

Previous Activities



2009

a) Preparatory activities for the Conference on Civic Reason

1. Preparatory meeting with Prof. Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na`im

Date and venue: 30-31 January 2009, Catholic University Leuven, (Belgium)

On January 31st Kosmopolis staff met Prof. Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na`im in Leuven (Belgium) to discuss the content and scope of the May conference. In Leuven, they also attended the conference and public lecture Islam and the Secular State, in honor of Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na`im.

2. Study group on Civic Reason

February – May 2009

In preparation of the conference, the Kosmopolis Institute initiated a multi-disciplinary study group on civic reason, human rights and secularism. UvH and Hivos staff, as well as staff from the Institute for Social Studies (ISS) in The Hague. The group met on a regular basis to discuss relevant texts.

b) International Conference: 'Promoting Pluralism through Civic Reason? Rethinking the Secular'

Date and venue: 25-26 May 2009, Polmanshuis/University for Humanistics, Utrecht (The Netherlands)

In cooperation with Hivos, the Kosmopolis Institute organized a conference on the future of secularism, the secular state and the potential for social action in the context of religious revitalization. A diverse group of 45 activists, academics, legal experts and policy makers from various parts of the world participated in the conference.

Internationally renowned participants included Prof. dr. An-Na`im and Justice Aftab Alam, sitting judge of the Supreme Court of India, gave key note addresses. Other participants included University of Amsterdam professors Prof dr. Veit Bader and Prof dr. Jan Breman. NGO staff from participating organisations in India, Indonesia and Uganda and from Kosmopolis presented their experiences with pluralism-secularism in practice.

c) Public Debate: 'Why Muslims need a Secular State and Western Politics should not Interfere', Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na`im in conversation with Maurits Berger

Date and venue: may 25 2009, Ottone, Utrecht, the Netherlands

On May 25th 2009, Prof. An-Na`im participated in a public debate, organized by Kosmopolis/Hivos. Prof. dr. Maurits Berger (University of Leiden) acted as moderator. An-Na`im and Berger discussed the central elements of the theories of An-Na`im and discussed their views on the Dutch public debate on freedom of expression and freedom of religion. Approximately one hundred people attended this lively debate. Human.nl reported about this event here.

d) Film- and discussion evening for UvH students and students UU (gender studies) November 26 2009

Kosmopolis organised an evening for UvH students and international University of Utrecht students (Gender studies) themed 'Homophobia in Africa –according to Western standards?' Two African documentaries were shown: (1) Victor & Georgina (filmed over a period of 2 years by Ugandan cineast Alice Smits) and 7 years (made by Dutch film maker Bram Vergeer).

Paul Jansen (Hivos, The Hague), who was involved in the making of both documentaries, was invited to tell more about his work in Africa. Over 30 students were present at this evening.

E) Web site development

Besides regular updates on the knowledge program activities on the Hivos sites (www.hivos.nl and www.hivos.net/pluralism) and the UvH site (www.uvh.nl), interested people were also kept up to date via a new site on Bridging the gap, an initiative by Human.nl. UvH summer school student Jochum Damstra contributed to their interactive website during the summer months when he was in Indonesia. His log can be read here.

International Summer School on Pluralism and Development 2009

The 6th edition of the international summer school focused on Promoting Pluralism and Development and was conducted in July-August 2009, in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Participants included graduate students and selected staff of affiliated CSO partners in India, Indonesia and Uganda as well as UvH students¹.

The Center for Religious and Cross Cultural Studies (CRCS) hosted this years' summer school. Teaching venues as well as student accommodation were secured at the Wisma MM campus in Yogyakarta.

International presentations, workshops and meetings by Kosmopolis staff

1. Caroline Suransky (January 21) Seminar presentation '**What do we eventually expect from the Knowledge Programme?**' Institute for Social Studies, The Hague, The Netherlands

2. Henk Manschot and Caroline Suransky (March 16) co-organizers of the **“The Hague Dialogues”**, with the Foundation China-Europe Dialogue and Exchange for Sustainable Development (CE-DESD), An International Dialogue on "Cultural Diversity: Catalyst for Citizenship, Creativity and Communication - enabling sustainable life-styles", Hall of Knights (Ridderzaal), The Hague, The Netherlands
3. Caroline Suransky (April 23) Seminar presentation at the BIS-Kosmopolis Seminar **“The Crystal Palace and the rest - a Seminar on Global Citizenship and intercultural pluralism with Prof. Peter Sloterdijk”** UvH, Utrecht, The Netherlands
4. Caroline Suransky (April 27) Presentations at Conference **“Valuing and Managing Pluralism in Uganda”** (1) Promoting Pluralism, the case of Indonesia; (2) Pluralism and Diversity in different contexts – A Dialogue with Richard Sswakiryanda, Sitharaman Kakarala and Caroline Suransky - Kampala, Uganda
5. Henk Manschot and Caroline Suransky (May 25) Paper presentation: **“Rethinking the secular from a Humanist perspective”** Presentation at the Kosmopolis-Hivos conference Promoting Pluralism through Civic Reason? Rethinking the Secular, , Utrecht, The Netherlands
6. Hilde van 't Klooster (May 26) Paper presentation **‘The Politics of Civic Reason. The case of illegal migration to fortress Europe.’** Presentation at the Kosmopolis-Hivos conference Promoting Pluralism through Civic Reason? Rethinking the Secular, , Utrecht, The Netherlands
7. Henk Manschot and Caroline Suransky (May 27) facilitated and participated in a **dialogue between Winnie Sorgdrager from the Dutch Raad van State and Justice Aftab Alam of the Supreme Court of India**, which took place at the Raad van State in the Hague, The Netherlands
8. Caroline Suransky (September 9) **“Humanistics and Intercultural Citizenship”** – (in Dutch) Introduction at the opening of the Academic year of the UvH 2009-2010, Ottone/UvH, Utrecht, the Netherlands
9. Henk Manschot (November 14) **Presentation at Seminar Engaging with the contemporary challenges to secularism**, National Law School of India University, Bangalore, India
10. Caroline Suransky (November 14) Presentation **‘Pluralism work in progress by Kosmopolis’** at PPKP interregional meeting, National Law School of India University, Bangalore, India
11. Hilde van 't Klooster (November 16) Moderator of panel discussion on **Faith and the Secular Question, One-day Dialogue Engaging with the contemporary challenges to secularism**, National Law School of India University, Bangalore, India
12. Hilde van 't Klooster & Sanne Rotmeijer (December 10) Presentation **‘Schinkels’ balancing act with Nationalist - Cosmopolitanism’** (in Dutch) Kosmopolis/ UvH Research

Group Citizenship in an intercultural Society, UvH, Utrecht, the Netherlands