

**World Communion of Reformed Churches
Executive Committee**

7-16 May 2013
Dodowa, North Accra, Ghana

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Thanks go to Páraic Réamonn, recording secretary, and all the recorders of the various group meetings, as well as to Ida Milli, Viktória Kóczyán and Frans du Plessis for their able assistance.

Kristine Greenaway, Executive Secretary for Communications

PARTICIPANTS

President

Jerry Pillay (Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa; South Africa)

Vice-Presidents

Helis Hernán Barraza Díaz (Presbyterian Church of Colombia; Colombia)

Yvette Noble Bloomfield (United Church in Jamaica & the Cayman Islands; Jamaica)

Yueh-Wen Lu (Presbyterian Church in Taiwan; Taiwan)

Bas Plaisier (Protestant Church in the Netherlands; Hong Kong, China)

Treasurer

Johann Weusmann (Evangelical Reformed Church; Germany)

Members of the Executive Committee

Lydia Adajawah (Evangelical Presbyterian Church; Ghana)

Brenda Bullock (Presbyterian Church in Trinidad and Tobago; Trinidad)

Peter Borgdorff (Christian Reformed Church in North America; USA)

Allan Buckingham (United Church of Canada; Canada)

Peter Bukowski (Reformed Alliance; Germany)

Mary Fontaine (Presbyterian Church in Canada; Canada)

Yoshimitsu Fujimori (Church of Christ in Japan; Japan)

Yael Eka Hadiputeri (Indonesian Christian Church; Indonesia)

Kobus Gerber (Dutch Reformed Church; South Africa)

Jan-Gerd Heetderks (Protestant Church in the Netherlands; The Netherlands)

Najla Kassab (National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon; Lebanon)

Clifton Kirkpatrick (Presbyterian Church (USA); USA)

Subha Singh Majaw (Presbyterian Church of India; India)

Cheryl Meban (Presbyterian Church in Ireland; United Kingdom)

Cheh Liang Mok (Presbyterian Church in Malaysia; Malaysia)

Allen Nafuki (Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu; Vanuatu)

Veronica Njoki Muchiri (Presbyterian Church of East Africa; Kenya)

Gabriela Lucía Mulder (Reformed Churches in Argentina; Argentina)

Elisée Musemakweli (Presbyterian Church in Rwanda; Rwanda)

Gradye Parsons (Presbyterian Church (USA); USA)

Carola Tron Urban (Waldensian Evangelical Church of the River Plate; Uruguay)

Salome Twum Ofori Danquah (Presbyterian Church of Ghana; Ghana)

Advisors

Robyn Ellen Goodwin (Australia)

Yong-Kyu Kang (Korea (Republic))

William T. Koopmans (Canada)

Stephen Kendall (Canada)

Representatives of sister organizations

Collin Cowan (CWM; Jamaica)

Cyril Ritchie (IJKRC; Switzerland)

Executive Committee 2013

Speakers

Collin Cowan
Cliff Kirkpatrick
Veronica Muchiri

WCRC Staff

Setri Nyomi, General Secretary
Dora Arce-Valentín
Yueh Cho
Kristine Greenaway
Stephens Lytch
Ida Milli
Páiraic Réamonn
Douwe Visser

Interpreters

Lawrence Selikem
Charles Adjanohoun

Recorder

Páiraic Réamonn

Absent with apologies

Clayton Leal da Silva (Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil; Brazil)
Mark Koenig (WCRC and PCUSA UN Liaisons)
Ryan Smith (WCRC and PCUSA UN Liaisons)

Representatives of Host Churches

Seth Agidi (Evangelical Presbyterian Church; Ghana)
Solomon Sule Saa (Presbyterian Church; Ghana)

Stewards

Nana Esi Acquah
William Acquah
Gifty Lebenam Amekuedi
Bertha Adwoa Asamoah
Jonas Bensah
Benedict Gasu
Sherrita Obema Nartey
Emmanuel Kwame Tettey

Visitors

Sylvia Bukowski (Germany)
Hilde Seal (Canada)
Henny Plaisier-Wendt (Hong Kong, China)

CORE GROUPS¹

THEOLOGY, MISSION AND COMMUNION

Moderator: Bas Plaisier

Peter Bukowski

Brenda Bullock

Yael Eka Hadiputeri

Kobus Gerber

Najla Kassab

William T. Koopmans

Elisée Musemakweli

Gradye Parsons

Carola Tron Urban

Staff: *Douwe Visser*

JUSTICE AND PARTNERSHIP

Co-moderators: Helis Hernán Barraza Díaz and Yueh-Wen Lu

Lydia Adajawah

Mary Fontaine

Robyn Ellen Goodwin

Jan-Gerd Heetderks

Clifton Kirkpatrick

Veronica Njoki Muchiri

Subha Singh Majaw

Gabriela Lucía Mulder

Johann Weusmann

Staff: *Dora Arce-Valentín*

COMMUNICATION

Moderator: Yvette Noble Bloomfield

Peter Borgdorff

Allan Buckingham

Yoshimitsu Fujimori

Yong-Kyu Kang

Stephens Lytch

Cheryl Meban

Cheh Liang Mok

Allen Nafuki

Salome Twum Ofori Danquah

Staff: *Kristine Greenaway*

¹ The President and General Secretary may attend any core group and are *ex-officio* members of all committees.

COMMITTEES

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Moderator: Johann Weusmann
Stephen Kendall
Clifton Kirkpatrick
Yueh-Wen Lu
Stephens Lytch
Cheh Liang Mok
Veronica Njoki Muchiri
Staff: *Yueh Cho*

CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Moderator: Cheryl Meban
Lydia Adajawah
Peter Borgdorff
Gradye Parsons
Allen Nafuki
Carola Tron Urban
President
General Secretary
Staff: *Setri Nyomi*

PARTNERSHIP FUND COMMITTEE

Moderator: Kobus Gerber
Najla Kassab
Subha Singh Majaw
Bas Plaisier
Salome Twum Ofori Danquah
Staff: *Douwe Visser and Páraic Réamonn*

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Moderator: *Jerry Pillay*
Helis Hernán Barraza Díaz
Yvette Noble Bloomfield
Yueh-Wen Lu
Bas Plaisier
Johann Weusmann
Staff: *Setri Nyomi*

WCRC ENDOWMENT FUND TRUSTEES

Co-Moderators: *Peter Borgdorff and Clifton Kirkpatrick*
Allan Buckingham
Brenda Bullock
Jane Douglass (by email)
Mary Fontaine
Stephen Kendall
William T. Koopmans
Stephens Lytch (president)
Gradye Parsons
Staff: *Kristine Greenaway*

TIMETABLE

Theme: *WCRC's Ecumenical Vision: Quo Imus?*

Tuesday, May 7, 2013

08.30 – 13.00	Pilgrimage to the Elmina castle
Before 08.00	Breakfast
08h00 – 08h30	Transfer to Elmina
08h30 – 09h00	Brief Service in the forecourt of Elmina Castle
09h00 – 11h00	Journey through the dungeons
11h00 – 12h00	Programme (Main Speaker – Collin Cowan)
12h00 – 13h00	Lunch in Cape Coast
13h30	Departure for the immersion sites, and officers/staff for Dodowa
14.00 – 18.00	Travel from Elmina to venues for Immersion visits. Officers travel to Dodowa
17h30 – 21h00	Group A: Visiting the Congregation of the Presbyterian Women's Training Centre, Abokobi.
17h30 – 21h00	Group B: Visiting the Congregation of the Madina E. P. Church

Wednesday, May 8, 2013

Immersion programme:

08h00 – 08h30	Welcome and Morning devotion – led by the director
08h30 – 10h00	Gender justice issues in the PCG
10h00 – 10h30	Snack Break
10h30 – 12.00	Climate Justice work in the EPC
12.00 – 13.00	Lunch
13h00	Depart for Dodowa and check-in at the Forest Hotel

Officers:

08.30 – 10.00	Officer's meeting, session 1
10:00 – 10.30	Snack break
10.30 – 12.30	Officers meeting, session 2
12.30 – 14.00	Lunch break
17.30 – 18.45	Opening Worship for the Executive Committee Meeting
19.00 ff	Dinner break and free evening

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Ascension Day

08.00 – 08.45	Ascension Day Service
08.45 – 10.00	Plenary: Opening actions, President's address and discussion, fraternal greetings
10:00 – 10.30	Snack break
10.30 – 12.30	Plenary: General Secretary's report (including programme and finance updates)
12.30 – 14.00	Lunch break
14.00 – 16.00	Plenary: Fund development challenges and directions

Executive Committee 2013

16:00 – 16.30	Snack break
16.30 – 18.00	Plenary: Regional Council reports, UN Office Report, John Knox Centre Report
18.00 – 19.00	Dinner break
19.00 – 21.00	Plenary: General Secretary Search Relocation and related issues

Friday, May 10, 2013

08.30 – 09.00	Morning Worship
09.00 – 10.30	Core Groups
10.30 – 11.00	Snack break
11.00 – 12.30	Core Groups
12.30 – 14.30	Lunch break
14.30 – 16.00	Committee meetings
16.00 – 16.30	Snack break
16.30 – 18.00	Committee meetings
18.00 – 19.00	Dinner break
19.00 – 21.00	Regional meetings in the evening, prayers in the regions

Saturday, May 11, 2013

08.30 – 09.00	Morning Worship
09.00 – 10.30	Core Groups
10.30 – 11.00	Snack break
11.00 – 12.30	Core Groups
12.30 – 14.30	Lunch break
14.30 – 16.00	Committee meetings
16.00 – 16.30	Snack break
16.30 – 18.00	Regional meetings (focus - Fund development) in the evening, prayers in the regions
18.00 – 19.00	Dinner break
19.00 – 21.00	Free evening

Sunday, May 12, 2013

Morning	Worship in various congregations Lunch and visits with the congregations
15.00 – 18.00	Personnel Committee meeting
16.00 – 16.30	Snack break (for Personnel Committee and North America Trustees)
16.30 – 18.00	North America Trustees' meeting
18.00 – 19.00	Dinner break
19.45 – 21.00	Provision for officers meeting Provision for North America Trustees meeting

Monday, May 13, 2013

08.30 – 09.00	Morning Worship
09.00 – 10.30	Process of electing the new General Secretary (Closed Session)

10.30 – 11.00	Snack break
11.00 – 12.30	Committee final meetings to finalize report
12.30 – 14.30	Lunch break
14.30 – 16.00	Core Groups final meeting to finalize report
16.00 – 16.30	Snack break
16.30 – 18.00	Plenary: The Mission and Challenges of Ghanaian Churches
18.00 – 21.00	Ghana evening – Meal and entertainment

Tuesday, May 14, 2013

08.30 – 09.00	Morning Worship
09.00 – 10.00	Theme plenary
10.00 – 10.30	Plenary: Reports from Committees
10.30 – 11.00	Snack break
11.00 – 13.00	Plenary: Reports from Committees Report from the Ad hoc group on General Secretary election
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch break (Personnel Committee Meeting)
14.00 – 16.00	Plenary: Reports from Core Groups/Committees
16.00 – 16.30	Snack break
16.30 – 18.15	Plenary: Reports from Core Groups/Committees
18.15 – 19:15	Dinner
19:15 – 20.45	Plenary: Reports from Core Groups/Committees
21.00 – 22.00	Farewell get Together for departing staff

Wednesday, May 15, 2013

08.30 – 09.00	Morning Worship
09.00 – 10.00	Plenary: Reports from Core Groups
10.00 – 10.30	Snack break
10.30 – 11.15	Meeting of the WCRC Michigan Corporation
11.15 – 16.00	Afternoon free
17.30 – 19.00	Closing Worship (with communion)
19.00 –	Dinner break

Thursday, May 16, 2013

Morning	Visit to the President of the republic of Ghana by a delegation of the Executive Committee
All day	Departures

Actions of the Executive Committee 2013

The Executive Committee

1. approved the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting in Berastagi, North Sumatra, Indonesia, 10-17 May 2012.
2. received the address of the President (*Document 1*).
3. received the report of the General Secretary (*Document 2*).

