

Copenhagen Climate Change Conference – BK Report for Wednesday, December 9, 2009

“Go soon, Come Soon” A day coming and going. The departure of Viggo and the arrival of Sister Dorte (Dorothy) who come from the same BK center in another part of Denmark, Aarhus. Also the arrival of brother Golo from Gyan Sarovar.

A Day of Media interviews!

COP 15 – Bella Center

Sister Jayanti, Sonja, Julia, Patricia, Winnie, and Arnold set off to COP15, the government meeting. This was Sister Jayanti, Sonja and Julia’s first visit to the Bella center as we had been involved with the Religious Leaders meeting up until now. After registering we familiarized ourselves with the huge conference venue, visited our BK stand, had a meeting with Climate Change TV person, Anna, who was organizing an interview with us later in the day, and sat in one of the main plenary sessions of the Climate negotiations. Just as we sat down in the packed conference room (people were overflowing and sitting in the passageways, **Mr. Vijai Sharma IAS Secretary to the Government of India, Ministry of Environment and Forests** was about to speak, this was perfect timing as Patricia recognized him as someone she used to work with and so a little while after his intervention she called him out of the conference room to **meet with Sister Jayanti**. A very lovely meeting took place where he acknowledged the importance of the presence of organizations and spiritual leaders such as ourselves during these negotiations as we worked at a different and much needed level which would help the negotiators, such as him, do their job and move things forward.

Press Conference at COP15

Organized jointly by **The Interfaith Declaration on Climate Change** (with whom we are sharing our stand) and **350.org organized** (highlighting the benchmark of 350 parts per million of CO2 in the atmosphere. The name of the Press conference was **Spirit and Science in Agreement on the Climate Crisis**. It lasted for an hour with 2 panels. Sister Jayanti spoke on the second panel facilitated by 350.org

First Panel:

Sister Joan Brown, OSF, Franciscans International Delegation

Climate Change of Heart and soul is needed. Saint Frances would say, follow in the footsteps of Jesus, look after your carbon foot print! At the end of his life when St. Frances was a bit disheartened about the situation around him he would say “Let us follow Jesus NOW. We are now saying – Let us begin NOW, ACT NOW.

Imam Abudul Wahid Pedersen, Foreign Relations Manager, Muslim Council of Denmark.

People may say what this has got to do with religion, maybe nothing, but it has got to do with religious people. Money is running the show, not humans; we have to reclaim our planet from the multi-nationals, into the hands of concerned people, concerned scientists, and concerned religious people. Our religions teach us this concern and we have to join hands as we are all in the same boat. We have to raise the awareness of concerned people.

Dr. Stephen Schneider, Stanford University. Stewardship is the keyword. He spoke of how he was part of the first conference in Rio, and how Bush (senior’s) advisers had at one point encouraged Bush not to go to Rio, because they did not want to be put in the position of having

to sign anything, but ultimately Bush decided to go, along with a little known senator of the time – Al Gore . . . Many years have passed since then. We are now close to the end and we have to fix it, it cannot be solved by one, it has to be a multilateral agreement. Moral principles are involved.

Venerable Chang Ji, Dharma Drum Mountain Buddhist Association. It is when we live by our ethical values that we live more wholesome lives. When your personal interest is at stake you have to let go of some things for the sake of the public interest. There is value in looking at the interconnectedness of all.

Second Panel

Sister Jayanti said crisis is not just to do with the climate change crisis it is a crisis in ethics and values, sometimes we need to “hit a wall” for us to make changes. that wall is fast heading towards us. Physical things will happen quickly when there is a change of human hearts and consciousness. The essential factor of the human being is consciousness, awareness – thought. There is the whole system of belief, that the quality of our thoughts impacts the world around us and the process of mediation, contemplation and prayer is to connect to the deep peace love and truth within our inner being so that thoughts of this quality can be transmitted into the world but it is also this quality of thought that is translated into action.

Rabbi Bent Lexner, Chief Rabbi of Denmark. The Bible tells us to guard and keep the earth. Science is clear, humanity is doing a dangerous experiment, and we must tell our people that we are commanded to guard the earth.

