

UPF Quebec, Canada Hosts Conference with the Democratic Republic of Congo

Robert Duffy
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Quebec, Canada - On April 1, 2023, parties from the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Province of Quebec were brought together in a joint conference via the Zoom platform connecting Kinshasa and Montreal. This international project was initiated following the request of a Congolese priest from the Montreal area who thought that his country could benefit from the lessons learned from the "Quiet Revolution" in Quebec some 60 years ago. The Quiet Revolution produced major, lasting social changes in relations among the Church, the State and the people.



The contacts having been made, a collaboration was established between the Congolese diaspora in Quebec and the UPF collaborators in both Kinshasa and Montreal. The chosen theme was "The role of faith-based communities in establishing lasting peace in the DRC." Speakers from both sides of the ocean elaborated on the central geostrategic position that the DRC plays in Africa, highlighted its challenges, and talked about the role that faith communities have played and could play in the DRC, based on the course of the Quebec Quiet Revolution.



The main conclusion or take-away from the event, apart from the appointment of Ambassadors for Peace from both sides, was the signing of a declaration resolving to support the partnership of religious leaders with the state, and to promote principles of "interdependence, mutual prosperity, justice and inter-religious harmony in a spirit of mutual trust."



MONTRÉAL



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In DRC 77 people participated and in Montreal 17, in addition to some 50 by Zoom of which 30 were from Quebec. Guests included academics, community leaders and officials. International leaders joined the meeting via the internet. This international event inspired further collaboration between the DRC and other francophone countries.

Based on this event, the Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD) DRC will be established in the coming weeks.