

## International Day of Families Observed in Japan

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Japan—The family is critical to achieving lasting peace and social stability. The UN General Assembly demonstrated its concern for the well-being of families by designating the 15th of May every year as the International Day of Families, and urging its member states and related non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to hold events in observance of this important UN day.



UPF-Japan collaborated with South Tokyo Assembly of Ambassadors for Peace to organize the third annual “Family Clean Rally 246” event on April 29, 2015. About 100 people, including local government assembly members; business executives; NGO leaders, as well as parents and children, joined the program, which combined street cleaning with walking along Route 246, a major roadway in Tokyo.

Before the service work began, a local assembly member encouraged the participants, saying, “This annual program is both fun and a wonderful opportunity where families and neighbors can cheerfully exchange with one another through local beautification activity”.

Representing UPF-Japan, Mr. Kazunori Arase, its director for publications, spoke about UPF’s global reach: “While this year marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, our world—even two decades after the end of the Cold War—is plagued with clashes involving religion and ethnicity.

To help the UN system tackle this challenge, UPF International works in official collaboration with the UN's Alliance of Civilizations”.



The street cleaners began their walks and work in two groups, made up of both young and old, and people from different professional backgrounds. They found and picked up many broken umbrellas and empty cans and bottles near shrubberies along the street. “I could not imagine so many trashes on a route where I live!”, said one participant. “By taking care of the streets, I became more affectionate of my own town!”, said another volunteer. Many of the participants appreciated the moments they could share together and with their families as they worked towards a common good.

The International Day of Families was also observed by “The National Campaign for Nurturing Characters, Rebuilding Families and Enhancing the Country”.

