

## Prizren city welcomes the Assembly of Peace Council

Prizren, Kosovo, 16. – 17. November 2013



**P**rizren, once considered the navel of Albania was chosen to welcome the annual assembly of Albania Peace Council. After successfully holding local peace council in nine cities all the energies were focused at the national peace council meeting which would also be an occasion to elect the new chairmanship of UPF Albania. That is to take place once in two years and last time was held in the seaside of Albania, 40 km west of Tirana.

This time we moved on the north east direction, just beyond the Albanian-Kosovar border, in the second most important city of Kosova, Prizren, where a few weeks ago the Prime Ministers of Albania, Kosovo and Turkey held a big really.

The meeting was planned with four sessions and overnight stay between 16 and 17 November, the last session focused on the election of the new presiding council and Peace Council presidency. Between this intense agenda we foresaw a visit at the castle of the town and one at the historic House of the League of Prizren where 150 years ago the Albanian leaders gathered to unite the Albanian lands under the Ottoman empire that was falling apart.

The first session beginning at 4 PM was moderated by Mr. Niko Veizaj, vice chairman of National Peace



Council (NPC), very popular among the ambassadors for peace as one of the founding members and steadfast supporter of UPF Albania. The opening speech was held by **Mrs. Lavdie Ruci**, the Chair of NPC (2011-2013) who stressed the need for a culture of peace

education that is a gap for Albanians and the Western Balkan people. "If we want to have peace in the region and a cooperative climate benefiting our people it is imperative to begin from ourselves to educate and promote a culture of peace.

"There are tens of cases of family violence, some leading to death. Blood feud remains an opened wound of the Albanian society. How can we then speak about a democratic society when this is not true for the basic cell of the society – the family. The family is the core and the source of life. The degree of peace and purity that we find in the family will be reflected on our society. Thus it's necessary to work in the family level, especially with the children to educate them with the values of mutual respect and positive mindset, peace and tolerance among each other.



This important event was respected by the presence of **Rev. Young Shik Ahn**, president of UPF Europe that gave also some congratulatory remarks during the first session. While concluding his speech president Ahn said: "As you know, UPF's vision embraces the

coming together as one family of the entire human race beyond ethnic, racial, religious and national differences and putting an end once and for all to ancient antagonisms that often go back countless generations and into bygone eras. Please keep that vision constantly in your hearts as you go about your work of healing the wounds of this nation and setting it on the path to a point where all Albanian people can experience God's true heart of love at all

times. We can only truly find such lasting love and peace if we can connect to the deepest innermost resources of the human heart - that part of ourselves which allows us to relate to the living God who is at the root of all our existences and behind all our religious traditions and who longs for the reconciliation and peaceful coexistence of all of his children. I therefore encourage each of you to constantly seek to renew your faith in God as the basis for receiving new inspiration for your personal development and for the work of Peace Ambassadors in Albania.”



After him, **Mr. Sokol Rexhepi**, secretary general of UPF Albania summarized the activities of the last two years through a detailed Powerpoint presentation. The first session concluded with a video report on the first anniversary of True

Father’s ascension. The second session that was correctly managed by Mr. Flamur Shehu, vicechairman of UPF Presiding Council (2001-2013)

was are gathered as we need to speak, to converse and to know each other. “It is like a fervent desire that should never fade. As ambassadors for peace we are optimistic that our mission is being delivered on a fertile soil and is aiming all ages and categories, from children to adults, from those highly educated to the poorly educated. ‘Goodnes is never enough’ our people say. Let’s do this every day, rightfully and with our heart”.

The chairman of the newest Peace Council, **Mr. Osman Elezi** from Kukës Peace Council, thanked UPF for expending its mission in the northeast end of Albania adding that a simple certificate warmed the hearts and strongly motivated those who received it to continue to do good and serving to others. It is our task to expand our influence on the whole area and to include people of positive influence and good example to relieve the pain and suffering of the people following the example of Father Mun.”

