

## Peace Start with Me Festival - Vienna Austria - Victory Celebration

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### April 30, at the Austria Center, Vienna

*Today beginning at 12 noon, a victory celebration to honor True Parents' success in Vienna was held with a huge crowd of thousands of members – practically all those who had come from all across the European super-region, from as far away as the Middle East and Moscow. Moreover, leaders from Korea, Japan and the US had also made the journey and were present.*

*This brief report was gleaned from the live webcast, but the connection was intermittent, hence we offer the following summarized highlights – including an extract from Mother's speech toward the end. (None of what is written here should be quoted as a verbatim record of what was actually said, though we believe it reflects quite an accurate view.)*



Michael Balcomb began with an overview of the highlights of the preparation for the events of the weekend.

He mentioned that when Mother gave her speech at the Wiener Stadthalle on Sunday afternoon, all the other sounds – the rambunctious children, the restless babies – stopped because everyone was drawn to listen to the most important Word.

Mother said that it is not too late for Europe, even though Europe could not always fulfill its responsibility: "Because True Parents are here, you can accomplish."

"Let's be honest, we have a long way to go still," said Dr. Balcomb, "but because of Heaven's grace we are on the road to victory, don't you think?" [Cheers]



Dr. Balcomb then took time to acknowledge the presence of True Family members – our International President Sun Jin Nim and her husband In Sup Nim, plus True Parents' daughters-in-law Yeon Ah Nim and Hoon Sook Nim – and thanked them, inviting them to stand and receive the appreciation of all the European brothers and sisters. And the audience responded with visible warmth. Dr. Balcomb also acknowledged the work of Mrs. Wonju McDevitt and Dr. Yun Youngho from True Mother's secretariat, whose daily work

includes conveying to the field the directions and words of True Mother. He then welcomed leaders from

around the world and from the various regions of Europe.

In introducing Elisabeth Cook, recently ascended to the national leadership of Austria, Dr. Balcomb mentioned the early days of the movement in Europe when missionaries went into communist Eastern Europe and worked as "Butterfly Missionaries" to witness behind the Iron Curtain. Elisabeth herself had been one of three clandestine missionaries to Hungary.

Elisabeth then shared her gratitude that True Mother could come to Europe, and thanked all the brothers and sisters who worked so hard. Elisabeth testified that "it could only have been through True Parents' love that so many brother and sisters would come to Vienna to help us". She alluded to the fact that many non-members were able to hear Mother's speech – and mentioned in particular the Longfield Gospel Choir as being comprised of members of the Christian faith, and that they had certainly heard Mother's speech.

A large group of Muslims – including a group from Afghanistan -- were also present thanks to the outreach efforts of Rev. and Mrs. Angelucci who had spent two weeks or more in Vienna to support the campaign. There were representatives of many Christian churches also, pastors and congregation alike. Our elder members had visited many churches even without appointments and found the resident priests present and receptive. "We had so many guests, we had run of out the ticket vouchers at the end," Elisabeth said.

Mother gave a beautiful green jacket to Elisabeth as a gift.



Dr. Otsuka, president of UPF, then gave testimony about the UPF conference, and he gave special emphasis on the role women can play in the process of making peace.

National leader of the UK Matthew Huish then spoke about the launch of Youth and Students for Peace, and the youth event that had drawn close to 1,000 young people to the Stadthalle the day before the main event.

"The youth assembly had one big problem – we had too many people who wanted to come!

We wanted to accommodate so many people and we wanted to sit in circles and discuss things, rather than in rows facing the stage. We wanted to sit in circles and discuss – have give and take with each other centered on our higher purpose. We have people across Europe who think and feel very deeply. We don't agree about everything – politically, philosophically – so we wanted to bring them together to discuss the eleven different topics we had prepared."



Matthew explained that they had brought together even those who had sometime before stepped back from the movement. He made the point that among the participants were those who shared our vision for peace without sharing our specific faith, among them some who spoke very well at the event. Matthew emphasized that there are many good young people who want to work for peace, so we will work not just with members of our own spiritual community but also with other good people across the region.

Before persuading Mother to speak, Dr. Balcomb introduced two people who were key to the production of the large event (Kazua Kanak and

Simon Kinney), and then invited the young people who had danced in the streets of Vienna to come up and do their "Mobilization" dance in front of True Mother and the audience.

Then Mother took the floor. The following is summarized from incomplete notes (made even more incomplete by the intermittent internet connection):

Mother reiterated some of the important points she had mentioned yesterday. She said that the Old and New Testament ages had passed, that even the Completed Testament Age has passed. Mother then said, "So all of you, I hope you can really let go of old ways and live in accord with the new era. Please do not be afraid of hardships, please believe that we can do it, I hope you can find that firm resolve today, will



you do so?"



Mother continued: "I have asked all of you to become Heavenly Tribal Messiahs. All you blessed families must fulfill your mission. The Blessing is not for you or your family alone – you must share it with your ancestors, your descendants, your neighbors.... I hope that all of humanity can understand the dream of Heavenly Parent and True Parents, which is the realization of the kingdom of heaven on earth. True Parents have come with new truth, so please divest yourself of old ways. Please believe in me and unite with me, and become victorious HTMs!"

Mother concluded by asking everyone to repeat the following declarations:

We can do it!

We will be victorious without fail!

We will be victorious absolutely!

We will be victorious and return glory and praise to Heavenly Parent and True Parents!

Mother thus concluded her speech. She then gave out some support money to various groups to help them with their activities.

Finally, True Mother led everyone in singing the Korean ballad *Saranghae* (I Love You), which she had often sung to True Father when they concluded an important event. It was a fitting conclusion.

*[The writer suspects three cheers of Eok Mansei would have followed, but the live connection had suddenly been cut and we therefore conclude the story here.]*