

## UPF UK: Int'l Women's Day - Support the UN Vision of Dignity, Justice, and Peace

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On [International Women's Day](#), observed in 2026 under the theme "[Rights. Justice. Action. For ALL Women and Girls](#)", the [Universal Peace Federation](#) (UPF), an NGO in General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, honors women whose qualities and service strengthens families, communities, and nations.

### Key Takeaways

- International Women's Day highlights the essential role women play in strengthening families, communities, and nations.
- The 2026 theme, "**Rights. Justice. Action. For ALL Women and Girls**," emphasizes access to justice, equal dignity, and the removal of structural barriers affecting women worldwide.
- The work of **Dr. Hak Ja Han** and the founding vision of the Universal Peace Federation emphasize the importance of women's leadership, moral voice, and public service in building a culture of peace.
- Initiatives such as the **Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP)** demonstrate how grassroots service, education, and humanitarian action contribute to reconciliation and stability.
- Peacebuilding is strengthened when governments, civil society, and communities work in partnership with women whose leadership sustains trust, dialogue, and cooperation.
  - MAGE - [Men Advocating for Gender Equality](#) is a UK - UPF initiative chaired by Jeremy Blain

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### Rights, Justice, and Action for All Women and Girls

As the international community prepares for the seventieth session of the Commission on the Status of

Women ([CSW70](#)), whose priority theme is ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls, including by promoting inclusive and equitable legal systems, eliminating discriminatory laws, policies, and practices, and addressing structural barriers, and as the United Nations marks the [International Year of the Woman Farmer 2026](#), designated by the General Assembly, and the [International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development](#), this day calls for respect, seriousness, and practical partnership with women who sustain peace in their work and daily life.

### **The History of International Women's Day 2026**

The modern international meaning of 8 March did not begin as a seasonal custom. It grew from women's long effort to secure fairer conditions, fuller civic participation, and respect for their equal dignity. When the United Nations began observing the day in 1975 and in 1977 called on Member States to proclaim a United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace, the date gained a wider and more universal framework

### **The Role of Women in Building Peaceful Societies**

For UPF, this history points not to ideological division, but to a simple and durable truth: peace becomes stronger when the rights, conscience, gifts, and contributions of women are taken seriously.

### **Honouring the Leadership of Dr. Hak Ja Han**

With deep respect, we recognize [Dr. Hak Ja Han](#), whose public life has been marked by perseverance and by the patient building of institutions that outlast individual lifetimes. Together with her husband, late [Dr. Sun Myung Moon](#), she helped shape a broad vision of peace grounded in human dignity, the moral strength of the family, and the demands of public service. She stood beside him in difficult moments of public mission, and in later years carried that work forward with discipline and clarity.

### **Women's Federation for World Peace Launched**

In April 1992, they founded the [Women's Federation for World Peace](#), an older sister organization to UPF. In the eight months that followed, she delivered inaugural addresses in 113 cities in 12 countries and in three languages. During her 1993 world tour, she spoke at the United Nations in New York, the Kremlin in Moscow, and the Great Hall in Beijing, highlighting women as peacebuilders and moral voices in public life, while affirming peace among nations and the ethical role of the family. WFWP also helped prepare the ground for the later [International Association of First Ladies for Peace](#), which UPF developed as a framework for women in public leadership.

### **Dr Hak Ja Han's Initiatives for Peace**

Her later work expanded this institutional foundation. In 2013, she proposed the [Sunhak Peace Prize](#), whose first award ceremony was held in 2015. From 2016 onward, she also helped initiate and shape UPF's primary associations. These included the [International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace](#), the [Interreligious Association for Peace and Development](#), and the [International Association of First Ladies for Peace](#). They also included the [International Association of Academicians for Peace](#), the [International Media Association for Peace](#), the [International Association for Peace and Economic Development](#), and the [International Association of Arts and Culture for Peace](#). Through these platforms, UPF widened its work through summit diplomacy, parliamentary engagement, interreligious cooperation, academic exchange, media responsibility, cultural dialogue, and development oriented partnership.

