



## **Brahma Kumaris at the 18<sup>th</sup> United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP18) - 28 November-7 December 2012 - End Report**

### **International delegation**

1. Sister Jayanti, UK – head of delegation
2. Joachim Golo Pilz, India/Germany - solar
3. Valeriane Bernard, Switzerland – interfaith, human rights
4. Sonja Ohlsson, Denmark – co-ordinator
5. Anthony Phelps – trainee, video ( arrival 27<sup>th</sup>)
6. Teresa Mungazi, Zimbabwe – youth
7. Mohit, AbuDabi – Sustainability, water conservation
8. Jyothi Hulmani, Dubai ( Jyotika) – main local co-ordinator
9. Piyush Ahuja, Dubai – youth
10. Teresa Lugones, Italy - rapporteur



The international delegation was supported by the BK National Coordinator, Sister Jyoti and logistic coordination was given by a team of BKs from Dubai, Muscat, Qatar and other Middle East countries.

### **Conference of Youth, COY 8**



COY8 was held on 23rd to 25th November 2012 at the Doha Student Centre in Qatar. The BK Environment Initiative (BKEI) youth participation was scaled up in 2012 with a meaningful and effective participation at COY8 as part of the overall UN set of meetings on climate change in Doha. The COY8 was attended by about 300 youth from more than 40 countries. New and positive ideas have emerged in this year's COY which encourage a spirit of togetherness. The BK youth delegation was made up of seven young people - Teresa (Zimbabwe), Juan (Canada), Manpreet & Sandra (Qatar), Piyush & Patish & Salam (United Arab Emirates). On 23 November, the BK Youth facilitated a workshop titled "Climate Change Demands Inner Change - Revealing the Missing Dimension in Resolving the Climate Crisis". It was aimed at contributing to the creation of a positive atmosphere, spirit of togetherness, and promotion of enduring human values such as peace, love, tolerance, and mutual respect. Throughout the COY8 and subsequently during COP 18, the BK youth had the opportunity to share materials, ideas and experiences.

Two exhibits were prepared for Brahma Kumaris, one in the venue of COP 18 and the other one in the Qatar Sustainability Expo. Hundreds of people passed by BK stands and many contacts were made through the service there.



### **Events organized by Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative:**

- **Protecting our atmosphere: State and individual responsibilities and the rights of Mother Earth.** The speakers were: **Sister Jayanti Kirpalani**, European Director of the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University, Main Representative to the United Nations, Geneva, **Bro Joachim Golo Pilz**, Director, Solar Research Institute, World Renewal Spiritual Trust (Germany/India), **Dr Abate**, Steering Committee Member of the Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance and **Dr Curtis FJ Doebbler**, Professor of Law at Webster University Geneva, International- Lawyers.Org, and Nord-Sud XXI, Human Right lawyer active in Human Rights issues in Geneva and New York. In essence, the message was that together with nature, we are part of a living system that is deeply connected with, and changed by, our consciousness. Individuals can bring about a change.
- Side event: **Birla Public School: “Design your destiny”**, attended by 180 students. The event ended with a wonderful quote: “Don’t run behind success... run to excel in life and success is automatically yours.”
- Talk addressed to **Management Team at local energy company in Doha**, given by Anthony Phelps, from Brahma Kumaris Retreat Centre in Oxford, on how to shift awareness to be driven from inside out, and therefore create more happiness in life. Sonja Ohlsson also had the opportunity to share about BK Environment Initiative. And Golo Pilz finished by a inspiring presentation about the opportunities for alternative energy in this part of the world which has the most sunshine in the world.
- **Climate change starts in the mind: ‘Healthy minds, healthy planet’**, at the Qatar Sustainability Expo. Speakers were Golo Pilz illustrated the India One project, Valeriane Bernard spoke about the Yogic Agriculture, Sonja Ohlsson underlined the importance of thoughts for a healthier planet: “when our thoughts and our mind are in harmony, harmonious signals are sent to the body. When we are healthier, we consume less. There has to be a shift in attitude from confrontation to cooperation”. Anthony Phelps facilitated the discussion. According to the Management of the Expo, this was the definitely the best attended event at Qatar Sustainability Expo.
- **Get together - Living in Harmony:** Businessmen, government officials and professionals from different backgrounds attended the event, from six different nationalities. The Chairman of Arab Forum, Saudi Arabia had flown in for this event particularly. Sister Jayanti and Brother Golo shared their expertise in consciousness and solar energy respectively. “Contentment comes when there is an inner awareness in which I am

