

## World Interfaith Harmony Week Observed in Japan

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January 19, 2017



Tokyo, Japan—To commemorate U.N. World Interfaith Harmony Week, UPF-Japan’s Council of Religious Ambassadors for Peace held the 82nd Interreligious Forum. The event, whose theme was, “A Role of Religious Leaders for Peace-Building,” took place on January 19, 2017 in Tokyo, Japan. Approximately 40 Japanese representatives of the Buddhist, Christian, Muslim, and Shinto faiths, as well as Ambassadors for Peace, attended the forum.

World Interfaith Harmony Week was proclaimed by the U.N. General Assembly in resolution 65/5, adopted on October 20, 2010, and is observed annually during the first week of February.

The forum began with remarks by Mr. Sotoji Maeda, an advisor to the Council, who spoke about the purpose of the Week. He said, “We need to show respect for each faith and religion to create a culture of peace all over the world, and produce mutual understanding and harmony among them.”

Representatives from the four different faith traditions then offered prayers for peace. Ven. Taishu Nara, a Shinto priest and vice president of the Council, offered the first prayer, and was followed by representatives from the Buddhist, Christian and Muslim faiths. Lastly, a prayer for peace by UPF founder Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon was recited by a UPF representative.



Afterwards, Mr. Masayoshi Kajikuri, secretary general of UPF-Japan, reported on the activities of Ambassadors for Peace in Japan and around the world, including the launching of the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP). The initiative was proposed by UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon at UPF’s International Leadership Conference (ILC), convened in Korea in February 2016. From July to the end of last year, regional and country-level branches of the IAPP were launched at leadership conferences held in the Asia-Pacific, Europe, Central America, South America, and Africa. On November 17, UPF-Japan organized an ILC in Tokyo, where it launched the IAPP. Mr. Kajikuri concluded by saying that “All the ILCs...contributed to the success of the ILC in Washington, D.C. at the Russell Senate Office Building on November 30, 2016.”