

International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace Launched in Italy

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Rome, Italy—The International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace had its Italian inauguration at a conference in the Parliament.

Following the IAPP's international inauguration in Seoul in February 2016 and its European launch in London in September 2016, the Italian chapters of UPF and Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP), an affiliated organization, immediately started to work on the Italian inauguration of the parliamentarians' association.

With the active support of two members of the Italian Parliament and a member of the European Parliament who had attended the Seoul and London events, in the following months we held four conferences in the Italian Parliament and organized an upcoming event on December 5, 2017, in Brussels, Belgium, at which the IAPP will be presented to the European Parliament.



These activities laid the foundation for the Italian inauguration held on October 25, 2017, in the Refettorio Hall of San Macuto Palace, one of the main halls of the Italian Parliament.

Of the approximately 110 guests attending the conference, 11 were parliamentarians. In addition, the European parliamentarian who is helping to organize the conference at the European Parliament sent a video message from Brussels. The other guests came from civil society: economists, president of NGOs, professors, politicians and others.



In the morning before the conference began, we held in the Parliament hall a press conference which was broadcast live on the Parliament website. Three members of parliament, one former member of parliament from the neighboring nation of San Marino, the president of the main human rights organization in Italy, and the vice president of UPF for Europe and the Middle East, Jacques Marion, explained in one hour the purpose of IAPP and its development in the world. The video of the press conference already has been seen online and downloaded by many people. The explanations from all the participants were very clear and full of hope and commitment.

The conference consisted of two parts: The first was the IAPP inauguration, which culminated in the proclamation and signature of the IAPP declaration; the second was a conference on the topic "Italy as a Bridge of Peace in the Mediterranean."

The first part was dedicated to the speeches of parliamentarians, while the second featured speeches of experts from different sectors: economists, religious freedom activists, research institute experts, and human rights advocates.

All the papers given were excellent and well appreciated, and we are preparing a publication to summarize the main contents. Especially outstanding was the emphasis given by all the speakers on the founders and their organization.

Carlo Zonato, president of UPF-Italy, and Gabriella Mieli, vice president of WFWP-Italy, moderated the two sessions, while Elisabetta Nistri, president of WFWP-Italy, gave a talk on the role of women in building a new society. Giuseppe Cali, the regional president for southern Europe of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), another affiliated organization, gave a final short speech on building a new society based on new paradigms.

The speech of Dr. Katsumi Otsuka, the regional chair of UPF for Europe and the Middle East, was very well received. He testified profoundly about the life and work of UPF founders Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon.

On the following morning, Dr. Otsuka, Jacques Marion, Giuseppe Cali and Gabriella Mieli were invited to visit the Parliament again to speak about future developments. At that occasion we met three parliamentarians who support UPF's ideals but were unable to attend the inauguration. We were offered the use of a meeting hall in the Parliament as a base for IAPP operations.