



HEADlines

Newsletter of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs ~ No. 66 / August 2007

◀ 17th GENERAL ASSEMBLY ~ SUPPLEMENTARY PAGES ▶

1. 17th General Assembly ~ Ten Days to Chiang Mai!

We are excitedly counting the number of days before the first delegate of about 360+ arrives in Chiang Mai for the 17th General Assembly of the YMCAs in the region on 5 September. In a tremendous response to youth and women participation, more than 75 youth and 100 women (40 are youth) are registered. *National Movements, thank you for the great support!*

2. Second APAY PeacE-Forum ~ Justpeace or just peace?

The topic for the 20-24 August PeacE-forum was “*The World Needs Justpeace, not Just Peace!*” A mouthful? But, just what is Justpeace?

“Justpeace has the potential for being long-lasting because it attempts to address the historical and cultural causes of violence, and to bring all people together in mutual respect and dignity. It is peace that is slowly built from the bottom up by strengthening grassroots communities and linking them so that they have the power and the vision to transform unjust systems and structures at the local, national, regional and global levels.”

The characteristics of Justpeace are:

- A peace based on a transformation at the roots of all those things that create nonpeace (i.e. chauvinism, globalization, arrogance, etc.)
- A peace based on the equalization of power, resources, participation, etc.
- A peace that respects the dignity of all people within the society.
- A peace that utilizes local wisdom and traditions to build its foundation
- Justice comes before peace (i.e. building an environment for peace by transforming injustices into justice)
- Going to the roots of conflicts by looking at its history and culture.
- A long-term struggle to build communities in which there is justice for all in the economic, political, social, and cultural structures.
- A process of looking at the global nature of injustice and conflict and developing a global vision for the transformation of unjust systems and structures.
- Focuses strongly on the transformation of people and structures from the bottom up.

The 3rd PeacE-Forum will be in October. More information next Headlines.....

3. *Popoki* at Youth Peace Camp in East Timor ~ What Colour is Peace?

The 2nd International YMCA Youth Peace Camp in East Timor was held on 31 July – 8 August. We had a Peace Education Programme with the East Timorese children. During the ‘Peace School’ we learned the value of Peace through singing, drawing, dancing and playing. We also planted trees around the Youth and Community Training Centre in Terra Santa. The Centre has become a focal point for the locals, giving them a sense of belongingness to the community and for fostering a stable community. On Sunday, the Timorese youth prepared an International Youth Ecumenical Worship with an impressive presentation of a play, “Passion” on the way to the top of a hill where we confessed our sin of violence and committed to become “peacemakers” with other Christian Youth Organizations.

Prof. Dr. Ronni Alexander from Kobe, Japan organized the Workshops on peace through a project, “*Popoki, What Colour is Peace? Popoki in Timor Leste*”. The main character of this project, “Popoki”, is a cat. “Hope” and “Courage” were two key words shared by Prof. Alexander. We learned that together we can strengthen solidarity and create “our peace”.

We also had a workshop on alternative trade for peace, “A cup of Peace”. We learnt about the Timor Leste Coffee project by the Korean YMCA and alternative trade.

Hideki Ishibashi, seconded staff of YMCA Japan in East Timor, worked with the Timorese youth to prepare for this camp. Through this process and camp itself, the YMCA with participants from overseas could foster Peace in the local community.

Reported by Yuria Yokoyama, National Council of YMCAs of Japan

4. *Advanced Studies ~ Leadership for Transformation: 25th Anniversary!*

Participants of this year’s 25th Studies will be from China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Philippines, and Taiwan; and, from Argentina and Egypt on our South-South cooperation support arrangement.

25th Anniversary Gathering of ASP Alumni / 25th Advanced Studies Graduation

Alumni of the ASP from 1981 – serving, retired, resigned, does not matter – will be generously hosted by the Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong from **2-4 December** (2 nights stay/board) at the “home” of the ASP, the WKS Youth Village.

The 2-day programme will begin at 5.00pm on 2 Dec. and end with lunch on 4 Dec. The 25th ASP Graduation will be on 3 December. Those wishing to come earlier or stay longer may do so at your own cost at the Chinese YMCA or other accommodation.

Further details will be available in the next HEADLINES, following informal discussions we plan to hold during the 17th General Assembly among the Alumni who will be there....

5. Indigenous Communities and Peace

This is an Interfaith Cooperation Forum programme to be jointly organised with the APAY on 19-24 October in Medan, Indonesia. It is aimed at bringing indigenous communities into full participation in interfaith dialogue processes. It will provide an opportunity for them to share about their spirituality and how it integrates them with nature, the earth and ecosystems. It will create a bridge among between indigenous religions/faiths and main line religions and to participate with them in the struggle to protect their identities and governance systems and to prevent violence against indigenous people by others.

