
International News

IASWECE Council Meeting, South Africa, April 3–7, 2017

— Report by Stefanie Allon for the IASWECE Council

For the first time, a Council Meeting took place in the Southern hemisphere—in Cape Town, South Africa, a place of great cultural and social diversity, where the power of the elements is intense. The time is one of political activity, calling for renewed change. Louise Oberholzer from the South African Federation of Waldorf Schools gave insight into the nature of the country and the development of Waldorf education there.

Beginning in the 1960s, a Waldorf founding movement established seventeen schools, along with kindergartens. Among them are eleven schools in the region of Cape Town, one in Natal, and five in the north, in the area of Johannesburg. By 1991, the end of Apartheid had brought equal rights and freedom for all. Since then the question of how to deal with this freedom has been an issue, especially in the education of children. Mary-G Häuptle, the representative from South Africa, reported that in the last twenty years

more and more educare centers in the townships want to work on the basis of Waldorf education, and the small Waldorf schools there—being the “younger stream”—also want to become part of the Waldorf movement.

The Centre for Creative Education, founded in Cape Town in 1993, offers government-approved training courses based on Waldorf education. The training for educators is particularly taken up by kindergarten teachers who come from townships and who with great initiative have been founding kindergartens there. Council members were able to visit the kindergartens at Constantia and Imhoff Waldorf Schools, as well as several kindergartens, schools, and baby care projects in the Khayelitsha and Manenberg townships. With deep respect and humble admiration, it was seen how the educators there create healing oases by living up to original values of caring and sharing in a surrounding of prevailing poverty and potential violence. ♦