

## UPF Europe and the Middle East Panelists Discuss Ukraine's Post-War Prospects

Jacques Marion  
December 13, 2024  
Chairman, UPF-Europe and the Middle East



Vienna, Austria – UPF-Europe and Middle East organized an International Leadership Conference at the Vienna Diplomatic Academy on the theme, "Europe and Ukraine: Common Perspectives and Values," on December 13, 2024. The event was co-hosted by the Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy (AIES) and the Ukrainian Peace Council.

The conference followed a fact-finding tour initiated by UPF-Europe and Middle East in Kyiv, Ukraine, in November 2023. At that time, [the Ukrainian Peace Council organized a roundtable discussion at Ukraine Drahomanov University, and a visit to the Peace School project run by UPF-Ukraine.](#)

On December 13, the Ukrainian delegation visited the Austrian Parliament, where they were reminded that the Austrian Empire's parliamentary assembly had included Ukrainian representatives. The delegates met with **Member of Parliament Pia Maria Wieninger**, from the Socialist Democratic Party, who confirmed her country's support and her personal support for war-torn Ukraine.



During the conference, Ukrainian participants presented their views on the current war situation in their country, and on future prospects for Europe and Ukraine.

The first session, "Europe – Ukraine: A Common Cultural Heritage," was moderated by the president of UPF-Czech Republic, **Dr. Juraj Lajda**. Conference co-hosts, UPF-Austria President **Mr. Peter Haider** and vice president of the Ukrainian Peace Council, **Dr. Volodymyr Novokhatsky**, delivered welcoming greetings.

After thanking Austria for welcoming 90,000 Ukrainian refugees, Dr. Novokhatsky introduced his organization, which works with domestic and international civil society groups to advance peace in Ukraine.

The first panelist, **Dr. Werner Fasslabend**, AIES president and former Austrian minister of defense, briefly commented on European democratic ideals before discussing the implications for the war of the upcoming Trump administration in the United States. He realistically described the challenges Ukraine will face on the path toward EU integration, and urged Ukrainians not to waver in their objectives.

**Dr. Vasyl Kremen**, president of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine and former

minister of education, underlined Ukraine's ideological, religious and mental affinity with Europe. He described their common political traditions, insisting that "Ukraine is returning home to the European family of nations."



**Prof. Angela Mickley**, who teaches peace education at Potsdam University in Germany, shared her experiences in conflict resolution, from Northern Ireland to South Africa, where she aided communication between hostile communities and fighting parties. She highlighted the need to "separate the perpetrator from the deed," respecting both the victim and the offender in a conflict.

**Dr. Viktor Andruschenko**, rector of Drahomanov Ukrainian University and president of the International Association of Rectors of Pedagogical Universities of Europe, said that education plays a crucial role in overcoming threats of totalitarianism. He pleaded for a resumption of the association's Pedagogical Constitution of Europe, interrupted by the war, which aims to make teachers the "guarantors of civilization's longevity."



**Amb. Valery Tsybukh**, president of the Council for Environmental Security of Ukraine, said that Ukrainian NGOs must focus on "post-war economic revival, not just recovery," and a "renaissance" through innovations and advanced technologies.

The second session, "Europe – Ukraine: Perspectives for a Common Future," moderated by UPF-Central Europe President Dr. Dieter **Schmidt**, began with greetings by UPF-Ukraine President **Dr. Mykhailo Ilin**, who has been maintaining the UPF Peace School despite the challenges of war.

**Dr. Yaroslav Yuvsechko**, vice president of the National Association of Religious Study in Ukraine, reviewed the religious landscape of Ukraine since the beginning of the war. He described the emergence, since 2018, of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, which is aligned with the Moscow Patriarchate-related Ukrainian Orthodox Church. He noted the patriotic alignment of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, and a diversity of trends among protestant churches and Muslim organizations.

**Hon. Lukas Mandl**, Austrian member of the European Parliament, reaffirmed the Catholic Church's full support for Ukraine. He said that religion may sometimes be misused, but it essentially promotes values such as human dignity and freedom, which is God-given. He said that Ukraine will be integrated into Europe, but it must first win the war and undergo a long reconstruction process.

