

Zone 7 Council Meeting in Puebla

The Zone 7 Council gathered for a meeting in Puebla, Mexico just before Easter. The official minutes record what happened and a number of participants have written, or are writing, individual reports, but I wanted to share some of my impressions as your Zone 7 Representative.

Where to start? There were so many highlights for me! How to adequately describe the wonderful feeling of all being together, the harmony and the joy? I know that my words couldn't properly do this justice, so I have chosen a couple of aspects (which are kinda connected!) to briefly share:

- Being together in person (after participating in 5 telephone conference calls over the past year).

Many of us were meeting for the first time. It is hard to explain the wide and connected feeling of actually being together in one place - for a Council meeting, latihan & testing and getting to know each other better. I liken this to the difference between simply doing latihan at home, versus being together with the brothers and sisters in our group, region, country and, in this case, the Zone. It was like a family gathering. After our first latihan, we tested about the significance of our various roles on the Council and how would Almighty God have us be during the meeting. At the beginning of the meeting, we were able to share about Subud in our respective countries (with delegates from Canada, Mexico, USA, Suriname and Cuba), together with Rasjidah Flores from the Susila Dharma International Association (SDIA), Rosario Moir from the Subud International Cultural Association (SICA), Alexandra Woodward from the Subud Youth Activities International (SYAI), Maya Korzybski & Luke Penseny from the WSA and four International Helpers, to better appreciate our similarities and celebrate our differences. At times there were 30 or more of us sitting around the large Council table, decorated with colourful table cloths, and located out in the fresh air, in front of the Puebla Subud House.



*Michaele & Rusdi (Subud Canada),
Karima, Luthfi, Fernando & Arif (Subud Mexico) - concentrating, not sleeping!*

- One of the main themes for our meeting was: "How can we work together and support each other in the Zone?" The discussion took a number of different directions, two of which focused on:

Subud Cuba

This was my first opportunity to meet Aziz (National Chair) and Munirah (Kejiwaan Councilor) from Cuba and to hear, first hand, about some of the challenges in their country and discuss how best to communicate in the future - recognizing that I don't speak Spanish and they speak very little English!! We learned about the need for financial support to assist their helpers in traveling around the country, visiting members and attending kejiwaan events. Subud Cuba is

applying for official recognition from their government and would like to be able to host a Zone Council meeting/gathering in the future (maybe 2013?)

Preparing for the 2014 World Congress

We met and received a preliminary report from the initial core group, chaired by Fernando Fatah Nieva, (within the Mexican Congress Organizing Team - COT), were treated to a tour of the convention centre, immediately adjoining the historic/heritage site of Puebla. We then had an opportunity to share, ask questions and discuss how the rest of the Subud world, and particularly Zone 7, might support Subud Mexico (with only 50 to 75 active members) in this ambitious endeavour. I had an opportunity to test with the male members of the COT, KCs, IHS & WSA about the Congress preparations. The COT now has the benefit of a Congress Operational Manual that Lucian Parshall has started to compile and is carefully deciding on the next steps that need to be taken and the help that will be required. Zone 7 wholeheartedly offered its support and assistance to Subud Mexico in any ways that were needed, and we eagerly await more information as the planning progresses. Sufficient to say that, from this recent experience by the Council members, Puebla appeared to be an exciting, attractive, and safe city for our next World Congress.



Lucian (Subud USA) taking a photo of Rasjidah (SDIA) and Mahmud (Subud Canada) in front of the Puebla convention centre

There is so much more that could be said, but most people don't like reading long reports! However, this brief report would not be complete without a BIG vote of thanks to our hosts Subud Mexico and particularly Subud Puebla. They couldn't do enough for us, looking after all our needs, serving us delicious food, running us around, interpreting, taking us to Usaha Mulia Abadi (what a special place!) and making us feel so very welcome!

The motto for our 3-day Zone Council meeting was "Work hard, have fun". From all of the comments that I heard after our meeting, I think we achieved this!

Dave Hitchcock
Zone 7 Rep