Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative

7th Report on the UN Climate Change Conference COP28

8-9 Dec. 2023 – Dubai, UAE

The climate talks in Dubai are entering their second week and final phase. However, governments are still seriously divided on the central question of whether to phase out fossil fuels or not. Dan Jorgensen, Denmark's climate minister, who has been asked to forge an agreement, said: "We cannot negotiate with nature. The climate cannot be compromised. No well-meaning words will change a single thing unless we act." This week may be our last opportunity to bring us on course to keeping the 1.5C limit alive. So, the talks are entering a crucial phase, and literally, the future of humanity is at stake.

Change of team in BK delegation

We say thanks to Sister Jayanti, Medilyn, Biru and Ankita C for their dedication and contribution to the Brahma Kumaris activities at COP28. We welcome Sister Maureen from London, Chaitya and Ankita from Dubai for the second week.

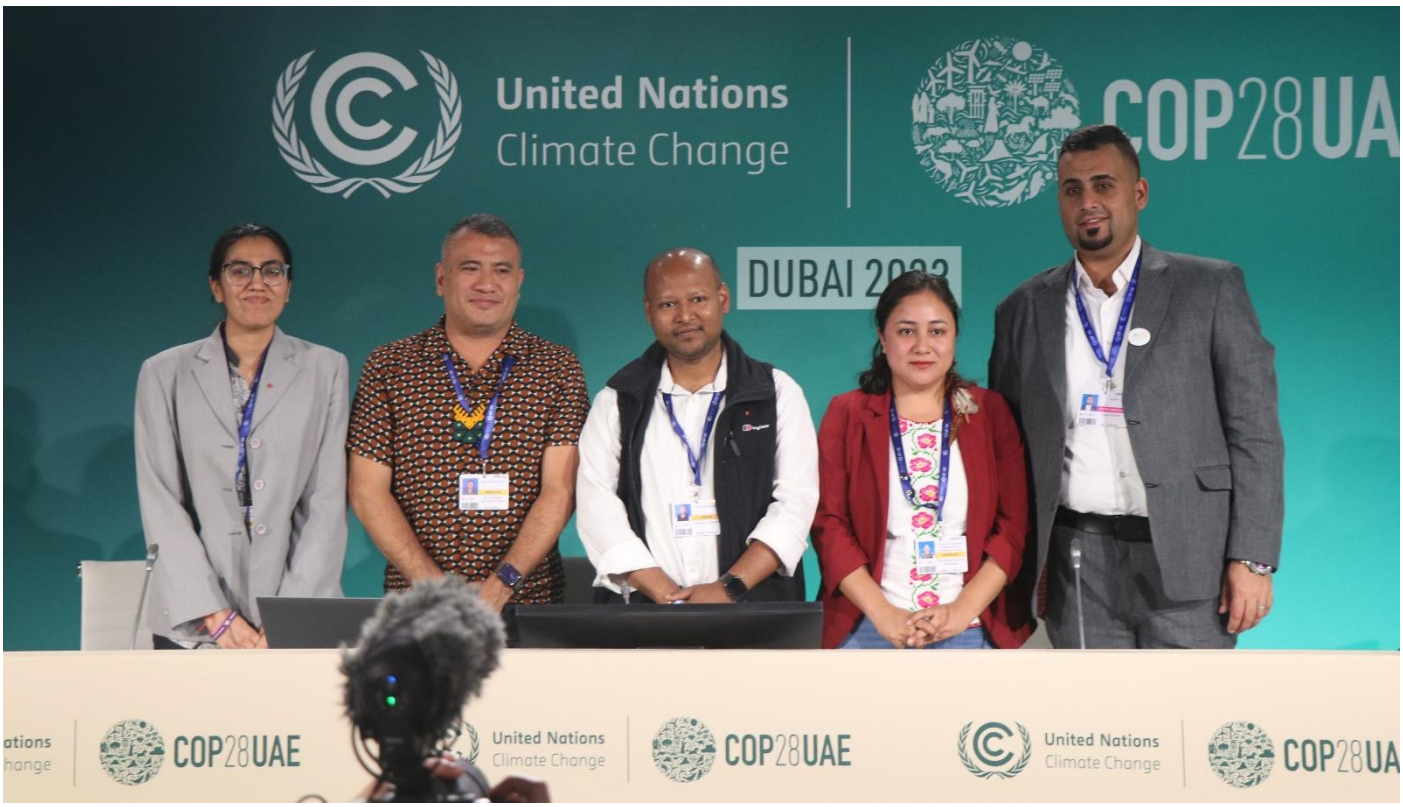
From bottom left: Golo, Jyoti Didi, Sister Jayanti, Sister Maureen and Jyotika, Sonja, Piyush, Ankita C, Chaitya, Aneta, Carolin, Valeriane, Ankita M, Aya.

