

IMAP UPF Rome Italy Panelists: Social Justice Demands Inclusive Community

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Rome, Italy – "Only in a just society, in which every person is valued, has equal opportunities and sees his or her rights respected, can peaceful coexistence among citizens, peoples and nations be realized." With these words, **Senator Tilde Minasi** opened the conference, "Social Justice and Peace: Interdependence, Prosperity, Universal Values," held on February 20, 2024, in the Capitular Hall of the Senate in Rome.

The conference, held on the World Day of Social Justice, was organized at the initiative of the senator in collaboration with UPF-Italy, the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace-Italy (IAPP-Italy), and with the participation of the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI).

"Where there is harmony, well-being, and prosperity, there is no reason for confrontation," the senator said. She expressed concern about widespread violence and anger in society, and emphasized the importance of spiritual and moral values to bring harmony in the social, economic and political dimensions. Social justice is not a utopia, she said. "All that is needed is to work on it and engage in a serious and convinced way, especially together with all those who share these values."

Introduced by **Mr. Marco Respinti**, journalist and moderator, the president of UPF-Italy, **Mr. Carlo Zonato**, took the floor. After showing a video of UPF and its projects, he explained, "In UPF's vision of peace, humanity is a single family with a common origin, a reality that is not only material, but made up of an inner part that has as its fulcrum the dimension of the heart." According to Zonato, the goal of social justice must be to bring peace, based on a culture of love and the principles of interdependence, shared prosperity and universal values.

Ms. Micaela Piredda, deputy public prosecutor, referred to Article 3 of the Constitution and noted the need to "act to remove barriers of gender, race, sex, religion, ability, and disability to achieve social justice" and reduce micro- and macro-conflict. She added, "Failure to remove barriers puts people on different levels...often preventing victims from being able to fight back." She advocated "preventive rather than repressive intervention, removing barriers at the source to ensure justice and social peace."

Mr. Marco Ricceri, secretary general of the Eurispes research institute, asked, "What is social welfare? Is it a system of care that offers more services in schools, in hospitals, in the streets, or is it defined in terms of inclusion, of community?" It is a question that remains unanswered, he explained, both for the U.N. 2030 Agenda and at the European level, because "There is a lack of desire to make a political choice about what is a 'good society' and how to build it." Ricceri said that sustainable development that succeeds in economics and environmental protection but fails on social issues would be ineffective. He said people must feel they are part of an inclusive community that strives for social and cultural harmony.

Senator Stefania Pucciarelli expressed her hope that Africa would not be left to the predatory aims of China and Russia, and that the Italian government's "Mattei Plan," aimed at strengthening economic relations between Italy and Africa, could foster social justice and human rights on the continent. She spoke of the negative economic effects of the attacks on merchant ships in the Red Sea, and "the possible repercussions on social justice and inequality in our country." She said she was concerned about aggression in society, the increase in femicide and youth violence, and the need to find new ways to intervene. She concluding by saying, "We must be witnesses and vigilant so that justice and social

cohesion are maintained and increased in our country and in the world."



UNICRI Rome representative **Ms. Alessandra Liquori** focused on digital governance as a crucial aspect of social justice, and UNICRI's research regarding the interplay between digitization, peace, justice, and strong institutions, attesting that "The new face of inequality is digital." She reported that, as of 2022, 850 million people in the world lacked access to any form of legal identity, which is critical to advancing at least ten out of seventeen of the 2030 Agenda goals. "Ensuring equal opportunities and a life of dignity for all is not just a moral imperative, but a matter of our civilization's survival," she said.

"Social justice presupposes overcoming differences," explained **Mr. Sergio De Nicola**, deputy attorney general. "As long as there is such a large economic gap between areas of the world, conflicts will be inevitable." He said the root of conflict is intolerance for diversity, which is actually an asset. He said mediation can reduce conflict by giving the parties due dignity and recognition. "It is not the authoritarian decision of the judge that restores justice, but the sharing and support for justice itself by all the protagonists in the process."



Senator Manfredi Potenti reflected on the need for Italy and other EU countries to identify – once diplomatic contacts between Ukraine and Russia and in the Middle East are resumed – the correct processes to meet the parties' demands to finally end the conflicts. He said, "We must set out from the perspective of restoring entire communities, so that they feel truly satisfied with the work that mediation has completed in their interests." He stressed the need for thoroughness in addressing issues between conflicting parties, lest difficulties arise in the future.

Bishop Luis Miguel Perea Castrillon of the Anglican Episcopal Church of Europe, who spoke from the audience, "The powerful and important messages we have heard must leave a mark on each of us, and we cannot leave this hall as if nothing happened." The prelate urged those present to take responsibility and take concrete action in support of social justice and peace.

Mr. Franco Ravaglioli, vice-president of UPF-Italy, in his concluding message, explained that UPF is a global network of peacemakers, born from the dream and vision of Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon. He ended by quoting the words of Dr. Moon, co-founder of UPF: "I pray that we all join together in order to realize the common dream of peace and justice for all people by creating one human family."