

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2007

# UPF TODAY

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO PEACE



**UPF Assembly 2007**

**Call for Fruitful Dialogue  
between US and UN**

**Global Peace Festival – London**

**Religious Youth Service Projects**

A PUBLICATION OF THE UNIVERSAL PEACE FEDERATION (UPF)

## Vision and Leadership at a Time of Global Crisis

Assembly 2007 was a landmark moment for the Universal Peace Federation and for world peace. For two weeks in September, more than a thousand Ambassadors for Peace gathered to celebrate the two extraordinary years of progress since the September 2005 inauguration and to develop plans for the year ahead.

UPF is providing vision and leadership at a time of global crisis. This is not merely a slogan: it is a growing reality. UPF's programs and projects have expanded rapidly, including the Middle East Peace Initiative, the Northeast Asia Peace Initiative, and other initiatives in the Balkans, South Asia, and Africa. In addition, UPF sponsors character education programs, the Interreligious Peace Sports Festival, Global Peace Festivals, and International Leadership Conferences.

At the Assembly, our Founder Dr. Sun Myung Moon said that the ideal of establishing the UN was not simply the result of a moral vision that emerged after World War II from the insight of political leaders such as Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill. The ideal of the UN is also an ideal of peace that has its origin in God.

This is how Dr. Moon always viewed the UN, even at the time of its founding. In fact, his own life course has been intertwined with the UN. It was the sixteen-nation UN Peace Force in Korea that liberated him in 1950 from the Communist prison camp at Heung Nam. Had it not been for the UN, he would have been executed.

Yet as much as he loves and respects the UN, he also sees that it has limitations. UPF proposes that the UN quickly develop an interreligious council within its system, thereby allowing a formal way for religious and spiritual perspectives to be included in the most serious work of resolving conflict and establishing peace in this world.

As an "Abel UN," the UPF has an important contribution to make. An "Abel UN" is rooted in the principle of living for the sake of others, and its trademark is service. We are to be guided not by the principle of national, racial, or religious self-interest, but by the principle of service to others.

In the pages of UPF Today, you will see an unfolding of that principle in our work to build bridges of dialogue, reconciliation, harmony, and peace among the world's races, religions, nationalities, and cultures. We hope you will add your own efforts as we seek to create one universal human family under God.



**Dr. Thomas G. Walsh,  
Secretary General,  
Universal Peace  
Federation**

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## UPF TODAY

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO PEACE

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*UPF Today* is the membership magazine of the Universal Peace Federation, founded by Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon. Envisioning peace as a state of harmonious interdependence among individuals, families, nations and peoples, UPF advocates constructive and original practices that contribute to achieving a unified world of peace, the hope of all ages. The magazine offers a forum for Ambassadors for Peace fostering human development, good governance, public service, and collaborative peace efforts involving religions, nations and nongovernmental organizations.

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UPF Assembly 2007, September 23, 2007, Manhattan Center, New York City. Photo by Graeme Carmichael.

# A CALL FOR FRUITFUL DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE US AND THE UN

By Joy Pople

*International Symposium on the United States and the United Nations*

“A good relationship between the US and the UN is essential to the functioning of the UN,” said Dr. Noel Brown, President of Friends of the United Nations, in his opening speech at the *International Symposium on the United States and the United Nations* on October 23, 2007, the eve of United Nations Day. “If the dialogue between the US and the UN is to be fruitful, we need more occasions like this.”

The symposium in Washington, DC, was sponsored by the Universal Peace Federation, Friends of the United Nations, *The Washington Times* Foundation, and the UPI Foundation.

Dr. Brown read from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s remarks prepared for United Nations Day. “The Secretary-General observes that global problems demand global solutions, and going it alone is not a viable option,” Dr. Brown reported, noting that the Secretary-General’s office is reaching out to new constituencies, such as evangelical Christians and business leaders.

“The UN was grounded in the vision of Franklin Roosevelt, and the four fears that he spoke about confronting are the cornerstones of the UN Charter,” Dr. Brown said. “The core values of the UN are shared by the United States,” he stated, and then challenged the assembly of about a hundred people to think about whether the core principles are still being upheld and what it would take to assert US leadership.

Amb. Anwarul Chowdhury from Bangladesh described several areas in which the US and UN have been engaged jointly, including peace and security,

development, good governance, and the role of civil society. He spoke of the need to view peace and security holistically and engage young people in the work of the United Nations and in building a culture of peace. “The most important role in building a culture of peace is that of the family,” he added.

As former United Nations Under-Secretary General for the Least Developed Countries, Land-Locked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, Amb. Chowdhury gave examples of youth in developing countries being involved in UN development projects. In response to a question afterwards about how to transmit a culture of peace to future generations, he encouraged young people

**Panelists included Dr. Noel Brown, President of Friends of the United Nations, and former US Congressman Earl Hilliard.**



Photo credits: Paolo Galli and Ken Owens



**Audience at the US-UN Symposium**

*“The issues that the world focuses on are the responsibility of both the US and the UN. Neither can solve the issues without the other.”*

– H.E. YAHYA A. MAHMSSANI,  
ARAB LEAGUE MISSION,  
UNITED NATIONS

from industrialized countries to spend time in developing countries and build personal connections with people there.

Moderator Taj Hamad, Secretary General of the World Association of NGOs, quoted US President George W. Bush speaking about the role of civil society: “Government can spend money, but it cannot put hope in our heart or sense of purpose in our life. Often when a life is broken it can only be rebuilt by another caring, concerned human being, someone whose actions say ‘I love, you, I believe in you, I am in your corner.’”

Amb. Felix A. Aniokoye, Deputy Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations, reviewed the history of Africa’s relationships with the UN. At the UN’s founding, most of Africa was under colonial rule, and the US supported the UN’s decolonization agenda. He expressed appreciation to the US for “doing quite a bit with the UN to support development in Africa,” but added that “much more remains to be done.” He referred to US concerns about promoting efficiency, openness, and transparency in UN operations and expressed the desire to see the US support the inclusion of African representation on the UN Security Council.

To solve common problems such as disease, poverty, and climate change, he said that “both the US and the UN should engage in ongoing dialogue with faith leaders to explore ways in which government and religions can be partners in the effort to solve critical global problems. At the same time, faith leaders need to meet together in dialogue and cooperation. They must go beyond competition and conflict and instead focus on service and the application of universal spiritual principles.”

Hon Earl Hilliard, former member of the US Congress from Alabama, called upon the US and UN to cooperate fully, “so that the next 100 years will not be like the last 100 years. Millions of lives were lost to wars and major conflicts. I think the future necessitates cooperation on a scale unimagined.” Noting recent natural catastrophes such as tsunamis and hurricanes, he urged not only the United States but other wealthy countries to come together under the auspices of the United Nations to plan how to deal with the crises of the future.

One person in the audience challenged the US administration’s choice of a vocal critic of the UN as its Ambassador. Congressman Hilliard responded: “Men are born and men die, but institutions live on. What the UN does will always be criticized by friends and foes. I think that a large percentage of the people of the United States support the work of the United Nations, and I hope that you will see greater cooperation from the US Congress.” Former US congressman Rev. Walter Fauntroy added, “It is critical that we have religious leaders involved. I had a religious leader named Martin Luther King, who appealed to the moral center of this nation and its people. Religious leaders must be headlights and not taillights, thermostats and not thermometers.”

H.E. Yahya A. Mahmassani, Ambassador and Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations, referred to rough times in the relationship between the US and UN, such as during the Cold War era. “The issues that the world focuses on are the responsibility of both the US and the UN,” he added. “Neither can solve the issues without the other. The UN has 192 members, and thus reflects the problems of 192 nations.” He expressed hope that with the aid of the US, it can transcend these problems.

