SEPTEMBER 2008

UPF TODAY

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO PEACE

Cleaning the Nairobi River
A Day for Peace in Kenya
One Family Under God in Latin America
Global Peace in Washington

A Publication of the Universal Peace Federation (UPE)
The UPF Family Is Growing

As reports come in from around the world, we are continually uplifted and encouraged. The UPF family is growing and the forward momentum is building.

The impact of the Global Peace Festival has been dramatic and beyond our expectations. Ambassadors for Peace are leading the way in advancing the vision, mission and work of the UPF, and especially through the Global Peace Festival, from Paraguay, to the USA, to Kenya and beyond.

To an ever-widening audience, the vision of building “one family under God” is becoming synonymous with peace. If we can begin to embody this ideal, the implications of the message start to become manifest. If we are one family under God, then interfaith competition and conflict must be abandoned. If we are one family under God, then a culture of service is required, and the suffering that comes with poverty, disease, and a degraded environment must be abolished. If we are one family under God, then we must each establish our own microcosm of this ideal within our own families, as fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, husbands and wives, parents and children.

We build one family under God, one family at a time. Indeed, if we are one family under God, then we understand the value of each and every human being; human rights, therefore, are secured not merely by our membership in a political community, but by the realization that our ultimate origin is most sacred. We share a common heritage, and we share a common legacy.

In the reports that follow in this issue of UPF Today, please consider the relevance of this ideal, for it undergirds, inspires, and guides all the efforts of UPF. Let us work together to build one family under God, in every corner of the earth.

Dr. Thomas G. Walsh,
Secretary General,
Universal Peace Federation

From the Publisher

Contents

3 Cleaning the Nairobi River, by Global Peace Festival-Kenya
5 A Day for Peace in Kenya, by Frederick Wakhisi
6 We Have Been Highly Enlightened, by Mrs. Neerja Mehta
7 Working for Reconciliation and Forgiveness, by Geoffrey Gichuki
8 One Family Under God in Latin America, by Global Peace Festival-Paraguay
10 Cattle Drive Spurs New Vision for Paraguay, by Larry Moffitt
12 Global Peace in Washington, by Michael Balcomb
13 America and One Family Under God, by Hyun Jin Moon
14 The Joshua Generation, by Joseph E. Lowery
15 A New Vision for Peace in the Americas, by Joy Pople
16 Commitment to Excellence in Public Service, by George H.W. Bush
17 The 21st Century and Peace, by Sun Myung Moon
18 Working with the Thursday Group in Jamaica, by Sally Sayre
19 Reducing Violence in Trinidad and Tobago, by Crescentia Hinkle, Julia McKenna, and Matthew Taft
20 Appreciating the Interfaith Mosaic of the Netherlands, by Carol Pobanz
22 Africa and Universal Values, by Laurent Ladouce

Copyright © 2008, Universal Peace Federation. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part prohibited except by written permission. Periodicals postage is paid at Tarrytown, New York, and additional mailing offices.

UPF is an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

Universal Peace Federation
155 White Plains Road, Suite 222
Tarrytown, NY 10591, USA

Cover photo: Cleaning along the Nairobi River as part of the Global Peace Festival – Kenya
Volunteers with the Global Peace Festival – Kenya are making consistent efforts to remove trash from a 300-meter length of the Nairobi River. Accumulated garbage had formed islands in some parts of the river during its 18-kilometer course through the nation’s capital. This cleanup campaign has attracted dozens of agencies, hundreds of volunteers, and various government offices to pool their efforts to restore this landmark feature that cuts across Kenya’s capital city.

The Nairobi River is considered to be a unifying factor within the Nairobi province. It flows through and serves all the constituencies. Unfortunately, poverty, ignorance, and general mismanagement has made the river, which was once the pride of Nairobi, a disgrace. It is littered with all kinds of environmentally hazardous substances as well as raw sewage from the communities living along its banks. The Nairobi River network touches all of the notorious Nairobi slums.

Cleaning up the Nairobi River was chosen as the best and most effective way to make a social impact for the Global Peace Festival August 29 to 31. It is also a priority of the United Nations Environment Programme.

As a buildup to the major cleaning scheduled for August 29, an initial project was planned for July 12. To this end, a committee of young people from 12 strategic partners representing all sectors of the society was constituted one month in advance. The cleanup location was identified, and preparations were begun to make the day a success. Three main issues had to be addressed: mobilizing participants, legal issues, and raising funds.

It was decided to focus on mobilizing people from eight areas: Dagoretti, Kamukunj, Starehe, Kasarani, Langata, Embakasi, and Makadara. Each committee member generated support within his or her networks. Various schools, colleges, churches, and business communities within and around the cleanup areas were also earmarked as mobilization points. Letters and calls were made to offices whose participation was essential. The city administration, the administrative police from the office of the President, and government ministries were also contacted. Dignitaries were invited for the launch of the activities at 8:00 am, with work expected to continue until 1:30 pm.

The day dawned bright and warm. People showed up as early as 7:00 am ready to begin cleaning. They came from youth groups, women’s groups, churches, businesses, and the general public. Tools, gloves, and cleaning equipment were distributed as people arrived. T-shirts with the GPF logo were handed out. Even the parking boys were excited about the project and willingly joined the crowds of.

Hundreds of tree seedlings were planted along the river banks to prevent erosion.
people as the cleaning progressed.

The cleanup took place in three locations in the city along the Nairobi River. Division of labor made the work easier and more effective. Some people removed the various impediments while others cleared the banks of the river. Even more people carted the debris to collection points where it was bagged and loaded into the disposal trucks donated by the city council. In addition, hundreds of tree seedlings were planted along the river banks to prevent erosion.

Loudspeakers played music to attract onlookers to join in the cleaning. The master of ceremonies made jokes to entertain the masses of people as they carried out their tasks. All in all, everyone was in a jovial mood.

Key partners

The Kenya Administrative Police joined us, along with more than 300 cadets from the Rift Valley Academy located 200 kilometers away in the small town of Naivasha. Their headquarters is located in the western part of Nairobi along one of the river's tributaries. Students from neighboring schools joined in, most notably from Pendoria School, the Indian high school, which brought hundreds of its students.

