

Living in Harmony

Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative



Report from Climate Change Conference

COP20 in Lima

Thursday 4th Dec. - COP20



(Picture: Peru has 3000 different kinds of potatoes)

This day started with the participation of Christophe Richon and Juan Vasquez Milling in two events for youths about Climate Change.

Youth program: On the road to COP21 and beyond. Discover the Youth Climate Action project

Representatives of different organizations such as P3 Foundation project from New Zealand, Youth Climate Action, My World, Think big from China, among others, shared with the audience ways in which they, (the youth) promote climate change action to help other youths i.e. developing training sessions in schools (capacity building), leading campaigns, sharing knowledge about extreme poverty and internet platforms for sharing information. An interesting question was posed to the assembly: How can we inspire youth to change? An answer given was: "In giving them the opportunity to be visible, in showing their skills, their idea to change the world". Another was "By giving them an income!" For more information, please read **Appendix 1**.

Youth program: Intergenerational Inquiry – Youths as agents of change.



Juan Vasquez Milling the BK's youth representative and co-moderator of this "Youth Day" celebration started the session by inviting everyone into the space for a moment of quite reflection allowing those assembled to be present and focused. The room was full. Following an impressive musical duo, a girl from the Global South and a boy from the Global North, singing "Men of Paper", Mr. Rene Orellana chair

G77 and China from Bolivia thanked them saying "the youth open our minds and our spirits to understand and listen to different perspectives . . . we need renewable energy – your energy which will help to rebuild our world." Others present were, Paul Watkinson, head of the French Delegation, for COP21 as well as the youth leaders themselves who shared their point of view with determination and sometimes emotion about the environment and the situation of the world in general. For more information, please read **Appendix 2**.

RINGO - Research and Independent Non-Governmental Organizations to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

How is the Brahma Kumaris connected to RINGO? The Brahma Kumaris have observer status with UNFCCC. Within UNFCCC there are different constituents, one of which is research. The Brahma Kumaris attend COP within this constituency of 'research' because of the work we do in solar energy and in agriculture.

RINGO meet daily during COP. Tuesday and Thursday are formal meetings where members brief the panel and each other on what has been happening at COP and in the negotiations. On alternative days the meeting is more of a round table where members discuss research they are undertaking relevant to the negotiations and climate change, as well as taking the opportunity to network with each other. Research is responsible for bringing parties together to negotiate at COP. Years of uncertainty and perilous data have brought us here. RINGO has a relevant role to UN COP Climate Change conferences: "to undertake studies in social science, evaluate policy and determine potential impacts, explore ethical issues and enter debate, as well as translate technical information into common language."

University Presentation: Climate Change and Renewable Energy in India. – Venue: INICTEL, National Institute of Research and Training in Telecommunications.



Around 50 persons participated in this event organized by:

- *Centre for research and innovation in science and technology for inclusive development*
- *University Peruvian Wings*
- *Simon Bolivar Public Technology Institute*
- *CAFAE - Inictel UNI*
- *Graduate School of Management*
- *1st Vice President of Congress.*

The presentation was opened by a beautiful mystical performance prepared by two BK artists representing the care and love provided by native Peruvian ancestors' to our planet earth.

Golo Pilz, Advisor, Renewable Energy, Brahma Kumaris informed the public about the increased carbon footprint in the world and the different options one has to reduce consumption. The present degradation of our environment is a consequence of men's greed and of the disappearance of values. We have to evoke inner peace, love, cooperation, and happiness in our lives and always aim at complete harmony. Think positively about yourself, about others and about the world. Taking power through meditation will help to transform the world."



Interfaith Panel at Voices for Climate



The event started with a short film in which the representatives of the different religions based in Peru addressed a short message of climate change from their perspective. Nonie Reano from the Brahma Kumaris in Peru was part of the film. The event was organized by Religions for Peace.

Picture: Valeriane Bernard; Laura Vargas, Executive Secretary for the Interfaith Council of Peru; Mons. Salvador Piniero, Archbishop of Ayacucho; Sonja Ohlsson and Nonie Reano from the Brahma Kumaris.

Laura Vargas from the coordinating team of the inter-religious council of Peru, was the moderator of the panel. Panelist were Mos. Salvador Piniero, Martin Kopp (Lutherans), Raquel Gabo (evangelic community of Peru) and Valeriane Bernard (BK). The moderator posed the following question to each panelist: What is the role of interfaith communities in climate change? (In that it differs from the governments, as a "voice of the voiceless").

Each panelist shared their approach to the environment and ways in which their community contributes with eco-friendly and "concrete" actions. Valeriane Bernard presented the work of the Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative: the interplay of consciousness and matter, the solar project and sustainable yogic agriculture.



The event concluded with a concert of performers sensitive to spirituality and the environment such as **Desert Rose** and a local group called Siembra.

Interfaith exhibition at Voices for Climate



“Voices for Climate” is a space in which Peru, as host country for COP20, welcomes domestic and foreign visitors. It is a space that shows the diversity of proposals and initiatives regarding climate change and emphasizes the five emblematic issues that have been prioritized in Peru’s internal climate agenda.

The interfaith Council in Peru has been given a stand in ‘Voices for Climate’. The Brahma Kumaris local centre in Lima looked after the stand Thursday 4th Dec.

Read more at: www.environment.brahmakumaris.org

Appendix 1.

Youth program: On the road to COP21 and beyond. Discover the Youth Climate Action project

Below you can find more information about youth-environmental organizations and their actions against Climate Change.

- P3 Foundation project: A New Zealand movement of youth determined to help the youth who don't have any resources, they develop training sessions in schools (capacity building), they lead campaigns and share knowledge on extreme poverty.
- Youth Climate Action (<http://action.youthclimate.org>): Is an internet platform to share and promote actions that give hope. It is led by youth and is about climate change.
- My World: Gives a chance to people to be heard by participating in a survey (<http://vote.myworld2015.org>). Among some several options in the field of the environment people can choose which of those are the most important for them and their family.
- Think big: A Chinese initiative that allows youth to develop their specialties, skills and to have more visibility.
- Your Common Wealth: A website to give visibility to the youth. People can write articles, share videos about the environment, injustice and poverty.

Appendix 2.

Youth program: Intergenerational Inquiry – Youths as agents of change.

Beautiful sharing from the youth: "Just three words to remember: Solidarity, inclusivity and intergenerational action". "We had a feeling of frustration in Rio20. The negotiations are not a business, life can not be sold!" "Nowadays, 50% of the population are less than 25 years old".

Some remarks made by the decision makers who replied to the youth:

"The power is in this: The power is in your hands, you can put it into practice".
– Mariano Castro Sanchez, Vice Minister of the Environment in Peru.

"Keep the passion! Don't become like bureaucrats! Don't use the same method the negotiators use". – Paul Watkinson, Head of the French Delegation.

"You are not agents of change but accelerators of change. Make direct actions".
– Nick Nuttall, UNFCCC Spokesperson and coordinator.