

International Day of Peace Observed in Netherlands

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Amsterdam, Netherlands—The 2015 UN International Day of Peace was observed in the Netherlands with a benefit dinner to support the Children’s Hospital in Pyongyang, North Korea.

The Netherlands branches of UPF and Women’s Federation for World Peace (WFWP), an NGO that is affiliated with UPF, jointly organized the benefit dinner on September 20, 2015, at the national headquarters of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, another affiliated organization. Funds raised by the benefit dinner will go to the European Medical Aid Project for the Children’s Hospital in Pyongyang.

The room was packed with representatives of United Religions Initiative (URI), Church of Scientology, Ambassadors for Peace, Women Empowerment Amsterdam, along with other guests and staff members.

The keynote speaker was Ms. Emma Jansen, the general coordinator of Peace Brigades International (PBI) Netherlands (www.peacebrigades.org). She showed a 5-minute video called “Bearing Witness” (<https://vimeo.com/17678083>).

“Human rights defenders are at the heart of all we do at PBI,” Ms. Jansen said. “We provide protection, support and recognition to local human rights defenders who work in areas of repression and conflict and have requested our support. We believe that lasting transformation of conflicts cannot come from outside, but must be based on the capacity and desires of local people. We avoid imposing, interfering or getting directly involved in the work of the people we accompany. Our work is effective because we take an integrated approach, combining a presence alongside human rights defenders on the ground with an extensive network of international support.”

PBI has been active since 1981 in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Colombia, Kenya, Nepal and Indonesia. In 2001 PBI received the Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders from Amnesty International and also was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Ms. Jansen was presented with an Ambassador for Peace certificate by Mrs. Helen Clerbout-Bressers, a board member of WFWP-Netherlands. Mr. Joop Remmerswaal was presented the Ambassador for Peace certificate by UPF-Netherlands Secretary General Wim Koetsier. Mr. and Mrs. Remmerswaal of the Church of Scientology have distributed thousands of booklets in the Netherlands about “The Way to a

Happy Life.” They were invited by their daughter Merel, an employee of the Public Relations Department of the Church of Scientology, who comes regularly to UPF events and UN days.

During the sharing time seven participants came forward to offer their poems, songs and words. Through their offerings the feeling of unity accelerated into the higher realms, and the atmosphere was completely transformed when the participants sang together, led by Mrs. Irene Gefferie of Women Empowerment.

Professor Dr. M.K. Gautam, a retired professor of anthropology, gave the concluding remarks about all that was said on the theme of the day by emphasizing the work and vision of Dr. Sun Myung Moon.

Mrs. Sophia Davies-Jordan was a very professional mistress of ceremonies. A short video, “Introduction to the Universal Peace Federation 2015,” was shown (<https://youtu.be/BUubc0VWjvU>). The International Day of Peace statement of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was read by Ambassador for Peace Stella Ismail from Somalia (www.Africansky.nl), and “Crown of Glory,” the poem written by UPF Founder Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon as a teenager, was read by Kyung In van de Ven, a board member of WFWP-Netherlands. Mr. Wim Koetsier informed the audience about the North Korea Project and spoke about the historic December 1991 visit of Rev. Dr. Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon to North Korea. Mr. Hans Campman, FFWPU-Netherlands chair, nourished the audience spiritually with music.

The dinner was prepared in a wonderful way by Mrs. Mihoko Koetsier-Ikeya, the vice chair of WFWP-Netherlands, with the help of Mrs. Sachiko Schermer-ito and Mrs. Elfrid Langenes.

Each participant was given an envelope containing Rev. Dr. Moon’s poem, the statement of the secretary-general of the UN, the statement of UPF and extra information on videos from WFWP and North Korea.

