Day 6
7th September

We started with the daily CSO (Civil Society Organisations) meeting.

BK Shantanu attended the Youth Forum. The Forum began with participants working in three working groups to create the final policy paper to be presented at UNCCD High Level Segment negotiations for LDN (Land Degradation Neutrality). The three groups were preamble, thematic (land degradation, desertification and drought) and the third was the meaningful youth engagements. BK Shantanu participated in the 3rd working group and added valuable inputs.
The youth got the chance to meet Madam Yoko Watanbe, Global Manager of GEF (Global Environment Facility). She briefed them about how the GEF runs and how environmental initiatives can be funded with the help of GEF. She shared many helpful insights to questions of young entrepreneurs and welcomed everyone to seek any kind of assistance in their endeavours.

Later that day, the UNCCD Executive Secretary Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw came to meet the youth caucus. He encouraged the youth participation and congratulated the caucus as the first ever youth official delegation for UNCCD in the journey of the last 25 years. He said that we are the first ever generation to face climate crisis and also the last that can do anything about it.
In the open floor BK Shantanu got the opportunity to ask Mr. Ibrahim a question: “One must see opportunity in the face of obstacles, it is a climate crisis but it can be also considered as a climate challenge, that brings every community together like a global community with unified vision and unified actions to save the planet. What according to you is keeping us from achieving this vision?” Mr. Ibrahim said: “It is a very deep question. I always look for the positive. I encourage optimism and believe that only a powerful positive approach can help us move ahead. I come from a community that never had opportunities. I got my education by chance. I saw the farmers suffer in my community and decided to do something for this cause and today I think I am able to do so. It was only because of the optimism, courage and hard work. As I said no magic but right choices, hard work and persistence are the key to handle any situation, I believe and encourage youth (everyone actually) to go within and make better choices, to be more useful in their impact on the planet.”
After lunch, there was a presentation from UNEP (United Nations Environment Program) Coordinator for Land, Water and Climate, Mr. Tim Christophersen. He informed the youth forum about the upcoming decade of UNEP agenda, a UN Decade for Restoration of Ecosystems. BK Shantanu asked him a question on how UNEP plans, in this particular decade, to work with FBOs (Faith Based Organisations) and also how UNEP plans to restore sacred spaces. In his reply Mr. Christophersen said that lately they have realised that working with faith based communities might be an aspect that UNEP would love to look into and working with them would possibly help UNEP to reach its target.
After this session the three working groups worked more on the final policy paper that was to be drafted and then presented to High Level Segment plenary sessions. BK Raghav was part of the thematic group that worked on the land tenure and land security. BK Shantanu worked on meaningful youth engagement and government collaborations. The final Policy paper is attached along with this report.
BK Aneta participated in the side event organized on “Afforestation and cultivation of drought resistant species in Asian countries”. 66 million people live in drought prone areas in Asia Pacific. 40% of population in the world is affected by water scarcity. There were various best practices and experiences shared on how to build resilience. The organizers acknowledged and thanked Brahma Kumaris for participating in the event. Another side event, where BKs were present was “Potential of Renewable Energy to Promote Land Restoration and Climate Resilience”. There was a discussion among Dr. Pradeep Monga, Deputy Executive Secretary UNCCD, Mr. Arun Tripathi, Director General National Institute of Solar Energy, India and Mr. Lu Qi, Institute of Desertification Studies, Chinese Academy of Forestry. When the floor was opened for the audience, BK Aneta shared the success story of India One Solar Thermal Power Plant as an example of combining renewable energy project with land cultivation, by using the same land for 24 solar power generation, 50000 tree plantation and yogic agriculture. Dr Monga said it is one of the best practices in that field and Mr Tripathi appreciated the operational aspect of the power plant and made a promise to visit it.
John Ndiritu attended a side event organized by the French Institute for Research and Development (IRD) on the management of water resources in Karnataka, India. John enquired about the possible use surface reservoirs to offset the fast decline of groundwater levels in the state. He was informed that the modeling that IRD is conducting allows for assessment of the use of reservoirs for groundwater recharge although this is not expected to significantly alter the groundwater levels. John also enquired about the involvement of all stakeholders in the socio-economic studies that IRD has been conducting and was informed that the social structure of the society posed challenges to this. He made contact with a PhD scholar from Amrita University who later came to the BK stall and also visited Happy Farm.