In conclusion, Dr. Hyun Jin Moon, Chairman of *The Washington Times* Foundation, noted that the UN developed from US leaders who had a vision of a harmonious world. “The inalienable rights to which the US Constitution refers come from our divine origin, God,” he said. “But in the UN Charter there is as yet no such reference.” He urged the US to return to its founding principles and the UN to seek a spiritual core for its work. 🌐

# Assembly2007

*The Assembly is the Universal Peace Federation's Annual Meeting and brings together the members of its Presiding Council, Global Peace Council, Regional Affairs Council, and Council of Affiliated Organizations, along with a wide range of delegates and observers from around the world.*

*Assembly 2007 included many significant events: two International Leadership Conferences, a Luncheon Briefing at the United Nations, an Anniversary Banquet, a Capacity-Building Workshop, celebrations of the United Nations International Day of Peace, an Interfaith Working Group, and the Founder's Keynote Address.*

## **UPF Interfaith Working Group Develops a Shared Vision**

*By Mel Haft*

*Executive Vice President, American Forum for Jewish-Christian-Muslim Cooperation, US*

UPF's Assembly 2007 was the setting for the first meeting of its Interfaith Working Group. Seventy people from the US, Europe, Middle East, and Asia met over the course of three days to develop a shared vision and direction for interfaith and global service approaches to peace. Conveners included Dr. Hyun Jin Moon, co-chairman of UPF; Dr. Hamdi Murad, Imam of King Abdullah's Mosque in Jordan; Hon. Jose de Venecia, Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Philippines (represented by Hon. Edgardo Castro); and Rt. Rev. Riah Abu El-Assal, former Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem.

Members of the Interfaith Working Group met in special sessions to discuss strategy for working together in several key areas:

### **YOUTH INTERFAITH SERVICE ALLIANCE**

*Moderator: Rev. Mark Farr, Senior Director of Outreach, Points of Light Foundation, USA*

Leaders from six countries attended a session about developing interfaith and service initiatives involving youth. Rev. Farr set the tone by proclaiming that the world is in need of quick and drastic change, led by the youth. He challenged the group to think big and act big. Martin Luther King III emphasized the empowerment of youth both in the US and abroad. This focus was echoed by Rt. Rev. Riah Abu El-Assal, former Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem, who advocated bringing young leaders together to develop service initiatives; he spoke of his vision of Palestinian and Israeli youths working together to plant trees. Likewise, John Bridgeland, a former US White House assistant and now President and CEO of Civic Enterprises, underscored the need to "unleash the next generation of youth to solve problems together by building trust." To spark such changes, the group recommended building a Global Youth Interfaith Service Alliance and taking the following action steps:

### **Launch an initiative on UN International Youth Volunteer Day**

- The Global Youth Interfaith Service Alliance will be launched in December in conjunction with UN International Youth Volunteer Day and the Global Peace Festival in the Philippines. Facilitated by Service for Peace, the Points of Light Foundation, and Martin Luther King III's Realizing the Dream Foundation, civic enterprises and partner groups will initiate interfaith service projects in the US, UK, and the Philippines in efforts to address the Millennium Development Goals. In coordination with Global Peace Festivals 2008, such youth alliance projects can be scaled to the needs of all continents.

### **Convene an International Youth Leadership Conference in the Philippines**

- The Youth Federation for World Peace plans to convene a leadership training for Young Ambassadors for Peace during the Global Peace Festival in the Philippines.

### **Develop Pilot Initiatives**

- Promote non-violence and service in areas of the Middle East
- Conflict resolution in Mindanao, Philippines
- Interreligious service trips

### **Develop resources**

- Leverage seed money for local programming initiatives.
- Support FaithLink UK to expand its capacity and develop chapters in Spain, Switzerland, and Denmark.
- Seek aid from diverse sponsors and leverage it for maximum effectiveness.

### **MIDDLE EAST PEACE INITIATIVE**

*Moderator: Rev. Michael W. Jenkins, Co-Chair, Middle East Peace Initiative*

Diplomats, government officials, and religious leaders discussed strategies for developing an interreligious council and pursuing Track 2 diplomacy to defuse conflict and promote peace in parts of the Middle East. During the discussion it was noted that

*Track 2 diplomacy has the potential to open doors of friendship and communication when governments cannot do it.*

mistrust is the greatest problem in the Middle East. Track 2 diplomacy has the potential to open doors of friendship and communication when governments cannot do it, and it can be successful when there are no hidden agendas. Track 2 diplomacy also needs to address sources of discontent such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of education. Participants called on leaders of various faiths to cultivate a culture of peace internally

and stand together publicly calling for an end to acts of hatred and violence.

**Action steps**

1. Promote upcoming Middle East Peace Initiative trips.
2. Hold a regional forum in Cyprus to discuss interreligious Track 2 strategies to stop escalation of regional conflicts. A meeting in a location such as Cyprus can attract participants from countries such as Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria.
3. Form an ongoing interreligious peace council led by religious leaders together with key NGO leaders and policymakers.
4. Develop and implement peace education for religious communities and schools. Cultivate charismatic leaders, including young Ambassadors for Peace.
5. Create initiatives to bring together young Israelis and Palestinians to build interpersonal connections.



A girl carries a sign during a peace march on the International Day of Peace in Michigan, US.



Israeli and Arab youth work together planting trees during a Global Peacemakers Project.

**SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA**

*Moderator: Mr. Tageldin Hamad, Secretary General, World Association of NGOs*

Speakers in the sessions on South and Southeast Asia offered promising models of people of different faiths working together for peace:

- **Dr. Douglas Johnston** explained the work of the International Center for Religion and Diplomacy (ICRD), which he founded. In Pakistan, their work on reforming Islamic religious education has reached over 500 madrassas (Islamic schools). ICRD has two goals: to expand critical thinking skills and develop an enlightened Islamic curriculum, including issues of women’s rights and interreligious tolerance. ICRD has won the trust of Islamic and tribal leaders and was invited by 57 key leaders of the Taliban to work together with the Korean Embassy to resolve the Korean hostage crisis in Afghanistan in the summer of 2007. ICRD is seeking financial resources to build its capacity to produce textbooks and train teachers.
- **Hon. Edgardo Castro** gave an update on the interreligious resolutions spearheaded by the Philippines, which have been adopted by the UN. He also gave examples of Christians and Muslims working together in the conflict zone of Mindanao. The Philippines recently established a national agency devoted to interfaith problem solving, and he suggested that other countries can study it as a model.
- **H.E. Dr. Alwi Shihab**, Presidential Envoy from Indonesia to the Organization of the Islamic Conference, noted that his nation has had a history of peace and tolerance among religions. The recent problems have arisen out of economic and

social causes and regional jealousy, not necessarily religious causes. For example, a vacation resort that caters to wealthy Christians located in a poor Muslim area fosters resentment. But in general, he stated that Indonesia is a model for ways in which its Hindu, Muslim and Christian communities coexist (as is also the case in Malaysia).

### Action Steps

1. Promote interfaith religious education, especially for young people, as a foundation for harmonious multi-faith communities.
2. Convene an interfaith working group or forum in Malaysia, Indonesia, or Manila in the near future. Seek co-sponsorship from the nation's interreligious ministry.
3. Hold conferences on good governance in various nations along the lines of the recent International Leadership Conference co-sponsored by UPF and the parliament of Sri Lanka, which has achieved significant results in reducing conflict.
4. Publicize the conflict resolution initiatives in Mindanao, Philippines, which can be a model that other countries can adapt.