The Nairobi City Council and the Ministry of the Environment were very supportive. The mayor was represented and his office provided thousands of cleaning tools, two bulldozers, and a garbage truck for use on that day. The police provided security throughout the day.

Another committed partner is the Mathare Youth Sport Association (MYSA), which provided tools and other supplies, including 300 wheelbarrows. MYSA is a community-based organization that brings together thousands of Mathare slum dwellers to creatively deal with real life issues. They have several activities that involve young people, including sports, cleanup, education, rehabilitation, and vocational training.

Kenya Veterans for Peace was formed following the inter-ethnic fighting that rocked Kenya earlier this year. These men and women who formerly served in the armed forces work together to educate and help troubled communities overcome stigmas and the turmoils of recent months. They provided 300 personnel for the cleanup.

Thirty-five community groups worked together during the project, and more than a thousand people participated in the cleanup. The project was a success considering the short amount of time and various challenges that confronted the organizers. GPF has adopted several portions of the river in order to guarantee a lasting impact of the project, an idea that was introduced to us by the Ministry of Environment.

We wish to express our gratitude to these organizations and the many others who offered valuable assistance in this project.

Mother-Child Cooperation for Peace

As part of its ongoing program to embrace vulnerable children, Global Peace Festival-Kenya sponsored a Mother-Child Cooperation for Peace event on August 1 at the Thomas Barnados Children’s Home in Nairobi.

The children competed in various activities such as dancing, art, and poetry. Through the smiling faces in the audience, every child felt appreciated and valued. Winners in each category received a gift. A girl from Exodus Children’s Centre in the Machakos district won a scholarship as the all-around “Best Child,” having demonstrated good leadership qualities and talent. Nascomm International sponsored the Best Child competition.

In attendance were about 300 children from 14 children’s homes in the Nairobi, Machakos, Kiambu and Thika districts. Prominent women were present, including NGO leaders, religious leaders, representatives of the Ministry of Education, and a doctor.
In a response to the recent crisis in Kenya, UPF-Africa brought together a group of 800 leaders of Kenyan society at the Kenyatta International Conference Center in Nairobi on March 18 to urgently consider how the core vision, principles, and programs of UPF might contribute to a peaceful resolution.

The conference, co-sponsored by Kenyan Veterans for Peace and with support from local corporations, was convened on the very day when the Kenyan parliament was in session with the specific purpose to bring an end to the political impasse and civil unrest that has plagued the country since the disputed presidential election of December 27, 2007.

The solution was worked out in consultation with former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who called for the establishment of a power-sharing structure. Thus, in addition to the President and Vice President, there will now be a Prime Minister and two Deputy Prime Ministers. President Mwai Kibaki’s challenger, Hon. Raila Odinga, was appointed Prime Minister Designate on March 18.

The UPF Secretary General Dr. Thomas G. Walsh thus became the first foreign visitor following the historic peace agreement to call upon Hon. Raila Odinga and Mrs. Ida Odinga, who have both been actively involved in the work of UPF over the past few years. The new Prime Minister explained that he had found the peace principles of the UPF “very helpful” in a time of desperate crisis.

The two-day conference was the latest in the ongoing UPF series of International Leadership Conferences on the theme, “Toward a New Paradigm of Leadership and Good Governance for Peace and Development.” The presenters included Dr. Walsh; Dr. Manu Chandaria, Trustee, Mahatma Gandhi Foundation of Kenya; Mr. Martin Luther King III, Chairman of Realizing the Dream; and Mr. Insu Choi of the Youth Federation for World Peace International. Rev. Mwalagho Kililo, Secretary General of UPF Africa, and Dr. Hee Sun Ji, Chairman of UPF-Kenya, were the local hosts.

Dr. Chandaria spoke about Mahatma Gandhi, whose ideals were part of the inspiration for the founding of the University of Nairobi. In honor of the presence of Mr. Martin Luther King III, he underscored the influence of Gandhi on the great non-violent civil rights leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Mr. King spoke of the non-violent legacy of his father and mother and the ideal of a “beloved community” of peace. As Chairman of Realizing the Dream, Inc., Mr. King had come to Kenya to offer his support and encouragement and to learn as much as he could about the current situation and explore ways in which Realizing the Dream could be a partner for peace. Dr. King invited the 1000 participants in the ILC to become Ambassadors for Peace.

He said, “Sometimes we must take positions not because they are politic or popular, but because they are right.”
Sometimes we must take positions not because they are politic or popular, but because they are right. We must learn to lead with love.

– MARTIN LUTHER KING III

He added that we should learn to “lead with love,” and spoke passionately about the need for an interfaith vision and of the challenge of turning dreams into reality. Mr. King also praised the decision by President Kibaki and Hon. Odinga to form a coalition, power-sharing government.

UPF-Africa and UPF-Kenya in particular are developing in substantial and very encouraging ways. Moreover, the International Leadership Conferences continue to be a major force promoting peace leadership and good governance. In conversation with several parliamentarians, Dr. Walsh and Rev. Kililo reported a spirit of great hope and resolve to work for a bright and peaceful future for Kenya.

We have gathered here today to celebrate peace. Let me emphasize that if it were possible, we do not even wish to remember the unpleasantness that has just shown its ugly face in our beautiful country.

We have gained a great deal from the precious knowledge shared by such magnificent speakers like Dr. Thomas Walsh, Dr. Manu Chandaria, and Mr. Martin Luther King III. I am delighted to see such a large number of people from various ethnic groups, interests, and countries.

On behalf of everyone, I wish to thank all the speakers. Also, thanks are due to all religious representatives and representatives of various foundations present here today. Thanks are due to each and every listener for your precious time. I can see you are deeply touched by the words of wisdom you are carrying home with you. Bringing together the two sides has never been an easy task.

To blend and give a common essence of life to suit the taste of each individual is not easy. I can vouch for the fact that today’s speakers have met this challenge of talking to this diverse audience so very perfectly. We are indeed very highly enlightened. Our knowledge has been added to.