### **Women's Federation for World Peace: Service in Action**

UPF also extends warm congratulations to the leaders and activists of the Women's Federation for World Peace. WFWP remains closely aligned with UPF, and its record of service has been especially meaningful in vulnerable settings. We express particular admiration for the many WFWP activists from Japan who have served in conflict affected regions. Their devoted work has fostered dialogue, education, and humanitarian action in the Middle East and across Africa and Asia. Their investments illustrate the principle of living for the sake of others as a daily practice of care where trust is scarce and needs are urgent. Their example shows that peace is built not only in summit halls, but also in families, schools, local partnerships, and steady service to vulnerable communities.

We also express regret that Dr. Hak Ja Han continues to face ongoing legal proceedings in the Republic of Korea and intense public attacks related to her public mission. We hope these matters reach, appropriately, a fair and impartial conclusion consistent with the rule of law and human dignity. This concern is especially meaningful as the United Nations and civil society prepare for CSW70, where access to justice for women and girls, through inclusive and equitable legal systems, stands at the center of discussion. It is also timely during UPF's [100 Days of Serving Community](#) campaign, launched on 20 February 2026 and running through 1 June 2026, with March focused on partnerships that strengthen

trust, service, and family life at the local level.

### **One Family Under God: The Foundation for Lasting Peace**

This conviction reflects the teaching of our founders that humanity is one family under God. They affirm that peace begins in the family as the first school of love, responsibility, and conscience, and grows outward into the community, the nation, and the wider world.

In that spirit, we see International Women's Day as a fitting occasion for governments, civil society, faith communities, and citizens to deepen their cooperation with and appreciation of women whose steady work keeps reconciliation possible.

### **MAGE - Men Advocating for Gender Equality**

Bridging the gender divide in leadership, boardrooms, and workplace pipelines requires more than discussion - it requires action. International Women's Day reminds us that despite significant social progress, gender equality in leadership and opportunity remains incomplete. Meaningful change depends on stronger partnerships between men and women, with men actively supporting gender equality as allies in workplaces, communities, and institutions.

Research consistently shows that gender-diverse organisations perform better. [Companies with greater gender diversity](#) are more likely to outperform financially, generate higher innovation-driven revenue, make better decisions, and attract and retain talent more effectively. Recognising this, initiatives such as **MAGE – Men Advocating Gender Equality**, [launched with Universal Peace Federation UK](#), encourage men to take responsibility for promoting inclusion and partnership. By asking what each of us can do to support gender equality, we can help build more inclusive workplaces and societies where everyone benefits.

### **Be part of building a culture of peace**

If this message resonated with you, take the next step:

**Be part of building a culture of peace**  
If this message resonated with you, take the next step:

- Join our Peace Network**  
Email updates with thoughtful insights, invitations, and ways to serve.
- Become a Monthly Supporter**  
Help sustain our long-term peace initiatives and leadership development.
- Become an Ambassador for Peace**  
Join a global network of ethical leaders and bridge-builders.
- Get Involved in our Work**  
Interfaith cooperation, youth leadership, gender equality, community service.

### **Most Relevant Next Reads**

Continue exploring how peace, dialogue, and ethical leadership are shaping a more just and harmonious world:

- [MAGE - Men Advocating for Gender Equality Launched](#)
- [Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls - UPF UK Event in the Lords](#)
- [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action: Thirty Years On](#)
- [World Religious Leaders Gather in Seoul for Peace and Freedom](#)
- [A Decade of Action for the Global Goals](#)
- [Interfaith Council at the United Nations](#)

### **Broader UPF Context**

- [UPF Celebrates 20 Years of Global Peacebuilding](#)
- [Dr Hak Ja Han - Mother of Peace, A Life Dedicated to Unity, Family, and Global Peacebuilding](#)
- [Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity, and Universal Values](#)