

African – German Relation

Hamburg, Germany, March 5, 2016



By Ulrich Ganz

With participants from Africa, Asia (Japan) and Europe, three major cultures were well represented.

On behalf of the UPF, Mr. Ulrich Ganz, coordinator of UPF – Hamburg, welcomed the eleven guests, (nine of whom were first-time attendees) and eight local UPF members. Then followed a brief review of some of the important events that took place in February in South Korea. These were: the World Peace Blessing, the ILC (International Leadership Conference) and the launching of the Peace Road.

Mr. Ganz then drew our attention to Africa by briefly introducing a school project that the UPF - activist from Berlin, Matthias Monzebe, has successfully promoted in his hometown in Central Africa.



The first guest speaker, Chief Onyeike, Charles Onyebuchi from Nigeria, who has lived for six years with his family in the city of Bremen, made a passionate

plea for peace. He has witnessed riots and civil wars in Togo and has lost family members. He mentioned that the consequences of armed conflict affect first the weak such as the elderly, women and children. Prostitution, unwanted pregnancies, mothers who do not know who fathered their children, and many other problems are the result of war. Mr. Onyeike stressed that in the absence of peace, no nation can develop.



Our next speaker, Mr. Jean Noukon, Secretary General of ARBA, an association that supports the integration of African immigrants in Germany, spoke about the relationship of African citizens to their German environment. Africans bring their culture and mentality, which sometimes succeeds and sometimes not, said Mr. Noukon. Musical groups and German courses are helpful in the integration process. The association also undertakes home visits to help where there are difficult situations in immigrant families.



The following speaker, Mr. Toelke from Hamburg, with a post-graduate degree in philosophy, discussed the situation of German society. Mr. Toelke, born after WWII to refugees from West Prussia, said that no other topic currently dominates Germany as much as immigration. Cultures are not easy to unite, and maybe intercultural marriage can play a role. He cited as an example a performance of **Handel's 'Messiah' in St. Michael's church** where there were hardly any Africans in attendance. Germany is becoming increasingly "de-Christianized". In 1970 almost the whole population was affiliated with one of the major Churches (Lutheran Protestant or Catholic). Today this figure is only about 60%, and in urban areas, the percentage without religious affiliation is higher - for example, Hamburg 55.2 % or Berlin 68.7 %. In the former East Germany about 80 % have no church affiliation.

Concerning the family, the 'housewives marriage' was abolished by law. Laws regulating sexuality were liberalized and the conventional purpose of protecting public morals was relocated to the protection of sexual self-determination. (The change in paragraph 218 and release of pornography for adults). Whoever participates in demonstrations in favor of **the family is called a „Nazi“** (as was the case in the "Demo for All" recently in Stuttgart). Mr. Toelke then asked Mr. Eder from Austria to read a quotation from a speech by Mrs. Hak Ja Han Moon, co-founder of UPF, delivered on 12 December 2015: ".If I look back fifty years ago when Rev. Moon and I walked down the street in Manhattan with tears in our eyes and felt that God has left America ", and we felt that this also applies to Germany. Some of us had tears in our eyes.

"The employment rate and income from tax have never been as high as today," Mr. Toelke said. "Export record of German engineering in 2015 was 155 billion Euros."

To conclude our presentations on the topic, Josias Johnson introduced his home country Benin. Although it is a relatively small country with about eight million



people, it is a great role model for democracy. There have been riots and forced government changes, but these rarely led to bloodshed. The neighboring countries are Togo and Nigeria. There are indigenous religions, to which 62% of the population belong. Then 23% are Christians and 12% Muslims. All live together peacefully.

Our event was accompanied by music provided by the folklore band "FuFu", which Josiah Johnson and his brother established together with four other musicians from different African countries. Now Ambassador for Peace Awards were presented to Chief Onyeike Charles Onyebuchi, Mr. Jean Noukon and Ansgar Michael.

Finally we came to the more relaxed part of the program when we had the opportunity over coffee and cake to exchange views and get to know each other better as a contribution to world peace.