**Ms. Tetyana Fedunova**, head of the Association of Schools of Kyiv City and vice president of the UNESCO association in Ukraine, shared the traumatic experiences of schoolchildren under daily Russian missile attacks. She described the Peace School project that she is leading with UPF-Ukraine, in which students are trained as junior peace ambassadors, meeting with diplomats, politicians and foreign

students, and learning to develop through serving others.



**Dr. Afsar Rathor**, a former UN Peacekeeping Mission executive, shared his experiences with conflict around the world and assessed the prospective costs of Ukraine's postwar reconstruction. He outlined benefits that Ukraine integration would bring to the European Union, citing the Green Deal project, since Ukraine's potential renewable energy output is seven times the European Union's demand.



The presentations on the highly topical issue of the war in Ukraine, plus the attendance of many eminent Ukrainian scholars and educators, stimulated great audience interest, and both panels concluded with passionate questions and comments.

In conclusion, UPF-Europe and Middle East Co-chairman **Mr. Jacques Marion** explained UPF's contribution to the Universal Peace Charter recently launched by the Cambodian government as an international framework for solidarity and peace between states, and between states and non-state actors. He announced the launch of an Asia Pacific Union Forum at the upcoming UPF World Summit in Korea in April 2025, in the presence of parliamentarians from around the world. The forum will address tensions in Northeast Asia and on the Korean Peninsula, which directly impact Europe through the war in Ukraine.

At the close of the conference, the Ambassador for Peace of the Year for 2024 was awarded to **Mr. Victor Andrushchenko**; and the honorary title of Ambassador for Peace was awarded to **Ms. Lesya Korolyk-Boyko**, chair of Progress of Women Peacekeepers in the Diaspora; **Ms. Julia Mokh**, opera singer, co-organizer and member of the jury of the International Vocal Competition Kvitka Cisyk; and **Ms. Natalia Evdokimova**, rector of the Pylyp Orlyk International Classical University.



# UNIVERSAL PEACE FEDERATION

A Global Network of Peacebuilders



Who we are ▾

Where we are ▾

What we do

Resources ▾

Peace Forum ▾

Events ▾

Search ...

## Connections



[View in flipbook](#)  
[PDF version](#)

## Printed newsletter



[View in flipbook](#)  
[PDF versions](#)  
[On-line versions](#)

## Publications

- [Education](#)
- [Magazines](#)

## Latest Events

No events

## e-Newsletter signup

Name

Email

☐ I agree with the  
[Privacy policy](#)

## Login for MENA

### Login for MENA

Username



You are here: [Home](#) / [What we do](#) / [Conferences](#) / [Regional conferences](#) / [2023](#)  
 / [Roundtable of Experts Seeks Lessons from Russia-Ukraine War](#)

## Roundtable of Experts Seeks Lessons from Russia-Ukraine War

Written by: UPF Europe and Middle East

03 November 2023



Dr. Vasyl Kremen, President, Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine.

Kyiv, Ukraine – UPF-Ukraine and the Ukrainian Peace Council held a roundtable discussion on “Russia-Ukraine War: Lessons for Europe and the World” at the Drahomanov Ukrainian State University on November 3, 2023. Ukrainian scientists, educators, and journalists took part, as well as foreign guests from France, Germany, the Czech Republic, Austria and Switzerland. Dr. Volodymyr Lavrinenko, vice rector of the university, served as host.

Former Minister of Education of Ukraine Dr. Mykhailo Zgurovsky, who currently serves as rector of the National Technical University of Ukraine “Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute” and head of the Ukrainian Peace Council, gave his analysis on what is necessary to end the war.

He pointed out that the search for military, diplomatic and ideological solutions to conflicts was underway at flashpoints all around the world, including the Middle East. “It is becoming clear that the prolongation of these conflicts leads to their globalization,” he said. “Humanity is facing a new challenge – the search for a new, effective security architecture. This is the main challenge for the Universal Peace Federation, the Ukrainian Peace Council, and many other peacekeeping organizations.”

