

FFWPU International: IAPD's Africa Spiritual Day held in Africa Union Hall

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Achieving peace through the dedication of religious leaders and promoting exchanges among global religious leaders across all denominations and sects.

May 22nd, 2024 was a significant day in the history of IAPD-Africa and Africa Union. It was the celebration of AFRICA SPIRITUAL DAY, held in the Medium Hall of the AFRICA UNION under the theme: "EDUCATING THE AFRICAN PERSON TO BE SPIRITUALLY Fit in the 21st Century."

More than 350 local participants took part in the event, along with 27 Religious Leaders from countries such as South Africa, Rwanda, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, and even from the USA, Canada, and the UK.

It is noteworthy that the foreign participants were all self-sponsored. Among the 350 local participants were 36 of Simon's religious leader invitees, 99 of Pastor Adane's invitees, 15 from the Inter-Religious Council of Oromia, 9 from the Ethiopian Catholic Church, 11 from the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, 15 from the Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council, totaling 214 religious leaders.

The remainder of the attendees came from different parts of civil society. Witnessing religious leaders of various denominations come together to celebrate the day was particularly moving.

After the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding, one of its objectives, the marking of Africa Spiritual Day, was realized. It has been a long time since IAPD Africa decided to organize Africa

Spiritual Day at the AFRICA UNION, but there have been many date changes due to already booked programs in AU. Importantly, IAPD Africa leaders wanted to proceed first with the signing of the MOU and then celebrate Africa Spiritual Day as a milestone that brings it to fruition.

Once the hall was filled with participants, the program began at 11 AM and ended at 1 PM. Rev. George Ogurie, IAPD Africa coordinator, and Mrs. Hazel Dixon, CIDO official, were the MCs of the day. The gathering included a diverse array of faith and religious leaders such as Dr. Dr. Uzwi-Lezwe Radebe, The Revelation Spiritual Home and Chairman of IAPD Africa, and Dr. Taj Hamad, Director of the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) Office of United Nations.



Other religious personalities included Cheikh Imam Moussa Drame, Chairman of IAPD-Cote d'Ivoire and President of the Supreme Council of Imams and Mosques of South Comoe Region, Cote d'Ivoire, and Rabbi Belayneh Tazekku, Brit Olam Bete-Israel Judaism.

The event started with the Africa Union anthem and a musical offering from the Meseret Kristos choir.

Four different perspectives were given as keynote addresses, and it was evident that participants were moved to see faiths find common ground. Immediately after the closing invocations, people were directed toward the Nelson Mandela Hall for a group photo. Lunch was also provided to all the participants.

In the afternoon, an interactive session was planned for the foreign participants to deepen their commitment to IAPD and its goals. This session was optional for local participants, as some had other work and commitments.

In conclusion, this historical event, which saw a unique celebration involving different religious leaders, serves as a nucleus or model for our True Parents' vision of uniting all humanity under the concept of One Family Under God.

Additionally, the **Inter-religious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD)** was founded in November 2017 in Seoul. The launch saw the participation of approximately 500 religious leaders from over 20 denominations worldwide, including representatives from the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, Christianity, Buddhism, Catholicism, Confucianism, Judaism, Islam, and Shinto.