Report on IAPD Webinar in Albania

December 12, 2020

Dear Ambassadors for Peace and friends of UPF,

We are happy to report that on December 12th, 2020, Universal Peace Federation Albania and Kosovo organized a webinar conference with religious leaders under the theme ***"Religious Leaders: A Source of Hope and Harmony for People in Time of Crises"***.

Uniting with the spirit of the Rally of Hope held in America on December 5th on the occasion of 1st anniversary of WCLC, we called Albanian religious leaders to come together and give messages of hope for our people in these unprecedented times.

We had high level representatives from different religions in Albania and Kosovo:

- Hajji Bujar Spahiu, Chairman of Muslim Community
- Hajji dede Edmond Brahimaj, World Leader of Bektashi Order, Islam
- Father Gjergji Gjata, Representative of Orthodox Church
- Sister Bardhe Gjini, Representative of Catholic Church
- She Hysen Hormova, Head of Halvety Order, Islam
- Iamam rexhep Lushta, Head Imam of Mitrovica, Kosovo

The event was moderated by Mr. Gani Rroshi, Secretary General of UPF Albania. Dr. Eva Cipi, the Chair of UPF Albania gave the opening address followed by a message of hope by Hajji Dede Edmond Brahimaj, World Leader of Bektashi Order. In his address Father Barahimaj mentioned: *"It is important that messages of religious leaders be heard and religious communities to be practical in directly helping people in need. Also, Universal Peace Federation has played an important role in this time and I use this chance to congratulate UPF leaders for their contribution and leadership..."*

Then a short video with messages of different religious leaders and part of Mother of Peace's message, who spoke at the December 5th Rally of Hope, was shown.

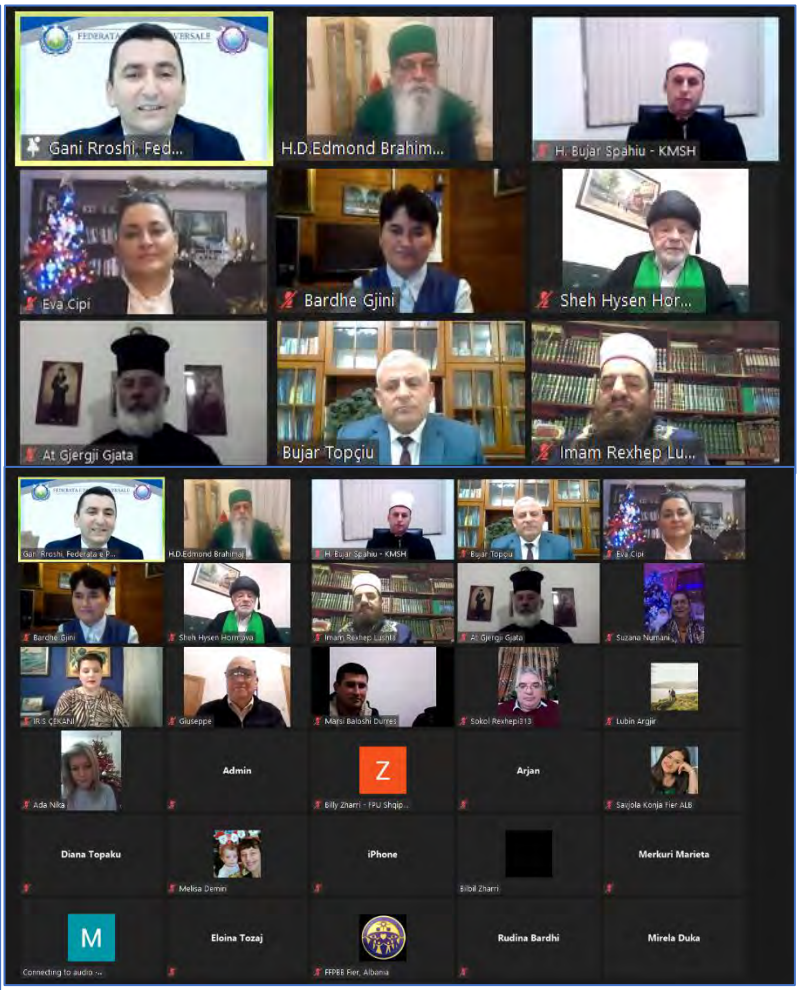
Next speaker was Hajji Bujar Spahiu, the Chairman of Muslim Community of Albania who also thanked UPF for organizing the conference and for its efforts worldwide to bring together religious leaders and solve world problems. He mentions that religious people should always be led by goodness and righteousness and never compromise with evil, no matter how tempting it can be.

Father Gjergji Gjata from Orthodox Church in his message said *"We are close to the holydays, dear brothers and sisters. Let's welcome these celebrations that come with their joy. My prayer and wish are that, just like we learn from God, to 'Love each other'. Let us pray for those who hate us, and for those who love us".*

Sheh Hysen Hormova, the Head of Halvety Order, an active Ambassador for Peace said "*The words of a clergyman are a spring of hope, because those words come from the holy scriptures. The words that come out of the mouth of a spiritual leader has won the hearts of the believers convincingly. They think that "When he talks to us, we can be calm, safe and can win life".*

Sister Bardhe Gjini from the Catholic Church gave a heartwarming message *"In these times, is required that we show our closeness and solidarity with each other by doing charity and by praying together. To pray not because prayer will keep away the Corona Virus, but because prayer will fraternize us with each other, will bring solidarity and will strengthen our faith in God, which is the most healing medicine of every disease and every pandemic".*

Imam Rexhep Lushta from Kosovo in his message mentioned *"All the prophets of God have invited into hope the people to whom the preached, because hope is what plants optimism in the hearts of the people. Hence, in this time of pandemic, in these difficult times that the whole globe is going through, we should try to plant hope and optimism in the hearts of the believers and of all people".*

The last speaker was Mr. Bujar Topciu, Chairman of Interreligious Commission for Peace and Development. He thanked all religious leaders for their contribution and emphasized that UPF will continue to work together with religious and faith leaders for spreading peace messages of hope at this time of global crisis.

Reported by UPF Albania