



UN Climate Change Conference COP24, Katowice, Poland

Report Monday 3rd December 2018



Opening

The official opening of the Climate Conference took place on Monday morning in the Spodek Congress Centre in the heart of Katowice. The civil society was represented by Sir David Attenborough from the UK.

The naturalist was chosen to represent the world's people in addressing delegates of almost 200 nations. They are in Katowice to negotiate how to turn pledges made in the 2015 Paris climate deal into reality.

He was very outspoken and said: "Right now we are facing a manmade disaster of global scale, our greatest threat in thousands of years: climate change," he said. "If we don't take action, the collapse of our civilizations and the extinction of much of the natural world is on the horizon."

His statement immediately went viral on the internet and its worth seeing this short summary: ([click here](#)). Attenborough urged everyone to use the UN's new ActNow chatbot ([click here](#)).

BK Exhibition

Brahma Kumaris are sharing their exhibition booth with ISMUN – International Student Movements of the United Nations. We have an excellent location next to a stand which distributes tasty apples from the region. Everyone walking to the food court to get his free apple, literally then faces our stand.

After setting up the stand and having an inaugural meditation, we immediately became busy distributing the popular blessing cards and wristbands. This time, we are also offering the experience of meditation through headphones connected to our on-line meditations.

[\(click here\)](#)



Valériane, Francis, Golo, Carolin, Sonja, Marek



The BK exhibition stand gets busy



Meeting friends – Golo, Nigel from UNESCO, Valeriane, Virginia from IUCN Australia

Opening of the German Pavilion

Golo and Carolin have been invited to attend the opening of the German Pavilion by the German Environment and Economic collaboration Minister. The Pavilion serves free coffee and gave us the chance to catch up with friends from last year's COP in Germany.



Side event at the UN DESA Pavilion

Our first side event took place in Social and Economic Affairs (DESA) Pavilion which is dedicated to Sustainable Development. The program was called "Just Transition - the role of ethics and human awareness in climate change solutions". It was organized by Brahma Kumaris and the Potsdam Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS). Carolin moderated the event and welcomed the gathering of about 25 participants.



Carolin Fraude, Malthe Hentschke, Golo Pilz, Viktor Jose, Sonja Ohlsson

Golo started by quoting Sir David Attenborough: "If we don't take action, the collapse of our civilizations and the extinction of much of the natural world is on the horizon". He then called for a paradigm shift: first healing our inner world and then healing the planet. He further emphasized the importance of meditation to change awareness and habits. We all have to change our lifestyle; this is the call of the hour. He also spoke about the wise leadership of Dadi Janki and highlighted the renewable energy projects of BKs in India.

The next speaker Victor Jose, Project Officer of Health Care without Harm, described their program for youth. Participants call themselves "CliMates" and work with role-play to make the necessary changes of mindset happen.

Sonja referred to the IPCC report which is clearly highlighting values, ethics, lifestyle change and the importance of reflection. She then asked the audience to take a moment

of silence, remember their favourite place in nature and think about their purpose in being at this conference.

Last speaker was Malte Hentschke from the Klima Allianz, based in Germany. He talked about their work with both NGO and faith communities.

There were questions from the audience about how an individual changing will impact society and about meditation. Sonja guided the final meditation and Carolin closed the program.



Interfaith event arranged by the Franciscans

Valerian, Ewa, Zbyszek and Aneta went to participate in an Interfaith Event organized by the Franciscans at the Parish Hall of St Stephen's Church in Katowice. The topic was: "Climate Crisis and Role of the Faith based Communities for Climate Justice". There were 8 panellists representing Franciscan ecology movement, Global Catholic Movement, NGOs and interestingly, the Chairman of the Miners' Trade Union in Poland. All the panellists shared their views on the current state of the world, the challenges and solutions they see for them.



There was a good interaction with the audience of about 50 people.

<http://www.eco.brahmakumaris.org>