home” was held at the university in partnership with UPF, City Hall, and the University of Korça. Many nationally-known scholars spoke at the conference.

The final day of the Albania GPF started with another tree planting ceremony. Many dignitaries participated in the ceremony, including Former President of Albania H.E. Alfred Moisiu, Korça Mayor Niko Peleshi, the Regional Education Department Director Mr. Andrea Mano, and many Ambassadors for Peace from Albania and other Balkan nations.

Approximately 150 distinguished guests and Ambassadors for Peace from Albania and other Balkan nations participated in the International Leadership Conference entitled “Toward Leadership and Good Governance for Lasting Peace and Development in Albania and Balkans.” The presentations were much appreciated, and at the end of the conference 60 new Ambassadors for Peace were appointed.

On the morning of October 19, 150 people gathered to reflect on the events of the week. Ambassadors for Peace from Albania and other Balkan nations shared highlights of their experiences during the many events that took place during the Global Peace Festival.

FESTIVAL BRIDGES EAST AND WEST

By Ronald Koonce and Meg Giossi

The East-West dilemma in Moldovan foreign policy is a recurrent concern. Due to the near impossibility of defining clear priorities in the first years of independence from the Soviet Union and making a break from the old mentality, Moldova has been trapped in an interminable transition and identity crisis.

The challenge is to reconcile Moldova's dependence on the East with its willingness to join the West. In the media, this has been compared to being in two boats at the same time. Moldova has reached a moment when a choice has to be made. Nevertheless, the choice is not of being with one and denying the other; it is more of belonging to one while understanding the other. This "identity crisis" is one of the primary reasons why the November 9 Global Peace Festival in the capital of Moldova, the city of Chisinau, was so successful.

In order to identify and celebrate the ongoing efforts of outstanding individuals and organizations who are contributing to human development and promoting a culture of peace and service, 250 NGOs in Moldova were surveyed. The most outstanding organizations in the following four categories were selected for special recognition:

- **Family and education:** Sperantsa (meaning hope) for its innovative leadership in rehabilitation and integration of special needs children into school and society.
- **Peacebuilding:** the Moldova World Children's Fund, founded by two former adversaries, a Soviet officer and a US Navy captain, for its devotion to improving the lives of the children of Moldova.
- **Sustainable economic development:** New Perspectives for Women, a project implemented by USAID and WINROCK Int., for combating the devastating effects of human trafficking by providing career training for young women from rural areas who are vulnerable, both economically and socially.

- **Media for peace:** a posthumous award to Victor Mocanu for his untiring efforts to improve the lives of the people in his community by discussing important issues, finding solutions, and bringing them to the public through a small radio station.

The main event started with the message that music is the connector of all people, with help from a few words by John Lennon. Then, the distinguished guests in attendance were entertained by Moldovan pop stars singing of peace as well as several traditional dance performances from around the world.

The speech by Dr. Katsumi Ohtsuka, regional chair of UPF-Eurasia, was received with great interest and enthusiasm from the guests. The message encouraging Moldovans to take ownership of the vision to build "One Family under God" in the region resonates with Moldova's spiritual traditions.

Finally, all performers gathered together on stage with candles to sing the finale, "One Family Under God," in a spectacular display ending in a touching moment with four doves being released into the air.

The message rang clear. It transcended national borders, religions, and personalities in a true example of peace. Hearts sang louder than words and, in a place that is divided, a time was created when all could come together.



SOUTH CAUCASUS PEACE INITIATIVE

By Jacques Marion

The South Caucasus embodies aspects of the three strategic issues that UPF focuses on worldwide. First is the interreligious dimension of the Middle East conflict, mirrored in Muslim Azerbaijan and neighboring Christian Armenia. Next is the ideological dimension of the North/South Korea conflict, reflected in the Georgia-Russia struggle which is, in a way, about different concepts of democracy. Finally, the widespread social problems created in the region by years of conflict reflect many of the challenges addressed by the UN Millennium Development Goals.



H.E. Rahim Huseynov, former Prime Minister of Azerbaijan, chaired the peace conference in Baku.

Offering donations to refugees from the Karabakh war living in Baku, Azerbaijan.



Baku, Azerbaijan

From December 2-5, UPF held a peace conference in Azerbaijan headed up by two of our leading Ambassadors for Peace, Dr. Vladimir Petrovsky, Chairman of the Russian Political Science Association and UPF-Eurasia Assistant Secretary General, and Dr. Eduard Yakovlev, a medical surgeon and president of the International Super-Marathon Association – also a Vice President of our Russian Peace Council.

