

UPF's Africa Summit and Leadership Conference 2019 held in South Africa

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Johannesburg, South Africa -- The Africa Summit and Leadership Conference 2019 (ASLC) convened June 7 and 8, 2019, at the Hilton Sandton hotel under the theme "Building a Peaceful and Prosperous Africa Centered on Universal Values." More than 450 participants representing 60 nations, including many former heads of state and government, parliamentarians and religious leaders from all faith traditions, attended the event.



The ASLC was dedicated to: (1) the regional inauguration of the International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP), (2) a presentation of UPF's activities and the Project for a Heavenly Africa, (3) providing a forum for the participants to partner together and discuss innovative ways to address today's challenges, and (4) a celebration of the UN-designated Global Day of Parents 2019 at the Interfaith Hyojeong Family Blessing Festival.

The international and national participants included 12 former heads of state, deputy presidents, heads of government and first ladies; 11 government ministers; 6 vice presidents of National Assemblies; 35 members of parliament; 130 traditional rulers (kings and queens); 101 religious leaders; 10 members of the international media; and more than 100 women leaders and civil society leaders.

On Friday morning, June 7, Mr. Adama Doumbia, the regional secretary general of UPF Africa and emcee for the Opening Plenary, introduced the well-known singer Khanyo Maphumulo, who sang the South African national anthem to officially open the program. Interfaith prayers were offered by Bishop Isaac Idahosa Odir, founding Bishop, God First Ministries of Nigeria and Mrs. Gafsah Mahlangu, director of the International Sufi School of South Africa.



Next came welcoming remarks from several royal houses. Prince Thulani, representing the Zulu kingdom, thanked Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, the co-founder of UPF International, and Dr. Prophet Radebe, the founder of Inkululeko Yesizwe Association, for organizing the conference and expressed his support for the work "to revive the great African traditions and values."

His Majesty Willard Mswati Gomani V, king of the Maseko Ngoni clan in Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania, reminded the distinguished gathering that throughout history "prophets and kings have worked together to restore peace, development and unity among our people. It is with that same heart that I pledge my full support from my side to support this cause to encourage spirituality, traditional norms, and culture within our regions Africa and all over the world."

King Jobe Radebe, representing the amaHlubi Kingdom and King Langalibalele, expressed total support "to restore African-ness and African indigenous beliefs."

Mrs. Kathy Rigney, who has been working in Africa for 45 years and serves as regional chair of UPF Africa, offered welcoming remarks and a conference overview. The program "is an opportunity to focus on the urgent need for a new vision and moral leadership by offering a framework for peacebuilding and development, grounded in its core values and universal principles."

Dr. Prophet Radebe, founder of Inkululeko Yesizwe Association and president of UPF-South Africa, explained that the reason he decided to partner with UPF is because he believes in the saying "two birds of the same feather flock together. You always surround yourself with people of the same vision, people who inspire you, not people who put you down. This is what draws me to [Mother Moon] in order for me to partner with her. I was drawn by the energy, drawn by the deeds." He described Dr. Moon as "an iconic woman who has stood up for peace, together with her husband, and has worked tirelessly to bring families together and to unite this effort."

Keynote speakers addressed the conference theme, "Building a Peaceful and Prosperous Heavenly Africa Centered on Universal Values." Representing South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, H.E. Samson Gwede Mantashe, chair of the African National Congress (ANC), South Africa's governing political party, and minister of energy and mineral resources, emphasized the need to address the challenges facing the people, including, "first, high levels of unemployment, poverty and inequality; second, accept that South Africa is not an island -- it is part of this great continent of Africa; third, break the divisions that are based on colonial background. For example, there is very little interaction between the Francophone and the Anglophone countries."

H.E. Mahamane Ousmane, president of Niger (1993-1996), addressed the topic of leadership and noted how the world is dealing with the transition from a bipolar world to a multipolar system. Beside challenges that mirror those found around the world -- for example, climate change, extremism, education, environment, terrorism -- Africa also faces the issue of water security, which impacts the quality of life especially for the most vulnerable -- usually women and children. "Some people actually say a third world war might be because of water or lack of water," the former president said.



H.E. Goodluck Jonathan, president of Nigeria (2010-2015), who welcomed and met personally with Father and Mother Moon in 2011 when he was president, has been a strong supporter of UPF over the years, dating back to his time as governor of the state of Bayelsa. President Jonathan served as the head of the observer mission that was responsible to oversee South Africa's recent general elections.

He noted the relationship between conflict and development. The UN Development Programme has shown that the 10 most developed countries have either no conflicts or very minimal conflicts, while the 10 least developed countries are constantly in conflict or have had recent major conflicts. "Unfortunately for us, these 10 least developed countries are all in the African continent," President Jonathan said.

He spoke about his experience when serving as chair of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the critical importance of good governance. "I call on African leaders, political leaders, all of us collectively, to make the required sacrifice to move our countries forward, so that these conflicts in the continent will be ameliorated and the continent will see more development," he said.