Regional councils

4. received the report of the African Communion of Reformed Churches, ACRC (*Document 8.1*).
5. received the report of the Alliance of Reformed Churches in Latin America, AIPRAL (*Document 8.2*).
6. received the report of the South Asia region (*Document 8.5*).
7. received the report of the Northeast Asia Area Council, NEAAC (*Document 8.4*).
8. received the report of the Caribbean and North American Area Council, CANAAC (*Document 8.3*).
9. received the report of WCRC-Europe (*Document 8.6*).

Related institutions

10. received a statement from Cyril Ritchie, President of the John Knox International Reformed Centre (*Document 9.1*).
11. received a report from the Presbyterian Ministry at the UN (*Document 9.2*).

General Secretary search

12. received the report of the General Secretary search committee (*Document 10*) and thanked the committee for its work.
13. appointed Yvette Noble-Bloomfield to convene a committee of the Officers together with Peter Borgdorff and Robyn Godwin (members of the Search Committee) to design a further search process and to receive suggestions of possible candidates from the Executive Committee; any Executive Committee member wishing to propose a suitable candidate should submit the name to either Peter Borgdorff or Robyn Goodwin by Saturday 11 May 2013.
14. appointed Yvette Noble Bloomfield (convener), Peter Borgdorff, Robyn Goodwin, Clifton Kirkpatrick and Veronica Muchiri as an ad-hoc discernment committee in the search for a new General Secretary to report to the Officers, for reporting onward to the Executive Committee in its current meeting.
15. as a result of this process of discernment, called Jerry Pillay to the position of General Secretary, requesting him to respond to the call no later than 31 July 2013.

Relocation of the operational office

16. received the report on the relocation of the WCRC operational office from Geneva to Hanover (*Document 11*) and approved the timeline set out in section A.

Theology, Mission and Communion

17. received the report of the Theology, Mission and Communion Core Group (*Document 12*).
18. supported plans to hold a Global Institute of Theology (GIT) in Latin America.
19. depending upon availability of staff and assistance to the staff, encouraged wider and more vibrant connections with the work of the Network of Theologians.
20. agreed to include the publication of *Reformed World* in the core budget for 2014.
21. acknowledged that as a consequence of relocation it will not be possible to maintain the present level of involvement of the Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion with the John Knox Committee and Programme Commission.
22. took appreciative note of the importance of the various ongoing dialogues that constitute a significant part of our theological engagement.
23. approved the following to represent WCRC in the new round of Reformed-Pentecostal Dialogue: Setri Nyomi, Bas Plaisier, Nadia Marais, Gabrielle Rácsok, Karla Ann Koll, Carmelo Alvarez, Anna Donata Quaas, Douwe Visser.
24. affirmed its support for the mission consultation planned for November 2013, with a tentative location in Oman.
25. approved continued involvement in Network of African Congregational Theology (NetAct).
26. encouraged the Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion and the General Secretary to continue to advance their work with the various regions to focus especially on mission dynamics relevant to the regions' situations.
27. expressed appreciation to Douwe Visser for his excellent work as Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion, especially in the context of many extraneous circumstances and demands pertaining to relocation.

Justice and Partnership

28. received the report of the Justice and Partnership Core Group (*Document 13*).
29. approved the content of the attached chart (*Document 13.1*) approved as the priorities for Justice and Partnership programmes, 2013-2015.
30. added Daphne Martin Gnanadason (India) and Peter Cruchley-Jones (Wales, UK) to the Gender Justice network and Tom Milligan (PCUSA) to the network of Covenanting for Justice and Economy.

31. agreed that the Core Group review the entire membership of the two networks at the Executive Committee meeting in 2014.
32. expressed appreciation to Dora Arce Valentín for her excellent work as Executive Secretary for Justice and Partnership.

Communications

33. received the report of the Communications Core Group (*Document 14*).
34. agreed to maintain the current funding of Ecumenical News International (ENI) and provide organizational support, including the assignation of responsibility to the Executive Secretary for Communications to support ENI and the management and financial support for attendance of Executive Secretary for Communications plus two WCRC representatives to ENI (one of whom would serve as an officer to ENI's Board).
35. accepted the Memorandum of Understanding regarding archives between WCRC and the WCC, including an ongoing commitment of CHF3,000, and agreed that CHF5,000 be made available from the relocation costs to provide for appropriate preparation of physical documents for removal and archiving.
36. accepted the new budget items for the Office of Communications detailed in the appendix (*Document 14.1*) and referred these to the Finance Committee and the Officers in their budget review.
37. placed on record profound gratitude and deep appreciation to Kristine Greenaway, the current Executive Secretary for Communications, who would demit office on 31 August 2013.

Constitution and Membership

38. received the report of the Constitution and Membership Committee (*Document 15*).
39. approved the changes to the AIPRAL bylaws.
40. gave interim approval to the Indonesia Regional Council and its bylaws, referring full approval to the General Council in 2017; and ratified the appointment of Arliyanus Larosa as secretary, and Olvi Prihutani as treasurer, of the council.
41. accepted into WCRC membership the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Africa (Uganda), the *Evangelisch-altreformierte Kirche in Niedersachsen* (Evangelical Old-Reformed Church in Lower Saxony, Germany), and the Sudanese Reformed Churches (Sudan/South Sudan).
42. accepted into WCRC membership the Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (ECO), subject to engagement in constructive conversation with Executive Committee members Yvette Noble Bloomfield and Peter Borgdorff, leading to a satisfactory conclusion; and approved the attached letter to ECO (*Document 15.1*).
43. asked the Constitution and Membership Committee to propose a mentoring programme for new members.

Executive Committee 2013

44. agreed that, where appropriate, all correspondence between the operational office and individual churches be copied to the Executive Committee member assigned to that church.
45. accepted the withdrawal from WCRC membership of the Christian Reformed Church in Australia, the Protestant Church of Reunion Island, and the Presbyterian Church of Argentina; and authorized the committee convenor to work with appropriate Executive Committee members to communicate our sorrow at their withdrawal and encourage them to stay in relationship with WCRC churches in their region.
46. recognized the *Unida Ecumenical de Cristo* in the Philippines as the continuing member of WCRC.
47. agreed that (a) those churches in default on the membership contributions that have not responded to any efforts to communicate with them and (b) those churches that have promised to make a payment and do not do so by 1 January 2014 shall have the full privileges of membership withdrawn and be placed on the inactive list as of 1 January 2014.
48. agreed that the committee convenor, the president of the relevant regional council (where appropriate) and the General Secretary approve any exceptions, for any church, to the approved dues structures.
49. amended the bylaws by adding:
"IV – Operational Offices
1. In addition to its registered office, the World Communion of Reformed Churches shall have its operational office in Hanover, Germany."

Finance Committee

50. received the report of the Finance Committee (*Document 16*).
51. adopted the 2012 audited statements.
52. accepted the offer of the Leer Church for financial coordination services from January 2014, under the authority of the General Secretary; and agreed to engage a half-time book-keeper for the WCRC office in Hanover.
53. agreed that the €200,000 grant offered by the United Churches in Germany be used for relocation expenses.
54. agreed to defer action on recommendation 7, 2012 (review by EKD High Audit Office, *Executive Committee Minutes 2012*, pp. 206f.), with a progress report to the Executive Committee in 2014 and a full report in 2015.
55. authorized the transfer of all WCRC funds, net of any eventual additional liabilities, to the new WCRC German entity.
56. appointed the *Compagnie fiduciaire de révision SA* as auditors for the 2013 WCRC accounts
57. provisionally adopted the general budget provisions, effective January 2014, and the WCRC procurement policy and WCRC

expenses policy, effective May 2013, both provisions and policies to be fully adopted in May 2014.

58. approved the 2014 budget, subject to adjustment in October 2013; and authorized the Officers to adjust the 2014 budget, if necessary, in consultation with the Finance Committee.
59. agreed that the grid for member church contributions would continue to be used in the manner approved in 2012.
60. affirmed the importance of a wide variety of fund-development efforts, including those of the North American trustees of the WCRC Endowment Fund.

Partnership Fund

61. received the report of the Partnership Fund Committee (*Document 17*), approved the direction taken by the Partnership Fund in relation to A funding, and asked the Partnership Fund staff to continue discussions with *Brot für die Welt*.
62. thanked Douwe Visser, Antoinette Berkouwer, and Páraic Réamonn for their hard work.

Personnel Committee

63. received the report of the Personnel Committee (*Document 18*).
64. affirmed the arrangements for personnel in the transition from Geneva to Hanover.
65. with gratitude to the Evangelical Reformed Church in Leer, agreed to appoint Gerhard Plenter as the WCRC Finance Officer.
66. regretted that, due to financial constraints, it was not able to continue the position of Fund Development Director; and expressed gratitude to Stephens Lytch for his services to WCRC.
67. named the following search committee for a new Executive Secretary for Communications, to take office by 1 January 2014: Yvette Noble Bloomfield (convener), Jan Gerd Heetderks, Cheryl Meban, the current General Secretary, and the General Secretary-elect; and instructed the moderator of the Communications Core Group and the General Secretary to find a good interim solution to cover the work that needs to be done from September to December 2013.
68. requested the search committee to review the job description of the Executive Secretary for Communications in the light of emerging trends and needs.
69. adopted the WCRC Personnel Practices and Policies.
70. approved the following transitional arrangements for the Finance Office:
 - a. have the current Finance Coordinator do a thorough closing of the third-quarter accounts (YTD September 2013) by the end of October 2013 and have it reviewed by the Finance Committee and officers.

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- b. appoint Antex International, which currently runs our payroll services and has the capacity to provide accounting services, for the following purposes:
 - Antex International shall work with the current Finance Coordinator from October to December in order to understand our system and be in a position to prepare for and bring the 2013 accounts to a final audit in an efficient and timely manner.
 - Antex International shall present our 2013 Geneva accounts to the auditors and see the auditing through by the end of March 2014.
 - Thereafter, and until the last WCRC Geneva-based payroll obligations are completed, Antex International shall be responsible for coordinating a scaled-down version of the Geneva accounts and, if necessary, bring them to a final audit.

