

Tongil Moo-do for Young Ethiopians

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Tong-il Moo-do students offer a bow to True Parents

On the last day of October, a Saturday, the Ethiopian Tongil Moo-do Federation invited leaders of FFWPU, including me and a UPF peace ambassador, Mr. Wondwossen Hagos, who is a university lecturer, to visit its training center to observe the work the chapter is undertaking and its achievements.

Daniel Getahun, president of the Ethiopian Tongil Moo-do Federation, his assistant Samson Tamrat, and Zenagebrel Desalegn the leading trainer, had invited us to observe training sessions beginning at 7:30 in the morning at their center, which is located in the Kazanchis area of Addis Ababa. There, Tongil Moo-do shares a large hall in the YMCA

center. The Federation also goes under a colloquial name, "Blood Brothers Club."

Master E. P. Aketch, who is a Kenyan as well as being a former national leader of the Unification Church in Ethiopia, founded Tongil Moo-do here in 1999. Tongil Moo-do currently has a regular training attendance of about twenty young people, including boys and girls from age three to twenty.



The church president is at back, left with his wife

They opened a rented a hall on the grounds of Birhan High School in October. Their aim is to attract high school students in order to let them know what the Tongil Moo-do Martial art consists of, but at the same time to teach them that achieving the three blessings is the purpose of life.

Zenagebrel Desalegn, their trainer and lecturer, explained to us that the four-position foundation is at the heart of Tongil Moo-do teachings and principles, which they express to young people mainly through character education material.

Once we had arrived at the training center, the children demonstrated for us their martial arts skills. Thanks to the generosity of UPF

Scotland during a preceding interfaith tour in Ethiopia, we were able to donate a laptop and speakers to the federation after the training session. We thought this could surely help them to improve their method of teaching Tongil Moodo principles.



Demonstrating their skills

We concluded our visit by congratulating them for their hard work and sacrifices despite all the hardships they encounter, considering that Tae Kwon-do is better known and has a stronger foothold in Ethiopia than Tongil Moo-do does. Indeed, the leaders revealed to us that their federation has been facing many difficult circumstances, such as lack of finances, very old materials and uncomfortable places for training.

Yet they persevere. Their faith and doggedness and above all their love for Tongil Moo-do astonished us. Despite their not receiving support of any kind, they try not only to persevere with

Tongil Moo-do in Ethiopia but to develop it.

Zenagebrel Desalegn told us that he cannot ever see himself stopping his practice of Tongil Moo-do or separating in any other way from this unified martial art. The Tongil Moo-do Federation team came in third place at a regional tournament organized in Mombasa, Kenya on August 25, this year. They returned from Kenya with a trophy cup. Among just three leaders and one student, they have won thirteen medals (gold, silver or bronze) at various tournaments.

We ended our visit by advising them generally and encouraging them to continue making more young Ethiopians aware of the martial art championed by Rev. Sun Myung Moon.