

Participants' expectations of the 3rd ICBE Consultation

Collated by Dominga Webber

A total of 87 participants registered, of which 85% have contributed their expectations for this report.

These are as follows:

- 1) To have in-depth understanding of Igorot Culture.
- 2) To learn the varying practices of other Igorot tribes.
- 3) To have fellowship with Igorots in Europe and learn of their host countries.
- 4) To renew friendship and to make new ones.
- 5) To observe and have a better understanding of the Igorot people.
- 6) To look into the organisation.
- 7) To learn of the vision, mission of the organisation.
- 8) To have fun.
- 9) To experience the aura and fauna of the Swiss Alps, and integrate with the Swiss people.
- 10) To conclude the theme 'What is in our culture, we hold dear that we want to pass on to the next generation.'

From my point of view, the consultation was satisfactory in meeting expectations as the main topic was the core values of Igorot culture which was brilliantly presented by Mia Abeya and further highlighted by Severino Oblas; who explained the practices of the 'Ibaloi' tribe of Benguet. The positive reports from different workshop groups were proof enough that we have learned something from the consultation. It was also inspiring to know that the youth took an active interest considering they will be carrying the torch of the Igorot culture, nurtured by the first generation Igorots.

The friendly and relaxed atmosphere was instantly noticeable the moment the delegates arrived and a strong fellowship was constant throughout the consultation spiced by Caridad Fiar-od's seemingly endless wit. The camaraderie was enjoyed by everyone, and allowed new friendships to be forged and old ones strengthened.

The breathtaking scene of the snow-capped mountains, the natural beauty of the gorge and the serene lakes were spectacular. With the shopping at the Interlaken and chances to win prizes during the tour being added bonuses. A well deserved thank you should go to Juerg, our tour operator who was all too happy to show us around his beautiful country.

The culmination of the consultation came during the Gala night, where the merging of Igorot and Swiss culture was personified in a performance involving traditional Swiss bell ringing and indigenous Igorot dances. It was an evening of fun with impressive presentations from both cultures where knowledge of each other's customs was gained through the exchange of musical instruments and costumes. Even the occasionally challenging language barrier did not hinder anybody's enjoyment.

The organising committees, although small in number and geographically spread-out, demonstrated their strength as an organisation through their hard work and careful planning which resulted in a very successful event. Without the help of many non-Igorots the Consultation would not have been possible. Martin Koller, who along with his wife Claire mastered the ceremonies, Christa Monico being responsible for the registration and finances, Juerg Hafner; who sacrificed valuable amounts of his own time to technically assist the Consultation which was coordinated by his wife Lolit. The endless support of other BIBAK Switzerland members was equally invaluable, for instance Fred Labfayong, responsible for advertising which brought a considerable number of non-European guests to the consultation. As well as all the other BIBAK members including Julio, Henry, Violeta, Rebecca, Angie, Rick, Walter, Bart, Frederick and Sabina who made it a worthwhile event to be shared and enjoyed by all. Of course let's not forget the many delegates who made sacrifices too and travelled from all corners of the globe, including the Philippines, in order to attend and make it a success. For without these people there would have been no conference at all.

So now we look onwards to the 4th ICBE Consultation in Ireland, and from what we experienced in Switzerland, 2007 is going to have a lot of work on it's hands in order to top this year.