Officers

71. received the Officers' report (*Document 19*).
72. agreed that
 - a. the departure of the operating office from Geneva be marked symbolically with a farewell service and reception on 11 December 2013.
 - b. a service of welcome be organized in Hanover on 12 January 2014.
 - c. representatives of WCRC member churches in Switzerland and Germany be invited to both events.
 - d. the General Secretary and General Treasurer consult with a small group in Germany in planning the service in Hanover.
73. authorized the General Secretary to coordinate a process in which necessary research can be conducted leading to the proposal of a possible venue or venues for the 26th General Council and possibilities for a theme can be proposed.
 - a. This may include indicating to WCRC member churches that they could invite the next General Council.
 - b. In this process, the long-standing WCRC commitment to organize a joint General Council/Assembly with the Lutheran World Federation should be a major consideration.
 - c. This consideration should be such that WCRC and the LWF should come in as equal partners, especially in choosing a theme and planning the content of the parts of the joint General Council/Assembly that they will do together.
 - d. The General Secretary should work with his LWF counterpart in exploring this possibility of a joint General Council/Assembly, recognizing that the LWF Council meeting in June 2013 will already be taking some decisions regarding the next LWF Assembly.
 - e. A letter should go from the WCRC Executive Committee to the LWF on this subject.

- f. If the idea of holding a joint General Council/Assembly should prevail, then WCRC would propose the creation of a joint assembly committee, or a joint and well-coordinated planning process.
- 74. authorized the Officers to provide policy oversight for this process, which includes receiving reports from the General Secretary and processing them for the next Executive Committee.
 - a. In May 2014, the Officers should bring a report with appropriate recommendations that will begin the process of full discussion of all aspects of the 26th General Council.
- 75. approved in principle the dates 10-18 May 2014 for the next meeting of the Executive Committee and supported the direction of shorter meetings, with optional immersion visits beforehand.
- 76. agreed that should the President accept the call to become General Secretary, he would be replaced as President by one of the current Vice-Presidents, Yvette Noble Bloomfield; and that should it be necessary to appoint a new Vice-President at the next meeting of the Executive Committee, a three-person committee would be appointed to propose a name.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE WCRC MICHIGAN FOUNDATION

The Executive Committee

WCRC-MF 1. agreed that the actions of the WCRC Executive Committee during its meeting in Dodowa, Ghana, 7-15 May 2013, be fully concurred in and entered into the permanent record of the WCRC Michigan Foundation.

NARRATIVE RECORD¹
of the meeting of the Executive Committee
Dodowa, Ghana, 7-15 May 2013

TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY 7-8 MAY

The meeting of the Executive Committee of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) was preceded by a pilgrimage to Elmina Slave Castle and immersion visits to the two WCRC member churches in Ghana, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana, and the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. On Wednesday evening the meeting was formally opened with worship hosted by the Emmanuel Congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in Madina.

THURSDAY 9 MAY

Plenary session 1: Thursday morning

The General Secretary called the roll and confirmed there was a quorum. Apologies for absence were received from Clayton Leal da Silva, who was recuperating from knee surgery. Changes to the timetable were approved.

It was duly moved and agreed to approve the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting in Berastagi, North Sumatra, Indonesia, 10-17 May 2012. **Action 1**

Address of the President

The President presented his address (*Document 1*). Discussion followed on grace and discipline, unity and diversity, doctrine and spiritual gifts, competition and communion, institutions and relational ways of being.

Peter Bukowski said that students in his seminary were interested in ecumenical relationships and partnerships but not in ecumenical structures. The Barmen declaration was rooted in the experience of Lutheran and Reformed Christians going to jail together. Cliff Kirkpatrick said his students would read the central section of the address as a statement of the ecumenical vision today. The address was received. **Action 2**

¹ The Narrative Record is the report of the proceedings in chronological order. Actions are not necessarily in numerical order. They can be found in numerical order in the Actions of the Executive Committee, above.

Greetings from CWM

Collin Cowan, general secretary, brought greetings from the Council for World Mission (CWM). He noted that CWM was committed to cooperating programmatically with WCRC: together in partnership, they could have a much more meaningful impact on the world. He wished WCRC well in the move to Hanover, adding that from CWM's experience, there would be many surprises.

He closed with a tribute to Setri Nyomi in his final year in office: CWM appreciated his help as it struggled with challenges and his support in exploring the cause of mission.

Report of the General Secretary

The General Secretary presented his report (*Document 2*), assisted by Douwe Visser, Dora Arce-Valentín and Kristine Greenaway.

In response to a question on the São Paulo conference on a new international financial and economic architecture, the General Secretary reminded the committee that this was a WCRC initiative mandated by the Uniting General Council.

The statement resulting from the conference, *International Financial Transformation for the Economy of Life*, was drafted by the 64 participants for and on behalf of the sponsoring organizations and would serve as a resource for the high-profile panel that would now be formed and would most likely have its first meeting in August 2013.

Mary Fontaine and Cheh Liang Mok stressed the importance of Indigenous input into all WCRC work on covenanting for justice in the economy and the earth. In Malaysia, as in many other countries, native land rights were not recognized.

In response to a question from Lydia Adajawah, Douwe Visser said that WCRC would be working hard to bring the Global Institute of Theology (GIT) scheduled for 2014 to the attention of member churches. It was announced that two alumni from the GIT in 2010 would graduate this year and co-pastor a congregation in Alberta, Canada.

The whole staff was thanked for its work, and the report of the General Secretary was received.

Action 3

Plenary session 2: Thursday afternoon

Fund development challenges and directions

Stephens Lytch made a PowerPoint presentation on where WCRC was going with fundraising. Strenuous efforts had balanced the budget in 2012 and put us on course to do the same in 2013; but the underlying problems were yet to be resolved.

Member church contributions – in 2009, roughly one million Swiss francs - were our main source of income. In real terms, these had dropped in the past decade by 30%, due to declines in some church memberships, the strength of the Swiss franc, and the global economic crisis. Looking to churches, both North and South, to resolve the shortfall would only make a small dent (14%) in this drop in the value of contributions.

He asked, if increased member contributions by themselves are not a solution, then what is?

It was possible to argue, he said, that since WCRC is an organization based on membership, we should operate only at the level our members are willing to support – and reduce our work accordingly. But that is not how we understand ourselves. We are a global Communion, with a global calling, and our financial survival should not be dependent on the strength or weakness of a small number of churches in the Global North. This is one of the reasons why the Executive Committee in 2012 decided to get seriously into fundraising.

He noted concerns. Any time we talk about money, we are confronted with questions of power, justice and equality. That Jesus has so much to say about how we relate to money indicates how fraught with ethical implications our relationship with money is. Why should we accumulate money if we claim to live by faith? How do we resist having money steer our mission? How do we avoid the temptation to favour those with money? How can we accumulate money in a way that is consistent with our identity and values?

A proper perspective on fundraising, he suggested, tells us that it is not begging, nor is it a necessary evil. Fundraising is about inviting others into an exciting mission. In faith-based organizations, fundraising is ministry.

The Executive Committee broke into small groups to discuss three questions:

- How can WCRC engage in fundraising in a way that is faithful to our identity as a Communion that works for justice?

- Why is WCRC so important to you that you are willing to invest so much time and energy to serve on the Executive Committee?
- What is WCRC's case for support? Why should someone in your region give to WCRC?

Statement from the John Knox International Reformed Centre

Cyril Ritchie, president of the John Knox International Reformed Centre (JKIRC) in Geneva, brought greetings and made a statement on behalf of the centre, which had had a long and cordial relationship with WCRC and its predecessor WARC (*Document 9.1*). It had established and maintained mutual relations of consultation and confidence with the Officers, the General Secretary and the staff ever since the then United Presbyterian Church in the USA possible for the Foyer John Knox to open its doors 60 years ago. He informed the Executive Committee that the centre was mounting a series of public events to commemorate this 60th anniversary, to which committee members were warmly invited.

In 2009, he reminded the committee, Douwe Visser took the leadership of the Programme Commission, organizing two very successful seminars in 2011 and in 2012. With the move to Hanover, this would stop; and the centre was concerned that it would not in future benefit from the quasi-automatic participation of WCRC staff in its assemblies and conferences.

The JKIRC would look forward, not back, and would seek every opportunity to interact fruitfully with the new WCRC office in Hanover.

The statement was welcomed and received.

Action 10

Regional Councils

Lydia Adajawah presented the report of the African Communion of Reformed Churches, ACRC (*Document 8.1*). In response to a question about Christian-Muslim relations, she said that problems in relationship were restricted to particular areas. ACRC had focused on these in Nigeria, for example. The Executive Committee received the report.

Action 4

Gabriella Mulder presented the report of the Alliance of Reformed Churches in Latin America, AIPRAL (*Document 8.2*). The Executive Committee received the report.

Action 5

Subha Singh Majaw presented the report of the South Asia region (*Document 8.3*), with a request for full recognition. The Executive Committee received the report.

Action 6

Executive Committee 2013

Yoshimitsu Fujimori presented the report of the North-East Asia Area Council and responded to questions about changes to the bylaws and the status of two churches in Korea and one in Japan. The Executive Committee received the report. **Action 7**

Brenda Bullock reported verbally on the Caribbean and North American Area Council, CANAAC, since the written report was not yet available. The Executive Committee received the report (*Document 8.5*) in anticipation. **Action 8**

Jan-Gerd Heetderks presented the report of WCRC-Europe (*Document 8.6*), expressing regret that there wasn't more time for regional reports, given the importance attached to the regions. The Executive Committee received the report. **Action 9**

UN Ministry

The General Secretary presented the report of the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations (*Document 9.2*). The ministry represents both the Presbyterian Church (USA) and WCRC at the UN.

Cheh Liang Mok asked if individual WCRC member churches could use this ministry to bring a concern. The General Secretary said that the office would be happy to work with member churches, but they were only two people. Individual church requests should be run through WCRC. Gradye Parsons confirmed that, in the interests of efficiency, this would be the PCUSA preference.

Peter Bukowski pointed out that member churches in Germany might find a lack of balance in paragraphs 14 and 15 (on Palestine). Cliff Kirkpatrick responded that this would be a good conversation to have with Mark Koenig. The office was committed to reflecting the policy positions of the PCUSA and WCRC.

In response to a question from Stephen Kendall about cooperation on the rights of Indigenous peoples, the General Secretary referred to paragraph 32.

On behalf of her fellow Kenyans, Veronica thanked the Executive Committee for prayerful support during the whole contested electoral process. Having peaceful elections in Kenya was seen as a miracle from God.

The report was received. **Action 11**

Plenary session 3: Thursday evening

General Secretary search committee

Yvette Noble Bloomfield presented the report of the search committee (*Document 10*) and the response of the Officers. The Executive Committee received the report and thanked the search committee for its work. **Action 12**

Cliff Kirkpatrick commended the search committee for the decision not to nominate and asked if it would not be helpful to have a more active search process, seeking to identify people the committee wished to apply?

Kobus Gerber was concerned about what could be a protracted process. It could easily be the beginning of 2015 before a new General Secretary was installed. He wished to put on the table formally that we move forward more quickly, without doing a bad job.

Peter Bukowski agreed and asked why the Executive Committee shouldn't take time in the meeting to put together some names, leading to a decision perhaps by January?

Yvette Noble Bloomfield suggested that the Executive Committee could ask the Officers and the two members of the search committee who were present to receive such names. Peter Bukowski proposed that Executive Committee members talk among themselves and give names to this group.

