

The International Assoc. of Parliamentarians for Peace inaugurated in Australia

John Bellavance
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Melbourne, Australia—The International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) was inaugurated in Australia with a discussion on the role of values in political life.

Parliamentarians, Ambassadors for Peace and friends of UPF held a discussion on March 11, 2017, on “Building a Culture of Peace in Australia—The Role of Values in Politics in Australia.”

Mr. Bill Pontikis, a former councilor for the City of Monash, chaired the discussion in his usual engaging style.

Hon. Dr. Rachel Carling-Jenkins, a member of the Legislative Council of Victoria State, gave a report on the fourth World Summit, which she had attended. The summit took place in Seoul, Korea, from February 1 to 5, 2017, under the theme “Peace, Security and Human Development.” She also spoke about the role in Australia of the newly founded IAPP.

Dr. Carling-Jenkins commented on the synergy of ideas and values between the parliamentarians from around the world who had gathered in Seoul. She emphasized the benefit of putting values front and center in politics. A values-centered approach will be the uniting paradigm by which legislators can unite across political lines for the common good.

Hon. Inga Peulich, a member of the Legislative Council of Victoria State and the shadow minister for multicultural affairs, also spoke about the role of values in political life and encouraged participants to take an active role in the political life of Australia.

John Bellavance, the vice president of UPF-Australia, presented “An Analysis of the New Global Political Paradigm and the Role of Values.” He described the “Headwing” vision of the founders of UPF. “In the global village in which we live, for peace to be achieved we need shared values,” he said. “This requires people to stand together for the values and the good of our nation and the planet, beyond religious and political divides.”

Mr. Bellavance described the three pillars of Headwing: Faiths must work together; faith and politics must work together; and left and right in politics must work together for the sake of the common good. Greg Stone, the UPF regional secretary general for Oceania, stated that this can be achieved only if we focus on shared values.

Twenty individuals received Ambassador for Peace certificates presented by Mr. Greg Stone and Dr. Yves Moreau, assistant director of UPF in Victoria State. The recipients included two parliamentarians—Hon. Dr. Rachel Carling-Jenkins and Hon. Inga Peulich—a philanthropist, a medical doctor, leaders of education and community organizations, two church ministers and values-centered political activists. This is a hopeful move and revival.