

UPF Chair Addresses Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba Day Program at the UN

Genie Kagawa
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New York, United States—UPF International Chair Dr. Thomas G. Walsh addressed a special program at the UN General Assembly in honor of Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba Day.

The Mission of Senegal officially celebrated the 29th Annual Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba Day at the General Assembly Hall on July 28, 2017. The highlight of the evening program was the keynote speech of Serigne Cheikh Mame Mor Mbacke, the spiritual leader of the Mouride Brotherhood in Senegal, who was on a nationwide speaking tour of the United States.

Cheikh Mbacke emphasized the essence of the life and teachings and legacy of Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba, the founder of the Mouride Brotherhood. Cheikh Mbacke stressed the message of nonviolence, giving all power only to Allah and surrendering one's will and actions to the Divine. Both oppression and peace are learned through education and not through force, he said. Education achieves what violence never can achieve.

Kathy Rigney, the regional chair of UPF-Africa, accompanied Cheikh Mbacke to New York.

In his address Dr. Walsh encouraged the followers of the Mouride Brotherhood in their work for the sake of peace throughout the world.

Read Dr. Walsh's Congratulatory Remarks here: [T. Walsh: Address at UN Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba Day](#)

Address at UN Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba Day

Thomas Walsh

July 28, 2017

United Nations, New York

Congratulatory Remarks

Excellency Serigne Mame Mor Mbacke Mourtada, supreme head of the Mouride Sufi Brotherhood.

H.E. Ambassador Fodé Seck, permanent representative of Senegal to the UN.

It is a distinct honor to be with all of you this evening to celebrate Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba Day here in New York City, and most especially to be here at the United Nations headquarters, the home of 193 member states.

I have been very impressed to listen to the previous speakers. Professor Souleymane Bachir Diagne, professor of philosophy at Columbia University, spoke eloquently about the underlying philosophy of the Mouride movement, as evidenced in the content of the prayers of the founder. Professor M. Mourtala Mboup discussed current theories of development and explained the contribution of Mouride practices to the achievement of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. And Mouhamadou Lamine Mbacke explained the economic principles of the Mouride Sufi Brotherhood, outlining its consistency with Islamic finance principles and explaining how the moral, ethical and spiritual principles of the Mouride community have given rise to a burst of economic prosperity and growth. I believe these principles and

practices of the Mouride Sufi Brotherhood have wide implications for development throughout Africa and the world.

Ahmadou Bamba Mbacke founded the Mouride Sufi Brotherhood more than 100 years ago in Senegal, centering on the great city of Touba, known to some as “the Muslim Vatican” and home to perhaps the largest mosque in sub-Saharan Africa. Since its founding, the Mouride Sufi Brotherhood movement has grown, carrying forward its vision of spirituality and peace among all peoples.



I recently visited Senegal and was reminded once again of its beauty and the goodness of its people. It is a shining star in Africa and the world.

During my visit I spent time with Cheikh Mansur Diouf, who on behalf of Minister Arona Coumba Ndoffène Diouf, is our partner in preparing an Africa-wide summit to be convened by UPF in November 2017. Recently our UPF delegation, led by Mrs. Katherine Rigney, met with President Macky Sall, who has encouraged and supported this worthy endeavor to promote peace and human development throughout Africa.

To restore our world and build a world of enduring, lasting peace, there must be widespread collaboration and partnership. Governments, UN member states alone, cannot achieve this goal. There must be partnership between governments and non-state actors, including NGOs, FBOs [faith-based organizations], and private sector partners. Organizations such as the Mouride Sufi Brotherhood play a necessary and essential role in creating peace and stability in our communities, societies and nations. UPF is proud to be a partner with the Mouride Sufi Brotherhood, as we share so many of the same core principles and values.

UPF emerged from the spiritual and moral vision of Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon of Korea. Our co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon has asked UPF, together with its partners in Senegal, including the office of President Macky Sall and the Mouride Sufi Brotherhood, to convene an African Summit in November or early December of this year. Representatives from throughout Africa will attend, including heads of state, parliamentarians, religious leaders, and tribal chiefs. We look forward to working together, and we very much look forward to the participation of Serigne Mame Mor Mbacke as our special guest of honor. This summit will have a great and positive impact on Africa and the world.

Serigne Mame Mor Mbacke has mentioned how grateful he is to UPF for appointing him as an Ambassador for Peace. Many thousands attended that ceremony in the great and holy city of Touba. However, I want to add that Mother Moon and all of UPF are very proud of Serigne Mame Mor Mbacke. Sir, you are indeed an exemplary Ambassador for Peace, a model Ambassador for Peace.

The world's governments are increasingly aware of the importance of understanding and appreciating the great moral and social assets that are manifested through religious communities, for they so often provide humanitarian relief, charity, counseling, education, health care and services to billions of people the world over, guided and driven by a spiritual sense of mission to live for the sake of others. This is a precious asset.

I applaud the great work of the Mouride Sufi Brotherhood and honor its founder, Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba, a true servant of the Prophet. Let us work together for peace.