

UPF-Brazil's Peace Monument project holds International Day of Peace 2016

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Sao Paulo, Brazil -- The Peace Monument project, in partnership with UPF-Brazil and other organizations, held an International Day of Peace event entitled, "Everyone United for Peace," at the auditorium of the Commercial Association of São Paulo (ACSP) on September 21, 2016.

The program began with the emcee inviting everyone in the fully packed auditorium to stand and sing the national anthem of Brazil. Afterwards, a short video about the history of the Peace Monument project was shown. A group of dignitaries were then invited to come forward and be recognized; among them were Mr. Alencar Burti, president of the ACSP; Mr. Gaetano Brancati Luigi, Ambassador for Peace and founder of the Peace Monument project; Deacon Rogério Almeida Alves, representing Cardinal Dom Odilo Scherer, Archbishop of São Paulo; Mr. Gilberto Natalini, secretary of education for São Paulo state; Mr. João Bico de Souza, Ambassador for Peace; and Mr. Adolfo Savelli, general coordinator of the ACSP's Civic and Cultural Council.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Burti welcomed everyone and renewed the ACSP's commitment to support peace initiatives like the Peace Monument project, and congratulated the 13 individuals and organizations receiving the Peace Monument award for their contributions and service to society.

Deacon Almeida Alves read a message from Archbishop Scherer. The Archbishop encouraged everyone to practice peace in our daily lives and increase our faith in God towards the building of a culture of peace.

Prof. Samuel Luz, president of the Brazilian Association for Religious Freedom, and a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, spoke about the importance of religious freedom and the need to promote a culture of peace in society. The religious leaders who attended the event included Rev. Kazuyoshi Nakahara from the Risshō Kōsei Kai; Mr. Sidnei Cordeiro from the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual Organization; Mr. Mauricio dos Santos from the Masonic Grand Lodge; Mr. Afonso Moreira, chairman of the board of the Espiritism State Federation of São Paulo; Elder Arnaldo Schioser from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; and Rev. Christian Lepelletier.

Mr. Pedro Paulo Trindade, cultural advisor at the ACSP, read UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's message for this year's Day.

The following individuals and organizations received the Peace Monument award and a certificate recognizing them as a messenger of peace:

Dr. Jose Renato Nalini, secretary of education of São Paulo state, and member of the Paulista Academy of Letters

Dr. Washington Luiz Correa, a medical doctor who specializes in kidney diseases, and founder of the UNASCO Clinic (the nephrology unit of Osasco); former president of the Brazilian Association of Dialysis and Transplant Centers

Elder Arnaldo Schioser, representing "Helping Hands," a community service and humanitarian program of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that mobilizes thousands of volunteers

The Beneficent Society, House of Hope (Kibo-no-Ie), a nonprofit organization that provides assistance and support to people with intellectual disabilities



Mrs. Eliana Carla, director of the Modulo School, chosen for the quality of its education model and recognized as one of the best schools in the nation.

Mrs. Maria Gabriela, director of the FUNSAI Foundation, a nonprofit organization that runs seven centers where it receives, cares for and educates orphans

The Madre Paula Montalt Elementary School works to not only educate children intellectually but also provides them with character education

Lt. Col. Alberto Tamashiro, chief of the Military Police's Social Support Center, which provides psychological and social assistance in São Paulo state

Dr. Frances de Azevedo, a lawyer and a member of the ACSP's Civic and Cultural Council, and founder of the "Poetry for Peace" contest

Mrs. Vilma Proença da Fonseca, who is visually impaired, and founder of Project Sarau Paulistano, a program that promotes the inclusion of people with disabilities through literature, art and culture

Mr. Sérgio Dutra Santos, a two-time Olympic gold medalist, said, "I was the only player in the world to participate in the volleyball final in four Olympics, but to play volleyball is easy compared to the responsibility of being a role model."

Ms. Eva Wilma, who started her career as a ballet dancer, and became a famous Brazilian actress in theatre, television and film said, "At this moment, we see so many war refugees seeking a place to settle. We urgently need to cooperate together for peace and to promote interfaith cooperation. I was inspired to see the religious leaders together; it's very important to build interfaith cooperation."

Ms. Nicete Bruno is a Brazilian actress and theatrical entrepreneur with an extensive and varied career in stage, television and film. Ms. Bruno created the "Theater in the University" project to inspire young people and show how art can affect our lives.

Three students were selected from the Poetry for Peace contest to receive a certificate from Dr. de Azevedo. Finally, Mr. Malcolm Forest sang the "United for Peace Song."

To close the event, the Vice President of the ACSP, Mr. Roberto Matheus, announced that Gaetano Brancati Luigi, creator of the Peace Monument project, and John Bico de Souza would be travelling to Italy on October 5, where they will be received at the Vatican by Pope Francis -- and that Mr. Luigi will be nominated as a candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize.

This International Day of Peace event was a great success. The participants departed with the inspiring words of Mr. Luigi, who said: "Let's share this vision of peace to multiply examples of goodness, love, and family values for the youth. Our mission is to unite everyone for peace."