

IAPD/UPF Lusaka, Zambia Holds 3-Day Religious Leaders Workshop

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Lusaka, Zambia -- The Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD) Zambia Chapter held a 3-day religious leaders workshop under the auspices of the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) Zambia Chapter from April 4 - 6, 2023 at the Golden Peacock Hotel in Lusaka. Twenty (20) participants attended this workshop.

Recognizing the need for different religious communities in different nations to come together to foster peace, mutual understanding, prosperity and development, UPF-Zambia organized the workshop to provide insight to IAPD Executive Committee members regarding the organization's vision, objectives and the execution of the intended aims. The introduction to UPF and its associations, introductory videos to UPF and IAPD, True Parents' (UPF Founders) Life Course, Family Values, Character Education, among other lectures, were shared with the participants during the workshop. The workshop brought together the religious leaders who are on the Executive Committee and other interested spiritual leaders.



The main speakers were: Rev. Bakary Camara, the general overseer of IAPD-Africa; Rev. Jean-Ghomsi, senior lecturer and IAPD-Africa staff; Rev. George Ogurie, IAPD-Africa coordinator; Rev. Rudolf Faerber, UPF-Zambia secretary general; and Rev. David Isaac Phiri, FFWPU Zambia president. The IAPD-Zambi Executive Committee is composed of representatives of five religious faiths: the Christian community, the Muslim community, the Jewish community, the Hindustan community and the Bahá'í

community. There were 20 participants from these five faiths. It was an exciting workshop in the history of Zambia with the government official who was the guest of honor calling it an unprecedented workshop. The workshop was the first of its kind, as IAPD-Africa is seeking the best practices to strengthen and expand IAPD activities. Therefore, the content used in the workshop was formulated for the first time through interaction between IAPD-Africa and general overseer Rev. Camara through Zoom, as well as discussions with UPF/IAPD Zambia Chapter.



Several speakers gave closing remarks. The Archbishop said the workshop was visionary, it was an eye opener and thanked the convener, UPF, for a job well done. He said peace is only talked about but it needs to be implemented. He said he wanted to be part and parcel of the implementation. He said Zambia has been a beacon of peace and said what politicians cannot do, religious leaders can achieve. He said peace is not just talk but something that can be achieved and IAPD is one such organization that has the strength to achieve it. He then called on the guests of honor that whenever they hear about UPF or IAPD they should not close their door.

FFWPU-Zambia president, Rev. Phiri, said in his remarks that with the resolution that was signed by spiritual leaders both in Korea and then in the Zambia Chapter by the Executive Committee together with religious leaders from different faiths and presented to African Union is a signal that religious leaders are important in the dispensation of peace. He bemoaned the immoral trend in the family which needs to be restored because peace starts with a God-fearing family. Rev. Phiri called upon the government to work together in partnership with IAPD.

In his closing remarks during the induction meeting, Rev. Camara said Mother Moon and Rev. Moon's peace-building vision is based on God, our Creator. Therefore, people need to know God's vision of peace building. The society and the nation depend on religious leaders to bring about peace because spiritual leaders have followers. But politicians have seen that religious leaders are divided. He said that the very moment they see that the religious leaders from different faiths are united, politicians will start looking to them for guidance, inspiration and prayers. That is why Mother Moon launched IAPD. IAPD is the center of all things. IAPD is spiritual, and the spiritual is the center of the physical body.

Rev. Camara said that Mother Moon shared with him that Africa is the hope for the future. Even Korea, which was known as the Jerusalem of the East, has gone down in terms of spirituality. He told the religious leaders that they are the custodians of spiritual growth. By coming together we are showing how God works. That is the way we show true love.

He said this is the first such workshop ever in the entire Africa and didn't know how Zambia got it. If you want to engage into something you have to know it. That was the reason the workshop was organized. However, he was quick to mention that for anything you do, after the workshop there is a need for results. There is escalating youth delinquency; therefore, there needs to be character education for the youth,

promoting family values. He also suggested how Africa needs to create a movement to come together as Muslims, Jews, Christians, Hindus and Bahá'ís, a movement called Africa Spirituality Day. He disclosed that all these aspects will be shared during the remaining two days.

He thus closed the meeting by reminding them to live as true brothers and sisters. He asked the participants to do the groundwork and build the foundation by creating something that has never been done before.



At the end of the workshop, participants signed the IAPD Declaration and new religious leaders were appointed Ambassadors for Peace.

The guest of honor, Dr. Martha Sitali, director of National Guidance and Religious Affairs desk at the office of the Vice President, in her remarks during the closing ceremony of the workshop thanked IAPD for organizing such a workshop. She commended UPF and IAPD for bringing together all the religious leaders in this important workshop. She further said that, in the next workshop she will not come as a guest of honor only but as a participant as well to learn more. She concluded her speech by saying that the government is open to working with UPF and its association, IAPD.

It is to be noted that the Shin Africa regional vice president, Mrs. Mica Amanlaman Camara, attended the closing ceremony.