## The Role of Service and Faith-Based Humanitarian Action in Achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals

By Martin Luther King III

The twentieth century will be remembered as the most violent century throughout all of civilization. One researcher reports that nearly 100 million war-related deaths occurred in the last century, leaving in its wake a constellation of wounded and maimed, fatherless and motherless, homeless and helpless refugees. But the twentieth century will not only be mourned for the magnitude of its violence; it will also be marked by the magnanimous women and men who made the ultimate sacrifice for truth and justice, peace and nonviolence, conflict resolution and community reconciliation. They were the peace ambassadors of the people-powered revolution of the Philippines, the velvet revolution in Czechoslovakia, the modern civil rights movement of the United States of America, the freedom movement of South Africa, and the *satyagraha* movement of India. They were found in Poland, Serbia, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

And what was the secret of their success? I submit that it was their unwavering commitment to faith and service. During the civil rights movement of the mid-twentieth century in the



Martin Luther King III (left) and other faith leaders from UPF's Interfaith Working Group at a planning session chaired by Dr. and Mrs. Hyun Jin Moon (right).

United States, many people of conscience and good will worked tirelessly toward a dream of equality. The hard-fought battles of the movement were waged with the sword of service and the shield of faith.

Arguably, as the movement's most ardent and articulate champion, my father believed in a nation of freedom and justice for all and encouraged this nation to live up to the true meaning of its creed. His faith was summed up in this statement: "The moral arc of the universe is long, but bends towards justice." Even more, his dedication to service was exemplified in the ultimate sacrifice he made serving garbage workers in Memphis, Tennessee. Equally important, and too often overlooked, he encouraged all peoples to live up to their purpose and potential by uniting and taking action to make this world a better place in which to live. That action, he believed, would be a living manifestation of their faith.

*"There comes a time where one must serve not because it is safe, politic, or popular but one must serve because one's conscience and one's faith compels him or her to know that it is right."*

— MARTIN LUTHER KING III

He further expressed that faith and its magnificence in action as he framed it in the context of service. Now listen just a moment as I paraphrase what he said. He said that everybody can be great because everybody can serve. He said you don't have to have a college degree to serve, you don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve, you only need a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love. Their collective faith that the arc of the universe is long but that it bends towards justice energized and gave direction to service. The twentieth century's victories were not so much

those of politicians or presidents, kings or queens, but ordinary people energized by faith and galvanized in service, and because of their faith and service they are seen today as yesterday's champions of peace through non-violence.

But what about us today? Today, according to UNICEF, there are more than a billion children living in poverty in the world. About 150 million children are suffering from malnutrition, and it is estimated that 11 million children will die of preventable illnesses this year. Clearly we must work with increasing dedication to invest our resources in saving our children, because it seems to me that our world will be gauged by how it treats its most precious resource, and certainly our children are our most precious resource. To do this, our world cries out for a new generation, one whose line of vision extends beyond the endless chain of revenge, retribution, and retaliation to one of faith and service. As in the twentieth century, through faith we can command the moral authority to act in service to our brothers

*“The moral arc of the universe is long, but bends towards justice.”*

— DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Development Goals in this century.

With all of our technical know how, the issue is not whether we can eradicate poverty, preserve our environment, or eliminate epidemics and diseases of destruction but whether we have the faith and the will to act. This is very, very important, because I believe we can do almost anything. We have the ability to do almost anything, but we have to look deep, deep inside to the depths of our souls to find the will, so that when ability and will meet, results are yielded.

It was the service of a few good women and men that challenged and changed the world. It won victories in the United States, such as civil, voting, and fair housing rights legislation. That same faith and service won freedom and democracy in nations around the globe. And it will be the same faith and commitment to service in this century that can win victories in the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

Finally, it has become popular to characterize service as a toggle switch—“a day on not a day off”—where picking up trash or painting swings in a park or marching in a convenient afternoon rally become convenient demonstrations of caring for others. But the challenges and opportunities of this century demand that we rethink our faith and service.

My father declared that the ultimate measure of a man or woman is not where they stand in times of comfort and conve-

nience but where they stand in times of challenge and controversy. He went on to say: Cowardice asks the question, is a position safe? Expediency asks the question, is a position politic? And vanity asks the question, is a position popular? But something inside called conscience asks the question, is a position

right? He went on to say that sometimes we must take positions that are neither safe nor popular nor politic, but we must take those positions because our consciences tell us they are right.

I'd like to paraphrase a portion of that statement: Cowardice asks the question, is service safe? Expediency asks the question, is service politic? Vanity asks the question, is service popular? But faith asks the question, is service right? And there comes a time where one must serve not because it is safe, politic, or popular but one must serve because one's conscience and one's faith compels him or her to know that it is right.

I challenge all of us to think confidently and creatively about ways our faith and service can be regenerative in spawning a new movement of hope in young people who boldly demonstrate their faith in service to meet the challenges and opportunities found in the Millennium Development Goals.

Thank you and God bless you all.

*Martin Luther King III is the eldest son of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Coretta Scott King. He is the founder and CEO of Realizing the Dream, Inc. This address was given at UPF's Assembly 2007, September 21-25, 2007, New York, New York.*



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

## Africa and Peace in the 21st Century Excerpts of Presentations Given at UPF Assembly 2007, Session III

BY DR. J'LENE GABRIELLE LIESE  
PRESIDENT, FOUNDATION FOR  
GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

I think I was born in love with Africa. As a little girl, all I remember was dreaming about Africa. There's something about the word Africa that brings feelings into my heart and into my soul. In fact, my son will be turning three next week, and he has already been to twelve African countries, many of them

*We have to value one another as resources and partners if we want to have healthy families and safe and loving children. If we want to have peace in the world, we need to start with seeing peace both with each other and in each other.*

- DR. J'LENE GABRIELLE LIESE

eight or nine times. Already he talks about Africa to everyone he meets along his way.

Unfortunately, though, the West does not always have the same positive feeling about Africa and the continent of Africa as I do. When I speak with my colleagues in the United States or Europe, people look at the war and conflict. They see the corruption, HIV and AIDS, malaria, and famine, and ask me, is Africa going to survive? Is Africa going to make it? All you have to do is set foot on the continent once and meet one person, and you know that the continent is going to not only survive but thrive, because there is a passion and a strength in African people that is unsurpassed. There is a joy in living life every minute in communities in Africa that I never find anywhere else. You have to be there and feel it.

One of my passions is around the gender issue. I work with women in a lot of different countries. This summer I spent a lot of time in Malawi, Zambia, Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda. I believe that women in Africa especially represent that strength. The women are able to overcome things that you wonder how anyone could ever overcome. They succeed in spite of having to walk twelve miles a day for water, not having any rights to their sexual well-being, and not being able to inherit land. These are issues that women face every single day throughout the continent.

This conference is about the idea of seeing peace in one another. I really believe it starts with men and women being able to see peace in each other. I cannot tell you how many schools I have been to where young girls want to be abstinent until marriage and be faithful to their husband when they marry. But they don't have a choice when their teachers go to their parents and offer them money or blackmail them by saying, "If you want good grades, then you must give your daughter to me." Girls in Africa do not have rights over their bodies or their

sexuality, and therefore they are the number one risk for HIV and AIDS today. They are not the ones who are transmitting it; they are the ones who are receiving it, because they do not have those rights.

I work in South Africa and other countries where rape is very prevalent. In Kenya, rape is becoming not only more prevalent but also brutally violent. There is anger in the violence against women today. I have been studying this violence and wonder why the anger is so palpable. I work with police, I work with rebels, and I work with child soldiers. In every country I have been in, if I bring a group of men together, there is anger about gender equity. They feel threatened by gender equity.

We keep hearing about how peace is not just the absence of war. Well, gender equity is not the absence of men. We need men. We need men and women to work in partnership together. The Baha'i faith compares men and women to two wings of a bird, and a bird cannot fly with only one wing. The bird of humanity has a broken wing. Our wing is broken, and the only way to heal that wing is for men and women to come together in partnership. We have to value one another as resources and partners if we want to have healthy families and safe and loving children. If we want to have peace in the world, we need to start with seeing peace both with each other and in each other. We should not feel threatened. We are meant to be on this planet working together in partnership.