Various Ambassadors for Peace and various officials from diplomatic missions are here to grace the occasion. We wish to thank them all. Thanks to all sponsors, including friends of Dr. Manu Chandaria, and as you can see from this banner, Manji Biscuits.

Finally, I would like to remind everyone that woman power, though rarely spoken of, is very important. I appeal to the Universal Peace Federation and to all of you to remember the advice of Martin Luther King III to look into sisterhood and register more women Ambassadors for Peace!

Neerja Mehta, Ambassador for Peace, runs a paramedic and health care supplies business in Nairobi.
On March 18, 2008 Kenya’s legislators approved an agreement in which opposition leader Raila Odinga will become Prime Minister of Kenya. In the days leading up to the vote, UPF joined leaders of civil society, religious groups, and diplomatic missions in Kenya in conducting major lobbying efforts in hopes that Kenya will regain economic stability and once again be a haven for peace in East Africa.

UPF Kenya organized a leadership seminar March 13-14 at the UPF Peace Embassy in Nairobi for retired and former men and women of the armed forces with the theme of “Kenya Veterans for Peace, Unity, Reconciliation, and Forgiveness.” Participants received education about a wide variety of topics related to peace, including principles of good governance, character education and HIV/AIDS prevention. More than 300 people gathered for the closing ceremony, at which the Nairobi Provincial Commissioner was represented. His representatives praised the role that UPF undertook to educate people to serve as peacemakers.

UPF Ambassadors for Peace also held a candlelight peace vigil on February 6 in the heart of Nairobi, at Uhuru Park. Political leaders and religious leaders, all of them UPF Ambassadors for Peace, came together to call attention to the need to reflect and pray for peace in the nation. They also took a moment to remember those who were bereaved and displaced.
The energetic crowd of 25,000 packed into Asunción’s historic Club Olimpia Stadium burst into rowdy and prolonged cheers at the Global Peace Festival (GPF) on July 5th as Founder, Dr. Hyun Jin Moon, told them: “Paraguay will play a leading role in building One Family Under God.”

“Before we are Paraguayans, or Americans, or Koreans; before we are Christian, Muslim or Jew, we must understand our fundamental identity as the sons and daughters of God,” Moon said. “We must look beyond our differences to the things that unite us and can bind us together.”

Faith leaders from many traditions opened the festival with a moving display of unity and affection, culminating with a call for God’s blessing by Bishop Manoel Ferreira of Brazil. Ferreira leads an international Assembly of God congregation of several million.

José Luis Chilavert, the extroverted soccer hero who scored more than 60 goals for Paraguay in international competition despite being a goalkeeper, welcomed the international delegates. “We’re proud of being Paraguayan,” Chilavert said, “but we’re even prouder that you have come here to our country to kick off the Global Peace Festival for 2008.”

Interest in the Paraguay festival reached a fever pitch in Asunción as the limited supply of tickets quickly ran out. When local radio station Popular 103FM ran a contest to give away the last 1,000 tickets to young people who brought a donation for the capital’s poorest children, more than 4,000 actually turned out and filled the streets for ten blocks around the station, with cheerful teenagers hoping for the hottest ticket in town.

The work of peacebuilding continues long after the stadium finally fell silent late Saturday evening with GPF organizers announcing a significant investment into a character education and service program.

Top musicians perform

The Club Olimpia finale brought together some of the hottest South American groups for a real battle of the bands. Argentine music sensation Alejandro Lerner topped the bill, with strong support from the Cuban rap group Chapa, Factoria (Panama), and Dálmata (Dominican Republic). Earlier in the show, the Paraguayan National Symphony Orchestra and Ballet, and Paraguayan groups Los Ojeda and Generación warmed up the crowd.

We must look beyond our differences to the things that unite us and can bind us together.

Dr. Hyun Jin Moon holding a dove, which was released as a symbol of peace.

Young people brought donations of food and clothing in return for a ticket to the Global Peace Festival main event.
initiative for the Asunción schools. “This is the start of a new chapter in Paraguay’s history,” said Thomas Field of the Victoria Company, one of the leading local backers of the Festival. “The time has come for this nation to shine,” said Senator Lilian Samaniego, the Festival’s organizing co-chair.

Students set an example of service

Thousands of schoolchildren in the Paraguayan capital found a new passion: service to their city and pride in the difference their volunteer efforts can make. Wearing bright blue Global Peace Festival T-shirts with the slogan “Asunción – My City” on the front and “One Family Under God” on the back, students from 15 schools gathered the morning of July 3rd for a final cleanup and celebration along Avenida Projectada 21 in one of Asunción’s poorer neighborhoods.

Teams of kids from the different schools split up to cover the 21 mini parks located along the wide boulevard. Each park had its own character: one was just a dirt football field, another a grass park, and a third was set up for volleyball. But all had similar problems: small mountains of garbage, rocks littered about, and unkempt pavement.

Some teams armed with brushes and whitewash set about painting clean new edges to sidewalks, and then used the same limestone-based paint to apply an insect-repellant layer to the lower trunks of trees. Meanwhile, others cut back branches and pruned trees, and in a typically Paraguayan scene, the wood was carted away on carts drawn by skinny but patient mule teams.

The cleanup was a joint project of the Global Peace Festival, the Unesco Schools Association, and the City of Asunción, led by Mayor Evanhy de Gallegos. “The Mayor wants to put Asunción on the international map,” said spokesperson Srta. Gilda Medina, “and events like the Global Peace Festival are important to us.” The service project was the first of its type in the country.

Head of a bustling city of over one million, the mayor is trying to strike a balance between tourism and growth while avoiding the drug and crime problems typical of large cities. “We need to find good solutions for our young people,” said Medina. “The mayor would like the cooperation of the whole city – parents, businesses, schools, and government – to keep our children safe. Seeing these kids making such an effort is an example to all of us adults.”

Leadership Conference

The International Leadership Conference on the eve of the Global Peace Festival brought together 220 participants from 80 nations, including a significant group of Young Ambassadors for Peace convened by the Youth Federation for World Peace.

