

Session Nine of the International Leadership Conference 2021 (ILC2021)

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Asia Pacific - Session Nine of the International Leadership Conference 2021 (ILC2021) - Asia Pacific program, held on May 1, 2021, featured the International Association of Arts and Culture for Peace (IAACP). Six leaders from the arts shared their perspectives on the theme, "The Role of Arts and Culture in Contributing to Peace in the Asia-Pacific Rim." A total of 2,228 people from 43 countries registered for the event. One-hundred and forty-five people attended it via Zoom and thousands viewed it on Facebook Live and YouTube live streaming.



Dr. Julia Moon, president of the HJ Korean Cultural Foundation and chairperson of the Little Angels of Korea, gave the opening remarks. As a professional ballerina herself, she explained, "IAACP is one [initiative] which is especially close to my heart because I have dedicated most of my life to the arts." As she narrated the foundation of the establishment of IAACP, she especially mentioned the Little Angels Children's Folk Ballet of Korea, its humble beginnings and its significant contributions for world peace through beautiful performances. "Their beauty and innocence as well as high professional and artistic standards deeply touched the hearts of audiences everywhere. Their talent and dedication made them young ambassadors for peace and goodwill," she said. She continued to enlighten the audience with her wisdom as a professional ballet dancer, explaining, "For a dancer, the stage is like a minister's pulpit. The only difference is that we inspire and uplift through the beauty of music and movement instead of words." Earlier in her speech, she cited the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games as an example of the power of the arts and culture to bring people together and why arts and artists can and must play an

important role in bringing unity on the Korean Peninsula. She ended her speech by expressing her sincere hope that IAACP will help bring about this beautiful vision of Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon.

Next, a video of a special performance by the Little Angels, showcasing the splendor of Korean arts and culture, was presented. The performance brought an atmosphere of inspiration and hope as the participants watched it and applauded together.



Mr. Bunhok Lim, deputy director of the Asian Cultural Council, Cambodia, emphasized that the role of culture in and the contribution of it toward the reunification process of the two Koreas is very important, not just because culture has been proven to be a key asset for peace and prosperity, but because both Koreas share the same culture and language. He then suggested three strategies: i) identify the needs of each party; ii) use local tools and traditions to ensure target groups are better able to identify with the form and content presented to them; and iii) apply multidisciplinary approaches where art and culture, both tangible and intangible cultural heritages, form part of a broader peace and reconciliation strategy.

Mr. Muhammad Nasir Hamzah, board of directors of the National Academy of Arts, Culture and Heritage, Malaysia, pointed out that, "Promoting peace through the arts and culture is much easier than just negotiation which has no attachment to something that is close to the people's heart." He went on to praise Malaysia which, despite the cultural and religious differences of its people, has managed to thrive harmoniously, celebrating various festivals together. "Through this effort, our country is recognized as a country with many cultures, and we have sold our country as 'Malaysia, truly Asia'," he said.

Dr. Li-bo Zhang, a professor at Ocean University, China, stressed the importance of universality as means to provide broad opportunities for the development of cultural characteristics. He presented three methods on how to realize universality: i) grasp the common theme of human nature; ii) follow the common rules of business; and iii) depend on the latest means of technology. In conclusion, Dr. Zhang encouraged the audience, saying, "...we need the circle concept; the more it transcends the nation, the more likely it is universal."

Mrs. Akaltyn Bekbolatva, an honorary educator at Almaty Conservatoria, Kazakhstan, recognized that people cannot have the right to any kind of existence other than peace. "From the moment of birth to death we are accompanied by music...humanity has absorbed this criterion with its mother's milk." She pointed out: "The role of music in the education of the citizens of the world is great. The philosophy of individualism, thoughtlessness and consumerism must be opposed with the colorful, diverse and versatile world of seven notes to transform the individual into a person who is full of richness and open to the world's soul and sensitive heart. After her presentation, she performed a soulful rendition of a Kazakh song. The audience was moved, sending comments of appreciation through the webinar chat even without understanding the lyrics.

The session ended with another video performance by the Little Angels and closing remarks, given by Mr. Hajime Saito, coordinator of IAACP-Asia Pacific.

The speeches that were delivered and the performances that were presented in this session demonstrated how much the arts and culture stimulate human emotions and bring people from different nations together. Therefore, the arts play an indispensable role in contributing to peace in the Asia Pacific Rim.