

Malawi's Inauguration of IAPP at the Malawian Parliament Building

Ronald Mwambo
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Malawi Members of Parliament Welcomed IAPP

45 members of the Malawian Parliament took part in the launching of the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP) on Wednesday December 6, 2017 at the Malawian Parliament building during a meeting sponsored by the Universal Peace Federation (UPF).

Among the members of parliament present were the First Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Esther Mcheka Chilenje MP, the Chief Whip of the Malawi Congress Party, Hon. Raphael Juma, the main opposition party. Also came to grace the occasion were Rev. Frackson L. Kuyama, President of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church of Malawi and Rev. Banda of the Presbyterian Church as well as five journalists from radio and print media houses.

The program had two parts. The first was an introduction to UPF; while the second part saw the inauguration of IAPP itself. Rev. Kuyama started his invocation with few words. He gave the story of a mouse that collaborated with an elephant in order to cross a bridge. He put emphasis on the need to make sure God is always part of what we do. "Dear members of parliament," he said, "if you partner with God, you will be able to do great things!" He then concluded with the invocation.



The Master of Ceremony, Rev. Ronald Mwambo, Secretary General of UPF Malawi, then invited Hon. Patricia Annie Kaliati, President of UPF Malawi and Regional Co-Chair of IAPP, to give her welcoming remarks. She thanked all the participants for coming and went on to talk about humanity quest for inner peace that started with Adam and Eve after the Fall. Hon. Kaliati, pointed out the lack of inner peace that caused Abraham and Sarah to send Hagar away, the sons of Jacob to sell their brother Joseph, the Israelites to rebel against Moses, etc. She exhorted all the members of parliament to work on securing inner peace. “Peace in the home is key to peace in the workplace and society as large,” she said. She expressed her gratitude to UPF founder, Mother Moon, for supporting the launch of the IAPP in Malawi as well as the coming delegation of Malawi to the upcoming Africa Summit in Senegal. “We are grateful for your prayers and continued support,” the UPF Malawi President said. Hon. Kaliati then introduced the next speaker, Hon. Esther Mcheka Chilenje MP, First Deputy Speaker of the Malawi Parliament.

Hon. Esther Chilenje, gave the opening remarks. “I would like to personally welcome the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace in the Malawi Parliament,” the First Deputy Speaker said. She said Malawi is indeed privileged to see this day, the launching of the IAPP. “Peace is a key commodity for nations. Where there are tensions, conflicts, there cannot be development.” She commended UPF for all its activities and its peace efforts. “I fully support this organization and through it, I believe,” she said, “I can contribute to the establishment of a holistic peace that the world craves for.” In the end, she declared opened the inaugural meeting of IAPP Malawi and wished that the proceeding will all go well. A group photo then took place outside at the lobby of the Parliament building.

Rev. Jean Augustin Ghomsi, Acting Regional Secretary General for East Africa, introduced UPF and its founders’ vision. Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon founded UPF on September 12, 2005 in New York as a network of individuals and organizations dedicated to world peace while affirming and applying universal, spiritual principles to conflict resolution and reconciliation of the divided human family.

He explained UPF core values. “Our founders, Father and Mother Moon,” he said, “envision a world in which we all live in interdependence, co-prosperity and universally shared values.” Father and Mother Moon advocate genuine love, which is based on the principle of living for the sake of others, as a foundation for true peace. When we can all live for the greater good, there is hope for true peace. Selfishness is the based for conflict,” he said.

UPF programs focus on interfaith peacebuilding, parliamentarians for peace, marriage and family, youth and service and the support for UN work and SDGs. Two videos introducing UPF and the founders were shown before the tea break.

After the break, Rev. Ghomsi introduced the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace as a program of UPF to be a global alliance of members of parliament, current and former, joined together to promote peace, that is, a unified world in which all people live together in harmony, cooperation and co-prosperity. The IAPP provides a mechanism for cooperative peace-building efforts among the executive and legislative, all working together with mutual respect and a shared commitment to cooperation and good governance. He ended by giving the list of African countries that have so far inaugurated the IAPP.



Hon. D. Namachekecha MP read the founder’s address at the First World Assembly of the IAPP given on February in Seoul, South Korea. In her address, Mother Moon said, “When you look at the state of the world today, there is no center. Small nations and larger nations only think of their own interests. In our

hearts, we all desire to have a united world—a peaceful happy united world—but so many walls block our way. However today, we have gathered here under one large dream, which means that you are dreaming the same dream as True Parents are and as God, our creator is. The only path to solving all the difficult problems of the world today is through the manifestation of the True Parents, who can heal all the problems of all nations, whether rich or poor.

I am saying that all nations, all of you, must attend God, our creator, our Heavenly Parent in your nations in order for world peace to come. God raised True Parents through the long period of six-thousand years through the course of restoration through indemnity. True Parents are the only ones who (as the Bible says) can engraft the wild olive tree to the true olive tree.” She exhorted all members of parliament to become peacemakers and help their nations to become Cheon Il Guk nations, that is, God-centered nations.

Hon. Esther Chilenje MP called and was the first to sign the IAPP Malawi’s Resolution from her office. She said she is ready to take part in all of UPF and IAPP programs both locally and internationally and that we can count on her full support, both as First Deputy Speaker as well as woman leader. All the other members of the parliament were invited to also sign.

In her vote of thanks, Hon. Mrs. Beatrice Mwale MP, thanked the founders’ of UPF for their vision for peace and asked Rev. Ghomsi to convey the gratitude of UPF Malawi for this inaugural meeting. “This message needs to be known at all quarters,” she said.

Rev. Banda of the Churches of Central African Presbyterians (CCAP) gave the closing prayer.

Since December 4, Hon. Patricia Kaliati MP has been on local radios talking about UPF and the launching of IAPP in Malawi. She and Rev. Ghomsi gave interviews to the five journalists who came for the launching and they were extensively reported.

This inauguration happened at a very sensitive and highly volatile political situation. All the churches and civil society organizations are planning a strike on Wednesday December 13, 2017 to force the government to review the electoral code ahead of the general elections of 2019. We had a meeting with the Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Richard Musowoya MP on November 7, 2017. He expressed the efforts the President of Malawi and him are doing to diffuse this tension. It is worth noting that Malawi is one of the rare countries in Africa where the ruling party leads the executive and the legislative is led by the opposition.

