

UPF Germany celebrates Africa Day in Berlin Reinickendorf

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Africa Day, an initiative of Pastor Botembe, Ambassador for Peace, Bernd Flieger, Universal Peace Federation (UPF) Berlin, and Mathias Monzebe, Bagandou e.V. was held on June 1 in Berlin Reinickendorf. The event, with the motto "Integration and Cultural Encounters" was the fruit of one year of preparation and was so successful that we plan to hold another next year.



Pastor Botembe and Bernd Flieger greeted the eighty guests before handing over to Rachel Nangally who moderated the event in a factual but warm-hearted manner. The first speaker was Jaques Marion, Co-Chairman of UPF, Europe and the Middle East. Marion, who lives in France was born in Africa and spoke of his several years' experience of work there. He mentioned Mother Moon's support for Africa, and her emphasis on the development of heart, especially a parental heart. He stressed the great spirituality of the people and linked it to universal values of family and peace. He told us that Parents' Day (a Holy Day of FFWPU, an affiliated organisation, dated by the lunar calendar) falls on June 1 this year. His speech, delivered in English, was translated simultaneously into German by Mrs. Balle

Moudouber.

The next speaker was Uwe Brockhausen, who expressed his delight about the first Africa Day to be held in the district of Reinickendorf, where he is now Deputy Mayor. He regretted that there is still no town twinning with Africa but pointed out the way to achieve this with partnerships between schools, associations or companies. We will certainly avail ourselves of his offer of help.



His contribution was followed by that of Mathias Monzebe, founder of Bagandou eV., which supports the small rural community of Bagandou in the southwest of the Central African Republic. Using a power point presentation, he showed us how Bagandou has a concrete impact on the living conditions of the people by offering clean water, as well as providing schooling for children and income-generating opportunities for adults, men and women alike. Here, too, universal values are being put into practice.

After a break, other associations active in Africa or contributing to the integration of African people in Germany and the EU, introduced themselves. Rachel Nangally founder of the association Sources-d'Espoir, ("source of hope"), spoke of the need for cultural encounters such as this Africa Day to break down prejudices and foster good relationships.



"Integration, anti-discrimination and the upcoming European elections" was the title of the presentation given by Mr. Aziz Lamere, founder of Narud e.V. Citing examples from the work of his association, he drew attention to the need to uncover, condemn, and prosecute racial discrimination and stressed the importance of the upcoming European elections for the relationship between the EU and Africa. He called on all migrants entitled to do so, to cast their vote.



Members of the Love-Peace-Harmony association presented its projects in the Democratic Republic of Congo, such as the construction of village wells. They sang in Lingala, a language of the Democratic Republic of Congo, a peace song that has been translated into more than 20 languages.

The atmosphere of the event was magnificent, the room pleasant and bright, and all the speakers were enthusiastically received. We enjoyed African and German snacks and various drinks. But surely a highlight was the three musicians who played as a trio and individually and got everyone moving. Christian Bakotessa on the guitar moved the hearts of the guests who sang along with some of the songs and danced to others. And he could yodel too!



Then when Mr. Macamo and Mr. Carlos Cruz beat out African rhythms on their drums, nobody could stay seated. The applause was thunderous!



Special thanks to Mrs. Yvette Mboyo for providing African delicacies, and women of the Family Federation for their cakes. And thanks also to the three young missionaries from Korea who contributed diligently, reliably and with heart wherever they were needed.

Conclusion: SUPER! We'll do it again.