This two-way process found a favourable response. It was proposed, seconded and agreed that, in the absence of Sheilagh Kesting, convenor of the search committee, Yvette Noble Bloomfield convene a committee of the Officers together with Peter Borgdorff and Robyn Godwin (members of the search committee) to design a further search process and to receive suggestions of possible candidates from the Executive Committee. Meanwhile, any Executive Committee member wishing to propose the name of a suitable candidate was directed to submit such a name to either Peter Borgdorff or Robyn Goodwin in the course of the next two days. **Action 13**

Relocation of the operational office

The General Secretary presented a report on relocation (*Document 12*). In response to questions from Kobus Gerber and Salome Twum, he confirmed that the timeline would involve running two offices as a temporary measure. Once the transition was over, the Geneva office would have no permanent staff but would be used by the General

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Secretary and Executive Secretaries for a few days several times through the year.

Stephen Kendall asked about the position of Finance Coordinator. The General Secretary said the Evangelical Reformed Church in Germany had offered the services of one of its senior staff, Gerhard Plenter, as WCRC Finance Officer, with administrative assistance in the WCRC office in Hanover. If this offer were accepted, it would mean restructuring the finance coordination. The Personnel Committee would look at the options.

Stephen Kendall asked about the salaries proposed. Johann Weusmann replied that these were based on the salary scales of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD). Staff would not be paid less than the German churches pay, but this would save about CHF200,000 in the budget. There should also be savings on rents and services, but these were hard to quantify in advance.

Jan-Gerd Heetderks queried the need to keep an office in Geneva. The President replied that the advice from Swiss lawyers was that this was currently more consistent with the WCRC constitution. The General Secretary added that keeping the office would help the relationship with the Swiss churches, which were not happy about the move. Carola Tron said her church, which was based in two countries, faced similar questions; we should accept the lawyers' advice.

Allan Buckingham asked whether it was possible to approve the financial details in the document without seeing them in a full budget. It was accordingly agreed to receive the report and to approve the timeline in section A, returning to section B during the report of the Finance Committee. **Action 16**

FRIDAY 10 MAY and SATURDAY 11 MAY

The Executive Committee met in Core Groups and Committees to focus on specific areas and process recommendations for the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee also held regional meetings during these two days.

SUNDAY 12 MAY

The Executive Committee divided into twelve teams to worship in six congregations of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and six congregations of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

MONDAY 13 MAY

Plenary session 4: Monday morning

General Secretary search

The Executive Committee met in closed session to discuss the search for a new General Secretary. They received a report from the ad-hoc committee on the General Secretary search, chaired by Yvette Noble Bloomfield. This included names that had come to the ad-hoc committee as possible candidates. It was decided to find a new General Secretary in the way of calling rather than the way of searching, so that the person called could consider the call and come to a decision about it.

The Executive Committee appointed a new ad-hoc committee to engage in conversations with two of the proposed candidates in a process of discernment and to come back to the Executive Committee with an appropriate recommendation.

The members of the ad-hoc discernment committee in the search for a new General Secretary were:

Peter Borgdorff
Robyn Goodwin
Veronika Muchiri
Clifton Kirkpatrick
Najla Kassab

The Executive Committee requested the Officers to receive the report from the ad-hoc committee and then present it to the Executive Committee. **Action 14**

Core Groups and Committees

At 11:00, Core Groups met to complete their work, and at 14:30 Committees met to complete their work.

Plenary session 5: Monday afternoon

Mission and challenges of WCRC member churches in Ghana

Representatives of the two WCRC member churches in Ghana made presentations on their mission and challenges.

Christianity came to Ghana from Europe; its history is bound up with slavery, colonialism and the struggle for independence. The Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) owes its origins to the Basel Mission (1828); the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC), to the

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Bremen Mission (1847). When German and Swiss missionaries had to leave during the First World War, Scottish missionaries stepped in. Today, the two churches retain links with German churches, Swiss churches, and the Church of Scotland.

In his presentation to the Executive Committee, Kofi Amfo-Akonnor, PCG Director for Church Life and Nurture, focused on evangelism and church growth. Among the challenges this presents, he said, are go-it-alone denominationalism, insufficient research and scientific information, and the need to strategize. The three northern and upper regions of Ghana – with a combined population of just over 4 million, the highest percentage of Muslims (44%) and adherents of traditional religions (29%) and the smallest percentage of Christians (24%) and Presbyterians (less than 1%) – pose a particular challenge. Badly needed are churches, manses, transport and adequate remuneration for church workers.

Many young northerners migrate south in search of work, Amfo-Akonnor added. Over 2 million live in southern Ghana, but differences in language and culture make them hard to reach. Literacy projects and vocational training offer an opportunity to share the word of God. This has led to the creation of congregations where they can hear the gospel in their own languages and play their own musical instruments. “Then we have Operation GoBack – where they go back and evangelize among their own people,” he said.

In his presentation, Seth Agidi, EPC Director for Ecumenical and Social Relations, focused on education, health, development, and work with women and street children. The Evangelical Presbyterian Church Development and Relief Agency (EPDRA) seeks to empower the poor and vulnerable through such practical activities as self-help and microfinance projects; access to safe drinking water; pharmacy projects in rural communities; promoting market access for poor farmers; and improving food security and family nutrition. These form part of a holistic mission strategy. The theme of the EPC General Assembly in 2012 was “Strategic Evangelism for Sustainable Growth and Development”; but spreading the good news is more than evangelism, Agidi said. It is seeking to reflect Christian faith in all aspects of life: economic, social, environmental, educational, even political.

Bas Plasier asked the presenters about the challenge of charismatic and Pentecostal churches.

Amfo-Akonnor said that for decades Presbyterians had resisted change: what the missionaries brought was the norm. Agidi said, “One Pentecostal minister thanked our moderator: we prepare people, and then they poach them. So now we try to poach the elements they

propose as attractive." Two decades ago charismatic worship was one of the reasons of a split in the EPC; but today, there is little difference in liturgy between the two parts, because the whole church has had to adapt.

Allen Nafuki asked how the two churches would distinguish between people believing in God and people believing in spirits. "We need to bring everything under the lordship of Jesus Christ," responded Solomon Sule Saa, PCG Inter-Church Relations Officer. "The traditional African worldview is still there, but it is transformed by the power of Jesus Christ."

In response to a question about church unity, Amfo-Akonnor said that this conversation had already started. The two churches had different origins, but they were the offspring of very similar mission organizations. Their congregations today worked together in local councils of churches and were hard to distinguish. Three years ago the churches began to discuss how they could move together.

Following the presentation by the Ghanaian churches, there was a festive dinner in the Marina Hotel, Dodowa.

TUESDAY 14 MAY

Plenary session 6: Tuesday morning

Partnership Fund

Kobus Gerber presented the report of the Partnership Fund Committee (*Document 17*).

The Executive Committee received the report, approved the direction taken by the Partnership Fund in relation to A funding, and asked the Partnership Fund staff to continue discussions with Brot für die Welt.

Action 61

The Executive Committee thanked Douwe Visser, Antoinette Berkouwer, and Páraic Réamonn for their hard work.

Action 62

Constitution and Membership

Cheryl Meban presented the report of the Constitution and Membership Committee (*Document 15*). The Executive Committee received the report.

Action 38

The Executive Committee approved the changes to the AIPRAL bylaws.

Action 39

Executive Committee 2013

The Executive Committee gave interim approval to the Indonesia Regional Council and its bylaws, referring full approval to the General Council in 2017; and ratified the appointment of Arliyanus Larosa as secretary, and Olvi Pihutani as treasurer, of the council. **Action 40**

The Executive Committee accepted into WCRC membership the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Africa (Uganda), the Evangelisch-altreformierte Kirche in Niedersachsen (Evangelical Old-Reformed Church in Lower Saxony, Germany), and the Sudanese Reformed Churches (Sudan/South Sudan). **Action 41**

A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (ECO) was formed in 2011 and has 38 congregations and 18,084 members. Cheryl Meban reported that the committee had long discussions about welcoming into membership a church that had just split from a member church – the Presbyterian Church (USA).

She explained that the recommendation meant a conditional approval – pending a successful visit and discussions with two members of the Executive Committee. The committee wanted the relationships to be preserved and the difficult conversations to be had.

Jan-Gerd Heetderks objected. A split was a very serious thing: it said that in principle we can't be brothers and sisters any more. We should take division very seriously.

Peter Borgdorff said that this wasn't "your typical kind of split". ECO had gone out of its way to say that it wished to remain as close to the PCUSA and share as closely as possible. There might be some incongruity between splitting and then being members of the same ecumenical organization, but it was better to be at the table of conversation and talk about those things that still divide us.

On a vote on the recommendation, three members of the Executive Committee voted against; Gradye Parsons abstained.

The Executive Committee accepted into WCRC membership the Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (ECO), subject to engagement in constructive conversation with Executive Committee members Yvette Noble Bloomfield and Peter Borgdorff, leading to a satisfactory conclusion; and approved the attached letter to ECO (*Document 15.1*). **Action 42**

Consideration of the remaining recommendations was deferred.

General Secretary search

Bas Plaisier reported on the outcome of the process set in train on Thursday 9 May. The ad-hoc committee had reported their outcomes

to the Officers during the morning tea break. Bas Plaisier chaired the Officers meeting because the President, Jerry Pillay, recused himself from the meeting. On the basis of the report, the Executive Committee reflected and came to the decision recorded here.

Two names had emerged with strong support in the Executive Committee: Jerry Pillay and Douwe Visser. Neither had applied nor asked for the position, but both were excellent candidates. The two were invited to a pastoral conversation with the ad hoc committee for discernment on the General Secretary call.

The Executive Committee decided unanimously to call Jerry Pillay, requesting him to respond to the call before the end of July 2013.

Action 15

Bas Plaisier thanked Douwe Visser for his willingness to be open to this process, knowing there was a risk that he might not be called. Visser had agreed because of his commitment, his love for the ecumenical movement, his love for WCRC.

Douwe Visser thanked those who had confidence in him. Executive Committees came with surprises, and this was very surprising. He had absolutely no feelings of disappointment, maybe even a feeling of relief. He looked forward to working with the new General Secretary.

Bas Plaisier said their choice had settled on Jerry Pillay because of what they saw of him as President. He was eminently qualified. He had an excellent ecumenical vision. His election at the Uniting General Council was a vote of confidence. Becoming General Secretary would allow him to give his whole time to this work, and not be divided by his work with his church and the university, and to streamline the transition in Hanover. The Executive Committee hoped that this calling will be finished with a full "Yes. The Lord is calling me."

Jerry Pillay said that for him WCRC had always been full of surprises. In 2010 he walked into a General Council for the first time and walked out as President. This year he walked into this meeting and walked out with a call to be General Secretary. He was warmed by the things that have been said by him, and by the process. He was glad it turned into a call and was disappointed that he couldn't say straightaway that he accepted. He needed to go back and talk with his family and his church. He was grateful for this period of grace and would try to reply as quickly as possible.

Bas Plaisier closed the session with prayer for Jerry Pillay and Douwe Visser, as well as for WCRC.