At a seminar session on the prospects for peace in the Americas, former US Ambassador to Paraguay John F. Keane addressed the need for trust and transparency and said that he hoped Paraguay could set an example for all of Latin America. “Nations do best when they create societies that reward effort and merit over connection and privilege,” Keane said, “and most of all we need to create a culture of mutual trust by working together.”

The conference attracted more than half of the newly elected senators and deputies of the new Paraguayan government. A delegation met with outgoing President Nicanor Duarte at the Presidential palace, congratulating him on the nation’s first peaceful and democratic transition of power.
You’re crazy.” Not exactly the benediction we were looking for, but it seemed like those were always the first words we heard from people while organizing our “Cattle Drive for Peace and Unity,” through the rugged outback of Paraguay.

We were proposing to drive 150 cattle, all of them pregnant, a distance of 170 kilometers (106 miles) through a thorny forest and iffy roads. June is winter in Paraguay, which is actually a good thing. Summer would be ten times worse. The drovers included people from Paraguay, Uruguay, Chile, Peru, Korea, Japan, and the United States.

Working together to move the cattle was a joint learning experience. It provided an opportunity for people from the city to have a direct encounter with the country people who have very little in the way of material goods.

We wanted to help people have an intimate experience with a part of their country most had never taken time to appreciate because it’s so far from the capital, and so hard to get in and out of. And finally, the experience served as leadership education on horseback. Our text was the beautiful creation itself.

We began in Fuerte Olimpo on the Paraguay River, a couple of hours north of Asunción by small plane. The first day’s ride was the most stressful because we were all getting used to being on a horse all day, as well as getting acquainted with each horse’s individual personality.

The sun was brutally hot and in its own way it helped us get our priorities straight: water, sunscreen, more water. We helped each other as we rode—sharing water, horse advice, and bits of information about ourselves. But sitting under the star-filled sky, people said what was really on their minds and we got to know each other on a more intimate level.

Ariel, whose family owns a major sugar cane mill in Paraguay, asked Hyun Jin Moon, “We’re inspired about Paraguay, because we are Paraguayan. But we want to know what inspires you about Paraguay.”

He spoke about his early years in post-war Korea. “This is a young country. And though it isn’t wealthy, there is idealism here, and a sense of family. I hope you can keep your vision.” People respond well to him because he genuinely loves the country and makes Paraguayans proud to be Paraguayan. He recognizes their potential and tells them to believe in themselves.

We were jointly responsible for the well-being of each other and all these cattle, and we were challenged to transfer this attitude to feeling responsible for our nations.

One of our more experienced riders had his saddle cinch fail while galloping. The saddle rolled with him and he hit the gravel road hard and fast as the horse ran over him. He had a concussion, six cracked ribs, a cracked shoulder blade, and a punctured lung. There was a medical evacuation procedure for just
such an occasion. We got him to a dirt airstrip and flew him to a hospital in Asunción by small plane. He’s home now and recovering nicely.

By the second day we were all getting to know our horses. You quickly bond with someone who is willing to carry you all day on his back, under a hot sun. We originally figured on 20 kilometers per day, but cooler temperatures and strong horses enabled us to do 35 to 40 km. Bottoms and inner thighs were unaccustomed to saddles, which made everyone uncomfortable, but by day three, when we rode a full 40 kilometers, a pride of accomplishment settled over all of us.

After we took care of our horses each evening, the urge to lie down to sleep was strong. It’s these small moments that determine whether you really do live for others or think mainly of your own needs. Around the campfire, there were deep talks about horses, love for nature, and love for one’s country.

One night, Father Maldonado brought out his guitar and serenaded us with a repertoire of love songs so tenderly rendered that they made even those who don’t understand Spanish, wistful.

Breakfast one day was peanuts and hominy floating in hot sugared milk. Another morning it featured baby pig parts with “coquito,” a dry breadstick, with cabbage and coffee.

Food led to a poignant incident in the tiny village of Maria Auxiliadora (Mary the Helper). Standing alongside the road were several mothers and children with a letter asking our help in improving their one-room schoolhouse.

Hyun Jin Moon, who has a house full of his own children, started fishing through his bag lunch for something to give to the kids. Then on impulse, he handed the entire lunch to one of the mothers. The rest of us did the same. Not expecting anything at all, and partly in jest, we asked, “Since we gave you our lunches, can you make a real Paraguayan lunch for us?”

Their house was an open shelter. They had a handful of chickens and ducks in the yard and half dozen pigs out back. They butchered four chickens and a duck for our lunch. They set up a table and chairs and cooked boribori (chicken soup), mandioca bread, and duck empanadas.

We knew they had fed us several days’ worth of food. These women exemplified a traditional culture in which food may be scarce but hospitality and community are always plentiful. Before we left, we gave them a contribution. But we had to offer it; they asked for nothing.

Out in the wilderness of the Chaco, among people who have nothing, we encountered the true heart of Paraguay.

The women of Maria Auxiliadora exemplified a traditional culture in which food may be scarce but hospitality and community are always plentiful.

The people of the village of Maria Auxiliadora express concern about their school being able to meet their children’s educational needs.
Thousands of peacemakers came to celebrate peace on the lawn of the US Capitol August 9 at the Global Peace Festival USA. The gathering, billed as the largest interfaith and multicultural event ever held in Washington, DC, was the second in a series of 15 Global Peace Festivals this year, with the next planned for late August in Nairobi, Kenya.

“The great thing about the Festival is that it brings people together with neighbors from other faiths and cultures in a safe encounter,” said the Festival’s executive director Paul Murray, pastor of a fast-growing church in Baltimore. “When people see Muslims and Jews from Jerusalem and other trouble spots embracing each other in tears of forgiveness and reconciliation on the stage, they naturally reach out right away with those of other faiths in the crowd.”

Throughout the afternoon, the air vibrated with the sounds of prayers and songs of peace in many different keys. The Black Bear Native American singers called the crowd to order with a traditional prayer dance, and Dr. Muzammil Siddiqi and a large Muslim delegation shared traditional Islamic prayers of peace.

