

## Zimbabwe's President to officiate at the first national Peace and Family Festival

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*Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Deputy Minister Energy Mutodi (centre) addresses journalist about Peace and Family Festival flanked by Africa Regional Chairman of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) Reverend Bakary Camara (left) in Harare yesterday. -- Picture by Shelton Muchena*

President Emmerson Mnangagwa is expected to officiate at the first national level Peace and Family Festival to be held on November 21 this year at the National Sports Stadium in Harare.

At least 40 000 couples from more than 200 countries will re-dedicate their marriages at a huge ceremony that will be led by Dr Hak Ja Han Moon from South Korea.

The international peace crusader is the widow of Mr Sun Myung Moon, who founded the Unification Church.

The rededication ceremony dubbed "Peace starts with me, Peace starts with my family", is being hosted by the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification Zimbabwe in collaboration with Universal Peace Federation and Women's Federation for World Peace International, both of which have general consultative statuses at the United Nation's Economic and Social Council.

Speaking at a Press conference in Harare yesterday, Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services Deputy Minister Energy Mutodi said FFWPU was not a church organisation, but an establishment that seeks to achieve lasting peace in the world through developing communities that respect family values. "This is an organisation that was founded by Reverend Moon in South Korea together with his wife Dr Moon whom we are we are going to be welcoming to Zimbabwe on November 19 this year," he said.

"So, the Ministry of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services would want to encourage you to report factually, to report progressively the events surrounding this organisation as his Excellency the President Cde Emmerson Mnangagwa will be officiating at this event.

"This is the first time in Africa that such an event is going to be held and for us to have it done here is a blessing that we all want to embrace. We are happy to be receiving a delegation from South Korea. Plans are underway to ensure that there will be 40 000 couples attending this event."

Deputy Minister Mutodi said the event would involve rededication of couples in their marriages as the theme or main focus of the organisation was to ensure that marriages are fortified and respected in partial fulfilment of the mission of Jesus Christ during his time on earth.

Reverend Bakary Camara, the Africa regional chairman of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), said the purpose of the gathering would be to heal the wounds of the past and support the Zimbabwe Government's endeavours for peace and reconciliation.

"The forthcoming 'Peace Starts with Me' Peace and Family Festival, Harare 2018, will bring together people from all walks of life -- political leaders, religious leaders, chiefs, civil society leaders, married couples and youths, for the sake of peace and reconciliation," he said.

"Through a celebration of the arts, music and inspirational words, the diversity and creative power of our human family will be highlighted."

Rev Camara said it would be a great event for peace and family and for the community and the nation.

"We are profoundly grateful to be received here by the people of Zimbabwe and the authorities," he said. "We are really proud to say that this country, even though you went through some difficulties, you have a sense of peace as a nation because you have been so patient and raise dialogue among yourselves and surrounding countries."