

Nigerians Remember Visit of UPF Founders

Raphael Ogar Oko
July 15, 2016



Abuja, Nigeria—Nigerian Ambassadors for Peace celebrated the fifth anniversary of the UPF founders’ historic visit to their nation.

The special Dinner for Peace, held on July 15, 2016, at the Transcorp Hilton Abuja hotel in the capital’s Maitama District, commemorated the 2011 visit of Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and his wife, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon. During that visit the founders had a meeting with then-President Goodluck Jonathan.

UPF-Nigeria organized the Dinner for Peace together with the Nigerian chapters of two affiliated organizations, the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) and the Women’s Federation for World Peace (WFWP).

During the dinner UPF-Nigeria’s new national chair, former Senate Deputy President Ibrahim Mantu, and vice chair, Chief Dubem Onyia, the former minister of state for foreign affairs, were formally presented with certificates of recognition.

It was also an opportunity for Ambassadors for Peace to plan for the future, especially accomplishing the UPF Peace Vision 2020. In particular, the discussion focused on the regional International Leadership Conference that was held in Burkina Faso in August 2016, which featured the launch of the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace for West Africa.

A very select group of high-level VIPs were in attendance, as well as UPF-Africa Regional Chair Mrs. Kathy Rigney, Special Envoy to Nigeria Rev. Shang Seon Park and Ambassadors for Peace. The presence of so many high-level VIPs helped ensure the dinner’s success.

FFWPU-Nigeria President Rev. George Marcus Ogurie, acting as master of ceremonies, began the event with special recognitions and greetings. A choir of young adults sang the national anthem of Nigeria, and then Mr. Akachukwu Nwankwo, a former special adviser to President Goodluck Jonathan, offered the opening prayer, dedicating the event to God and praying for its success and for the well-being of the nation.

In his welcoming remarks UPF-Nigeria Secretary General Dr. Raphael Ogar Oko expressed appreciation to the UPF founders for their lifelong commitment to peace, which has inspired people all over the world. He also thanked Mrs. Rigney for her sacrifice and dedication to making Nigeria great through more than 40 years of service for peace in Africa.

Watching a video documentary of the life and activities of the UPF founders, the participants were inspired by the diversity of their activities and applauded them for their accomplishments for peace and development.

The keynote address given by Mrs. Rigney was titled “A New Beginning: UPF-Nigeria.” It was an inspiring speech that moved the hearts of the participants and deepened their understanding of the event.

She began with these words: “I thank God for a day like this that we can sit together to share a meal as a family – for we are indeed a family, One Family under God. But more importantly, it is a chance for us to make a new resolve to fulfill our calling as Ambassadors for Peace. ...



“Today, July 15, is a special day in the history of Nigeria. ... It was today in 2011 that our founders, the Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, arrived in Nigeria and went straight to meet with then-President Goodluck Jonathan at the State House. That meeting was a very historic one in the sense that it was to be the last meeting that our founder would have with a sitting head of government of a country before he passed in 2012.”

On the main issue of the day, Mrs. Rigney said: “We have come to the point in the progress of our work in Nigeria whereby it is imperative that we have an active national chair of UPF-Nigeria. This would be a person who understands and appreciates the founding vision of UPF and possesses the passion and zeal to project that vision in concrete terms to the nation.”

This led to the presentation of certificates of appointment as national chair and national vice chair to Senator Ibrahim Mantu and Hon. Dubem Onyia, respectively. The participants applauded them for their new responsibilities and congratulated them warmly.

Senator Mantu thanked UPF and spoke passionately about Father and Mother Moon, as he frequently called the UPF founders. He described his personal experiences with the founders and explained how they positively impacted him and the world. He stated that he treasured his appointment as UPF-Nigeria national chair more than any other appointment he has ever held in his life. He promised to bring his experience to work for UPF in Nigeria and ensure that Nigeria fulfills the Peace Vision 2020.

In his acceptance speech, Senator Mantu said: “I am a politician, as everyone knows. But of late I’ve found myself speaking out on the need for politicians to become ‘born again.’ We cannot continue on the same path as before. ... Leaders who engage in corrupt practices do not have the fear of God in them. They do not really love their people. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, it is said. True love for humanity will make one live for others. This is why the fundamental teaching of Father and Mother Moon of universal peace must be embraced and practiced by all good leaders who really want to lead their people to prosperity. ...

“As a politician, I am used to campaigning for positions. But this is one position I never campaigned for. I firmly believe that this has come to me as a calling from the Almighty God. I therefore resolve to answer this call with the highest sense of responsibility.”

Some distinguished Nigerians were appointed as Ambassadors for Peace at the event: His Lordship, Hon Justice B.A. Adejumo, president, National Industrial Court of Nigeria; Sen. Hope Uzodinma and Sen. Murtala Nyako of the National Assembly of Nigeria; and Cheick Harouna Sankare, mayor of Ouenkoro, Mopti, Mali.

Congratulatory remarks were offered by Engr. Mohammed Abagana, former minister of the Federal Capital Territory, and Princess Moradeun Ogunlana, Nigerian Ambassador for Peace in Diaspora (USA), as well as the representative of the deputy governor of Imo State.

Other participants included Her Excellency Aisha Emeje-Audu, wife of the former governor of Kogi State; Professor Chimele Abengowe, consultant cardiologist with the State House Clinic, Abuja; Mrs. Mary Aibangbe, national president, Women in Colleges of Education; Sen. Mohammed Shaaba Lafiagi, National Assembly, Abuja; Ambassador Mrs. Mary Sawa, provost, Federal College of Education, Yola, Adamawa State; HRH Alhaji Dr. Shaban Audu Nizazo III, Etsu of Kwali, Abuja; as well as Princess Moradeun Ogunlana, coordinator of Nigerian Ambassadors for Peace in Diaspora (USA); Hon. Bassey Etim and Ambassador Mrs. Grace Kazalma-Mantey, among other leading Ambassadors for Peace.

