

## UPF International: Reordering Global Priorities in 2026

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### **The Universal Peace Federation Responds to the New Year Message of United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres**

In his 2026 [New Year's Message](#), United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres warned that the world stands at a crossroads, where chaos and uncertainty surround us, division, violence, climate breakdown, and systemic violations of international law threaten our shared future. He highlighted the unsustainable trajectory of global militarization, noting that military spending has reached an estimated \$2.7 trillion more than twelve times [official development assistance](#) while conflicts rage at levels unseen since World War II.

The Universal Peace Federation (UPF) receives this message as a call to renewed responsibility. The Secretary General's affirmation that humanity has enough resources to save lives, restore the planet, and secure a future filled with peace and justice resonates deeply with UPF's founding conviction that people and planet must take precedence over profit and power. In response, UPF is mobilizing its global network to contribute through dialogue, service, and cooperation in support of the United Nations mission.

### **Upholding People and Planet**

Secretary General Guterres appeal to choose people and planet over pain affirms a moral priority that UPF seeks to advance through peacebuilding rooted in human dignity, strong families, and care for the environment. UPF founders, [Dr. Hak Ja Han](#) and the late [Dr. Sun Myung Moon](#), taught that lasting security does not emerge from force, but from compassion, justice, and cooperation among peoples.

As early as 1981, they articulated the vision of an International Peace Highway, reflecting a belief in humanity as one family under God physically, socially, and spiritually connected. This perspective calls for service to others and for practical efforts that build trust across religious, cultural, and national divides. Today, this spirit is expressed through interfaith prayers at Peace Road events, family-strengthening initiatives, and youth-led service projects that link reconciliation with environmental stewardship and community well-being.

Across Asia and Africa, UPF youth programs engage participants in community cleanups, dialogue forums, and reconciliation workshops, demonstrating how service can become a lived foundation for partnerships envisioned in [SDG 17](#). These efforts respond directly to the imbalance the Secretary-General identified between soaring military expenditures and chronically underfunded development, affirming that peace is cultivated through mutual respect, ethical leadership, and shared prosperity.

### **Responding to the Secretary General's Call**

UPF contributes to the global peace architecture by convening diverse actors legislators, faith leaders, former heads of state, scholars, economists, and journalists to foster dialogue and joint problem-solving. Through its various international associations, UPF supports initiatives that encourage peaceful governance, religious reconciliation, sustainable economic approaches, responsible media, and evidence-based peace research.

In this spirit, UPF supports cooperative economic models highlighted during the UN International Year of Cooperatives, advancing decent work and inclusive growth under [SDG 8](#), while reinforcing [SDG 16](#) on peaceful societies and [SDG 17](#) on partnerships. These efforts reflect the priorities articulated in the UN Summit of the Future Pact and seek to translate shared principles into collaborative action.

At the same time, UPF work remains grounded in communities. In more than 120 countries, national Peace Councils and Ambassadors for Peace facilitate interfaith leadership training, civic education, youth engagement, and environmental initiatives. Youth and Students for Peace programs emphasize service-learning as a pathway to responsible global citizenship.

Regional peace initiatives including efforts in the [Middle East](#), [Northeast Asia](#), [the Balkans](#), and other regions demonstrate the importance of sustained encounter and trust-building. In 2025, UPF convened [high-level forums](#) in the Balkans on interethnic reconciliation, bringing together former heads of state, civil society leaders, and youth organizations to advance dialogue and regional cooperation.

### **Commitment to Collaboration**

UPF reaffirms its commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and to working collaboratively with UN agencies and partners. Through initiatives such as [the Harmony and Hope Campaign](#), UPF connects global observances with local action to promote dignity, solidarity, and family-centered ethics. In the context of the UN 80th anniversary and the [International Year of Peace and Trust](#), UPF will expand volunteer engagement and regional training programs, particularly in Africa and Latin America, to strengthen SDG implementation.

UPF also offers interreligious and ethical perspectives to support governance reforms, including emerging challenges such as artificial intelligence, disarmament, and social cohesion under [SDG 16](#). Looking ahead to 2026, UPF stands ready to co-organize peace forums, dialogue platforms, and educational initiatives with UN partners, contributing spiritual insight and grassroots experience to shared objectives.

Guided by the belief that peace begins in the family and extends outward to nations and the global community, UPF commits itself to educating, serving, and advocating for policies centered on peace and human dignity. In affirming the Secretary General call, UPF renews its dedication to working as part of the wider UN family in service to humanity and our common future.

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