Lakha Lama Rinpoche, Pendeling Centre for Tibetan Buddhism. What is needed is nonviolence, awareness and respect. Violence comes from inside pollution which makes us greedy and steal from nature that which is not given – we take it out of the planet and then the waste from that changes into chemicals. This is a lot of violence to our home. We need to teach or children non-violence, science and religion need to come together – inner science. It is the inner science which exists before the outer science.

Tahirih Naylor, representing Bahai International Community’s UN office. This is not only a crisis but an opportunity to live at the next level of maturing. We also believe that it is the inner perspective which molds the outer perspective.

Questions were taken from the press.

There were interesting **Questions from the Press**, including a young reporter from World Watch

Interview with Climate Change TV.

Climate Change TV is the world’s first Internet broadcaster dedicated entirely to climate change issues, featuring exclusive interviews with world leaders, environmental ministers, expert scientists, decision makers, activists and many of the most important and influential figures involved in the international climate change debate. The BKs were given the opportunity to be interviewed by a journalist there in the middle of the large space at the Bella Centre where an audience gathered to hear the interview. This was also broadcast all over the Bella center at other times during the day. The questions asked were”

“Tell us about the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University?”

“What is your purpose of being here?”

“What is the role of mediation in this?”

“What would you say to the leaders of the world gathered here?”

We leave you to reflect on the answers – you know by now the position of the BK’s here. When the story is put up, we will send you the link.

Interview with Religious Affairs Correspondent, Danish Broadcasting Corporation.

In the afternoon Sister Jayanti was interviewed and joined by Golo and Sonja. **Anders Laugesen**, the correspondent came to Baba's home. He is well traveled and has spent the last 20 years looking at different religions, he had also spent a couple of years in India. He was very interested to know the role of women and the power of the Shakti, in particular the role that goddess Kali, as her appearance seems particularly violent. **Sister Jayanti** spoke of their role as representing the power to destroy raven and this is why these goddesses appear so fearsome. They represent the end of evil, and there is no fear of death because there is the knowledge of immortality.

Laugesen then said he sometimes felt that religious people, especially Yogis, were well away from the turmoil of the world and it was easy for them to stay cool and calm while the rest of the world suffered.

Golo intervened here and shared how in fact Yogi's too had to make effort to stay cool and calm – they as ordinary people, had also come from the confusion of the world and even if yogi's lives in mountains, such as the Aravalli mountains of Rajasthan where the BKs have their headquarters, there was plenty of activity going on. For example, he was presently involved into a huge project, dealing with many people, a lot of machinery and technology, and it was because of a lot of intense spiritual effort on his part that he is able to stay cool and calm in these often hectic circumstances. **Sonja** also shared how she has to deal with a lot of stress, and stressful people in her work, as a community nurse, and it is her practice of daily meditation that keeps her cool and calm.

Laugesen enjoyed his time here so much he stayed for one and a half hours and on departure shared how he could see that even though Sister Jayanti had a lot of gentleness in her demeanor and voice, when he looked in her eyes he could see the power of shakti. The interview will be broadcast at some point together with Sonja's meditation commentary in Danish.

Activism at COP15

Bella Conference Center is teaming with people from all over the world, and the plenary rooms are full – 'Standing room' or rather 'Sitting on the floor Room' only! Arnold reported that he went into the plenary early to make sure of a seat and heard a lot of noise outside and after sometime went outside and found that the security had moved the slogan chanting activists far from the entrance of the plenary room creating a corridor so that the activist could not disturb the meetings.

Christiania – Windows of Hope

Renaud Russeil, gave a presentation in the afternoon called '**From fear to non-violence, changing our lifestyle for a sustainable future**'. About 50 people attended and some who were interested in having a conversation after the event for about half an hour.

Ray of the Day

You may remember we mentioned in Monday's BK report that CAN (Climate Action Network – group of 400 NGOs) organize a prize presentation called the "Fossil of the Day" and that we had suggested they also have a prize called 'Enlightenment of the Day' and they said that they were thinking of this but were going to call it 'Ray of the Day' (a better name). Today the "Ray" was born – Today, the small country of Tuvalu in the Pacific received the award "The Ray of the Day" for their efforts in climate change negotiations. The country is particularly affected by climate change and has brought the legal aspect of the COP 15 on the pitch.