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## Forberedelse til generalforsamlingen i KEK 2009

### **Sammendrag**

Konferansen av Europeiske Kirker avholder sin generalforsamling i Lyon, Frankrike, 15.–21. juli 2009. Den norske kirke har nominert 5 delegater i tillegg til sentralkomiteemedlem og delegat for Churches' Commission for Migrant in Europe (CCME).

I samarbeid med nordiske og baltiske søsterkirker ble et eget forberedelsesmøte for delegater fra de nordiske og baltiske medlemskirkene i KEK avholdt i Oslo 27.–28. januar 2009. Møtet tok sikte på å gi informasjon, forberede programprioriteringer fra de nordiske og baltiske kirkene, samt koordinere nominasjon av kandidater til sentralkomiteen.

Et eget forberedelsesmøte for norske delegater planlegges i forkant av Lyon.

Programinformasjon om generalforsamlingen, rapporter fra forrige arbeidsperiode samt prioriteringer for 2009–2015 foreligger og vil bli gjort tilgjengelig for delegatene som en del av forberedelsesprosessen.

KEKs generalforsamling vil fokusere på fire hovedområder.

1. 50-årsjubileum for KEKs tilblivelse skal feires.
2. Hovedprioriteringer for de neste seks år skal vedtas. MKR har nå sjansen til å gi signaler til Dnks delegater på generalforsamlingen om hva som er det viktigste å prioritere i den kommende perioden. Dette legges nå fram til drøfting i MKR.
3. Generalforsamlingens tema, "Called to one hope in Christ" vil stå i fokus.
4. Visjoner frem mot 2029 vil være en del av generalforsamlingens langsiktige planlegging for KEK.



## **Forslag til vedtak**

1. MKR ber sekretariatet om å finne erstatning for delegat med vara i samarbeid med Samisk kirkeråd. Forslaget legges fram for Kirkerådet.
2. MKR støtter forslaget til videre forberedelsesprosess og ber sekretariatet om å følge opp med invitasjon til eget forberedelsesmøte for de norske delegatene.
3. MKR støtter det nordisk-baltiske forslaget til nominasjonsliste.



## **Saksorientering**

Kirkemøtet 2008 oppnevnte følgende personer som delegater til KEKs generalforsamling i 2009:

- 1) Berit Hagen Agøy, Mellomkirkelig råds leder (leder av delegasjonen)  
Vara: Kjetil Aano, Mellomkirkelig råds nestleder
- 2) Biskop Tor Berger Jørgensen (innstilt av Bispemøtet)  
Vara: Biskop (innstilles av Bispemøtet)
- 3) Gerd Marie Ådna  
Vara: Ingvill Thorson Plesner
- 4) Inga Marie Nordstrand (*melder forfall*)  
Vara: Kirsti Guvsám (*melder forfall*)
- 5) Erlend Rogne, Mellomkirkelig råd  
Vara: Kathrine Intelhus Lind-Solstad

På egen kvote deltar Elise Sandnes som sittende medlem av KEK sentralkomité. Mellomkirkelig råds generalsekretær vil fungere som rådgiver for delegasjonen.

### Andre deltakere:

#### CCME

I tillegg deltar Joseph Gaima Moiba som delegat fra Den norske kirke, valgt av Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME).

På samme kvote deltar også Eva Frydenborg fra Norges Kristne Råd.

#### EDAN

Ecumenical Disability Advocacy Alliance jobber for å få formell status i KEK, og har nå muligheter for å få flere observatørplasser på generalforsamlingen. Dette åpner mulighet for at Torill Edøy fra Den norske kirke reiser som deres delegat.

#### Stewards

Informasjon og søknadsskjema om Stewardsprogrammet er sirkulert bredt. KEK avgjør hvilke søkere som får mulighet til å være stewards på generalforsamlingen. Så langt er to norske søkere kjent.

## **Økonomiske/administrative konsekvenser**

Kostnader for forberedelse og deltakelse i KEKs generalforsamling følges opp innenfor budsjetterte kostnadsrammer for 2009.



# Conference of European Churches Assembly 2009

## Central Committee

CiD

### **Denmark**

Danish Lutheran Church  
Baptist Church

Mette Ladefoged (ordained female)

Marie Vejrup Nielsen (lay, female)

### **Estonia**

Evangelical-Lutheran Church

Peeter KALDUR (male/ordained/non-youth).

### **Finland**

Evangelical-Lutheran Church  
Orthodox Church of Finland

Tapani Rantala (ordained/male/non-youth).

fr Rauno Pietarinen (male ordained) / Riina Nguyen (female lay)

Bishop Matti Repo

### **Iceland**

Church of Iceland

### **Latvia**

Evangelical-Lutheran Church

Anita Henslin (lay female)

### **Lithuania**

### **Norway**

Church of Norway  
Christian Council of Norway

Revd Elise Sandnes (female, ordained) Youth candidate: Erlend Rogne (Male, youth, lay)

### **Sweden**

Church of Sweden

Karin Bursstrand (ordained, female)

Christopher Meakin (male, ordained)

Missionary Covenant Church  
Baptist Union

Olle Alkholm (ordained, male)

**International**

(United Methodist Church, Nordic & Baltic Episcopal Area)

**Nordic Free churches**

Karin Wiborn (General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Sweden, ordained, female)



**CSC**

Karsten Fiedelius (lay, male)

**CCME**

**Comments**

Possible migrant church candidate coming up

Aila Lauha + Matti Kotiranta

Eva Frydenborg

Kristina Hellqvist (lay, female)

Liv Södahl (lay, youth, female)

This church is only prepared to have one of the two elected.