Exhibition

Today we are starting a 4-day long exhibition together with the Faith Assoc. of the Rehab. of Street Children & Orphans and the Int. Youth/Student Movement for UN to showcase key projects in education, renewable energies and lifestyle change.

Press Conference: Young Heroes of Climate Justice Stories

The session was moderated by Ankita Manjunath, Youth Rep. for BKEI, she opened by speaking about the importance of climate justice and how these young heros have been making an impact on the ground in dealing with the global climate crisis as well as creating a community of like-minded individuals.– LINK to Webcast



Left to Right: Ankita; David Palmer, Wayuu Community, Ambassador & Emerging Film Makers Program Coordinator, INUTW; Shantanu, Nansedalia Ramírez, Coordinator of the Youth Movement of the Mesoamerican Alliance of Peoples and Forests; Loay Alatrash, Chariman of Arab Green Youth Voices Network

Air France

Shantanu was interviewed right after our press conference by Air France. They asked Shantanu how spirituality can help in the situation of climate crisis.

FAITH LEADERS at COP28

Faith leaders at COP, please see videos including Sister Jayanti
https://interfaithsustain.com/faith-leaders-cop28/

Faith stock take of COP28

Climate Action Zone Hub, the Interfaith Liaison Committee organized a dialogue entitled: "Faith stock-take of COP28 – What is missing in climate discussions and action?" Maureen was one of the speakers at the event with approx. 60 participants actively sharing their views of the outcomes of COP28. Ahmed Al Ghardaqa, from the COP28 Presidency team and the Lead of the COP28 Interfaith Initiative, attended the event and received the outcomes of the Talanoa Dialogue presented by Valeriane.

Ahmed Al Ghardaqa, from the COP28 Presidency team and the Lead of the COP28 Interfaith Initiative and Valeriane.

Care, Share and Inspire - Climate Wisdom Studio

In today's Climate Wisdom series, the moderator Sonja reminded us of our interconnection with nature and the possibility of feeling grief when the environment is deteriorating, she said: "I remember experiencing climate grief when I noticed birch trees drying up in my home town." The panel of experts were **Maureen, Bishop Marika Markovits** - Linköping Diocese, Sweden and **Lora Almutairi** - Public Authority of Agriculture Affairs, Kuwait

Bishop Marika shared that "As a diver, I feel sad to see that the seas have become empty and the coral reefs degraded; I feel my own responsibility because of my extensive travel across the world and I am doing my bit to compensate". **Sr. Maureen** explained that "When we feel that we can do something to make a difference, it helps to alleviate the grief. "We usually take from nature, but seldom give; having good wishes, pure feelings and vibrations for nature can immensely benefit it." **Lora** shared the predicament faced by the developing countries who are offered the technology but not the fund. "If we want to address this problem, we must start with the community, especially educating children about climate change." Compassion and sustainable action underlined the essence of the discussion. Bishop Marika brought a serene closure to the program with a prayer specially created and dedicated to COP28.

