



Climate Change Conference COP23 Wednesday 15th Nov 2017, Bonn, Germany

The high-level negotiations were opened today. Angela Merkel, German Chancellor, Mr Steinmeier, German President, and M. Macron, French President, arrived in the morning to open and to address the general assembly of the UNFCCC. There was tight security and the air was full of hope and expectations.



Carolyn met UNFCCC Executive Secretary Ms. Espinosa

Carolyn was able to meet Ms. Espinosa when she visited the exhibition area of the Bula Zone. Hearing the name Brahma Kumaris, Ms. Espinosa immediately remembered Sister Jayanti and India One Solar Plant. She congratulated Brahma Kumaris for their fantastic work.

Launch of Ethical Principles declaration at UNESCO

Sister Jayanti was part of a panel organised by UNESCO, which launched the "Declaration of the Ethical Principles" for Climate Change. All the speakers shared their perspectives with a lot of passion.



Prof. van Ypersele, from Belgium, said that negotiators often get lost in minor details. Using the ethical principles can be a powerful reminder of what is really important in life.

Mrs. Drollett, from Office of the Prime Minister of the Cook Islands, pointed out that the declaration is a valuable guideline for any decision-making process. People often do not see the relationship between the wealth of the rich countries and the poor ones. The wealth of the rich has often been accumulated from the poor countries, for example the vulnerable island states.

Prof. Brown from USA said, "The absence of ethical arguments in the climate change discussions is a warning and striking! The governments need to ensure that climate change is seen as an ethical issue; it is about equity.

Sister Jayanti congratulated UNESCO for their conference slogan "Changing minds not the climate". It is important to connect our conscience to the first article of the declaration the "Prevention of harm". The ethical aspect of the declaration resonates with the philosophy of karma – the law of action and reaction. When I give sorrow, it will come back to me in one form or another. One example is the food we consume, its production should not harm others or animals.



Interview by "Balance"



Philipp Unger, a local journalist, has created a blog on "Balance". He interviewed Sister Jayanti and other BKs on "Balance", in the context of the environment. His Blog is: www.ballancier.de

High-level segment opening

Sister Jayanti was able to attend the opening of the high-level segment, thanks to the one special pass we managed to get. She listened to the speeches of Frank Walter Steinmeier, the German President, Mr. Lajčák, the President of the UN General assembly, Ms. Merkel, the German Chancellor and M. Macron, President of France. Later, she was able to meet Barbara Hendricks, the German Environment Minister, and thanked her for the support and help for India One.



The Magic Handshake

In the afternoon, a rumour spread through the halls that some VIPs will visit the Bonn Zone of the conference. Sonja, Golo and Klaus Peter went straight to the German pavilion where journalist and TV crews were already in position. After one hour of more rumour and uncertainty, suddenly Barbara Hendrick and M. Macron, French President, made their way through an enthusiastic crowd.

Things got a bit tight, but Golo was able to meet Ms. Hendricks and Sonja, Golo and Klaus Peter had warm handshakes with President Macron.



Side Event on "Transforming Lives, Hearts and Policies"

Together with the Quakers' "Global Alert for the Defence of Youth and less Privileged", the Brahma Kumaris organised a side event with the somewhat lengthy title "Transforming Lives, Hearts and Policies, staying below 1,5 degrees without reliance on geo-engineering". The event took place in the Indigenous Pavilion and surprisingly pulled quite a crowd, people had to sit on the floor.



Prince Goodluck, from Nigeria, advised that an effect of global temperature rise is significant desertification in their local communities. Emmanuel Umohinyang talked about the climate change in Nigeria and its impact on youth and the less privileged.

Prof. Kevin Anderson from Manchester University encouraged us to discuss with people their positive vision of the future. We have to find positive narratives that appeal to a wider group.

Sister Jayanti highlighted the direct connection between consciousness and climate change. Soon after we identify with our physical form, humans begin to feel empty and try to fill the void by over-consumption. We have to return to the awareness of the inner being. It seems that the pain involved in climate change will become the catalyst for the required personal changes.



Golo shared the success story of using renewable energies for more than 20 years in the Brahma Kumaris community. He spoke reverently of Dadi Janki, the 102 years old leader of the organisation. She still takes care of worldly affairs but never forgets the importance of a stable and healthy mind. This is true leadership and inspires others to follow. We have forgotten that the inner and outer world are interwoven and it is a positive vision that will bring real transformation. He shared that meditation is a very powerful tool to heal the heart and mind and to inspire others.

Paul Allen gave a motivational speech and encouraged us all to try to be true to the best of ourselves!

The engaging discussion finished with the deep question: What is the main root of climate change, and what can you do tomorrow?



Meeting with the founders of Gender CC



Klaus Peter explains solar power and spirituality to 3 delegates from Iran.

Evening Dinner

Markus Kurzdiel of GIZ (German Society for International Cooperation) joined us for evening dinner. He helped a lot on India One and we had a lively discussion on food, climate change and the outlook for the world.



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