



HWPL
Heavenly Culture, World Peace,
Restoration of Light



12th Anniversary of the September 18th HWPL World Peace Summit

Spreading a Culture of Peace Through Capacity Building for Peace Leaders

1. Overview

The 12th Anniversary of the September 18th HWPL World Peace Summit will be held on 18 September 2026 across regions worldwide, including the Republic of Korea. The conference commemorates the HWPL World Peace Summit, which was held in Seoul on 18 September 2014, reviews twelve years of progress on the commitments made then, and charts strategies to further institutionalize peace.

Held under the theme “Spreading a Culture of Peace Through Capacity Building for Peace Leaders,” this year’s conference reaffirms HWPL’s contributions to the institutionalization of peace and examines both the direction and outcomes of capacity-building for peace leaders as a sustainable peacebuilding model. The model aims to establish a sustainable, applicable, and standardized system for peace practice by bringing together four pillars: training youth as future leaders; an integrated approach to interreligious dialogue and learning; educational frameworks that raise awareness of peace; and community based peace initiatives led by civil society — thereby advancing both the institutionalization of peace and helping spread a culture of peace.

2. Content

Heavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration of Light (HWPL) has advanced multi-stakeholder, action-oriented strategies that engage governments, international organizations, and civil society in conflict resolution and the building of sustainable peace. In 2014, HWPL convened the Sep. 18 HWPL World Peace Summit and derived agreements with leaders from politics, religion, women’s and youth sectors, and the media and journalists, pledging global cooperation for peace. This led to the 2016 proclamation of the Declaration of Peace and Cessation of War (DPCW), consisting of 10 articles and 38 clauses that outline foundational principles for building

a peaceful world. The citizen-driven Legislate Peace (LP) project has since evolved into an international movement that practices peace in everyday life. Currently, approximately 700,000 HWPL members worldwide participate in LP project activities, which now span climate and the environment, humanitarian relief, education, and the empowerment of women and youth.

Yet in 2026, prospects for sustainable development grounded in coexistence and cooperation have dimmed. Beyond ongoing regional conflicts, disinformation, the climate crisis, competition over resources, forced displacement, and religious intolerance, interstate wars have become central to global security and economic agendas. Breakdowns in education and social protection, loss of employment opportunities, and deteriorating physical and mental health now threaten daily life and prospects across generations — especially youth — eroding the capacity of the next generation to carry forward a peaceful world. These realities underscore more than ever the need for structural approaches, both institutional and cultural, that strengthen the foundations for peace in responding to conflict. In this context, SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and DPCW Article 10 (Spreading a Culture of Peace) call for concrete capacity building models to enable participatory peace governance.

HWPL has implemented peace initiatives with broad multi stakeholder participation.

In the religious sphere, HWPL has expanded dialogue among faith leaders of diverse backgrounds through WARP Offices in major cities worldwide and, more recently, through the Religious Peace Academy, where leaders exchange and study peace oriented teachings from their scriptures and disseminate them to their communities.

In education, HWPL partners with international bodies, governments, and institutions to integrate Peace Education into curricula and run Peace Educator programs, achieving results such as the adoption of Peace Education in national programs.

In media and journalism, peace journalism training and a multinational journalism network help bring peace issues into mainstream discourse and foster a reporting environment that serves as a platform for reconciliation. In South Korea, HWPL's Peace Action Committee and the campaign project, "Together: Connect Korea," exemplify government–civil collaborative governance in designing and implementing community based peace projects.

This conference will both review outcomes across peace initiatives and outline strategic approaches by which HWPL and peace leaders worldwide can expand a culture of peace through capacity-building that is learning oriented and dialogue driven. It will explore the present generation's roles and the next generation's potential in building sustainable peace as both an institution and a culture. Moreover, to root and advance the legal, educational, and cultural foundations of peace within the next generation's social fabric, it is essential to shift youth from passive victims of conflict to active protagonists of peace by leveraging digital, linguistic, and

cultural networks that enable effective transnational peace movements. As part of this effort, programs will engage approximately 200 youth leaders from around the world to strengthen their potential as peace advocates. Program themes include culture of peace experiences, intercultural understanding, and raising awareness on peace and reunification on the Korean Peninsula.

