



Report on the UN Climate Change Conference COP25

Sunday 1st December 2019 Madrid, Spain

From 2nd to 14th December, the 25th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP25) is taking place in Madrid, Spain. It is the 11th Climate Conference where Brahma Kumaris (BK) is actively participating. Our BK green youngsters arrived previously on Thursday 28th. They joined the Conference of Youth (COY), which is held before the UN governmental event.



Right from the beginning of this year the Chilean BKs have been whole heartedly involved as the conference was to take place Santiago de Chile. The preparatory team had many meetings with interfaith organisations and civil society activists. In November, the conference was abruptly moved to Madrid, Spain due to the civil unrest in Chile. So, there was little time to relocate and plan all the programs and activities. The Spanish family was ever ready and, in less than a month, all was organised.

The BK Team

As usual, our green team comes from all over the world. The head of the delegation is Sister Jayanti (UK) supported by Golo (India), Valérieane (Switzerland), Sonja (Denmark), Julia (New York), Gabrielle (Australia), Shantanau (India) with Bill, Marta, Maria and Moschi from Spain. The Madrid centre has been welcoming all of us with a warm heart.



Indigenous Peoples Platform Meeting

Valériane has been attending the local community and indigenous people's platform meeting in Madrid prior to the COP25. There were about 70 people from the different indigenous communities around the world formulating strategy and best course of action regarding the COP25.

For the plan of action, food, water, survival and transmission of indigenous knowledge for resilience and adaptation are high on the priority list.

A Maoris stated: *Our oceans are burning from the acidity even if you can't see the smoke... The planet has a fever... In a human body we can deal with 1.5 or 2 extra degrees but not with too much more.*



Our good friend Hindou and Valériane at the platform.



Interfaith opening of COP

A group of faith-based organizations arranged the COP25 Interfaith Dialogue on Hope and Action for Sunday, 1 December. It took place at the Iglesia Evangélica Española located in the old part of Madrid. The organizers were Franciscans International, Dominicans for Justice and Peace, World Council of Churches, Lutheran World Federation, ACT Alliance, Green Faith, Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO), Islamic Relief Service and the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University. It was attended by more than 100 people.

Valériane welcomed everyone to this space for faith communities to share knowledge,





experiences and initiatives. With shared concerns and hopes, climate change can be mitigated.

The dialogue started with a panel discussion by Amanda Kron (OHCHR), Lindsey Cook (QUNO), Khulekani Magwaza (Lutheran World Federation) and Marta Matarin (Brahma



Kumaris) facilitated by Athena Peralta(WCC). Marta shared how the spiritual powers of love and peace become laws that govern our existence. When we connect with the sacred space within, we automatically share those powers with others and the planet.

Towards the end, a meditation and service was conducted by BK Esperanza (Seville) and Alfredo, the local priest. It was a good opportunity for the people of faith to share news of the impact of climate change upon their communities.

Links to newspaper articles:

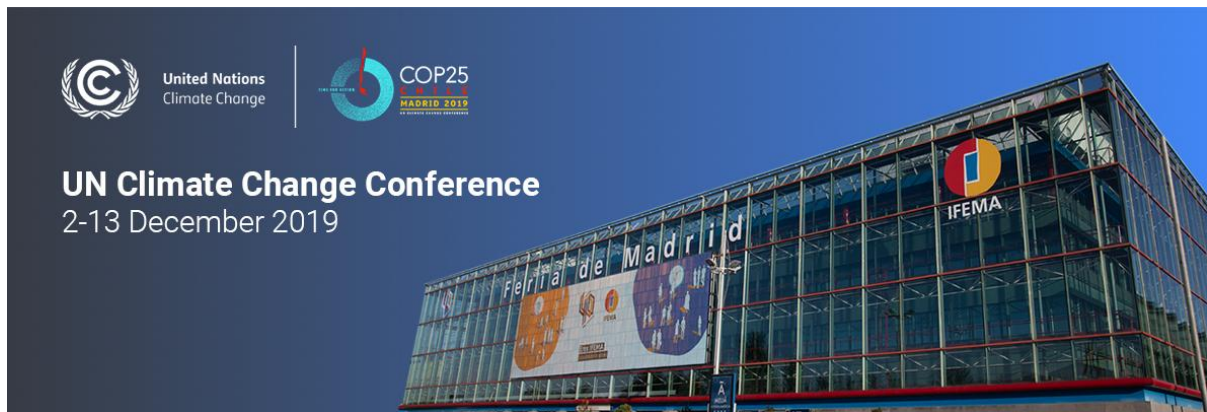
Lutheran World News:

