



A MOST EXTRAORDINARY SUMMER

- *Robiyan Easty, Zone 4 Representative, August 2011*

First the gathering in Cilandak with some important work beginning there, followed by the World Subud Council meeting in Rungan Sari, Kalimantan, then back home to intensive prep for the Zone 4 meeting in Greece, the meeting itself, followed soon after by the German gathering and congress.

I am not too hopeful for the future when I look at the shrinking numbers of members in the older countries, the ageing membership therein, the difficulty of finding new Chairs, long-term members alienated by the grossly exaggerated and costly aggressiveness between the leaders of enterprises started by Bapak, utterly contrary to Bapak's advice; top priority given to the past, to heritage, rather than to the future, a characteristic of cultures that have lost their way.

At least, I *wasn't* hopeful. But something started to change last summer and continued into this one. Little glimmers started to appear.

World Subud Council

I started to be hopeful because in Great Malvern the new team of Zone Reps bonded straight off. We recognized that we could vehemently disagree without breaking apart. I have a persistent yearning that we work closely together, as I experienced when we were building Loudwater in England, with the intense disagreements, the compromises, personality clashes, but ultimate harmony that comes from commitment to a goal and to our Subud ideals. It seems that inwardly we all have this and that it is now time for it to manifest more strongly.

What took root in Malvern continued to grow, with a new feeling of closeness developing between the WSA and SDIA and SICA, after many years of going down different paths. Then SDIA asked to have their AGM together with the Z4 meeting in Greece and I was very

happy to comply; as hoped for, it brought a strong feeling of common purpose, with Kumari able to make a presentation to the zonal council and to ask how we can cooperate, showing as an example the home gardens project in Kalimantan which is supported by SDIA Germany and which I was privileged to visit for the public signing of the agreement.

If SDIA is our only official body doing work in the world, Latifah and her team have big plans for SICA, too. In Rungan Sari our understanding that it is the affiliates which were formed to go outwards was shared by Latifah and resulted in the forums part of the External Relations function being taken over by SICA. The superb SICA website that Latifah created many moons ago, but was left defunct for a decade, is now about to go online again; we saw a preview in Rungan Sari, which I copied and presented in Greece; keep your eyes open for the launch.

A new understanding and mutual respect between MSF and the WSA was encapsulated in an MOU (memorandum of understanding). And then in Rungan Sari, after confusion and aggravation about the method of selecting new trustees, we got two new ones of high quality, Heloise Jackson and Bachtiar Lorot. I must confess that I was pleased when Bachtiar was elected chair as I understood from one or two late night conversations that he would champion the working together of our institutions: complementarities not competition, as he put it.

I am hopeful because last year in Great Malvern I looked at the youth with the eyes of a returning native and saw a new maturity that made me forget the missing generations, saw a closeness among our young folk, quickly established, free of man-made borders, as experienced by my daughter Utami and surely others too. This year in RS we saw the quality contributions and commitment of Alex and Lucinda.

I am hopeful because the last year saw us dealing with many difficult issues with courage and firmness, making heard the voices of the members we are representing, reflecting a common understanding of the horizontal/lateral nature of Subud, that we must go forward like a balanced team of horses, all pulling together in the same direction. Yes, there was a regrettable absence of sensitivity at times and regrettable resignations, but a willingness to look for solutions was tangible and a major melt-down of the core was avoided.

ZONE 4 & SDIA (see separate reports for details)

The success of the zone 4 meeting in Greece was attributable to many things, from having an open and welcoming environment of sun and sea, the very friendly and cooperative hotel manager and staff, to the global flavour introduced by the SDIA AGM. Above all



it was what was brought by you, the participants and the way of working, that was so hopeful. I had decided not to bring up my need for support again, but the question arose spontaneously after a latihan for Greece and the subsequent concern and willingness to take action was moving, showing a truly human quality.

The difference between the German congress and the Z4 meeting was, of course, that the German congress was uni-cultural whereas zone 4 has richly diverse cultures, languages, membership numbers and prosperity levels. Considering all of this, the degree of harmony in the Z4 meeting was impressive, but equally impressive was the loving respect between the German members and the lightness of their congress. Old films of Bapak in Wolfsburg and the Rambach camp were shown and the issues from this time talked about frankly between the generations. I felt that Germany is going through a healing process in a very nice way, slowly but surely shedding the traumas of the past and retaining the good that also came from these experiences.

There was a strong parallel between the two meetings in the finding of a new team. At both meetings there was initial pessimism about finding new people. Suddenly, by the Grace of the Creator, within an hour in Greece and something similar in Germany, the new team members were there. And the new German committee is from Bonn, a group which has never before been in the forefront in this way.

And so Harina and I finished our trip with 5 days next to Lake Constance at the kind invitation of Anwar and Rusydah. Such a beautiful area, where Germany, Switzerland and Austria join. Saw a deer on an early morning walk up the mountain and foxes on the hill behind the house. Swam in the lake and had the surprise of tasting that the water was drinkable. Strong latihan in Sipplingen and Constance. Ibrahim (was Conrad) crossing the border from St Gallen to join us.

Yes it was a summer of rich experiences and positive outcomes. Those who know me well know that I do not hold back on telling it how it is, even when it is critical or negative, but I have to repeat that I come out of this summer with more than a soupcon of hope. I pray that this hopefulness will be justified and that I will be given the strength to do well what I am given to do towards our progress.

Photos:

Top left - Paloma, Zone 3 Rep, Maxwell, WSA Executive Chair, Ruslan, SESI Coordinator, Hammond, WSA Treasurer, Robiyan, Zone 4 Rep during WSC break-out meeting

Top right - delegates at Zone 4 Meeting

Second page – Greek dancer