Representing Fier Peace Council **Mr. Frederik Jorgaqi** said that even though a handful of peace ambassadors we have substantial projects for the future. Following Mother Moon’s advice we think to hold education activities for young people to educate them with the spirit of peace and tolerance. We will as well cooperate with cultural institutions



consisted of short introductory messages by the chairs of newly formed Local Peace Councils (Elbasan, Durrës, Fier, Lezhë dhe Kukës). The first speaker was Mr. Flamur Hidri, chair of Durres Peace Council who said that the initial objective of this council is the identification and appointment as ambassadors for peace of those individuals and representatives that in their daily lives are serving the people and are a positive model in their family life and love the nation. We also want to promote UPF peace principles widely for them to become a point of reference for leaders of various fields.

After him spoke **Mr. Gjergji Shyti**, the chairman of Leazha Peace Council, who said that it is good that

to promote and imprint the concept of harmony and cohabitation harmoninë. The last two decades there has been a great and movement of people within and out of the country that somehow influenced in worsening the peace and security climate of our society.

Also each Ambassador for Peace from Fier will plant one tree in order to give the symbolic message that people should focus in cultivating goodness, beauty, nature and life in general.

**Mrs. Eva Nita**, the newly elected chair of Elbasan Peace Council said that: “We as ambassadors for



peace have put a clear focus to our work as ambassadors for peace. Our efforts will focus in support of the children in need, especially to those without parents and with disabilities.

This session concluded with a documentary recently shown by Korean National TV MBC on the life and contribution of Father Moon to world peace.

Beside the interesting menu, the members of the NPC could enjoy the performance of a local singer that was supplemented by the “singer” of Ambassadors for Peace, Mr Gaqo Apsotoli that has represented Albania in numerous national and international events. He lit up the atmosphere and received warm applauses by the audience. The evening was completed with the poetries from Mr. Agim Doci and famous playwright Mr. Fadil Kraja.

Throughout the evening there were some appointment of Ambassadors for Peace like the viceminister of labor and social welfare of Kosova, Mr. Fatmir Shurdhaj, academician Selman Sheme (Albania), Mrs. Sier Vaso (Albania), Mr. Mustafa Gjana (a local council member of the city) and Mr. Shaban Morina (owner of Hotel Theranda hosting the Albanian Peace Council).

The second day began under the theme of “The Vision of UPF Albania for the future”, that was moderated by Dr. Saemira Pino, vice chair of UPF Presiding Council. The session opened with a picture and video presentation in memoriam of those ambassadors for peace that passed away in the

recent years. This presentation moved the hearts of those present and of the family members attending.

The first speaker was chairman Ibraj that made a short analyses of figure and facts from the last two years. It was especially pointed out that more than 250 people were appointed as Ambassadors for Peace in nine local peace councils. “Nowadays the ambassadors for peace are taking ownership on UPF by paying the annual fee and making special donations”, said Mr. Ibraj. He explained once more the spiritual mission and position of UPF according to the founder’s words: “UPF was founded by True Father to lead the world leaders in becoming leaders of heart and then leading humanity towards God’s ideal to build one world family under God. UPF is standing as the Abel UN and its mission is to support, encourage and guide the existing UN to fulfill its mission and objectives by reforming itself and putting God at the center of its mission.” During his speech Mr. Ibraj presented some milestones of UPF work in the last mandate pointing out the establishment of Peace Councils in Fier, Lezhë, Durrës, Ulqin, Tuz dhe Kukës. He also presented some new proposals for the improvement

of UPF performance in the near future. One of the proposals was providing extra support to the office of the secretary general by adding new full time and part time staff to UPF headquarters.

During his speech chairman Ibraj presented the project to establish an Albanian Peace Council, a coordination instrument among Albanian





ambassadors for Peace from Albaniam, Kosova, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro.”

He also thanked the Presiding Council, the members of the Peace Council and the secretary general and local secretaries for the support during his chairmanship 2011-2013. He concluded saying: “We are like a family that resembles a tree. Its branches have the same root and trunk but they grow in different directions”.

