

UPF Founder Speaks in Athens

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Yong Cheol Song

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UPF — Greece

Athens, Greece — On May 3, Rev. Sun Myung Moon announced that he wanted to give his proclamation “Building a World of Universal Peace at a Time of Global Crisis” in Athens, the birthplace of European civilization. As a result some 500 Unificationists and Ambassadors for Peace eagerly converged the next day on the Ledra Marriott Hotel in Athens for the fourth speech of the European leg of the UPF Founders’ World Tour.

Professor Apollonios of the Research Institute into Greek Therapeutic Music from Athens played some traditional Greek harp pieces as the capacity audience settled down, and the program began with Dr. Thomas Walsh, President of UPF International, congratulating the audience on their magnificent response to the invitation at short notice and explained, “We are here to hear God’s words and inscribe them in our heart.”

Father Georgi Spasov from the Orthodox Christian tradition and Mr. Taj Hamad from a Muslim background and Secretary General of UPF International, shared words of blessing by way of an interfaith invocation.

The congratulatory address was given by Prof. Dr. Alik Mitsakos, President of Women in International Security in Greece and founder of the Youth Leadership Camp in Greece: “Peace in order to be created has first to be preserved. Peace is the fruit of faith and imagination and of keeping our personal values particularly in the family. Dr. Moon and the UPF have worked very hard to realize that, and we are very happy to see him in Athens today.”

Rev. Dr. Yong Cheol Song, Chair of UPF-Europe, warmly welcomed the audience and thanked them for their responsive to the invitation, which demonstrated their profound appreciation of the proclamation of the “God-centered, providential message to the world, calling for people of every religion, race, nationality, and culture to come together as the restored sons and daughters of one God.”

Hearts and minds were further uplifted by a beautiful rendering of the song, “The Holy City,” sung by Ping Jie Chen accompanied by Prof. Apollonios’ harp music. The tour video presented Rev. Moon someone whose life is epitomized by the phrase “Try, try, and try again,” and Dr. Walsh introduced several of Father and Mother Moon’s daughters, sons, and daughters-in-law, culminating in Rev. Hyung Jin Moon, the International Chairman of UPF. He said: “I truly have been blessed with the best father and mother in the world” and explained that “only in the last several years did I awaken to the spiritual value of Father and Mother Moon.... I want to ask you to do your very best to understand True Parents’ value.”

Father and Mother Moon came to the stage to a standing ovation from an audience many of whom had travelled hundreds of miles over the previous 24 hours to be present. Father Moon delivered his text with many additional remarks and did not conclude until after 11:30 pm, which was wonderful for the more than 150 Albanians who had left their homes very early that morning but due to delays at the border had not been able to arrive till nearly 10 pm. They were so grateful for the opportunity to be there, even though there was only standing room for many of them.

“Who knows about true love,” Father Moon asked in one of his extemporaneous additions to the text. “People with Ph.D. degrees don’t know about it. It’s a big problem. Through religion and leading this kind of life I came to know about true love.”

He made special references to Athens and its legacy of Greek civilization: “The Acropolis and Parthenon — there are so many gods there! But you need to have this relationship with the one God. All the people who had a place in history in the Mediterranean are here with you (in spirit) listening today. You may think it’s not true but it is! I

had to wait a long time to speak these words in Athens.”

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