The closing benediction was given by Rev. Shang Seon Park, special envoy to Nigeria. The event ended with distinguished Ambassadors for Peace pledging to do more for the sake of world peace and unification and to keep alive the legacies of Father Moon as well as support the outstanding leadership of Mother Moon and UPF.

Rulers Should Become Missionaries

Ibrahim Nasiru Mantu
July 15, 2016

Sen. Ibrahim Nasiru Mantu gives his acceptance speech after becoming the national chair of UPF-Nigeria.

Acceptance Speech of Sen. Ibrahim Nasiru Mantu, Former Deputy President of the Nigerian Senate, upon Being Named National Chair of UPF-Nigeria

Senator Mantu gave this speech on July 15, 2016, at the Transcorp Hilton Abuja on the occasion of the Dinner for Peace commemorating the fifth anniversary of the visit of the UPF founders to Nigeria.



Your Excellencies, distinguished Ambassadors for Peace, brothers and sisters in peace: You are all warmly welcome to this important meeting. The importance of this meeting is underscored by the fact that it is five years today since the founders of this great organization, UPF, made a historic visit to our dear country. It was indeed a critical point in our country's history.

As an active participant in the events that marked that visit, I am a witness to the tremendous amount of investment made at the time. We welcomed Ambassadors for Peace and delegates from across the world to Abuja, which included former heads of government of a number of countries, religious leaders of different faiths, heads of educational institutions and civil society organizations. It was a gathering of distinguished peace advocates and peace activists from around the world. It was just what our country needed at the time, and it required someone with a deep love for humanity to muster the courage to mobilize hundreds of people from around the world to preach peace in a country where (and at a time when) bombs were exploding here and there. This is the kind of founder that we have in the person of Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and his wife, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon.

I have associated with this organization since the early 2000s. I have enjoyed the special honor of being hosted by Father and Mother Moon as well as by their very able and amiable assistants. I highly admire their dedication to the cause of world peace. I can testify that their standard of devotion is rare in these modern times when the world is characterized by individualism and egoism. Mrs. Kathy Rigney here, for example, together with her colleagues have been missionaries of peace in Africa for more than forty

years. They have demonstrated a high degree of altruism by living with complete strangers and serving them in an effort to create a world which is as one family under God. When I see this, I am deeply challenged. If people who come from such faraway places can demonstrate true love toward my people, then I myself should do even more. I feel I should begin to see myself as a peace missionary too. Indeed, every one of us should be missionaries—especially we politicians.

The days of Plato were the heyday of philosophy, and so Plato made his famous remark that either kings must become philosophers or philosophers must become kings^{**}. Indeed, a “grand-student” of his, in the person of Alexander the Great, did become an emperor and he conquered the world. Alexander was a philosophy student of Aristotle’s, and Aristotle was a student of Plato’s. In the same vein, in these modern times “doing good” with missionary zeal, not passively, is imperative if the world is to survive. That is why I put forth the thesis that either rulers should become missionaries or missionaries must become rulers.

I am a politician, as everyone knows. But of late I’ve found myself speaking out on the need for politicians to become “born again.” We cannot continue on the same path as before. Corruption and immorality in high places are indeed a serious bane to our development. Agreed that there are corrupt practices and tendencies in all human beings, but the corruption being perpetrated in our part of the world is unique. I don’t know why someone would corruptly enrich himself to the tune of billions of dollars while the generality of the masses are wallowing in poverty. The question is how well will such a person live to enjoy his corrupt enrichment? Yet while he is basking in affluence, his people who gave him a mandate to lead them are starving.

Leaders who engage in corrupt practices do not have the fear of God in them. They do not really love their people. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, it is said. True love for humanity will make one live for others. This is why the fundamental teaching of Father and Mother Moon of universal peace must be embraced and practiced by all good leaders who really want to lead their people to prosperity. As Ambassadors for Peace, we are “born again” citizens of the world who have said goodbye to all negative forces that make human beings hate each other. Being Ambassadors for Peace, you have embraced universal peace as your religion and as disciples of Father and Mother Moon.

Your Excellencies, distinguished Ambassadors for Peace, brothers and sisters, I am highly honored to be given the opportunity to serve as national chair of this great organization in Nigeria. As a politician, I am used to campaigning for positions. But this is one position I never campaigned for. I firmly believe that this has come to me as a calling from the Almighty God. I therefore resolve to answer this call with the highest sense of responsibility.

More than ever before, our country is in need of peaceful coexistence among its various components—be they ethnic, cultural or religious components. I know very well that UPF is the best equipped body to foster harmony and understanding among diverse groups. We must use the resources at our disposal to accomplish this task. Dear to the heart of our founders is the promotion of ideal peaceful marriages and families. We must actively support such initiatives. We must develop programs that address the root causes of things that undermine peaceful coexistence among people. In doing so, we will partner with organizations—both governmental and non-governmental—sharing similar aspirations.

Your Excellencies, distinguished Ambassadors for Peace, brothers and sisters, I am delighted that we have Hon. Dubem Onyia as our vice chair. I am excited that we can work together on this important task. I am also excited that we are blessed with so many Ambassadors for Peace of the highest caliber, such as your good selves, whose cooperation will be highly required to move the organization to a new level.

I do not want to pretend that the task will be easy. But since this is the work of the Almighty God, I believe His hands will be with us; and if His hands are with us, nothing will be impossible for us to accomplish.

Bravo to all Ambassadors for Peace!

Long live the Universal Peace Federation!!

Long live the Federal Republic of Nigeria!!!