## HON. MICHAEL KAASE AONDOAKAA ATTORNEY GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE, NIGERIA

In recent years, democracy has begun to spread in Africa. Nigeria has enjoyed over eight years of uninterrupted civilian, democratic rule. Yet, religious and ethnic tensions continue throughout the continent, and growing disparity in economic structures between the haves and have-nots has heightened tensions between economic classes in Africa.



Posters raise awareness of the UN's Millennium Development Goals during the Global Peace Festival in Benin, Africa.

In Nigeria, for example, there has been strong agitation in the oil-rich south by the people seeking improved conditions from the multinationals and companies whose operations have completely destroyed the area, resulting in environmental degradation. President Umaru Musa Yar'Adu has taken generous steps and launched the Niger Delta Development and developed a master plan. He has engaged in direct dialogues with the various communities in the Niger area with a view to restoring peace. These efforts of the president have already started yielding result, and peace is steadily and gradually returning to the area.

Our government is particularly impressed with the Universal Peace Federation's focus on the family as the textbook of peace. The practice and principles of love and peace are learned from

*Peace education is found with family values where siblings learn to care and live in harmony with each other. As molded by their parents, they come to master a life of service, devotion to God or Allah, tolerate the opinion of others, and cultivate proactive compassion for the needy.*

- HON. MICHAEL KAASE  
AONDOAKAA

the beginning at the mother's breast. Peace education is found with family values where siblings learn to care and live in harmony with each other. As molded by their parents, they come to master a life of service, devotion to God or Allah, tolerate the opinion of others, and cultivate proactive compassion for the needy. Such children grow into natural Ambassadors for Peace and spread peace by example.

President Yar'Adu is indeed grateful to Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon for their sponsor-

ship of UPF conferences, HIV prevention programs, various activities for youth, interreligious work, character education, and the peace embassy in Abuja, our capital. As we share in the peace initiative of the UPF, we invite you to incorporate the concept of the rule of law as part of the values which will advance peace in Africa and the whole world.

An era of sustained peace will be launched in Africa and the whole world if we commit ourselves to strict adherence to the rule of law. The rule of law guarantees peace and order, safety and security. The rule of law guarantees a process and a procedure which completely eliminates tension. The rule of law guarantees due process and assures every other system in every continent, particularly Africa, that remedies will be found. In a world governed by the rule of law, there will be order because aggrieved parties will not resort to solving problems by carrying

arms since they will be sure of obtaining remedy from the courts. Governments throughout the world, particularly African governments, have a duty to obey court orders as a means of restoring confidence in the judiciary. The institution of the judiciary will certainly take away tension. People will no longer go to the streets to get remedies but go to the courts of law.

Strict adherence to the rule of law by governments and citizens is a fundamental solution on the road toward peace. Let us raise up the rule of law and launch our world into a sustainable order of peace. If we desire peace, as we do, we must certainly embrace the rule of law to guarantee world peace.

I know, as President Yar'Adu knows, that this is Rev. Moon's mission. Peace is founded on the rule of law. The two pillars must work together. If they don't work together, there will be no peace. Peace cannot operate in a vacuum. It must rest on the pillar of the rule of law.

We salute Rev. Moon as a historic peacemaker, founder of institutions of peace, and a major builder of a global community of peace that we all yearn for. We are delighted that our nation, the most populous of Africa, is represented in this forum exploring options for world peace.

President Yar'Adu appreciates the service of UPF members in Nigeria and looks forward to the expansion and development of the organization to every local authority in our country. The presence here of Chief Ernest Shonekan [who was president of Nigeria in 1993] demonstrates the fact that we are ready to partner with this initiative. We believe UPF will help Nigeria grow peacefully. You can, therefore, count on our support.

## GEN. MALIMBA MASHEKE FORMER PRIME MINISTER, ZAMBIA

Even now, criminal cartels are still running Africa. We have people who are dividing nations. When we talk about reconciliation, it means that the country is devastated and needs reconciliation among its people and with God. In Darfur, the Congo, and until recently Angola, which are rich countries, the criminal cartels provide armaments to various warlords. Why are they doing so? They are doing so to further deplete those countries of their resources, because, just as when two dogs are fighting for a bone, the foreign dog that is not fighting will pick up the bone. This is what is happening in Africa.

God says we are in His image—all of us. Who here can tell me whether God is feminine or masculine? I am a man and am in God's image. My sister there is in God's image. All of us are in God's image. So is He masculine? No. When we are together, I see a Chinese, an African, a Brazilian, a Russian, and a Frenchman. This is an image of a garden that God is looking at—flowers of many colors. When there are many colors in your garden, you see beauty, and there is no discrimination. 🌍

# MY FIRST TRIP TO HEAVEN

## INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE KODIAK ISLAND, ALASKA

by Jonathan F. Pratt

Director of Communications and Technology, Human Relief Organization, US

As a new Ambassador for Peace I was honored and excited to be invited to my first International Leadership Conference. My journey began on Tuesday, August 28 departing from Norfolk, Virginia. After a layover in Atlanta I boarded my plane for Anchorage, Alaska. During the seven-hour flight, I was lucky to be treated to a spectacular view of some of Alaska's glaciers along the coastline. I was impressed by the sheer size of the mountains surrounding Anchorage. It is part of Rev. Moon's intention for us to experience the magnificence of God's creation through nature. He was succeeding so far! On the flight to Kodiak, I was lucky to see some more beautiful views of the Bay of Alaska and some of the islands.

**August 29:** I shared a room with Hillman Frazer at the Shelikov Lodge. Hillman was so tired from travel he had fallen asleep with the lights on. I tried to be careful not to startle him, being a stranger coming into the room at 1:30 in the morning. The conference has a policy of double occupancy in order to lower expenses and encourage new friendships.

After breakfast, we went over several presentations and discussions on A Vision of Peace: One World Family Under God; Religion, Spirituality and Leadership; UN Renewal: The Significance of Civil Society and Religion; Understanding the Root Cause of Conflict; and The Significance of Marriage, Family and the Blessing. Presentations were made by Dr. Michael Jenkins, Dr. Thomas Walsh, Michael Lamson and Mark Hernandez.

Also making special appearances at the conference on Wednesday were the Mayor of Kodiak, Carolyn L. Floyd, and Dr. Hyun Jin Moon. The mayor gave us a warm welcome to Kodiak, continuing her ten-year support of the Unification

movement and affiliated organizations in Kodiak. Dr. Hyun Jin Moon gave an impassioned talk about the peace movement and his father, Rev. Sun Myung Moon's leadership. The twenty-minute address left us all very excited. Dr. Moon's oratorical skills greatly impressed me.

**August 30:** In the morning's spiritual service with the elder Rev. and Mrs. Moon, I was able to gain a fuller understanding and appreciation for the Unification movement. I got a better sense of Rev. Moon as a great spiritual leader and benefactor of humanity. Because of the outstanding weather, it was decided that we would go fishing. Half would go sea fishing and the other half of the group would go river fishing. This day I went sea fishing. The tournament was for three categories of fish: silver salmon, king salmon, and halibut.

**August 31:** We resumed conference presentations and discussions about UPF's peace initiatives. The Middle East and Northeast Asia discussions were very enlightening about what has and is being accomplished in those areas to move them toward peace and reconciliation. Also

**There were so many fish and the water was so shallow that most of the salmon were hooked by the fins and released.**

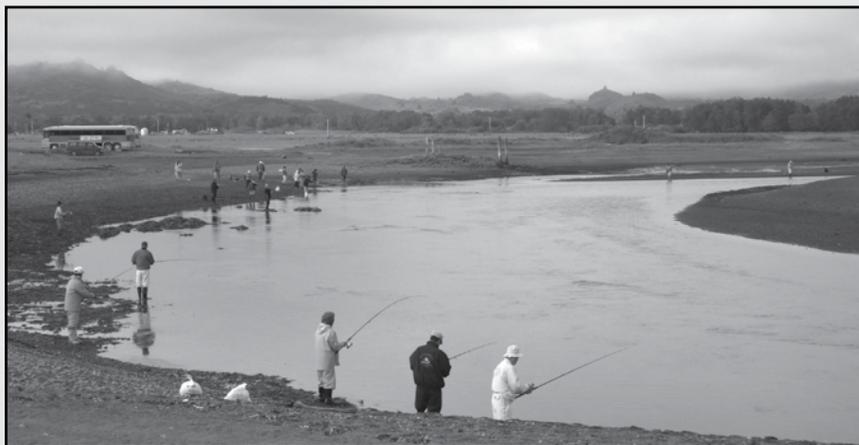


Photo credits: Jonathan F. Pratt, Art Roselle, Flavio Signore



**A few people caught some salmon, one of which we cooked fresh right out of the river, which made for a delicious lunch.**

enlightening was the proposed Bering Strait Project to link the Americas with Asia, Europe and Africa. I found Dr. Chang Shik Yang's talk about UPF's accomplishments in engaging with North Korea to be very interesting and engrossing. We enjoyed some moments of joyous song and dance as well.

