

## **FAREWELL 2007. WHAT A RICH AND EVENTFUL YEAR IT WAS! WELCOME 2008. WHAT DOES IT HAVE IN STORE?**

Dear brothers and sisters far and wide,

I want to start by thanking all those members around the world who took such great care of me during my travels, offering me wonderful hospitality, enthusiastically sharing projects and visions, openly expressing concerns and upsets, and joining in songs and good laughs; and all those who wrote to me to share in much the same way. It is hard to express how much I appreciate your support and prayers. Also my thanks to all the members I could not meet or talk with but who each, in their own way, brought their unique gifts and talents to our global family.

2007 saw many celebrations and jubilees, remembering the early days of Subud and Bapak's travels around the world. It started with the 60 year celebration of the official establishment of Subud in Indonesia, and ended with the recent 50 year jubilee in Sri Lanka. And right in the middle was the colourful Thank You event in Ascot, England, which brought together so many from all over the world. We came to express our thanks to Bapak, to the courageous pioneers of Subud's early days, to Ibu Rahayu, to all those who continue to dedicate themselves to serving Subud and, last but by no means least, to Almighty God for the gift of the latihan.

As often as not, 2007 was a year of reflection as well, a time for honest appraisal, looking at what we have achieved, whether our expectations have brought the results we hoped for, where we want to go from here and what we need to do to get there.

It is hard to generalise about the fulfilment of expectations, but, in this past year, as I travelled, I was certainly able to bear witness to the fruits of the latihan in the lives of so many members, as individuals, in enterprises, and working together in projects. I was impressed and amazed at the diversity, creativity and ingenuity, so that more than once I felt overwhelmed with gratitude for all that I observed and experienced.

At the same time, 2007 was significant in the fact that the decision was made to sell Bapak's flagship enterprise, PTS Widjojo. For a fair number of members this was very disappointing – and is even considered a grave mistake; others, on the other hand, see it as the end of one chapter and the beginning of a new one yet to be written. Only time will tell how the story continues. What is certain is that the decision has given rise to many discussions and a renewed look at what Bapak's vision for enterprises was all about. Listening to successful Subud entrepreneurs and professionals over the past months has given me useful insight into this complex issue, and, once again, I find the diversity of opinions and approaches quite fascinating. My perception is that the concept of enterprise within Subud is far from dead. On the contrary – and I hope that 2008 may be a year where we find even broader content to our work on enterprises and projects of all types.



Speaking of 2008 brings us to the question of the new initiative to be launched by the World Subud Council. Again, these initiatives follow up on World Congress workshops, and this year will be no different. In 2007 we looked at our presence in the world. We were delighted to receive so much feed-back that reflected member's efforts to reach out into their communities and to attend events that bring Subud into contact with other organisations and associations; but it also showed a real concern for the way we deal with our own members and function as a whole. There was a general feeling among many member countries that the theme bears continued attention, and at its August meeting, the WSC identified the natural follow-up initiative: to take an in-depth look at the way we function as an association, question what is working and where we need to find new approaches, for our internal working relationships as much as for those with our communities and the world. I'm sure there is a common understanding among Subud members that the latihan allows a process of change and growth within ourselves as individuals; it is obvious then that our association should reflect this by being a flexible structure, where change and new concepts are possible. Let us, together, look at all this; and let us consider some interesting suggestions that are being proposed (ISC will soon be communicating about this) to work towards a future where we can each find our place, where we are at ease and where we can feel satisfied with our association and how it works.

In 2008, various teams will continue working on exciting areas of development that are gradually becoming more defined. One is the group working on the Subud Forum concept, which aims to organise seminars of interest to a broad number of members involved in different fields, such as local development, education, and so on. These seminars would eventually be open to non-Subud participants as well. Our work in the area of interfaith and participation in interfaith and intercultural events (as encouraged by Ibu Rahayu in her talk to the Thank You gathering in Ascot) needs to continue and become more consolidated, reflecting the growing commitment of countless organisations around the world to look for ways to create more understanding and tolerance between peoples. The nature of the latihan, where people of every faith, religion, culture, nationality and walks of life can worship together with no sense of separation or discrimination, could well find expression in this form of activity. Kalimantan continues to be a subject of interest for many members world-wide, and, as a follow-up to the visit I made there last February, together with the WSA deputy, Frederic Richard, an initial event is being planned there for March.

Finally, 2008 will see the WSC meeting taking place within the context of the Gathering of the Americas in Amanecer, Colombia. At this council meeting, preparations for World Congress in New Zealand, just a year and a half later, will receive a lot of attention. The organising team in Christchurch are already well advanced with the framework of venues and all the other practicalities for such an event. Now we need to begin planning the activities and programmes to take place – so we'll be counting on lots of in-put from you all.

So, on this first day of the New Year – 2008 – I send you all my very best wishes and prayers that your lives will be blessed with great experiences, positive relationships, good health, success and bounty.

Much love,

Osanna