

## New Zealanders Probe ‘Peace through Communication’

Andrew Halim  
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Parnell, New Zealand—The importance of communication in realizing peace was the focus of UPF-New Zealand Ambassadors for Peace in their monthly meeting.

“Peace through Communication” was the theme of the afternoon forum, which took place on November 14, 2015, in the UPF Peace Embassy in Parnell, a suburb of Auckland.

The panel of speakers consisted of three Ambassadors for Peace: Virin Gomber, family program manager for the Peace Foundation; Tracey Deane, community leader and entrepreneur in the South Waikato District; and Rev. Sirr Christoffersen, head of universal worship in New Zealand for the Sufi Order International.



The afternoon began with a call by the master of ceremonies, Ambassador for Peace Morrin Cooper, for a moment of silence to share our hearts with those who were closely affected by the recent terrorist attacks in France and Beirut. Mr. Peter Holdem, UPF coordinator for the North Island, opened the meeting with a

prayer. Then Mr. Geoffrey Fyers, UPF-New Zealand secretary general, gave the welcoming remarks and an introduction to the panel of speakers.

Virin Gomber gave a concise and profound presentation on communication. He explained the importance of communication within ourselves and with others. Ambassadors for Peace have the potential to transform the world through their communication, he said, and he encouraged everyone present to establish a good rapport and empower others through peaceful communication.

The next speaker, Tracey Deane, raised thought-provoking questions about the effort needed to establish peaceful communication. Recognizing good, healthy and responsible communication as being necessary to achieving peace on earth, she spoke of the need to establish peaceful communication on many levels, starting within ourselves, with our family and with other people around us. As people put in positions of authority and responsibility, she said, Ambassadors for Peace need to consciously improve the way they communicate and along the way impart them to others in peace. There are many ways to communicate, she said, but first one should seek to understand before desiring to be understood. If all of us do our best to communicate respectfully and responsibly, we will create a peaceful world with our own hands.



The last speaker, Rev. Sirr Christoffersen, emphasized the two-way nature of communication. As a psychoanalyst, he commended all the speakers for their presentations, which he said summed up almost everything that needs to be understood about communication. He urged us to take extra caution in the way we communicate with one another, so as to establish building blocks for peace that will allow internal healing to take place naturally, both within ourselves and with the people around us.

Following a thought-provoking question and answer session, five new Ambassadors for Peace received their awards from Rev. Julius Gicole, director of UPF-New Zealand, and his wife, Mrs. Jasmin Gicole. They are: Mr. Arunjeev Singh, Mr. John Corcoran, Mr. Tej Ram, Mr. Qareebullah Abduljabbar and Mr. Azeem Zafarullah.

Then Mr. Leon Pogoni, chair of the World Fishing Sports Federation New Zealand, gave a short introduction to the federation, including the reason behind its conception along with its methods in achieving peace. Its founder, the Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon who also founded UPF, believed that the ocean holds infinite potential to solve the problem of world hunger and that the future of humanity is closely tied with our ability to adapt ourselves to incorporate it as our eventual habitation.

Rev. Julius Gicole gave brief closing remarks, applauding the initiatives and the well-prepared presentations of our very own Ambassadors for Peace on that day. It was also appropriate to gather in light of the recent developments around the world that threaten the very existence of peace, he said. He encouraged everyone to be free to express their ideas for our network to keep on promoting peace in our own little ways, because this is the way we substantialize the ideal environment in which we want to live.