Representatives from indigenous communities are being invited to participate with our partners from different faiths in this initiative to foster understanding and harmony among indigenous populations and other communities.

YMCAs working with grassroots indigenous communities interested about this workshop and interested to find out more, may contact Executive Secretary Lakshan Dias.

6. Upcoming Events, August – December 2007

| DATES | PROGRAMME | VENUE |
|-----------------------|---|---------------------------|
| 4 September | APAY Nominations Committee Meeting | Empress Hotel, Chiang Mai |
| 4 September | APAY Officers Meeting | Empress Hotel, Chiang Mai |
| 4-5 September | APAY Youth Caucus | YMCA Chiang Mai |
| 5 September | APAY Gender Equity Forum | Empress Hotel, Chiang Mai |
| 5-10 September | APAY 17 th General Assembly | Empress Hotel, Chiang Mai |
| 19-24 October | ICF Indigenous Populations and Peace | Indonesia |
| 30 October-4 December | 25 th Advanced Studies Programme | Wu Kwai Sha, Hong Kong |
| 9-14 November | Micro-financing for Development and Sustainability | To be determined |
| 2-4 December | 25 th Anniversary Gathering of Advanced Studies Alumni | Wu kWai Sha, Hong Kong |
| 6-9 December | 2 nd Leaders' Quadrennial Roundtable (LQR-2) | YMCA Kuala Lumpur |

6. Concluding Thoughts:

Spiritual Awakening, Acting in Solidarity, Sustainability for Life

The 17th General Assembly is a coming together, journeying together to reflect on our past “talk and walk” and to envision the passage into the future. A future that responds to realities and is relevant; contemporary and compelling us to respond.

As the Asia and Pacific YMCA family we will be challenged by the theme, “*Strengthening Spirituality, Solidarity, Sustainability*”. It will be a time and space for Fellowship, Inspiration, Reflection, Sharing-Learning Together. We have all come with multiple and various expectations, but with one purpose – to be strengthened for a journey of faith and action in the realities of the world.

Our journey together is in the globalised world. Spirituality binds us together. We need to awaken and strengthen our Spirituality. Spirituality gives emphasis to the connection

between God, humanity and the creation. Solidarity is built on mutual trust. It is both a gift and responsibility. We are called to act in Solidarity for a Sustainable future with a global perspective, as global citizens. Sustainability is not just about the environment. Social, economic, cultural and political dimensions should be considered and where necessary localised alternatives to the current global trends of development found for sustainability of life.

Spirituality is a distinct character of the YMCA that we must nurture. Solidarity in partnerships and networking for mutual growth, accompanying, and encouraging each other is a foundation of our being and acting together with community.

We need to awaken, strengthen and harmonise spiritual values, solidarity for building a sustainable life style. This is our framework for the sustainability for humanity, for the whole of God's Creation. It is our hope that concrete actions in favour of the "least and the lost", to support people's efforts for transformation, to create change, to create a balance of our Spirituality, our Solidarity for Sustainability of life for all, will emerge from this short journey together in Chiang Mai.

The YMCA has a Message to claim and proclaim. We have a Message to bring alive – with freshness as the Spirit leads us - to reach out in solidarity to the suffering, the paining, the discriminated against, the vulnerable, the despised, the lost and the least, and sustain them through empowering actions to liberate and "reclaim" dignity of life. The YMCA has a historical mission responsibility to bring love, justice and peace, and life itself to all.

This Assembly provides time and space for people to talk and to share, to listen and to learn. To fellowship as one and build solidarity. To be a blessing to one another!

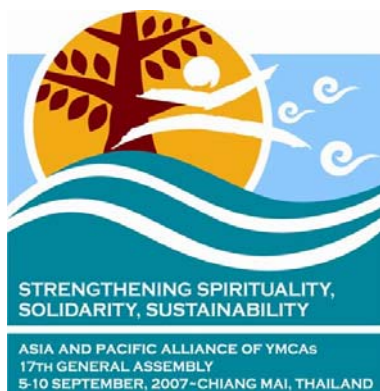
May the Lord bless us and keep us as we seek to awaken and strengthen our spirituality, our solidarity and our commitment for sustaining our common life, our communities and our Earth.

Yip Kok Choong
General Secretary

Cristina A. Dalope & Lakshan Dias
Executive Secretaries

Supplementary

17th GENERAL ASSEMBLY UPDATES



The Logo.....

*The Sun, the Sky, the Wind,
the Tree, the Land, the Water,
Humankind, as one
with the Spirit of God,
together,
strengthening sustainability
for a harmonious,
abundant life for all.*

GENERAL ~ PARTICIPATION UPDATE

To date, registrations stand at 362 for the Assembly; 75 for the Youth Caucus and 30 for the Gender Equity Forum. There are 110 women registered, 40 of who are youth.

