

## UPF Zambia's preparatory meeting for the inauguration IAPD in Lusaka

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The UPF organized the preparatory meeting for the inauguration of the Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD) which took place at Golden Peacock Hotel in Lusaka – Zambia on December 15th, 2017.

The meeting was attended by 28 participants for the purpose of nominating 10 interim committee members needed to start running the IAPD in Zambia. Religious leaders representing all different religions in the nation attended the meeting such as Christians, Moslems and Hindus sent their apologies, Jewish and the Bahai.

### **Opening remarks by Bishop David Masupa**

Bishop David Masupa, the Chairman elect, thanked all the religious leaders who were present at the meeting for they managed to attend the meeting just after a short notice. He began by saying that a new era has dawned in Zambia for past religious leaders working together for peace. Instead they kept on stabbing each and competing with one another over religious doctrines.

However, during these last prophetic days there is a reason to come together and address the critical challenges of our times as we observe the conflict between Israel and Palestine intensifying. He further mentioned another sign of a small country such as North Korea of which today has become a threat to a hegemony country such as USA. The lingering questing is what would happen if these two countries started exchanging fire? Definitely all the countries in Africa will be affected as well.

He reminded all participants that Christians, Moslems or Bahai were all created by one God. The bishop urged religious leaders to acknowledge and respect all brothers and sisters who are Moslems, Christians or Hindus in their faith and not to make them sway from what they believe in.

He continued with his brief speech to inform the participants on the importance of forming a religious forum that could speak on behalf of all religions with one voice. In this modern world it is not healthy to introduce yourself based on your religion. He assured the audience that there was no agenda to indoctrinate any member into another religion.

Bishop Masupa emphasized that each one should keep and observe his or her religion without being swayed to change from it. However, for matters of peace and moral values and strong family values no matter one's religion we have to stand as one.

After Bishop David Masupa finished his opening remarks he invited Bishop John Mambo to say a few words. Bishop Mambo started by saying that here in Zambia religious leaders have been late to form their interreligious group. He gave an example of the members of the parliament and the traditional chiefs. It is for that reason they had elected Bishop Masupa unopposed as the vision carrier. However, in that meeting an interim committee was going to be elected for the vacant office bearers in order to forge ahead in love and unity.

Finally, he mentioned that all religious leaders representing all sectors of different faiths in Zambia were going to be included in the interim committee. After that he gave an opportunity to all individual members present to introduce themselves starting from the high table.

### **Briefing Report of ILC Meeting of Religious Leaders in Seoul**

After self-introduction of all the participants, Bishop Masupa was given an opportunity to read through and explain the resolution which was taken in Seoul during the ILC meeting. He congratulated all the participants for attending the meeting at such short notice.

Finally, he thanked all for their cooperation and time. He said, "Your coming here is not in vain. It is the beginning of adding your voice to many voices all over the world that are working for peace and your voice is very important.

We have resolved to overcome major tendencies that may be relayed within religion, and are ready to promote dialogue, mutual respect, cooperation that we may effectively work to resolve the critical challenges of our time, poverty, hunger, corruption, injustice, environmental degradation, family breakdown, women, child abuse and conflicts and violence.

He ended up his speech by appreciating Dr. Hak Ja Moon and her late husband Dr. Sun Myung Moon for establishing the organization that promotes peace for all humankind. Bishop Masupa promised that the remaining ten vacancies in the interim committee shall be filled before the official inauguration of the IAPD in Zambia.