

UPF Côte d'Ivoire's Workshop for Parliamentarians in the National Assembly

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On August 3, 2017, UPF Côte d'Ivoire inaugurated the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace in the National Assembly. The vice-president represented Mr. Guillaume Soro, the Speaker of the House. Representatives also stood in for the prime minister as well as the Economic Environmental, Cultural and Social Council, which sent its vice-president.

The ceremony started at 10:30. Upon the arrival of the representative of the president of the National Assembly, those assembled sang "L'Abidjannaise" ("Song of Abidjan"), Côte D'Ivoire's national anthem. A video briefly presented UPF and IAPP. The secretary general of UPF-Africa read the speech of the founder, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, wherefrom the audience had an opportunity to grasp the profound motives for the launching of IAPP. Next, Mr. Aka Sayé Lazare, president of UPF Côte d'Ivoire, introduced the board members of the national chapter of IAPP, eight women and six men. Mariam Traoré, the Member of Parliament representing Tengrela, read the resolution, after which the Burkina Faso New Hope Choir sang the Cheon Il Guk anthem.

In his speech, the Deputy Jean Likane Yagui, president of IAPP, expressed his determination to extend the network of parliamentarians who are ambassadors for peace and to work to promote laws that take into account spirituality. The representative of the Speaker of the House of Côte d'Ivoire then spoke on his behalf. After those words of encouragement to the IAPP, he stressed that Dr. Guillaume Soro, president of the National Assembly, would receive the UPF after Independence Day, August 7, 2017.

(Indeed, on August 9 he received the national president of UPF to whom he reiterated his intention to invite the founder of UPF to Côte d'Ivoire.) After that, the dignitaries and the members of the board of IAPP and UPF signed the resolution. The national television broadcast highly favorable coverage on August 4 and 5, over the national channels. Six other media outlets covered the event.

During the inauguration, Dr. Kanate Diakite, who chaired the ceremony, called on the National Assembly to become the conscience of the nation. In order to substantiate this exhortation, the UPF held a workshop on the topic "A philosophy of peace for parliamentarians to contribute to lasting peace in Côte d'Ivoire."



Nourishing the conscience

This we held at the Ibis-Plateau Hotel, Abidjan, from 2:30 pm to 5.30 pm on Monday, November 20, for those members of Parliament who are also members of the IAPP.

The meeting began with the opening address of Aka Sayé Lazare, national president of UPF. Jean Likane-Yagui, president of the IAPP, thanked the legislators who had joined the association and then urged them to own the philosophy of peace expounded by the founder, Dr. Sun Myung Moon, through training and workshops like this one.

In the next three hours, twenty-five parliamentarians received presentations on the Principle of Creation, the Human Fall and a glimpse of the providence of restoration. Regarding the ideal God held at the time of the Creation, Rev. Likane stressed the importance of the family in peace building and that parliamentarians should promote family values.

The Reverend Eugène Ahondjo then addressed the origin of conflict in the light of the Human Fall; he brought out some philosophical concepts about the causes of conflict and explained how the first human sexual relationship had been perverted. He helped parliamentarians understand how sexual immorality can erode their authority and competence.

The last presentation dealt with conflict resolution and peace-building. Mr. Ahondjo spoke about Reverend Moon's activities and the interfaith blessing ceremonies for peace. He concluded his speech by encouraging parliamentarians to continue studying "The Philosophy of Peace."

After the presentations, the many questions reflected the interest of their MPs, their desire to know more and their concern over the sanctification of their marriage. Each MP received a copy Book Ten of Cheon Seong Gyeong. The president of the IAPP congratulated the parliamentarians for being attentive to these topics, whereas they are used to debate political issues with passion. The president of UPF gave a closing speech to encourage parliamentarians to go further in the study of the Principle. He proceeded to the graduation of participants in a happy atmosphere; everyone was proud to receive a diploma.

This is encouraging, as the president of the national chapter of IAPP is determined to ensure that all MPs become members so that they study the Divine Principle. We invited the parliamentarians to take part in the Dakar summit from January 17 to 19. At a later date, we will honor those among them who were not yet ambassadors for peace with membership in that august body.