

The Mother of Peace Embraces Muslims

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Letter to members

True Mother holds a historic continental-level Blessing Ceremony in Niger



Beloved Cheon Il Guk leaders, blessed families!

May Heavenly Parent's and True Parents' blessings and grace be with you.

Today, I would like to begin this letter by giving it the title, "The Mother of Peace Embraces Muslims." I find it so difficult to calm down my excited heart at this very moment. We finished the Blessing Ceremony in Niger not so long ago, and as I write this letter, it is as if the amazing moments that moved our hearts, as well as the excitement of today's historic Blessing Ceremony, are engraved in every cell of my body.

Today, we had the historic national-level Blessing Ceremony in Niger, which was also a continental-level Blessing Ceremony. The miracle of the 2019 Africa Continental Summit yesterday thus continued even today through the Blessing Ceremony.

On this historic day, True Mother woke up very early in the morning and began her day in prayer. Today, she convened leaders from Africa and other areas for a breakfast and report meeting. Present were UPF-Africa Chair Katherine Rigney, UPF West Africa Secretary-General Dr. Paterne Zinsou, UPF International Chair Dr. Thomas Walsh, True Mother's two sons from the religious sphere – Prophet Radebe and Sheikh Mansour, Hyojeong Foundation Chair for the International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences Joo Dong-moon -- who came to give a presentation on the drinking water project, which is one of the Blessed Africa Projects, Director Kim Jin-choon, Chairman Kim Sang-gyun of HJ Magnolia Medical Foundation, Rev. Abdoulaye Wone, Family Department director at the FFWPU-Africa HQ, and others.

The breakfast and report meeting became a great revival. Leaders, one after the other, testified in front of True Mother, at how amazed and how moved they were by yesterday's continental summit, which will serve as the foundation for continental restoration. Special Emissary Kathy Rigney reported how moved the heads of state and leaders participating in the Summit were, and how they unanimously called True Mother the "Mother of Peace." Dr. Walsh confessed that yesterday's summit was amazing, and a miraculous rally of a kind that we have never experienced before in our movement.

Prophet Radebe's testimony and confession of faith in front of True Mother brought the revival to a climax. Sheikh Mansour's tearful testimony to True Mother moved the hearts of all those present. Sheikh Mansour cried, and True Mother also cried. I also reported to True Mother the joyful news that President Macky Sall has officially appointed me as special advisor to the president of Senegal to further unite and work together with True Mother. Next, Chairman Joo Dong-moon testified how the world, even the United States, are paying attention to True Mother's amazing leadership in bringing together Africa, warming the hearts of those taking part.

Lastly, we read the eighth letter, which I sent out yesterday to leaders and other members around the world. Soon after the breakfast and report meeting came to a conclusion. True Mother's expression was very bright.

Throughout the morning hours, True Mother offered very serious devotion for the historic national-level Blessing Ceremony to be held for the first time in a Muslim country. At 3 pm, True Mother departed for the Palace of Congress, the Blessing venue, under the strict escort of a military guard.



Though I have just expressed how True Mother departed for the venue in one sentence, I have to confess that so many things took place that defy description in writing. To be completely honest, my heart experienced both hell and the Kingdom of Heaven repeatedly in this short period. Diplomatic protocol is often called, "a war without any gunshots." If this is the norm with national-level protocol, how more difficult will it be for Heavenly Protocol? (True Mother has directed that all protocol centered on True Parents be called, "Heavenly Protocol.") We have experienced numerous difficulties that I cannot describe in words. This is a reality we have faced at all national-level events, but today, it was even more pronounced. There were not only the regular protocol issues, but also many urgent situations occurring that I cannot describe in words. Later, when the opportunity arises, I'll share these things with you.

Even these difficulties, however, could not prevent True Mother from continuing on her path. They may have become barriers, but they could not block the very first Muslim national-level Blessing Ceremony, as well as the first continental-level Blessing, from taking place. This was an event that God's only begotten Daughter, the substantial Holy Spirit, has awaited for 6,000 years.

The venue was already filled to capacity with 700 representative couples from among the 2,100 pre-blessed couples. This was prior to the commencement of the Blessing Ceremony. The moment I saw the couples dressed in their traditional Muslim attire for the Blessing Ceremony, I couldn't stop the tears in my heart. All the 2019 Africa Continental Summit VIP participants, all of whom all influential leaders in Africa, including current heads of state, former heads of state, speakers, ministers, parliamentarians, religious leaders, etc. received the Blessing on this day.