Plenary session 7: Tuesday afternoon

Constitution and Membership (continued)

The Executive Committee returned to the report of the Constitution and Membership Committee (*Document 15*).

The Executive Committee asked the Constitution and Membership Committee to propose a mentoring programme for new members.

Action 43

The Executive Committee agreed that, where appropriate, all correspondence between the operational office and individual churches be copied to the Executive Committee member assigned to that church.

Action 44

Peter Borgdorff commented that Executive Committee members who had been assigned to oversee particular groups of churches needed to be kept in the communication circuit.

The Executive Committee agreed accepted the withdrawal from WCRC membership of the Christian Reformed Church in Australia, the Protestant Church of Reunion Island, and the Presbyterian Church of Argentina; and authorized the committee convenor to work with appropriate Executive Committee members to communicate our sorrow at their withdrawal and encourage them to stay in relationship with WCRC churches in their region.

Action 45

The Executive Committee recognized the *Unida Ecumenical de Cristo* in the Philippines as the continuing member of WCRC.

Action 46

The *Unida Evangelical de Cristo* was the original name but the church split over ecumenical engagement. The original signers of the application for membership are in the *Unida Ecumenical*.

The Executive Committee agreed that (a) those churches in default on the membership contributions that have not responded to any efforts to communicate with them and (b) those churches that have promised to make a payment and do not do so by 1 January 2014 shall have the full privileges of membership withdrawn and be placed on the inactive list as of 1 January 2014.

Action 47

The Executive Committee agreed that the committee convenor, the president of the relevant regional council (where appropriate) and the General Secretary approve any exceptions, for any church, to the approved dues structures.

Action 48

The Executive Committee amended the bylaws by adding:

“IV – Operational Offices

1. In addition to its registered office, the World Communion of Reformed Churches shall have its operational office in Hanover, Germany.”

Action 49

Cheryl Meban said the committee had agreed to do more work before 2017 to make sure the constitution and bylaws were even more fit for purpose. It could be argued that it would be preferable to delete all reference to the location of the secretariat.

Finance

Johann Weusmann presented the report of the Finance Committee (*Document 16*), highlighting that for the second year in a row, WCRC had a slight surplus.

The Executive Committee received the report.

Action 50

The Executive Committee adopted the 2012 audited statements.

Action 51

The Executive Committee accepted the offer of the Leer Church for financial coordination services from January 2014, under the authority of the General Secretary; and agreed to engage a half-time book-keeper/assistant for the WCRC office in Hanover.

Action 52

Peter Borgdorff said that for WCRC this was a huge gift. Johann Weusmann replied that for the church, it was like adding on another congregation.

The Executive Committee agreed that the €200,000 grant offered by the United Churches in Germany for 2013 be used for relocation expenses.

Action 53

The Executive Committee expressed its gratitude to the United Churches in Germany.

The Executive Committee agreed to defer action on recommendation 7, 2012 (review by EKD High Audit Office, *Executive Committee Minutes 2012*, pp. 206f.), with a progress report to the Executive Committee in 2014 and a full report in 2015.

Action 54

Johann Weusmann said that WCRC would use the EKD High Audit Office as auditors from 2014 onwards, and they would then review our procedures.

Executive Committee 2013

The Executive Committee authorized the transfer of all WCRC funds, net of any eventual additional liabilities, to the new WCRC German entity. **Action 55**

The Executive Committee appointed the Compagnie fiduciaire de révision SA as auditors for the 2013 WCRC accounts. **Action 56**

The Executive Committee provisionally adopted the general budget provisions, effective January 2014, and the WCRC procurement policy and WCRC expenses policy, effective May 2013, both provisions and policies to be fully adopted in May 2014. **Action 57**

Members of the Executive Committee were asked to submit comments to the secretariat prior to 30 September 2013 so that revisions can be considered in good time.

The Executive Committee approved the 2014 budget, subject to adjustment in October 2013; and authorized the Officers to adjust the 2014 budget, if necessary, in consultation with the Finance Committee.

The Executive Committee agreed that the grid for member church contributions would continue to be used in the manner approved in 2012. **Action 59**

In response to a question from Alan Buckingham, Johann Weusmann replied that the grid was flexible because it depended on GDP. It was also possible to raise the level of total contributions if the Executive Committee so decided.

Peter Borgdorff urged that in communicating with member churches it was not enough to send out an invoice. The General Secretary replied the secretariat would take this on board.

Johann Weusmann expressed the thanks of the Executive Committee to Yueh Cho, who came in when WCRC was in financial difficulties. He had helped WCRC with going through the difficult times, implementing the contributions grid he largely developed, and developing the new budgeting system, and in the transition to Hanover. He would not be moving to Germany and WCRC would miss him.

Communications

Yvette Noble Bloomfield presented the report of the Communications Core Group (*Document 14*). The Executive Committee received the report. **Action 33**

The Executive Committee agreed to maintain the current funding of Ecumenical News International (ENI) and provide organizational support, including the assignation of responsibility to the Executive Secretary for Communications to support ENI and the management and financial support for attendance of Executive Secretary for Communications plus two WCRC representatives to ENI (one of whom would serve as an officer to ENI's Board). **Action 34**

Jan-Gerd Heetderks asked what ENI did for WCRC that was extra; and Kristine Greenaway replied that ENI got stories into places no in-house communicator could.

The Executive Committee accepted the Memorandum of Understanding between WCRC and the WCC regarding archives, including an ongoing commitment of CHF3,000, and agreed that CHF5,000 be made available from the relocation costs to provide for appropriate preparation of physical and electronic documents for removal and archiving. **Action 35**

The Executive Committee accepted the new budget items for the Office of Communications detailed in the appendix (*Document 14.1*) and referred these to the Finance Committee and the Officers in their budget review. **Action 36**

The Executive Committee placed on record profound gratitude and deep appreciation to Kristine Greenaway, the current Executive Secretary for Communications, who would demit office on 31 August 2013. **Action 37**

Peter Borgdorff said we were in a new age of communication where we needed a period of discernment about how to do communications today, and he worried about how this rethinking was going to happen.

Kobus Gerber protested that the Executive Committee was being flooded with reports on which it was asked to take instant decisions. This was not a responsible way of working. The committee needed to have reports beforehand.

Jerry Pillay responded that the Officers had already discussed this question and were thinking of proposing a whole new way of working, with meetings of the Executive Committee cut to seven days and much of the work of core groups and committees done beforehand.

Theology, Mission and Communion

Bas Plaisier presented the report of the Theology, Mission and Communion Core Group (*Document 12*) The Executive Committee received the report. **Action 17**

Executive Committee 2013

William Koopmans led the Executive Committee through the report.

Cheryl Meban asked how students were selected for the Global Institute of Theology. Douwe Visser replied that there were strict criteria but the opportunity was communicated widely. There was a three-day selection process.

Cheh Liang Mok asked what WCRC was learning from Pentecostal dialogue and what could it contribute to WCRC member churches. Douwe Visser said that this was a question we should ask of every dialogue. The two vital dialogues were with the Vatican and with the Pentecostals. On the point of mission, we have a lot to learn. What the Pentecostals would like is sound and systematic theological thinking. The Reformed members of the dialogue included young people: part of the theological formation of young leaders. It was important that these dialogues have an impact at the local level: that is why we carried the report in *Reformed World*.

Cheh Liang Mok said that WCRC talked a lot about justice and about the injustices done to us by missionaries in former times. Did this help us in mission? Why always going back to the past instead of asking how to do mission today?

Bas Plaisier said the relationship between the Pentecostals and mainline churches was problematic; but they were part of the Protestant and often the Reformed tradition. We had to speak with them.

Cliff Kirkpatrick asked why the WCRC mission consultation with member churches in the frontline of violent interreligious situations was proposed for Oman. Douwe Visser said this was the result of a visit from an interfaith institute in Oman. The Sultan was very committed to dialogue; and holding the consultation there could help expand the participation.

The Executive Committee supported plans to hold a Global Institute of Theology (GIT) in Latin America. **Action 18**

The Executive Committee, depending upon availability of staff and assistance to the staff, encouraged wider and more vibrant connections with the work of the Network of Theologians. **Action 19**

The Executive Committee agreed to include the publication of *Reformed World* in the core budget for 2014. **Action 20**

The Executive Committee acknowledged that as a consequence of relocation it will not be possible to maintain the present level of

involvement of the Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion with the John Knox Committee and Programme Commission.

Action 21

The Executive Committee took appreciative note of the importance of the various ongoing dialogues that constitute a significant part of our theological engagement.

Action 22

The Executive Committee approved the following to represent WCRC in the new round of Reformed-Pentecostal Dialogue: Setri Nyomi, Bas Plaisier, Nadia Marais, Gabrielle Rácsok, Karla Ann Koll, Carmelo Alvarez, Anna Donata Quaas, Douwe Visser.

Action 23

The Executive Committee affirmed its support for the mission consultation planned for November 2013, with a tentative location in Oman.

Action 24

The Executive Committee approved continued involvement in Network of African Congregational Theology (NetAct).

Action 25

The Executive Committee encouraged the Theology, Mission and Communion Executive Secretary and the General Secretary to continue to advance their work with the various regions to focus especially on mission dynamics relevant to the regions' situations.

Action 26

The Executive Committee expressed appreciation to Douwe Visser for his excellent work as Theology, Mission and Communion Executive Secretary, especially in the context of many extraneous circumstances and demands pertaining to relocation.

Action 27

Justice and Partnership

Helis Hernán Barraza Díaz and Yueh-Wen Lu presented the report of the Justice and Partnership Core Group (Document 13). The Executive Committee received the report.

Action 28

Peter Bukowski welcomed the way the Executive Committee could see at a glance what had been done but asked, what was the WCRC position on the São Paulo statement? And what did the core group want WCRC to do for the 10th anniversary of the Accra confession? It shouldn't repeat what was done at the Uniting General Council.

Helis Barraza Díaz said that churches and societies everywhere were struggling to respond to the current economic crisis. São Paulo was just a step in a process that would now be taken further by a panel of well-known and well-equipped people who would present a proposal for a new financial architecture.

Executive Committee 2013

The Accra Confession had been much debated. In 2014, there should be an evaluation to see what impact it had had on the Reformed family.

Cliff Kirkpatrick complimented the leadership of the core group on a kind of breakthrough in the way WCRC did things, taking the diverse bag of issues we dealt with and focusing on four main points. He regretted that the São Paulo statement had not been before the Executive Committee. This was the sort of thing the committee should discuss, rather than detailed actions.

Salome Twum asked what “de-ordaining” meant. Yueh-Wen Lu replied that this is when a church ordains, and then later decides they had made a mistake, and therefore annulled the ordination. When this happens on the basis of gender, it becomes questionable. Peter Borgdorff asked whether, given our diverse fellowship, it helped to categorize ordination as a justice issue. Dora Arce Valentín said we talked about woman’s ordination within gender justice because women were entitled to full participation in ministry.

