

UPF-Central America and the Caribbean Webinar: Era of the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Costa Rica -- On the evening of July 25, 2020, UPF-Central America and the Caribbean held a web conference titled "The Central America in the Era of the Covid-19 Pandemic: Challenges and Opportunities Facing Government and Civil Society Leaders." The Zoom webinar had 120 attendees from 19 countries.

Mr. Mario Salinas (Secretary General, UPF- Honduras), served as emcee and introduced the panelists.

Rev. Dae Hee Hong (Regional Director, Family Federation for World Peace and Unification-Central America) gave opening remarks. The following is an excerpt: "So, in the 15th century a disaster brought a great momentum to finish the dark ages of the Middle Ages and develop new scientific civilization in Europe and finally brought the era of Renaissance in literature and the reformation of religion as well. Likewise, in this time of Covid-19, we should think it is the right time to review our way of living and thinking such as individual-centered ideas, nation-centered ideas or humanity-centered ideas. Also we should put more focus on universal values and the principles of nature than on self-centered values and national interest-centered ideas. As leaders of our society, we should think about how we can cooperate together to set the new order of universal principles, the new standard of universal values in this world? Then I believe the new era of a heavenly renaissance of culture and universal values may come soon."



Dr. Charles S. Yang (Chairman, UPF-Central America and the Caribbean) was the first panelist to speak. He told the gathering: "Recently, the co-founder of the UPF who is widely known as the Mother of Peace, Dr. Hak ja Han Moon, strongly said that we have to find solutions that come from beyond human efforts or humankind's knowledge and instead from the guidance of God. We should overcome this pandemic together as one family under god, beyond race, religion and nationalities. UPF will do its best to help our community prepare for the post-Corona era by continuing to improve programs and seek redevelopment along with other nations. In fact, we are preparing a Rally of Hope for over 1 million people, coming on August 9."



Hon. Luis Redondo Guifarro (Congressman, Honduras) spoke next. Today is a great opportunity for the world, he began, and here are those of us who can initiate it. "Searching for the good in everything seems impossible, but it is important to strive until we succeed. Especially in this time of pandemic, we must succeed in finding the good. When I came to UPF, I found a way to unite all the legislators of the world through global legislation and together find the way that leads us to peace, UPF unites us in the good, all of us."

Mons. Nicodemo, Dr. Vicente García (Bishop, Orthodox Catholic Church, Ecuador) said: How beautiful for a child of a God-centered family to become a government representative! It would mean a change of the life that we currently face. It would end hatred, envy, wars, and so forth. . . . The family relationship is important. Therefore, legislators, when putting their spirit in the laws that would be promulgated, should think about moral and ethical characteristics, having God as their inspiration."



Hon. Jimmy Harold Blandón (Congressman, Nicaragua) raised the issue, "If the international agencies that could help Nicaragua don't have accurate data on the pandemic, how could they help us? Because aid

is always proportional to the needs and data provided. . . . The challenge for Nicaraguans is greater than for other countries because strict measures have not been taken to restrain the advance of the pandemic, nor were the suggestions and recommendations of international agencies followed."



Hon. Laura Paula López Sánchez (Former Congressman, Mexico): Unfortunately, she said, Mexico has been one of the countries hardest hit by the Covid, not only due to the exaggerated number of cases or deaths, but it has strongly affected the society, especially families. "Unemployment, damage to the economy and a significant increase in domestic violence, which has risen by 125%, are indicators that the conditions we are experiencing have been deplorable. I encourage the population to continue with the recommended care as a good way to stop the advance of Covid."

