

International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace Paraguay Launched

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On April 25, UPF inaugurated the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace -- Paraguay chapter, at the Bourbon Convention Hotel in Asuncion, the nation's capital.

Intense rain that had fallen for hours that day had subsided before the event began. Taking part in this important and historic event were 122 people, a number of them legislators in the nation's bicameral National Congress -- from the Chamber of Senators and the Chamber of Deputies. Some ex-senators and deputies were also on hand.

All of them expressed a commitment to accomplishing universal peace. The event drew politicians, members of the diplomatic corps, figures from universities, media, various foundations and members of the three branches of the Paraguayan government. Several mayors of municipalities, including those in major cities in the central departments [states or provinces], which surround "Greater Asuncion," felt drawn to the national-level founding of IAPP.



The national organization

On this occasion, appointments took place of the IAPP president, vice-president and secretary-general. Deputy Cynthia Elizabeth Tarrago Díaz, who was noticeably supportive and active at the regional-level inauguration, is president. Deputy Héctor Lucio Lesme is vice-president and Dr. Michelle Byun is the secretary-general.

Dr. Yang Chang-shik, Rev. Shin Dongmo, and Special Envoy Seo Sung-jong came to the opening night of the IAPP.

Dr. Luis Federico Franco Gómez (president of the Republic of Paraguay 2012–2013) said, near the end of the program, "I thank, first of all, the founders of the Universal Peace Federation, Father and Mother Moon, for their long service and dedication in favor of peace. I encourage our compatriots, legislators, to dedicate themselves with love for the environment, in the protection of indigenous peoples and to ensure human rights without discrimination. You cannot disillusion the people, who have deposited their confidence in you; you are obliged to maintain loyalty and fidelity to those people who expect much of each of you. Finally, I want to tell Dr. Yang that Paraguay and Korea are two sister nations, and that Paraguay always opens its doors to the noble Korean people."

Deputy Cynthia Elizabeth Tarrago Díaz said the following:

As president of the Network of Parliamentarians of Latin America, it is a genuine honor to offer you the most cordial welcome to this gala dinner that gives a starting point to the IAPP.

First, I would like to thank the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace, from the groups of which hundreds of parliamentarians from different Latin American countries have chosen a woman and Paraguayan representative to lead this [initiative in Latin America]. It is a position that honors me and deepens my commitment.

We, as parliamentarians, have a high commitment toward the fight for the defense of elementary human rights, the environment and the fight against poverty as tools for the installation of peace at the global level.

During the World Summit of Parliamentarians held last February in Seoul, Korea, more than a hundred and fifty congressional representatives from forty-one countries formed this association. I am convinced that by organizing ourselves in this globalized world and by adding noble objectives such as those FFWPU proposed, we can greatly alleviate humanity's global problems.

Finally, I want to reiterate my commitment to the fight for peace at all levels of society, because peace emerges from our homes, our institutions and governments.

From the heart of South America, I launch my call for world peace and my prayers for a world of tolerance and equality. Thank you very much.



Deputy Héctor Lucio Lesme, the newly installed vice-president of IAPP-Paraguay, said, "It is an honor for me to share this important moment in the history of Paraguay, to be founding the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace in our country. Although we have moved forward in technology, we have problems relating to one another.

This should not be the case, we must engage in dialogue and develop understanding and solidarity in a Christian and multi-party democracy. The IAPP will become a "legal tool" for humanity's

welfare, and as an organization we are inaugurating, we must move forward with strong steps to advocate for world peace."

Among the Paraguayan parliamentarians at the inauguration were thirteen members of the National Republican Association (the Colorado Party) -- the ANR; six members of the Authentic Radical Liberal Party -- the PLRA; and one independent parliamentarian.

Also on hand was one member of PARLASUR, the legislative body of MERCOSUR, a trade and political bloc comprising Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and normally Venezuela (the bloc suspended Venezuela's membership in December 2016). Among diplomats attending the event were Federico José Perazza Scapino, the Uruguayan ambassador to Paraguay; Víctor Cuevas, ambassador of Paraguay to Mexico; Federico González Franco, the ambassador of Paraguay to Argentina; and representatives from the embassies of Spain and Peru. Also attending the event were highly situated administrative officials, such as the governor of the Central Department Blas Antonio Lanzoni ("department" equates with "state" or "prefecture"); intendant (which equates with "mayor") of the city of Ñemby, Lucas Lanzoni; intendant of the city of San Antonio, Raul Mendoza; intendant of the city of Mariano Roque Alonzo, Carolina Aranda; intendant of the city of Capiatá, Luis González; and Daniel Báez, intendant of the city of Julián Augusto Saldívar.