

UPF-Sri Lanka's Youth Building Peace event for UN International Youth Day 2017

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Galle, Sri Lanka -- "Youth Building Peace" was the theme of an event UPF-Sri Lanka held to celebrate the UN International Youth Day.

UPF in partnership with Sri Lanka's Ministry of Lands and Parliamentary Reforms, the UN Information Centre (UNIC) Colombo, Youth and Students for Peace (YSP), Religious Youth Service (RYS) and the Global Youth Service Foundation organized the program, which took place on August 12, 2017 at the Management Training and Development Center in Wakella, Galle, a city on the southwestern tip of Sri Lanka.

Among the more than 200 attendees, which included youth from Sri Lanka and from overseas, were Hon. Gayantha Karunathillake, minister of land and parliamentary reforms of Sri Lanka, who was the chief guest, and member of parliament for Galle district, Hon. Wijepala Hettiarchy, who was the guest of honor.

The program began with prayers offered by representatives of different faiths, which was followed by the lighting of a traditional oil lamp. The welcome address was delivered by Ms. Dinesha Liyanasuriya, secretary general of RYS-Sri Lanka. Rev. John Gehring, senior advisor of RYS International, and Mrs. Ursula McLackland, secretary general of UPF-Asia, introduced RYS and UPF, respectively.

Ms. Senani Dinesha of UNIC Colombo read UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres's message for this year's Day. Mr. Sachintha Dulanjana, honourable speaker of the Youth Parliament of Sri Lanka, stressed the role of youth in building peace. Mr. Reheman Abubaker of UPF-Sri Lanka delivered a message on behalf of Dr. Robert S. Kittel, president of YSP International.

Hon. Karunathillake, Hon. Hettiarchy and Dr. Chula Senaratne, secretary general of UPF-Sri Lanka, also spoke about the importance of International Youth Day from various aspects.

Children from the SOS Children's Village Galle performed several dances, and the program concluded with a vote of thanks, given by Dr. Ravi Galhena, co-founder of the Global Youth Service Foundation.