

REPORT FROM THE VISIT TO PORTUGAL, LISBON
National congress 26th to 29th of March 2009
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Portugal, a country on the very west of Europe, bordering the Atlantic. with Lisbon, its beautiful capital, held its national congress end of March. Lisbon and Porto, are the main groups with a membership of ca. 50, next to some isolated members.

Arriving 2 days early, we had some extra time before the congress started, to talk about the present situation both on the committee and the kedjiwaan side.

It was expressed that the last months had not been easy, on one side through the present economical situation which had an effect on the budget of the Subud-premises and on the other side to face the difficulties in the men's group and in special of two families, which seemed to influence the group situation.

The premises are in the ownership of Subud since 3 years and well used. Six latihans a week are offered to the group which gives everybody the possibility to do latihan but at the same time may take away the chance to experience bigger group latihans. One reason to offer this amount of latihans is because some of the men members have to work in the evenings. These latihans are well visited and it was good to see that young people joined in as well. The other reason are the personal difficulties of some members to do latihan together. The helpers were discussing and testing that matter a time ago. There is an awareness of that issue and it will be looked at shortly again.

After the Thursday lunch latihan we met again in the afternoon to see some of the members and Farah joined in the womens latihan. As there are 2 latihans, one in the afternoon and one evening Latihan, we did some personal testing after the first one, and Sofia took the opportunity to do some testing concerning her work as councilor kedjiwaan. The second latihan in the evening was visited by many more ladies which was felt very deep and strong. Testing about Susila, Budhi, Dharma and how it is for our daily life and for the growth and development of Subud if we truly are living it, let us feel the inner reality.

The mens Latihan in the afternoon was filled with fathers and sons so to speak. Several young subud members were doing this afternoon Latihan and although this was may be one of the fractions of the group, it felt really wonderfully blessed by this. In the evening Lavasir met the men for the group latihan and some testing and also did testing with the national helper and a local helper about specific difficulties facing the helpers group til very late at night. This continued the next morning.

We got the chance to visit the „Alfragide Project“ run by Daniela. It has a pre-school, an after-school homework program and since some months a day home

for babies from 4 months old. The dedicated work of Daniela and some other Subud members is remarkable, one can feel the spirit of love and care in which these children can grow and receive the basics for their life. Not to mention that this institution is always ready to receive donations to start the next project to renovate and to enlarge the building to offer a better care for the children.

The national congress started on Friday afternoon with the opportunity to have time for kedjiwaan work. After doing latihan we were sharing about putting the latihan in our daily life and the readiness for inner change and what is it in us which hinders us to do so. Several questions for the readiness were tested with the ladies and it was experienced very deeply with an open feeling to share. As these tests were made for each single person and all the others were able to feel with them, it created real compassion and inner understanding for each others situation. Followed by a group latihan and some general testings about putting the latihan in our daily life, the ladies had to leave the room for the men's latihan.

Saturday morning another room in the building was rented to make a simultaneous latihan possible. After the latihan the ladies tested questions about: surrender, acceptance, patience, courage and questions concerning the congress. The men tested the effect of true forgiveness on yourself, the one you forgive, the effect of this on his descendants, your descendants etc.

A lot of members came, much more than expected and what made everybody happy was that many of the young members were active and took part during the whole congress.

Muchtar, the national chair welcomed all of us, forty members from all over Portugal and 12 members from abroad. He mentioned that some of the members take the opportunity to travel to other countries, in special to national congresses of Spain, which opens up the feelings to each other and enables us to work together on various projects, like organizing the combined Zone 3 meeting/ the Gathering and the WSC meeting at the end of May this year in Santiago de Compostela.

Muchtar expressed that in the last months it was not easy for him to do the work as a chairman, he couldn't feel any support and so had the feeling that he had to do everything by himself. He placed emphasis on the fact that the main feeling of working for Subud should be „JOY“ - and mentioned that Ibu Rahayu recently said to complain and criticize each others' work hinders God's power to work in ourselves and it lowers our inner state.

Therefore Muchtar suggested working together in a more flexible way, as most of the members who are willing to work in the committee are very busy and none of them could take the responsibility of doing the work of a wing representative except SD Portugal. That would mean to have a team who works in the various fields together. This suggestion was taken by the whole membership and was

voted with one consent. Several members were ready to work with Muchtar with this concept.

Afterwards reports were given from national helpers, Susila Dharma Portugal, SIHA, and Subud Youth.

The topic themes of the congress in short:

- | **Bucelas:** was owned by 3 families of Subud, because of legal reasons, as Subud as an association at that time was not allowed to buy a property. It was clear and written on paper that in the case that this law would change, that all of them would give it to Subud. 2 of the families did so but the 3rd one was not ready to do so. So to make it short: it went to court - 10 days before the congress this family resigned from their right and gave it to Subud. Now Bucellas is in the ownership of Subud Portugal.
- | **New project Bucelas:** Martin Martins presented a business plan for the property. As at the present time Bucelas is not looked after on a regular basis, vandalism destroyed all the windows of the latihan building. The idea was to revitalise the place in 3 steps. Martin would be willing to live there and to start to redecorate the damages and then to start the other phases in building up a center which could be used for Subud and for outside of Subud managed as an enterprise. A workshop was held in the afternoon where most of the members participated and it was taken as a official project from the congress.
- | **Latihan premises in Lisbon:** through the economical situation it was hard to find groups who are renting the little offices and the big room. Muchtar himself lend one of the rooms for his company, for some days the large room is rented for different kind of groups. For the present time the finances are in balance but the committee will try to find new possibilities to get more money in. One of the members, a high qualified financier, will talk to the bank concerning the interest and the payback, which he did already since the project started.
- | **ICDP** is legalised in Portugal since a year and has a new relationship with SD Portugal.
- | **50 years of Subud Portugal** will be celebrated in September after the Ramadhan
- | **Subud Youth:** the former youth representative moved to England and stopped doing her work as representative.

Testing for the representative of SD and the chairperson were done. As there were no candidates both of them were re-approved with great enthusiasm. A vice chair was found as well which will help the situation.

As Rhyana, the international Youth chair was there as well, we took the chance to do some testing about her work, which helped to get a clear feeling for the

present situation and to receive the next steps. One of the results was that Rhyana will participate at the WSC meeting in Spain, end of May.

Sunday morning started with latihan, afterwards we did some body testing and awareness testing. A final meeting which was held in a wonderful light atmosphere, finished the congress.

The ladies helpers met in the afternoon for a meeting. Themes like „mixing“, “how to look after members“, the „work of a helper“ „how to work together“ and „how to support each other“ were discussed and tested. The difficulties in accepting our differences showed that we still have to work on that. Not to correct each other and feel superior to others will help to find harmony in the helpers group. An inactive helper was tested to be active again. All ladies felt very happy for that.

The latihans and the testings were experienced deep and strong and gave the whole meeting a feeling of new energy and readiness of making the next step. It was remarkable to see the energy, commitment and strength of members to work in Subud projects, although situations are not always easy. It is an example for many of us, how to put the latihan into practice and how to live it in our daily life.

We do hope that it will be possible that a space for forgiveness will be created and to enable true harmony between all members. It would help and strengthen not only our membership but would also heal wounds which hinders us to open up for God's Grace.

Many thanks to all sisters and brothers who looked after us with so much kindness and love, and for the wonderful prepared food which we could celebrate together. We ask for forgiveness when we said something which offended somebody.

May God´s Blessing and Guidance be with all of you.

Lavasir and Farah