We were welcomed in Baku by a high level delegation including former Prime Minister Rahim Huseynov, Members of Parliament Dr. Ilyas Ismaylov and Prof. Dr. Jamil Gasanli, long-time Head of the Football Federation of Azerbaijan Mr. Fuad Musayev, and Mrs. Zarifa Salahova of the Women's Association of Azerbaijan.

The following day we visited a camp of refugees from the Karabakh war. We met with 40 women, many of whom lost children and husbands during the war, living in very humble, rundown buildings outside of

Baku. We could feel the pain and resentment of these people who long to recover their lost homes. A donation was offered by Ambassador for Peace Dr. Akif Kerimov and by UPF-Azerbaijan.

Our peace seminar began with introductory remarks from Mr. Rahim Huseynov and a presentation on “UPF Approaches to Peace-building” and “UPF Vision on Conflict Resolution.” Dr. Vladimir Petrovsky concluded with a presentation on “Human Security and Human Development in the South Caucasus,” in which he proposed a resolution calling for a minimum standard of human security to be officially adopted by all parties in conflict.

Tbilisi, Georgia

The Georgia series of events was organized by UPF Representative Vitaly Maximov and Ambassador for Peace Dalila Khorava, the Minister of Health, Labor and Social Affairs of Georgia's Abkhazian Government. Dalila single-handedly mobilized all the participants for the conference and organized the Global Peace Festival. Both were great successes.

The seminar was attended by 80 participants, including Mr. Vakhtang Kolbaia, Vice-speaker of the Georgian Parliament and several officials representing in Georgia the regional governments of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. On the afternoon of December 7, the Global Peace Festival was held in Tbilisi at the Professional Workers Palace. A thousand participants attended. The master of ceremonies introduced the Global Peace Festival as part of Dr. Moon's



H.E. Dalila Khorava, Minister of Health, Labor and Social Affairs of Georgia's Abkhazian Government, Co-chair of GPF-Georgia.



Meeting with the Armenian Ombudsman, Professor Armen Harutunyan (2nd from right)

broad work for peace. Former Georgian President and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze attended the program, along with representatives from consulates and parliament members.

Yerevan, Armenia

On December 14-16, as our third and last stop on this South Caucasus Peace Initiative trip, our UPF delegation went to Armenia accompanied by Dr. Oleg Mironov former Ombudsman of Russia (1996-2003) and UPF Ambassador for Peace.

Our seminar, attended in majority by people not in current political position, allowed us to perceive a certain openness for dialogue and reconciliation. When one young participant tried to emphasize the “enemy” status of the Azerbaijanis, she was opposed by other participants who on the contrary reminded that many Azerbaijanis sacrificed their lives to protect Armenians during the war. In fact the two communities had lived side by side for centuries, and many had intermarried.

There are several NGOs working for reconciliation between the two nations even though they are hindered by government control on the peace process. One of their projects is to establish what they call a “South Caucasus Congress,” transcending national borders. We can conceive of making a Global Peace Festival that would include participants from the three nations.

The conclusion of this year’s effort will be the Moscow South Caucasus Peace Initiative Conference on Human Security in Conflict Areas, to be held in January 2009 in Moscow. The conference will be co-sponsored by the Russian Political Science Association.

Participants in the December 14 seminar in Yerevan, Armenia

IN MEMORIAM: AMBASSADOR FOR PEACE EDUARD YAKOVLEV

On December 7, a “Peace Run” was organized by UPF-Georgia as part of the Global Peace Festival with the support of visiting Russian Ambassador for Peace Eduard Yakovlev, President of the International Super Marathon Association. About 150 people took part, including 18 handicapped people.



Mr. Yakovlev said that since he did not feel very well that morning, he would only run one mile with the runners, and kept a car on hand nearby. However, after running just two blocks, he collapsed with a heart attack and died on the way to hospital.

As a Russian who came for peace to Georgia – he was wearing a T-shirt with both the Russian and Georgian flags – his death became the center of media attention. The Russian consul in Tbilisi received a call of condolence from the leader of the Georgian Parliament, and later that day Georgian officials said that if his family agreed to have him buried in Georgia, he would be honored in the Pantheon of Georgian Heroes.

However, his relatives naturally asked that his body be returned to Russia, and Russian local authorities then did their best to support the process of repatriating him to Moscow through Armenia, since there is no longer any direct communication between Georgia and Russia.

With his passing, UPF and the Russian people have lost a great Ambassador for Peace, whose enthusiasm for the task lasted until the very last moment of his life. We will continue the noble work for which he gave everything he had.

— VLADIMIR PETROVSKY



UN INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

The United Nations' International Day of Peace — marked every year on September 21 — is a global holiday when individuals, communities, nations, and governments highlight efforts to end conflict and promote peace. Established by U.N. resolution in 1982, "Peace Day" has grown to include millions of people around the world who participate in all kinds of events, large and small.

