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Exhibition proclaims the Faith in Scotland

More than 40,000 people are estimated to have visited a multi-faceted Bahá'í exhibition at a museum in Scotland from June to October. In addition to an introductory panel display on the Faith, Glasgow's St Mungo Museum of Religious Life and Art featured a model of the New Delhi House of Worship (on loan from the Peace Museum in Verdun, France), a multimedia display, and works of art by Bahá'í artists. A meditation area was opened during the exhibition and the Bahá'í community held events at the museum every Saturday afternoon, including public talks, devotional meetings and artistic presentations. The Regional Bahá'í Council for Scotland sponsored the exhibition.

The exhibition was featured on a religious affairs programme on the national BBC Radio Scotland, and the Bahá'ís have noted that this was probably the biggest proclamation of the Faith in Scotland since Abdu'l-Bahá's visit to Edinburgh in 1913.

(For further information contact the National Spiritual Assembly of the United Kingdom)

Meditation space popular at business congress

More than 125 business executives visited a meditation room set up by the European Bahá'í Business Forum (EBBF) during a recent congress on "Motivation at Work" in The Hague. The "Tranquillity Zone" was designed to look like a tent of Bahá'u'lláh, with Persian carpets, roses, 19 leather armchairs and rose water. Small tables were placed around the room with books from various religions and a large table held the holy books of the world religions, each lit by a small candle. Beautiful music added to the serene atmosphere. Whenever a group of people settled in the room, the Bahá'ís would start a 10-minute meditation, during which there was a welcome, followed by prayers in Dutch and Persian and a text in English. The EBBF was assisted by Bahá'ís from The Hague.

Many of the visitors took away a text of Bahá'u'lláh and an EBBF leaflet, and some returned again, and a number of people called or emailed the congress organiser to tell them how much they had enjoyed the Tranquillity Zone. The EBBF has already been asked to run it again next year. At the start of the congress, the chairman gave a succinct explanation of the Bahá'í Faith in order to introduce the EBBF to the 600 business executives, company directors and human resource managers.

(For further information contact the EBBF, email: ebbf@fr.inter.net)

Bahá'ís host conference on feminine outlook on new millennium

More than 90 people attended a conference on 1 October, in Luxembourg, hosted by the Bahá'í women's organisation (Union des Femmes Bahá'íes) on the 'feminine outlook on the challenges of the third millennium'. The event was held under the auspices of the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, and more than half the participants were non-Bahá'ís. A French Bahá'í, Esther Zana, helped host the conference, and that same day joined a representative of the Office of Public Information on a visit to the Luxembourg Minister for Women and Family, Marie-Josée Jacobs. During the appointment, Mrs Jacobs expressed her concern about the current situation of the world and about the future of youth. She was presented with the "Bahá'í Shrine and Gardens, Mount Carmel Haifa" book, and said she had visited the gardens before on a private trip to Israel and had been very impressed by the beauty of the Bahá'í World Centre.

(For further information contact the Office of Public Information of the Bahá'í Community of Luxembourg)

Greek Bahá'ís invited to government-NGO exhibition

In September Greek Bahá'ís took part for the first time in a joint governmental-NGO national exhibition of "Volunteerism and Humanitarian Organisations". Several prominent people visited the Bahá'í stand, including a former Prime Minister, a member of Parliament, the director of the Athens United Nations information centre, officials and journalists. The stand itself used the same coloured information panels on Bahá'í social economic principles and projects that were used at the EXPO 2000 in Hanover. It included a video of the FUNDAEC educational programme in Columbia and selections from statements by the Bahá'í International Community on sustainable development, racism and the advancement of women. More than 1,300 pamphlets with the same information were handed out during the exhibition. Ten Bahá'ís went through a special orientation programme before the event to be able to staff the stand for the two days.

Excellent contacts were also made with many of the representatives of other NGOs.

(For further information contact the National Spiritual Assembly of Greece)

Luxembourg Community using BIC racism statement

High-ranking officials in Luxembourg responded positively after receiving a copy of the Bahá'í International Community's statement to the United Nations World Conference against Racism, held recently in Durban, South Africa. The Luxembourg Office of Public Information mailed approximately 40 copies of the statement to government officials and non-governmental organisations working in the field of human rights. A letter explaining the role of the BIC and its involvement with the various agencies within the UN accompanied the statement.

Among the replies was a letter on behalf of the Ministry of Education stating that the document was listed under a government registration number and that it was being sent to people responsible for the enrolment of foreign students into Luxembourg schools.

(For further information contact the Office of Public Information of the Bahá'í Community of Luxembourg)

Meeting with Prince after peace award

Bahá'ís of Liechtenstein met with the Principality's reigning monarch in September to congratulate him on receiving the "Path to Peace Foundation Award" earlier this year. Every year a head of State is recognized by the Catholic organisation for outstanding endeavours for peace. This year, His Serene Highness Prince Hans-Adam II was recognised for initiating and financing a research programme in the field of self-determination and autonomy at Princeton University.

During the friendly 45-minute meeting, the Bahá'ís presented the Prince with the new "Bahá'í Shrine and Gardens, Mount Carmel Haifa" book published by the Haifa Tourist Board, and reported that he was very touched by the beauty and majesty of the Mount Carmel project. The Prince talked about freedom of religion as a prerequisite for world peace and stated his wish that the church and state be separated in Liechtenstein in order for all religions to enjoy equal rights. The Bahá'í delegation was able to discuss the community's activities world-wide in the fields of the advancement of women, global prosperity, human rights education and moral education.

(For further information contact the Bahá'í Community of Liechtenstein, email:tackermann@adon.li)

Moldavian Bahá'ís hold 2nd largest PR event

Bahá'ís held a successful reception to mark the 10th anniversary of the election of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Chisinau, Moldova, on 27 September 2001. Several of guests offered to collaborate on future projects. Among the guests were the secretary-general of UNESCO in Moldova, the head of the Association for the Social Protection of Women, representatives from the Academy of Science of Moldova and local media. The Bahá'ís noted that during the evening, which was marked by a friendly and hospitable atmosphere, some of the guests offered to work with the Bahá'ís on three joint projects in television, women's development and moral education. Many old friends of the community were present, as well as Christine Samandari-Hakim from the Office of Public Information of the Bahá'í International Community in Paris.

The Bahá'ís reported that this was probably the second largest public relations event they have held in Moldova. (For further information contact the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Moldova)

New video for use in high school education

A new introductory video about the Faith has been brought out in the Luxembourg language, for use in moral education classes in high schools. The Faith is already part of the curriculum in 'technical' high schools in Luxembourg, and the new video is being sent to all high schools. The video will provide Bahá'ís with an opportunity to introduce the Faith within the framework of religious studies at ages 16 to 17. The video features young Bahá'ís explaining various teachings of the Faith and why they are Bahá'ís. Local Spiritual Assemblies are also being encouraged to make use of the video at the primary school level.

The video was produced by a Bahá'í from Iceland, Sigurdur Aisgeirsson, in collaboration with the Luxembourg Office of Public Information and under the guidance of the National Spiritual Assembly, with the aim of providing accurate information to secondary school students.

(For further information contact the Office of Public Information of the Bahá'í Community of Luxembourg)

Note: Please send all news concerning Public Information to be published directly to BIC-OPI, Paris no later than the 25th of each month (25 November for next issue) to the attention of Jessica Dacey. The Office of Public Information reserves the right to edit any articles and decide on the publication of all submitted material. Information that is no longer recent is less likely to be published.

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