Ever since the Summit hosted in Cape Town, South Africa, last year, the Blessing Ceremony has become a part of the Summit program. During the Cape Town Blessing Ceremony, one of the most respected leaders in Niger, the nation's former president Mahamane Ousmane, participated in the Blessing and gave a congratulatory address. Hence, the great challenge of hosting a Muslim national-level Blessing Ceremony in Niger began in Cape Town. What is most amazing is that, contrary to our concerns, Muslim leaders had accepted the Blessing as a very sacred and blessed ceremony.

Yes, that is really so. The Blessing Ceremony is not a special religious ceremony that is ours alone. The Blessing Ceremony is a universal Blessing through which the True Parents of all people, the True Parents of Heaven, Earth, and Humankind, embrace all of humanity.

Ever since then, the Blessing Ceremony has become part of each national-level summit. It was part of the Summit program in South Africa this past June, in São Tomé in September, in Albania in October, and in Cambodia this November.

This was also the case with the Niger Summit. However, the Niger Summit was hosted on the continental level, bringing the Blessing Ceremony to be a continental-level Blessing. Co-hosted by the African Union, ECOWAS and the G5 Sahel, this was a continental-level Blessing ceremony. The Blessed Africa Project was launched as a continental project through the MOU signing at the opening plenary yesterday. Among the 10 projects it proposes, the 10th is the "True Family Blessing Movement and Blessing Ceremony," and it is highlighted as the most important. Therefore, their accepting the Blessed Africa Project also means they have accepted the True Family Blessing Movement and Blessing Ceremony. Likewise, accepting the Blessing Ceremony also means they have accepted and will attend True Parents, who are the owners of the Blessing Ceremony. From such context, the Niger Blessing Ceremony is not only a national-level Blessing Ceremony, but also a continental-level Blessing Ceremony for Africa.

Because such was the providential meaning of the Blessing ceremony, on the left side of the stage were seated Niger's prime minister and his wife, the president of the National Assembly and his wife, and all the ministers as representatives of Niger. On the right side of the stage were seated the current and former heads of state who had attended the Summit. What made me doubt my eyes was the fact that the current President of Libya was seated in the first row on the right side. He looked very serious and solemn. To assist True Mother in officiating the Blessing ceremony, I had to walk to and fro in front of him to reach her side, and the Libyan President asked me with a smile, "Could you please move, because I can't see?" When I saw that, I realized that the Libyan President was very seriously paying attention to the Blessing ceremony and not just sitting there for show.

The Blessing Ceremony, with Family Department Director Abdoulaye Wone as MC, began with a video introducing True Mother as one who presides over Blessing Ceremonies held around the world on the national level. Next, interreligious prayers were offered by Bishop Okoriko of Nigeria and Sheik Mansour Diouf. Both of them offered words of benediction to Heaven, saying "May the blessing of True Mother, the Mother of Peace, be with this land of Niger and with all of Africa." Following this, the Nigerien Minister of Family Affairs delivered a welcoming address.



True Mother had already arrived at the green room at the beginning of the event and had been watching the program. Then something rather unexpected happened. Looking back on it, I think it is also something to be grateful for. Originally, the prime minister of Niger (who is also the president of ECOWAS) was scheduled to attend the Blessing Ceremony and deliver the congratulatory address as the representative of his country, and so the protocol we had prepared was such that only he was to follow behind True Mother when she made her entrance. However, the President of the Nigerien National Assembly (who is slated to be appointed as president of UPF-Niger) strongly requested that, since he represents the people of Niger, he should also be allowed to enter behind True Mother together with the Prime Minister. Even the Prime Minister was at a loss for words. So we reported to True Mother, and revised the protocol so that both the Prime Minister and the President of National Assembly could enter after True Mother as representatives of their nation and their people respectively. When I think about it now, I am truly grateful, for it shows how passionately these leaders wish to attend True Mother.

True Mother made her entrance by walking down the line created by the fifteen senior Blessed couple attendants serving as groomsmen and matrons of honor. Mother's appearance was a blessing in itself. In front of her were brides and grooms from Niger, dressed in the best Muslim traditional attire to receive the Blessing, as well as prominent leaders with the collective power to move all of Africa. True Mother came to stand in front of them to bestow the Blessing on behalf of Heaven, and she looked every inch the

True Mother of humankind and of the universe.

In my mind, the following words rang and resonated over and over again:

"Such a day is finally here. Thank you, Heavenly Parent. Thank you, True Father."

I repeated these words again and again in my mind.

