

UPF Southeast Europe's program on Peace and Security in Tirana, Albania

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UPF's Southeast Europe region will host a program on Peace, Security and Human Development in Tirana, Albania, Oct. 25-27. There will also be the launch of the International Summit Council for Peace Europe Branch, Youth and Students for Peace Rally, Peace Road Balkans and Family Festival and Blessing Ceremony.

The Universal Peace Federation, in partnership with representatives of government, civil society, religious leaders and the private sector, launched the international Summit series in order to effectively address and seek solutions to these and other issues. The Summit series consists of both world-level and regional-level Summits, dating back several decades.

More recently, regional Summits have been convened in Africa, South America, and Asia.

In January 2018, the president of Senegal collaborated with the Universal Peace Federation in hosting the first Africa Summit for Peace and Human Development in Dakar, Senegal. This Summit convened more than 1,200 participants from over 60 nations. The second Africa Summit was convened in Cape Town, South Africa, to honour the life and legacy of President Nelson Mandela. (Below HE President Macky Sall of Senegal receiving the Leadership and Good Governance Award from Dr (Mrs) Hak Ja Han Moon, Co-Founder of UPF during the Senegal Summit Conference in January, 2018)

The Asia Pacific Summit 2018 was held in Kathmandu, Nepal, in November 2018 on the theme of 'Addressing the Critical Challenges of Our Time: Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity and Universal Values'. A total of 1,500 distinguished delegates from 45 nations, including seven heads of state and government, participated in the Summit, which was inaugurated by the prime minister of Nepal.

The Southeast Europe Peace Summit 2019 in Albania is co-hosted by UPF under the patronage of the prime minister of Albania, in partnership with the Podgorica Club of former heads of state and government as well as academic, nonprofit and social agencies from throughout Southeast Europe and beyond. The Summit will showcase the positive impact of cooperation between government and civil society on peace-building and reconciliation in areas of conflict, bringing about renewed development, enhanced prosperity and solutions to other critical issues in society.

But it is not just about political and economic solutions. More than 1,000 youth and young adult leaders will gather for the Youth and Students for Peace Assembly, showcasing innovative service and social projects designed to give young people a bigger stake in the future of their own countries.

Women leaders will be invited to attend the Global Women's Peace Leadership Banquet organised by Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) International. At the banquet WFWP will explain its vision of creating bridges of cooperation, reconciliation and peace.

There also will be the public launch of the Peace Road Balkans 2019/2020, a flagship project of UPF around the world that brings together young people from former enemy nations on a marathon cycle journey of peace. Last year the Peace Road Balkans included stops in Albania, Montenegro, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and northern Greece. This year Croatia, Italy and Austria have been added.

A selected group of delegates from throughout the world will be in attendance -- more than 50 countries will be represented -- including current and former heads of state, speakers of parliament, parliamentarians, spiritual leaders from the world's great religions, women leaders, and representatives of the media, academia, business, arts, youth and civil society.

The Summit will feature the second European assembly of both the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) and the Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD). It will conclude with an Interfaith Family and Marriage Festival and an International Cultural Performance. We believe that your participation in this important conference will contribute greatly to the fulfilment of these shared objectives.

The principal organiser of the summit, the Universal Peace Federation (UPF), holds General Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The co-founder, Dr Hak Ja Han Moon, will be joining us in Tirana. UPF has active chapters in more than 150 nations. Its programs focus on peace-building and conflict resolution, strengthening marriage and family, youth and service, and support for the mission and work of the United Nations. Particularly noteworthy among UPF initiatives are the International Leadership Conferences, the Peace Road project and the Sunhak Peace Prize.



One session will be chaired by a UK Ambassador for Peace and Adviser, Abdul Basit Syed Ibrahim, entitled 'Peace and Development in the Balkans: The Role of Business, Entrepreneurs and Investors'. In this session we are pre-empting the inauguration of the 'International Association for Peace and Economic Development (IAED), next February at the UPF World Summit in Seoul, South Korea. UPF is seeking to promote the economic interdependence that promotes both mutual prosperity and an enduring peace. The United Nations' SDGs underscore the need to end extreme poverty by good governance and policies that facilitate long lasting and widespread economic development. In this session, panellists will consider the ways in which economic development can be expanded throughout southern Europe. Questions to be considered include: Are there region-wide policies and structures that could be adopted that will enhance investment, cooperation and trade? In what areas could investment best stimulate development?