H.E. Dioncounda Traoré, president of Mali (2012-2013), introduced the founder, known respectfully as Mother Moon. Since her husband's passing seven years ago, she has "ably headed one of the largest and most significant movements of the 21st century. She leads the movement forward with brilliance and wisdom and commitment," President Traoré said.

Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon was warmly welcomed with cheers and applause. The UPF co-founder immediately won the hearts of the audience when she declared, "We have all gathered here because we believe in God, and in particular, God loves Africa!" She gave a brilliant exposition of religious history centered on Jesus Christ and Christianity and her view that "the solutions to humanity's problems lie in truly understanding God."

Due to the fall of humanity, as told in the Book of Genesis, God's original idea was frustrated, she said, and so history has been a painful process of restoration through indemnity to save fallen human beings. Despite the clarity of Jesus' words to love one another, the early missionaries to Africa did not "understand his essence" and instead "became colonialists who took away from others. This painful culture and history continued; in particular, the African continent has suffered tremendously and has endured a painful history."

Dr. Moon testified to the work of True Parents to "bring Heaven's blessings to families worldwide. For 60 years the Blessing movement has continued. In 150 nations around the world the true family values

movement and the providence of True Parents are expanding beyond religion, race or nationality."

She expressed her hope that South Africa and Africa can become models of true love, which is to live for the sake of others, and she invited the participants to "stand in the position of leaders who can build a beautiful future for our descendants."



After H.E. Kwassi Klutse, former prime minister of Togo (1996-1999), and his wife presented flowers to Dr. Moon, Dr. Thomas Walsh, chair of UPF International, explained the background and purpose for the inauguration of the African chapter of the International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP). Dr. Moon has been integrating and refining the global mission of UPF and creating institutional frameworks, he said. In 2016, the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) was launched. More than 5,000 parliamentarians from around the world have participated in inaugural programs in 80 nations. A companion organization, the Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD), was launched as a global interfaith organization to bring people together for dialogue and cooperation to address the world's critical problems.

UPF is creating instruments of peace, Dr. Walsh said, and based on this partnership of the religious and political spheres, UPF is launching a crowning organization that will bring together current and former heads of state and government. The International Summit Council for Peace (ISCP), which crosses the political spectrum, is dedicated to building a world of peace in which everyone can live in freedom, harmony, cooperation and prosperity, he said.

The heads of state and dignitaries were invited to the stage to sign the resolution supporting the ISCP. Dr. Moon presented to each of them the official medal of the ISCP. Lastly, H.E. Goodluck Jonathan was appointed as the chair for Africa of this new organization.

Other sessions included a wide array of presentations and in-depth discussions on IAPP by high-level leaders from the region and abroad including: Her Excellency Dr. Specioza Naigaga Wandira Kazibwe, Vice - President of Uganda (1994 – 2003); H.E. Gabriel M. Agbeyome Kodjo, Prime Minister of Togo (2000 – 2002), former President of National Assembly and current President of the Commission of Defense and Security to the National Assembly of Togo; Hon. Anicet Niyongabo, Vice President of the Senate of Burundi, President of IAPP – Burundi; Hon. Iro Sani, Vice president of the National Assembly of Niger, President of IAPP – Niger; and Hon. John T. Doolittle, former Congressman of USA, Chairman of IAPP USA.

Speakers focusing on IAPD included: Archbishop Johannes Ndanga, Executive President of the Apostolic Christian Council of Zimbabwe; Cheikh Mansour Diouf, Ambassador for Peace, Co-chair of Africa Summit 2018 Dakar, Senegal; Bishop Issac Idahosa Odiri, Clergy, God First Ministries Inc., Nigeria; Bishop Dr. Keith Clint Harrington, South Africa Ministries Centre; Rev. Cerge Changa, President of United Church of Zambia; Rev. Prophet Paul Bandera, The Revelation Church of Tanzania; and Archbishop George Augustus Stallings, Jr., founder of the Imani Temple African-American Catholic Congregation, United States.

Presenters of the Heavenly Africa Projects and UPF Works and Projects included: Mr. Adama Doumbia, Secretary General, UPF Africa; H.E Zakaria Abdourahamane, Minister, Spokesperson of the Government of Niger; H.E. Adlander COSTA DE MATOS, Minister of Family of Sao Tome; H.E. Kwassi Klutse, Former Prime Minister of Togo; Dr. Tageldin Hamad, Vice President, UPF International and Director, Office of United Nations Relations; Mr. Thomas Mc Devitt, President of The Washington Times of USA; Hon. Eric L. Houndete, Former Vice-president of National Assembly, President of IAPP – Benin; and Rev. Moruti Ledwaba, Regional President of FFWPU Western Africa.

On the afternoon of June 8, the participants attended the Interfaith Peace and Family Blessing Festival at the Orlando Stadium. That program was co-hosted by Universal Peace Federation, its affiliated organization Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, and the South Africa Interfaith Associations.