

The 140th International Convention

Report

The 140th International Convention of the Theosophical Society took place from 31 December 2015 to 5 January 2016, at the International Headquarters of the TS in Adyar, Chennai, India. The theme of the 140th International Convention was 'Compassion and Universal Responsibility'. There were around 1000 participants from all around the world.

The Convention began with the traditional recitation of the prayers of the religions, as well as the Invocation to the Unity. This year, children from Olcott School chanted the Buddhist prayer. A lamp was lit by the President, and several other representatives. Tim Boyd delivered annual Presidential Address in which he gave an overview of the activities of the Sections and groups around the world in 2015.

The programme of the Convention comprised talks, lectures and various additional cultural and other activities. Altogether there were 22 speakers, including 4 from the European Sections. The Chairperson of the EFTS, Trân-Thi-Kim-Diêu spoke about "Responsibility Transforms – Compassion Transcends". Mirva Jaatinen, GS of the Finnish Section, participated in a symposium on "Compassion in Different Spiritual Traditions". Michiel Haas, resident at the International Theosophical Centre, Naarden, and architect responsible for the Adyar Estate renovation, delved into the theme "Sustainability and Spirituality". Krista Umbjarv, EFTS Secretary, participated in a symposium on "Religious Intolerance and Sectarian Violence".

This year, representatives from sister organisations, namely ULT and Point Loma, participated in the Convention. Vicente Hao Chin Jr. who was unable to be present in Adyar, delivered his lecture over Skype. Tim Boyd and Michiel Haas gave an interesting overview of the state of renovations and future plans of the Adyar estate.

Between lectures and talks, participants could visit Adyar institutions and participate in cultural programmes which culminated with the performance of dance by Kalakshetra Foundation.

All programmes of the Convention were live-streamed; they can be watched at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG1SpKalljNqk39aC1A6hjA>.

Krista Umbjarv
EFTS Secretary