## 13<sup>th</sup> cec assembly

Called to One Hope in Christ  
Lyon, France, 15-21 July 2009

### Conference of European Churches

### Work Priorities 2009 – 2015

### General Secretariat

The General Secretariat of CEC is based in Geneva. The Constitution of CEC provides that "The General Secretary... shall be in charge of the General Secretariat of the Conference and shall be the head of the entire staff and shall also be Secretary of the Central Committee and the Presidium". In addition the Bye-Laws of CEC provide that the General Secretary "shall be responsible for the administration of the Conference, for relations with the member churches and other ecumenical bodies, for the preparation and conduct of meetings of the Assembly and the Central Committee and meetings of the Presidium... as well as for informing the member churches and the public about the work of the Conference".

In interpreting this mandate, the Restructuring Document which was adopted by Central Committee at its meeting in October 2008 speaks of the responsibility of the General Secretary to assume "special responsibility for strengthening the overall development and vision of the organisation". It also envisages that he will specifically convene, prepare and chair the meetings of the Senior Management Team comprising the Directors of the Commissions (augmented as appropriate by the Secretary for Finance and Administration and the Secretary for Communications) and work with them to ensure the coherence of the whole organisation and in particular the coherent implementation across CEC of the overall work programme of CEC as assigned by the CEC Governing Bodies.

To assist in the fulfilment of these functions, the Communications and Finance and Personnel Departments of CEC are based within the General Secretariat, as is the CEC Assembly Office.

In furtherance of these functions, the following priorities are proposed for the work of the General Secretariat following the 13<sup>th</sup> CEC Assembly in Lyon. They are not stated in any particular order of priority.



***To ensure CEC's visibility in the whole of Europe***

The CEC Senior Management Team has proposed the need for CEC to work at a strategic approach to ensuring its visibility and effectiveness, especially in Eastern Europe. The CEC Central Committee has widened this discussion to seeking ways in which CEC is no less visible in one part of Europe than another. These strategic issues of visibility and effectiveness throughout Europe will need to be addressed by the new Central Committee in a discussion enabled by the General Secretary working with the Senior Management Team and with all executive colleagues.

***To develop further patterns of common working with other ecumenical bodies, especially the WCC and GEKE/CPCE***

In response to concern from CEC member churches that there should be greater coherence in ecumenical work on a European level, CEC and CPCE have already established patterns of common working, which are described in the CEC Activity Report. CEC and WCC have also been working to find ways of achieving greater coherence in their respective areas of work in Europe. Member Churches clearly expect of CEC that this process should be broadened and deepened in the coming years.

***To facilitate a review, in the period immediately following the Assembly, of the location of the CEC General Secretariat***

The question of the appropriate location of the General Secretariat of CEC, if CEC as a whole is to operate at its most effective, is a strategic question which CEC has been discussing for some years without coming to a conclusion. It is intended that Central Committee will address this issue before the Assembly is convened. In the light of that discussion, it may be necessary for the new Central Committee to give this question high priority. Whatever the outcome of this discussion, a further priority of The General Secretariat must be the following:

***To continue to promote coherence in the work of CEC***

One of the key roles of the General Secretary will remain to promote coherence in the work of CEC and he, working with his colleagues in the Senior Management Team and with all colleagues throughout CEC, will need to develop effective strategies to enable coherence within CEC to be maintained and further developed.



***To complete the review of membership issues, including those arising from the integration between CEC and CCME***

At the time of the agreement of the integration of the two bodies, it was accepted that questions arising from the different structures of membership of the two bodies would be left open at the time at which the integration takes effect, with transitional measures in place to enable those who at the time of integration were members of CCME to play as full a role as possible in the integrated CEC. It is intended that work on this will begin already before the Assembly in Lyon. Alongside this, recent discussions at Central Committee have revealed that CEC's existing definitions of membership are not sufficiently precise and the outgoing Central Committee has asked that this too be addressed.

***To establish a Gender Desk***

As outlined in the CEC Activity Report, a Gender Advisory Group established by CEC has been working to prepare the way for an appointment of a CEC Secretary for Gender Issues in order to enable CEC to relate more effectively to specific gender based issues. Work now needs to be done urgently to ensure that funding is in place for this post so that it can be established.

***To build further the relationship between CEC and its associated youth organizations***

The CEC Activity Report describes the Memorandum of Cooperation which has been arrived at between CEC and its Associated Youth Organizations. It is intended that this will be formally signed in Lyon. In the months before the Assembly our cooperation has very much focused on the preparations for the youth aspects of the Assembly. After the Assembly the relationship will need to be broadened and deepened in the interests of making the voice of young people more clearly heard in the life and work of CEC.

***To clarify the relationship between CEC and CCEE***

Before the Assembly, CEC has already begun to work with CCEE to redefine the guidelines which govern our work together. This work will need to continue after the Assembly.



***To continue to promote Charta Oecumenica as a basic tool for common ecumenical work***

As we gather in Lyon eight years will have elapsed since the *Charta Oecumenica* was signed. CEC needs to continue to promote *Charta Oecumenica* and, with our Roman Catholic partners, to reflect on whether we need to develop a process for reviewing and renewing the *Charta*. As this touches the whole of the life of CEC in all its three Commissions, the General Secretary will need to work to promote this discussion across CEC.

***To enable a thoroughgoing review of the CEC legal texts***

As delegates will see in the relevant papers, the Legal Advisory Group which met in the period before the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly recognized that detailed work is needed on the CEC legal texts in order to bring them into line with CEC as it has evolved since they were first agreed in the early 1990s. The General Secretariat will need to bring recommendations to Central Committee for the setting up of a Group to carry out this necessary work.

***To maximize CEC income from member churches***

Important work has been done between Assemblies to increase the amounts received as membership fees from member churches. In a time of economic and financial challenge, this work will need to continue, with targeted approaches especially to larger member churches who do not pay their membership fees in full.

***To develop alternative financial strategies***

In a period when member churches are likely to be facing their own financial challenges, CEC will need to develop a strategy for fundraising from sources other than member churches, as well as exploring the question of sponsoring.

***To develop the CEC communication policy and strategy***

To continue the work which has already begun to develop clear communication policy and strategy for the whole of CEC.

