



Global Peace Convention 2013 Hosts Leaders from 40 Nations in Kuala Lumpur

Assembly Advances Education, Entrepreneurship and Interfaith Initiatives to Meet the Challenges of Underdevelopment and Identity-based Conflict

More than 1,200 government, civil society and faith leaders from 40 nations addressed the need to advance social cohesion in diverse societies at the fifth annual Global Peace Convention (GPC) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on December 5-8, 2013. The three-day convening, "Unity in Diversity: Building Social Cohesion for Sustainable Peace through Universal Aspirations, Principles, and Values," presented proposals and strategic assessments in areas of interfaith cooperation, education, community and economic development, family and youth empowerment, volunteer service, women in leadership, and business investment as a catalyst for peace.

The first to be hosted in a Muslim nation, the 2013 Convention drew upon Malaysia's rich experience in melding a country from religiously and culturally diverse peoples.

"Unity in Diversity is the very essence of life of the Malaysian people who are multiracial, multicultural, multi religious, and multi lingual—and yet we have lived harmoniously together," said Hon. Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Joseph Kurup, Minister in the Department of National Unity and Integration, representing Prime Minister Mohd Najib bin Abdul Razak at the opening of the Convention.

"Diverse races and religions have been present for centuries in this land and have enriched each other," he added. "We have a moral responsibility to preserve our unity for future generations. Let's look at this very important issue, Unity in Diversity, and spread it to the whole world."

Addressing the Convention theme, Global Peace Foundation Chairman Dr. Hyun Jin Moon called for "soft-power" approaches, specifically the establishment of a faith-based Peace Council at the United Nations, to meet the global challenge of identity-based conflict. "As people of faith, we should recognize that we have more in common than we have of differences," the GPF Chairman said. "Today, religious identities are regional in



Hajiya Amina Sambo, wife of the Nigerian vice-president, founder of I Care Women and Youth Initiative, and patron of Global Peace Women Nigeria , addresses the Global Peace Convention in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

scope and appeal, spreading far beyond national boundaries. That is something the existing UN is not well equipped to deal with and that a religious peace council could remedy."

Hon. Vincenio Cerezo Guatemala's first democratically elected president (1986-91) and President of the Esquipulas Foundation, conveyed the support and best wishes of the Latin American Presidential Mission, inaugurated at the 2012 GPC in Atlanta, and described the efforts to bring peace and democracy to Guatemala and to the Central American region.

"I listened to the speech of Dr. Moon, who proposed one family under God," the former president said. "I realized I should participate with the people who are think the same way I am thinking."

He related his efforts to enlist the support of former heads of state in Latin America to use their experience and influence to support peace, political reform, and



From left: Hon. Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Joseph Kurup, Minister in the Department of National Unity and Integration, representing Prime Minister Mohd Najib bin Abdul Razak; Hon. Vincenio Cerezo Guatemala's first democratically elected president (1986-91) and President of the Esquipulas Foundation; and Dr. Hyun Jin Moon, Global Peace Foundation Chairman.

economic justice and development in the region. "They accepted my proposal," he said. "There are now 20 former presidents involved in the Latin American Presidential Mission—all from different political parties, different ideological positions, but in agreement to create a new kind of society."

Following President Cerezo's address, video greetings were presented to the Convention from 14 former presidents of Latin America.

Nigerian delegation

The 2013 Convention included a delegation of more than 70 Nigerians. In November 2013, GPF hosted leading Christian and Muslim clerics and traditional rulers in Nigeria to address urgent security issues and launch the One Family under God campaign in the West African nation of 170 million.

During a pre-Convention interfaith forum and in concurrent sessions, Nigerian Muslim and Christian leaders spoke about their experience of friendship and cooperation. Clerics and interfaith leaders from Malaysia, Indonesia, Nigeria, India, Nepal, and the United States focused on the significant role of faith leaders in addressing conflict and instability rooted in religious extremism.

Hajiya Mrs. Amina Sambo, wife of the Nigerian vice-president, founder of I Care Women and Youth Initiative, and patron of GPF Nigeria, told the international gathering that she had been inspired to partner with the Global Peace Foundation by Surah 49:13 in the Qu'ran that says, "We have made you nations and tribes so that you may know one another."

The November Leadership Conference in Nigeria formally launched the Africa Peace Service Corps, a transnational initiative to empower African youth as agents of

GLOBAL PEACE CONVENTION 2013: Unity in Diversity: Building Social Cohesion through Universal Aspirations, Principles and Values

- Co-sponsored by Malaysia Department of National Unity and Integration and the University of Malaya.
- More than 1,200 government, civil society and faith leaders from 40 nations participated in 36 sessions and workshops.
- GPF 'Character and Creativity' education initiative launched in Malaysia, Indonesia and Nepal, expanding to nine nations.
- Focus areas addressed themes of interfaith, family, service, youth, women, education, community development, economic development, media, Northeast Asia peace.
- Nigeria delegation led by H.E. Hajiya Amina Sambo, wife the Vice President, included 70 key leaders, including Muslim and Christian leaders.
- Latin American Presidential Mission of 20 former Heads of State represented by former Guatemalan President and Esquipulas Foundation President Hon. Vincenio Cerezo.



Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, December 5-8, 2013

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GPF Vice President and Lead Executive Director Dr. Tony Devine addresses the Global Summit on Character and Creativity in Kuala Lumpur.

change and peace through service and entrepreneurship.

Just weeks prior to the Convention Super Typhoon Hayian devastated regions of the Philippines, and GPF diverted resources for a planned peace festival to aid in recovery efforts. During the Global Peace Convention, Hon. Tan Sri Zaleha Ismail, Chairwoman of GPF Malaysia and Convention Co-Chair, proposed a special task force on disaster relief based on Philippines response efforts. And in the days following the Convention, GPF senior leaders met with government, faith community, and private sector partners to inaugurate an ASEAN region Peace Service Corps to promote a culture of service for the youth of Southeast Asia.

'Character and Creativity' Summit

Among the most significant advances in 2013 has been GPF's 'Character and Creativity' education Initiative (CCI), which has gained government and private sector support in Kenya, Paraguay, Uganda, Brazil and the United States in 2013. The Global Peace Convention drew educators from throughout Southeast Asia, and highlighted the need for schools to better prepare youth with life skills to succeed in the twenty-first century workplace. The pre-Convention CCI Summit held at the University of Malaya, was live streamed and launched CCI in schools in Malaysia and, shortly after, Indonesia and Nepal.

During the Global Peace Awards gala on December 7, Bishop Sunday Onuoha, founder of Vision Africa and Executive Director of the Nigeria Inter-Faith Action Association, movingly dedicated the 2013 Interfaith Award to all Nigerians and said the international recognition would help to advance the fight against Nigeria's real enemy, the mosquito, the carrier of malaria, which does not discriminate between Christian and Muslim.

Malaysian Prime Minister Mohd Najib bin Abdul Razak was also recognized at the Gala with the 2013 Global Peace Award for Promoting a Culture of Peace. The Prime Minister was chosen for his efforts in building cross-cultural relationships, for pioneering the Global Movement of Moderates and for his role in resolving the Bangsamoro conflict between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Other awards conferred at the ceremony included

KUALA LUMPUR PEACE RESOLUTION

At the conclusion of the Convention, participants adopted the Kuala Lumpur Resolution by unanimous consent, with a commitment to:

- **BUILD** a movement of multi-sector, faith-based, civil society groups based on the vision of One Family under God, rooted in universal principles and shared values, to overcome religious extremism and to promote just and ethical societies.
- **PROMOTE** the establishment of a faith-based peace council at the United Nations.
- **PROMOTE** moral and innovative leadership as a strategic framework for building sustainable peace for a prosperous future.
- **INVEST** in youth globally through character competency, community-building and social entrepreneurship as essential complements to traditional forms of education.
- **PROMOTE** volunteerism and service through regional peace service corps and community-driven initiatives.
- **UPLIFT** the unique role of women as peace builders through programs that educate and empower women.



“I came away deeply enriched, deeply stimulated, and even more committed to working for interfaith activities.”

—Amb. S. Azmat Hassan, Former Ambassador of Pakistan to Malaysia



Top left: Malaysian youth provide entertainment; top right: Malaysian Prime Minister Mohd Najib bin Abdul Razak accepts the 2013 Global Peace Award for Promoting a Culture of Peace; bottom left: Prof. Leah Marangu invites her husband to the stage after accepting the Leadership in Strengthening Families Award; bottom right: Women leaders from diverse cultures at the session on Global Peace Women.

the **Leadership in Strengthening Families Award** to Prof. Leah Marangu, Vice Chancellor of Africa Nazarene University and the first Kenyan woman to lead a university in Kenya, for her efforts to support Character and Creativity education for Kenyan youth; the **Outstanding Service Award** to His Eminence Cardinal Guadencio Borbon Rosales, former Archbishop of Manila and founder of Pondo ng Pinoy, a poverty alleviation program; the **Good Governance Award** to National Senator Lilian Samaniego, for advancing transparency and good governance in Paraguay; and the **Innovative Scholarship for Peace Award** to Dr. Oscar Alvarez Araya, for promoting understanding of the world's faiths as a bridge for peace.

Other major developments included the convening of business leaders to assess the role of commerce, corporate philanthropy, and business invest-

ment in fostering and sustaining peace; the role of women in extending traditional caregiving roles within the family and community into broader leadership in the public and private sector; the importance of establishing a permanent peace regime on the Korean peninsula for regional and global peace and stability; and sessions devoted to meeting the many challenges confronting the institution of the family in modern life.

The Global Peace Convention concluded with the ratification of the Kuala Lumpur Resolution, which committed signatories to, among other affirmations, “Build a movement of multi-sector, faith-based, civil society groups based on the vision of One Family under God, rooted in universal principles and shared values, to overcome religious extremism and to promote just and ethical societies.”