

## **LAGOS CONGRESS REPORT**

### **This is the report of Subud Nigeria Lagos Congress Newcastle Hotel Anthony Village 8<sup>th</sup> November to 12<sup>th</sup> November 2011**

#### **5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> November**

The International Helpers arrival in the country was to coincide with the schedule of the Lagos Congress. The IHs arrived 30 minutes earlier from Frankfurt, and spent the night at the hotel which was to serve as the venue for the Congress. The following morning, (accompanied by former Africa coordinator) they visited Ijebu-Ode group and spend 2 days as part of their group tour of the country.

#### **8<sup>th</sup> November**

The congress organising team and helpers arrived for the preparation of the congress site.

Some Congress delegates arrived late (minimum of 14hrs journey) into the night while the rest came in the following day. They were all checked into allocated rooms. There was a night Latihan followed by body testing after which dinner time was announced. Members gathered around each other relating past experience, sharing and relating personal experience since the last Calabar gathering of 2009.

Of great concern was the state of the National Chairman who suddenly took ill prior to his departure for the congress venue in company of the IHs and Ijebu-Ode group members.

#### **9<sup>th</sup> November**

There was helpers & committee Latihan which became a daily routine till the end of the congress.

Subud Nigeria Committee Councillor Dr. Yemi Ojo stood in for the National Chairman and declared the Lagos Congress opened while the Secretary read the welcome address.

In the address the chairman thanked WSA for their moral and financial support to Subud Nigeria. He says this was the 3rd time during his tenure in office that WSA would sponsor a congress. He thanked the IHs for their help in meeting our spiritual need and for representing Bapak amongst us. He also thanked SES Britain for support in sending a Toshiba laptop for our secretariat use.

The Congress itself was well attended by almost all the groups of the Federation. There are 6 groups in Nigeria and some isolated members.

When requested Bro. Lateef Dada Bashua gave the review of Subud Nigeria history and the future challenges. He implores the youth to take up the challenges of taking over from the older members. He says we are all getting old and its time young people started to take over for continuity.

#### **Group Reports**

##### **Lagos Group:**

The Lagos Group Chairman gave a brief history of his group and the setback the group faces. He thanked WSA /MSF for granting a rent subsidy to Lagos group but remarked that inflation has made the grant inadequate for its objective.

He concluded by saying that all efforts were focussed on achieving the objective of the grant.

### Calabar Group

The group Chairman reported that his secretary was not around to present the group report, but he was advised to present this verbally to the meeting.

There were 11 active male members and 3 active female members in his group. Latihan takes place in his house 3 times a week in the morning. He thanked WSA/MSF on the grant for the purchase of a Latihan house for Calabar group.

Asked what is actually the problem confronting the purchase of house, he replied that he was of the opinion that purchasing a virgin land and using the remaining fund to build a house was a better idea.

The other delegate of the group and also a group helper expressed a different impression. He said that whatever belongs to a group should be referred to as 'we' not 'I' and as such the group decision should not have been overruled by the chairman.

Instances were mentioned when it could have been easy to purchase houses put up for sale by banks in the city.

After lengthy discussions, the group chairman was persuaded to revert to the agreed Calabar resolution of 2009 which was that Subud Nigeria was to apply for a grant from MSF to buy a Latihan House for the Calabar group.

### Umuahia Group

The group chairman said there were 16 members, but there was no place to do or practise the Latihan and this was their main problem. He reminded the meeting that as one of the resolutions adopted at the Calabar gathering of 2009, Umuahia is the next place to be eligible for MSF grant for the rent age of a Latihan place after Lagos.

### Isi-Uzo/Enugu Group

The group chairman said there are 7 members left of a large group. He attributed the dwindle to the perception of Subud by the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church perceives Subud as a cult organisation in spite of being shown a written declaration by the Archdiocese of Vienna to the contrary. This affected the morale of the members particularly the youth and one by one they left voluntarily. He concluded by saying that having their own Latihan place is also another factor, when their National Helper could no longer fund the two bedroom flat he rented for their Latihan.

### Ijebu-Ode Group

Bro.Ojo in his report admitted that member in Ijebu-Ode 1 had dwindled tremendously and no reason was given for this. He said they had a piece of land which had been encroached upon. IHS Hassan who had spent 2 nights in Ijebu-Ode chipped in that I-Ode 2 now plans for two Latihan days, Monday & Friday, and that things have started moving.