***To establish a new CEC website***

To continue the work which has already begun to develop a new CEC website which will be interactive and attractive in its format.



***Press Officers Network for European Churches (PONEC)***

To continue supporting the development of this Network as an instrument for increasing Christian visibility in Europe.

***Prize for Religion Writing in Europe***

In recent years, CEC has administered the awarding of this Prize, funded by the John Templeton Foundation. It has served as an important instrument for stimulating and acknowledging writing on Religion within Europe. The Templeton Foundation has now withdrawn its funding for this and it will therefore be necessary to seek alternative funding so that this important initiative can continue.







## 13<sup>th</sup> cec assembly

Called to One Hope in Christ  
Lyon, France, 15-21 July 2009

### Conference of European Churches Work Priorities 2009 – 2015 Churches Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME)

*CCME is an ecumenical organisation that serves the churches in their commitment to strangers, responding to the message of the Bible which insists on the dignity of every human being, in order to promote an inclusive policy at European and national level for migrants, refugees and minority groups.*

*(CCME Mission Statement)*

#### **I. FOUNDATIONS OF THE WORK OF CCME**

1. With this work programme, CCME seeks to contribute to the Christian witness in Europe; seeking to develop a Europe welcoming strangers and building inclusive societies: "So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God" (Eph. 2:19). CCME will do so as part of the Conference of European Churches.
2. The Conference of European Churches and the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe in their memorandum of understanding "Different Backgrounds – Joint Future" adopted by the CCME ExCom and the CEC Central Committee respectively, have agreed to journey together to make the witness of churches in Europe more visible.
3. The work of CCME in fostering Christian reflection and action on migration is grounded in the clear command in both the Old and the New Testaments to act humanely and compassionately towards strangers who share with all human beings the dignity of the Being of God, (Genesis 1,26-27; John 1,1). That "You shall love the alien as yourself" (Leviticus 19, 34; Hebrews 13, 1-3) is typical of the humane attitude towards 'the other' found in the Moses law, an obligation recognized by the three Abrahamic world religions and other faith communities. It is believed to have been given both by revelation and natural law, that is, a moral principle which is capable of being recognized by all human beings.
4. The CCME Mission Statement adopted by the 16<sup>th</sup> CCME Assembly in London, October 2005 continues to guide the work of the Commission.



## ***II. MANDATE OF THE CCME (of CEC)***

As outlined in the joint memorandum of understanding "Different Backgrounds – Joint Future" signed by the leadership of CEC and CCME in Vienna in November 2007, the CCME General Assembly and CEC Central Committee have affirmed the mandate of the CCME of CEC, namely to

1. serve the churches in their commitment to strangers, responding to the message of the Bible, which insists on the dignity of every human being, in order to promote an inclusive policy at European and national level for migrants, refugees and minority groups;
2. work on issues of migration and integration, asylum and refugees, and against racism and discrimination, undertake research, initiate, develop and implement projects in these fields;
3. represent the common voice of the churches in Europe on the above issues vis-à-vis the European institutions.

## ***III. PROCESS TOWARDS THIS WORK PROGRAMME***

This work programme is the result of a participatory process: in December 2007 an invitation to CCME members was sent out, asking for input to the future work programme of CCME. These inputs were discussed and further developed by the Ex-Com meeting in Mechelen (Belgium), April 2008. A provisional version of the work programme was circulated prior to the CCME General Assembly in Protaras (Cyprus), 8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> October 2008, where the final version was discussed, amended and on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2008 adopted.

## ***IV: THEMATIC PRIORITY AREAS 2009-15***

Within its general mandate, CCME of CEC will seek to focus its activities on a number of strategic areas, in which it engages with high quality contributions and potential for impact, rather than trying to address every issue of potential relevance. In its work, and together with the wider ecumenical family, CCME will monitor developments influencing the life of migrants, such as economic development, conflict around the world, climate change.



For the period 2009-15 the following thematic areas will form work priorities for CCME:

### **1. Europe's role in refugee protection in the 21st century**

The large majority of refugees are currently hosted by poorer countries in the world. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Europe was the scene of displacement but also of providing protection. In the past years, the numbers of refugees in Europe has drastically declined, in disproportion to the global level. Numbers of refugees vary significantly between different European countries. Overall, fewer refugees find access into Europe and access to effective protection.

*Therefore, priorities will be:*

- a. Defending asylum (including complementary protection)*
- b. Additional forms of refugee protection; including resettlement of refugees to Europe*
- c. Revising the need for protection (e.g. environmental refugees, internal displacement)*

### **2. Human Dignity in the process of labour migration**

With economic globalisation, patterns of international migration are changing. While the majority of migrants move within their region, more migrants travel further distances for a job and a living. While they are welcome when (cheap) labour is needed, permanent settlement and participation in societies meet barriers and restrictions. Currently a trend can be observed in many European countries to increase labour migration, while their status and rights remain uncertain. The right to family life for migrants is particularly under threat in many countries.

*Therefore, priorities will be:*

- a. A uniform set of rights for all migrants*
- b. Ratification of binding legal instruments Europe-wide and globally*
- c. Advocating for the right to family life as sine qua non of integration*
- d. Monitoring expulsion, detention and removal of migrants*
- e. Address irregular situations of migrants*



### **3. Countering contemporary forms of slavery, in particular trafficking in human beings**

Parallel to stricter immigration controls trafficking in human beings has become more visible in the past two decades as a new form of slavery. While joint efforts of authorities, non-governmental organisations and churches against this international crime have produced some results, trafficking for forced labour is still a rather unknown field. The human rights of trafficked persons are generally still insufficiently protected.

*Therefore, priorities will be:*

- a. Trafficking in women*
- b. Trafficking for forced labour*

### **4. Uniting in Diversity: Migration as an opportunity and challenge for the unity of the church**

Migration is changing the ecclesial landscape: more congregations of migrants are found, a greater diversity of denominations is observed. Separate and segregated church life is a phenomenon similar to fragmentation in societies; at the same time, more transnational and international congregations emerge. Migration constitutes an enormous opportunity and yet a considerable challenge for churches in Europe.

