

UPF Quezon City, Philippines Launches IMAP to Inspire Conscientious Media

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Quezon City, Philippines – In the midst of roaring winds and relentless rain brought by Typhoon Kristine, UPF-Philippines launched the International Media Association for Peace (IMAP) on October 24, 2024, at the Peace Embassy in Quezon City, Metro Manila. Under the theme “The Media: The Conscience of Society,” the event brought together 333 attendees, physically and virtually.



The program began with a solemn prayer led by **Archbishop Elias T. Soria**, president of the Interreligious Association for Peace and Development, Philippines. This was followed by opening

remarks from **Hon. Ek Nath Dhakal**, chairman of UPF Asia-Pacific. In his address, he highlighted the Philippines' favorable environment for IMAP and the active engagement of Filipinos with social media. He underscored the role that IMAP can play in reflecting public sentiment and guiding society's conscience.



Dr. Robert S. Kittel, IMAP coordinator for the Asia-Pacific region, introduced the keynote speaker, **Mr. Thomas P. McDevitt**, chairman of The Washington Times and acting global director of IMAP. Speaking via Zoom from Washington DC, Mr. McDevitt praised the visionary efforts of UPF's founders, the late Dr. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, in their pursuit of a harmonious global community grounded in interdependence, mutual prosperity, and universally shared values. He emphasized that the media should embody three key attributes: freedom, responsibility, and morality. Finally, he extended an invitation for future collaboration, emphasizing the need for advocates of moral media to work together, in light of pressing global challenges, particularly in the Philippines.



Other distinguished speakers from the Philippine government and elsewhere included:

- **Hon. Mark Cristeo Roa Gimenez**, undersecretary in the Office for Regional Concerns and Facilitation of Presidential Assistance (ORCFPA) Presidential Management Staff (PMS);
- **Hon. Mario F. Fetalino Jr.**, assistant secretary in the Presidential Communications Office (PCO);
- **Hon. Rodante D. Marcoleta**, member of the House of Representatives of the Philippines;
- **Pres. Masaichi Hori**, president of FFWPU Asia-Pacific; and

- **Dr. Leo Angelo T. Halog**, president of UPF-Philippines.



To officially launch IMAP, Hon. Gimenez led the symbolic banging of the gong, followed by a celebratory cake cutting to mark the occasion. The event continued with the formal appointment of **Bishop Romel R. Maraya** as the new president of IMAP-Philippines, after which the audience listened attentively to his acceptance speech. Despite the adverse weather, the event was deemed a success by all.



IMAP was launched as one of the pillar associations of UPF during the World Summit 2020 in Seoul, Korea. It is dedicated to supporting humanitarian efforts, combating fake news, and promoting morally and socially responsible media to advance peace. In a world where misinformation can spread rapidly, it becomes difficult to distinguish between authentic news and false information. IMAP recognizes the vital role that journalists play in guarding against totalitarianism and supporting the expansion of freedom.