There were around 50 visitors in the booth and some visitors visited the Happy Farm. They enjoyed the evening ambience where they meditated and relaxed themselves.
There was a paragraph on yogic farming and Happy Farm published in Eco Newsletter that was issued daily by CSO group and distributed to all delegates of UNCCD.
Day 7
8th September

Sunday morning was a day with the BK family. A special meditation was organised in the Happy Farm for all BK students in Greater Noida. More than 200 BKs were present there. There was a special guided meditation from morning 5:30 AM to 7:00 AM conducted by members of the UNCCD delegation.

After Murli, there was an experience sharing session from BK Aneta, BK John, BK Shantanu, BK Swati and BK Parul. Then BK Gita ji shared a beautiful, special subtle region message that everyone should be coming to the farm to meditate for the five elements of nature. In the message there was also appreciation of efforts and service at the UNCCD COP 14. Then BK Jaiprakash Bhai ji also invited the Brahmin family to serve through mind whenever possible. The entire family had a delicious vegan breakfast.
Many COP14 delegates came for a brunch organised at Happy Farm. Some of them were from Nigeria, India, Italy and Philippines, especially to mention Mr. Bhawani Kusum from Gram Vikas Bharti, the Indian CSO focal point of UNCCD COP 14 and Ms. Rosalud Dela Rosa, the Global Consultant for FAO (Food and Agriculture organisation) Italy.

In the evening we had a little meeting with the family at Swarn Nagri center. Members of BK delegation shared their experiences with the family.
Happy Moments at Happy farm
Day 8
9th September

Monday was a very busy day from its beginning. There were security arrangements made for the visit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji. The plenary hall was fully crowded and magically the entire BK delegation received the opportunity to be seated at the first segment of delegates. This was a live telecast on many national channels and our presence was quite recognisable.
Prime Minister Modi mentioned that only the consciousness of WE over ME can bring the change we all aim to achieve. He also recited a Shloka which said that before I, may the space, may the air, may the land and may the elements prosper, may the flora and fauna prosper and may my fellow beings prosper and let there be my prosperity in the prosperity of the world. He said Om Shanti and explained that shanti here not only means peace but also means prosperity.
The panel also had dignitaries like Mr Ralph E. Gonsales, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and Grenadines, Ms. Amina J Mohammad, Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Executive Secretary of UNCCD, Mr. Prakash Javedkar, President of UNCCD COP 14, (Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change; Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India), Mr. Babul Supriyo (State Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change).
**Day 8  
9th September**

In the afternoon, BK Shantanu attended the UNDP dialogue at India Pavilion. Mr. Achim Steiner was in the panel with other dignitaries like Ms Samya Sammaddar (NITI Ayog – National Institution for Transforming India). For a short time, BK Aneta and BK Shantanu were able to speak to Mr. Steiner and handed over materials explaining the relevant activities of BKs.

Later Ms. Samya (NITI Ayog) visited the booth of Brahma Kumaris and learnt about the Brahma Kumaris initiatives.

John Ndiritu attended a Technology Fair presentation by GIZ (Germany) on Digital Approaches for Providing Information for Decision Making. This presentation mainly focused on the work GIZ is undertaking with partner organizations in India to provide reliable information to farmers efficiently using cell-phone and other technologies. 12,500 farmers are currently using this technology in several states in India. John therefore inferred that more field-based research on yogic farming at universities could help to formalize it further and to incorporate it into the database of information available in the GIZ software.
Day 8
9th September

On that day, one of the round table discussions within High Level Segment (HLS) was on “Land, Climate and Renewable Energy”. BK Aneta was a member of CSO working group for that and the BK input was included in the CSO statement presented for HLS participants, which said that it is recommended to experiment and apply yogic sustainable agriculture method, that integrates a positive thought based processes with organic farming and results in higher crop resilience to climate change, increased size and quality of crops, land restoration and various social benefits.

One of the members of that HLS round table was Mr. Ovais Sarmad, Deputy Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). There was a chance of meeting him after the event and sharing BK activities contributing to the agenda of UNCCD and giving him greetings from the BK Green Team. He asked about Sister Jayanti and sent his warm regards to her.
Day 8
9th September

In the evening there was a gala dinner and cultural evening organised by the Government of India for delegates, Mr. Ricky Kej performed there, together with Baaba Maal, Senegalese musician. Mr. Ricky Kej has been associated with Brahma Kumaris for some time now and he also visited our booth with great interest.

More than 60 visitors visited the booth and some delegates visited the Happy farm. They experienced for the first time Raja Yoga meditation.