Peace, Security and Human Development in Southeast Europe

October 25 – 27, 2019 Tirana, Albania

Saturday, October 26

Opening Plenary: Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity and Universal Values: Toward Peace In Southeast Europe

Opening Panel: Perspectives for Peace in the Balkans

Twenty years after the conflicts that reconfigured the region after the end of the Cold War and the breakup of Yugoslavia, the Western Balkan nations are facing the process of EU integration, the challenge of regional cooperation, and pressure from competing international interests. Assessing challenges and opportunities on the national and international levels, panelists will give their perspectives and recommendations for peace and development in the region.

Launch of the International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP)

This session will feature addresses by current and former heads of state and government on the theme of "Peace, Security and Human Development in Southeast Europe." It will feature the launch of the International Summit Council for Peace, a global association of current and former heads of state and government dedicated to dialogue and collaboration for the sake of peace and human development.

Side Event: Launch of "Peace Road Balkans" 2019-2020

Peace Road Balkans is a project of UPF involving young people, parliamentarians, city mayors and civil society leaders, aiming to overcome prejudice and create positive interaction among youth and leaders in the Balkans region. Through cycling or riding for peace across borders, the Peace Road project contributes to realize the UPF Founders' vision of an International Highway for Peace across the globe.

Concurrent Sessions

Session II-a: ISCP Joint High-Level Panel: Peace, Security and Human Development in Southeast Europe

The International Summit Council for Peace provides a meeting place for current and former world leaders to share the wisdom and experience that are needed to find lasting solutions to the critical problems of our time. In this high-level panel, former heads of state and government from the Balkans and the greater region will offer their vision and recommendations for building peace, security and human development in Southeast Europe.

Session II-b: Education for Peace and Human Development

Education is the fundamental means for building a culture of peace. The UN promotes education for sustainable development, teaching attitudes and skills aimed at realizing environmental integrity, economic viability and a just society. To achieve these goals, there is a need for character education that teaches individual morality and good citizenship. In the context of Southeast Europe, which education policies contribute to regional cooperation and understanding? Panelists will discuss their vision for education and best practices contributing to peace and human development.

Concurrent Sessions

Session III-a: Addressing Critical Challenges of Our Time: The Role of Parliamentarians

Representing the people, respecting the rule of law and upholding human rights, parliamentarians play a central role in searching for innovative solutions to the critical issues faced by their nation, their region and the world. In this panel, members of parliament from Europe and the Middle East will share their experience, their vision and their recommendations for a future of peace, human development and social justice in Southeast Europe.

Session III-b: Addressing Critical Challenges of Our Time: The Role of Men and Women Faith Leaders

Religious leaders and faith-based organizations play a significant role in bringing about reconciliation and a culture of peace. By working together with political leaders, their moral authority and their emphasis on respect for human rights and dignity provide valuable resources for achieving a just and peaceful society. In this panel, religious leaders will explain how their faith helps transcend social conflicts and foster social development. Women panelists will describe how women faith leaders can play a unique role in developing a peaceful society and community.

Global Women's Peace Leadership Banquet

Organized by Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) International, the event will feature remarks by WFWP International President, the presentation of awards to women leaders and artistic performances.

Sunday, October 27

Concurrent Sessions

Session IV-a: Family Values, Peace Values

Family values are a great resource for peacebuilding. However, family traditions can also purvey prejudice, defining ethnic or cultural solidarity in such a way as to foster adversarial historical relationships. There is a need for family traditions to promote solidarity in the wider society. In this light, several questions arise: What kinds of government policies can most effectively support and strengthen the institution of family? On the other hand, how can family values support democratic aspirations for good governance? How can we encourage families to consciously cultivate principles of interdependence, mutual prosperity and universal values, so that family culture will become the basis for a shared culture of peace?

