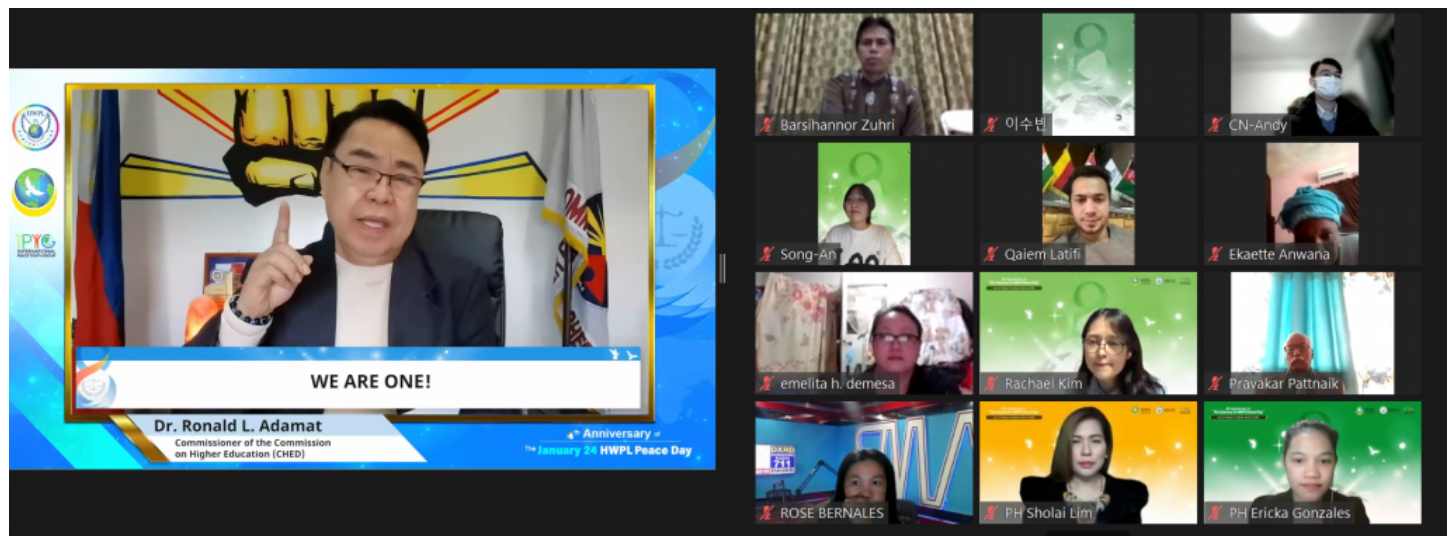


Annual Event to Commemorate Civilian-Led Peace building in Mindanao Calls Forth Collective Action to Develop Peace



Melbourne, Victoria Jan 31, 2022 (Issuewire.com) - On the 24th of January 2022, over 22,000 social representatives from 51 countries attended the international peace conference celebrating the Peace Day held virtually. The event commemorated a civilian-led peace agreement made between the Islam and Catholic communities in Mindanao 8 years ago.

Back in 2014, Heavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration of Light (HWPL), an international NGO mediated the conflict in Mindanao by proposing a peace agreement by local representatives. Witnessed by Chairman Man Hee Lee of HWPL, the peace agreement was signed by Hon. Esmael G. Mangudadatu, the then Governor of Maguindanao, and Archbishop-Emeritus Fernando Capalla of the Archdiocese of Davao representing local leadership. Since then, the province of Maguindanao and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) declared January 24 as “HWPL Peace Day” and have commemorated it as an annual event to reaffirm international cooperation and local partnership for peacebuilding in Mindanao.

Moreover, peace monuments were built honouring the peace agreement in Mindanao. The 1st and 2nd Peace Monuments were erected in 2015 and 2016 respectively. In 2021, the third peace monument was unveiled in Cotabato City. Being the first in Luzon, a peace monument in Dingras, Ilocos Norte was unveiled last January 24 as part of the 8th Anniversary event of the HWPL Peace Day celebration. Also, another monument located in Siniloan Integrated National High School is set to unveil in February.

The event, under the theme of “Law of Peace in Heaven and on Earth”, aimed to promote interfaith harmony between religions and raise public support to establish international law for peace.

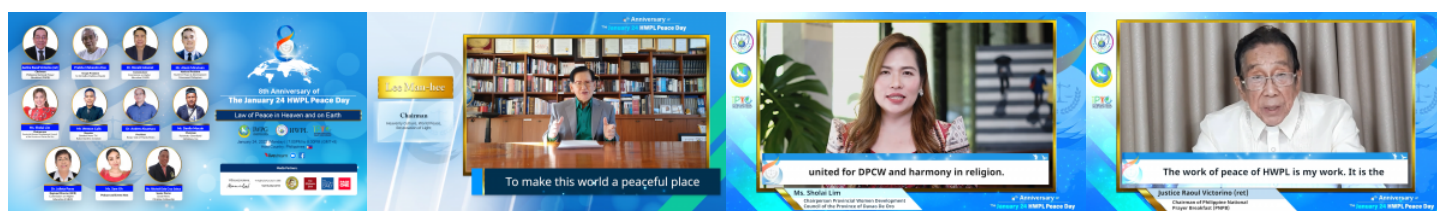
Key figures gave congratulatory messages including Senate President Vicente Sotto III, Senator Panfilo Lacson, Senator Cynthia Villar, Senator Ronald ‘Bato’ Dela Rosa, Chief Justice Alexander Gesmundo, and TV News Anchor Mariz Umali from the Philippines. Keynote speakers from various fields also presented commitment messages declaring their plans on promoting peace in their respective sectors including law, education, youth, women, private business, and media.

Prabhu Mahendra Das, Temple President of Sri Sri Radha Madhava Mandir, said that he decided to participate in the World Alliance of Religions' Peace (WARP) Office organized by HWPL as “a global platform for religious leaders to talk, share, discuss, learn, and grow together harmoniously and peacefully.” For the contribution to peace in the field of religion, he added, “I firmly believe that all religions should enter into a partnership through the form of a Memorandum of Understanding.”

Justice Raoul Victorino (ret), Chairman of Philippine National Prayer Breakfast (PNPB) and Dean of the College of Law of Philippine Christian University (PCU), shared how he was inspired by the “revolutionary movement” that HWPL initiated to endorse global peacebuilding through the draft the “Declaration of Peace and Cessation of War (DPCW)” by global experts in international law to advocate peace as a global culture and norm. He declared, “I will strive to get the support of the President of the Philippines for the National Solidarity Support of DPCW. At the same time, I will integrate DPCW [education] in the college of law by collaborating with the Philippine Association of Law Schools.”

Also, representing the Philippines education sector, Commissioner Ronald Adamat of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shared, “The CHED Commission en Banc has issued an endorsement to President Duterte, urging him to declare January 24 as ‘National Peace Day’, that will provide for simultaneous celebration and observance of peace through peace activities, events, and ceremonies by all instrumentalities and agencies of government, including the private sector. This shall also be celebrated and observed in the education sector.”

“Our purpose is to bring all people in the world together to create a world of peace and leave it as a lasting legacy for future generations. To make this world a peaceful place without wars, let us become messengers of peace. Let us remind people around the world of that emotion—a longing for peace—and the Peace Day so they can remember all of this forever,” said Chairman Lee during the closing remarks.



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