

## Heavenly Africa: São Tomé and Príncipe 2024 Peace Designer Global Peace Camp

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From August 30 to September 9, 2024, the island nation of São Tomé and Príncipe in West Africa became a hub of youth empowerment and peace initiatives. The '2024 Peace Designer Global Camp,' themed 'Enhancing Leadership, Professionalism, and Integrity,' brought together 100 young participants for a transformative experience.

This Peace Camp, conducted in collaboration with four schools designated by the Ministry of Education, focused on character education, school facility repairs, and community cleaning projects. The event garnered significant national attention, with multiple features of the opening and closing ceremonies on São Tomé's national broadcast.

The National Assembly hosted both the opening and closing ceremonies, underscoring the camp's importance. The closing event was particularly noteworthy, featuring:

- Jailson Damata, President of the São Tomé Youth Federation, opening the ceremony
- Matsuda Koji, World President of Youth Federation, delivering an encouraging speech
- Eurídice Medeiros, São Tomé Minister of Youth, and Abnildo Oliveira, Vice President of the São Tomé National Assembly, offering congratulatory remarks
- Awards for Youth Ambassadors for Peace and outstanding presenters
- Cultural performances and a synergy contest

Matsuda Koji conveyed True Mother's message emphasizing youth development. He proposed nurturing 1,000 Peace Designers to achieve national peace through initiatives like the Peace Village and Peace

Environment movements. Koji also announced the launch of Korean language classes in October, offering opportunities for vocational training in Korea for exceptional students.

Minister Medeiros praised the camp's positive impact on youth consciousness and behavior, expressing hope to extend such programs to other regions. Vice President Oliveira emphasized the importance of individual effort in achieving peace and encouraged citizens to take ownership of this goal.



The synergy contest saw students presenting solutions to social problems aligned with UN Sustainable Development Goals. Proposals included sustainable forest management, equitable quality education, and water management strategies. The First Lady of São Tomé and Príncipe, Fatima Vila Nova, presided over the awards ceremony, recognizing the students' efforts.

Following the camp's conclusion, participants joined the Peace Road event - a global run promoting Korean Peninsula unification and world peace. Now in its 12th year, Peace Road involves youth from 160 countries under the slogan "Realizing a Community of Coexistence, Co-prosperity, and Shared Happiness."

The São Tomé saw participants marching from the National Assembly to Independence Square, voicing their support for peace in São Tomé and Korean unification.

São Tomé and Príncipe was designated as a Least Developed Country (LDC) by the United Nations in 1982, but it is expected to graduate from this status in 2025 thanks to the efforts of the Youth and Students Federation. Meanwhile, True Mother announced the São Tomé Peace Declaration in 2019 and has hosted youth and student festivals centered on the theme of peace.