**September 1:** This was the second day of fishing; this time I got to go river fishing. After morning service and breakfast, my group left Angel Garden on two buses and enjoyed a scenic forty-minute drive through winding roads and gorgeous views of Kodiak Island to our first fishing spot. We spent about four hours at the first spot; a few people caught some salmon, one of which we cooked fresh right out of the river, which made for a delicious lunch. The mountain backdrop and scenery were breathtaking.

Later in the afternoon we drove to a shallow river chock full of pink salmon. There were so many fish and the water was so shallow that most of the poor salmon were hooked by the fins and released; but just about everybody got a chance to catch something here.

The bus ride back to Angel Garden for dinner provided for some amazing sightseeing, and our bus stopped at least three times to give people the opportunity to take pictures.

**September 2:** During the morning service Rev. Moon discussed the Abel UN as a sort of parallel United Nations. After breakfast, we continued addressing the topic and watched a video about the life of Rev. Sun Myung Moon, the founder of UPF. Toward the end of the morning we had discussions. Various delegates from Japan, Korea and selected Ambassadors for Peace made closing comments. I was very honored to be asked to speak

about the week's events on behalf of the attending Ambassadors for Peace.

Fortunately, I kept the notes for my brief speech: "Who in here thinks being here was one of the most incredible experiences of their life? I am one of you. We have all been salmon fishing in Alaska! We have all been sea fishing in the Bay of Alaska! And most significantly, we have shared our hearts and minds with each other."

I have never been in the same room with so many people with enormous hearts and minds focused on achieving peace, making the world a better place, and moving the earth in alignment with the Divine. I thank Rev. Moon and UPF for such a highlight in my life.

During the course of the conference, at mealtimes and during break times, I enjoyed conversations with many fellow Ambassadors for Peace. I got to know them and their backgrounds and shared with them some of my work with the Human Relief Organization, particularly my involvement with a program called "Billion Stoves" an ultra-clean burning and efficient cook stove that will burn a wide variety of locally available fuels and small quantities of wood.

After lunch we had the opportunity to do some sightseeing on Kodiak Island. We went to a seafood processing plant and to the Baranov Museum, the oldest standing Russian-built structure in Alaska (built in 1808). We then toured the Kodiak Military History Museum. Afterwards, the bus drove us part way up the nearby mountain, and for those of us who wanted to go to the top, it was about a forty-five-



minute hike.

To cap the day, we had a banquet at an affiliated seafood restaurant in Kodiak. There was an incredible assortment of seafood and fresh fruit. I couldn't believe how fresh and sweet the watermelon, grapes and cantaloupe were. At the end of our meal we had a very delightful session of song and dance presented by different groups and individual participants in the conference. It was very energetic and uplifting.

Then prizes were announced—about forty-five boxes of fresh fish were given us to take home. Because there were only enough boxes for a bit less than half of us, winners were picked by lottery. Mark Hernandez gave me a winning ticket which had been given to him by Richard Fletcher of Australia. Neither Mark nor Richard would be home for at least a few days, so I got two frozen silver salmon, each at least thirty inches long, which I carried back home with me and shared with friends.

**September 3:** At 6:30 PM I left heaven (Kodiak), ironically by flying upward, fully aware that my soul had grown from the experience. ☸



**I have never been in the same place with so many people with enormous hearts and minds focused on achieving peace.**

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF AMBASSADORS FOR PEACE

- We are one human family created by God.
- The highest qualities of the human being are spiritual and moral in nature.
- The family is the “school of love and peace.”
- Living for the sake of others is the way to reconcile the divided human family.
- Peace comes through cooperation beyond the boundaries of ethnicity, religion, and nationality.

### Membership in UPF

The Universal Peace Federation (UPF) extends an invitation to become part of a community of peacemakers. The Universal Peace Federation members include leaders in fields such as government, religion, media, entertainment, sports, academia, business, arts, and education, making up a global collaborative community of responsible men and women dedicated to world peace.

- Senior Membership is open to official national chapters of the Universal Peace Federation.
- Affiliate Organization Membership is open to international

non-profit, non-governmental organizations.

- General Membership is open to Individuals who are appointed as Ambassadors for Peace by the UPF International Secretariat, Senior or Affiliate members.
- Associate Membership is open to non-profit organizations or to friends of UPF who are committed to working towards the purposes and goals of the Universal Peace Federation and who may participate occasionally in its activities.

There are several ways to join:

- Visit our website at [www.upf.org](http://www.upf.org) to fill out an Online Join/Renewal form.
- Call 1-914-631-1331, extension 124, and speak to a Membership Services Representative.
- Download and print a membership application and fax it to 1-914-631-1308 or mail it to Membership Services, UPF, 155 White Plains Road, Suite 222, Tarrytown, NY 10591, USA.

Contact Membership Services or visit our web site at [www.upf.org](http://www.upf.org) to learn the many ways in which you can make the most of UPF membership.

# CLICK “TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE IT BETTER”

## GLOBAL PEACE FESTIVAL IN LONDON

By Dr. Colin Turfus

*Conferences provided the center of gravity for the festival as they examined the values people hold in common and seek to pass on to the coming generation.*

The Global Peace Festival in the United Kingdom turned out to be a “global” experience in terms of the diversity of ethnicities and cultures represented. Advertised under the slogan “Click,” invitees were each encouraged to look at ways they can “click” with a person from a different culture. Eight partner organizations worked together on the September 8-10, 2007, event, held at the Imperial College in London.

The festival sought to strengthen relations among family members and between the family and society. It focused on building bridges between faiths, cultures, and generations. Musical performances and art exhibits attracted creative talent, and Ambassador for Peace certificates were awarded at various points. Conferences provided the center of gravity for the festival as they examined the values people hold in common and seek to pass on to the coming generation.

### Strengthening marriage and family

Nearly 100 Ambassadors for Peace and others from Britain and Europe met to discuss Marriage and Family in the UK: Changing the Trend.

Delegates included a member of the House of Lords, a number of barristers and justices of the peace, faith leaders, social workers, business people, and Ambassadors for Peace from all walks of life.

Mr. Sidney Shipton, OBE, Coordinator of Three Faiths Forum, lamented how commonplace divorce had become. He blamed the spiraling violence and lowering educational standards not on economic deprivation but family breakdown. This was followed by Edward Hartley, Chairman of the Marriage and Family Committee of the UPF National Peace Council, citing statistics about the adverse consequences of this trend for partners and their children. Discussion focused on what educators, faith groups,



Photo credits: Caroline Franklin, Andy Johnson, Gianni Raineri, Sant Nirankari Mission

**Festival participants were encouraged to look at ways they could “click” with people from a different culture.**

the media, NGOs, and governmental social services can do to change the trend. Suggestions ranged from strengthening our own marriage to getting the message into the media.

