WORKING PARTY on External Relations / Presence in the World

The WP Brief with background of decisions made and resulting work in progress is considered as having ongoing relevance and these proposals, recommendations and observations are intended as added contributions to the work of External Relations in Subud.

Particularly in the midst of the current global crisis many are searching for answers to problems and looking into the role of spirituality. Subud potentially has much to offer the world. Therefore WSA and all Subud organisations, including wings and affiliates need to take a more integrated approach to devoting significant attention to how we might work at local, national and international levels to engage in the world community. This integrated approach will make Subud more visible, accessible and welcoming to those who choose to join.

The thrust of this working party's proposals is to strengthen and expand the place of external relations work in the program of the WSA including all groups and committees of the Subud community.

Subud as a multicultural spiritual association has a great opportunity to employ a range of new media, social networks and other communication opportunities to further the aims of the WSA and engage in dialogue with individuals and groups that share related interests.

1. To create a task force including representatives of members of WSA, the wings and affiliates. This should be under the authority of the WSC and supported by the WSA executive (ISC). The purpose: To undertake a survey resulting in strategy and action plans covering external relations at the local, national and international levels including projects, wings, affiliates and related bodies.

   Points to be addressed should include:
   - Identification of issues, global forums, events and networks of mutual interest.
   - Review and development of WSA resources / tools to respond and participate

2. That WSA engage the National Committees in drafting/developing a variety of explanations about Subud suitable to different audiences and cultures. Concern was expressed that the traditional language used to explain Subud is not sufficiently inclusive.

3. That the WSA engage National organisations in preparing a range of information products about Subud that meets the needs of various audiences, such as applicants, general public, Government or official authorities, and the media. The language used should be accessible and use a *range of* commonly understood terms so it is easily understood by each particular audience.

Recommendations:

1. That a task force be set up to develop appropriate training to assist Subud members at all levels to verbally explain Subud in a coherent, appropriate and inclusive manner to various audiences with various purposes (*applicants, authorities, press, websites)*
2. That the international organisation includes in website policies and guidelines careful consideration for the cultural and legal issues of different countries regarding the language used.

3. That there are policy guidelines for and monitoring of websites and printed information using the name of Subud to prevent misuse.

Observations:

- Differentiate between use of the word 'Subud' and 'latihan'.
- Explore areas where improvements can be made towards congruency between what we say we are and what we do or how we behave
- Short definition of the meaning of the word 'Subud' ie. Susila Budhi Dharma in introduction to information materials
- Range of terms used in information could include various examples eg. God, the Divine, ….
- Need for information to include a map of the structure and worldly side of Subud.
- WSA policy guidelines are needed on a proactive PR approach with press and community particularly when holding congresses
- Congresses:
- - Website information on name tags of congress participants, friends of Subud tags for accompanying non Subud members/friends to include in the 'club', welcoming area with 'hosts', information material to read + screen with film informing about 'What is Subud' e.g. congresstv.com interviews
  - access to public for parts of the programme, proactive invitations to members of community, churches etc, for sharing at local, national and international events
- Websites:
    - support of website development in countries that need it with links to subud.com. Different languages
    - All Subud websites as show case for projects of Subud members that reflect expression of spiritually inspired work
    - Consider links to websites which we share common aims with and have associations with.
- Press: develop relationship with press and media, proactive approach particularly in preparation for congresses