*Therefore, priorities will be:*

- a. Being Church together*
- b. Integration and the role of religion*
- c. Theological reflection on migration*

### **5. Churches as witness to inclusive communities in Europe**

Various forms of exclusion exist in societies, and they are becoming even more dramatic. Vulnerable groups of migrants are particularly affected by exclusion, e.g. asylum applicants and undocumented migrants, children of migrants, also ethnic minorities are also often marginalised. Anti-discrimination legislation provides an important instrument even if it also poses challenges and needs improvement.

*Therefore, priorities will be:*

- a. Anti-discrimination legislation: monitoring and promotion in churches*
- b. Inclusion of ethnically discriminated groups: within church and society*
- c. Churches addressing racism*



## **6. Migration and development**

The nexus between migration and development is recognised in communication and statements. Policies and concrete cooperation activities (e.g. the European Neighbourhood Policy) are however still largely dominated by the aim to use development cooperation as a tool for migration restriction and control. Churches as actors in the fields of migration and development are ideally placed to explore positive ways of action which go beyond remittances. However, this potential for being actors of migration and development is not yet fully used.

*Therefore, priorities will be:*

- a. Monitoring policy development at European level*
- b. Cooperation with other regions, particularly through the World Council of Churches and its Global Ecumenical Network on Migration*
- c. Networking with church development agencies and identifying relevant projects*

## **7. European year of churches responding to migration 2010**

Recognising that migration is an overall reality in society today, and aware that migration is posing challenges to societies, political institutions and churches, CEC and CCME are planning a European Year of Churches focussing on migration. During this year, churches activities for migration and integration, asylum and refugees and against racism and discrimination shall be made more visible through joint activities, a joint calendar of meetings and at least four regional meetings. The study "Mapping Migration in Europe – Mapping Churches' Responses" provides a starting point. The European Year of churches responding to migration 2010 will also assist churches in sharing their good experience, strengthening existing work, and identifying possible new areas of work so as to become more effective in pursuing the aims of inclusive societies in Europe and welcoming strangers.

All future activities of CCME will need to be evaluated against their potential:

- to make a specific contribution from churches to a wider debate and serve the churches' witness in the area of migration on a global level;
- to be complementary to or to have specific added value in relation to activities of other actors and to achieve synergy with them;
- to give a voice to the voiceless;
- to have a clear impact among churches or
- to have an impact in voicing the churches' concerns towards policies on the national level;
- to provide specific added value by addressing an issue on a European level.





## 13<sup>th</sup> cec assembly

Called to One Hope in Christ  
Lyon, France, 15-21 July 2009

### Conference of European Churches Work Priorities 2009 – 2015 Churches in Dialogue Commission

The Churches in Dialogue Commission (CiD) of the Conference of European Churches (CEC) is more than a study commission preparing ecumenical texts for the member churches of CEC. The CiD rather initiates and supports a variety of bilateral and multilateral encounters and dialogues, with a special emphasis given to theological reflection on the various challenges.

The Commission carries out its work at annual plenary meetings, and in between through consultations and working groups, as well as through communication with various research institutes and other ecumenical organisations. The framework of the CiD is the *Charta Œcumenica*, used as a basis in all areas of study and dialogue.

Looking back at 2003, the CiD was given its mandate with the following priorities of work by the 12<sup>th</sup> Assembly of CEC:

1. Relations between the Orthodox churches and other member churches of CEC
2. Our common mission in Europe
3. Majority and minority churches
4. Cooperation among theological Faculties in Europe
5. Spirituality and worship life at ecumenical meetings
6. Theology of Religion
7. Ecumenical training & formation in Europe
8. Healing of Memories

As a primarily theological commission, CiD is addressing its working priorities first of all in a theological manner. In this respect the issue of ecclesiology was identified as a major theme. This topic is to be a permanent reference point in the discussion of this commission. In the same way, the issues such as Mission, Spirituality, Ecumenical Formation or the Theology of Religion should be considered as ongoing concerns for the Churches in Dialogue.



At its fifth meeting (25-27 June 2008, Pullach, Germany) the Churches in Dialogue Commission (CiD) of CEC recommended for 2009-2015 the following working priorities:

### **1. Promoting dialogue and encounter between the Orthodox Churches and other member Churches of CEC**

There is already a tradition of theological cooperation between the various confessions within CEC, which should be continued more intensively. In this respect a special consideration should be given to dialogue and encounter between the Orthodox and the other member churches of CEC. A concrete way in this respect would be to continue the consultation process on the ongoing official theological dialogues between these churches, initiated by the CiD between 2005-2009.

### **2. Towards a Common Mission in Europe**

The churches in Europe should be incited to help each other in their mission. Competition between churches in the field of mission should be avoided. Studies on the understanding of "mission", "evangelisation" and "proselytism" should be carried out in order to achieve a common vision for all churches. The spirit of the Charta Oecumenica should be further implemented in the cooperation between all churches.

### **3. Majority and Minority church relationship in Europe**

Many of the churches in Europe exist either as large majority or as small minority churches within their countries. Here a permanent learning process is necessary in order to bring about more ecumenical fellowship and mutual help. The experiences with the common consultations so far indicate that they should be continued in order to facilitate the cooperation between all churches at the local level.

### **4. Strengthening co-operation between theological Faculties from all over Europe**

The facilitating role of the CiD by organising consultations of the Theological Faculties from all over Europe should continue. Among the questions to be addressed in this respect are: the relationship between Church and Faculty, what to teach and how to teach, the importance of research, interdisciplinary studies, theology versus religious





studies, how the faculties and the churches understand and respond to modernity or post-modernity.