### Women’s conference

Women came together on the theme of Promoting Gender Equality and Empowering Women. Dr. Suman Datta, Chair of Women’s Interfaith Network (Kent Branch), focused on the unequal way women have been treated in many societies, often with the sanction of religions. She advocated the reinterpretation of religious texts that have been used to justify unfair treatment of women. Mrs. Martina Coombs, Vice President of Women’s Federation for World Peace-Europe, emphasized the importance of valuing ourselves and others equally and of respecting differences since differences give life its richness.

Nancy Miller Jong, an international business-woman born in Korea, challenged women to prove themselves worthy and get what they want in life, rather than regretting their situation. Alice Ukoko, Chair of Women of Africa, talked about empowering African women, and Dr. Wagia Syeda, a counselor



**Conference on Gender Equality.**

at the Birmingham Central Mosque for Women, addressed issues of marriage among Muslims in Britain. Shannon Hopkins described how her organization, “The Truth Isn’t Sexy” Campaign, began as a discussion among friends who resolved to use their skills to stop human trafficking. Heart-rending personal testimonies brought the magnitude of the problem home to the audience.

### **Art service project**

A service project the previous weekend promoted a positive image for Caribbean immigrants living in South London. The project involved thirty-seven volunteers from Service for Peace of Luxembourg, Religious Youth Service of UK, and A Taste of Our Culture. The orientation session focused on team-building and leadership skills. One group made a mural at the nursery in Thornton Heath, while another group made a peace banner, and there was much conversation during the work. Reflections were shared at a closing meeting.

### **Grand finale**

A grand finale in the large marquee on the Queen’s Lawn brought conferees together for the evening, with brief speeches by distinguished guests. Mr. David Anderson, MP, spoke about conflict management and the need to promote justice rather than partisanship. He told the audience to ask political leaders what they are doing to support the Millennium Development Goals to save the planet

**Amarjeet Singh Bhambrah, Executive Member, Hindu Culture and Heritage Society – UK, examining works at the art exhibition.**

and the people. Bishop Riah emphasized the importance of peace for the city of Jerusalem, defining peace not as the absence of war but the absence of the causes of war. Lord Tarsem King spoke of the necessity of investing in youth and expressed his delight to see so many bright young people at the festival. The Civic Mayor of the London Borough of Hackney, Counsellor Faizullah Khan, offered heartfelt support.

Global Peace Festival Chairman Dr. Hyun Jin Moon spoke passionately about his father, who as a North Korean farm boy had a dream of the ideal of one family under God, a dream that is now being fulfilled. “Our duty is not just to tolerate our neighbors, but to embrace them as family,” he said. “One family under God should become the dream of all humanity.” 🌐

*The festival focused on building bridges between faiths, cultures, and generations.*



# LONDON GLOBAL PEACE FESTIVAL GRAND FINALE



David Anderson, MP



Capoeira, Brazilian martial arts dance



Lhamea Lall



Mayura Patel performing a traditional Indian dance



Levi Francis



Lord Tarsem King

# CONFERENCE ON SHARING OUR VALUES

by Raul Kamal, Sant Nirankari Mission, UK

**T**his enlightening conference aimed to provide some answers to questions such as “how can communities hand down traditions and values from old to young?”

Sudhir Kundi Ji inaugurated this conference by introducing himself and the ethos of the Sant Nirankari Mission by stating that through spiritual awakening, or the knowledge of God, man could become closer to his fellow men and this Almighty God.

A representative of the Jewish faith stated the importance of a child’s education and highlighted the fact that she had chosen a school with an ethnic and religious mix for her children so that they learn to peacefully coexist from a young age.

David Freeland from the Universal Peace Federation stated that his father’s illness brought his family closer together. Appreciating the importance of family, David decided to listen to his family and make his choices in accordance with their teachings. David believes people react to how you treat them, which is echoed in the statement that love is the only commodity which multiplies when you divide it.

Gaurav Sharma Ji then represented the Sant Nirankari Mission youth by posing the same three questions that Lord Krishna presented to his disciple, Arjuna. The questions were: where do you come from? who are you? and where will you go? The seventeen-year-old went on to explain that if every young person asked themselves these three questions, this would open the door to a broader way of thinking where one’s values and human characteristics could change for the better. Gaurav Ji added to this by stating that just as electricity cannot be seen without a medium, God’s teachings can only be seen when a spiritual guide is present.

An Islamic representative highlighted the need to work as a collective unit and that it is not religion that needs to be emphasized but unity within the community.

Alan Hart, a former broadcaster and writer, stated that our everyday existence could be described as a journey in the University of Life. Alan mentioned that he had surveyed parents of poor families from developing countries asking what they would like to be able to give to their children. They answered “education for our children so that they do not have to live like animals.”

Alan recalled that his father used to make him clean his own shoes for inspection every Sunday evening. This discipline remained with Alan who, as an interviewer, used to look at prospective employees’ shoes, believing that a person who could not respect himself or make an effort to impress his potential employer should not be employed. Concluding his discourse, Alan reiterated that the values of humanity had been lost or misplaced and that mankind must rediscover these values to create a better society.

Bishop Riah Abu Al Assal, the former Anglican bishop of Jerusalem, referred to the New Testament and told the story of The Good Samaritan. The bishop’s message was a clear indication that we should “love thy neighbor” where our neighbor is represented by this one global family, more commonly referred to as mankind.

*The Sant Nirankari Mission, an all-embracing spiritual movement dedicated to human welfare, was one of eight partner organizations participating in the Global Peace Festival in London.*



**In discussion groups, participants explored ways to share their values.**

# RELIGIOUS YOUTH SERVICE PROJECTS

*Religious Youth Service brings together young adults from diverse religions and nations in service to others. Through experiential service-learning projects it stimulates interreligious and intercultural cooperation and understanding with the goal of building a culture of peace and lasting friendships. It is a project of the Universal Peace Federation.*

*By Daniel Bessell, Executive Director, RYS*

## Cote d'Ivoire: Peacebuilding in the interior

The entire community of Attohou—children, women, men and even the elderly people—got involved in constructing a primary school in central Cote d'Ivoire, an area that is rebuilding after five years of civil war.

The Religious Youth Service project in the West African nation of Cote d'Ivoire September 8-22, 2007, was the first held in a French-speaking African country. The project included three main activities: peace-building education for the participants, a service project, and meetings with officials at a UN office.

Through the educational component of the project, participants developed greater skills in

working together as a community and understanding the necessity of living for the sake of others. The activities made participants aware of how they can become artisans of peace by taking responsibility to proactively engage in service to others. They could understand that by engaging in such service they became more and more like brothers and sisters forming one family.

The second part of the project was an exciting success as participants helped build a primary school for 300 students. The village women demonstrated their beautiful hearts by bringing food and firewood in the evening as well as fetching water each day for participants' needs. The local youth also joined in the volunteer activities. The young children had never attended school or seen white people before. Through this project, the local people could feel renewed hope.

Villagers felt rejuvenated upon seeing people from far away come to their small homes in the bush. Participants were pestered by mosquitoes, ate simple local food, and had no electricity, but conditions did not discourage them or make them want to give up.

The visitors played with the children, giving them joy. One day, in response to the community's kindness, all the participants visited each family in the three villages. In joy and gratitude the local community gave them three goats, yams, and harvest from their farms. It is remarkable how a simple action can change peoples' lives.

The third part of the project involved meetings with the UN office in Bouake, just north of the former UN-monitored buffer zone between the government forces in the south and rebels in the north. The officials were very interested in the RYS

**Villagers felt rejuvenated upon seeing people from far away come to their small homes in the bush.**



project, especially in the ways RYS works to break down barriers and build bridges of understanding with the local people to facilitate a more lasting peace. This UN partnership will be strengthened in future RYS projects.