Thank you for this strong move to provide space for youth and women participation and leadership!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Airport transfers to and from Empress Hotel will be arranged for delegates arriving in Chiang Mai on 3, 4 and 5 September and departing on 10 and 11 September.

Look out for YMCA Volunteers/Greeters in PASTEL BLUE Assembly Polo T-Shirts at the Exit of the International Arrival Hall (or Domestic Arrival Hall if you have stopped over in Bangkok for a few days – this should be informed to the APAY Secretariat.)

URGENT! Those yet to inform us of their flight details should do so **IMMEDIATELY!**

WORKBOOK: Due to unforeseen circumstances, we may not be able to despatch the workbook on time. Please accept our sincere apologies for this delay. However, the Workbook (pdf) can be viewed on the Website.....

OFFICIAL OPENING ~ WELCOME DINNER

The Hon. Vichai Srikwan, Governor of Chiang Mai Province, Thailand will be the Guest of Honour at the Official Opening and Welcome Dinner on 6 September. This function will bring to fore the Asia and Pacific YMCA Movement in Chiang Mai Province where the local and Thai YMCA is well known for its contributions to the common good of the people.

*Please be PUNCTUAL ~ Dressing FORMAL.
Complimentary Cocktail Reception by Empress Hotel from 18:45 –19:15, with hot and cold canapé.*

DIALOGUE WITH THE WORLD ALLIANCE OF YMCAs (8 September, Saturday 14:00-16:00)

We are greatly honoured to be able to welcome Mr. Martin Meissner, the President; Rev. Samuel D. Stephens, Deputy President; Dr. Bart Shaha, Secretary General; and Mr. Fernando Ondarza, Treasurer; of the World Alliance to our Assembly.

This is a unique opportunity for us to be able exchange views on common concerns and for interaction with ALL the Officers of the World Alliance

*Participants are invited to submit topics/questions for the Dialogue
to the Assembly Information Desk using the response form by 09:00 on 8 September.
We regret that further topics/questions will not be entertained from the Floor.*

GEForum FOR INCREASED GENDER SENSITIVITY AND RESPONSIVENESS

The Pre-Assembly Gender Equity Forum (GEForum) on 5 September (2:30pm-6:30pm) is for exchange of opinions and reflection on issues of gender sensitivity and responsiveness in the YMCA. **Ms. Wumi Onadipe**, Director International Programmes, Y Care International, with more than 20 years experience in the field of gender equity and women empowerment will deliver the key input. Ms. Hiromi Nagao, Chairperson of the sub-group on Gender Equity, World Alliance of YMCAs and Ms. Toshiko Takeda. Chairperson of the APAY Gender Equity Committee will also share on plans and efforts to increase sensitivity and responsiveness at the respective levels.

YOUTH DOING ACTIONS, RESPONDING TOGETHER (DART)

In the Pre-Assembly Youth Caucus on 4-5 September, more than 75 Youth will share their Voices, their actions and responses to concerns and realities in society. Together with their *idealism, enthusiasm, and initiative*, we will dialogue and engage in identifying issues and **DART** towards a better community for all, lest our Vision be lost amidst the realities around us.

LEARNING IN THE COMMUNITY, EXPOSURES FAR AND WIDE

Exposures to YMCA and community responses to contextual realities including work related to community organising for development, HM King Bhumipol's philosophy of sufficiency economy; economic and environmental sustainability; local leadership-governance – gender equity; children, youth, girls at risk; indigenous culture preservation/handicrafts, etc.

URGENT! PLEASE RETURN the Exposure Sign-up Forms to indicate preferences, IMMEDIATELY, for necessary logistical arrangements for travel, and with the village communities.

WITNESSING TO TRANSFORMATION

“Witness Rooms”, is the answer to one of the main concerns of the Assembly Planning Team: “How can we know and show how we are relevant to our community?” “How can we ensure that we stay relevant?”

Movements have been busy getting ready to share their mission expressions in selected focus areas. There will be an overview of the broadly grouped focus areas, after which participants will be invited to visit the presentation in 7 large rooms (according to focus areas). We encourage you to visit these presentations and be motivated by them to consider fresh initiatives and programmes. Or to network for knowledge and information sharing?

SHARING AND LEARNING TOGETHER IN SEMINARS/WORKSHOPS ...

Sharing and Learning Together in Seminars and Workshops is a response to the diversity in experiences and expectations of equally diverse Assembly participants. Engage “comfortably” at your own interest or concern level in a variety of issues of concern and skills or a blend of both. Each participant will be able to participate in two Seminars/Workshops of their choice.

URGENT! PLEASE RETURN the Seminar Sign-up Forms to indicate preferences, IMMEDIATELY, for necessary logistical arrangements.

