

IAPP inaugurated in Mexico at the Legislative Palace of San Lazaro in Mexico City

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Mexico City, Mexico -- The International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) was inaugurated in Mexico at the Legislative Palace of San Lazaro in Mexico City on November 28, 2017. The theme of the program was "The Role of Parliamentarians in Creating a Culture of Peace."

In attendance were members of the Congress of the Union, Mexico's bicameral legislature; parliamentarians from Central America; representatives of different political parties in Mexico; civil society and faith leaders; and Ambassadors for Peace.



Speakers included:

Chang Shik 'Charles' Yang, president of UPF-Central America and the Caribbean

Juan Antonio Ixtlahuac Orihuela, federal deputy of Mexico

Othón Pérez Hernández del Castillo, president of UPF-Mexico

Thomas Walsh, president of UPF International

Jose Alberto Alfaro Jiménez, former vice president of the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica and president of IAPP-Central America and the Caribbean

Ricardo de Sena, regional secretary general of UPF-North America

Waldo Fernández Gonzalez, federal deputy of Mexico

Laura Paula López Martínez, local deputy of Monterrey

Lorrelly Trejos Salas, member of the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica and president of IAPP-Costa Rica



The first speaker, Dr. Charles Yang, president of UPF-Central America and the Caribbean, said that "the world no longer has barriers or borders. Cyberspace [has] knocked them down. We all live under the same sky, and we must help bring peace."

He pointed out that world harmony is constantly affected by wars and by social, political and religious differences. Therefore, there is the need for parliamentarians to join forces, regardless of parties or creeds, "to bring peace to all humanity."

Hon. Juan Antonio Ixtlahuac Orihuela, federal deputy of Mexico said: "Mexico is [facing a serious challenge with] crime. At least 56 people die each day from international crimes. This figure is against the development and stability of society and challenges government institutions."

The country is waging a battle against crime, corruption and drug trafficking. That is why it is important that the greatest effort be made to strengthen democracy and justice, which are "fundamental to achieving peace."

He referred to the signing of the Treaty of Versailles almost 100 years ago, which brought an end to World War I and sought to restore world peace. "[Yet,] today...[despite] so much [development], so much political capacity and development, we keep the problems of violence and crime alive. That is why it is important to discuss what we have to do at the international level. Peace is not a matter of borders, sovereign states or nation states, but of universal size and dimensions. Therefore, all countries must [commit] to work for it."

He added that Mexico must recover leadership in culture, traditions and production, and be a country that promotes international peace and unity among nations.

In his remarks, Dr. Othón Pérez Hernández del Castillo, president of UPF-Mexico, recognized the role of parliamentarians in representing the people, upholding the rule of law and safeguarding human rights.

"They work to build a safe and stable society to live in; they know the importance of cooperation and collaboration to finding innovative solutions to critical issues on the local, national, regional and global levels, such as climate change, the rise of extremist ideologies, humanitarian disasters and conflicts, among other issues."

The president of UPF International, Dr. Thomas Walsh, said Mexico's inclusion in the IAPP is significant. "It is a strategic country for the region and the continents."

He also said that a strong, healthy, stable family structure is necessary for peace. In addition, conditions need to be established to allow the goals of sustainable development to be realized.



He emphasized the importance of dialogue and cooperation, maintaining contact, meeting even with different visions and perspectives, listening to each other and consolidating a common vision for peace.

Hon. Jose Alberto Alfaro Jiménez, vice president of the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica and president of IAPP-Central America and the Caribbean, said parliamentarians must truly work with a shared purpose and think about others.

Given the problem of corruption, if you do not have firm moral values, you can never [truly] represent the people. "Parliamentarians have a commitment to the people and peace. If we fail, nations will not achieve [peace] in a lasting way."

The director of social studies on the position and status of women and gender equity at the Center for Studies for the Advancement of Women and Gender Equity (CEAMEG), Mrs. Judith Díaz Delgado, said women should be present in the construction of a new culture of peace and be recognized as an integral part of the solution, since women have been the first victims in armed conflicts, and face them in a different and more vulnerable way.

"We must inherit a different world from the new generation; we, who have been participants in modifying legislation so that women have a different world, must build a better world through prevention, work with new generations in an educational environment and promote values and respect," she said.

The event concluded with all the parliamentarians signing the resolutions launching the IAPP in Mexico.

UPF also appointed two members of Mexico's Congress of the Union, Hon. Laura Paula López Martínez, local deputy of Monterrey, and Hon. Baltazar Martínez Montemayor, federal deputy of Mexico, as board members of IAPP-Mexico.