

UPF's IAPP, International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace

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A worldwide UPF network connecting parliamentarians for peace, public responsibility and cooperation



Key Takeaways

IAPP connects serving and former parliamentarians worldwide to encourage dialogue, responsible leadership and practical cooperation across political and national boundaries.

Founded internationally in 2016, IAPP has developed national and regional initiatives across Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, the Americas and other regions, including parliamentary caucuses, working groups and institutional partnerships.

IAPP sees public office as a responsibility of service, supporting parliamentarians in strengthening peaceful societies, effective institutions and inclusive decision-making - goals closely aligned with UN Sustainable Development Goal 16.

The [International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace \(IAPP\)](#) is the [Universal Peace Federation's](#) global association for current and former parliamentarians. It connects legislators from different political parties and countries through leadership conferences, working groups and national initiatives.

IAPP works with legislators because they carry the concerns of citizens into national decision-making. They shape laws, budgets and public oversight. Through IAPP, parliamentarians meet counterparts from other countries and work with civil society on peace, responsible governance and cooperation.

IAPP has developed national and regional structures and programs in dozens of countries in Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America. These range from parliamentary caucuses and national sections to an office inside [Cameroon's National Assembly](#) and regional cooperation through the [Balkans Working Group](#).

2016: A Global Association Takes Shape

On February 15, 2016, more than 150 parliamentarians from over 40 nations met at the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea during a UPF International Leadership Conference. They adopted a resolution to establish the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace.

Hosted at the invitation of Korean parliamentarian Kim Eul-dong, the [National Assembly session](#) was joined by about 20 Korean lawmakers, diplomats based in Korea from eight countries and more than 40 journalists. Speaker Chung Ui-hwa welcomed the international delegation. Dr. Sun Jin Moon, then UPF International chair, delivered the keynote and read a message from Dr. Hak Ja Han. U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce sent a video greeting.

The wider Seoul conference brought additional political and diplomatic experience into the discussion. Speakers included Ambassador Christopher Hill, former U.S. ambassador to Korea, and Issaka Sidibé, president of Mali's National Assembly. Conference sessions addressed peace and stability in Northeast Asia, violent extremism, climate change and international cooperation.

The founding meeting also carried an immediate peace agenda. Kim Eul-dong proposed establishing a [fifth United Nations office in Korea](#), and the participants discussed how parliamentarians could contribute to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. The founding resolution connected parliamentary responsibility with peace and human development and was signed by participating leaders.

Soon after its founding, IAPP began organizing regional meetings. Asia Pacific parliamentarians met in [Kathmandu](#). European and Middle Eastern leaders gathered in London. African launches followed in Ouagadougou and Lusaka. By the end of the year, IAPP had also convened parliamentarians in South America and Washington, D.C.

The Washington program brought 56 legislators to a session in the Russell Senate Office Building. Hon. Dan Burton and Hon. Jose de Venecia Jr. were introduced as international co-chairs, bringing decades of legislative experience into the new network.

In February 2017, the first global assembly followed. More than 400 parliamentarians from 120 nations

met for an IAPP session at the Korean National Assembly. Two days later, the Inaugural World Assembly of IAPP convened in Seoul and adopted its assembly declaration.

Building Parliamentary Work in Countries and Regions

The expansion can be followed through a long series of national inaugurations. During 2017, IAPP launched in the [Democratic Republic of the Congo](#), [Peru](#), [India](#), [Paraguay](#), [Fiji](#), [Nigeria](#), [Togo](#), [Israel](#), [Myanmar](#), the [Dominican Republic](#), [Nicaragua](#), [Costa Rica](#), the [Marshall Islands](#), [Bhutan](#), [Colombia](#), [Australia](#), [Gabon](#), [Barbados](#), [St. Vincent and the Grenadines](#), [Trinidad and Tobago](#), [St. Lucia](#), [Ukraine](#), [Panama](#), the [Solomon Islands](#), [Canada](#), [Tuvalu](#), [Vanuatu](#), [Slovenia](#), [Brazil](#), [Uruguay](#), [Albania](#), [Mexico](#), [Argentina](#), [Malawi](#), [Uganda](#), [Lebanon](#), [Ecuador](#) and [Kiribati](#). The [Balkans](#) held a regional inauguration at the Assembly of Kosovo, and the [South America office](#) opened in Paraguay.

Also in 2017, an [IAPP luncheon at United Nations Headquarters](#) in New York considered peace and stability in Northeast Asia. In December, IAPP held a [conference in the European Parliament on radicalization](#).

The network continued to grow in 2018. IAPP conducted national inaugurations in [Kenya](#), [Samoa](#), [Tonga](#), [New Zealand](#), [Cameroon](#), [Portugal](#), [Taiwan](#), [Niger](#), [Burundi](#), [Haiti](#), [Indonesia](#) and [Morocco](#). [São Paulo State](#) in Brazil also inaugurated an IAPP chapter in its Legislative Assembly, while the [Africa Summit in Senegal](#) inaugurated IAPP at the continental level.