The Executive Committee approved the content of the attached chart (Document 13.1) approved as the priorities for Justice and Partnership programmes, 2013-2015. **Action 29**

The Executive Committee added Daphne Martin Gnanadason (India) and Peter Cruchley-Jones (Wales, UK) to the Gender Justice network and Tom Milligan (PCUSA) to the network of Covenanting for Justice and Economy. **Action 30**

The Executive Committee agreed that the Core Group review the entire membership of the two networks at the Executive Committee meeting in 2014. **Action 31**

The Executive Committee expressed appreciation to Dora Arce Valentín for her excellent work as Executive Secretary for Justice and Partnership. **Action 32**

Plenary session 8: Tuesday evening

Personnel

The President presented the report of the Personnel Committee (*Document 18*). The Executive Committee received the report. **Action 63**

The Executive Committee affirmed the arrangements for personnel in the transition from Geneva to Hanover. **Action 64**

The Executive Committee, with gratitude to the Evangelical Reformed Church in Leer, agreed to appoint Gerhard Plenter as WCRC Finance Officer.

Action 65

The Executive Committee named the following search committee for a new Executive Secretary for Communications, to take office by 1 January 2014: Yvette Noble Bloomfield (convener), Jan Gerd Heetderks, Cheryl Meban, the current General Secretary, and the General Secretary-elect; and instructed the moderator of the Communications Core Group and the General Secretary to find a good interim solution to cover the work that needs to be done from September to December 2013.

Action 67

In response to the suggestion made by Peter Borgdorff during discussion of the report of the Communications Core Group, it was agreed that the search committee should review the job description of the Executive Secretary for Communications in the light of emerging trends and needs.

Action 68

The Executive Committee approved the following transitional arrangements for the Finance Office:

- a) have the current Finance Coordinator do a thorough closing of the third-quarter accounts (YTD September 2013) by the end of October 2013 and have it reviewed by the Finance Committee and Officers.
- b) appoint Antex International, which currently runs our payroll services and has the capacity to provide accounting services, for the following purposes:
 - Antex International shall work with the current Finance Coordinator from October to December in order to understand our system and be in a position to prepare for and bring the 2013 accounts to a final audit in an efficient and timely manner.
 - Antex International shall present our 2013 Geneva accounts to the auditors and see the auditing through by the end of March 2014.
 - Thereafter, and until the last WCRC Geneva-based payroll obligations are completed, Antex International shall be responsible for coordinating a scaled-down version of the Geneva accounts and, if necessary, bring them to a final audit.

Action 70

The two recommendations outstanding were deferred until Wednesday 15 May.

Officers

The President presented the report of the Officers (*Document 19*). The Executive Committee received the report.

Action 71

The Executive Committee agreed that

Executive Committee 2013

- a. the departure of the operating office from Geneva be marked symbolically with a farewell service and reception on 11 December 2013.
- b. a service of welcome be organized in Hanover on 12 January 2014.
- c. representatives of WCRC member churches in Switzerland and Germany be invited to both events.
- d. the General Secretary and General Treasurer consult with a small group in Germany in planning the service in Hanover. **Action 72**

A difficulty with the proposal for a joint General Council/Assembly with the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) was that while for WCRC this was a long-standing vision, it was unclear whether there was any serious commitment from the LWF side. A secondary difficulty was that – precisely because 2017 was the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, with the many engagements that implied – it could be difficult for the most suitable representatives of our European member churches to attend a General Council, whether held jointly or not. Peter Bukowski and Jan-Gerd Heetderks both urged that if we could have a joint General Council/Assembly with the LWF in 2017, then we should go for that; but if not, we should consider moving the General Council back one year, to 2018.

The President said that if the LWF said yes, we should agree on 2017, but if not, we should ask the Officers to advise us what best to do.

The Executive Committee authorized the General Secretary to coordinate a process in which necessary research can be conducted leading to the proposal and a possible venue or venues for the 26th General Council, together with possible themes.

- a. This may include indicating to WCRC member churches that they could invite the next General Council.
- b. In this process, the long-standing WCRC commitment to organize a joint General Council/Assembly with the Lutheran World Federation should be a major consideration.
- c. This consideration should be such that WCRC and the LWF should come in as equal partners, especially in choosing a theme and planning the content of the parts of the joint General Council/Assembly that they will do together.
- d. The General Secretary should work with his LWF counterpart in exploring this possibility of a joint General Council/Assembly, recognizing that the LWF Council meeting in June 2013 will already be taking some decisions regarding the next LWF Assembly.
- e. A letter should go from the WCRC Executive Committee to the LWF on this subject.
- f. If the idea of holding a joint General Council/Assembly should prevail, then WCRC would propose the creation of a joint assembly committee, or a joint and well-coordinated planning process. **Action 73**

The Executive Committee authorized the Officers to provide policy oversight for this process, which includes receiving reports from the General Secretary and processing them for the next Executive Committee.

- a. In May 2014, the Officers should bring a report with appropriate recommendations that will begin the process of full discussion of all aspects of the 26th General Council. **Action 74**

Discussion followed on the dates of the Executive Committee meeting in 2014. Stephen Kendall argued that the dates did not compute: 10-18 May seemed longer rather than shorter, as suggested. Peter Borgdorff was concerned that the dates included two weekends, starting on a Saturday and ending the Sunday following.

The President asked the committee to approve the direction in principle.

The Executive Committee approved in principle the dates 10-18 May 2014 for the next meeting of the Executive Committee and supported the direction of shorter meetings with optional immersion visits beforehand. **Action 75**

WEDNESDAY 15 MAY

Plenary session 9: Wednesday morning

Personnel and finance (continued)

Johann Weusmann moved a recommendation on fundraising in two parts and it was agreed:

The Executive Committee affirmed the importance of a wide variety of fund-development efforts, including those of the North American trustees of the WCRC Endowment Fund. **Action 60**

The Executive Committee regretted that, due to financial constraints, it was not able to continue the position of Fund Development Director; and expressed gratitude to Stephens Lytch for his services to WCRC. **Action 66**

On behalf of the Officers, the General Secretary presented the document "The WCRC Personnel Policies and Practices" which was distributed earlier to Executive Committee members for review. He outlined a series of minor changes to it. Discussion followed on the text as a whole. The Executive Committee adopted the WCRC Personnel Policies and Practices. **Action 69**

Executive Committee 2013

Officers (continued)

The bylaws stipulate that “if the office of President becomes vacant, the Executive Committee shall fill the office of President by election from among the Vice-Presidents” (Bylaw II D 1).

The Executive Committee met in closed session to discuss the vacancy should the President accept the call to become General Secretary.

When the Executive Committee moved back into open session, it was announced that should the President accept the call to become General Secretary, he would be replaced as President by one of the current Vice-Presidents, Yvette Noble Bloomfield; and it was agreed that should it be necessary to appoint a new Vice-President at the next meeting of the Executive Committee (Bylaw II D 2), a three-person committee would be appointed to propose a name.

Executive Committee of the WCRC Michigan Corporation

The Executive Committee adjourned with prayer and constituted itself as the Executive Committee of the WCRC Michigan Foundation.

Peter Borgdorff moved that the actions of the WCRC Executive Committee be fully concurred in and entered into the record of the WCRC Michigan Corporation.

The Executive Committee agreed that the actions of the WCRC Executive Committee during its meeting in Dodowa, Ghana, 7-15 May 2013, be fully concurred in and entered into the permanent record of the WCRC Michigan Foundation. **Action WCRC-MF 1**

The President invited the General Secretary to close the meeting of the Executive Committee of the WCRC Michigan Foundation with prayer.

Close of meeting

The President resumed the meeting of the Executive Committee and thanked all who had contributed to the work of the meeting. Kristine Greenaway asked the Executive Committee to express special thanks to the technician and the two interpreters, who had gone the second mile.

The Executive Committee closed with worship in the sanctuary of the Adenta Evangelical Presbyterian Church. The General Secretary preached and the President offered words of gratitude to the Ghanaian churches.

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

Jerry Pillay

1. "WCRC's *Ecumenical Vision: Quo imus?*" The Psalmist writes in Psalm 52: 8-9: "But I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God; I trust in God's unfailing love for ever and ever, I will praise you forever for what you have done; in your name I will hope, for your name is good. I will praise you in the presence of your saints."
2. The above Psalm is penned in the context of despair and anxiety. David is fleeing from Saul who is trying to kill him and those he expected to help him seem to have betrayed him. The Psalm expresses his righteous indignation but ends with the affirmation that he sees himself as a flourishing leafy olive tree (v3). This is possible for David because of his trust in God's steadfast love. In the context of this trust there is gratitude and testimony to God's character and fellowship with the people of God.
3. In many ways WCRC was placed in a situation of despair and anxiety as it tried to steer through troubled waters in 2012. This was made quite apparent at our last Executive Committee meeting in Indonesia where we were deeply concerned about our deepening financial situation and its implications on the organization. We were pressed to make decisions given the reality and the urgency to get us out of the impending deep waters. I shall return to these a little later but for now I just want to make the point that we can "trust in God's unfailing and steadfast love." We can "hope in and praise" God in the midst of challenges and struggles because we know, just as David did, that God will see us through. Indeed, this rings true and obvious for us as we consider the past, present, and future of WCRC.
4. *Where are we going?* Before I attempt to provide some answers to this question I will first engage some reflections on our challenges as an organization, look at the meaning of the word "ecumenical", try to understand this in the context of the WCRC's vision and work, and suggest some ways as to how we may consider the future direction of the WCRC. I will end this Address with a few comments and acknowledgements.

WCRC Challenges

Finances and Fundraising

5. 2012 was a year of numerous challenges as we faced huge financial constraints. I am pleased to say that the Finance Committee and the Officers constantly and consistently monitored

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the situation and took decisions which enabled us to finish the year with a small surplus. We are most grateful here for the work done by Yueh Cho, Setri Nyomi and the General Treasurer.

6. We managed to curb expenditure where possible and set realistic budgets and adhere to it in very stringent terms. At times this may have even caused some tensions in the WCRC Office among the staff because of the work they needed to do, and the money that was needed to do it, and the measures that were put in place to access funding. However, there was always the understanding that these were necessary given our financial challenges.
7. We have managed to stabilize the financial situation and get us to a place where we can start to find steady increase and better financial ability to sustain the work of the WCRC. By God's grace, we have managed to continue to get funding for our projects and programmes, the struggle has been with the core budget which essentially refers to salary and administration. We express our sincere thanks and gratitude to our donors who have continued to support the work we do with joy and enthusiasm.
8. The financial stability at this stage does not mean that we are completely out of the woods, so to speak. It still requires that we function as good stewards as we manage our resources and spending, that we continue to keep good accounting principles and systems in place, and that we cast our eyes to the future to ensure and secure financial sustainability. Undoubtedly, the move to Hanover will help bring cost down and ensure savings especially in the area of salaries but we must not stop at this.
9. Added to this must be the untiring endeavour to raise funds. I personally support the initiatives of the WCRC to invest in this area as it prepares for a financially sustainable future. By all indications, it is going to become increasingly difficult for ecumenical organizations to financially sustain their work. In most parts of the world we are starting to see this down-ward trend and ecumenical organizations which have not adequately prepared for this are already starting to close shop or reconfigure and restructure their operation.
10. The Executive has taken some decisions about this last year in the part-time (voluntary) appointment of a Fund Development Director. We had set for ourselves targets in raising funds with a plan which includes the involvement and cooperation of the Executive members and their work within the Regions. Unfortunately, we have not succeeded in raising the amount that was put in place by March 2013. We have to seriously and realistically interrogate this against our current world economic

climate, the economic ability/potential of member churches, and different views and models of fundraising used in different countries, communities and cultures. It may be true that what works in one context may not necessarily work in another. So we cannot assume that one model fits all, what we may need is a multiplicity of models befitting the variety of communities/countries found within the WCRC. We may need to give more attention to research and detail as we formulate models to raise funds within the Communion. We also need to seriously look into the possibilities of endowments and bequests as further possibilities of obtaining financial sustainability.