Dr. Vasyl Kremen, President of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, who is also a former minister of education, said that the cause of the Russia-Ukraine war was that the leadership of the Russian Federation lacks understanding of current civilizational progress, and is trying to return to distant times when the power of the state was determined by its population and the territory it occupied.

Dr. Oleksandr Sagan, Former Head of the State Religion Department, spoke about the role of religion in this war, and Dr. Ruslan Khalikov, an expert from the Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation, noted that more than 500 religious buildings have been destroyed during the war.


Amb. Valery Tsybukh, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine and head of the NGO “Environmental Safety Council, emphasized the large-scale ecocide that is currently taking place in Ukraine. He noted that almost 20% of the protected areas in the country are under threat. He also pointed out that 30% of the territory has been mined – an area twice as large as Austria – and that it will take decades to clear away the mines once the war is over.


Tetyana Fedunova, head of the Association of Kyiv Schools, noted that students from the No. 85 School in Kyiv are now studying in 35 countries around the world. She also provided a report on 10 years of experience implementing the Peace School project, which provides leadership training and fosters a culture of peace among students.

Ksenia Abramovych, a student and youth ambassador for peace, described her own experience at the Peace School and emphasized the need to educate youth in the philosophy of peace. Representative of the UNESCO National Commission Olena Stepa noted that the desire for peace is engraved in the heart of every person, and that understanding between different cultures and religions is absolutely necessary in the modern world.

In his speech, Jacques Marion, co-chair of the Universal Peace Federation in Europe and Middle East, emphasized the inability of the United Nations to fulfill its task of preventing wars. The main problem, in his opinion, is that the UN is dominated by national interests, which obscure its original purpose.

Dr. Dieter Schmidt, the chair of the Universal Peace Federation of Central Europe, noted that education is the transformative force of society. And, he said, the Russian invasion of Ukraine is an attack on fundamental Christian values and a denial of human dignity.

Password 



Remember Me

Log in

[Forgot your password?](#)

[Forgot your username?](#)

Dr. Arsar Rathor, president of the ecological organization LIUS-SOIL and former head of UNIDU projects, said that interreligious dialogue is a tool for achieving peace, and religious leaders and institutions can be mediators in conflicts. He cited the examples of Rwanda, Mozambique and other countries.

History has proven, noted Dr. Rathor, that even superpowers cannot defeat the will and spirit of the people. He gave the examples of Vietnam and Afghanistan, both with limited resources, that defeated two superpowers in the last 30 years. National spirit is the main motivating factor that encourages people to defend their homeland, he said.

Dr. Juraj Lajda, president of UPF-Czech Republic, told how his organization is trying to help Ukrainian children maintain their identity. He demonstrated a recently published book of children's fairy tales in Ukrainian and Czech. Mrs. Chantal Komagata from Switzerland, coordinator for UPF-Central Europe, spoke about her program to provide humanitarian aid to Ukrainian refugees.

Dr. Zgurovskyi concluded by thanking the speakers and noting that this roundtable had opened the way for cooperation between UPF and other peacekeeping organizations in Ukraine.



Related articles

EUME ILC July-August 2022: Tirana Session 7

Conference Focuses on 'Building Bridges' in Conflict Areas

Legal Experts in Rome Discuss Justice and Peace

Global South Perspectives on the Russia-Ukraine War and Geopolitical Tensions

Summit August 2022: Session 6a



[Contact us](#) | [Login](#) | [Privacy notice](#) | [Legal notice](#) | [Disclaimer](#)

We are an international and interreligious network of individuals and organizations, including representatives from religion, government, civil society and the private sector dedicated to achieving world peace. UPF supports the work of the United Nations, particularly in the areas of interfaith peacebuilding, peace education, and the strengthening of marriage and family.

Universal Peace Federation is an NGO in General Consultative Status with the [Economic and Social Council of the United Nations](#)  
We support and promote the work of the [United Nations](#) and the achievement of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#)

Copyright ©2006-2024 Universal Peace Federation. All rights reserved.