## **A New Group Emerges**

### Abeokuta Group

The Congress witnesses the formation of a new group comprising of the National Committee Councillor Dr.Yemi Ojo and 4 other members. A man and 3 women were opened by IHS in Ijebu-Ode but all resides in Abeokuta.

They accompanied IHS to Lagos for the congress but will tentatively hold Latihan with Ijebu-ode 2 until their Latihan place be sorted out within their new group.

### Subud Cotonou (Benin)

This group was officially set up on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2010 during a visit by Subud Nigeria. This is as a result of their interest and their attendance at the Subud Nigeria National Congress of 2008 held at Hilltop Hotel Eleiyele, Ibadan.

Their progress report was presented by the group helper, Bro. Robinson. He called for assistance in the form of Subud literature in French (Subud magazine), Bapaks Talk in French and other related literature of Subud books in French.

He narrated their experience after the departure of the Nigerian contingent, how the landlady of the house occupied by their Chairman had served them a quit notice because the Latihan seemed disturbing her spiritually.

They had to resort to **shift** Latihan in his own house. There were 7 old members and 1 female candidate that was brought for opening, making the group 4 male and 4 female.

After the entire group chairmen had presented reports of their respective groups, a group meeting took over in which amendments and adoptions were made on the remaining schedule of congress program. This was followed by committee, helpers/general Latihan and later dinner time.

### 10<sup>th</sup> November

The day began with the committee and helpers/general Latihan after the breakfast. This was followed by body testing, personal and individual testing and another general Latihan till lunch time.

The Congress program contained two workshops/discussions slated for the afternoon session, 1. The different stages of the Latihan and receiving guidance in daily life through the Latihan. This was followed by a general Latihan. 2. The second workshop/discussion was on the Latihan/the low forces and the Subud Administration... (Responsibility without authority).

There was a move by the distance members concerning their departure. They felt that the closing ceremony will not allow them to board their destination transport at the right time. They opined that if the last day (12<sup>th</sup> Nov) program could be shifted backward to (11<sup>th</sup> Nov), this would afford them the opportunity of boarding their respective buses (6am). After some general discussion among members, it was resolved to merge slated program of 12<sup>th</sup> November with 11<sup>th</sup> November. This was followed by a long Latihan that lasted till dinner time.

### 11<sup>th</sup> November

The usual committee/helpers/general Latihan began after the breakfast. This was followed by separate Helper meeting and committee meetings at different rooms simultaneously.

At the helpers meeting which was coordinated by IH Hassan, he implored helpers to voice out the constraint they face in discharging their duties.

Responding, helper Robinson repeated his earlier statement (contained in Group report).

The helpers from Lagos talked about their method of contacting each other for Latihan; They also talked about their monthly rotational Latihan.

The helper from Umuahia complained of lack of Latihan place and says the last IHs visit of Andrew/Farah in 2009 was the last Latihan held together as a group.

The Calabar helper has the same complaint and said they have one group Latihan per month.

The helper from Ijebu-ode 2 says the group is in its infancy (state) but they do have a regular Latihan in his house.

The helper from Isi-uzo complained of lack of Latihan place but maintained that he strove to offset this by paying scheduled visits to other members to hold Latihan with them.

Reacting to all of the above, IH Hassan said we all should strive hard to do our Latihan regularly and diligently. He opined that problem in whatever form it takes, will always be there. He advised all members present to strive harder each time a problem crops up to do our Latihan as our spiritual life depend on it.

IH Dorinda in her own comment says that she is an isolated member but she had to travel for 12 hrs sometimes while others travel between 5 to 8 hrs simultaneously to join others to have a group Latihan. She said its all part of our commitment to Subud and the Latihan and they all love and look forward to it.

She advised all helpers to seriously strive harder to attend to their Latihan (helpers Latihan) as the development of members depends largely on what they make of their own Latihan.

The helpers meeting lasted till the lunch time was announced, but not before a general Latihan was held.

The afternoon session began with a joint forum session in which the report from committee was read to this forum.

While helper Andrew aired the view from the helpers meeting, Lagos group Chairman Tony presented the committee views. Tony said the committee agreed on 1, Planning in each group is very essential, 2. Cooperative ventures that will embrace all groups and then, 3. Subud Enterprises. Exportation of kola for drug related manufacturers.

He further explained that for these to take place there should be trust and unity among the group involved, but what do we have nowadays, ego, lack of trust and struggle for supremacy.

