IAD News

Inter-America: George W. Brown receives honorary doctorate from USC

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Dominican Republic Secretary of State thanks IRLA for its global efforts to promote religious freedom

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César Pina Toribio, Secretary of State for the Dominican Republic, attended the final session of the 7th World Congress April 26, telling attendees that his nation shares their commitment to preserving and promoting freedom of religion.
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A two-time recipient of an honorary doctorate, first from Andrews University in the 1980s, Elder Brown was praised for his unflinching commitment to service, his exemplary and visionary leadership and for his passion for the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, university leaders said.

A graduate of USC, Elder Brown also delivered the keynote address to the more than 700 graduates -- the largest graduating class in the history of the institution.

"Success is a journey through life, with stops, pauses and new beginnings," said Elder Brown. "This is called a commencement because you are beginning a new phase in your life."

"Do not settle for anything other than the best. Success does not depend on genius or a magical formula, but the result of hard work, perseverance and tenacity," went on Brown.

Elder Brown encouraged graduates to take God with them, to be transformational. "Know yourselves, know why you are here, know where you are going, take God with you wherever you go," he said.

Born in the Dominican Republic, Elder Brown was a former dean of men and president of Caribbean Union College, an educator, youth leader and administrator with more than 40 years of denominational service. He was elected president of the Inter-American Division in 1980 and served in that capacity for 13 years during which time the Division experienced rapid growth in membership and initiatives.

Elder Brown holds a Masters in Systematic Theology from Andrews University and a bachelor's degree from Northern Caribbean University.

Elder Brown continues to fulfill preaching and writing assignments from the home he shares with wife Carla in Florida, United States.
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Pina Toribio also conveyed greetings to the Congress attendees from the Dominican Republic president, Leonel Fernandez. Speaking in Spanish, Pina Toribio said that there is a clear, sincere, and permanent space for religious liberty in the Dominican Republic. He congratulated the Congress on its success, and thanked the organizers for their work in raising awareness about the vital role that freedom of conscience plays in building a strong, peaceful nation.

"The Dominican Republic is a pluralistic society, and we want to do all we can to further good relations between religions, and to ensure that all religious groups receive equal treatment," he said.

April 26, 2012 - Punta Cana, Dominican Republic...Bettina Krause/IRLA

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