In June 2018, [IAPP-Canada convened an expert briefing on inter-Korean relations](#) in the House of Commons. In 2019, a [conference in Fiji](#) brought together 70 dignitaries, including 13 members of parliament, one cabinet minister and three ambassadors.

The [Global IAPP Assembly](#) in Seoul in February 2020 brought parliamentarians together around national and regional issues. In 2021 and 2022, dedicated IAPP sessions returned to peace on the Korean Peninsula, including a [Europe and Middle East webinar](#) with 223 reported participants and Think Tank 2022 sessions in [Europe, the Middle East](#) and [Asia Pacific](#). In 2023, IAPP sessions continued through [Peace Summit 2023](#) and a [Parliamentarians Leadership Conference at the Parliament of Sri Lanka](#).

Three recent examples show what this work looks like today.

In March 2026, an [IAPP office opened in Cameroon's National Assembly](#). The office gives the association a permanent base in the legislature for meetings and ongoing work with parliamentarians.

In June 2026, the IAPP Europe and Middle East Balkans Working Group convened political and civic leaders at the [Parliament of Albania](#) to discuss media freedom, digital governance and regional cooperation. The working group continues these discussions among participants from neighboring countries.

On July 4, 2026, [IAPP returned to the People's Palace in Kinshasa](#) for a national conference with parliamentarians and public leaders. The conference created a National Executive Bureau and adopted an IAPP-DRC resolution, giving the national chapter a leadership team and a formal basis for its work.

UPF holds General Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council. Through UPF, IAPP's parliamentary programs form part of the organization's wider participation in United Nations civil society processes. Its programs also contribute to the aims of [Sustainable Development Goal 16](#), especially peaceful societies, effective institutions and inclusive decision-making.

Public Office as Service

At a [2016 Parliamentarians for Peace conference in Nigeria](#), a message from Dr. Hak Ja Han was read to participants: "You represent the people. You are entrusted by the people with a great responsibility." The words express a principle that runs through IAPP's history.

For UPF, public office carries a responsibility to the people. Parliamentary leadership is visible in decisions, relationships and the ability to keep dialogue open when interests differ. IAPP keeps legislators in regular contact with counterparts from other countries and with leaders from civil society.

Late Dr. Sun Myung Moon emphasized cooperation between countries and people with different political views throughout his public work. Dr. Hak Ja Han brought that experience together in IAPP, creating a permanent association for parliamentarians. The founders described their larger vision as one family under God, a vision of human dignity and cooperation among people of different political, cultural and religious traditions.

IAPP Today

Hon. Dan Burton serves as global chairman of IAPP, and Dr. Michael Jenkins serves as global coordinator. Through UPF's regional and national structures, IAPP continues to develop parliamentary caucuses, working groups and national initiatives.

What began as direct conversations with legislators has become a worldwide parliamentary network. IAPP continues that work by connecting public leaders who have been elected to represent their constituents and carry the responsibility of public office. These relationships help parliamentarians build practical cooperation and bring their experience into the work of peace.

The Road to IAPP Began Long Before 2016

IAPP also builds on a much longer history created by Dr. Hak Ja Han and late Dr. Sun Myung Moon. Their work with lawmakers began decades before IAPP, from congressional meetings in Washington to parliamentary programs in Korea and other regions. That experience helped shape the association that emerged in 2016.

The idea developed through repeated contact with legislators. After the 1974 address in Washington, late Dr. Sun Myung Moon returned to the U.S. Capitol on December 18, 1975, for a second invitational address to members of Congress.

During the 1980s, these contacts became regular leadership programs. The American Leadership Conference brought legislators and other public officials together in the United States. Around the end of the Cold War, international programs brought Soviet and Eastern European deputies into dialogue with American counterparts.

Dr. Hak Ja Han expanded this parliamentary work in 1993. On July 28, she addressed U.S. lawmakers and congressional staff at the Dirksen Senate Office Building, where Senator Orrin Hatch introduced her. On November 8, she spoke at the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa. Five members of Parliament and fifteen ambassadors were among the audience.

The network expanded again in the new century. On July 13, 2001, late Dr. Sun Myung Moon spoke at the National Assembly in Seoul. Around fifty members from different parties attended, together with hundreds of parliamentary staff. That same year, the Ambassadors for Peace initiative created more opportunities for parliamentarians to work with religious leaders and academics.

On March 23, 2004, an IIFWP Crown of Peace awards reception at the Dirksen Senate Office Building brought together peace awardees from many parts of the United States and more than a dozen U.S. lawmakers. By 2005, specialized programs in Oceania were already using the name Parliamentarians for Peace.

Nepal then became an important place for regular parliamentary cooperation. Through the [South Asia Peace Initiative](#) and a multiparty Parliamentarians Peace Council, lawmakers developed regular cross-party relationships. By the middle of the 2010s, the main features of the future IAPP were already in place: parliamentary dialogue, international exchange and national follow-up.

IAPP welcomes cooperation with serving and former parliamentarians, national legislatures and civil society partners interested in peace, accountable governance and continuing parliamentary dialogue.