

David Fraser-Harris, spoke of peace making on many levels over the last 40 years

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David Fraser-Harris, Universal Peace Federation (UPF) Secretary General for the Middle East, on a visit to London, spoke of his experiences of peace making on many levels over the last approximately 40 years.

David Fraser Harris began his talk with an example of peace making from the 1980's in Birmingham. He explained the healing that came from a Japanese missionary serving a community even though he was sometimes persecuted and rejected. One former British Prisoner of War who lived in that area was liberated from his resentment and bitterness through that patient service.

Listening to both sides by bringing people together from opposing factions or from positions of enmity prepares an

opportunity for them to experience their own misunderstanding and limitations in the face of the humanity of the other.

The Syria conflict is so fractured and brutal that considering a peaceful solution seems impossible. By bringing the stakeholders together and allowing them to understand each other better there are chances for progress. UPF has held several consultations that have brought together representatives of some of the conflicting parties. The International Chairman of UPF, Dr. Thomas Walsh, was invited to explain the conclusion of those consultations to a Vatican conference.

We must keep the same standard, whether it is popular or not! Then we will be trusted for keeping our integrity. In the long term that is very important to hold to key principles of listening to both sides fairly and allowing freedom of speech within the peacemaking effort.

Another point he made was if you struggle with someone then make effort to relate to that person because those feelings are a sign that you need to find peace with them.

The ultimate way to peace is to build good families. Children raised in such families will have a natural ability in their inter-relationships to be responsible and to forge peaceful relationships. Then the next generation can live peacefully for the rest of their lives.

UPF is an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations