

## UPF Jakarta, Indonesia commemorates the World Interfaith Harmony Week

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Jakarta, Indonesia -- UPF-Indonesia commemorated the 10th anniversary of World Interfaith Harmony Week by organizing a program on March 7, 2020 in Jakarta city featuring speakers from the Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh and indigenous faiths.

The theme of the event was "Interfaith Harmony in the Spirit of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika." In English the sanskrit phrase *bhinneka tunggal ika* means "unity in diversity," and is the motto of Indonesia. It was established as the national motto by the country's founding fathers to promote tolerance among different groups and religions. As Indonesia faces political and religious turmoil due to ideological differences, there is recognition of the urgent need for the religious sphere to promote *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* more as a unifying factor.



Attending the program were several government and religious leaders, including Dr. Ali Mochtar Ngabalin, expert staff to the Office of the President of Indonesia; Muslim leader Prof. Dr. Nasaruddin Umar, grand imam of the Istiqlal Mosque in Jakarta, and former deputy cabinet minister of religious affairs; and Maha Pandita Utama Suhadi Sendjaja, general chairman of Parisadha Buddha Dharama Niciren Syosyu Indonesia.

The chief guest Dr. Ngabalin gave remarks in which he called for more programs promoting interreligious harmony, such as UPF-Indonesia's World Interfaith Harmony Week 2020 event, be held in Indonesia to combat radicalism and terrorism. He expressed regret that UPF-Indonesia's program was small in scale and urged UPF to organize larger programs involving opinion leaders in the future as well as promised to help facilitate this happening by bringing this suggestion to the Indonesian President's desk.

The following is a summary of the speeches four faith leaders and representatives gave at the program.

Representing the Muslim faith was Prof. Dr. Umar, who said: "I agree with what the UPF founder said about God not being sectarian. Humanity is one and has no color. Not only is humanity one, but also the religious scriptures are one. The content of all religious textbooks boils down to one thing: Love."



Representing the Christian faith was Rev. Jimmy Sormin, who said: "Sometimes Christians tend to monopolize love and do not realize that it actually belongs to all people...to become one as Indonesians or as world citizens does not diminish our value as religious people whether we are Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, etc. There [can be] no peace among nations, without peace among religions."

Representing the Catholic faith was Rev. Andy Gunardi, who said: "Catholic clergies and theologians suggest that Christianity and Catholicism are no longer Christ-centered but are instead God-centered, whereas Christ is the way to bridge people to God, just like central figures in other religions were to guide people to the one God."

Representing the Buddhist faith was Maha Pandita Utama Sunahdi Sendjaja, who said: "Now is the time for us to go one step beyond tolerance to acceptance. We can tolerate something without accepting it, but we can't accept something without tolerating it."