During this session the special envoy of True Parents, **Rev. Gi Yoong Shin** gave a strong talk to all attending. “Many people say I want to serve this country but often is just words. As you know a mother does not say I will serve my family but she serves without bragging. She always sacrifices. This is because she feels as the owner of the house. What kind of family and what kind of nation do you want to have? Do you want one that attends God and receives his blessings? If your answer is yes than please study the teachings of Father Moon and practice them in your life. By doing so I hope you can become leaders who can build true families, true societies and a true nation and a true world of peace centered on the teachings of Father Moon.”

Mr. Ali Laçej, member of UPF Presiding Council and an early supporter of True Parents gave an interesting talk on the reality of the spirit world. Beside some text, his presentation included many pictures and some music on the background which

made it easier for the audience to follow and digest it.

Since we were running out of time we skipped the break between sessions and immediately introduced the procedure of elections and some minor changes in the statute.

Mr. Shehu was the one to introduce the voting process, through one page where there was a column with 7 names for 3 positions of the NPC presidency and another one with 17 names, out of which 11 would be elected for the Presiding Council. The Presiding Council now will have 21 members, 9 are elected directly from Local Assemblies of Peace Councils – the chair of each Council and 1 will be automatically part of it which is the President of FFWPU. The process was explained very clearly by Mr. Shehu.

An election committee chaired by Mr. Sokol Rexhepi began working rapidly to finish everything on time. The counting was done in real time thanks to our IT specialist Mr. Gabor Vasmatics. With the reading of the last vote we had a correct result.

The chair of NPC was elected Mr. Arben Malaj, a well know politician and a prominent ambassador for peace. The next on the list of the most voted was Prof. Dr. Shezai Rrokaj and Dr. Majlinda Mema.

The newly elected presiding council with its 21 members pushed Mr. Ibraj (the most voted





candidate among the 17) to continue to work as the chairman of UPF along with Mr. Shehu and Mrs. Saemira Pino as vice chairs. During his remarks, Mr. Ibraj thanked everyone for the heartfelt support: "I am obliged to fulfill the responsibilities I am delegated by you and we will continue to work together for the next two years."

He also read the declaration of the Assembly which states that "The main mission of UPF Albania in the coming mandate is to take care of the spiritual growth of the nation trying to build the Heavenly Kingdom on Earth, uniting the physical and spiritual worlds." In that declaration the NPC proposes to European Office to award the title Ambassador for Peace to the nation of Albania.

The European president of UPF **Rev. Yong Shik Ahn** held a congratulatory speech to conclude the Assembly. "Ladies and gentlemen, from my standpoint and I believe God's standpoint also, The Peace Council in each nation is actually the most important body in that nation. It is nothing less than that nation's conscience charged with drawing God's blessing to its people. I would humbly request that each of you who are now elected really search within yourselves and amongst Father Moon's teachings and through prayer to discover the value and significance of your role from Heaven's viewpoint. Please ask God how the Peace Council

can bring the vision and heart of True Parents and UPF to bear on the situation of this nation."

In this way I believe that the very powerful body of Ambassadors for Peace with which Albania has been blessed can become an incomparable and unstoppable force for goodness in this nation's life, lifting up the reputation of the nation throughout the world and bringing boundless blessings from Heaven to its citizens. Rest assured that all my heart and commitment as European Continental Director will be with you in this noble quest!"

The last words of the assembly were those of the new NPC chairman, **Dr. Arben Malaj** who gladly said: "I am happy to be among the finest representatives of Albanian society that reflect the core principles of this organization. I hope we will justify the faith you put upon us and work together to do whatever necessary for this noble mission. I have seen your devotion and seriousness and I believe that UPF Albania was a positive example to be taken as an example in the region and internationally. Wherever I was present in international activities Albania was mentioned for its results by the main leaders and the founders themselves. I hope we can continue the good work of UPF Albania".

Report by  
**Sokol Rexhepi**  
Secretary General UPF Albania

