

**UN Headquarters, NY
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United Religions Initiative
World Peace Prayer Society**

THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE AT THE UNITED NATIONS

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon Rings Peace Bell

Newly elected UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched the 2007 International Day of Peace with the traditional ringing of the Peace Bell at 9:30 a.m. in the Japanese Garden. He delivered his powerful message for the International Day of Peace, stating that peace is the mission of the United Nations, but that it is not easy. He urged, "On this International Day, let us promise to make peace not just a priority, but a passion. Let us pledge to do more, wherever we are in whatever way we can, to make every day a day of peace."



Mr. Ban noted with sadness the passing of



Peace Messenger Luciano Pavarotti, and introduced Michael Douglas, Elie Weisel, Jane Goodall, and newly appointed Messenger of Peace Princess Haya of Jordan. He asked for a Minute of Silence, while students from the UN International School raised the flags of all 192 UN Member States. As a finale, a children's choir sang a lovely song. The Messengers of Peace paused on their way out to take photos with the UNIS students, some of whom were resplendent in their native attire. All then proceeded to the Student Observance in Conference Room 4.



UN Student Observance of International Day of Peace

The annual youth event organized by the UN Dept. of Public Information in association with Pathways to Peace, United Religions Initiative and the World Peace Prayer Society for the International Day of Peace was a great success. 900 people attended the event in UN Conference Room 4, which meant that some adults were standing most of the morning.



Under-Secretary General for Communications and Information Mr. Kiyoo Akasaka opened the event by introducing Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. It was an honor and inspiration to have the Secretary-General address the youth. He was followed by the Vice-President of the General Assembly, Dr. Hjalmar Hannesson of Iceland. Next came the Messengers of Peace. Actor Michael Douglas spoke about the horrors of nuclear weapons. Dr. Jane Goodall talked about environmental degradation and said "hello" in chimpanzee. Dr. Elie Wiesel addressed



the horrors people can subject upon one another and the importance of respect to break the cycle. HRH



Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein of Jordan, who had been appointed that day as a Messenger of Peace by the Secretary-General, spoke about eloquently about those in need and our obligation to help.

The students were linked by satellite with youth at UN Peacekeeping sites in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lebanon and Sudan, providing information on life in areas of conflict and testimony from young people sharing their personal experience of war.



Discussion and questions were handled with great skill by our young moderators, Kymberli Stewart and Sarah Nadeau. There were five youth presenters in four areas. Ana Dodson of Peruvian Hearts talked about the importance of the Stop Child Poverty Campaign and shared her work. She is a 14-year-old who was adopted as a baby from an orphanage in Peru. Her family returned to visit

Peru when she was 11 years old. She saw the need of so many orphans and decided to raise money to help the orphans in Peru. Mitch Paine, a college freshman from Nebraska, spoke about the wonderful program



founded by Dr. Goodall, Roots and Shoots. James Ajokomo Lual told of his harrowing escape from the Sudan by walking over 600 miles into Ethiopia, and how he went from being a refugee to a recent college graduate. Frederick Huballa and Taylor Reed, both representing PeaceJam, called the group to take action! They shared the "Call to Global Action" written by the Nobel Peace Laureates to invite the youth to take action on the MDGs and nuclear weapons.



Monica Willard introduced Mrs. Ban Soon-taek, wife of the Secretary-General, who rang the bell for peace. This bell was crafted from recycled weapons. Everyone joined with the entire building in the Minute of Silence at 12 noon.



Hip-hop artist Chris "Kazi" Rolle, star of feature film "The Hip Hop Project," shared a video about using hip-hop to promote good and dazzled the students by performing one of his hit songs. He also taught the students a hip-hop version of "May



Peace Prevail on Earth" to accompany Deborah Moldow leading the World Peace Flag Ceremony.

Students came forward raising each flag one by one, as everyone called out the names of the 192 UN Member States. The Peacekeeping sites also took part via satellite, and projections showed the various regions of the world and young people there celebrating the International Day of Peace with the message "May Peace Prevail on Earth." Mrs. Ban also participated in the Flag Ceremony, proudly raising the flag of the United Nations. As always, the World Peace Flag Ceremony left everyone feeling inspired and uplifted, capping the event with a joyful message of peace.



Ms. Elizabeth Baldwin-Penn, Chief of the Public Relations Section of UN DPI closed the morning with appreciation to all who organized the event. Special thanks go to Dawn Johnston-Britton for vision and production. The morning was fun, rich in information and left all participants with many ideas and direction for taking action to promote the culture of peace.

May Peace Prevail on Earth!