Member Churches

11. Member churches have to assume their role and responsibilities within the WCRC family. We need to understand that membership is not just a theoretical exercise to say that we belong to the organization. What is needed is an active participation and involvement in the work of the WCRC. It is effectively the members who are the people who carry the name, ethos, beliefs and practices of the organization. In essence the WCRC lives through its members who give it life, form and movement in the 108 countries in the world where it is found.
12. Member churches have to equally bear responsibility to ensure the financial sustainability of the Communion. We do this most responsibly when we pay our membership fees as a first and obvious sign of commitment and fellowship. It is thus concerning that there are many member churches who have simply ignored the numerous attempts to engage them in fulfilling this responsibility.
13. We are aware that there are member churches that find it extremely challenging to pay the basic amounts requested in membership fees. We, of course, need to be mindful of this as we relate to justice issues and the genuine inability of some of them to pay. We also need to realize that if we perceive contributions to the life and work of the WCRC only in economic and material terms then we have succumbed to a very narrow perspective of what the Communion is all about. We are enriched by the very presence of others different from us and varied in what they have to offer in and through their very own life experiences, culture, gifts and presence. We learn from their experiences and encounter in life what it means to be part of the same body of Jesus Christ. Ecumenism is not just about economics as we address the concerns about the poor but is also about *all* the gifts found in the house of God to help make a difference in the world as we together proclaim the fullness of life in the Risen Lord.

Address of the President

14. At this Executive Committee meeting we will be called upon to apply the constitution to defaulting member churches as far as membership fees is concerned. It is necessary that we implement what is in the constitution. We have, through the General Secretary, sent reminders to these churches and have clearly stated that we will be enforcing the constitution on this matter. Some have responded by paying, others by writing and explaining their situation and still others have simply ignored our letters. The Membership Committee and Executive would need to exercise a discerning spirit as it addresses these defaulting churches bearing in mind that we need to look at the dynamics of grace and discipline in each situation.

Relocation

15. The May 2012 Executive Committee took certain decisions with regard to relocation. This was, no doubt, was one of the issues which caused us a great sense of despair and anxiety at that meeting, with some people arguing for an immediate decision to relocate to Hanover and others calling for an open, transparent and participatory process in deciding on the new Office location for the WCRC.
16. I am very pleased that we engaged the latter process. It is true that we arrived at the same conclusion in the end but the difference is one of acceptance, ownership and peace. We have received very complimentary comments from member churches on the process used which would have been vastly different if we were driven by just financial urgency at that time rather than by the process of participation and inclusion. There are many who still question the fact that a decision was based on finance rather than the wider interest of ecumenism but because they participated in the process, whether directly or indirectly, they have embraced the eventual decision. This ultimately stands well for us as the WCRC.
17. It is true that we have much to lose when we move out of Geneva. Geneva is the heart of Reformation history and experience as we consider the work and contributions of Reformers such as John Calvin, etc. Another great sense of loss is the presence and contacts we have with other ecumenical partners in the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva. This is probably unmatched in any other part of the world since contacts with the World Council of Churches, the World Lutheran Federation and the many others puts us in touch and in tune with world issues, ecumenical engagement together, helps us to back up our meetings with the WCC at times to save travel costs, and gives us access to numerous ecumenical experts and experiences which we ordinarily would not be able to encounter. However, the

decision to move to Hanover is now made and as we make this move, we need to ask significant questions about our future ecumenical life, partnerships, priorities and strategies. What ecumenical contours or focus will the move to Hanover bring to the WCRC? I will return to this question a little later in this address when I refer to the future of ecumenism.

18. The relocation to Hanover has already impacted on the staff and the work of the WCRC. We are sad to note that only two members of the existing staff will continue their work in Hanover. Setri Nyomi will be with us until we are able to appoint a new General Secretary. Douwe Visser and Dora Arce-Valentín will continue their respective work. We are really sorry that Kristine and Daphne will not relocate with the WCRC Office. We are most grateful for their outstanding work and we will surely miss them.
19. The relocation issue had certainly caused a lot of concerns and emotional challenges for the staff. It was a really difficult time for them during the time of decision-making and it did affect their work in some ways, as inevitable in such experiences, but I wish to express our sincere thanks to them for keeping the light burning and continuing with their respective responsibilities in the midst of uncertainties and questions about their own futures.
20. I can proudly say that the Officers made every effort to involve, engage and include the staff in most of our conversations related to relocation. The sense of transparency and inclusion helped eradicate an "us" and "them" approach to relocation, which mostly affects the staff in a more personal way. I was personally glad and privileged to discuss the implications of the move with each member of staff and how it would affect them. They were given the absolute freedom to share their views and opportunity was availed for us to journey together on this route even though we may have had different views. However, it was generally accepted that the state of the WCRC situation warranted such a move. I must also compliment the staff that when the decision was finally made; they visibly showed acceptance and got more earnestly stuck into producing the quality work they are usually accustomed to. Their reports will definitely show this.
21. Having briefly reflected on the work of WCRC in the past year, I turn now to look at some of the implications the move to Hanover and the changing face of ecumenism, in general, will have on our future life and work. In order to understand this I will attempt to look at the evolving/emerging trends in ecumenism.
22. What does the word "ecumenical" mean? At one level this is a highly abstract question. At another it has an immediate and

concrete socio-political relevance in most contexts. In answering the above question I wish to refer to the seminal work done by Ernst Conradie. He put together a list of 22 agendas which has described the forms and notions of ecumenism over the centuries. It is worth mentioning each briefly to trace the historical development and ascertain the future trends of ecumenism.

Forms and notions of ecumenism

23. *The whole inhabited world (oikoumene)*

The term *oikoumene* was originally used in the Greco-Roman world to refer to the inhabited world (or at least the known part of it). It is derived from the verb *oikein* (to inhabit) and is thus related to the words *oikia* (house or dwelling) and *oikos* (household). Over time, the word came to mean the civilized world, and to be synonymous with the Roman Empire. To add the adjective "whole" may therefore function in either an imperialist or in an anti-imperialist critical way to refer to whole known world outside the sphere of influence of the empire.

24. *Ecumenicity and catholicity*

Since its inception early Christianity spread from Jerusalem in all directions and quite soon covered the whole inhabited world, also extending beyond the borders of the Roman Empire of that time. The seed of the gospel found some fertile soil in very different cultural and geographic contexts. The inner secret of such inhabitation in different contexts may be captured with the term "catholicity" (from *katha holon* – in general, on the whole). The etymological link between ecumenicity and catholicity is the concern for "the whole". The catholicity of the church points to the "essential relatedness of churches and Christian communities locally, nationally, regionally and globally" (see WCC 1997:12). If so, the whole world can only be inhabited in these of offering a home for all people (ecumenicity) through the transforming power of the gospel that seems to work everywhere.

25. *The recognition of seven church councils as "ecumenical"*

The need for a gathering of churches to discuss matters of life, liturgy and teaching has been recognized since the Jerusalem assembly described in Acts 15 (see the entry on "Ecumenical Councils" by Frans Bouwen 2002:373-376). Since that time there have been numerous church councils but only a few of these are widely recognized (but not by all Christians) as "ecumenical". The first of these (Nicea, 325) condemned Arianism and confessed Christ to be "of one essence" (*homoousios*) with the Father. The second (Constantinople, 381) proclaimed the divinity of the Holy Spirit. The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed of 381 still represents the most significant degree of liturgical consensus amongst Christians worldwide even though it is subject to radically

diverging interpretations. The third (Ephesus, 431) condemned Nestorianism and emphasized the unity of the person of Christ. The fourth (Chalcedon, 451) condemned monophysitism and recognized the two natures of Christ as “fully human” and “fully divine” in the one person of Christ. The Assyrian Church of the East (which spread up to India, China and Tibet by the 7th century) did not recognize these two councils as truly ecumenical while the Oriental Orthodox Churches of the south (which spread especially to Egypt and Ethiopia) recognized the third but rejected the fourth. The Latin churches of the West and the Orthodox churches of the East held three further councils together (Constantinople, 553; Constantinople, 680-681 and Nicea 787) – which these churches unanimously recognize as ecumenical.

26. *The conciliar movement amidst major ecclesial schisms*
The conciliar movement started within the Roman Catholic Church during the time of the so-called great Western schism (1378-1417). It was argued that only a general council would have the authority to restore unity to the church and to introduce the reforms needed. One may argue that something similar emerged in the aftermath of most of the major schisms that characterized the history of Christianity in the West since the (not so) “great schism” between the western and eastern churches in 1054. These hopes were almost always dashed as Christianity continues to become ever more fragmented. Nevertheless, for some, “ecumenicity” essentially means the search for *structural unity* amongst divided denominations through a complex “conciliar” process involving endless gatherings of church leaders.
27. *Mission and evangelism in an ecumenical spirit*
It is widely acknowledged that the Edinburgh mission conference in 1910 may be regarded as the first major signpost of the modern ecumenical movement. In the discussion below five well-known dimensions of the modern ecumenical movement will be highlighted. The original focus on mission and evangelism is highly significant. There is no need here to review the immense literature that emerged since 1910 on the interface between mission and ecumenicity. Suffice it to say that the link between mission and ecumenicity was expressed in an influential formulation by a meeting of the WCC Central Committee in Rolle in 1951: *“It is important to insist that the word ecumenical, which comes from the Greek word for the whole inhabited earth, is properly used to describe everything that is related to the whole task of the whole church to bring the gospel to the whole world”* (see WCC 1997:10).

The interface between mission and ecumenicity can be approached in different ways. Some may emphasize the need for

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cooperation for the sake of world evangelization (in one generation), or to address the social agenda of the church (mission as prophetic witness and service). Others may focus on the *credibility* of an internally divided witness or alternatively on the powerful message of *koinonia*. Yet others may focus on the *confusion* created amongst the receivers of the mixed messages of a branded Christianity. The lack of unity amongst Western churches hampered the efforts of foreign missionaries working in a cross-cultural context. The churches that emerged through such efforts all struggled with issues of identity with respect to indigenous culture, pre-Christian religions and these very differences. Moreover, it is also necessary to recognize the *evils perpetrated by a divided church* among the peoples of Africa which left such churches with practices that they could hardly defend (Amanze 2000:6). Indeed, as Amanze (1999) recognizes, by the beginning of the 20th century the ecumenical movement was more vigorous in several African countries than elsewhere in the world and preceded the Edinburgh 1910 conference. This ecumenical zeal was clearly born from the unwanted divisions caused by a divided church in the African context.

Many missiologists have recognized the significance of reflecting on "unity and mission". This is signalled by the title of the major chapter on an "emerging *ecumenical* paradigm" in mission in David Bosch's magisterial work *Transforming Mission* (1991). Unity and mission is also the focus of WCRC work.

