

## Forum in Paris on Human Rights, Responsibilities for Peace

Jacques Marion  
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Paris, France - Commemorating Human Rights Day, UPF-France held a meeting on “Human Rights, Responsibilities for Peace: The Role of Civil Society in Peacebuilding.”

The audience of about 80 participants who met on December 13, 2014, in Paris included Ambassadors for Peace and new guests.

After an opening address introducing 2014 activities of UPF in Europe and France, the first session on “Rights to Peace, Education for Peace” began with Professor Edmond Jouve, a renowned constitutional law scholar, who outlined the progress of human rights and argued that human rights gradually will take precedence in international law. He was followed by Dr. Jean-Luc Berlet, a professor of philosophy, who gave a stimulating talk on the role of love and its development through the “three blessings.”

The second session, on “Human Rights and Spirituality,” began with Venerable Michel Thao Chan, founder of the peace organization Cercle de Réflexion des Nations, who explained how human rights could be gradually internalized to become a way of looking at and transforming the world. Then Mr. Mohammed Haouat, president of the UNESCO-affiliated association ASILEC, gave a report on Islam’s view of human rights, emphasizing how the image of Islam has been distorted by current events.

UPF-France President Jacques Marion presented the UPF view on the meaning and importance of interreligious dialogue. He explained how the family is meant to play a major role as a training ground for harmonizing human rights and duties.

In the last session, on “Youth and Peace,” Alexandre Huard of Youth UPF reported on Religious Youth Service (RYS) programs around the world. Then three leaders of Coexister, a well-known youth interreligious organization in France, spoke about their vision and activities. During an interfaith tour around the world, they said, they had the opportunity to meet UPF leaders in New York and to discuss future joint projects.

The program ended with a ceremony awarding four new Ambassadors for Peace, including M. Jean Marie Rouaut, a French walking race champion and supporter of “sports for peace” activities.