### **5. Sharing spirituality and worship life, between churches and at ecumenical meetings**

The issue of Spirituality is directly related to the issue of the theological dialogue between the churches. The 3<sup>rd</sup> European Ecumenical Assembly underlined the direct link between theological dialogue and the issue of sharing the spiritual experience of the ecumenical partners. One of the best opportunities to acknowledge the spirituality of other church traditions is offered by ecumenical gatherings. How spirituality is expressed and how it could best be received by others at ecumenical gatherings should be reflected upon. Some guidelines in this respect may be developed.

### **6. Improving Ecumenical Training & Formation in Europe**

There is an increasing need for ecumenical training for leaders and members of the churches in Europe. Ecumenical formation may include learning about and from the past, but it is also about creating present and future expressions of ecumenism. The ecumenical movement will only thrive if every one understands it with their hearts as well as their heads. It must be based on an active relationship rather than institutions. Ecumenical training should offer motivation for being ecumenical and working ecumenically.

### **7. Continuing the consultation process towards a common Theology of Religions in Europe**

The CiD has already collected and reviewed church statements on a Theology of Religions. The intention was first of all to make the work already done by individual churches available to the other member churches of CEC. In addition some reflections were made on what is in common and what differs in the church statements. This process should continue towards a possible common theological basis of the European churches in their relations with other religions.



## **8. Promoting the Healing of Memories process in Europe**

Healing of Memories is a process directly related to the reconciliation between people and churches. As long as the common past of the churches is still a source of divergent interpretation or even of conflict between them, the churches should work to overcome their past together. CEC has initiated and accompanied Healing of Memories processes in Norway, Germany, Former Yugoslavia and Romania, among others. This process should continue.

## **9. Reflecting upon new ecumenical spaces for a more inclusive cooperation between the churches in Europe**

The Ecumenical cooperation promoted by CEC has brought almost all European churches closer to each other. There are still churches on this continent which are not part of the ecumenical family for various reasons. The experience of the Global Christian Forum at the world level showed that new ecumenical ways or spaces for a more inclusive cooperation between all churches is possible. CEC should consider creating such new ecumenical spaces in Europe as well.



13<sup>th</sup> cec assembly

Called to One Hope in Christ  
Lyon, France, 15-21 July 2009

Conference of European Churches  
Work Priorities 2009 – 2015  
Church and Society Commission (CSC)

## **The Europe we are hoping for**

### **Towards a Work Programme for the Church and Society Commission (CSC) of the Conference of European Churches (CEC) 2009-2015**

#### **Our hope for Europe**

The Charta Oecumenica describes the integration of Europe as follows: "We are convinced that the spiritual heritage of Christianity constitutes an empowering source of inspiration and enrichment for Europe. On the basis of our Christian faith, we work towards a humane, socially conscious Europe, in which human rights and the basic values of peace, justice, freedom, tolerance, participation and solidarity prevail. ... We commit ourselves to seek agreement with one another on the substance and goals of our social responsibility, and to represent in concert, as far as possible, the concerns and visions of the churches vis-à-vis the secular European institutions."

CEC and its Church & Society Commission understand Europe always as the whole continent, "from the Atlantic to the Urals, from the North Cape to the Mediterranean" (Charta Oecumenica).

#### **Our mandate**

The commitment of the churches for European integration is reflected in the mandate of the CSC. The mandate reads as follows:

- (a) Study and examination of Church and Society questions in a socio-ethical perspective such as EECCS and CEC have undertaken up to now (for example: peace, justice and the integrity of creation, reconciliation, churches and governments);



- (b) Monitoring the European institutions: European Union, Council of Europe, Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, in relation to themes such as the European integration process, democratisation, establishment of the rule of law, human rights and minority questions, European security, economic and social questions, the environment;
- (c) Dealing with the specific responsibility of the churches in the member states of the European Union for international policies of the EU.

### **Bridge-building between churches and the European institutions**

Communication is an integral part of everything the CSC does. Since 2004 CSC has produced an annual report, which in an attractive and easily readable way provides the churches' views on current European debates and highlights some of CSC's key activities. The CEC membership is kept updated on European developments through CSC Updates on European affairs, often accompanied by CSC briefings and reports, which provide more in-depth information on particular questions.

A crucial form of "communication" is the concrete involvement of member churches and associated members in the work of the CSC through working groups, task forces, statutory meetings, consultations and seminars, but also through meetings with the institutions provided by CSC. The meeting of Church and Society Secretaries of European churches is one example of an extensive sharing among CEC member churches and associated organisations on topical questions, an annual meeting in the CSC calendar in order to ensure that the ongoing activities of CSC meet and reflect the needs and concerns of the membership.

### **Looking back to 2003**

The CSC section of the Trondheim to Lyon report gives account of the work implemented by CSC since the last CEC Assembly in Trondheim in 2003. It reflects three main dimensions of CSC work:

1. Content work
2. Co-operation with and among CEC member churches and associated organisations.
3. Relations with the European institutions. You will also find these three dimensions in the document on CSC working mechanisms and methods, which can be found in the CSC section of the CEC website.



## **Looking forward to 2015**

A first proposal for the new CSC work programme has been discussed in the meeting of Church and Society Secretaries of European Churches in October 2008. Following this meeting, the document has been modified and adopted by the CSC Executive Committee.

**We are herewith presenting this proposal to our member churches and associated organisations inviting you to give your comments and contributions. All your answers will be carefully taken into account.**

It is envisaged that, based upon responses from our member churches and associated organisations, a work programme proposal will be developed by the last meeting of the Church and Society Commission, which will meet in Denmark, **11-15 March 2009**. After that it will be presented to a CEC Working Group prior to the Assembly, which is mandated to prepare the input for the Policy Reference Committee to be established at the Assembly. The Assembly itself will then have to establish priorities for the work of CEC and its Commissions.

## **What is CSC best placed to do?**

In relation to its member churches and to the partner organisations and in view of an overwhelming agenda, it is important to ask:

- What is CEC and its CSC best placed to do?
- What can be done better by individual member churches and/or partner organisations?