The UPF and its partners engaged in hundreds of Peace Day 2008 programs. Here's a representative sample from the Americas, with a fuller account on our website, www.upf.org.

Argentina

An olive tree symbolizing peace, victory, strength, and endurance was planted in the "Parque Patricios" district of Buenos Aires. Mrs. Maria Costa



Argentina

Pinto, the UN Information Centre Director for Argentina and Uruguay; Miguel Werner, Secretary General Secretary of UPF-Argentina; Mr. Horacio Daboul, the President of the Social and Cultural Arabic League Association participated in the celebration. A parade along Caseros Avenue concluded the day. Organizers included the Trade and Industry Chamber, the Huracan Athletic Club, the San Antonio Sociedad de

Fomento, the Corrales Viejos Brotherhood, the Felix Bernasconi Institute, and the Memorial Forum.

Brazil

Alencar Burti, President of the Federation of the Commercial Associations of Brazil, opened the celebration at the Pateo do Collegio in São Paulo. A Unesco representative read the peace message of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, and the Human Rights City Commission Representative, José Gregory, read a message from the State

Dominican Republic



Secretary of Justice and Defense of the Citizenship, Dr. Luiz Antônio Guimarães Marrey. Other speakers included representatives from civil society, businesses, and international associations. José Maria Chapina Alcazar and Silvia Maria Penha de Aquino were awarded the Mark of Peace Trophy. Representatives various religions participated in a ceremony symbolizing interfaith cooperation for peace.

Dominican Republic

A thousand people filled the auditorium of the National University in the city of Higüey in honor of the International Day of Peace. The celebration had an ecumenical character. The Catholic bishop, Mons. Gregorio Nicanor Peña, spoke about peace as one of the "fruits of the spirit" mentioned in the Bible, and the president of the Association of Christian Churches of the province, Rev. José Benito Capois, offered the invocation. Senator Germán Castro García spoke about the need to uproot hate, resentment, and arrogance from one's hears and replace them with forgiveness. Mrs. Clara Benedicto, head of international relations at the National University, spoke about the importance of true love and the role of women in building a culture of peace.

Ecuador

The International Day of Peace celebration attracted 1,400 participants, including the Chinese Ambassador to Ecuador, a representative of the Bolivian Ambassador to Ecuador, and the consuls of Bulgaria, Portugal, and Thailand. Catholic, Episcopal, Anglican, and Protestant religious leaders were present, along with political leaders, educators, NGO representatives, and the mass media. In addition, the civil defense and fire departments were mobilized.

Guyana

Acting President Samuel Hinds unveiled a peace pole in Georgetown at the Non-Aligned Monument engraved with the words "May Peace Prevail on Earth" in English, Spanish, French, and Dutch. Prayers were offered by representatives of various religions. Also present at the ceremony were the Minister of Culture Youth and Sports, Dr. Frank Anthony; and the Mayor of Georgetown, Hon. Hamilton Green. The Scouts Association helped

sponsor a peace march along Main Street on the theme “Work to overcome barriers, build understanding, and promote reconciliation.” It ended at the bandstand of the Kingston Seawall, where peace poles from various parts of the country were erected.

Honduras

The celebration in Tegucigalpa was attended by 210 political leaders, government officials, civic leaders, businessmen, trade union members, and leaders of both Catholic and Evangelical churches. The appeal to peace resonated with the people of Honduras, a small country with harmony among people of different races.

Jamaica

Seventy people attended a lecture on conflict resolution presented by a youth facilitator who works with UNICEF and the Dispute Resolution Foundation. The presenter made a great impression because of his practical experiences living and working in violent inner city communities. Rev. Maxine Martin from Unity offered a song of peace.

Paraguay

The International Day of Peace was celebrated in the former Senate Chamber in the historic Cabildo building in Asunción. Among the 120 people in attendance were officials from the ministries of Education, Culture, and the Environment as well as Ambassadors for Peace, lawyers and educators. The Peace Declaration was read, and a video was shown about the Global Peace Festival in Asunción in July.

Peru

Two hundred people from all walks of life came together in Lima to share their hopes and aspirations for peace. The program included music, dance, and a theatrical performance, an interfaith candle lighting ceremony, a minute of silence, and speeches by UPF-Peru president Arq. Luis Huarcaya, and indigenous leader Amautha Willakoq Tãhuro. Distinguished guests included Arq. Jose Rosas, President of the Ethics Committee of the Peruvian Architects Association; former Congressman Lic. Valdez; former Mayor of Jesus Maria, Lic. Paquito Izquierdo; and President of the Intercultural Society, Dra. Izaguirre. The religious community was represented by Evangelical Pastor Luis Acero, Pentecostal Pastor Orestes Sanchez, and Imam Khalil Muhammad.

