

Bonn Climate Change Conference - June 2014

Report of Global Justice and Equity

Climate negotiations are grounded in UNFCCC values, such as equity and cooperation, but are weakened by narrow interests. We consider the crucial role of systemic and holistic thinking and present case studies of tree planting in Nigeria and solar energy in India as examples of value based transition.

Prince Goodluck Obi, Dir. Global Alert for Defence of Youth and the Less Privileged, Nigeria

Dr. Curtis FJ Doebbler, Prof. of Law, Geneva, International-Lawyers.org

BK Jayanti Kirpalani, Director, Brahma Kumaris, Europe & United Kingdom

Joachim Golo Pilz, Dir. Solar Research Institute, India

Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University & Global Alert for Defence of Youth and the Less Privileged

Integrating the heart makes a difference

From my experience side UNFCCC events bring important issues to the surface – at least for an outside observer such as me. On Friday evening, I joined attended a side event like no other. The panel comprised such diverse peoples as Prince Goodluck Obi from Nigeria; Golo Joachim Pilz from Solar One, India; Jayanti Kirpalani (Brahma Kumaris, Europe & United Kingdom) and Curtis Doebbler (USA lawyer based in Geneva, working at the UN on the subject of human rights).

Prince Goodluck Obi described his successful tree-planting project for children in Nigeria. Not only are trees planted to add more oxygen in the atmosphere but, at an early age, they learn to take responsibility for their interactions with nature. **Sr. Jayanti Kirpalani** stated that she appreciated such initiatives and included that the *Brahma Kumaris* have also planted a million trees in India in the recent decades and support a Solar Power project (India-One.net).



Sr. Jayanti added that as there are more and more different faith and grass-roots organisations involved, they are more engaged at the level of the head causing blocks in negotiations. A new angle is needed to connect the matters of the heart. She said that if something touches your heart and you recognize that it is important for you, then you know that you will do it. If your heart is drawn to something, it is easy to put it into practice. All the desirable outcomes, in terms of climate, equity, global justice and sustainability can only

happen when there is this shift; it happens in our own hearts and when we start thinking about the world as our own family. When we begin to think of a family and we really have that connection and bond of love and respect for each other. We are ready to go out of our way and try everything to do something for them.

We are one human family and we share one home – this planet – and whatever it is we want to do has to be done together. Climate change actually is making us realize this. No one can say I am not affected by climate change. No human being can say it does not concern me, I am not affected.

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All of us swim in the same water, sit in the same boat. And only if we recognize this, that means to adopt a spiritual perspective, then we are able to take that extra step forward that we will need to take to make sure there is truly justice for all and not only for a privileged few.

In place of equity, we could say 'fairness'. Where there is family there is also fairness. We can only move forward as a human family when we ready to have fairness with each other. It all comes back to the fact that there has to be a shift in our hearts, a shift in our consciousness. This change does not happen through negotiations but rather it happens through awareness, through reflection but also through silence. In silence, we touch our own inner core values. Without reflection, we remain on an external, superficial material level in our lives and we seek contentment and fulfilment through consumerism in the shops. That attitude has destroyed the ecosystem of the planet. Only if we take time for reflection can we connect with our own inner world and our values, which lie deep within. Then we can begin to understand 'fairness' and the forms of respect for all. What does it mean to share and how to feel compassion for all forms of life. Through this shift within ourselves we can work for a world that is sustainable.

Golo Pilz expressed his strong feelings about the level of injustice in the world. In the mid-1980s, he moved to India to do something about this injustice. Today many parts of his dream have come true. He initiated the construction of the Solar One Power plant in Rajasthan as a first step towards the use of simple clean technology that can be replicated by any community people. **Curtis Doebbler's** ethical perspective sees human rights as being the common denominator for people from different faiths and cultures. This search for harmony is an important focus for the human rights negotiators and climate negotiators who must work together if we are to achieve value orientation.

Mid-session, **Ms. Christiana Figueres**, Executive Secretary of the UN Framework for Climate Change Convention stepped forward to state her support for the understanding that "...individual change - moving away from personal victim consciousness – would filter upwards into society... What is happening here in this side event is connected deeply with the heart and ... only if head and heart work together can we then progress".



Patrizia Heise, Germany