

## UPF Lusaka, Zambia IMAP: The Role of the Media in Moral Education in Zambia

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Lusaka, Zambia - The International Media Association for Peace (IMAP) Zambia Chapter held a one-day seminar for journalists from different media institutions within Lusaka on February 15, 2023 at Peace Embassy, Lusaka, Zambia. A total of over 50 journalists from the print and electronic media attended the seminar.

In line with the theme of the seminar, "The Role of the Media in Moral Education in Our Country," many journalists acknowledged the need to educate the community on morals and that journalists should be at the center-stage as peace builders.



The seminar started with welcoming remarks from the emcee, Mr. Master Chimbala, a seasoned media personality and IMAP trustee. Mr. Chimbala acknowledged some of the Zambian media gurus in the audience and asked them to participate effectively, to be open-minded and live up to their duties.

Next, an introduction to IMAP was presented via a video which depicted how the founders, Dr. Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, have been passionately championing freedom of the media and

that journalists should be responsible transmitters of information as well as peace builders.



Following the video presentation, IMAP Zambia Chapter president, Mr. Peter Chikwampu, gave the opening remarks. He welcomed the guests of honor, guest speakers and the journalists who were participating in the workshop. Pointing out that the citizens believe what they read and hear from media reports, he stated that it is the role of the media to report the truth but also be conscious about the content of the stories and their consequences on the nation and the lives of the people. He further said the participants must share views on how the media should help shape the moral education in relation to peace building and also to help the association grow as it seeks to attract membership from professional media bodies.

He also said the Association has noted with concern the low reporting levels on peace by the local media. He said the media plays an important role in the prevention of conflicts at all levels of society; hence, the media need to take interest in matters that have to do with peace promotion.

He also urged IMAP members to be proactive in reporting about peace building and look for ideas that would help IMAP accomplish the planned projects.

The IMAP president concluded his speech by encouraging his fellow journalists to participate effectively during the sessions of the workshop so that at the end they could start pitching stories and talk shows that promote peace.

According to protocol, the event was to be followed by the guest of honor's speech. However, due to national duties, the guest of honor, the Minister of Information and Media who is also Chief Government Spokesperson, Honourable Chushi Kasanda, was not available at the appointed time, but arrived later towards the end of the seminar. The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Information, Mr. Kennedy Kalunga, gave her apologies and delivered the speech on her behalf.

Mr. Kalunga said the IMAP's one-day workshop had come when the world was commemorating World Radio Day, the theme of which is similar to IMAP's. He said the workshop provided another platform to further amplify the important role of the media in peace building within and among nations in order to make the world a better place to live.

He said the media should be advocates of peace and that denouncing an act or behavior has the potential to disrupt peace. Mr. Kalunga advised the media to shun sources that want to sow seeds of division and disunity for their selfish motives. He said the media should rather boldly lead the way in promoting morality, peace and unity in the society.

The Permanent Secretary commended the Universal Peace Federation Zambia Chapter for its investment in promotion of the media as Ambassadors for Peace and other initiatives.

The seminar had three (3) presentations. The main presentation was led by guest speaker Professor Lungwagwa. Professor Lungwagwa served for many years as lecturer at the University of Zambia (UNZA). He also served in a number of ministerial positions in past governments. He is one of the longest-serving members of UPF and Professors World Peace Academy (PWPA).

In his speech the professor said from yesteryear's traditional media to the present technology of the Internet, mobile smartphones and social media, the media helps to shape the society. However, he expressed some concerns with the current dissemination of information, especially with the social media platforms. He said while the traditional media is able to be checked and regulated, the social media has remained unchecked and unregulated, becoming instead a tool of discontentment. This has made the moral compass of the society to go haywire. He also cautioned the traditional media to do away with sensational reporting as that kind of reporting shall not bring peace but breed confusion and conflicts.



The second presenter was UPF secretary general, Rev. Rudolf Faerber, who said Universal Peace Federation is an advocate of peace and therefore in its pursuance to attain it, has engaged many stakeholders from different avenues of life to be involved in creating peace. He said UPF has created different organizations to provide platforms to talk peace and engage them to provide leadership.

One such UPF project, he said, is IMAP which will engage journalists from the various media. He therefore asked the journalists to get involved, plan and participate in peace building and also to write stories that will instil good moral standards in our community and the nation as a whole.

The third presenter was Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) Zambia president, Rev. David Isaac Phiri, who represented FFWPU regional vice president, Mrs. Mica Amanlaman. Rev. Phiri said that a journalist is someone who needs to know and understand a lot more than other professionals do to inform the masses and not to misinform them. Therefore, journalists need to do a lot more research about a topic beyond what even an expert in that profession knows, for accuracy purposes.

After Rev. Phiri's presentation there was a question and answer session. The journalists expressed some concerns with the church leaders who spend all their time going to mountains for prayers, leaving national issues unattended to. They said there are times the church needs to address national issues that affect their own flocks and that there are issues that do not need prayers but other interventions.

Some said in as much as they would like to write on issues concerning moral standards in the society and peace building, the various media have their own policies they want their reporters to focus on.

It was resolved that there is a need to involve the editors and proprietors of the media institutions as they are the ones to change the policy of the newsroom to go in that direction.

A vote of thanks was delivered by Ms. Nakiwa Simfukwe, who expressed appreciation to the presenters for their insights on how journalists can play vital roles in contributing toward educating the community on moral standards not only in the country but in the world at large. She also thanked the presenters for reminding the journalists of the importance of peace building and that they play a very key role in peace building.

At the end of the event, many participants filled out IMAP membership forms and others took them to fill out later.

The participants expressed their appreciation for the workshop, many looking forward to be part of IMAP.