



The Brahma Kumaris

at

- the 6th session of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR-6) and
- the 6th session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6)

19 February - 1 March, 2024
Nairobi, Kenya

The global environment is facing threats, many caused by human actions. From climate change, biodiversity loss and land degradation to plastic pollution and deteriorating air quality standards, the Earth's ecosystems are facing unprecedented challenges. Policymakers and global citizens have long agreed that there is a need for concerted action to reverse these trends that threaten life on Earth.

The Brahma Kumaris is an active member of the United Nations Environment Program family and contributes with the spiritual perspective to the root causes of the situation and required solutions.



The world's highest environmental decision-making body, the sixth United Nations Environment Assembly brought about 6000 delegates from 193 Member States to Nairobi to consider proposals for "Effective, inclusive and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution."



The 6th session of the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR-6)

19 - 23 February 2024



On Monday, 19 February 2024, the OECPR-6 opened in Nairobi, it served as a preparatory meeting of the UNEA agenda and pre-negotiates and deliberates the content and wording of proposed resolutions, declarations, and decisions for endorsement and approval by the Assembly.



UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen said that in these times, multilateralism must demonstrate its ability to transcend geopolitical strife and deliver action on the triple planetary crises.

The working groups were established to negotiate 2 decisions and 19 draft resolutions grouped in five clusters, as follows:

- abating pollution and promoting sound management of chemicals and waste (Cluster A);
- halting and reversing the loss of nature while restoring ecosystems (Cluster B);
- international environmental governance (Cluster C);
- addressing root causes of climate change, nature, biodiversity loss & pollution (Cluster D);
- procedural, budgetary, and administrative matters (Cluster E).



For the five days, from 19-23 February delegates within working groups were working from morning until late into the evening. It was the best OECPR organized so far, yet the outcome was not as hoped for. On the last day of the OECPR-6, no agreement had been reached on a single draft decision or resolution and they all were transferred for further negotiations within the Committee of the Whole of UNEA-6.

The solar radiation modification (SRM) draft resolution remained one the furthest from finalization due to its potentially high risk and need for further scientific research.

UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen provided encouraging closing remarks and urged delegates to use their presence in the environmental capital of the world, as a chance to show that multilateralism and environmentalism meet here in Nairobi and to deliver future long-term sustainability to present and future generations.



The Brahma Kumaris delegates were Dorcas from Kenya and Aneta from Poland. They were observing the negotiations during the OECPR-6 and gave their contributions to some draft resolutions, e.g. on land degradation, stating the need to support community-led conservation and restoration of natural ecosystems, by agroecological approaches and regenerative practices. They highlighted the importance of re-establishing the connection with the land, based on values and the need to develop and implement programs aimed at enhancing farmers' emotional well-being and community resilience.



For draft resolutions on sustainable lifestyle and circular economy, the BK delegates submitted interventions on human actions shaping the natural environment and actions having their root in the awareness, explaining the profound impact of the awareness on the planet.

Dorcas and Aneta participated in daily meetings of the Major Groups and Stakeholders, where the current status of negotiations was updated and the main positions and interventions of the NGOs and other stakeholders were agreed upon.

One of the side events attended by the BK delegates was the program in Green Room focused on good practices that are already reducing plastic pollution, such as plant-based packaging as an alternative to single-use plastic, as well as creating new and gender-just jobs. The role and situation of waste pickers in Kenya, who are mostly women were highlighted.



The Brahma Kumaris representatives were part of the meeting of the NGOs and other stakeholders with the Arab League, a regional organization in the Arab world, which is located in North Africa, West Africa, and part of East Africa. Saudi Arabia invited everyone to participate and contribute to the COP16 of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) that will happen in Riyadh in December 2024.



The 20th Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF) at UNEA-6

24–25 February 2024

Serving as the prep meeting for major groups and stakeholders attending the UNEA, talks were organized around the UNEA-6 theme of “Effective, inclusive, and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution.”

At the beginning of the meeting, the GMGSF held a “solidarity moment” with victims of the ongoing war in Ukraine, Palestine, and Sudan.

Participants spent the rest of the day on a systematic review of the five UNEA-6 resolution clusters.



Following a first day of “housekeeping” that developed a shared understanding of the positions of the Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) and finetuned input on the draft resolutions of the UNEA-6, discussions on Sunday were organized around a series of informal dialogues with key players in international environmental governance.