FOCUSSING FOR THE FUTURE MISSION CLARITY AND SOCIAL RELEVANCE

For collective envisioning of our Future in Focus, following “a praxis of action-reflection leading to fresh action” with “a love for the scriptures, the power of relationships and a commitment to the poor”. The Seminars are planned to bring together the learning about *who are we?* And, consider *what can we do* in the next Quadrennium? How we can best express the YMCA Mission relevantly in *Solidarity* with God's people for *Sustainability* for life?

These will be in Sub-regional Group Discussions, with the larger ones sub-dividing on basis of geographical and social, cultural contexts: East Asia – North and South; South East Asia – Mekong and rest of ASEAN; South Asia – North and south.

PARTNERSHIP/NETWORKING (SOLIDARITY BUILDING)

This will be time for partners – long established, or new, to touch base, or have preliminary discussions. Partners are free to set up their own “solidarity” sessions. This will also be a good time for general networking, even if there are no intentions (yet) to establish formal “partnerships”. Those with interests in forming “networks” are encouraged to do so and request for announcements to be made, e.g. network of YMCAs working on alternative tourism/development tourism; YMCAs interested in Uni-Ys/Student Work; economic justice/fair trade; social advocacy; Y’s Men, etc.

PROGRAMMES FOR SPOUSES / PRE AND POST ASSEMBLY PROGRAMMES

(6 September – afternoon; 8,9 September – morning and afternoon)

Spouses may participate on a fee-paying basis in Special Spouses Programmes planned on specified days and times by the Host Committee at reasonable charges (covering transportation/admission, other fees as applicable). Elephant Farm/Show? Health Spa? Thai-cooking class? Shopping for crafts/silk? Sign up early for the programmes to facilitate planning at the Assembly Information Desk (*outside Imperial Grand Ballroom*).

*Delegates who wish to arrive early or stay longer may sign up for **Pre or Post Assembly Programmes** with the YMCA of Chiang Mai.*

TOWARDS THE 2ND GOLDEN MILLION!

With the achievement of the 1st GATF Million, the Campaign for the 2nd GATF Million will be launched* at the 17th General Assembly. Movements and individuals who have made significant contributions will be recognised at the Council Meeting and General Assembly.

We appeal to movements and participants to be ready to make pledges or contributions during the Launch to kick-start the Campaign. We have done a Million together let us do the 2nd Million together!

*A **GATF Bazaar***, a collective fundraising event to support the GATF will have national handicrafts and YMCA “products” for sale. Spend your Bahts at the GATF Bazaar ...**for a cause!**

****GATF ~ Golden Anniversary Trust Fund***

Officially launched in 1999 at the APAY’s 50th Anniversary at the 15th General Assembly, Manila. It is a Trust Fund to support in fostering good global citizenship, and socially relevant Mission Action Programmes that help transform lives and communities.

ASIA PACIFIC NIGHT ~ HOSTS' DINNER

The Thai Alliance and the Chiang Mai YMCA will host a farewell dinner on **9 September 2007, Sunday**. We will enjoy Movements cultural presentations and Thai traditional dances and other cultural expressions at the Asia Pacific Night.

***A Meeting of Facilitators and Leaders of the Witness Rooms, Focus Groups and Seminars/Workshops
will be held on 5 September (Wednesday) at 16:30-17:30 in the Petcharat Room, Level 1.***

***There will be a briefing in plenary on the Exposures on 6 September (Thursday)
from 16:30-17:15 in the Imperial Grand Ballroom.***

Foreign Exchange For Your Convenience @ Empress Hotel

The Host Committee has arranged for the Bangkok Bank to provide a “temporary” Foreign Exchange Service for your convenience (major currencies) on
5 September, Wednesday & 6 September, Thursday 10:00-14:00

Quadrennial Council Meetings ~ 5 & 8 September

National Movements are reminded to note that the Quadrennial Council Meeting, as per *Article II of the APAY Constitution (see below)*, shall be held at the General Assembly. The QC Meetings are scheduled for ***8.30pm – 10:00pm on 5 September and 8.00pm-10.00pm on 8 September.***

Art. II, 1. The Council shall consist of **three representatives** from each member Movement and Associate of the World Alliance, and such other Associations or Movements as may be invited and admitted by the Council, namely **the President, one Youth representative, and the National General Secretary**. In case any of these representatives is not available, the corresponding National body shall appoint a substitute. **Each member Movement will have equal votes.** (Youth means a person between the age-range of 18-30 years at the time of appointment).

2. Former Presidents of the Asia and Pacific Alliance, Officers and Members of the Executive Committee of the World Alliance from Asia and Pacific and the Secretary General of the World Alliance or his authorised representative are Ex-Officio members of the Council.

We urge National Movements to ensure that there will be a *Youth delegate* to represent the Movement at the Quadrennial Council Meeting, due recognition to the role of youth in the decision-making processes of our Alliance.

SEE YOU IN CHIANG MAI SOON!