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# Peace envoys

**F**IVE vice-chancellors pledged to support character-building initiatives at their universities during an inaugural Malaysia Professors Conference officiated by Deputy Higher Education Minister Datuk Idris Haron recently.

The conference, themed "Culture of Heart through Character Education", was held in Kuala Lumpur and attended by more than 200 academics from public and private universities.

In his keynote address, Idris encouraged the participants to make concerted efforts towards nation-building through character education.

"For our global reality to be reconfigured, universities and higher education institutions should assume an even more prominent role as promoters of the crucial values that are the glue of society," he said.

"Peace begins in the mind and the seeds of peace are best sown amongst the young who are inheritors of our world.

"The choices they make in life decide whether the country advances towards greater peace, progress and prosperity or slide towards greater acrimony, polarisation and economic decline."

When asked to suggest ways to bring about peace, Idris added, "We should look for commonalities and not differences."

Idris was given the Ambassador for Peace award by the Universal



One for the album (from left): Prof Ismail, Prof Dzulkifli, Dr Yoo, Zaleha, Idris, Rafiah, Prof Sharifah Hapsah and Prof Nik Mustapha.

Peace Federation (UPF), which sponsored the conference.

Also receiving Ambassadors for Peace awards were the five university vice-chancellors — Datuk Rafiah Salim (Universiti Malaya), Prof Datuk Sharifah Hapsah Syed Hasan Shahabudin (Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia), Prof Datuk Dzulkifli Abdul Razak (Universiti Sains Malaysia), Prof Datuk Dr Nik

Mustapha Raja Abdullah (Universiti Putra Malaysia) and Prof Datuk Dr Ismail Bakar (Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia).

The invited speaker was US-based UPF Asia peace education director Dr Robert Kittel, who pointed out that the problems of morality, exploitation and corruption often stemmed from a common root.

The conference was organised as part of the ongoing activities of the Global Peace Festival that will culminate in a grand celebration at Bukit Jalil Stadium on Oct 18.

Also present at the event were UPF senior adviser Dr Yoo Choong Young and Pure Love and True Family Malaysia for World Peace president Tan Sri Zaleha Ismail.