

UPF Stuttgart, Germany Seminar Examines Principles of Peace

Gudrun Hassinen
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Stuttgart, Germany – A seminar for UPF ambassadors for peace, held in the beautiful Stuttgart Peace Embassy on Saturday, September 14, 2024, attracted over thirty participants. This seminar was to offer deeper insights into the principles that motivate UPF to work for a peaceful world community. Four roughly thirty-minute presentations were followed by discussions in small groups.

Mr. Karl-Christian Hausmann, chairman of UPF-Germany, gave the first presentation on "Universal Principles as the Foundation for World Peace." He pointed out that universal values and principles are comparable to natural laws and have been formulated to some extent by world religions. He explained the view of God held by the founders of UPF, adding that unless we understand God as our Creator, efforts to establish lasting peace cannot succeed.



Mr. Hausmann quoted Canadian psychologist and author Mr. Jordan Peterson: "When society forgets its moral values, nihilism and terror reign. The collapse of our values is an even greater threat than climate change." Therefore, he said, religions are an essential source of values, and cooperation among religious groups is an indispensable pre-requisite for peace.

The second presentation, "The Cause of Conflict," was delivered by **Ms. Gudrun Hassinen**, vice-chair of UPF-Germany. She spoke of inherent destructive egoism; alienation from one's inner, divine self; and the reluctance to take responsibility for one's own inner peace and for relationships, especially in the family. She explained that individual purpose must be balanced with the common good in order to establish peace. She connected this with the interpretation of the Old Testament story of the human fall, as outlined by Rev. Moon, co-founder of UPF.



The third presentation, given by **Mr. Christian Haubold** of UPF-Bonn, explored the possibility of finding a pattern for peace and reconciliation in our Judeo-Christian history and tradition. He discussed confrontations on all levels – between brothers, individuals, nations and philosophies – as exemplified by Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, Israel and Rome, the Renaissance and the Reformation, democracy and communism. He said that in conflict situations it is crucial to recognize one's responsibility before God, and chose the way of reconciliation, seeing the other as a brother or sister rather than an enemy. These principles are already being used in the field of marriage counselling, he pointed out.



Dr. Dieter Schmidt, chairman of UPF-Central Europe, discussed the principle of forgiving one's enemy, based on the understanding, experience, and example of Rev. and Mrs. Moon, the founders of UPF. He explained the significance of the UPF principles of peace in advancing interreligious cooperation, in strengthening marriage and the family, and in establishing peace and security. He also presented innovative UPF projects and initiatives, such as the Peace Road project, and stressed that all our efforts are guided by a culture of service to others.

In closing, _____ from Sufi-Islam and **Mr. Herbert Marks** from the Scientology Church were appointed ambassadors for peace, in recognition of their commitment to interreligious dialogue and community service.

All participants were greatly enriched by the successful seminar, enhanced by a lovingly prepared lunch buffet, drinks and snacks.

English: Catriona Valenta