**Minutes ~ Parliament of the World’s Religions Meeting**

**October 15, 2018**

Facilitated by Hayat, Coordinator for DUPNA for the Parliament. Started with the Sufi invocation.

Hayat addressed the agenda items she wanted to address. Several people joined us on the call. She gave thanks to the many people who are giving their time, energy, and extraordinary support, including Betty and Marty, Jen, Tajali, Astarte, Jane, Pavla, Habib, Narayan, and Shivadam. Majida gave kudos to Hayat for doing such a great job as Coordinator.

**Agenda Items to discuss:**

-We have 1 scheduled dance session

-Pre-Parliament dance on October 31st

-Pop-up sessions

-Volunteer opportunities to set up and break down the booth

-3 apps that would be extremely helpful to download when you are at the Parliament

-Tips for managing being at the Parliament

If anyone needs housing, contact Hayat and she can try to help out with that.

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The 1 scheduled session we have is on Saturday Nov. 3, 2-3 pm. We will dance in front of the stage in the exhibit hall. We chose the dance leaders for that hour by looking at Mentors and Mentors in Training. We focused on people who are very committed to the dances and experienced in leading a large group. For that session: Narayan, Jen, Majida Myriah, and Tajali. We have not figured out who the musicians will be yet. Shivadam’s wife Parvati’s presentation is offered at the same time, and he will be playing guitar in her session, and so he will not be able to join us for that session. Hayat attempted to reach out to the Parliament organizers to see if we could change the time so that Shivadam could join us, but that was not successful.

There will be 4 dance leaders in one hour; if there is more time at the end of the hour, Narayan will lead another dance.

There will be other presentations at the Parliament where the Dances of Universal Peace will be offered.

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Regarding ‘pop-up’ or ‘impromptu’ sessions: We cannot hand out flyers; but we can have flyers at our booth. We can within 15 minutes of the dance session perhaps invite people around to join us in the dance. Jen said we could also have signs available to advertise pop-up sessions. Jen said we could also have business cards available at our sessions for people to pick up.

Ronnie Joy Leah is having a circle dance session on Sunday, Nov. 4th and invited someone to lead a dance at that session. She will send details about that to Hayat.

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Pre-Parliament Dance and potluck on October 31st. Set up at 5, dinner at 5:30. Dances 7-10pm. We wanted to use this event as a warm-up and preparation for the scheduled session at the Parliament. For potluck for those traveling….Pavla, who is organizing this, said that perhaps travelers can donate money instead of bringing food.

Narayan cannot be there until the next morning, November 1. Jen, Majida Myriah, Tajali, Shivadam, Pavla, Habib, Helga, Lakshmi will lead there; perhaps others. There is a FB Event page about the Pre-Parliament dance and an FB event page for the overall DUP at the Parliament.

Where the Pre Parliament event will be held: **at Friend’s House, 60 Lowther Ave.** Question about how to get to the event space….very accessible by public transportation, and north of the Convention Center. More detailed information about how to get there will be sent out in an e-mail by Hayat. Jen reminded the group that detailed information can be found in DUPNA’s last newsletter about the Pre-Parliament event.

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Hayat asked Jen about her ideas about the ‘pop-up’ sessions. Jen said one way we could take advantage of having so many dance leaders together for a week, is having ‘pop-up’ or ‘impromptu’ sessions. Her understanding is that Narayan has been in touch with the Director of the Parliament and has been given permission to find spaces and times to go ahead and lead a dance circle. Jen’s thought is to determine who amongst us who are dance leaders, would be interested and feel confident in their ability to initiate such a pop up dance circle. We can have a smaller group discussion among those interested leaders. Hayat said that she recalls that Narayan did that at the 2015 Parliament and he didn’t seem to have any trouble getting a dance circle going due to his magnetism and joy. Hayat said Pavla expressed a desire to have a couple of sessions scheduled after working hours during the weekdays so people who work during the day can attend. Jen said it would be great to come together and have a meeting with those who would like to participate on that Thursday (Nov. 1st) so we can scope out the spaces and determine a couple of times we can do a pop up session and let people know through Whatsapp and to publicize those sessions. People liked that idea.

Hayat said that herself, Jen, and Narayan, and Pavla “bent over backwards” to get the Parliament to let us be in a more public space where there is more traffic…it was explained to her that, in this space, there are no wide-open spaces as there was in 2015 in Salt Lake. Narayan found that there are maps on the Parliament website where you can see the spaces, and we asked Pavla to go and scope out the spaces for pop up dances…and she gave some opinions on some of the spaces. Everyone finally decided we would have to be there in person to determine if the spaces were appropriate for a dance circle. Also, we have to see where the Parliament has placed some people where we might want to dance.

Jen asked if there was anyone on this call who was interested in leading dances in the pop up sessions; several people expressed a desire to do that. Jen said that at the end of the call she would take contact info to make sure they are on the e-mail thread.

Jen said that she wondered if Hayat could send out an e-mail to everyone and see if we could have a small group meeting about this. Jen said lets plan a meeting on Thursday night at dinner time…the first plenary session is Thursday evening.

Jen wondering how we are going to gather musicians for the official and Pre-Parliament sessions. Not figured out yet. Hayat thinks that we might figure that out before the Pre-Parliament dance at the dinner. Jen said we can extract the names of the musicians from a spreadsheet in Google Docs, e-mail them, and touch base about them playing music for the dances.

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Someone asked about availability of food at the convention center. Hayat said in 2015 at POWR Salt Lake, there were Langar lunches provided by the Sikh community, and there were slightly expensive options for fast food. This may be the case at this POWR; she knows for sure that there are restaurants in the area.

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Volunteer opportunities ~ we need help to get the items for the booth from the van on Nov 1, and for booth set up during the day. We estimate a need for 5-10 people to help. Meet at 10 am. Some restrictions of what we can and can’t do. We can set up 8 am – 4pm. Then we will need help on Nov. 7th to break down the booth (#1203). The booth is not far from the space we will be dancing for the scheduled session. We’ll need quite a bit of help being at the booth. As a non-profit, we are not selling merchandise but asking for donations. We do have prices because we have to meet expenses. Expects these to be relatively short shifts. It can be fun being at the booth as you meet people and can share about the dances, and also it is a hub for all of us to meet up. Doors are locked form 10pm to 8 am. Hayat will find out for sure when the booths can be open.

Marty will bring his I-pad so that we can accept credit cards.

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TIPS about being at the Parliament: Hayat said someone wrote to her feeling concerned about being feeling intimidated being among 10,000 people and all the offerings. Hayat suggested looking at the schedule and focus in on what you want to go to and let go of wanting to do too much and trust in your intuition. Draw down to a list that is manageable to you to have a good experience.

It would be great just to be really mindful of people in our group that may feel overwhelmed, and take their hands and breathe with them. Tajali found that in 2015 she found the DUP booth was a “wonderful grounding cord”. They also had spaces where there were couches to rest in mindfulness, and perhaps that will be the case in this venue as well. Also have a ‘buddy’ to help ground each other.

Some people expressed how their experience at the 2015 Parliament was so nurturing and inspiring to them.

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Question about the weather and wondering if there is a “tunnel”. Google Toronto Transit and Toronto Path to find out more information. Or check with your hotel.

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Hayat plans to send everyone on the call an e-mails summarizing some of the things we talked about in today’s call.