The first Blessing Ceremony to be held in a Muslim nation was begun with the Holy Water Ceremony. In the Muslim cultural realm, the act of sprinkling holy water can be misunderstood as a ceremony to convert someone to Christianity (that is, as baptism), and so True Mother carried out the Holy Water Ceremony in such a way that the brides and grooms held hands together and True Mother touched the hands of each and every couple with holy water. As she did so, she looked so divine and impressive that the audience could not stop applauding her and exclaiming loudly until the end of the Holy Water Ceremony.



Next came the Affirmation of the Blessing Vow and the Blessing Prayer. It was a benediction of tears, of love, and of blessing:

"Beloved Heavenly Parent, to whom we are truly grateful! You have had to walk such a thorny path until this day to seek out humankind, whom You love. However, the True Parents, who can complete Your ideal of creation, have finally appeared on earth with the power to guide fallen people into the Heavenly Parent's embrace through the Marriage Blessing. They have had to walk an indescribably difficult path until they could do so and establish all people as children whom Heavenly Parent can love directly. You know how we have striven at the center of this vast desert where sandstorms rage to seek the righteous people Heaven has prepared, through whom we can find the people and the nations that can be embraced by Heaven.

In this country where 80 percent of the land is desert, You have prepared righteous people from a very long time ago to create the environment where a Blessing Ceremony can be held today. Through this Marriage Blessing, the dream of one family of humanity centered on You, Heavenly Parent, transcending the barriers of religion, race and culture, can be realized. And when those who have been blessed today are able to stand in the position where they have fulfilled their responsibilities in front of Heaven -- that is, when they have fulfilled their responsibilities as messiahs of their own tribes -- this nation will become one that can receive Heaven's blessing and grace.

True Parents are grateful for this and hope that, through these Blessed couples, this country of Niger will become the Heavenly Niger attending Heavenly Parent and become the center of the African continent and its beacon of light and pride. I pray that the blessed couples of this people and this nation will be able to take the lead in establishing the Kingdom of Heaven of freedom, equality, peace, unity and happiness on earth, which is the beautiful garden that You originally created, and the dream of humankind. I pray and proclaim this in the name of True Parents."

True Mother's Blessing Prayer resounded far and near.

It resonated in oneness with the Blessing, which Heaven had wished to embrace for 6,000 years.

Mother blessed the nation of Niger as "Heavenly Niger" and, at the same time, also blessed "Heavenly Niger" to become the center of "Heavenly Africa" and play a central role in constructing the Garden of the original creation centering on Heavenly Parent and True Parents. All the participants answered loudly with "Aju." As I looked upon this unbelievable sight, all I could do was offer gratitude again and again to Heaven.



Next, was the exchanging of rings and the Holy Wedding declaration. Afterward, representing all in attendance, Chairman Kassum and former president of Mali H.E. Dioncounda Traoré offered flowers and gifts to True Parents. Chairman Kassum is one of the people who worked the hardest for this event. He has been looking forward to the day True Mother would come to Niger and as soon as he saw True Mother alight from the plane on the day she arrived, his wish and desire was realized and he shed many tears. He is a true filial son of Niger. We were able to form the foundation for this Summit and Blessing because of his hard work. When he presented the flowers celebrating the victory of the first Blessing of a Muslim nation, he was overwhelmed.

YSP-Niger representatives then recited the Pure Love pledge and performed wonderful dances to the Korean songs "Push ahead" and "I am happy." Their performances brought even more festivity to the Blessing Ceremony Hall.

This was followed by a congratulatory address by the Prime Minister of Niger (representative of ECOWAS). The Prime Minister's congratulatory address was the highest praise and gift offered to True Mother. Here is an excerpt from his congratulatory address:

"There are conflict and disputes in every nation in Africa. For example, if we look at Mali, Niger's closest neighbor, they have had a civil war that has raged for decades and continues still. Nonetheless, all Africans wish for peace. For that peace we have been yearning for, today True Mother, the Mother of Peace, has come to this land and given us the Blessing Ceremony for peace. This is the greatest gift and blessing given to us. I hope True Mother's blessing will continue to spread and we will be filled with peace through these blessings. I also pray for True Mother's great mission to be blessed."

After the congratulatory address, True Mother presented plaques of appreciation to both the Prime Minister and the President of the National Assembly who have both worked hard for this Summit and Blessing Ceremony. This was followed by the holy flame ceremony and a cake-cutting ceremony to celebrate the 100th anniversary of True Father's birth and the 60th Anniversary of True Parents' Holy Wedding.

