

UPF- Anambra Nigeria opened amid plans for establishing a zonal peace council

Raphael Ogar Oko
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Onitsha, Nigeria -- A UPF chapter opened in Anambra State amid plans for establishing a zonal peace council and a zonal development commission.

More than 120 Ambassadors for Peace, religious leaders, media figures, scholars, youth leaders and government functionaries participated in a UPF-organized zonal conference on peace and development in Nigeria's South East zone. The conference, held on September 3, 2016, was part of activities to commemorate the formal launch of the zonal chapter of UPF in Anambra State with a call for the establishment of a South East Zonal Peace Council and South East Zonal Development Commission.

The conference theme, "Building a Culture of Peace and Sustainable Development," provided the direction for speakers and participants to reflect on the critical issues of peace and development in the South East zone. Key speakers at the event included Professor Josephine Alumanah of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka; Dr. Justin Ogo Nwankwo, lecturer, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka; Superintendent of Police Rabi Garuba, divisional police officer, Fegge Police Division, Onitsha; and Dr. Raphael Ogar Oko, secretary general, UPF-Nigeria. The zonal conference focused on critical issues for the realization of lasting peace and sustainable development in the South East zone of Nigeria comprising Anambra, Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo states.



The opening session featured a goodwill message from His Excellency Chief Willie Obiano, the governor of Anambra State. The governor was represented by Dr. Mrs. Amaka Akudo, the special adviser to the governor on special duties, and by His Holiness Rev. Professor Daddy Hezekiah, the founder and leader of Living Christ Mission Inc. and chancellor of Hezekiah University. Dr. Akudo and Professor Hezekiah both commended the UPF Founders for their foresight as well as the Ambassadors for Peace for responding to the Founders' call for world peace.

The welcome address was delivered by Rev. Ambassador Zeal Festus, coordinator of the Ambassadors for Peace in Anambra State. At the end of the closing session, His Excellency Chief Willie Obiano and his wife, as well as Rev. Professor Daddy Hezekiah, were decorated as patrons of the UPF Ambassadors for Peace in the South East zone. A local cultural group based in Onitsha entertained the participants and were applauded for their inspiring dance steps.



The conference sessions focused on the need for UPF Ambassadors for Peace in the South East zone to become advocates who will join others to transform our world from a world of conflicts, violence and wars to a world of peace, harmony and love. Discussants identified that the beginning point must be to establish a universal culture of peace, and that this culture of peace should be understood to be different from the politics of peace or religious preaching of peace that we hear from every politician and religious group. Culture of peace simply refers to establishing the standard of how to live a life of peace.

The assembly of Ambassadors for Peace provided an opportunity for the speakers to discuss how we can live in peace. It included discussions and presentations on the need to live in peace in the three worlds of human existence. As life exists in the womb, on earth and in the spiritual world, all human beings without exception should live in peace in the womb, on earth and in the spiritual world.

It was resolved that “to live in peace in the womb, we must ensure a peaceful sexual relationship between a couple. After conception, we should ensure life in the womb remain peaceful through the harmony of the thoughts, words and actions of parents and others around the child in the womb. We should ensure that during birth, children should be born in peace and not by force. After birth, children should be guided to grow in peace through childhood, adolescence and enter into adulthood. As adults, we need to marry in peace and establish a peace family of three generations that live together with a common vision on earth. As peaceful grandparents, we need to prepare to die in peace from the earth and to enter the eternal kingdom of peace in the spiritual world, where we should rest in peace.”

The assembly resolved that to achieve a culture of peace, UPF Ambassadors for Peace must work toward adapting from the UPF Founders' teachings:

- a code of conduct for living in peace,
- a curriculum of education for peace and
- a constitution for peaceful communities.

The assembly also emphasized the need to establish a structure and an infrastructure for peace in the South East zone. Part of the structures for peace and development, as endorsed by the conference participants, are the individuals designated as Ambassadors for Peace, their families and peace councils that will provide opportunities for Ambassadors for Peace to serve their communities.

At the closing session, the Ambassadors for Peace recommended two key structures for peace and development of the South East that our Ambassadors for Peace should be most committed to and be involved in as well as encourage the government to endorse. The first is the South East Peace Council (SEPC) and the second is the South East Development Commission (SEDC). These structures will facilitate the realization of peace and development in the zone and provide the basis for a zonal infrastructure for peace.

As a demonstration of their commitment, the Ambassadors for Peace announced two committees with a call on members to voluntarily join and to work toward the zonal peace council and the zonal development commission. The announced committees are the Ambassadors for Peace South East Peace Committee and the Ambassadors for Peace South East Development Committee. These committees shall work toward the launch of the South East Peace Initiative and the South East Development Initiative that eventually will lead to the South East Peace Council and the South East Development Commission, respectively.



Dr. George C. Ikpot, UPF-Nigeria director of international affairs, in giving the closing remarks said that “achieving all these wonderful plans will begin from becoming peaceful citizens who practice the peace principles of the UPF, establish peaceful families through participating in the UPF world peace family Blessing programs and utilize resources for peace. This is the calling of the Ambassadors for Peace and the task that we must realize now.”

Twelve new VIPs were presented a certificate of recognition as Ambassadors for Peace. The new Ambassadors for Peace are:

1. Rev. Cannon Prince Chukwuma of the Anglican Church, Nnewi Diocese
2. Mrs. Bernice J. Elekwo, a Lagos-based banker
3. Chief Festus O. Udungwo, a traditional ruler
4. Rev. Ndudirim Christian Okechukwu
5. Mr. Destiny Ogubuike
6. Mrs. Patricia Anwuli
7. Rev. Cannon Odilichukwu Onyekaba
8. Chief Sir J.O. Umezuluora
9. Rev. Cannon John Chukwudalu
10. SP Rabi Garuba
11. Mr. Innocent Nwosu
12. Professor Josephine Alumanah