

FFWPU Europe and Middle East: Pristina, Kosovo Balkan Leadership Conference

Michael Balcomb

October 5, 2024



<https://vimeo.com/1030820432>

We like to think that war and conflict in Europe are a thing of the past, barbaric and prehistoric. It would never happen here again, but we are wrong. We have seen that we are wrong. We might ask, why is that the case? What is it within human nature, within the human heart, that so quickly leads again and again to violence and division?

Sixty years ago, the second Secretary General of the United Nations, Doug Hammerskold, contemplated this question almost in despair. He said of the United Nations and the Quest for Peace, I see hope only if there is a spiritual revolution. Mr. Hammerskold was not a religious leader, Imam, or Pope.

We're not talking here about a confessional reformation. We're not talking about the ascendance of one faith or another but rather the more profound spiritual question within each of us. What is it that again and again divides us from not only our neighbors but our brothers? We have heard under the surface, and maybe not so far under the surface, a feeling that somebody else is blocking peace, those people in that other country or from that other political party that is not my own, or if it is a different generation or a different gender.

But I believe, and I challenge you, that the task of peace is not limited to the eloquent spokesman here on the podium with me or to the Prime Minister and his administration who had to leave. It is a question that is challenging myself. And what is the key? The key is tough to hear, but I will say it now. We must love the enemy, the enemy's children, or the opponent more than ourselves. As long as any one government puts its national interest, it may think this is the way to ruin, but it is not. It is the way to peace.

Dr. Michael Balcomb

President, FFWPU Europe and Middle East