

## **Peace Message: Our planet is facing extremely serious problems of great concern**

Evaristo Carvalho

October 2020

President of the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe



Your excellency Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Heads of State and Government: It is with great honor and sublime pleasure that I speak at this Rally of Hope, promoted by the Universal Peace Federation. Allow me to extend my warmest congratulations to the founder of the Universal Peace Federation, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, and sincere thanks for inviting me to participate in this important forum. I would like to express my best wishes to the forum.

Our planet is facing extremely serious problems, which have been of great concern to countries, international organizations and NGOs. These are climate change and its perverse effects -- such as droughts and floods, rising sea levels, coastal erosion, rising temperatures -- armed conflicts, hunger and extreme poverty, and terrorism. In addition to these major challenges that the world faces, the COVID-19 pandemic has emerged and has severely affected people across five continents with high rates of infection and mortality, which affects the full range of socio-economic activities.

The scale of the crisis has led a large number of political, economic experts and other intellectuals to imagine ways to reinvent society after confinement. Distinguished participants, we appreciate the numerous initiatives of the Universal Peace Federation, in the person of the venerable Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, ardent defender of harmony among all people and tireless fighter for peace, justice and the well-being of humanity, particularly on the continent of Africa. This historic Rally of Hope takes place this September, in a period full of meaning and of challenges, not only for the Universal Peace Federation, which celebrated the fifteenth anniversary of its founding, but also for the International community and the United Nations, which hold its General Assembly, and which celebrated the International Day of Peace 2020 on September 21. The theme of these rallies in 2020 calls on us to build peace together.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am pleased that this Rally of Hope opens a favorable horizon and allows us to look to the future of our nations and world, the post-COVID-19 era.

I would like to reiterate here my adherence to the principle of living together, of building peace together, of removing any religious, racial, or ethnic considerations, that could further poison and add fuel to crises, and of pooling our resources and our means to solve the problems that humanity as a whole and our populations face, in accordance with the principles the founder of the Universal Peace Federation has dedicated on more than one occasion.

I share the positions Dr. Moon takes and I congratulate the Universal Peace Federation that she is its founder. My great interest in UPF was accentuated on the occasion of the World Summit in Korea in 2019 and the African Summit in São Tomé. I had the pleasure and the joy of participating in those summits.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, What are the prospects for the post-COVID-19 reality? Young people are the spearhead of Society. Greater attention should be paid to youth in the elaboration of development projects; Education is the heart of development. The education system must be strengthened. Students should be educated on the issues of norms, ethics, universal values, virtues and altruistic love, and the sense of selfless service.

Children need an education that they love and a love that teaches, with a vision for their well-being; The promotion of dialogue and cooperation, with a view to promoting and strengthening the culture of peace and human development; The protection, preservation and defense of the dignity and value of each human being, that all people are members of a global family; The strengthening of the family as a central and fundamental institution of society; Indeed, society is an expression of the family, because it is within the family that we learn for the first time, what our attitude should be and what kind of relationships we should have with people, with things and with our work; It is fundamentally the family that forms our character, it is our first school of ethics and morals, where we learn to esteem and respect ourselves, to respect the other, and to respect things; Government programs, strengthening the family, must address the central and root problems.

Actions to build trust, mutual respect and cooperation between peoples must be initiated; Programs for the preservation of the environment must be part of children's education, from kindergarten on. The greatest resource needed to rebuild the world is human capital -- whatever the type of plan for the reconstruction of national and world economies, whatever renewal and development that must be prepared for a glimpse of the economic and vital sectors of society -- a new human conscience oriented towards the love of one's neighbor, respect and human dignity and the right to be different, active human solidarity, and life for the good of others.

Venerable Dr. Moon, we are convinced that your proclamation of the new age of "heavenly Africa" as a continent of hope, which can bring about a world of freedom, equality, peace and happiness, will be a reality in the not too distant future, if we all work together for it.

I would not like to conclude without renewing our sincere thanks to the Universal Peace Federation, in particular to venerable Dr. Moon, for the commendable initiative to carry out this Rally of Hope, for the gifts agreed upon in my country, the most recent being the offer of a fire fighting truck, the ceremony for the delivery of which took place this September. We invite everyone to engage actively with the ideals of peace, reconciliation, security and human development. Thank you for your attention.