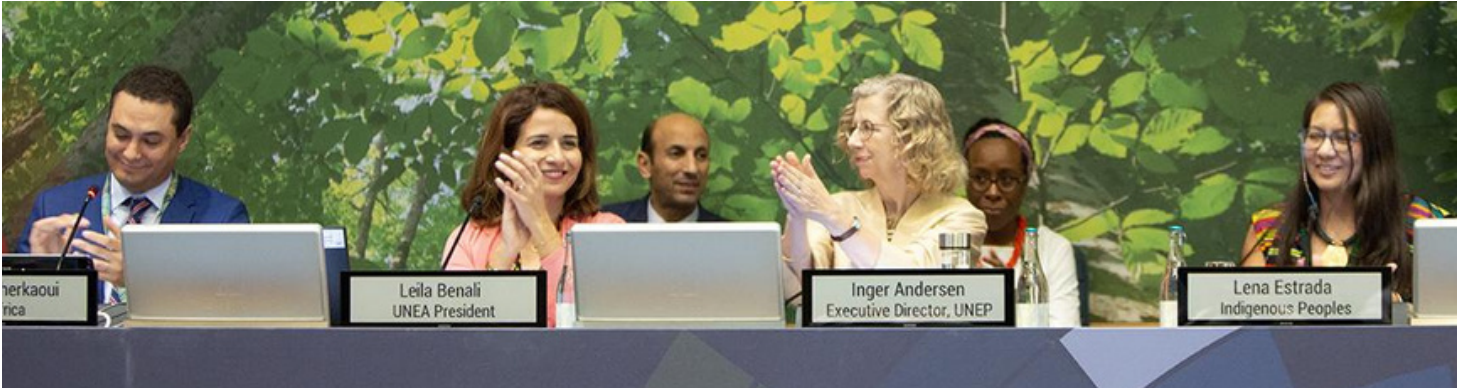
In the morning, UN Special Rapporteur on toxics and human Rights, Marcos Orellana, emphasized that MGS are instrumental in tackling some of the world’s most intractable environmental challenges through their contribution to evidence gathering and documentation, awareness raising, and advocacy.



Sascha Gabizon, Executive Director, Women Engage for a Common Future and Marcos Orellana, UN Special Rapporteur on Toxics and Human Rights



Marcos Orellana, UN Special Rapporteur on toxics and human rights



Ayman Cherkaoui, Africa Regional Co-Facilitator; UNEA-6 President Leila Benali; Inger Andersen, Executive Director, UNEP; and Lena Estrada, Co-Facilitator, Indigenous Peoples and their Communities Major Group

In the afternoon, MGS held an exchange with UNEA-6 President, Leila Benali, and UNEP Executive Director, Inger Andersen. Benali stressed that since becoming UNEA President, she has consistently engaged with MGS because of their valuable dual role as think tanks and watchdogs.



Underlining that multilateralism is the only viable approach to tackle global challenges, Andersen further noted the contribution of MGS as a multistakeholder platform that crosses boundaries and factions, urging them to be part of the demanding chorus that “asks for ambition, calls for accountability, and helps to deliver.”



A final dialogue session introduced an emerging “Group of Friends” of UNEP MGS aimed at facilitating meaningful MGS participation in UNEP processes and environmental governance more broadly.



Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum UNEA-6

The sixth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-6)
26 February - 1 March 2024



On Monday, 26 February 2024, the sixth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-6) opened at the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, with an ambitious plan for the week ahead.



Ahead of the opening plenary, the impressive musical talents of the Kenya Boys Choir were followed by calls to maintain the “Nairobi spirit” by reaching an agreement on the critical issues under discussion.



UNEA-6 President Leila Benali (Morocco) noted major conflicts that are having serious impacts on the world and she stated that UNEA-6 is an opportunity to restore trust in multilateralism and humanity.

"Environmental multilateralism is alive. It works. And it is here to stay," said UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen. "A peaceful, equitable & sustainable future can exist." She pointed out that at previous UNEAs, the world was watching, but today, the world was here at UNEA and she could not have been more right.



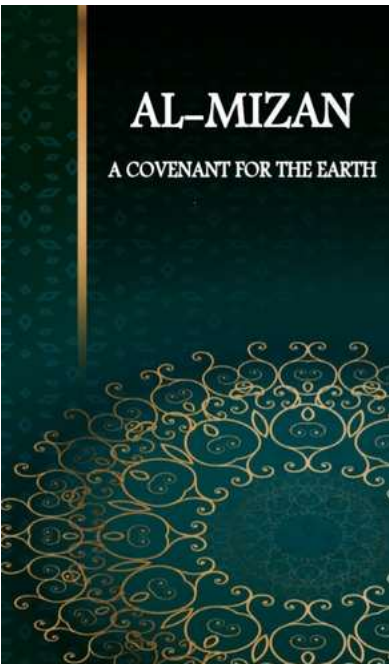
Leila Benali, President of UNEA-6 together with Inger Andersen, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme during the opening of the MEA Exhibition at the UNEA-6.



Dorcas and Aneta participated in the networking event of Faith for Earth Coalition. It was a gathering of many people from various faiths and religions, united by their care for Mother Earth. Some of the information shared was on the progress of draft resolution negotiations, the Youth Network, and the Summit of the Future planned for September 2024 in New York.