Over the years, the cooperation and division of labour with other organisations and bodies have become ever more important, first and foremost with the two other CEC commissions, but also with associated member and partner organisations of CEC, such as the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE), APRODEV, Eurodiaconia, the Association of Academies and Laity Centres in Europe (Oikos Europe), the educational partner organisations and others. Of particular importance in this regard are other offices of CEC member churches in Brussels and Strasbourg and our relationships with Roman Catholic partner organisations, first and foremost with COMECE. Furthermore, CSC seeks to cooperate with the European umbrella organisations of other faiths as well as with other European networks.



In addition, cooperation with sub-regional organisations and groups of churches has become ever more important for CSC and a way to “bring Europe closer to the people”. The cooperation with the Conference of the Churches Along the Rhine, the Theobalt Network as well as with the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland and the Church of Sweden on European issues could here be mentioned as good examples.

### **The basis of our hope and our work**

It is important to highlight that CSC is a very distinct body and not just another NGO in Brussels and Strasbourg. CSC is a faith-based organisation in the service of its constituency. The work of CSC is foremost theological work, starting from faith-based ethics and developing its relevance for present day challenges. In addition, CSC also has a spiritual presence, for example through participating in the work of the ecumenical Chapel of the Resurrection – the “Chapel for Europe” in Brussels.

### **Making hope visible: CSC’s working priorities**

The following chapters propose a number of working priorities for CSC in the forthcoming years. It has to be noted that many of them are closely interconnected. Moreover there are a number of cross-cutting topics, which shall be taken into account in all working areas like gender mainstreaming (cf. CSC’s policy paper on gender mainstreaming), cooperation among different European regions and sustainable development. Analysing and evaluating European legislation processes is a general feature of the work in all thematic areas covered by CSC.

## **1. European Integration: a value-based project**

The process of European integration is a key theme for CSC’s involvement in European politics. The European church leaders’ meeting in 2006 pointed out what CEC and its CSC have long emphasised: Europe must be more than just an economic project. The churches are an important actor to ensure that Europe as a whole is a value-based project promoting the human, social, spiritual and religious dimension of the European project. Intercultural and interfaith dialogues are important elements contributing to the process of integration. All these dimensions play a role in encouraging and supporting the active participation of the people of Europe in European integration and making them owners of that process.



European integration means for the churches a process which involves the whole continent, not only EU member states. Special attention needs to be given to some specific areas of concern, such as the relationship of the EU and Turkey, perspectives of the Balkan countries in view of possible EU accession, but equally to the questions of EU relations to neighbouring countries.

*Objectives:*

- to further reflect together with member churches on the value basis of the European integration process and to remain in dialogue with the European institutions on implementing commonly shared values
- in context of ongoing integration to address East – West differences in Europe
- to monitor the relationship of the EU with the candidate countries
- to monitor the relations of EU members states with Eastern Europe countries both within the context of EU (the European Neighbourhood Policy) and the other pan-European organisations (OSCE, CoE)
- to address cultural and religious diversity in Europe;

## **2. Globalisation: justice and responsibility**

The consequences of economic globalisation are becoming increasingly evident. Churches in Europe are more than ever challenged to address the impact of globalisation in different parts of the globe, including in different parts of Europe: the issue of global justice and the responsibility of the industrialised countries in Europe for other regions of the world. CSC has since 2008 been engaged in a project addressing impacts of globalisation with the Latin American Council of Churches and has started a dialogue with the All African Council of Churches. CSC also supports and plays an active role in the work of the World Council of Churches on globalisation including its plan to particularly examine the situation in Europe in 2010.

The CSC work on globalisation has thus far been built on the document 'European churches living their faith in the context of globalisation.' It is underlining the different experiences with globalisation in various parts of the continent. Particular European perspectives are being introduced to the debate, e.g. experience with the model of a social market economy and the European integration process: There are many bilateral contacts between churches from Europe and churches from other continents. What needs to be strengthened is a common voice of churches from Europe in reaching out to the partners outside the continent as well as to the political institutions.



*Objectives:*

- to follow up the recommendation of the Third European Ecumenical Assembly in Sibiu calling for initiation of a consultative process, addressing European responsibility for ecological justice and for the just shaping of globalisation;
- to work on raising awareness of churches in Europe on the process of globalisation and its consequences;
- to strengthen a common voice of churches in Europe in addressing globalisation;
- to intensify cooperation with the churches' specialised ministries providing development aid on the European level and in relation to the European institutions.
- to intensify a dialogue between churches in Europe and churches from other continents;
- to contribute actively to the WCC process on Wealth, Poverty and Ecology.

### **3. Environment and Climate Change: change our lifestyle**

In line with the recommendations of the Third European Ecumenical Assembly in Sibiu (2007), CSC continues to promote the engagement of European churches in environmental matters including climate change: CSC is engaged in and serves as the secretariat for the European Christian Environmental Network (ECEN) in order to strengthen the common witness of the churches in this field and to offer a platform for sharing best practices and for reflection. It is by now recognised that the protection of environment has a strong ethical dimension. The issue of environmental justice and of environmental education challenges the lifestyle of many Europeans and of the societies at large. An increasing number of CEC member churches are engaged in reducing their own ecological footprint as well as in raising awareness in the parishes and society.

CSC brings the churches' voice to the political debate on climate change, care for the environment and sustainable development. Currently, the focus of the policy debate is on climate change and the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the context of global negotiations on the follow-up process for the Kyoto Protocol. The EU has set itself ambitious targets, the implementation of which is now under negotiation and challenged by the current financial crises.