comfortable with how I am, and at peace with myself. I do not need to take from situations or people. This ultimately leads to harmony with nature. One who is content and peaceful will not seek to exploit nature but have a relationship of respect with it, she said. Human thoughts and vibrations can heal nature and nature responds to human actions. Nature is going to protect us only if we protect it.”

- Side event - **Honouring Wisdom, Strengthening Commitment, Birla Public School:** event mainly dedicated to teachers and parents. Brother Golo Pilz and Sister Jayanti Kirpalani were the speakers and the facilitator was Brother Anthony Phelips.
- **Qatar Foundation Presentation:** The Health, Safety, Security & Environment Directorate of Qatar Foundation hosted a presentation on "Alternative Sources of Energy" by Golo Pilz, from the Brahma Kumaris delegation. The invitation had gone out to all staff members of the Education City, so the audience was a mix of professors, engineers and senior advisers.
- **Talk to the managers of Mercury Hotel:** Valeriane Bernard offered the topic of "The Mechanisms of Success". Around twenty managers attended and were very interested and inspired by a new approach to achieving success.
- **Reception organized by "bread for the world"** Valeriane Bernard and Sonja Ohlsson participated in an informal get together organized to allow the NGOs and some negotiators from different parties.
- **Side event organized by the Government of India**
- **Equity and ADP: How equity should become an integral part of the Ad hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP) negotiations**
- **Momentum for Change - Women for Results:**
- This special event provided recognition to the crucial role played by women in addressing climate change. The event was opened with special remarks by Heather Grady, Vice President of the Rockefeller Foundation, and Christiana Figueres, UNFCCC Executive Secretary
- **Side event at the Intercontinental Hotel - Sustainable Innovation Forum:** business and government leaders gathered at the *Sustainable Innovation Forum*. The forum took place in the Intercontinental Hotel overlooking the beautiful Al Corniche area of Doha and the Arabian Gulf. It was hosted by Climate Action in partnership with UNEP led by Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director and Under Secretary General of the United Nations. Brahma Kumaris participated together with other NGOs. When the first plenary session moderated by Jane Dutton, Senior News Presenter at Al Jazeera, came to its close Sister Jayanti came up onto the stage. She introduced meditation with addressing the energy of thought: "Let's take a moment to experience clean, infinity renewable energy of thought to sustain the self, so that there is hope clarity and courage to move forward. A three-minute reflection was led by Sister Jayanti, and the atmosphere of many words were changed into one of peace.
- **“Environmental Protection: Religious Perspective”:** Sister Jayanti shared the panel with Dr Ibrahim Sleh Al Naimi, Chairman-Board of Directors, DICID; Prof Ali Al-Qaradaghi, General Secretary of the International Islamic Scholars' Union; Dr Yousef Al Horr, Founding Chairman at Gulf Organization for Research and Development and Archbishop Serafim Kykotis of the Orthodox Church of Zimbabwe.

### **BK representatives participated in the following meetings/events:**

- **Opening session in the Plenary Hall:** introduced by Christlana Figueres, the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Climate Change Secretariat and the presentation of the

- Side event - **What Doha must deliver for the pre and post 2020 Climate Regime:**  
At this side event. speakers focussed on key decisions needed in Doha to ensure equitable, ambitious and effective outcomes in the pre and post 2020 climate regime.