The Niger-style 5-tier cake was so high that after True Mother lit the candles, the Prime Minister, President of the National Assembly, and incumbent and former heads of state tried to blow out the candles together but the candles would not blow out. The Prime Minister wittily said to me "Since Mother lit the candles, let us blow them out," and he blew out the candles together with True Mother. Then Cheon Il Guk Special Envoy to São Tomé, Philbert Seka Seka, led the three cheers of Eok-mansei to conclude the event.

It was an amazing victory, an amazing miracle, and an amazing Blessing Ceremony. After the Blessing

Ceremony, International Chair Thomas Walsh and Vice Chair Taj Hamad excitedly expressed their joy, saying they could not tell if this was a dream or reality. I felt the same way. As soon as this Blessing Ceremony concluded, I received messages of congratulations and gratitude for True Mother. One of the messages from a leader read, "Something unimaginable has happened because we believed and acted; accordingly, a miracle occurred. I still cannot believe this. Islam has embraced the Mother of Peace, True Mother." Even I, who had been a part of the planning, could not believe this day of miracles. Islam is entering the embrace of True Mother, the substantial Holy Spirit, the only begotten Daughter. Her embrace is so vast and I felt that large embrace over and over again today.



On returning to the Hotel, even before Mother could embrace the joy of this victory, True Mother offered devotions for her next journey to Tanzania. She is indeed the mother of humankind, the mother of the universe, the True Mother. How happy must Heavenly Parent and True Father in heaven have been watching today's event? Just thinking about this makes me overcome with emotion today. Today we held the Africa continental- level Blessing Ceremony and a state-hosted Blessing Ceremony. It has been a moving and miraculous chapter in the drama of the providence conducted by True Mother.

At 5 pm, True Mother was escorted to the airport by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The government of Niger offered its courtesy to True Mother until the end, and perhaps it was because True Mother was leaving, but there were even more military and police officers guarding True Mother and still no other cars on the road. In the car on the way to the airport I asked the Minister of Foreign Affairs how he felt the Blessing Ceremony had gone. He faced True Mother sitting beside him and said, "Today True Mother has blessed Niger and the people of Niger. The Blessing Ceremony was historic. I felt the grace of True Mother's amazing blessing when I saw that as soon as the Blessing Ceremony ended all the participants sent pictures of the Ceremony to their family, siblings, and friends."



After arriving at the presidential airport, True Mother gave encouraging messages to former president Ousmane of Niger, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and to Chairman Kassum, in the presidential lounge before boarding the airplane. As was the case when True Mother arrived, a red carpet was rolled out for her departure and she received a farewell ceremony from the honor guard. This was an amazing example of the Niger government's love for True Mother. Before boarding the plane, True Mother looked toward the honor guard and the leaders of Niger and gave a final wave filled with love.



The amazing journey to Niger concluded here. A leader gave a reflection, saying this event was the greatest in the history of our movement; it amazed, of course, the entire continent of Africa, but also the world. That is true. Because True Mother has completely invested herself, putting her life on the line, Heaven cannot help but work through True Mother. If you believe and ask it will be given, if you knock it will be opened, and if you seek it will be found. I am shedding tears as I write this letter. My tears won't stop. "Heavenly Parent, thank you. Thank you so much that through our True Mother we are liberating Heavenly Parent's sorrow and completing True Father's final will."

Yet this was not the end of True Mother's Niger journey but the beginning of her journey to Tanzania. As soon as Mother boarded the plane, she offered devotions. We arrived in Tanzania at 2 am and were greeted at the airport by five parliamentarians and the wife of the prime minister. Then at the hotel, around 150 youth, students, and religious leaders had waited throughout the night to give True Mother a traditional performance singing "Thank you for coming True Mother." Another new history has begun, because True Mother's coming is a blessing in itself.

After arriving at the hotel True Mother received bows and brief reports from the leaders and went to her room to prepare for today's event.

Beloved Leaders and Blessed families!

True Mother is love. Because she is love, she is our Mother who travels even to the ends of the world to embrace those who earnestly wish to meet her. From the east to the west, from the south to the north, True Mother is frantically and constantly on the move so that she can embrace the world and her children. She is our True Mother who, even with sores in her mouth and legs so swollen it is difficult to stand, she has a smile on her face as she embraces us with love. I sincerely ask everyone to please offer deep devotion for the historic Tanzania Summit and Blessing Ceremony and for True Mother's good health. Thank you.