

IAPP Yaoundé, Cameroon Opens Office in National Assembly

Paterne Zinsou
March 13, 2026
Secretary General, UPF Africa



Yaoundé, Cameroon - During a visit to Cameroon in March, Dr. Zinsou Paterne, secretary general of UPF-Africa and continental coordinator of the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP), presided over a multisectoral peace conference and secured a historic diplomatic breakthrough by establishing a national IAPP headquarters within the National Assembly.

On March 12, 2026, UPF-Africa conducted a high-level Peace Promotion Conference and Investiture Ceremony at the Hôtel Franco in Yaoundé. The event brought together over 250 leaders, including government authorities, traditional chiefs of all 10 regions, religious leaders, youth associations and prominent media figures.



Under the patronage of President Paul Biya, who sent his representative, the event served as a strategic platform to reinforce the government's "Living Together" initiative, which promotes peace, national

integration and social cohesion.

The highlight of the event was the investment of peace activist Ms. Georgette Medjiadeu Tchokoualieu, founder of the non-profit Give A Smile, as an Ambassador for Peace. Her charity supports and empowers vulnerable people, especially women and children. Her appointment, which was officially blessed by all 10 traditional chiefs, served to elevate the role of female leadership in regional peacebuilding.



In his keynote address Dr. Zinsou defined the role of an Ambassador for Peace. Rather than a purely honorary distinction, he described the role as a sacred calling. He emphasized that sustainable peace requires concrete action over rhetoric, moving beyond speeches to measurable community service. He also stressed the principle of sacrifice, the willingness to prioritize the collective good over personal interest. Finally, he reminded participants that intergenerational cooperation is essential, saying that peace ambassadors should act as a bridge between traditional wisdom and youth-led innovation.

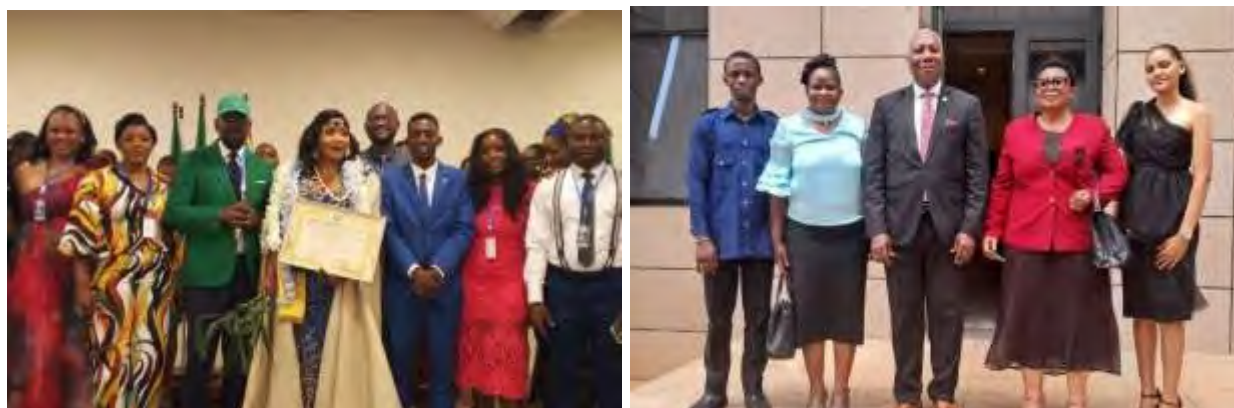
In her acceptance speech, Ms. Tchokoualieu described peace as the "fuel of society," and linked moral stability directly to economic and educational prosperity. She voiced her commitment to using UPF's ECOSOC consultative status to amplify the voices of Cameroonian women on the global stage.



The next day, March 13, a ceremony at the Parliament of Cameroon inaugurated the official headquarters of the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) Cameroon within the National Assembly. The keys to the office were formally handed to Dr. Paterne Zinsou, in his capacity as continental coordinator of IAPP, by Assemblywoman Ms. Brigitte Emabot. This event transitions the association from a collaborative partner to a permanent fixture of the Cameroonian legislative environment.



The new headquarters will serve as a laboratory for ideas, where parliamentarians can address issues such as democratic governance, values-based education, and inter-African cooperation. Also, a proposed reform aims to synergize the efforts of both current and former legislators, ensuring that experience and innovation work hand-in-hand for the African people.



On the same day, Dr. Zinsou and an IAPP delegation paid a courtesy call to the vice president of the National Assembly, Ms. Mary Muyali Boya Meboka. Dr. Zinsou expressed gratitude for the vice president's representation of the Speaker at the 2025 World Summit in Korea. He explained the plan to broaden the IAPP platform to include both sitting and former parliamentarians, enabling political veterans to mentor current leaders and maintain institutional memory in peacebuilding efforts.

The vice president endorsed this idea, and expressed her commitment to seeing IAPP's principles translated into concrete public policies and recurrent parliamentary activities.

These UPF and IAPP activities serve to position Cameroon as a continental model for sustainable, autonomous peace leadership.