### Forward Planning

On forward planning Bro. David, the National Treasurer, says Subud has been run in an ad hoc manner. He talked about Budget and Planning, and gave the instances of Lagos Baiyeku land as bad planning. He advises for focus on Planning and following up on the plan adopted.

Bro Robinson talked about Youth Empowerment, while David asked what type of empowerment was available to the youth except if the youth involved starts something by himself. Bro. Charles says he is into music and look forward to someone sponsoring him into limelight. While Bro. Andrew is of the opinion that buying Okada for the youth might be a way of empowering the youth.

IH Hassan is of the opinion that it is not all about money but first the Latihan which is the most important thing.

The joint forum ended with members resolving to look inward and see how far they could assist each other by regularly meeting and Latihan together as much as possible.

A 30 min break takes place while the next agenda on the program is 'testing for the next venue and date'.

The Chairman of the occasion, Bro. Lateef called for nomination among the group present.

Two groups Isi-Uzo and Abeokuta offered to host the next congress.

The testing was done by all helpers present while the IHs witnessed. After testing, there was a clear indication from the test that Isi-Uzo was preferable as the next venue of the 2013 Congress.

## **Any Other Business**

Under this forum, Bro. David the National Treasurer spoke about Cooperative Ventures which demands 10 minimum members for registration (as Subud Nigeria ventures.) He promised to see to the registration of this venture and papers were passed round for interested members to fill in their names.

IH Hassan wants to know from the congress members about the two Latihan houses sponsored by WSA/MSF.

Responding, the Calabar Chairman confirmed they would pursue buying a place as was agreed to in 2009 Calabar gathering.

IH Dorinda spoke on the Lagos rental issue. She said the inadequacy of the fund should not be a hindrance because there is no rigidity on the number of years it should or could serve. She further advised that as the fund sent was not adequate for a 2 yrs rent, it may be considered and adequate for a year rent.

## **Resolutions**

3 resolutions were unanimously passed at the congress, these are;

- 1) That the next Subud Nigeria Congress is to take place in Isi-Uzo during April through June 2013
- 2) That each group should contribute #1000 and #500 per month to National Secretariat and its own group maintenance respectively.
- 3) That enterprises proposal should be forwarded to the National Secretariat which will then process it or forward it to WSA.

## **National Council Meeting**

The National Council met for the second time since the last Calabar gathering of 2009 and 14 members of the 16 members were in attendance.

The meeting was chaired by Dr. Yemi Ojo on behalf of the National Chairman. In the course of the deliberation, the group helper from Umuahia Bro. Njoku wanted to know how to reach out to others on the monthly subscription recently adopted by the congress.

The National Secretary was mandated to get this message across to other members throughout the Federation, and this should include the account no. of Subud Nigeria.

The National Treasurer Bro. David implored all members present to join hand together and achieve a goal. He says Subud members should increase numerically.

He talked about encouraging our youth and our wives to join us in Subud and Latihan.

Bro. Andrew, the National Helper, wanted the south-west group to encourage the Kejiwaan female Councillor Sister Hassanah Alasa to visit her zone, while Bro. David wants to know why the Kejiwaan male councillor Bro. Sodiq Akintimehin for south-west zone was left out of the non-performance syndrome.

The secretary was mandated to write these two National Helpers demanding reasons for their non performance.

In another vein, the National Chairman implored all chairmen present to prepare fully for the visiting IHs and look for the best hotel to accommodate them in the course of their group visits across the country.

### **Closing Ceremony**

Bro David on behalf of Subud Nigeria thanked the IHs for all they have done and for leaving their respective homes to represent Bapak at this gathering and wish them safe journey back home. He also wished them safe journey to all respective groups within the country.

The IHs responded through Hassan. He thanked the National Committee for all their support and also commends the Lagos group for putting up such a wonderful package. He wished the Lagos group success in their search for a Latihan place and called for support from all groups towards the National Secretariat.

In his own remark, the group helper from Cotonou thanked Subud Nigeria for their hospitality as well as their unflinching support towards their new group. He reminded everyone about their need especially in the area of Subud Literature in French language.

The day ended with a good-bye Latihan after which dinner was served.

### **Departure time**

As early as 4.30 am, delegates waved goodbye to each other and in two and three left the Congress venue to board buses to their respective groups and homes. The IHs were accompanied on their group tour by the National Helper (male & female) from the eastern zone and a National Committee member.

Hakeem Naibi  
Subud Nigeria Secretary