9.12.2023

ACTIVE YOUTH

Youth delegates of Brahma Kumaris at COP28 along with the Raja Yoga Center - Dubai family visited the Jabal Ali Wildlife Sanctuary in Dubai, to plant mangroves. Major Ali Al Suwaidi, President of the Emirates Marine Environmental Group welcomed everyone and explained the importance of mangroves in curbing carbon emissions and global warming. Meditation and Actions together brings the needed change for the whole world.

Youth in Solidarity with Environmental Defenders

The Young Catholics CYNESA and If Not Us Then Who? (INUTW) organised an event called: Youth Rising in Solidarity for Environmental Defenders and Safeguarding Lives, Nature and the Future Environmental defenders united to share their lived experiences and unwavering determination in their pursuit of protecting nature, despite facing threats and obstacles to their human rights. Using a creative and interfaith approach of storytelling the participants could experience inner resilience and hope. *No photo to protect the Environmental Defenders*

Handover of the Interfaith Talanoa Call

The Interfaith Talanoa Call was written as a result of the dialogue that took place on the 30th of November, the first day of the COP. The conveners of the dialogue gathered the main points of each thematic group to draft a Call they handed over to Ina Parvanova, the UNFCCC Director of Communications & Engagement.

Land Restoration Program

Muhammad Zubair, AlHuda Centre of Islamic Banking and Economics, Chief Executive Officer Sri Sri Ravishankar, Founder, of The Art of Living, and Maureen.

The UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) organized a side event at the Faith Pavilion, titled: Mobilising Faith Community Towards Land Restoration. The panelists from various faith communities and religions explored the common values that underpin our responsibility to care for the Earth. Sister Maureen represented the Brahma Kumaris and she shared the stage with. One of the key messages shared by all was that God loves all the creation - including nature, so it is our duty to protect it. Sister Maureen shared, that when we work with the land, we shall do it not only with our hands but also with our heart, otherwise, too often is just short term. All of the panelists have also presented various projects that their organizations cary out to restore land, as well as their personal practices to take care for the Earth. See full event here

Faith in action for climate justice

This event brought together a diverse faith leaders to discuss the loss and damage fund. Panelists spoke about the need for a call of hope - justice, and responsibility towards the most vulnerable: children, women, and indigenous peoples. The establishment of the Loss and Damage fund in COP27 was appreciated and its operationalization in COP28 was acknowledged, all with a clear understanding that the fund being based on grants, not loans. All agreed about the need to include non-economical loss and damage aspects; that what has value, now always has price. How to monetarize loss of hope? The session ended with the summary, where sister Maureen shared her good wish to let God's love and wisdom guide our every thought, word, and action, and let our faith and determination be absolutely infectious. YOUTUBE Link

Together with Maureen were: *Bishop Julio Murray*, Archbishop of Central America, Bishop of the Diocese of Panama; *Bishop Marika Markovits*, Church of Sweden (Evangelical Lutheran) and The Holy See Rep. The dialogue was moderated by *Chiara Martinelli,* Dir. CAN Europe.

Care, Share and Inspire - Climate Wisdom Studio

Tonight's guest speakers were Maureen, BK Priyanka Patil, Founder and Director Golden Era Eco Services, Dr. Florence Colleoni, Antarctic researcher, Trieste, Italy. Golo moderated the session combining science, faith and practical application.

COP DROP – Faith for Biodiversity

The Biodiversity Faith Group headed by Gopal Patel has arranged daily COP Drop Livestream. On the 9th it as the turn of Maureen to do the Zoom call. The questions asked:

- What has been your experience this year at COP?
- How do you feel people of spirit and faith can best show up in places like COP?
- What is your advice for how we can deepen our connection with nature?

Maureen receives a Medal

H.E. Judge Mohamed Abdelsalam, Secretary-General of the Muslim Council of Elders met with Sister Maureen to share expreinces of COP and discuss future co-operation. Sister Maureen received a medal given selected main partners in the Faith Pavilion.