Several speakers reminded the crowd of the parallels with another great gathering in Washington 45 years ago, when Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered his immortal message, “I have a dream.” Dr. Joseph E. Lowery, one of King’s closest aides during the sixties, said the time had come to fulfill King’s dream of creating the beloved community. “We must become the ‘Joshua Generation’ Martin envisioned,” Lowery said, “leading the world into a promised land as One Family Under God.”

Latin Grammy winner Juan Fernando Velasco and gospel superstars Yolanda Adams and David Phelps – with seven Grammies between them – were among the many entertainers keeping the crowd in a festive mood, with additional performances from the 500-voice Global Peace choir and a strong contingent of local youth groups singing the Global Peace Festival theme song “Where Peace Begins.”

The Festival also celebrated the power of service to transform people and communities. “Service is just another way of saying ‘I love you,’” said Rev. Mark Farr of the Points of Light Institute, a lead festival partner. The Institute, along with the Universal Peace Federation, Boys and Girls Clubs of Washington, DC, and more than 242 partner agencies organized a recent citywide day of service. A “Food for Peace” drive helped fill the shelves of the Capitol Area Food Bank, which revealed to the Washington Post that thousands of families were newly at risk of hunger. Festival-goers brought food from as far away as Chicago.

The global theme of the Peace Festival is “One Family Under God” – a world without the barriers of race and religion – and the leadership role of America as the model of interfaith harmony.
I want to share with you a new vision for America. It is a vision rooted in our nation’s founding principles, a vision that exalts the ideal of “one nation under God” and then takes it one step further into a greater, more universal idea of “One family under God.”

It is a dream for all Americans and all people of faith. And most of all, I firmly believe that it is God’s vision for humanity.

I want to share with you a vision that exalts the ideal of “one nation under God” and takes it to a greater, more universal ideal of “One family under God.”

Let us reflect, for a moment, on the birth of our nation in 1776, when 13 “rag-tag” colonies announced their independence from the colonial yoke of Great Britain. It must have been a moment of great pain, anxiety, and exhilaration, for those who signed the Declaration of Independence knew very well what their fate would be if they had failed. The amazing thing about the Declaration is the deeply spiritual rhetoric and the clear reference to God, or the Creator, as the true source of human dignity and intrinsic rights.

I believe that same Declaration of Independence remains the most important document of our modern era. Although it was a secular document, it was leavened with spiritual undertones that evoked a prayerful yearning to establish a new land committed to principles upon which “one nation” could be created “under God.” Thus, it carried a profound spiritual authority and became the basis, I believe, of a new covenant with God. That covenant was rooted in the biblical promise first made to Israel in the book of Isaiah.

True to that prophecy, America invited all of God’s children to come and worship Him according to the dictates of their conscience. Although predominantly a Christian nation, the United States was the first nation on earth committed to universal spiritual values. It was the first nation to champion religious freedom and human rights, regardless of denomination, faith, nationality, ethnicity, and race.

America became a pluralistic melting pot, representing how the world could live in harmony under a national vision rooted in the sovereignty of God. Of course, there have been times when America has not fully lived up to its founding ideals. But at its best, it represents the hopes and aspirations of all God-affirming people around the world.

The power of this vision goes all the way back to the very beginning of human history.

Just as we have big aspirations and hopes for our children, so too did God have great expectations for humanity. God wanted His children to create a true family that could be the school of true love, true life, and true lineage. It would have been God’s family where He would dwell as the True Parent of all mankind.
Bishop Manoel Ferreira, a congressman from Brazil, announces a Global Peace Festival in Brasilia, Brazil, December 6-8, 2008.

Yet, this dream was not realized. And therefore, God had waited patiently throughout human history, often in agony and lamentation, for someone to realize His unfilled dream.

Two thousand years ago, a young carpenter’s son, Jesus Christ, went beyond the traditions of his own people, referring to God as his Father and embracing all humanity as his brothers and sisters. Jesus taught a selfless, compassionate love, the need for individual spiritual responsibility, the promise of universal salvation, and the need to create the family of God.

Tragically Jesus’ life was cut short, and the new wine he was to bring was unfortunately poured into less-than-new wine skins. Yet, his legacy and message lived on through the foundation of world Christianity.

It wasn’t until the modern era with the founding of the United States that the true, universal spirit of Christianity took root. Instead of espousing any one faith or denomination, Americans have enjoyed the freedom to follow the dictates of their conscience, with the hope of creating a nation united under the sovereignty of God.

This became the basis of the American dream in building “One nation under God.” The dream to create “One family under God” did not end with Jesus. It remained latent within the Christian message, waiting for someone to rekindle Jesus’ universal and global mission.

My father, the Reverend Dr. Sun Myung Moon, has devoted his entire life to the fulfillment of that mission. He uprooted his family and invested 34 years of his life to awaken America to its providential calling.

This dream of building “One family under God” is not just the dream of one man, one woman, or one family but the dream of all humanity and, most of all, the dream of God.

Dr. Joseph E. Lowery, President Emeritus, The Southern Christian Leadership Conference

A day before he was assassinated, Martin Luther King said, “I’ve been to the mountain top and I’ve seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you, but we as a people will get to the Promised Land!” When he said “we as a people,” he meant not just black people or white people, not just Jews or gentiles but people of every race, creed, ethnicity, and color on this planet.

We appeal to people of courage and conscience that we become “the Joshua Generation” that Martin envisioned leading world into a Promised Land where we as One Family Under God will work together to end the barbarism of war, the insanity of racism, and the scourge of poverty. Let us do for the entire world on our watch in the 21st century what the nonviolent warriors convened by Dr. King did for America and the world on their watch in the 20th century.

Dr. Joseph E. Lowery calls for new leadership for a “Joshua Generation.”

Bishop Manoel Ferreira, a congressman from Brazil, announces a Global Peace Festival in Brasilia, Brazil, December 6-8, 2008.
The Americas Summit in Washington, DC, April 28 to May 2, 2008, brought together 160 delegates from 32 nations in North and South America from Canada to Argentina and Chile to consider the challenges and opportunities for better relationships throughout the hemisphere. The conference participants included six former heads of state and government, four current speakers of the house, 27 congressmen and senators from different legislatures, members of the diplomatic corps, clergy from key faith traditions, and community, youth and women leaders.

