

UPF Istanbul, Turkey: Program recognizing Turkey's contributions to Korean War

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Istanbul, Turkey -- UPF held an online program to recognize Turkey's contributions to the Korean War.



The webinar, held on January 15, 2021, was a joint project of the International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAAP), one of UPF's constituent associations, and the Federation for Peace and Unification (FPU), whose members are Koreans living in Japan as well as Japanese citizens.

Titled "The Strategic and Tactical Heroes of the Turkish Brigades That Helped the Korean War," the meeting had about 100 participants, mostly Japanese and Koreans.

The moderator was Yoshihiro Yamazaki, the IAAP coordinator for Europe and the Middle East.



Dr. Ali Denizli, a professor of international relations at Rumeli Istanbul University and author of more than 10 books on the Turkish soldiers in the Korean War, was the main speaker.

He explained that Turkey was the second nation to respond to the United Nations' call for a military mobilization to South Korea.

Diplomatically coerced by the Soviet Union, Turkish leaders sought for an alliance with the West and decided to send its troops to Korea, Dr. Denizli said.

Turkish brigades fought critical battles to deter the massive Chinese incursion into Korea, he said.

Turkish soldiers took care of refugees, setting up a school for Korean War orphans. Dr. Denizli wrote about this episode, which became the inspiration for a hit movie called Ayla, the story of a Korean orphan girl who is helped by Turkish soldiers.

The FPU office reported many words of gratitude from the audience for the Turkish soldiers' bravery, sacrifices and attention to the war-stricken Koreans. Dr. Denizli expressed his hope that bonds of heart will develop genuine cooperation between the two nations.

UPF-Turkey plans a second Korea-themed webinar on February 20 together with UPF-Korea's regional office in the city of Busan, where 462 Turkish soldiers are buried in the U.N. Cemetery.