

UPF North America meets about the Bering Strait Peace Road Connector

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Washington DC - May 21, 2024 - UPF North America held a meeting on the International Peace Highway New York to London and the *Bering Strait Connector* in The Washington Times Beech Room.



Venue and Setting

Attending were 70 in person (the full capacity of the room) and 50 online, attending via Zoom.

This was a "hybrid" meeting that was partly in person and partly online. Through Zoom we had participants attending from Alaska and Russia. Russia is very interested in the Bering Strait tunnel. UPF is not persecuted in Russia, and part of the reason for that may be because they work hard to promote the International Peace Highway and tunnel.

Even though there exists great conflict between the U.S. and Russia at this time, our meeting completely avoided politics and the current difficulties. Several speakers acknowledged the conflicts between the U.S. and Russia, but there was an understanding among all attendees that some ideas and projects transcend political considerations.

The meeting took place at The Washington Times Building from 10 AM to 1 PM. It was a vigorous set of

presentations and discussion among participants, followed by a delicious lunch.

Guests were welcomed by the host organizations

The two main host organizations were Universal Peace Federation and The Washington Times Foundation, represented by **Dr. Chang Shik (Charles) Yang**, Chairman of UPF International, and **Dr. Michael Jekins**, President of The Washington Times Foundation. Co-hosting with us was **Mr. Scott Spencer**, Chief Advisor to the InterContinental Railway Corporation, a non-profit NGO in the U.S. and Russia that has the mission of pulling together the people and resources to build the Bering Strait tunnel and also the railway connectors across the wilderness regions of Canada and Russian Siberia. **Mrs. Kaeleigh Moffitt**, in her capacity as President of the Women's Federation for World Peace, an affiliated organization, and Congressional Liaison for the Universal Peace Federation, did an excellent job as the emcee and host, making everyone feel honored to be part of this event.



Dr. Charles S. Yang

Dr. Yang, Chairman of UPF International and also the Bering Sea Tunnel Project, called everyone's attention to both the Bering Strait tunnel and the tunnel between Korea and Japan as the two unfinished links that prevent land access between every part of the world.

He cited three factors for success that were pointed out by Rev. and Dr. Moon: (1) political commitment from the leaders of the United States and Russia, (2) economic feasibility and investment capital related from many governments, and (3) the sharing of the most advanced tunneling technology.



He recounted the announcement of their commitment to the Korea-Japan Undersea Tunnel at the 10th ICUS on November 10, 1981, and so their commitment to the Bering Strait Tunnel at the founding of UPF in New York in 2005

Eventually linking Tokyo to the rest of the world through North and South Korea, UPF Founders, Dr Sun Myung Moon and Dr Hak Ja Han, called this highway "the new Silk Road."



Dr. Michael Jenkins, President, UPF International and The Washington Times Foundation

Dr. Jenkins opened the meeting with words of welcome to all who had come, and were watching online via Zoom. He summed up the history of UPF's interest in the project and said he recommitted Universal Peace Federation's interest and dedication to the Bering Strait project. He said we would continue to meet like this and earnestly pursue the peaceful development of the Asia Pacific region, with all nations involved.

At the conclusion of his remarks, Dr. Jenkins showed video about the tunnel project that was created the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Russian Ministry of Economic Development



Mr. Scott Spencer, Chief Project Advisor, The Intercontinental Railway

Scott Spencer spoke of the urgency of the tunnel project. The key point of his remarks was that Confronting a crisis to create a mutually beneficial opportunity for peace is the best way to avoid a wider war. Waiting for a war to go away is not an option thus the urgency of now to take action to save lives and secure the peace that is vital for the greatness of all nations.

As a railway consultant for many railway companies in the world, he usually speaks about the engineering, operating and environmental characteristics of building an 8000 kilometers-long railroad linking the United States and Canada with Russia and China via the 53-mile tunnel under the Bering Strait. However, instead he emphasized the urgency of now: about how this project can be part of a mutually beneficial diplomacy initiative to end the war between Ukraine and Russia.



Hon. Mead Treadwell

The Honorable Mead Treadwell was Lt. Governor of Alaska from 2010 to 2014). Today, he runs his own consultancy called Treadwell Development. Lt. Governor Treadwell is a longtime close friend of The Washington Times. He came to our office to discuss our plans for this meeting but was unable to be at our event in person because of another conference he was going to attend in Alaska.

All his life, he has worked to develop ties with Russia, as our closest neighbor in the Arctic region. He said, "In good times, and bad times between the U.S. and Russia, and that includes strengthening economic, personal, and cultural relations with Russia. In the Arctic, many Russian citizens are not just neighbors with Alaskans, they are brothers, cousins, grandparents: family. Whether our nations are friends or adversaries – and we've seen both, sadly, several times in our lives – it's important to remember that we are all people, we want peace, and we love our children too."



Dr. Victor Razbegin

Dr. Victor Razbegin is a Russian scientist and government official. He is currently Director of the Interdepartmental Centre for Integrated Regional Transport Projects. Before that he worked at the Russian Ministry of Economic Development as Vice-Chairman of the Council for Productive Forces. He is also a

Co-founder of The Intercontinental Railway who served on the Russia end of that NGO as the counterpart of Scott Spence. Dr. Razbegin's topic was "Russia's Readiness and Willingness" to build the Bering Strait Connector. He is a vocal advocate for the tunnel being an aid to the promotion of peace and a reduction of tensions between Russia and the U.S.



Mr. Eugene Harnett

Mr. Eugene Harnett has lived in Alaska for many years as a church pastor. He is a former East Garden security guard. Today, he is chief-of-staff for a conservative member of the Alaska State House of Representatives.

He spoke of the need for a think tank devoted to the Bering Strait connector to Russia. There needs to be a place where people can meet and the best ideas can be distilled and put into practice. He said, "the think tank would be the yeast to make the dough rise."

Right now, there is no one place where everyone can gather. Dr. Razbegin in Russia, also said the people working on the tunnel project in the U.S. and Russia (and China), need to meet regularly in order to move forward.

Mr. Louis Cerny

Mr. Louis Cerny, although semi-retired, is active as a consultant with the major railway companies of the world. He has been involved in railways since the early 1960s, and is the former Executive Director of the American Railway Engineering Association. His specialty is designing large-scale steel bridges, tunnels and railroad systems. He understands the technical challenges of building railroads in the most harsh conditions, such as permafrost and extremely cold weather.

For the project to go forward there will need to be reasonably good relations between the US and Russia. The direction of history can shift quickly, and we need to have the project plans developed and ready to go, to take advantage of any favorable turns in U.S.-Russia relations.

One of the benefits of the project is that a tunnel will greatly reduce the need for new port facilities and ocean shipping, So we can expect some opposition from container ship companies and contractors who build ports.

The cost of the Bering Strait tunnel is estimated at around 120 billion US dollars. If the tunnel and connecting railways require 15 years to complete, the total cost will be less than 1 percent of the combined military spending of the U.S. and Russia during that time.

Dr. Masoyoshi Kajikuri

Dr. Kajikuri serves as Chairman of the Japan Korea Tunnel Project. He sent a video in which he testified to the vision of UPF Founders, Dr Sun Myung Moon and Dr Hak Ja Han, to connect Japan and South Korea with North Korea and the rest of the world.

He showed the advanced development of Japan's thinking about the tunnel. He showed the 600-meter test tunnel that had been constructed, and practical plans for the completion of a tunnel from Japan to Korea.