

## **VISIT TO CYPRUS, ANDREW and FARAH – 19.02 - 21.02.2007**

Arriving in Cyprus in the afternoon, we picked up a hire car to drive to the Northern Turkish part of Cyprus, where most of the Subud members lived. Mashoed met us at the border and showed us to his home in Ammóchostos (Farmagusta), where we were made very welcome by Irem, his wife, who prepared us a lovely meal. Latihan and testing was later that evening, with 3 men and 2 women.

The following morning we met a young woman, called Ilkim for an applicants meeting and later that day she was opened in Lefkosa (Nikosia). This was the place where the Latihan first came from Indonesia on its way to Europe in 1956. 3 longstanding women members, with Ilkim who was opened, Irem and myself did latihan and testing. Andrew did Latihan with Latif, also long standing member opened in the early days. It seems that the visit has acted as a catalyst with the members agreeing that they had been in isolation for many years, and having the intention to meet on a regular base and to form stronger bonds.

After returning to Ammóchostos the men did latihan with Sükru, another man from Iskilli, Mashoud and his two sons who were in their twenties, and also Emmanuel. Testing showed the importance of regular meetings and forming a committee to strengthen the bond of Subud Cyprus, also to communicate with the wider Subud community. Some discussion was had as to the possibility of having a holiday camp or youth meeting in Cyprus, which we are sure would receive much support.

Subud in Cyprus has great potential but needs the care and attention of all to grow once more. The following day we had further discussions and finished with a Latihan before leaving for Lebanon on the evening of the 21<sup>st</sup> of February. We hope the next visit to Cyprus will not be so long in coming.

Farah and Andrew wish to thank all the members of Subud Cyprus for the love and many kindnesses shown to us during our visit, and which made our work such a joy.

## **VISIT TO LEBANON, ANDREW and FARAH – 21.02. – 26.02.2007**

We were collected from the airport by Talal, Ali and Mona. Lebanon is on a knife edge with power struggle threatening to explode into violence at any moment. The grief and sadness of the people weigh heavily. This found expressions in the latihan which had extraordinary power, as if letting Gods Grace fill the darkness. In spite of all the horrors and deep division, the Subud members have a lot of joy in being together and caring for each other. We did Latihan and testing every day followed by explanations and discussions.



The whole group, nearly all the women (all in all about 22) and 2 men were able to do Latihan and general testing and to spend some time at Bsous, the beautiful home of Alexandra Asseilly, in the hills near Beirut, and share with her the joys and sorrows of the changes in fortune of her work for peace in Lebanon. In the afternoon we visited the “Garden for Forgiveness” or “Jardin du Pardon” which covers an eight hectare site in the very heart of the city of Beirut. It’s truly miraculous what has been achieved. The “Garden”, God Willing, will become a potent symbol of the enduring power of forgiveness to transform the bitterest hatred to achieve lasting peace, in a world where its action is all too absent. Many felt the Latihan strongly at times throughout the visit and it seems that tears were never far away. More Latihan and testing finished that day.

The following day we had the great good fortune to be able to visit the amazing “Roman Temples” surrounded by snowcapped mountains at Baalbek. A crazy driver who drove with breakneck speed down the mountain to Beirut did not let us forget to be close to our inner and to trust in God's Guidance. The day finished with more latihan and testing.

On our last day we and four members met at Alexandra’s home where testing showed the readiness for two more women to join Mona as helpers, which was very necessary due to the growing number of members. The evening was full with Latihan and personal testing for the women and a probationers meeting for 2 young men called Rabih and Ayad. Testing from Andrew showed that the opening should take place later and will require another visit in a few months. The group discussed the necessity of forming a committee for finding premises for Latihan, enterprise, and social welfare projects, such as a kindergarten. The importance of being connected and being in touch with the wider Subud community was expressed.

With much laughter we played games, danced, acted and sang, to show our gratitude for each other, till finally embracing each other and saying good bye.

Farah and Andrew wish to convey their gratitude to all the members in Lebanon for the love and kindness given to us during our visit, which helped to make our trip such a joy.

May you all be always in Gods Power.  
Love Farah and Andrew