

120 legislators launch of IAPP in South America in Asunción Paraguay

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The event that established the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace in South America took place at the Bourbon Hotel in Asunción Paraguay. Paraguay is a landlocked nation of nearly seven million people, bordered by Brazil, Bolivia and Argentina.

According to Evaristo Fernández, president of the UPF chapter in Paraguay, a hundred and twenty legislators from thirteen nations took part. One of them, Paraguayan Senator Silvia Giacoppo described the IAPP as "a network of parliamentarians discussing issues such as climate change, environment and social conflicts." She went on to write, "both the conference and UPF seek to break barriers and overcome differences of all kinds, whether ideological, racial, national or religious. In search of peace for generations to come, they look to us -- parliamentary representatives of the people -- to build peace and to further human development. This association of parliamentarians for peace is part of that momentum."

A media outlet that interviewed some of those involved in the event, included the following: "Nathaniel Kwon Jin Moon, son of the late Rev. Sun Myung Moon, said he views Paraguay as a key site for the expansion of this peace project in Latin America. He added that he appreciated our country. Finally, he celebrated the integration of Paraguayan legislators within the network."

Past desperate times

The same article included an exchange with one of the prominent guests at the IAPP, two-time Uruguayan president, Julio Maria Sanguinetti. The reporter asked his view of the peace agreement between Colombia and FARC, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, which has been at war with the Colombian government since 1964.

The government and these Leftist rebels finally agreed on a peace treaty that would end the conflict, but the Colombian people voted against it. To this question, the octogenarian ex-president replied, "Peace at this time has Colombia as a major... epicenter; it had been a popular uprising, finding ways to peace will resume, and we trust that sooner or later they will achieve it."

Latin Americans above a certain age know a lot about Left and Right and the military relationship to

civilians. For a stretch of years in some Latin American countries, darkness descended. Military coups occurred or dictators gained power in elections and refused to let go. The power of those in control was everywhere apparent, while the people were kept in a feeble state, vulnerable and living day to day in a hellish fear-filled atmosphere. In the depths of that darkness, loved ones disappeared. Mothers and fathers, siblings and friends mourned in their hearts, and they marched in the streets.

Uruguay had a series of five corrupt presidents that had a dictatorial partnership with the military, beginning with Juan Maria Bordaberry, effectively from 1972, and ending four dictators later in 1985. The Paraguayan dictator, Alfredo Dominguez Stroessner, ruled from 1954 until 1989. Near the end, he was forcing military generals to retire when one powerful general sent troops and tanks to Stroessner's house. He fled to Brazil, where he later died.



End of strife

It was no simple act for Julio Sanguinetti to follow those five dictators as president. He and other politicians had simply decided to hold party conventions, elect party leaders and run for the office of president. Sanguinetti ran as the Colorado Party candidate and won. Abraham F. Lowenthal stated in the magazine *Foreign Affairs*, "In Uruguay, after a bitterly repressive decade of military rule, the administration of Julio Maria Sanguinetti was inaugurated in 1985, and the country has returned to the civilized political discourse for

which it used to be known."

Bordaberry, the Uruguayan dictator, was charged in 2005 with four cases of aggravated homicide. According to Human Rights-Uruguay, this was possible, mainly because the United States was willing to declassify documents showing an agency within its government had coordinated attacks against leftwing adversaries in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay. The court found Bordaberry guilty in 2010 and sentenced him to thirty years in prison; he died at home a year later at the age of eighty-two. This is all to say, with what happy expectation people in the region might greet an association of parliamentarians striving for global peace.

The bright side

As in the unification movement, nations throughout the world look to the youthful members of society to find fresh hope and enthusiasm. A strong supporter of the IAPP event was Cynthia Diaz Tarragó, a congresswoman who is head of the Press and Social Communication Commission. She's in her mid-thirties and was a television personality before running for office. Her family has a strong sense of public responsibility; she has two brothers who are government officials.

A Paraguayan congressman, Jose Domingo Adorno Mazacotte, wrote of her experience at the ILC in reverent terms. Regarding IAPP, she wrote, "I want to thank God for the opportunity he gave me to witness the birth of a great project of peace between the Federation for Universal Peace and the Association of Parliamentarians for World Peace, who under the leadership of Mother Moon we will work to create a global family under God.... Allow me to thank the son of the Mother Moon, who came to join us; give us strength and courage to work for the fulfillment of the dream of the Father Moon and Mother Moon, which is also the dream of all of ours as good citizens."