*NOTE: Civil war in Cote d'Ivoire arose during an economic downturn due to ethnic tensions and immigration. UN peacekeepers supervised a checkpoint in the buffer zone between Abidjan, a southern city that is the seat of the government, and Bouake, the northern capital of the rebellion. According to the terms of the peace agreement signed in March 2007, the commander of the rebel army became the prime minister, sharing power with the president.*

## Sri Lanka: Responding to the unrest

Tamil and Sinhalese children in the city of Ratnapura whose parents abandoned them or are in jail are sent by the government to the local orphanage. Twenty-two boys, all less than twelve years old, live there; five are Tamils and the others are Sinhalese. The orphanage is managed by the Buddhist Society of Ratnapura, which depends heavily on the donations of well wishers, but the donations are barely enough for the day-to-day maintenance of the children.

This year's RYS project in Ratnapura, southern Sri Lanka, helped improve the living conditions for these children.

A multifaith city of Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims and Christians, Ratnapura is world famous for its gems. Geographically Ratnapura is situated in an area of regular rainfall. Therefore, it is abundant with natural beauty in the surrounding vicinity including a virgin tropical rain forest. Surrounding it are rubber and low-country tea plantations.

On August 18, participants gathered near the Fort railway station, and the son of the president of Sri Lanka, Mr. Namal Rajapakse, paid a surprise visit to greet everyone and offer his good wishes at the beginning of the project.



After all the formalities, the enthusiastic participants arrived at the site to do their part. The work consisted of building a study hall and repairing the play area at the orphanage. Some worked hard at digging holes for the foundation and pillars, while others did landscaping. Cement was mixed and used in repairing the study hall.

The participants enjoyed visits to a Buddhist temple and also took part in a Hindu ritual. They visited a gem mine and finished their stay on August 24 in the rain forest.

"Although I've participated in several youth projects, this is the first time I was able to really be 'interreligious,'" said Ishara Guruge from the Lyceam International School in Colombo, Sri Lanka's capital. She was a member of the Sri Lanka basketball team at the Interreligious Peace Sports Festival held in July in Korea.

Daniel, a school teacher from Jaffna on the northern tip of Sri Lanka, thanked RYS for the wonderful experience he had because it changed his idea about the Sinhalese people in the south, who are thought to be discriminating against the Tamils in the north.

**Working on the project changed the ideas a school teacher from the north had about the Sinhalese people in the south.**



*NOTE: Sri Lanka, an island nation off the south-east coast of India, is home to two primary ethnic and religious groups, the Sinhala-Buddhist majority and the Tamil-Hindu minority in the north and east. The Tamils aspire to self-determination and an independent homeland; the Sri Lankan government seeks to maintain a unitary state. Civil war began in 1983, and despite recurring violence, both sides claim to adhere to a December 2001 ceasefire.*

## Suriname: Young leaders of many faiths serving together

The Paramaribo Zoo had almost become dormant until Netherlander Rain Forest expert Auke Heilkma came to its rescue. With the help of youths from various religious and cultural backgrounds from Suriname, Guyana, French Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, the Netherlands, USA, and Jamaica, the Paramaribo Zoo has almost recovered. The zoo is home to some 200 species of animals, with a wide variety of snakes, birds, and monkeys.

Some RYS participants fed and cared for the animals, while others had the opportunity to do landscaping and cleaning. The animal houses were washed, some areas were painted, and the picking up of garbage made the zoo a litter-free zone. The group also set up seating areas for visitors to the zoo.

A second project was held at the Fatima Oord, a home for the elderly. Participants did landscaping, cleaned storerooms, and took time to share stories with the elderly ladies.



**"If I have a friend in Trinidad and Guyana I will become a better politician. I will understand the needs of international youths. RYS took away my selfishness and give me a new life. I am learning how to serve the people and not just myself."**

- Joel Dominee, Suriname

**"At the crack of dawn we stood before a beautiful river. As the sun emerged from behind the massive greenery it illuminated the grace of this wide and flowing body. I looked at this river and I saw the start of a new me."**

- Joelle Jackman, Trinidad



From August 18-30, 2007, RYS participants immersed themselves in diverse people among the Muslim and Christian communities in Paramaribo, the capital of this country on the northern coast of South America. These visits supplemented the education program provided by Education Director, Maurice Burke. The education team also included senior advisor Rev. John Gehring, who led the orientation, while the Project Director, Georgia Pearson, facilitated the reflection.

The group had an opportunity to tour the Presidential Palace, and everyone had a chance to sit in the President's Chair. The President generously offered the use of the Congress Hall for the project's closing ceremony. The project received a large amount of media coverage during the ten-day visit.

Participants expressed gratitude for the great time they shared, the new friends they made, and the diverse experiences they had. Most wished the project could have lasted longer. 🌍

## GET INVOLVED

*To support, host, or volunteer for an upcoming project contact*

RYS International Office  
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Email: [info@religiousservice.org](mailto:info@religiousservice.org)

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+1 (212) 239-1421

Fax: +1 (914) 206-4615

[www.religiousthouservice.org](http://www.religiousthouservice.org)



## RYS PARTICIPANT REFLECTIONS

“The design that the RYS had made for us to interact with each other and with the directors resulted in some kind of deep connection. The way people presented themselves, the response, the togetherness—all of this was something very new to me. I couldn’t imagine feeling so very comfortable among people I only knew for a couple of days. This went beyond my expectations. I was experiencing something new. At that time, it was the only thing that was real and normal. This was joy! More like inner joy.”

*- Luker Romalho, Suriname*

“At first I was skeptical about attending the program due to the presence of different religions. However, I decided to continue with my plans to attend the project since I want to be a person who makes a difference in the world. I came with an open heart, willing to accept whatever the program had in store for me. The program was more than I had ever expected. RYS has taught me to be a better person and also showed me how to be a follower as well as a leader.”

*- Shonelle Alert, Guyana*

“I love the RYS. I got to respect young people and work with them. I had to be a big brother on a project that I knew nothing about. I didn’t feel old nor did I look at them as being young. We were equals; we were brothers and sisters. We need this in the Netherlands.”

*- Melvin Pique, the Netherlands*

“At the crack of dawn we stood before a beautiful river. As the sun emerged from behind the massive greenery, chasing the darkness away, it illuminated the grace of this wide and flowing body. I looked at this river and I saw the start of a new me—a beautiful me on the inside; a confident lass, a continued believer and a motivator.”

*- Joelle Jackman, Trinidad*

“I got a call from the Minister of Youth, and they said I should represent the youths of Suriname in RYS, because I had been elected as a Youth Parliamentarian. My mother said, ‘Joel, try volunteering for once.’ At the work days no one saw me as a celebrity but as a brother and a friend. Politics took on a different meaning in my life. If I have a friend in Trinidad and Guyana I will become a better politician. I will understand the needs of international youths. RYS took away my selfishness and give me a new life. I am learning how to serve the people and not just myself. Suriname is so divided not by religion but by culture. The Paramaribo never say “I love you” to the Binnenlanders because they blame them for the civil war, and vice versa. Only RYS can change that. I have friends/family in Paramaribo and the Binnenland.”

*- Joel Dominee, Suriname*

**“I got to respect young people and work with them. I had to be a big brother on a project that I knew nothing about. We were equals; we were brothers and sisters. We need this in the Netherlands.”**

*- Melvin Pique,  
the Netherlands*

# DRUZE LEADERS ATTEND INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

By Dr. Thomas G. Walsh  
Secretary General, Universal Peace Federation

At the Druze headquarters overlooking the Sea of Galilee, a Jewish theologian bowed down and kissed the grave of Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses. Dr. Shuki Ben Ami explained that he honored the person from whom the Druze trace their heritage “because he also represents Jews, Muslims, and Christians.”

Dr. Ben Ami was among the ten Jewish, ten Christian and ten Muslim leaders from Israel who joined eighty-eight Druze scholars, teachers, sheikhs, and professionals attending UPF’s International Leadership Conference October 29-31, 2007, in Tiberias, a city on the west shore of the Sea of Galilee. The gathering was hosted by the Druze leader Sheikh Moafak Tarif, who believes in a common ground that unites religious people. “Religious leaders must be messengers of peace,” he told the assembly, “and not affirm those who abuse or misrepresent religion.”

