

Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative



Climate Change Conference COP23 Wednesday 8th Nov 2017 Bonn, Germany

Daily caucus of the Women and Gender Constituency

This morning, Carolin attended the meetings of the Women and Gender Constituency (WGC) which is one of the nine official constituencies of the UNFCCC. Since its beginning, Brahma Kumaris has had a strong focus to support women in leadership roles and a natural interest in climate change and gender related issues.



Participants from the Pacific region shared how they support women and feminists' movements to avow their rights. Since the Pacific Islands have a long tradition of patriarchy, it has influenced their culture and religion deeply. Maria Nailevu said: *"Whenever you question power, whenever you try and propose something new and different, as feminists and gender groups have been doing for decades, there will be a push back. And so, we need to see ourselves as a social movement, no matter if women are working within government or in other bodies. We need to raise our voices and stay ambitious for the 1.5°C target!"* She was referring to the increase of temperature due to global warming, which, if exceeded, would result in the Pacific Islands being under water, as would be many other areas of the globe. After the meeting, several women gathered and sang "Climate justice- NOW!"

Meeting for the faith based organisations



Rev. Henrik Grape, Coordinator of the World Council of Churches, invited each participant to introduce themselves by sharing their names and organisations. Valériane provided a brief history of the Interfaith Liaison Committee's (ILC) work, which began post-Warsaw (2013), reporting to the UNFCCC about the variety of faith and spiritual-based efforts.

The gathering shared the different faith-based initiatives, including the launch of "Walk on the earth

gently". The Lutheran World Federation Advocacy and their social media this year is focused on the theme of "Creation – Not for Sale" with participation of the youth delegation, mainly from Asia.

Thorsten from the Brahma Kumaris said that we have completed an ambitious solar project in Abu, India, and the German government is featuring it in their publicity for COP23, all around Germany.

Henrik underlined the importance of sharing our experiences and initiatives. Valériane suggested that we discuss ideas about a shared future for ILC and its common work. She led a guided meditation, inviting people to create a vision for a sustainable future, and asked the participants to walk back to the present and see how faith and spiritual communities might contribute to that future.



Climate Action Studio Interview

The annual Climate Change Studio interview took place on a rather grey and rainy day. Sister Jayanti had a nice chat with the interviewer beforehand. It turned out that he is from Venezuela, a country that is facing many challenges. The interview centered around the idea that in two years, the next round of nationally determined contributions (NDCs) will be submitted. What must be done, outside of the UNFCCC process, between now and then to raise the ambitions of the Parties?



Sister Jayanti's response was that leaders must come together for a collective collaborative approach to deal with the challenges more efficiently. We humans have created these problems and it is we humans that can resolve them. Changes in consciousness mean we will make changes in lifestyle and diet and that will start reversing the impact of climate change.



Meeting with the Gender and Climate Change group



Sister Jayanti at the WRST stand



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