

## UPF Lima, Peru holds forum for the UN International Day of Peace

Trevor Edward Jones  
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**Lima, Peru** -- On Monday, September 26, 2022, UPF-Peru branch held a forum for the United Nations International Day of Peace in the auditorium of the illustrious Bar Association of Lima. This important event was co-sponsored by Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) and the International Association of Youth and Students for Peace (IAYSP) Peru, under the leadership of the Universal Peace Federation Peru and with the support of the Lima Bar Association.



The forum brought together outstanding leaders and Ambassadors for Peace who focussed on the United Nations theme for the International Day of Peace 2022: "End racism. Build peace." UPF-Peru president **Dr. Trevor Jones** virtually participated in the forum and encouraged the audience to join UPF's initiatives and work together for peace.

The panel was made up of **Dr. Judith Torres Anaya**, director of the Human Rights Office of Lima's Bar Association, representing the Dean of Lima's Bar Association; **Pastor Orestes Sánchez Luis**, secretary general of the Interreligious Association for Peace and Development (IAPD-Peru); **Dr. Juan Álvarez Vita**, ambassador in the Diplomatic Service of Peru; **Dr. Virginia Zegarra Larroche**, president and founding member of the civil association Raíces Afroperuana; and psychologist **Rosemary Fernández Rodríguez**, director of research and development of the National Secretariat for Youth (SENAJU) (part of the Government Ministry for Youth).

In addition, **Mr. Jaime Fernández Túpac**, secretary general of UPF Peru, psychologist **María del Rosario López Balcona**, president of the Women's Federation for World Peace, and **Mr. Dokhwa Miraval**, president of the International Association of Youth and Students for Peace, were part of the panel. **Dr. Teresa Otiniano Castillo**, general secretary of the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP-Peru), read UPF International's statements for the International Day of Peace.



"When there is freedom, there are rights, justice and peace," said Dr. Torres Anaya, during her welcoming remarks. "When we know our rights and obligations, we protect ourselves and others; we recognize the other as valuable because that person is a human being just like us." She congratulated UPF's initiative for giving importance to human beings' value, living in peace and building a better world.

As part of the celebration, Pastor Luis, who had invited many other religious leaders to attend the meeting, called for peace, unity and an end to conflict and invited all the audience to join in a prayer for peace. Similarly, Dr. Castillo invited the audience to display renewed solidarity and more humanitarian effort to achieve peace.

"Racism is one of the worst tragedies of the human being," said Dr. Álvarez Vita, who invited the audience and the entire community to confront this problem. "Peace is a result of living in an environment where all human rights are respected. It's everyone's obligation to first face internally the ideas of racism and discrimination in all their forms." He recommended that the topic of human rights be taught at all levels of Peruvian education to leave a better legacy for future generations.

Dr. Larroche stated, "All human beings yearn for happiness and fulfilment in our lives. We usually say that we reject racism and discrimination in all its forms. However, there are racist behaviors or beliefs that people maintain without considering them as such." She affirmed, "It's very difficult to have empathy or compassion for others when you think this way. That is why we must start with ourselves, changing our way of thinking to end discrimination and racism, hatred and violence, and build a world in which we all can live."

"All the youths in our country are not the same. Within this population there are many differences and diversities that make some more vulnerable to discrimination due to a disability, their place of origin or residence, among others," expressed Ms. Rodriguez. "SENAJU promotes a youth approach where we see young people as development actors, recognizing their diversity and potential." She concluded her speech by inviting the audience, as part of civil society, to join their work in favor of youth.

As part of the celebration, 36 new Ambassadors for Peace were appointed, including district authorities, academics, religious leaders, businessmen and civil society leaders, who ratified their commitment to promote peace initiatives and carry out social service work in favor of the most needy people. The ceremony of incorporation of new Ambassadors for Peace was chaired by Mr. Fernández, Mrs. Balcona and Mr. Miraval.

The event featured artistic presentations: a dance performance by IAYSP-Peru, an Ayacucho's musical performance by Ambassador for Peace, **Dr. Rebeca Najarro**, and a musical performance by the soprano **Alianda Valenzuela** from IntiTika – Flordel Sol. At the end of the meeting, recognition was given to all the panellists.