*Objectives:*

- to examine environmental questions from a theological and ethical perspective and to strengthen the common witness of the churches on topics such as mobility, eco-management and sustainability;





- to continue to support ECEN as a network of European churches and to support, *inter alia* through ECEN, CEC member churches in strengthening their environmental work
- to promote a Creation Time in European churches (EEA3 recommendation)
- to implement the European eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS) at the Ecumenical Centre in Brussels and to continue help managing CEC meetings in a more ecologically sound way
- to bring the voice of churches in the European policy debate on issues related to climate change, the promotion of energy efficiency and renewable energy sources and to support their engagement in the public discussion at the national level.

#### **4. Social and Economic Policies: challenging the growing gap**

Social and economic questions are at the heart of the debate on the future of Europe: Europe is challenged by a growing gap between the rich and the poor. Unemployment and social exclusion remain to be a major threat in many European states. The worldwide economic and financial crisis, which started in summer 2008, has shown that only closely coordinated international policies shall have an impact on the international economic processes. But, while economic policies are today mainly shaped on a trans-national level, the competences on social protection have remained to a large extent on the national or even regional level. This leads to an imbalance of social and economic policies in Europe, which is one reason, why the European integration process is a source of frustration for many people especially in Central and Eastern Europe.

For the churches, caring for those who are in need and advocating for those who have no voice are a constitutive part of their identity. In so doing, churches are bridge-builders for a socially cohesive society.

##### *Objectives:*

- to work for just societies that provide opportunities and access to participate for everyone according to his or her capacities.
- to promote employment policies, which pay special attention on precarious work situations and on the excluded from the labour market.
- to strengthen the role of churches and diaconal ministries as providers of social and healthcare services.



- to intensify networking among CEC member churches and associated organisations on social and economic issues and to intensify cooperative links with other stakeholders in this area.
- to promote Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Socially Responsible Investment (SRI), including helping CEC member churches to develop their own strategies.

## **5. Agriculture and Rural Life: care for rural communities**

The expenditure of the European Union on agriculture remains its single largest budget item. However, the reform of the EU budget after 2013 may lead to a considerable review of the Common Agricultural Policy budget in particular. In this process a number of ethical issues will need to be considered, such as food security, ecological and sustainable farming, the effects of budgetary changes on people living from farming or living in rural communities, and a sustainable agricultural policy on the global scale.

In the period from Trondheim to Lyon, CSC has commissioned a policy document on agriculture and rural life, which addresses the above-mentioned ethical issues. In the forthcoming months and years this document and its implications needs to be discussed with member churches and the European institutions. CSC has also worked with the Churches European Rural Network (CERN) on the above-mentioned issues.

### *Objectives:*

- to monitor the developments within the European institutions, regarding the reforms of the Common Agricultural Policy and the global trade negotiations according to the ethical criteria and their implications included in the policy document.
- to provide, in cooperation with the Churches European Rural Network (CERN), a platform for churches to address issues related to agriculture and rural life.

## **6. Human Rights and Religious Freedom: defending the equal value of all human beings**

Human Rights are a pillar of European integration. All political institutions to which CSC is relating are based on a commitment to human rights. However, common values mean very little if they are not practised. While there is a broad consensus on the



importance of human rights on an abstract level, disagreements follow when their content is specified. In the Charta Oecumenica, churches in Europe committed themselves to support human rights and to defend the equal value of all human beings. But also churches are involved in the debate on the implementation of human rights and on the universality and indivisibility of them.

CSC will continue to assist the member churches to work on their human rights concept. For churches, the promotion of religious freedom for the individual as well as for religious communities remains a priority; especially at a time where the role of religion in the public sphere is being questioned. However, CSC and its member churches are equally engaged in promoting human rights more broadly. This includes, for instance, safeguarding rights of certain vulnerable groups and activity in promoting social and economic rights.

*Objectives:*

- to offer a platform to European churches for the reflection on human rights from a theological perspective and sharing best practices
- to study human rights issues (religious freedom, anti-discrimination, gender equality, children's rights etc.) in relation to the needs of member churches and in view of developments in the European institutions
- to continue to strengthen the engagement of member churches in the protection of human rights, e.g. by developing a human rights manual with training sessions for churches as a theological contribution to the human rights education and by fostering the networking among churches on human rights
- to assist the member churches in South Eastern Europe in implementing human rights, dealing with the consequences from the Communist past and strengthening the rule of law and democracy
- to bring majority and minority churches together on the issue of religious freedom
- to strengthen the common voice of the member churches on human rights vis-à-vis the European institutions and to contribute in particular to the OSCE Advisory Council on Freedom of Religion and Belief, the Council of Europe's Steering Committee on Human Rights and the EU Fundamental Rights Agency.



## **7. Ethics, Science and Technology, including Bioethics and Biotechnology: New ethical challenges**

CSC and its predecessor EECCS have a long-standing record in being engaged in issues relating to bioethics and biotechnology. CSC has observer status in the Council of Europe's Steering Committee on Bioethics and works closely with the Institutions of the European Union. The Working Group on Bioethics and Biotechnology has produced a number of policy documents on issues such as ageing, euthanasia and stem cell research (cf. CEC website). These documents have served as a basis for discussions in the member churches as well as for submissions to the European institutions.

With new technological developments European societies are facing new challenges in the field of science and technology, which go beyond the sphere of bioethics and biotechnology. Member churches have therefore suggested that CSC should broaden its spectrum towards issues like nanotechnology and communication technologies. They stress the need for deepened ethical reflection on the impact of science, technology and the widening gap between those who profit from scientific research and those who do not. The mid-term evaluation of the 7<sup>th</sup> Research Programme of the EU in 2010 might serve as an important focal point.

### *Objectives:*

- to continue bringing together the churches' opinions and ethical reflections on bioethical and biotechnological issues;
- to examine the impact of information and communication technologies from a theological and ethical perspective;
- to intensify the work on new technologies such as nanotechnology;
- to monitor the European institutions as they develop a political framework in the area of research, science and technology, with an emphasis on bioethics and biotechnology;
- to bring the churches' voice to the debate within the European institutions including the mid-term evaluation of the 7<sup>th</sup> EU Research Programme.

