

## UPF-New Zealand Hosts a Leadership Conference

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Auckland, New Zealand - To foster the development of the Ambassadors for Peace program, 20 Ambassadors for Peace joined UPF organizers at the Parnell Peace Embassy in Auckland for a Leadership Conference under the theme “Leadership in Action Towards Building a Nation of Peace” on October 12, 2013. The conference was hosted by UPF New-Zealand.

The conference started with an opening prayer from Rev. Colin Burgess, who came together with his wife Bronwyn.

Ambassadors for Peace, Rev. Frank Smith, Laurie Ross, and Morrin Cooper gave inspiring reports from their recent attendance at the UPF International Leadership Conference in Seoul, Korea. Long time Ambassador for Peace Mr. Simon Kan, also described his continuous involvement with UPF and for being active in supporting its programs and activities.

The interfaith, intercultural and international dimension of the UPF were clearly evidenced in the video presentations, ‘In Search of an Ideal’ and ‘What Is an Ambassador for Peace?’

UPF-New Zealand Secretary General Mr. Geoffrey Fyers continued by explaining the roles and responsibilities of an Ambassador for Peace and also made a short tutorial about accessing the UPF websites for more information about UPF programs and activities.

UPF Director Julius Gicole outlined the basic UPF ideals through presentations on the ‘Principles of Peace,’ and lively discussion ensued.

Following a hearty lunch, two new Ambassadors for Peace, Mr. Vijendra Prasad and Satya Narayan, were presented with certificates and expressed their desire to live up to the ideals of being an Ambassador for Peace.

A break-out session to discuss the best way to develop and expand the Ambassadors for Peace movement was very fruitful with many suggestions discussed. There was general agreement to start a monthly meeting and discuss projects for Ambassadors for Peace to be involved in.

The day was concluded with participant reflections and a heartfelt song from Ambassador for Peace Midori Hara.

The conference, aside from learning the principles of peace, was also a good opportunity to catch up with fellow Ambassadors for Peace, especially those who participated in the Middle East Peace Initiative (MEPI) activities in Israel.

Overall, the conference marked a substantial step forward for the Ambassadors for Peace program. New friendships were formed, positive ideas were discussed and an action plan formulated to develop and expand the network.