

Copenhagen Climate Change Conference – BK delegation weekend report – 12 & 13th Dec., 2009

Saturday 12th December

Planning meeting for the BK Environment Initiative.

The BK delegation got together after class to discuss how we could move forward with the BK Environment Initiative and how we can share this with the rest of the BK family. We had a short brainstorming session and will meet again on Tuesday before sister Jayanti leaves and the BK delegates who have left Copenhagen will join us by phone.

COP15 and the Klimaforum

This was a quieter day, at both COP15 and the Klimaforum (NGO meeting), mainly because today was a day of demonstrations. Our interaction with the public was more of a one on one conversation as people visited both our stands. Most were from different government delegations, especially some of the African countries which included Senegal, Malawi, and Mali. During quieter times it was an opportunity for the local green team volunteers to ask spiritual questions to our BK delegates who were with them on the stands.

Meanwhile out on the street, people gathered in front of the Danish Parliament building to march to the Bella Center (COP15) about four miles away. The crowd of tens of thousands was incredibly diverse and included: young people from around the world, dressed as penguins and polar bears and dinosaurs, singing, dancing to stay warm against the cold breeze. The demonstrators marched to press for more decisive action on global warming. Many chanted and carried banners reading "Demand climate justice", "The world wants a real deal" and "There is no Planet B". Though this was a mainly peaceful demonstration there were some arrests, most have now been released.

Closing Session of the Religious Leaders Meeting.

Sister Jayanti, Sonja and Bro. Romas set off for the closing session of the religious leaders meeting which took place in Duemosegaard, the country manor of Hildur and Ross Jackson, founders of the Gaia Trust and the Global Eco Village Network in Denmark. This was a beautiful modern farm house, into which the owners had just moved with a vision of having it as an ecological retreat and educational center. During this closing session each religious leader was asked to share in one word what their experience of this week had been, and many came up with words of oneness or unity. It had indeed been an unusual week where religious leaders from many different faiths had been able to be unified around this issue.

Finally an intense discussion began on whether anger could be righteous or not. At this point our delegation had to leave to join our "International Christmas Party" at our local BK center which was enjoyed by the whole delegation together with the local volunteer green team.

Sunday 13th December

Second Wave

A wave of new arrivals and departures have taken place over the weekend in Copenhagen not only from our BK delegation -- the departures of Renaud, Arnold and Dotre who left for France, Holland, and western Denmark respectively and the arrival of Sister Valerianne from Switzerland Sis Lotta from Sweden and Bro Piero from Italy - but there has also been a huge influx of additional NGOs along with more government parties, and government ministers who

will be preparing for the arrival of their Heads of State this coming week. This has caused the organizers of the UN Conference to issue a limited number of secondary passes to the observer delegations (NGOs such as ours) – to limit the amount of people entering the Bella Conference Center at one time. The capacity of the Bella Center is 15000 and the registered participants is 30,000. So our delegation of 17 has been limited to 7 delegates, which actually doesn't make a great deal of difference to us as we do not even have that many at the main conference at one time.

COP 15 and NGO Forum

The NGO Forum has a well attended meditation each morning. This morning's session was led by the Brahma Kumaris. Valerianne from Switzerland guided the meditation. After half an hour's powerful meditation, there was a sharing on empowerment. At the end one woman asked how activities like mediation would impact the COP15? This gave the opportunity to speak of mind over matter, and how creating harmonious relationships influences the whole community through a new, more positive, and inclusive attitude. This different atmosphere supplies a more constructive attitude towards climate change, rather than the outbursts of anger which can be expressed.

Religious Service at the Cathedral in Copenhagen

Sister Jayanti, Sonja, and Winnie attended this beautiful ceremony which was held at the Church of Our Lady, the Copenhagen Lutheran Cathedral. The ceremony was called the Ecumenical Celebration for Creation. Sister Jayanti was among a congregation of about 2,000 people. - Sonja had managed to get a reserved seat in the second row with a clear view of the proceedings. (Due to her much appreciated help with the Religious Leaders Meeting). Songs were sung in Zulu by a choir called Church on the Rock Choir from South Africa, in Greenlandic by Aavaat, a Greenlandic choir and in Danish by the Copenhagen Royal Chapel Choir. Three symbols of climate change were carried in procession: Glacier stones from Greenland, dried up maize from Africa, bleached corals from the Pacific Ocean and all the songs and prayers were based on the natural world. The ceremony was presided over by the Queen of Denmark and among other bishops and church leaders from the 5 continents, Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams spoke an inspiring sermon and Archbishop Emeritus, Desmond Tutu read a Psalm. Sister Jayanti had the opportunity to meet with both Archbishops. Dr. Desmond Tutu said he had been following the growth and activities of the BKs over the years. Conference of Danish Industry - Bright Green.

Mr. Pachuri, Chair of IPCC and Nobel Laureate spoke of how business cannot function in a society that has failed. Even if emissions come to 0% today the inertia in the seas (time lag) will make sea levels rise. Thermal expansion of ocean will definitely happen.

- The Global community has to take climate change seriously, including business and industry. This is the Opportunity to transform and come back close to nature. Natural energies are going to be the foundation of civilization.
- The Indian government has committed 20,000 megawatts of solar energy in the next 11 years.
- Reduction of CO₂ emissions by 2015 must happen.
- Using the technologies on a large scale as in Denmark and Germany, doesn't reduce growth of industry.
- We can measure and predict the impact of humans on nature, but we cannot predict or measure the impact of the upheavals of nature on nature.