

UN “Friendship Day” and Kick-off for the PEACE ROAD with Ambassadors for Peace in Hamburg

Hamburg, Germany, 30. July 2016



By Ulrich Ganz

Representatives of Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism, along with several Ambassadors for Peace and guests, met on the occasion of the UN ‘World Friendship Day’.



Reinhold Merta who supplied the musical accompaniment for the event, started off by playing a song from Chris de Burgh, ‘Human Hands’.



Then we experienced a ‘live’ Japanese tea ceremony, conducted by our ‘tea

ceremony mistress’, Masae Markmann. Masuyo Grönung played the role of a guest, and both were dressed in traditional kimonos. Hilke Ganz read out a few points explaining the historical background of the tea ceremony, whose origins are in the 6th century. Mikiko Eder, also dressed in a kimono, served some of the guests with the precious drink.

After a further musical interlude, followed a presentation by Daniel Abdin, president of the Islamic Al-Nour community and committee member of the Islamic communities in Hamburg. His topic was the renovation of the former protestant Kapernaum Church and its restructuring into a mosque. His report, accompanied by photographs explained that the renovation of the building had turned out to be more difficult than expected, because the building had been unused for ten years. After the opening which is expected to be in 2017/2018, the mosque will be mainly used for inter-religious dialogue. Mr. Abdin, who is also standing as an SPD candidate for the district of Wandsbek, said that this is his contribution for the future of Hamburg. Regional UPF representative Ulrich Ganz presented Mr. Abdin with an Ambassador for Peace certificate for his engagement in inter-religious peace.

Ambassador for Peace Frank Busch, who had also made the premises available to us, stressed in his short talk on the topic

‘Day of Friendship’, that respect for another’s religion is an essential aspect of one’s own happiness.



To close, Ulrich Ganz introduced the PEACE ROAD, this year taking place globally for the third time. It goes back to a proposal made by Dr. Sun Myung Moon at the International Conference for Science in 1981, to connect countries and continents by a motorway. To keep this idea alive, bicycle and hiking trips etc take place, also to support the reunification of Korea and the establishment of a 5th UN office at the border between the two Koreas.

As a sign of solidarity we took a group photograph with banners corresponding to this theme. The bicycle tour in north Germany will take place from 12-14 August, along part of the previous German-German border, which today is a nature reserve, ‘the Green Band’. Thus together we were able to set a signal for peace in the world.