With the hopeful news of the election of new governments in many nations on the one hand, and concern about the rise of potentially destabilizing populist movements on the other, the participants were set the difficult task of examining new paradigms for leadership and development.

Some speakers proposed that the region can take up the road of peace by sustained economic growth accompanied by genuine human development. “The best way to achieve sustainable growth in our countries,” said Hon Lilian Samaniego, a senator from Paraguay, “is through international cooperation. This collaboration should include Latin American countries themselves along with our North American neighbors and our European friends, with whom we share profound historical and cultural ties.”

Hon. Peter Montoute, Vice Prime Minister of St. Lucia, said that the Caribbean nations with their experiences in the areas of human rights, adherence to the rule of law, and smooth transfer of governments can be positive influences in any closer ties which may be established within the region.

This issue includes excerpts from speeches that reflect a diversity of backgrounds and experiences but express similar visions for collaborations to promote peace and development.

The event was part of UPF’s series of International Leadership Conferences, designed to examine in some depth the importance of shared spiritual and cultural values as the most important ingredient for change. The ILC introduced the key concepts of the UPF Peace Education curriculum, which emphasizes strong families, interfaith unity, and an unwavering commitment to personal integrity and self-discipline as the foundations for lasting change.

One of the highlights of the three-day conference was a field trip by chartered flight to the George Bush Presidential Library at Texas A & M University in College Station, Texas. Newly renovated, the library offers an intimate glimpse into the long life of public service of the former president, and was of great interest to many of the delegates from South and Central America who remember the Bush presidency’s welcome focus on the region.

“We believe that groups of political, religious and community leaders such as these working together in new partnerships hold the key to lasting peace,” said Dr. Thomas Walsh, UPF Secretary General. Leaders should act not like the quarreling brothers that they sometimes were while in active office, but with wisdom and impartiality act more like the parents of their nations.

“Of course, some may indeed doubt that peace is possible,” said Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon in her closing address, “but where there is a will, there is always a way—especially if it is the will of God!”
I’m glad to see all of you here. I had a nice visit with Rev. Moon and thank him for bringing this prestigious group to Texas A & M University.

First of all I want to thank the organizers from the Universal Peace Federation and The Washington Times Foundation. I believed then and I believe today that The Washington Times has helped to bring a much-needed sense of balance and perspective to news coverage in our capital city.

The challenges we face in our own country and those regional matters we share as neighbors are as complex as they are compelling. As a result, the demands being placed on many public servants, like you, are as great as they have ever been. These challenges are too important to leaders entrusted to provide for the general welfare to get wrong.

Now is not the time for us to start turning inward—speaking of my country. Back in 1990 I remember taking what many people considered an ill-advised trip to Cartagena, Colombia, as president to show America’s solidarity with those who simply want to live in peace and toss aside the shackles and the dangerous dictates of the drug lords and terrorists. But I am very glad I went and showed that the United States cares about this battle against narcotrafficking.

Working together for peace and development in Colombia is terribly important. Throughout the hemisphere it is important, and I hope it continues to be an area of strong and productive bi-partisanship. It should be a matter of conscience and not conflict.

I salute you for your commitment to excellence in public service. And I salute Rev. Moon and his associates for what he is doing to help in that very important way.

I know I get a big argument on this right here in the United States, but I believe politics and political service is honorable. I believe that public service is an honorable calling. Sure, there are people who break the public trust. But I was delighted to have spent a good deal of time in elected office and appointed office. I have great respect for the system.
God chose and raised up the United States of America in accordance with His providential plan, and trained the American people through Christianity. Civilization on the North American continent, rooted in faith, has bequeathed to the world the principles of freedom of religion and respect for equal human rights. On America’s shoulders rests the responsibility to bring harmony and oneness among the world’s 6.5 billion people and to expedite the creation of a peaceful, ideal world.

The present time marks an important milestone in the development of civilization. We stand at a critical junction of human history where we can complete the providence of building God’s fatherland and peace kingdom as the culmination of human history.

We must work quickly to complete the reform of the United Nations and also to fulfill the mission of the Universal Peace Federation as the “Abel” or Peace UN, which was launched in September 23, 2007. In this way, we will expand God’s ideal of creation into politics, economy, culture, and education, all under the realm of God’s heart and love.

No nation can be an exception from this. All the walls and barriers that divide the human family are to break down before the waves of heavenly fortune coming to earth in this era. As you become the owners and inheritors of the victorious foundation brought by the True Parents of heaven and earth, you will build God’s fatherland with your own hands!

Whoever practices true love will live with God, share His happiness, and enjoy the right to participate as an equal in His work. A life lived for the sake of others is the absolute precondition for entering the kingdom of heaven. It is the new way of life, modeled on a family whose members all live peacefully centering on God. It is your responsibility as Ambassadors for Peace to seek after and establish families of the kingdom of God.

Please do not forget that democracy as we enjoy it today is essentially an ideology of brotherhood. In that sense, democracy itself is serving a transitional role, and we should quickly take a revolutionary leap forward into a civilization of God’s heart and love, the age of the true parents and the true families.

I sincerely wish and pray that you will engrave on your hearts these words I have conveyed to you and use them in educating your children, other young people, and all the citizens of your nations.

May God’s blessings be with your families, your nations, the Pacific Rim region, and the “Peace UN”!

Civilization on the North American continent, rooted in faith, has bequeathed to the world the principles of freedom of religion and respect for equal human rights.

– SUN MYUNG MOON
On my last full day in Jamaica, I was chatting with a lady seated on the bus as I stood over her hanging onto the overhead strap. She asked how we were enjoying our stay and was curious to know if we’d gotten to Negril and Montego Bay to enjoy the beaches there. She was dismayed to learn that we had only been to a beach close to Kingston and would miss some of the typical tourist spots. Then I explained that we really weren’t in Jamaica for a holiday but to teach character education. That’s when she said, “Welcome, welcome, welcome to Jamaica!”

Like everywhere else in the world today, Jamaica is dealing with the breakdown of traditional families and all the social problems that can and do ensue. The local newspaper headlines last week in Kingston were about the Prime Minister’s efforts to crack down on crime.

