

UPF Reggio Calabria, Italy Joins Program to Support UNESCO Chairs

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Reggio Calabria, Italy – The UNESCO Italo Club for Reggio organized a stimulating symposium on the work of UNESCO Chairs stationed at universities throughout the world on November 25, 2024, at the Palazzo Alvaro in Reggio Calabria. The conference was held under the patronage of the Metropolitan City of Reggio. **Ms. Maria Gabriella Mieli**, public relations director of UPF-Italy and coordinator of UPF-South Europe, was invited to give a presentation at the conference on behalf of UPF.



Ms. Teresa Gualtieri, national president of the Italian Federation of Associations and Clubs for UNESCO (FICLU) introduced the proceedings. She stressed the importance of the UNESCO Chairs and how they maintain a healthy relationship with the universities where they are active; how they generate immediate cultural advantages to the cities that host them, which adds to their importance and merit.

Mr. Giovanni Latella, Reggio City councilor and delegate for culture, offered greetings on behalf of the Municipality of Reggio. He was grateful for the increase in tourism due to the commitment of the UNESCO Chairs in the area. He said this was the result of cultural exchange programs between cities that host the chairs.

Following was **Mr. Alberto Giofrè**, president of the Reggio UNESCO Club; president emeritus of the

historic environmental NGO, Kronos 1972; and a UPF ambassador for peace. He illustrated the role of the UNESCO Chairs within the social context, and their relationship with UNESCO. He explained that the task of a chair is mainly research, almost always in cooperation with other chairs, who are interlinked through the UNITWIN network.

Mr. Giofrè described the constructive and proactive relationship that a UNESCO chair has with the community, and the prestige the chair brings to the hosting city. He pointed out that the subject addressed by all chairs, and emphasized by UNESCO, was the promotion of a culture of peace.

Ms. Mieli next took the floor to explain UPF's three key principles: interdependence, mutual prosperity and universally shared values. She explained the relationship between UPF and UNESCO, pointing out that UPF shares the aim of building a culture of peace. She spoke about the global Ambassadors for Peace project, which recognizes community leaders and supports citizens and institutions in working together, in an interdisciplinary and multicultural setting, to achieve peace within oneself, with one's neighbors, and with the environment.



Mr. Salvatore Mongiardo, scholar at the New Pythagorean School, focused on the theme of true peace. He referred to the ancient history of Italy, when the population lived in peace and managed to integrate Greek migrants, and even rulers, from the Bruzi to the Piedmontese, who merged with the local culture and gave birth to a cosmopolitan society. He also underlined the positive role that women could have in a future, healthier and more balanced world.

The second part of the event focused on the UNESCO Chair project in human sciences, sustainable development and cultural peace. After Mr. Giofrè explained the program's history, **Mr. Gerardo Pontecorvo**, operations coordinator of Re Italo, spoke about the program's focus on development, water resources and climate change.

Ms. Susanna Quattrone, president of Kronos 1972 and vice president of the Re Italo Club, spoke of the great potential of students and the professional and employment prospects that open to them through the UNESCO programs.

Ms. Rosa Veccia, councilor of the Re Italo Club, drew attention to the chairs themselves; their character and their work within the community. She applauded the rigorous and dedicated endeavors of the Study and Work Group.

The last speaker was **Mr. Alessandro Giofrè d'Ambra**, who described his teaching experiences at the Universities of the Strait. He recalled the excitement and interest of the students in the UNESCO Chair program, and the international cultural exchanges that would result from it.