

The Hague and Nijmegen, Netherlands hold UPF 2018 Peace Road events

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The Hague, Netherlands -- For the 2018 Peace Road, UPF supporters joined with other organizations to take part in two Peace Walks on consecutive Sundays. Each of the walks was about 4 kilometers (about 2.5 miles) in length.

In Nijmegen, the oldest city in Netherlands, we did the walk on September 23 together with the Council of World Views and Religions, to which 20 organizations belong. The 30 Dutch supporters of UPF were joined by an additional 10 from Germany.

As it was a rainy day, we walked through the town with our umbrellas. A number of people who had applied for the walk did not turn up; as a result, UPF (and its affiliated organizations Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, and Women's Federation for World Peace) made up a substantial part of the group.

During the march we visited different places of charity. In one of these places, homeless people are given special care to enable them to find "peace in themselves." At one location during the march, various organizations gave a short speech to present their vision for peace.

The UPF message about the Peace Road initiative was given by one of our younger supporters, who spoke with clarity and enthusiasm. At the final location, a community center, the UPF supporters surprised the crowd by singing "You Are My Sunshine." This didn't just brighten the hearts of the people, but it actually chased away the rain so that the march ended in sunshine.

The best result of the action was that it brought us closer to our partner, the Council of World Views and Religions, and the many organizations connected to it.

We are very grateful to our German UPF supporters from the Düsseldorf region, which borders the Netherlands. Their support was most precious. The Dutch-German cooperation added an important extra dimension to the action.

In The Hague we joined the Gandhi Walk for Non-Violence on September 30. It was organized by the Hindu society in The Hague. (The Hague, which is the seat of government in Netherlands, is called the "Hindu capital of the European continent.")

We had been invited to participate by Pandit Tewarie, an Ambassador for Peace. As pandit of the beautiful Sewa Dhaam Temple, he leads one of the largest Hindu communities in the city. Pandit Tewarie has been a great admirer of the UPF founders for many years. He attended the International Leadership Conference that was held in Korea in August of this year.

We, along with a group of some 500 people, marched from the iconic Peace Palace to the Grote Kerk ("Big Church"). Among those walking were not only Hindus but many other supporters of the cause of peace and non-violence.

Pandit Tewarie insisted on wearing the Peace Road T-shirt during the walk, and several members of his

community did the same. The walk presented an interesting mixture of Gandhi Non-Violence T-shirts and Peace Road T-shirts. Our large Peace Road banner was carried by a mixed group of people, almost at the front of the procession.



In the church there was a program of speeches, song and dance. Among the speakers there were several significant VIPs, such as the ambassadors of India, Indonesia and United States, and the deputy mayor of The Hague.

Pandit Tewarie, as a leading Hindu in the city, has connections with many such dignitaries. Pandit wishes to help us to promote UPF and WFWP to them. We had the opportunity to meet some of them and connect them to our network.

The success of the Peace Road action in The Hague was similar to the one in Nijmegen. We managed to strengthen our bond with good partners.