Our UPF team of character educators had made plans to come to Jamaica to help staff a UPF camp entitled “Fighting HIV/AIDS Through Character Building.” That camp will serve 40 to 60 young people for a five-day experience from August 4-8 at the Half Way Tree Elementary School. But before that camp could begin we found ourselves on July 14 at a newly formed summer day camp: Sir Howard Cooke’s Thursday Group Character Development Centre in Nannyville, a neighborhood of Kingston.

The Thursday Group has several Ambassadors for Peace among its members, and UPF’s representative in Jamaica, Mr. Dennis Salmon, has been a member of the group since 2004. The Chairman of the Thursday Group, Rev. Martin Spade, is an Ambassador for Peace.

On August 1, 1991 Sir Howard Cooke was appointed to the position of Governor-General for Jamaica by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Although this is largely a ceremonial position since Jamaica is no longer a colony of Great Britain, Sir Howard used his position to gather respected men and women of the community to meet with him every Thursday from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Some of these clergy of diverse faiths, professionals, and business men and women continued to meet even after Sir Howard’s retirement in 2006.

The Thursday Group members are true patriots of Jamaica who want to see their country realize its true potential. Whatever the topic of discussion, they concluded that the root of society’s evils is a lack of good character. Eventually some became weary of talking and began offering after-school tutoring and homework help in a building that is being renovated through grant money. When renovations are finished, the building will include office space, a library, and meeting rooms in addition to the classrooms and dance studio already in use. The summer camp was funded through grants from the Jamaica Social Investment Fund.

Justin Noll of New York and Alice Roschuni of Maryland worked with the youngest group of children from age 6 to 10. Chifuku (Chief) Kuwahara...
from Boston and I were in a classroom of around 30 students from ages 11 to 16. We assisted the teachers for the academic classes at the beginning of each day, and then we held the character development classes.

Using the Discovering the Real Me curriculum, we did our best to get students thinking about how to make good choices in their lives. Using a chapter from Book 7, “Finding Your Way Home,” Chief and I helped students to become more familiar with their conscience, which can serve as a compass when pressure comes to stray from the best path to a happy, successful life.

One of Chief’s favorite stories is from Book 12, Chapter 3, “Me and My Shadow.” There is a tale told by a Native American grandfather to his grandson about the two wolves at war within him. When the boy asks which wolf wins, the grandfather replies, “The one that I feed.” We discussed how to feed the good wolf and starve the bad one inside each of us.

We were thanked repeatedly by the camp director, Mr. Ivan Coore, and the Thursday Group Project Manager, Dr. Sitaram Poddar, for coming and sharing our lessons with children and adults alike. Sir Howard Cooke visited the camp on July 22 and expressed his gratitude to each person on our team.

Our team went to Trinidad and Tobago to teach character education at St. Joseph’s Primary School and Sealots Community School July 2-27, 2008. At St. Joseph’s, we had about 70 students and at Sealots 33 students. We taught stories from the Discovering the Real Me curriculum and integrated icebreaker games with team-building activities, question and answer sessions, drawing and writing exercises, discussion and sharing, singing, and sports.

The students gave really good solutions for the peacemaker challenge, a group activity where students come up with solutions for everyday problems such as being insulted on the football field. The drawings the students made of themselves being peacemakers showed us the level of conflict they have to deal with and their willingness to tackle it as peacemakers.

The role our character education program plays in decreasing gang violence and crime became clear. We could see even from the first day that fighting is a common occurrence in the community. Reacting physically was a very ingrained response to any provocation. Yet during the camp we overheard two girls complimenting each other outside of the classroom. One group at St. Joseph’s worked together to efficiently resolve a conflict between two girls in the group, without teacher assistance.

When we evaluated the program, we found that the stories in the curriculum were effective in teaching the lessons. Incidents of violence and fighting decreased throughout our time there.
The small girl watched quietly as green mosaic tiles were laid to form the scarf and dress of a Muslim child. “What’s that?” she asked shyly, pointing to the figure. “It’s a little Muslim girl. You see she is standing together with two other Dutch children,” a participant in the Religious Youth Service (RYS) explained. The girl, herself wearing a scarf, smiled in delighted understanding. “Oh, I see!” she exclaimed. “They are different, but one!” This simple message of the mosaic-covered bench will be proclaimed at the Lucas School in a largely Turkish and Moroccan section of Utrecht, the Netherlands.

With globalization, our exposure to people and cultures from all over the world is increasing. Yet, it’s difficult for relationships among people of different cultures to go beyond tolerance and perhaps respect; it is rare for the average person to develop a sincere curiosity and appreciation for each other’s differences. Rather than living together in an intercultural society, we are creating communities of different cultures which exist side by side. Is this really valuing our diversity?

Such issues are very prominent in the Netherlands. As Europe’s most densely populated country with 16 million people, its survival and well-being depend on people’s ability to live side by side in mutual respect. The Netherlands reportedly has the second-largest proportion of Muslims in Europe (6 percent), and in such a country interreligious comprehension and friendships are crucial.

However, religiously motivated violence, especially the murder of filmmaker Theo Van Gogh by a Muslim fanatic in 2004, drew attention to the need for interreligious comprehension, dialogue, and friendships. There are tensions among the Moroccan and Turkish communities in Utrecht in relation to the larger Dutch society. Integrating immigrants into a “mosaic culture” is a topic of discussion in cities such as Den Haag, but young people from different religions and cultures do not have frequent opportunities to meet and mix.

Religious Youth Service, a project of the Universal Peace Federation, creates opportunities for youth of different religions, cultures, and backgrounds to engage in dialogue, learn to know each other, and spend time living together with a common purpose of serving the community. In strengthening the deepest values that are common to most religions, RYS encourages people to practice their faith through contributing to the community and connecting with other faiths and cultures.

This year’s July 7-16 intercultural youth project brought national and international participants to a Moroccan and Turkish immigrant section of Utrecht to help promote integration of immigrants into the Dutch culture, building on the 2007 project in Utrecht in collaboration with Kerk en Wereld [Church and World] and Youth Service Initiative. This year, participants worked much more closely with the local mosques and community organizations to meet local needs.