The conference presented an overview of the principles and programs of UPF, with special emphasis on the vision of creating “one family under God.” Speaking in Hebrew, understood by all Druze, secretary general of UPF-Israel Hod Ben Zvi gave the opening presentation on “A Vision of One Family under God.” Taj Hamad, speaking in Arabic, gave a presentation on the spirit world and the importance of a religious life. Other presenters were Dr. S.J. Lee, Dr. Antonio Betancourt, Mel Haft, and Rev. Michael W. Jenkins.

Between sessions there were opportunities for discussion. Many of the delegates were eager to ask



Many of the delegates were eager to ask questions and share their views.

questions and share their views. The spirit was high, friendly, and open. Father Dimitri Mussa, head of the Orthodox Christian community in the predominately Druze village of Abu-Snan, said, “Since my childhood, I have asked God to be close to me. When I look at you, I find God in each of you. Spending time in the company of imams, sheikhs, priests, I find that I am sitting with myself because we are one. I can see that we can live together as people of different religions, because God is one. We have to unite in God’s garden when we leave this earth.”

During a visit to the Druze headquarters, Druze scholars explained that according to Druze tradition, Moses asked Jethro, who was a good organizer and manager, to go with them to Canaan and “be our eyes to see the way forward.” Druze have no printed scriptures. Priests spend years studying hand-written notes and must observe strict standards.

Sheikh Samih Naif Natur, editor of the Druze magazine *El Amama*, referred to Druze roots in Cairo, when the unification method called *Dar al-Hikma* (the House of Wisdom) started about a thousand years ago. “The light of knowledge and unification burned there. This conference is only another step.”

“When the relationship is personal, it goes beyond the barriers,” said a former district judge, Yousef Ismael. “We all believe in one God. Although we are different, our core principles are the same.”

Ambassadors for Peace certificates were awarded as part of the closing ceremony of the conference.





- ▶ FAMILIES OF PEACE
- ▶ REACH UN MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS THROUGH A CULTURE OF SERVICE
- ▶ DIALOGUE & INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO PEACE
- ▶ NETWORK TO BUILD "ONE FAMILY UNDER GOD"

# UPF Announces Global Peace *festival*

ONE FAMILY UNDER GOD

*Global Peace Festivals in Manila, Seoul, Paris, Frankfurt and London are setting the stage for worldwide change in 2008*

## Building the Dream of Peace Together

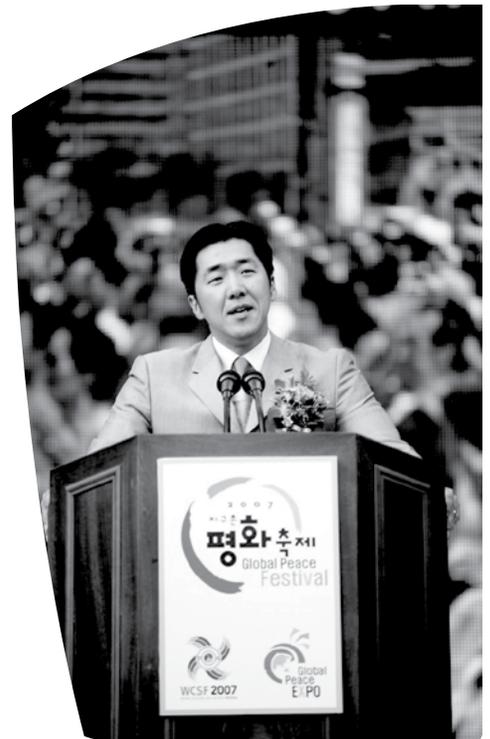
**T**he Global Peace Festivals promote peace through the arts, sports, service and education for all people as members of one global family under God, beyond race, religion, nationality and culture. 2007 was our launch year with Festivals held in Seoul, Jerusalem, London, Paris, Frankfurt, Cotonou and Manila.

At the first festival in Seoul, Korea, the GPF Chairman, Dr. Hyun Jin Moon said, "The world needs true leaders who can build a vision that will allow humanity to find peace

within our lifetime. We must cultivate our spirits and plant the seed of peace and the vision of building one family under God."

When you go home from a Global Peace Festival you will take with you a message of peace and the culture of living for others. As you bring that message to your homes, your neighborhoods and your nations, you'll become a Peacemaker.

**Join us in 2008!**



Dr. Hyun Jin Moon, GPF Chairman

### FAMILIES OF PEACE

The Global Peace Festivals are dedicated to the building a world of peace through individuals and families of peace. The World Peace Blessing helps our families transcend barriers of race, religion and culture then the world has hope.

Only by creating strong, loving families of peace can the goal of creating one human family of peace, under God, become a reality.

### THE UN MDGs

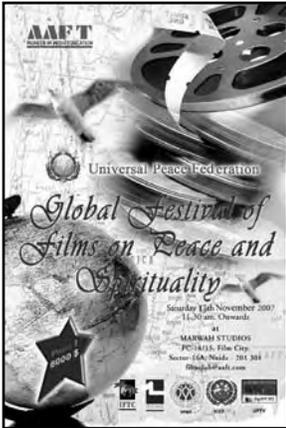
We're committed to the UN's Millennium Development Goals, to a world where every child has a bright future, good nutrition, medical care, education and freedom from war and oppression. Sure, these are the UN goals, and every country in the world has signed on. But guess what? Without you and your family, the goals are just another empty promise. Find out more at [www.un.org/millenniumgoals/](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/)



Carlos and Margot Seoane toast the World Peace Blessing in Montevideo, Uruguay

# India Hosts Festival of Films on Peace and Spirituality

By UPF-India



As the late UPF Presiding Council member Dr. L.M. Singhvi, said, “Peace is too important to be left to diplomats and soldiers alone. Peace will not come unless civil society is at the forefront of interfaith dialogue.”

In this spirit, professional filmmakers, directors, producers as well as students of film, cinematography and mass communication centers throughout India—and worldwide—were invited to submit short films on themes of peace and spirituality.

Winning films will be shown at the Global Festival of Films on Peace and Spirituality on November 17, 2007, at Marwah Studios in New Delhi, India.

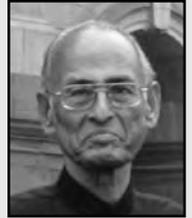
Two categories, professional and student films, will be judged by a panel of professional filmmakers and religious leaders. The Youth Federation for World Peace and UpTV are sponsoring the \$6,000 in prize money.

## For further information contact

Ms. Anisha Malik, Festival Coordinator  
Marwah Studios Complex  
FC-14/15, Film City  
Sector-16A, Noida, 201 301, UP – India  
Email: filmclub@aaft.com

## IN MEMORIAM Laxmi Mall Singhvi

In the sad demise of Shri Laxmi Mall Singhvi, the nation—nay, the world—has not only lost a renowned scholar, distinguished diplomat, prominent parliamentarian, and jurist but also a vociferous votary and voice of interfaith amity and universal peace.



We, associated with Universal Peace Federation in general, and Universal Peace Federation-India in particular, are grieved and bereaved at the sad loss of Shri L. M. Singhvi, UPF Presiding Council member, who ably inspired our endeavor for universal peace. His words of wisdom and sagacity will continue to inspire us and humanity at large: “Peace is too important to be left to diplomats and soldiers alone. Peace will not come unless civil society is at the forefront of interfaith dialogue.”

We extend our condolence to his bereaved family and the extended global family: “*vasudhaiva kutumbakam.*” We pray for his soul to rest in peace.

Dr. Nandlal Jotwani, Ambassador for Peace  
October 6, 2007

*“We can change  
the world through the  
power of true love and  
living for the sake  
of others.”*

## UPF TODAY

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO PEACE

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