

The Kiribati chapter of IAPP launched at the Kiribati House of Assembly

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South Tarawa, Kiribati -- The Kiribati chapter of the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) was launched at the House of Assembly on December 9, 2017 with the first president of Kiribati and 22 members of parliament in attendance. Five religious and civil society leaders, the leader of the current governing party and the leader of the opposition also came.

UPF-Asia chair, Dr. Chung Sik Yong, gave the keynote speech, in which he spoke about the vision of UPF Founders Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and how it can be applied in Kiribati. The program also included presentations on the "Family as the School of Love" and the "Zero to Hero Project," a martial arts program run in the Asia-Pacific region by the International Peace Leadership College (IPLC). UPF-Oceania chair, Rev. Shang Seon Park, gave the closing remarks.

On December 11, Dr. Yong officially recognized the former minister of trade and commerce and current member of parliament, Hon. Pinto Katia, and his wife, as the presidents of UPF-Kiribati.

Prior to inauguration of the IAPP-Kiribati, over two days, on December 7 and 8, UPF's delegation -- which included Dr. Yong; Rev. Park; Rev. Gregory Stone, secretary general of UPF-Oceania; Mr. Santosh Neupane, president of UPF-Fiji; and Dr. Venus Agustin, president of the ILPC in the Philippines -- met with several current and former Kiribati government leaders.

On December 7, the delegation was warmly welcomed to the island nation by the former first president, H.E. Anote Tong, and his wife, and shared lunch with them.

The next day, they had a lunch meeting with the minister of education, Hon. David Collins, to introduce the Zero to Hero Project and discuss the prospect of having youth from Kiribati participate in it and signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the minister of education and the ILPC.

Afterwards, the UPF delegation was officially welcomed and introduced to members of parliament by the Speaker of the House of Assembly. Later, the Speaker met with the delegation in his office and conveyed his support for the inauguration of the IAPP-Kiribati.