- Side Event - **Gender and Climate: Moving beyond the Rhetoric:** panel chaired by Christlana Figueres and composed by women who are top leaders in the world. Amongst them, the daughter of the Emir of Qatar, H.E. Sheikha Mayassa. The main topic was the important of gender equality. Women are often the group most affected by climate change, because of the role they play in the home and as a caregiver.

- **Momentum for Change 2012:** The UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, UNFCCC Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres and Kelly Rigg, Executive Director of the Global Campaign for Climate Action (GCCA) introduced the Programme of the Lighthouse Activities, in which public-private partnerships were focusing on the urban poor.

- **RINGO (Research Institutions NGO) meetings:** BK is part of this constituency within the Major Groups of the United Nations. Meetings were held nearly every day and Valeriane Bernard represented the BK. She was part of the drafting committee for the RINGO High-level Statement. She stressed the importance of ethics and values in the process of COP 18 meetings.

- **Meetings of faith-based civil society groups:** also this group met nearly every day during the Conference and Valeriane Bernard participated on behalf of Brahma Kumaris.

- **Inter-religious Coordination Meeting:** as the situation has moved into a crisis threat to the planet, faithful people and leaders, institutions and agencies need to think carefully about strategy, prepare in advance, work for a common purpose, and have substantive presence and impact in COP 19 in Warsaw. Later during 2013 a meeting/regional meetings will be held to strengthen faith preparation and contributions to the Warsaw process.

- Valeriane Bernard met with her colleagues **from Geneva** to design the next steps of their **work related to Human Rights and Climate Change**

- **COICA: Indigenous people of the Amazonas:** they consider it their responsibility to take care of their own forest and ecosystems since it is their habitat and culture.

- **UNFCCC Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres addressing the NGO's:** she stressed the importance of building a platform of cooperation.

### **Interviews/press conferences:**

- **Interview by Climate Change TV, managed by an NGO called Responding to Climate Change:** Sister Jayanti was interviewed by **Climate Change TV**, managed by an NGO called Responding to Climate Change, who are focussing on social media.

- The Youth representatives of the delegation, Piyush Ahuja and Teresa Mungazi went to **AL Jazeera** new channel, for the preparation of a video about the different initiatives taken by Youth in COP 18. Link <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VoV63t5Ad8M>.

- **Press Conference:** by Sister Jayanti Kirpalani and Golo Pilz, facilitated by Valeriane Bernard. Subject: Protecting our atmosphere: State and individual responsibilities and the rights of Mother Earth.

- The **Doha Film Institute** interviewed a group of African Youth for a documentary that they are working on. The youth gave their expectations and the African perspective with regards to the Climate negotiations.
- **Interview on Yogic Farming** by a journalist from the **Peninsula** to Valeriane Bernard.
- **Interview by Peninsula** to Sister Jayanti Kirpalani about **Climate Change and Consciousness**.
- Interview from **Qatar Foundation Live Radio to Sister Jayanti** on the closing day of the Conference.

**BK in Newspapers:**

- The **Chandrika Daily** (Qatar edition) newspaper ran a story on the QSE 2012 Inauguration as well as coverage of the BKEI Exhibit.
- The English **Newspaper Time Out**, with an article reporting an interview to Golo Piltz in reference with the Brahma Kumaris' inputs to the COP 18. The title of the article "A profound shift in global awareness is the dire need of the day", which summarizes our unique message to COP 18.

**Overview of activities by Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative at UN Climate Change Conference COP18, Doha 2012**

- 3 Preparatory Meetings
- 2 Exhibitions – one inauguration
- 1 Youth Workshop
- 3 Side events at COP18
- 1 Press Conference COP
- 4 Public Talks – Expo, Al Safa Hotel, Birla School
- 1 VIP meeting
- 1 Qatar Foundation presentation
- 2 Presentations at companies – Woqood, Mercure Hotel Experiential meditation at Business Forum,
- 1 Radio Interview
- 1 Climate Change TV
- 5 News Paper Articles
- 12 reports
- Interfaith meetings
- Networking, meeting ministers and main UN individuals