Session IV-b: The Challenge of Migration: Perspectives from EU and Southeast Europe

According to UNHCR, 15,000 people have risked their lives to reach Europe by sea in 2019. The figure recalls tragedies and reflects a crisis that may only be worsening, considering demographic, climate, security and social conditions in Africa and the Middle East. The situation requires Europeans to show more solidarity and apply a founding principle of the European Union: the principle of substitution, meaning that decisions must be made at the European level in terms of capacity and harmonization of resources in response to the urgency of the moment, compelling European partners to consider with the

same empathy those men, women and children trying to reach their coasts, whether they are called "migrants", "refugees" or "asylum seekers". In this challenging equation, Southeast Europe, which, despite persistent requests is not yet fully integrated and seems increasingly distant from the EU, stands on the front line.

Session IV-c: Interfaith Cooperation and Social Engagement: Best Practices

The conflicts and tensions of today's world put all religious traditions to the test, as not just individuals but whole cultures find themselves mistrusting each other. Yet there are places where faith communities respond to suffering and confusion with one united voice of compassion, virtue and exemplary service. Instead of competing in the "salvation market," they have discovered that they are each other's most natural partners, sharing both vision and values. They tackle the wounds of war through reconciliation programs, seek to prevent conflict and violence through experiential and awareness programs, or bring the youth of the world's cultures together, building understanding, respect and trust.

Session V-a: Women Together: Redefining Pathways to Peace, Reconciliation and Human Development

One of the most culturally rich and beautiful areas of Europe, the Balkans have also been a region of strife among religions, nations and ethnic groups. The conflicts that followed the fall of the Iron Curtain and the collapse of Yugoslavia added to the historical burden, leaving deep scars and lingering resentment. In order to resolve these underlying problems, a new type of leadership is needed to create bridges of cooperation, reconciliation and peace. Concerned about creating a peaceful future for their families and their nations, women are called to advocate and engage for the rights and dignity of all people in their public leadership roles as well as in their homes. By working together to create a peace culture rooted in core values, investing with the passion and labor of love of mothers, wives and daughters, they can give hope to heal, build and transform.

Session V-b: Media in the 21st Century: Challenges and Opportunities

This panel offers a platform for European media experts, civil society representatives and politicians to discuss the following themes: 1. Press freedom in Europe and the Middle East and threats of censorship - assessment of the current situation based on the Press Freedom Index by Reporters Without Borders. 2. Freedom of speech and media responsibility for quality management, integrity, and ethical standards in reporting: seeking a common understanding and concrete guidelines. 3. The rise of the Internet and social media: challenges and chances for an engaged civil society on local, regional, national levels.

Can the International Media Association for Peace, which is scheduled to be launched at the World Summit 2020 in Seoul, Korea, be a platform for promoting peace and reconciliation in our region?

Session V-c: Peace and Development in Southeast Europe: The Role of Business, Entrepreneurs and Investors

Economic development, leading toward mutual prosperity, is necessary for a true and lasting peace. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals underscore the need to bring an end to extreme poverty and to promote good governance and policies that contribute to economic development, raising the standard of living for everyone. In this session, panelists will consider the ways in which economic development can be expanded throughout Southeast Europe, harmonizing global strategies with local needs. Are there region-wide policies that could be adopted that will enhance cooperation and trade? How do government policies and practices enhance or hinder economic development in the region? What kind of investment is needed to stimulate development?

Closing Plenary: Peace Perspectives in Southeast Europe (Tirana International Hotel)

In this closing session, panelists will share their perspectives for peace and development in Southeast Europe with regards to the current geopolitical context.

Interfaith Family and Marriage Festival (Tirana Congress Hall)

The family is the basic institution of social life and a key factor of social cohesion. It is where children learn language, culture, ethics, values, and attitudes toward others. Thus, the family is called a "school of love" and a "school of peace". The festival will feature a ceremony of marriage rededication to be officiated by the UPF cofounder, Dr Hak Ja Han Moon, bringing together couples from throughout Albania and participants from Europe and the Middle East region. The festival will conclude with entertainment by young artists representing different cultures from the region.