

HOLLAND CONGRESS 19 – 22 JUNE 2008

Farah and Andrew [International Helpers Area 2] spent the Thursday before the congress meeting with the national committee, the national helpers, youth and Susila Dharma, so as to get a feel for what the priorities might be before the congress proper started on the Friday afternoon. The meeting was held in the pleasant purpose built Subud house in Rotterdam. It emerged from our discussions that improving the team work among the helpers was a priority, along with arriving at a better understanding of helpers' duties. To this end an all Holland helpers meeting for both active and inactive helpers was suggested, to be held over a weekend possibly in the Autumn, to give all time to deepen their feeling of the importance and blessings of being diligent in carrying out helper work. The importance of helpers Latihans was also discussed.

Other issues were to improve communication and support between the national helpers and the all female national committee. Meeting the Susila Dharma team it became clear that the main priority was to allow the team more time to get into its stride, and to support them to build more capacity within the team. The meeting with the youth again emphasised the need for the youth to be included at all levels in our organisation, and gave us the opportunity to inform them of the forthcoming gathering at La Source. Helper's support of the wings was also discussed and tested.

The following day we travelled with our hosts to a delightful congress centre owned and run by the Ba'hai near Utrecht, really the sort of thing we should have for ourselves in fact!

On the Friday there were two Latihans with testing to help to deepen the feeling of the Latihan, on both occasions the testing was shared between ourselves and the national helpers in a very easy way. Andrew was very happy to be in the company of a more experienced helper who shared some of the tests that Bapak had done when he was still with us in this world. In a general meeting on Kejiwaan issues the members had the opportunity to share on the themes they would like to explore together, as with any community of Subud members who have been together for a long while forgiveness, reconciliation and gratitude were an important theme.

Saturday morning commenced with more Latihan and awakening testing, as well as on the theme of respect and caring for others, listening, and talking with a feeling of closeness to the true inner self, and recognising from what part within us our impulses to criticise and feelings of superiority arise. Afterwards there was the general opening of the congress with the reports of the committee, helpers, national helpers, the youth, SICA, and so on, held together with a light and easy feeling. Meetings then took place throughout the day in small working groups on various topics.

Later there was a meeting of the women helpers of the Den Haag group to discuss and test issues concerning working together. Also a meeting took place between the KC's for Holland, France and Spain with Reinbrand Visman and ourselves. Later that evening the men found the opportunity to discuss and test ways in which the Kejiwaan Councillors and the International Helpers can work more closely together within the zone, as well as some personal testing with some of the women.

Sunday was Bapak's birthday and so the theme for testing after Latihan was to try to find ways in which we could feel something of the reality of who Bapak really was. We asked to feel who we are, and then who Bapak is, how it is to be a helper of Bapak, how it is for us if we ask Bapak to help us deepen our surrender, what is the work of Bapak now that he is no longer with us, how it is for our inner understanding if we read the talks of Bapak and how is it if we do not, and also to feel the love of Bapak for each one of us, among other tests. It was a very special moment to savour together. A birthday song for Bapak and wonderful cakes were prepared to celebrate Bapak's birthday, ending with seeing the first part of the "Personal History Film" about Bapak.

SICA presented some art works and a young woman gave a little concert with one of her own songs. As there were a lot of young women a special youth Latihan was made. Reinbrand gave a presentation on Zone 3 and WSA matters, and there was also space for the Susila Dharma team to make a presentation. There were some discussions among all the members of using the booking for the same Ba'hai centre next year as the venue for a joint zone 3 and 4 meeting.

The congress finished in the afternoon giving both Farah and myself an unrushed drive to Schiphol for our flights home on Sunday evening. We wish to thank the committee and helpers of Subud Holland for including us so generously in their congress affairs, which were conducted in a spirit of good will and humour by all the members. May God bless all the Dutch Brothers and Sister so that they may bring into reality the vision of Bapak for Subud in the world in Holland.

With love
Farah [Czwiernia] and Andrew [Holloway]