

The Six Nation UPF Latin American Tour

Dr. Hyun Jin Moon and Dr. Thomas Walsh launched the UPF Latin American Tour in order to share with leaders, throughout the region the UPF vision of building one family under God. To realize that dream, UPF is working to creating a great regional or hemispheric union, built not only on mutual political or economic interests, but, more fundamentally on universal values and principles.

BELIZE

The tour arrived in Belize on April 13, welcomed by UPF Director Dr. Kang and leading Ambassadors for Peace, many of whom had previously attended ILCs in Korea or the USA. Belize is a nation of 300,000 people, many of Mayan descent. Formerly known as British Honduras, it is a member of CARICOM, and close to the Caribbean community of nations.

Among the Ambassadors for Peace in Belize, Hon. Marco Antonio Cuellar took the lead as Secretary General of UPF Belize, supported by Mr. Ernesto Gomez the UPF Coordinator, Belize. Many of Belize's 2000 Ambassadors for Peace attended the International Leadership Conference including several who have recently taken positions in the new government as Ministers. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Defense, Minister of Tourism and Development, all were in attendance.



Meeting with the Prime Minister of Belize



Opening Banquet in Belize

On April 14, Dr. Moon had a private meeting with Dean O. Barrow, the Prime Minister of Belize, and shared about the mission and work of UPF and its relevance to development and peace in Belize. Among the programs that were discussed were: Character Education; Play Football Make Peace, Service for Peace, and many others.

On April 15, the tour party visited the Mayan ruins in Belize, and climbed to the top of a very large ancient temple. After that, the delegation traveled to St. Ignacio for a meeting with more than 300 students, teachers and high school principals, hosted by the Mayor of St. Ignacio and 7 local high schools. Two young girls, just out of high school organized the entire event. They had been to GPF Philippines in December 2007 and were so inspired.



At the Cet Cayo School in Belize

COSTA RICA

On April 16, Dr. Moon delivered the keynote address at the Opening Plenary of the ILC, a session which also featured Ambassador for Peace Dr. Alvarez. Private meetings were held with the Hon. And Mrs. Rodrigo Carazo, former President of Costa Rica and former Chairman of the Peace University.

Although Oscar Arias, Costa Rica's President and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate was out of the country, on official business to Mexico, the UPF delegation was welcomed to the President's office by Vice President Laura Chinchilla. She knew the work of UPF and was well aware that President Arias was a close ally and friend of UPF and its Founder, Rev. Sun Myung Moon. Vice President Chinchilla said she would be happy to collaborate with the work of UPF, and indicated interest in attending the Global Peace Festival in Paraguay and a future International Leadership Conference.



Meeting with Vice President Laura Chinchilla



Meeting with the President of the Congress

Dr. Moon also met with the President of the Costa Rican Congress, Hon. Francisco Antonio Pacheco, and discussed the prospect for developing a two-year service project for high school graduates. Costa Rica abolished its military, and it seemed possible that, as in other countries, young people could be encouraged to contribute to society through service programs.

The delegation also met with UPF Costa Rica's emerging television broadcasting station, Channel 52, "Tele-paz.

PANAMA

On April 17, the tour traveled to Panama. Regis and Nancy Hanna provided a briefing for Dr. Moon and the entire delegation, outlining the history of the work of UPF in Panama.



UPF Volunteers in Panama

In addition to the ILC program, Dr. Moon and Dr. Walsh met privately with Ms. Roxana Mendez, Vice Presidential candidate and President of an NGO that serves children who are victims of poverty, and with Master Favio, who manages several Martial Arts programs that involve 20,000 students. Master Favio is also Deputy Mayor, and a close advisor to likely President-to-be Balbinda.

PERU

On April 19, the team arrived in Peru, land of the Incas and Andean civilization. In 2005, the UPF Founder Dr. Sun Myung Moon visited here on the first peace tour, and mentioned that he felt right at home among the people of Peru, who, he said, were 'like cousins;' being, according to some scholars, people of Mongolian descent who were linked to Asia, having migrated over land to this region thousands of years ago.

The following morning, Dr. Hyun Jin Moon had the opportunity to share more about his vision for South America.

"The greatest civilizations in this hemisphere were established not in North America, but in Central and South American, with Mayan and Incan civilizations," he said. "However, the explorers and settlers who came to South America from Europe were in search of gold, and they, especially the

conquistadors, had a very detrimental impact on the peoples.”

In contrast, the first settlers of North America came in pursuit of religious freedom and the desire to build a community for God. They started with 13 simple, humble colonies. In 1776 they declared independence and declared “we hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal and endowed by our creator with certain inalienable rights, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. In other words the USA was formed according to the ideal of forming one nation of many people under the sovereignty of God”

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