

“Lessons Learned” from the 2010 World Congress in Christchurch

Report to the members of the World Subud Council and World Subud Association Executive by Dave Hitchcock - Zone 7 Rep.

- It is widely agreed that the Christchurch Congress was most enjoyable, successful, and well organized.
- However, are there specific areas that can be further improved for Puebla, Mexico in 2014?
- The attached table of comments, perceptions and recommendations were contributed by Subud members from all over the world. Many were suggested by more than one person. On some there were conflicting views! I hope that I have included all comments and suggestions received to date. They are listed in no particular order. Some were condensed to fit into the table format.
- Many thanks to everyone who provided feedback.
- Please remember that these are the perceptions and recommendations of many who attended the Congress in Christchurch. There may be a number of practical, economic and organizational barriers or restrictions that they were not aware of, but they are suggested from the perspective of an attendee at the Congress.
- They are not provided as a criticism of the organization in Christchurch, but as respectful and constructive feedback as to how we might be able to build on the successes in New Zealand.

Based on this input, I have identified a number of key recommendations that I believe could be given special attention in planning the next World Congress. (Although focusing on these, it is hoped that many of the other equally valid suggestions, included in the table, can also be considered.)

1. SPECIFIC DELEGATE NEEDS

(i) Preparation of delegates at the Congress for the formal business sessions:

- Schedule an “ice-breaker” event, before the start of the business meetings, at which the delegates could introduce themselves, socialize and meet each other in an informal setting.
- Schedule an informal business meeting to discuss various procedural matters and encourage questions on such topics as:
 - the delegates schedule/program
 - delegate responsibilities
 - how resolutions are presented
 - use of testing
 - voting procedure
 - consensus
 - etc.

(ii) Plenary Sessions:

- Delegates to sit in a circle facing each other and the Chair - like United Nations? (Possibly with Kejiwaan Councillors behind National Chair and Committee Councillor.)
- Delegations to be identified by appropriate signage.
- Need for sufficient microphones for delegates and observers.
- Appropriate seating for observers outside the circle.
- Area to be well lit.
- etc.

(iii) Translation Services:

- Consider cost/benefits of hiring paid translators for simultaneous translation versus proficient volunteers at Plenary Sessions.
- Evaluate the different language needs as early as possible.
- Determine the need for translators for other events/working parties/workshops.

2. NEEDS OF ALL ATTENDEES

(i) Signage:

- Recognizing the constant changes and additions during a Congress, evaluate how best to provide the latest schedule information. Use of latest technology?
- Better daily signage outside individual rooms as to what is taking place inside.
- Ways to help attendees (including delegates) to arrange to meet/contact others.
- Use of conventional/international symbols/pictograms.

(ii) Wing/Affiliate Events:

- Recognizing the likely restrictions of any Congress site, attempt to integrate the areas used by SDIA, MSF etc. so that they are as close as possible to the main Congress events.
- Schedule a Susila Dharma Day (or half day) that everyone at Congress (including the delegates), can participate in.
- Need for adequate technical support (paid or volunteer?)
- Invite the Wings to take on more responsibility for organizing specific aspects of the Congress e.g., SICA for entertainment.
- Encourage the Wings to organize events to which the non-Subud/general public is invited.

(iii) Financial Relief:

- Re-evaluate the use of subsidies, reduced registrations etc. to better help those in need to attend (students, retirees, volunteers etc.)
- Attempt to reduce the number who attend, while avoiding paying the registration fee.