## **8. Peace, Security and Reconciliation: Non-violent conflict prevention and crisis management**

The quest for peace and reconciliation has been the *raison d'être* of CEC since its inception. At the three European Ecumenical Assemblies, the churches in Europe re-



committed themselves to actively engage themselves in peace and reconciliation processes as well as in promoting a preferential option for non-violent means of conflict prevention and crises management. To this effect, capacities have been developed and strengthened in many churches and church-related organisations. The Future Conference prior to the Lyon Assembly re-emphasised the need for a pan-European instrument and mechanism of churches for mediation among churches, for mediation in conflicts with a religious dimension and in society. This mechanism would ideally have a major contribution to peace in Europe but would require strong commitment of CEC member churches and notable staff resources.

Recent developments, such as violent conflicts among and within states, the participation of European troops in peace keeping and peace enforcing missions as well as the proliferation of small arms and the increasing arms trade challenge the churches to continue to reflect theologically on issues related to peace, security and reconciliation as well as to strengthen their common and active engagement in promoting just peace, reconciliation and non-violent means of conflict management.

The preferential option for non-violence is the yardstick by which the churches measure the engagement of the European political institutions in terms of conflict prevention and crises management. Over the last years the EU has proceeded apace in developing its Common Foreign and Security Policy. Whereas EU crisis management is largely of a civilian nature, more commitment to conflict prevention is needed.

*Objectives:*

- to reflect from a theological perspective on the concept of non-violence and its implications, including, for instance, issues related to the relation between security and vulnerability, just peace, and the preferential option for non-violence.
- to strengthen the common reflection and action of European churches on issues related to peace, security and reconciliation, such as the arms trade and the proliferation of small arms and nuclear weapons
- to support churches and church-related networks engaged in peace-building and reconciliation
- to monitor and lobby the European and global political institutions with the aim to increase their non-military capacity for conflict prevention and conflict management



## 9. Education: Promoting shared values

The European institutions have a supportive competence in the field of education. Any of the institutions to which CSC relates is engaged in providing a platform for reflecting on education in Europe. Education is recognised as one of the most important means for promoting shared values, intercultural dialogue and an active European citizenship. It concerns all areas of life and is seen as a life-long learning process, including formal as well as non-formal/informal education.

The Council of Europe has just chosen education as the topic for the dialogue with religious communities in the framework of the inter-cultural dialogue. According to the Council of Europe teaching of religious and convictional facts is a relevant part of primary and secondary school education in order to avoid prejudice against religions and beliefs. EU is providing a number of exchange programmes like Erasmus, Sokrates and Grundtvig. Religion, however, is hardly, if at all mentioned in these programmes.

Churches are important stakeholders in this area as they are engaged in the formal and non-formal sector of education. It is an area in which CSC is closely co-operating with church-related partner organisations engaged in education as well as with the Churches in Dialogue Commission. The most recent CSC plenary re-emphasised the need to bring the common voice of the churches to the political institutions, accompanying the reflection process and the establishment of programmes in the institutions. A particular emphasis in this should be laid on religious education as a means for developing people's identity and for promoting an active European citizenship. Special attention should be given to the churches' role in the teaching of religious and convictional facts in public schools.

### *Objectives:*

- to offer a platform for churches and church-related organisations to reflect in view of the programmes of the European institutions on the role of the churches in promoting education in the field of inter-cultural dialogue and active European citizenship.
- to bring the common voice of churches and church-related organisations through effective instruments to the European institutions as they reflect and develop programmes on education.
- to promote the recognition of churches as important stakeholders in the field of formal and non-formal education in the European institutions.



## **10. Intercultural and Inter-Religious Dialogue: Promoting tolerance and non-discrimination**

Inter-religious dialogue has always been an important dimension of CSC's work. As a follow-up to the "Soul of Europe" initiative, which finished its activities in 2005, CSC has sought cooperation with other faiths in relation to the agenda of the European institutions. This is an area where CSC cooperates closely with the CEC/CCEE Committee for Relations with Muslims in Europe and with COMECE.

In recent years intercultural dialogue has found the increased interest of European institutions. Inter-religious dialogue is treated as one central aspects of intercultural dialogue aiming at promoting tolerance, non-discrimination, social coherence, peace and reconciliation. The Council of Europe's White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, adopted in May 2008, as well as the initiatives launched by the European Year on Intercultural Dialogue 2008 have provided important points of entry for the churches in the work with the institutions. This challenges the churches to reflect among themselves on the relationship between inter-religious and intercultural dialogue in the programmes of the institutions and what role they want to play in it.

### *Objectives:*

- to provide a platform for churches to reflect on the concept and best practices of intercultural dialogue and to share experiences;
- to continue to be a critical partner of the European institutions for activities in the field of intercultural dialogue including the implementation of the Council of Europe's White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue and the follow-up of the (EU) European Year for Intercultural Dialogue 2008;
- to foster inter-religious dialogue in view of the European institutions' agenda;
- to engage with churches in cities in relation to the joint EU – Council of Europe project on "Intercultural Cities". Strategies to meet the challenges of cultural diversity are about to be developed in collaboration with pilot cities;
- to offer a platform of exchange for churches involved in the EU programmes of the European Cultural Capitals.



## **One hope and ever new challenges**

The work programme to be adopted by the Assembly in Lyon will be the basis for the CSC's work in the forthcoming six years. Past experiences show that such a work programme must remain sufficiently flexible to be able to react to new challenges arising in the churches, in society and in the political institutions. The long drawn out and very demanding process of developing a Constitutional Treaty of the EU, superseded by the Lisbon Treaty, is a typical case in point. This process could not be foreseen when the last work programme for CSC was established.

"Called to one hope in Christ" means to contribute to the European integration process from a Christian perspective. The new work programme for CSC shall allow CEC's member churches and associated organisations to do this together in an ever-changing context.

Brussels and Strasbourg, November 2008