

UPF Argentina and Arab Association celebrated the International Day of Families

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Buenos Aires, Argentina -- On May 16, UPF-Argentina and the Arab association "Asociación Liga Árabe Cultural y Social" celebrated the International Day of Families by recognizing couples who had marriages of between 25 and 56 years. The event took place in El Templete, Parque de los Patricios. Among the honorees were Carlos Alberto Nieva and Edith Calderón Maldonado, Jaime Guzmán and Giovanna Campos, Atilio Alfredo Martínez and Celia Carnovale, Benedicto Rejas Dávalos and Francisca Luna Mamani, Jorge Néstor Alcaraz and Mirta Federico, Jorge Ernesto Olivares and Norma Beatriz Rooney, Manuel Vila and María Angélica Pierbattisti, Alberto Asseff and Susana Sánchez, Alberto Aníbal Derudi and Montserrat Muñoz Budi, and Antonio Luis Zorz and María Carmela Agati.

All couples, which included a couple from Peru and Bolivia, were accompanied by their relatives and friends. They shared inspirational experiences and anecdotes, some heartfelt memories, and a few tips, such as helpful dialogue and good humor, as well as the values shared after many years of marriage. One couple stressed the power and significance of love, notable because the wife is a catechist and the husband an atheist. Honorees were given a framed diploma (1) and the autobiography *As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen*. They were grateful for the tribute.

Horacio Daboul, Ambassador for Peace and president of the Arab association "Asociación Liga Árabe Cultural y Social," welcomed the guests. Sergio Castellón, from the managing board of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification and member of UPF-Argentina's Peace Council, gave a few words. Artistic performances were in the charge of Alfredo Corales, a folklorist from Entre Ríos, who sang "Zamba de abril" and "No saber de ti." In addition, Makenna Zambonini, creator of the initiative "Noches de Música por la Paz" (Nights of Music for Peace), sang "Brindis," "Quédate a mi lado," and "Sabor a mí." At the end, we shared a cake and a light meal (2).

Among the organizations that supported the event were the Argentinian chapters of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification and the Women's Federation for World Peace; the Argentinian Federation of Collectivities; the Rotary Club from Parque de los Patricios; the Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Tourism and Services from Parque de los Patricios; Foundation FEPAIS; the radio and TV program "Pasaporte Cultural," the chair of University Social Responsibility (UdeMM) from the Marina Mercante University (UdeMM); Africa House in Argentina; and Peace Boat. In addition, Ambassadors for Peace who supported the event were Bertha Bilbao Richter, vice-president of the ILCH (Literary and Cultural Institute); and Eduardo Borri-Jackeline Giusti, coordinator of the Pacis Nuntii Movement in Paraná and Santa Fe. We have also received numerous greetings and messages.

It is worth mentioning that, on September 20, 1993, the UN General Assembly decided in a resolution that May 15 of every year should be observed as the International Day of Families. 2018's theme is "Families and Inclusive Societies," and this year's observance will seek to advance UN Sustainable Development Goal 16, which promotes "the importance of building peaceful, inclusive societies to achieve sustainable development." This day provides an opportunity to "promote awareness of issues related to families and to increase knowledge of the social, economic, and demographic processes affecting them." These goals, including the sacred value of marriage and the divine institution of families, are part of the 2018 International Day of Families Declaration by UPF-Argentina (3).

QUOTES:

1) Content of the diploma:

"For promoting an example of commitment and values such as selflessness, empathy, mutual respect, dialogue, solidarity, patience, cooperation, and love. For recognizing family as the natural realm of growth and education, the school of coexistence, the basic unit of society, a divine institution, and the foundation of national and global peace."

2) Content of the presents shared with the guests:

"A society and a family are like a pile of stones. If you remove one stone, the pile will collapse." **The Talmud**

"When individual families have learned kindness, then the whole nation has learned kindness." **Confucius**

"The future of humanity passes through the family." **Juan Pablo II**

"Families are the starting point for the building of peace." **Sun Myung Moon**

"The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State." **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN), Article 16**

3) Declaration of the 2018 International Day of Families by UPF Argentina (*)

On September 20, 1993, the UN General Assembly decided that the International Day of Families was to be observed each year on May 15 (Resolution 47/237). This year's theme is: "Families and inclusive societies," associated with UN Sustainable Development Goal 16, which promotes "the importance of building peaceful, inclusive societies to achieve sustainable development." UPF Argentina celebrates this day and shares the following Declaration:

FIRST: UPF-Argentina recognizes the family as the microcosm of the global community. Once the world finally arrives to an age in which sustainable peace and harmony can be enjoyed among peoples and cultures, this coexistence will be based on that basic unit, humanity's heritage. In other words, a functional family is essential to building a healthy society, and is a significant element for reconciliation and peace.

SECOND: Regardless of any conditions of race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, and religious belief, we are all members of a certain family. Family is universal. Even more important, family is the school of love and ethics. Through experiences in our families, we learn how to value all the other relationships in our society, which is our bigger human family, and with friends, neighbors, coworkers, colleagues, and strangers. Moreover, families can help dissolve old resentments that fuel civil, tribal and religious conflicts.

THIRD: A faithful marriage, and harmony among parents, form the backbone of families and becomes essential for the growth, education, and stability of children. Solid, healthy and loving families help protect society from violence and crime, drugs and corruptions; as well as the spread of infections such as HIV/AIDS. Even more important, family is the school of love and ethics and represents a substantial foundation for human development and social progress.

FOURTH: The family has successfully adapted to changes throughout history. It has survived revolutions and empires, and it has prevailed despite the economic and social turbulence in many societies. This is called adaptability; nonetheless, nowadays it is being threatened by a range of social, economic, cultural, political and ideological situations. This is the time to strengthen the family. To restore the family is a way of addressing the spread of social and civil problems that desolate this world.

FIFTH: Everlasting peace will not be settled just with the establishment of laws supported by the State and with the cooperation of social organizations. All of this has to be ensured as a basic human right, promoting awareness of human solidarity as a family, as brothers and sisters that share a moral and spiritual heritage: In short, as one universal family under the same God.

For this reason, UPF Argentina celebrates the International Day of Families, with 2018 marking the twenty-fourth anniversary of the International Day of Families.

Argentina, May 15, 2018

() In 1993, the UN General Assembly designated May 15 as the International Day of Families (resolution 47/237, September 20). In 1989, the General Assembly proclaimed 1994 as the International Year of the Family (resolution 44/82) as a way to "raise awareness, increase understanding and promote policies that improve the position and well-being of the family."*