A silent protest held by civil society

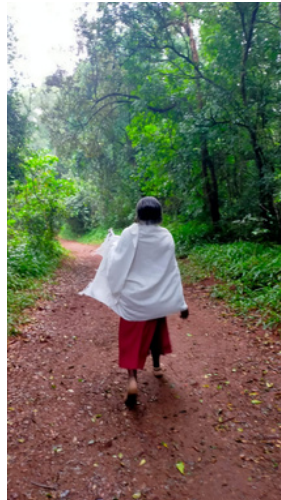
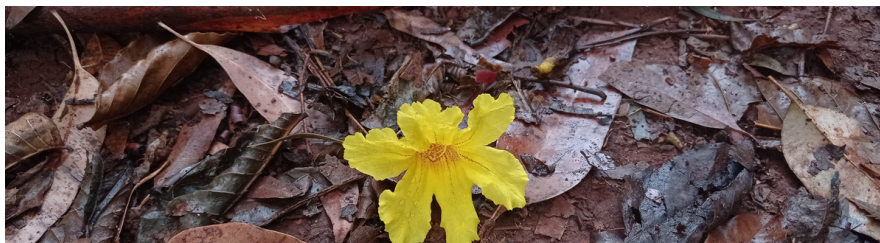


Al-Mizan - A Covenant for the Earth was launched during the UNEA-6. The Covenant presents an Islamic outlook on the environment in a bid to strengthen local, regional, and international actions to combat the triple planetary crises defined by the United Nations as climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. It is a global endeavour to engage Muslims from all levels of society in the development and adoption of this call.



The President of UNEA, Leila Benali, Permanent Representative of the Holy See, Dr. Samir Boudinar, the Muslim Council of Elders, and two co-authors with Dr lyad.

Healing stroll and serving throught the mind in the beautiful Karura Forest



Side Event in the Green Room

The Brahma Kumaris was invited to the panel discussion in the Green Room, called: Why Faith Matters Matter in Multilateralism to Combat Climate Change Impacts, Biodiversity Loss, and Plastic Pollution. The event was organised by Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa (CYNESA) and it took place on the 29th of February 2024. About 100 people participated in person and on-line.



The following panelists participated in the dialogue:

- David N. Munene: Programs Manager, CYNESA & Regional Facilitator, UNEP MGS, Africa
- Rev. Rachel Mash: Anglican Communion
- Aneta Loj: Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University
- Rev. Fr. Stephen Makagutu: Deputy Permanent Representative, Holy See Mission to UNEP & UN Habitat
- Fidelis Stehle: President, FIMCAP Europe



The event convened faith-based actors accredited to the UNEP to showcase their efforts in utilizing faith as a tool to facilitate dialogue for environmental policymaking. The focus was narrowed down to the activities of organizations dedicated to addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. Drawing from their experiences in various UN processes including the UN Climate Change Convention (UNFCCC), the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD), the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA), these organizations demonstrated their ability to influence international policy while also engaging in grassroots actions.



Aneta presented the engagement of the Brahma Kumaris in various multilateral forums, emphasizing interfaith activities as a means to amplify the voice of faith and advocate for values, ethics, and just approaches in negotiations and policymaking processes. She showcased Brahma Kumaris' projects as examples of implementing multilateral agreements and concepts, such as research activities in solar energy and yogic agriculture, rural outreach program - the Raj Rishi Gokul Village - A Holistic Rural Development project, and the youth-led KalpTaruh program.



Meetings of the green hearts



With the delegation of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF)



With Dia Mirza,
UNEP Goodwill Ambassador



With LWF Delegate, Husna Ahmad
& Patricia Kombo



With Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim,
Environmental Activist



With Georgina Bwango, UNCCD



With Patricia Kombo,
UNCCD Land Hero

Closing Plenary

Following many hours of non-stop negotiations over the two weeks, delegates successfully concluded the sixth United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6), spending the final day listening to passionate speeches by leaders from around the globe calling to respond to the planet's warning signals.



All these calls from global leaders ended in solidifying these undertakings through adopting timely resolutions in many important issue areas. During the closing plenary, Member States adopted 15 resolutions and 2 decisions, as well as the UNEA-6 Ministerial Declaration to ensure UNEP fulfils its mandate as the leading UN agency to facilitate “effective, inclusive, and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.”



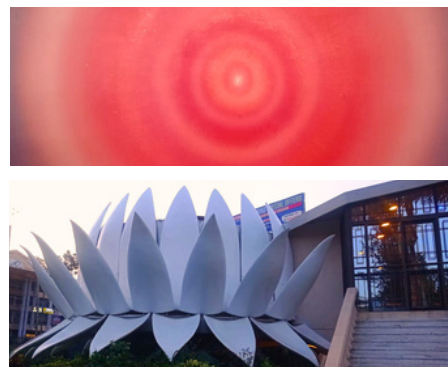
UNEA-6 President Leila Benali, Morocco



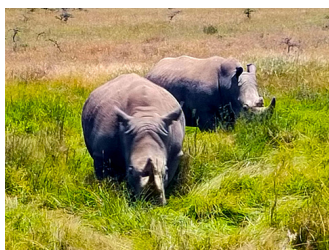
Inger Andersen, Executive Director, UNEP

UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen said the negotiations were not always easy, Member States did not always agree, but what matters is how we disagree, and this spirit of inclusivity represents true multilateralism.

With lots and lots of gratitude to our wonderful Hosts, the BK Family in Nairobi



And sharing our respect and good wishes with the majestic wild life at the Nairobi National Park



**THANK YOU & ASANTE SANA
OM SHANTI**