There were many opportunities for the youth of the area to interact with our intercultural group.
School children visited daily with their teachers and on their own after school. They joined in designing and creating mosaics on benches and a wall. One design integrates the Dutch flag with the crescent moon and star (symbols of Morocco) and the Turkish five-pointed star. At the center of the bench are three figures: a Dutch boy and girl together with a little girl in a long dress and head scarf. A second project, a dialogue bench, involved putting mosaics on three facing benches. The head bench features a sun with rays streaming from it, a symbol of life and hope, while the two supportive benches depict many colored hands raised together integrated into the rays of hope. The benches are designed to facilitate communication. Inspirational quotes on creativity are planned as a contemplative centerpiece for the benches. The third project, a large wall mural, sports symbols of joy, laughter, and music.

Participants shared in aspects of the local and immigrant cultures. The youth cultural center arranged three workshops: in rap, Mid-eastern drumming, and Bollywood dancing. A cultural evening program allowed everyone to share their newly acquired abilities and also talents reflective of their native culture. A visit to Gouda, the famed cheese market, tempted the adventurous to taste traditional foods of the area including raw herring dipped in onions. A four-hour bike ride, employing the most common means of travel in the Netherlands, was a memorable experience together with a boat ride through the canals.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect were the many visits to religious sites. We attended the services of Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Hindu, and Universal Sufi faiths to more deeply understand their beliefs and their related worship ceremonies. Members of each of the faith traditions shared their unique way of worshipping the Divine, allowing the visiting youth a chance to take part in their worship if they desired, observe the devotions, ask questions, and discover for themselves what and why each group worshipped as they did.

Each religion expressed warmth and sincerity toward the group. A special highlight to these visits was the gracious service of a Sikh priest in wrapping turbans around the heads of the participants. It seems it is the simple acts of joy and friendship that are the true expressions of religious love and faith. They are the embodiment and expressions of true loving relationship, the essence of all faith traditions.

For more information, see rys.net and youthserviceinitiative.org.

The combinations of colors and images convey the message that we may seem different, but we are one.

With every new place of worship that we visited, my mind became more and more open to the new experiences and concepts. I left with the desire to continue to expand my knowledge and experience of other faiths.

— AIKA WATANABE
World politics at present leans toward globalization through regional unions. The American dream, for instance, is no longer the North American dream, but the Pan-American dream, because God wants to bless all Americans. In 2005, American scholar Jeremy Rifkin published a book entitled *European Dream* praising Europeans for the recent miracles of abolishing borders, using a common currency, and creating lasting peace among former enemies. At the core of the European dream, Rifkin stresses that some universal values make Europe attractive to all mankind. In a similar fashion, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan Taro Aso upholds the Asian dream. Rather than a dream of economic success, it is about Asian people becoming role models. The Asian man and Asian woman are becoming attractive in popular culture, ethically and esthetically, Aso believes.

Such American, European, and Asian dreams may help define the African dream. A crucial step is to promote African unity. In the wake of independence, Pan-Africanism was strong but ambiguous. Its worldview naively embraced materialistic and humanistic views borrowed from Western thought, assuming that socialism or rationalism would solve the challenges Africa constantly faces. Other thinkers tried to promote gratitude, or African pride, in reaction to a condescending attitude toward Africa and the black people. More recently, Pan-Africanism refers to a worldview and movement that seeks to unify both native Africans and those of the African diaspora as part of a “global African community.”

In our view, universal values offer a basis for drawing people together beyond boundaries of race and culture. UPF, through its educational activities and publications such as *World Scripture*, is working hard to communicate unifying, universal values.

We have clear views about love and beauty. The view of African beauty can easily be one-sided: African men (some women too) try to become attractive stars in sports while African women aspire to become top models. A more comprehensive view of beauty and love should combine spiritual and physical components of beauty. People who focus not just on promoting their own individual image but on contributing to the well-being of others radiate a deeper beauty. When someone transcends racial divides and finds ways to resolve issues that affect people globally, people feel that he or she is like a friend to the whole human family. For this reason, Nelson Mandela is considered one of the most attractive persons in the world today. He exemplifies the African dream and Pan-Africanism.

**When someone transcends racial divides and finds ways to resolve issues that affect people globally, people feel that he or she is like a friend to the whole human family.**

**Life goals as a framework for the African dream**

UPF-France set up a working group on the theme of the African Dream that meets once a month to discuss a specific issue. So far, we have addressed tourism, languages and communication in Africa, development, and family structures. Our blog (http://lrafricain.blog4ever.com, in French) contains hopeful stories. The stories that have attracted the
The dreams of African people are the same as every person’s dream:

- To achieve maturity of character, to become a person of heart who cultivates the harmony of mind and body and lives for the sake of others.
- To create an ideal family where the four types of love (parents’ love, conjugal love, siblings’ love, and children’s love) are realized. Furthermore, to establish one’s family as a school of love and peace, and expand that to one’s community, nation, and continent.
- To achieve creative mastery over nature and the kind of development that can bring lasting prosperity while preserving the environment.

UPF-France’s Working Groups

Other working groups include the dignity of women, the family as the school of love, spirituality, and human development. These various working groups serve several purposes:

- As an “Abel United Nations,” UPF should analyze and address pressing issues with more transcendent ideas than typical of humanistic views. All those issues should be approached with true love and be grounded in our five principles of peace. Our working groups are think tanks and will communicate their research and proposals through lectures, publications, and blogs.
- Working groups help mobilize Ambassadors for Peace and attract more people to become Ambassadors for Peace. Through strengthening and extending our network, our national peace council will gain credibility and the potential to have a broader impact.
- The working groups help prepare for our Global Peace Festival and make alliances with other groups working on similar issues.

Upcoming Global Peace Festivals

Kenya
August 29-31
Mongolia
September 6-9
Canada
October 2-5
Malaysia
October 17-19
Japan
November 13-16
United Kingdom
November 22-23
Brazil
December 6-8
Philippines
December 10-12
Israel
December 10-17
UPF Supports the International Day of Peace with projects in over 100 nations.