<https://www.lutheranworld.org/news/faith-communities-mobilize-madrid-eve-cop25>

Le País:

El País

https://elpais.com/sociedad/2019/12/01/actualidad/1575187979_179292.html



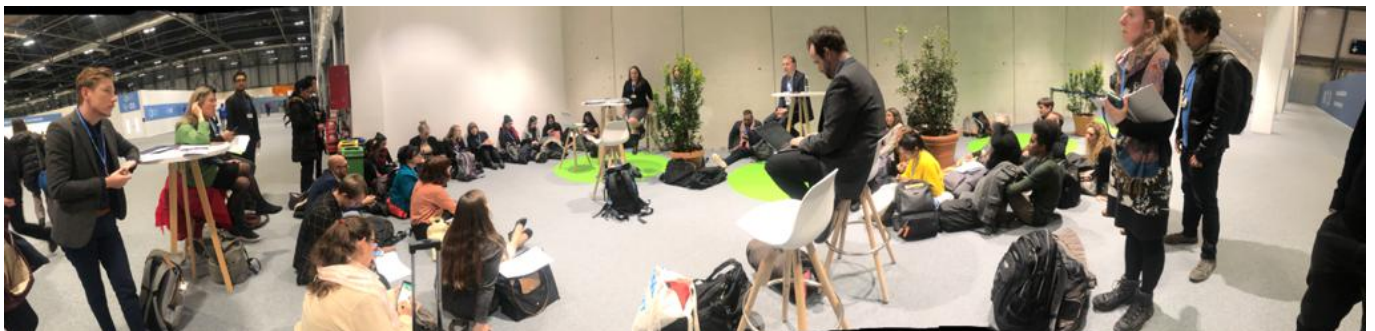
Opening

More than 50 World leaders gathered for the official opening of the Climate Conference on Monday morning in the IFEMA Exhibition ground in Madrid. The UN General Secretary A. Guterres said it is time now to take important decisions to limit our emissions. He urged the countries to be more ambitious as the Planet is close to the point of no return. Chilean environment minister Caroline Schmidt said climate change hits the most vulnerable people, communities and countries in an unfair way.



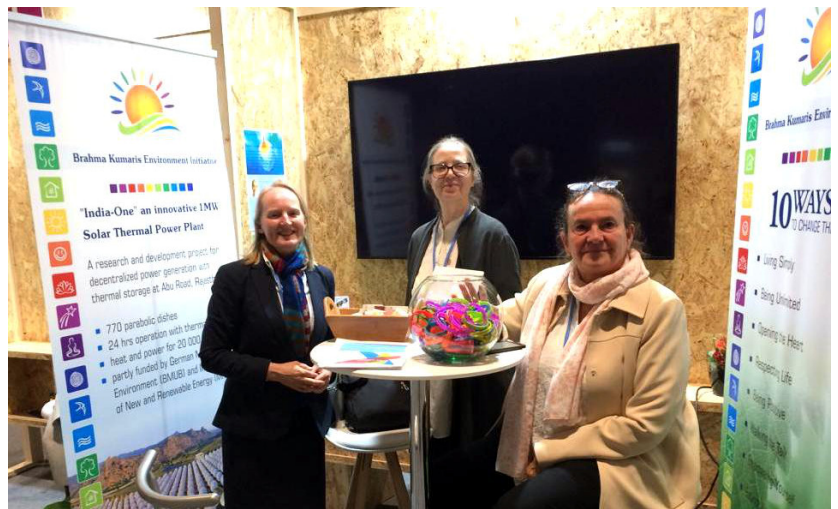
Human Rights and Climate change

Val riane went to the first meeting of the Human Rights and Climate change group. This gathering is looking into the human rights issues related to the different articles and procedural decisions that have to be kept in mind and promoted during the COP25.



BK Exhibition

This year all organisations are each getting their exhibition stand only for two days. As often in the past, we shared our exhibition booth with ISMUN – International Student Movements of the United Nations. After setting up the stand and having an inaugural meditation, we immediately became busy distributing the popular blessing cards and wristbands.



Gabrielle, Julia and Valérie at the stand.

www.brahmakumaris.org
www.eco.brahmakumaris.org
www.india-one.net



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