St. Kitts & Nevis

The “Silver Jubilee Committee” and the Ambassadors for Peace and Empowerment held

an all-night peace vigil at Warner Park in Basseterre. The program included the national anthem, a peace dance, reading a peace message, a minute of silent prayer, and release of 500 white balloons. More than 3,000 people came to hear music by bands and well-known singers. The OSIRIS theatrical group performing “Breaking the Chains for Peace.”

St. Lucia

A peace message by St. Lucia National Commission for UNESCO Coordinator, Mrs. Cynthia Joseph, was distributed to 11 primary and 18 secondary schools. It was read at the Friday morning general assembly in each school, followed by classroom discussions.

Uruguay

“Building a Culture of Peace” was the theme of the celebration at the Uruguay National Garden in Montevideo. The 80 participants included Dr. Hugo Pereira Fagúndez, President of Red Cross Uruguay; Col. Mariano Rodrigo, Head of Public Relations for Uruguay Air Force; and Cap. Bartolo Aguilar of the Uruguay Air Force.

United States

Celebrations in various states ranged from holding up signs at street corners in Anchorage, Alaska urging motorists to “honk for peace,” to taking a boat trip in the New York Harbor to pray for peace at landmarks including the Statue of Liberty and the United Nations Headquarters. In Monrovia, a suburb of Los Angeles, young people gathered in a local coffee shop to promote peace in a fun and creative way that engaged the whole community. Children of all ages made hundreds of pinwheels for display in the coffee house and to hand out to people on the sidewalk.

Venezuela

More than 20 volunteers gathered for a service project at San Martin Orphanage in Caracas from September 19 to 21. The sports course was repaired, and walls were repaired and painted. The youngest orphans got involved right away; by the next morning, the teenagers joined in. On September 21, one minute of silence was observed, and some of the orphans and volunteers offered reflections about peace and teamwork.



Paraguay

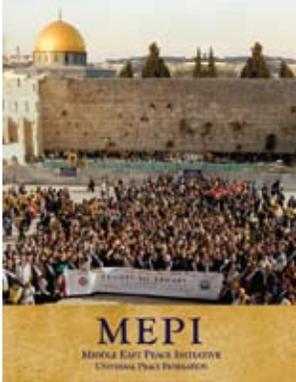


United States

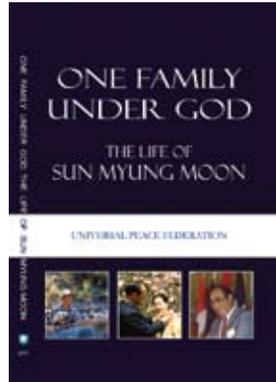
Venezuela



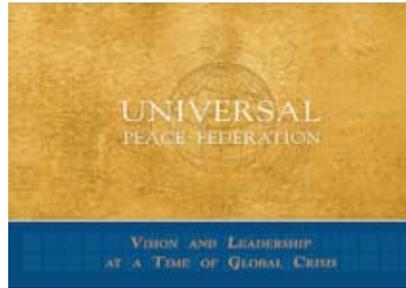
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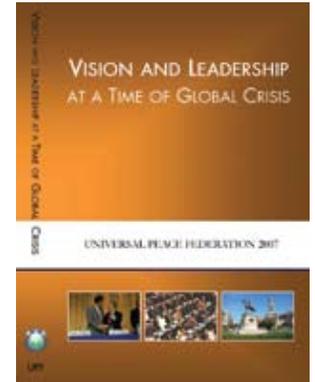
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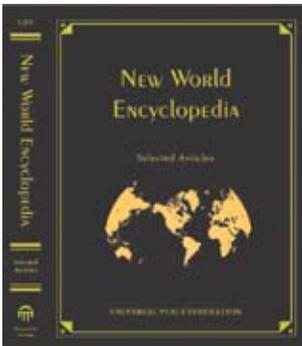
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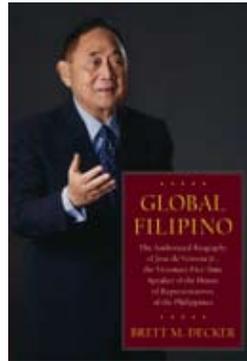
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The present time marks an important milestone in the development of civilization. We stand at a critical junction of human history where we can complete the providence of building God's fatherland and peace kingdom.
— Dr. Sun Myung Moon

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INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO PEACE

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