

Asia Pacific Summit 2018–Nepal - Highest international summit Nepal ever held

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A number of heads of state or government came to Kathmandu for Asia Summit 2018 (November 30 to December 3). This event was both the highest international summit ever held by the government of Nepal and the most prestigious event ever organized by UPF and affiliated organizations. It took place at the end of 2018 and was a brilliant conclusion of True Mother's world tour. True Mother, coming from Africa, received the highest honors of the nation of Nepal. She could meet the president of the country, and the prime minister, KP Sharma Oli, hosted the event.

Cambodia Prime Minister Hun Sen, the vice president of Republic of the Philippines Leni Robredo, and Myanmar's state counselor Aung San Suu Kyi took part in Asia Pacific Summit 2018. There were also heads of state of nations in Oceania. Moreover, speakers of the house, parliamentarians and other high-ranking officials from around the world responded.

You may wonder why UPF chose Nepal as the summit venue. There are various reasons, but there are definitely several paradigms for bringing peace in this Himalayan nation of thirty million people, landlocked between communist China (1.3 billion people), and democratic India (1.2 billion people). Somehow, the national and secular agendas of the Nepali government were a close match to the universal and providential timetable. UPF wants to emphasize Nepal's model of building peace to the world and to support the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. You could also see the agenda of UPF as supporting tourism and the government's Visit Nepal Year 2020 campaign; we were encouraged to highlight particularly Lumbini, the birthplace of Lord Buddha, as an international tourist destination. During the summit, bilateral and multilateral meetings took place. Dialogue and discussions were planned that would explore new diplomatic opportunities for Nepal.

The government and authorities of Nepal saw Asia Pacific Summit 2018 as an important event to boost Nepal's tourism, for it will generate good will around the world. The summit took place at a time when the world is divided and countries are waging wars. The theme of the summit was "mutual prosperity and universal values." If Nepal can be the place to extend harmony and goodwill, investors will want to invest here.



Toward harmonious cooperation

Sustainable peace can only be realized when we bring together the government, private sector and civil society and this is also the only way to tackle pressing global issues from climate change to poverty. The summit in Kathmandu could reaffirm the existing global cooperation on peace, development, good governance, climate change, marriage and family. Moreover, the role of youth and faith-based organizations in building a prosperous nation were also discussed during the summit.

Peace begins when leaders reconcile. It requires both sides to realize the futility of war. Nepal is grateful to various stakeholders, including the United Nations, which supported the process. But Nepalis themselves initiated and took ownership of the process. It was essentially a "made in Nepal" peacemaking effort. From this point of view, other countries may certainly learn from Nepal.

True peace, however, is more than the absence of war. One must work on good government and justice. In Nepal, after a decade of fighting and violence, armed militants voluntarily handed over their weapons to the United Nations, and together with democratic parties, held two Constituent Assembly elections, wrote the constitution, integrated two armies, restructured the state, and formed a federal democratic republic to account for the nation's ethnic diversity. Nepal now consists of seven autonomous provinces. Three of these provinces have borders both with India and with China. This federal structure is good for nation building and for better diplomatic relations.

Our focus on the family

One could compare Nepal's spirit of reconciliation with Nelson Mandela's approach of forgiving enemies and achieving a peaceful end. Peacemaking in Nepal was "Mandelian" in this sense, but it involved the majority of citizens, not just a few charismatic leaders.

But, at the end of the day, peace is also more than sound institutions, good governance and justice. If we want a nation to become one family under God, we have to deal with the family, the school of love. One of the challenges of our time is the need for strengthening the institutions of family and marriage; thus, True Mother officiating the peace blessing of seven hundred mayors and their spouses was one of the highlights of the summit. We also launched the International Mayors' Association for Peace (IMAP). We had invited civil society leaders to this program to celebrate family and peace. We believe that marriage and family are important aspects of building a prosperous and peaceful nation. Nepal's prime minister proposed a partnership focused on good governance. During the ceremony, marriage appeared as the key component of the social contract.

Nepal has a unique culture that honors parents, grandparents and guests as they would God. The family structure in Nepal is quite robust. We were fortunate that Prime Minister K. P. Sharma Oli embraced the idea of Asia Pacific Summit 2018, which focused on issues such as climate change, peace and security, good governance and conflict resolution, as well as strengthening marriage and family. These are some of

the Sustainable Development Goals put forth by the United Nations. The Nepali prime minister has said that strengthening marriage and family could help achieve the goals implicit in his government's motto, "Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali."

We could also bring together important religious leaders from different faith groups to take responsibility for the moral values of the new millennium and of their homeland. The role of the host nation, the land of Lord Buddha, comes out of the culture of heart and serving others joyfully. Wherever they go in Nepal, visitors receive a wide, welcoming smile -- the head is slightly bowed, the hands are brought together with respect and you hear a heartfelt "Namaste," which literally means, "I bow to the god within you." Accompanying this is eagerness, a willingness to serve.

More than one thousand five hundred international delegates from forty-five countries took part in this mega event. More than thirty heads of state or former heads of state attended, business entrepreneurs and investors actively took part. One lesson we can draw from Asia Summit 2018 is that we should identify the national agendas of the host country and find a match for them within the providence. This is how the notion of "restoring nations" will become substantial for us and for the people we deal with.

