

Diplomats in Tokyo Discuss Peace and Prosperity in the Asia-Pacific Region

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Tokyo, Japan—UPF-Japan held its 27th Peace Diplomats Forum in partnership with the Institute for Peace Policies (IPP), an affiliated organization, on July 20, 2016 in Tokyo.

The event, whose theme was “Prospect of Japan’s Diplomacy and Security Policy: Focusing on Japan-U.S.-Australia Relations” drew prominent people in Japan, including approximately 30 foreign diplomats (five of whom were ambassadors) and nearly 30 Japanese leaders—parliamentarians and diplomats, as well as journalists, scholars and representatives of government; civil society; and the private sector.

The forum began with Mr. Shigenari Kato, secretary general of the Peace Diplomats Forum, who served as the emcee for the program, introducing UPF and its activities. Afterwards, opening remarks were given, by Mrs. Hae Ok Lee Song, regional co-chair of UPF-Japan.

Mrs. Lee Song expressed her condolences to the victims of the recent terrorist attacks around the world, and emphasized that terrorism would not be eliminated only by military power, and underlined the need to address the issues of mutual distrust, discrimination and prejudice that underlie this problem and to advance the understanding that we are all members of “One Global Family.”

Following congratulatory remarks, which were given by a parliamentarian, Mr. Hideaki Ueda, a former Ambassador of Japan to Australia, gave the keynote speech.

Referring to the decision an international tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands made on July 12, 2016 in which it denied China’s claims over the South China Sea in a case that was brought by the Philippines, Mr. Ueda stressed the importance of cooperation between the U.S., Japan and Australia and these three nations’ cooperation with other Asia-Pacific nations, and for China to abide by international law.

Mr. Ueda also spoke of the anti-Japanese sentiment many Australian’s had due to Japan’s attacks on Australia during World War II. He said that Japanese women who had married Australians and who lived in Australia after the war contributed to the transformation of Australian’s sentiment from anti-Japanese to pro-Japanese.

Mr. Jun Isomura, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, a Washington, D.C.-based U.S. domestic and foreign policy think tank, then moderated a Q&A session with Mr. Ueda.

The event concluded with the appointment of four new Ambassadors for Peace, by Mrs. Lee Song.

During the refreshments, many of the first-time attendees enjoyed getting to know one another.