

Report from Zone 7

for the 2012 World Subud Council meeting in Vancouver.

Some achievements, key issues and challenges.

1. Some achievements

- Continuing intention to hold annual “in person” Zone 7 Council meetings. (Recent meetings were held in Paramaribo, Suriname (2008), Amanecer, Colombia (2009), Christchurch, New Zealand (2010), Puebla, Mexico (2011), and now Vancouver, Canada (2012). Both **Subud Cuba** and **Subud Suriname** have already indicated an interest in hosting the 2013 Zone 7 Council meeting.
- Successful Zone Council Meeting in **Puebla, Mexico in 2011**, with good representation from all of the countries in the Zone, incorporating a visit to the site of the 2014 World Congress.
- Regular (quarterly) Zone Council **conference calls** held, most with participation by 4 out of the 5 member countries in the Zone, Zone Rep, Zone Secretary, Zone Treasurer and IHS.
- Zone Rep receives good support from **Zone Treasurer (Hardwin Blanchard)** and **Zone Secretary (Lucian Parshall)**.
- **Annual Zonal Budget** includes contributions (by wealthier countries) that allow financial support of Cuba, assistance for some delegates to travel to Zone Council Meetings and some Zone Rep travel.
- Although the number of Subud members in each Zone 7 country varies significantly (and consequently the way that the respective national dewans operate), reports indicate that the Subud organizations are running relatively smoothly in the US, Suriname, Mexico and Canada. Cuba is more difficult to determine - see later.

2. Some recent developments/activities in Zone 7 Countries

- **Subud USA** has appointed Oliver Norton as its new Executive Director and he started his duties in May. Plans are well advanced to move the National Office to the new Subud House in Washington, DC, as soon as construction is complete. Encouraging “grass roots movement” with many groups planning their own kejiwaan days. Increasing number of Helper Retreats being organized.
- An enthusiastic Organizing Team in **Canada** is hosting the **Americas Gathering** in Vancouver in June 2012. (see www.americasgathering.ca) This will be held in conjunction with meetings of the WSC, MSF, Subud Canada and the Zone 7 Council. There has been assistance from members in other parts of the Zone. eg. translation, rental deposit for the facilities etc. The **Subud USA** National Congress will take place in Seattle, following on the Americas Gathering.
- The 2014 WCOT in **Mexico** is working well, with assistance from other parts of Zone 7, including Marston Gregory (Subud USA) to help with the Finances and Lucida Garneau (Subud Canada) with Regonline, together with Maya on behalf of the WSA Executive. There is an ongoing commitment from Subud Canada, and other countries within Zone 7, to provide support and assistance to Mexico, as and when it is needed.
- Recent activities in **Suriname** included replacing part of the rusted roof of the latihan hall in Paramaribo, made possible by contributions from members after latihan. A raffle was held to raise funds with two microwave ovens as prizes. One went to a member who loves cooking and the other was won by a member who was going to replace the microwave he had broken earlier that day!

3. Some key issues and challenges

- **Cuba:**
 - (i) Personality “difficulties” between former and current National Chair & Dewan of Subud Cuba, since 2010.

Led to split in 2011 of Subud Guacanayabo (some members in and around Manzanillo) from Subud Cuba. Subud Guacanayabo seeking official membership of (or at least recognition by) WSA and Zone 7. Visit by International Helpers in February 2012.

Zone 7 Council is concerned about the conflicting “stories and views” that are coming from each “side” in Cuba. Despite a positive written report by the IHs who visited Cuba, Council members would appreciate an opportunity to discuss the situation with the IHs at the upcoming Zone Council meeting.

(ii) Language. Current national chair and most of the dewan don't speak English. Zone Rep doesn't speak Spanish. This makes communication (both verbal and written) a continuing challenge, although Subud Mexico's Committee Councillor provides an excellent translation service! Currently Subud Cuba isn't able to participate in Zone Council conference calls.

(iii) But, encouraging news that Subud Cuba may be close to receiving official recognition by the Cuban government!

- **Caribbean:**

(i) Isolated members spread around a number of Caribbean islands. Small gathering in Jamaica in 2011 and another planned for May 2012.

(ii) We were informed in 2011 that they were calling themselves Subud Caribbean and wanted to be recognized as a member of the WSA. No formal structure (National Committee, National Helpers etc.), so cannot currently qualify as a member of the WSA.

(iii) “Concern” from some members in Jamaica that they have been poorly treated by the international organization in the past, and that Subud USA Regional Helpers had taken on responsibility for their kejiwaan support, rather than the IHs!!

- **Zonal Project**

For some years the Zone has been searching for a suitable “Zonal Project or Enterprise” that could give us a common goal or focus. The upcoming Americas Gathering and 2014 World Congress in Mexico are somewhat satisfying this need.

- **International Organization**

(i) Continuing ignorance and apathy by many Subud members in Zone 7 about the international organization. Typically asked questions:

Apart from IH travel, what does the WSA do?

How does the WSA affect me?

Why is the international structure so large, complicated and cumbersome for the size of the membership?

(ii) Although there is little interest in the WSA Budget by countries in Zone 7, there is concern about the successive projected budget deficits.

What is our money being spent on?

How does our country's contribution benefit Subud/me?

Opinions voiced that annual budgets should balance, particularly in the current difficult and unsettled economic times. Don't ask us to contribute more without a clear explanation of why!

Recommendation for ongoing discussion and action at the 2012 WSC meeting in Vancouver

Recognizing that many members will never be interested or read the material that is provided, it is very important that we try to:

(i) initiate a more proactive response to these widely held concerns

(ii) provide simpler, more effective and regular communications about the international organization and what it is doing for the members.