28. *Faith and Order: Mutual recognition of the one faith that Christians have in common*

The first world conferences on Faith and Order held in Lausanne (1927) and Edinburgh (1937) responded to a core intuition of the modern ecumenical movement, namely that ecumenical fellowship will be continuously undermined without a mutual recognition of one another's baptism, celebration of the Holy Communion and forms of leadership. This is only possible if the underlying doctrinal differences could be addressed. The aim is to aid mutual recognition of each other's position as authentically Christian so that the fellowship is no longer undermined but enriched by such diversity. In the title of *Confessing the one faith* (1991), the task is to recognize *the* one faith that Christians from different contexts have in common.

29. *Life and work: Theological reflection on social issues*

The two conferences on Life and Work in Stockholm (1925) and Oxford (1937) took place amidst dramatic social change in Europe. The phrase "life and work" expressed the determination of the organizers of these early conferences (under the leadership of Nathan Söderblom) to propose the Christian "way of life" as a

response to the world's "greatest needs". The aim was "to formulate programmes and devise means ... whereby the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of all peoples will become more completely realized through the church of Christ". As Paul Abrecht (2002:691-693) notes, the strength of Stockholm (1925) was its recognition that "the world is too strong for a divided church", while its weakness was its deliberate avoidance of theological differences, with the assumption that "doctrine divides while service unites". This weakness was rectified by the time of the Oxford conference (1937) through inputs from Karl Barth, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Reinhold Niebuhr, William Temple and JH Oldham where ethical focus and theological reflection were deeply integrated. These developments established the foundation for employing social analysis (using insights from lay experts), for later Christian support for social democracy (and the welfare state) and for Christian engagement with the state on the basis of an understanding of the place of the church *in* society. As a result Life and Work became the main dynamo for ecumenical engagement whereas Faith and Order was a more hesitant partner.

30. *Ecumenical Theological Education*

Christian education was one of the core dimensions of the modern ecumenical movement since its inception. This should not be reduced to theological education with a view to the ordained ministry where ecumenical structures may well be appropriate for financial and organizational reasons. Christian education is also and perhaps especially aimed at the ministries of the laity – to occupy leadership positions in local churches but primarily to train leaders for wider service in society. Indeed, it has often been observed that the ecumenical movement was from its inception a movement of the laity, often with lay leaders.

31. *Worship and celebrating the liturgy together*

The subject of worship has been on the agenda of the ecumenical movement since its early beginnings. This is understandable since any gathering of Christians typically includes worship with Christians from different denominations following widely diverging liturgical traditions. The format of such worship therefore necessarily invites ecumenical reflection. Where a fuller liturgy is followed, this invites questions about the celebration of the Eucharist / Holy Communion / Lord's Supper and the inclusion or exclusion of people. Disunity in worship is of course deeply related to issues of Faith and Order and was indeed addressed at the third world conference of Faith and Order in Lund (1952) where a report on *Ways of Worship* served. A significant step forward in this regard was the liturgy prepared for the plenary session of the meeting of the Faith and Order Commission in Lima

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(1982). The enthusiastic reception of this liturgy indicates the need for such an expression of Christian fellowship (see Berger 2002:1250-1255).

32. *Ecumenism from above? A fellowship of churches or what ecumenical structures, offices and bureaucrats do?*

The ecumenical movement almost inevitably found institutional expression in specific structures and organizations. The most significant of these is and remains the World Council of Churches that was established in 1948. Subsequently, similar structures were established at a continental level (like the All African Conference of Churches established in Kampala in 1963 and the Association of Evangelicals of Africa and Madagascar formed at Limuru in 1966, the WCRC in 2010). These structures typically address and integrate all five of the above mentioned dimensions of the ecumenical movement, i.e. mission and evangelism, life and work, faith and order, theological education and Christian worship.

There is, in these organizations, an understandable tendency to equate the ecumenical movement with the leaders, offices, meetings, resolutions, conferences and study documents of such structures. This is understandable given the immense output and to a lesser extent the ecclesial and social impact of such structures. The dangers here are obvious, namely that the inspiration behind the modern ecumenical movement will become bureaucratized so that the word ecumenical refers to whatever ecumenical bureaucrats and their offices do. It is as if churches have hired officials to be ecumenical on their behalf. Thus the ecumenical movement becomes domesticated, brought under control by technocrats rather than a movement continuously challenged by its visionaries. Alternatively, it becomes a form of tolerant inter-denominational cooperation. Ecumenical fellowship cannot be left to specialists or theological experts doing the work on behalf of others. Likewise, it cannot be something that the laity leave the clergy to worry about (Kinnamon 2003:84). It seems that people all over the world no longer want to be dictated by experts in the religious "headquarters" in Rome, Geneva, Nairobi or New York who, it is charged, dominate, homogenize and exploit them (Marty 2004:6). Moreover, these structures are typically expensive to maintain in terms of salaries, offices, administrative staff, travelling and so forth. It comes as no surprise that many such structures experience financial difficulties and face cut-backs when the original sources of funding dry up.

Another problem is related to the reception of ecumenical resolutions and documents, i.e. the appropriation of such

documents in member churches. The challenge is, in the words of Mary Tanner, "to turn the ever-growing pile of ecumenical texts into shared life" (see Kinnamon 2004:57). This is a necessary function of gathering a group of experts to discuss an area of specialization. Those who were not there and who do not have such specialized interests will not necessarily share the vision or comprehend the significance of any new statement. At worst this boils down to "ecumenism from above". The tension between the universal and the local is indeed inevitable. What is constructed to be of universal significance may affect more contexts but will not necessarily address particular and more immediate needs.

This understanding of ecumenism is of course highly reductionist. The World Council of Churches understands itself as a *fellowship* of member churches. This was expressed in the so-called "Toronto Statement" on "The Church, the Churches and the World Council of Churches", accepted by the WCC Central Committee in 1950. It was reiterated in the document entitled "Toward a Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC" (1997:18): "The Council as a fellowship of churches is an organization through which its members act together, not a body which acts separately from the churches." This fellowship has many dimensions but cannot be equated with whatever is done by ecumenical offices. It touches upon the life of such churches as a whole and finds expression, one could say, primarily at the local level. Occasional meetings with Christians from other geographic contexts have to remain exceptional and cannot define the nature of such fellowship. If such fellowship is not embodied at a local level, it would remain rather meaningless.

33. *Church and Society: The dominance of the social agenda of the church*

The five dimensions of the modern ecumenical movement as outlined above invite a creative tension between them that certainly helps to sustain the vibrancy of the movement. Nevertheless, it seems that any gathering of Christians from different contexts invites a discussion of issues of wider public significance. One may therefore detect a tendency in ecumenical engagements to focus on what may be called the social agenda of the church. This is undoubtedly the case in the South African context given the involvement of especially the SACC in the struggle against apartheid. However, as noted above, any such engagement with social issues requires clarity on the distinct contribution that churches can make in relation to international diplomacy and various spheres of society, including the different levels of government, agriculture, industry, business, jurisprudence, education, health, the media, culture, sport and so forth. What is it that churches can contribute to social issues of wider

significance that others cannot? Where this question is neglected, ecumenical engagement is reduced to running commentary on political events (or a more constructive engagement to influence policy through institutes or parliamentary liaison offices), Christianity (as one religious tradition alongside others) is assigned the role of one guardian of the moral fabric of society (which is where Kant saw some role for religion), while churches are treated as (perhaps significant) non-governmental organizations with whom other sectors may cooperate to address issues around education, health, service delivery or social development. Likewise, the ecumenical movement becomes a way in which churches cooperate with each other as voluntary organizations in order to address common social concerns, such tolerant cooperation often requires the underplaying of differences or a toning down of an aggressive justice agenda since that may cause unwanted division.

34. *Ecclesiology and Ethics: Bridging a widening gap in the ecumenical movement*

The ecumenical movement has continuously wrestled with the relationship between the nature and mission of the church and social concerns. Obviously, it has been crucial to keep these aspects together, as illustrated in the examples of the confessing church in Germany and the church struggle against apartheid. Support for evil structures is legitimized through heresy, while prophetic witness against such structures requires an authentically Christian stance and a liberating praxis. In ecumenical reflections on the mission of the church there is sometimes a tendency to underplay the distinct contribution which the church *as church* can make. Similarly, in ecumenical reflections on the nature of the faith and the order of the church there is a tendency to avoid divisive controversies on what the mission (the social agenda) of the church in society entails. At the same time it is clear that divisive issues in society are also divisive in society so that domination in the name of gender, race, class, culture or sexual orientation is indeed an ecclesiological and not merely an ethical issue.

Although it seems obvious that any reflection on the faith and governance of the church should have significant ethical implications and that discourse on the social agenda of the church should draw on a theological understanding of the church, there developed a long-standing tendency to treat issues of "ecclesiology" and "ethics" separately – either from the perspective of "Faith and Order" or from the perspective of "Life and Work". The history of the ecumenical movement may be regarded as a sequence of attempts to build bridges between ecclesiology and ethics from either of the two sides.

Perhaps the deeper problem verges on the relationship between the theological and the sociological dimensions of the church. If the focus is on ethical challenges, there is a tendency to emphasize and sociologically describe the broken reality of the church. If the focus is on what the church should do in the world, there is a tendency to emphasize the theological nature of the church, what the church is as a sign of God's coming reign (see Vischer 1993:78). The deeper theological problem is perhaps an inability to situate the tension between ecclesiology and ethics in the larger narrative of God's work of creation, sustenance, salvation and consummation (see Best & Robra 1997:12, also Conradie 2013). Both ecclesiology and ethics has to engage with the hard realities of injustices, violence and destruction in a world confessed to be the triune God's beloved creation. Where this narrative is narrowed to focus on soteriology or ecclesiology alone, ethics will suffer. Where ethics is approached on the basis of social analysis alone, the transforming power of the gospel will be lost.

35. *Ecumenicity as "dialogue" with other living faiths*

From its early inception Christianity required some clarification regarding its relationship with other religious traditions, including of course Judaism but also the claims to divine authority of the Roman emperors. The question of a Christian understanding of other religious tradition was on the agenda of the modern ecumenical movement since its inception, especially given the call at Edinburgh (1910) to bring about the evangelization of the world in one generation. This debate was heightened at the subsequent mission conferences in Jerusalem (1928), where the rising tide of secularism was recognized, and Tambaran (1938), where an understanding of the Christian message in a non-Christian world was addressed. In further developments after World War II the continuity and discontinuity of Christianity with other religious traditions elicited considerable debate. At the New Delhi assembly of the WCC (1961) the term "dialogue" was first used as a way to speak of Christian relationships with people of "other living faiths". After a process started in Kandy, Sri Lanka (1967) the WCC central committee created a new sub-unit on "Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies" in 1971, with Stanley Samartha as director. The first WCC assembly to invite interfaith guests prompted controversy, fears of syncretism and of the undermining of mission, and suspicions that the uniqueness of God's revelation in Jesus Christ was compromised.

This latter position often prompts fears of syncretism suggesting that the uniqueness of God's revelation in Jesus Christ might be compromised in the process. Although all participants in such dialogue may agree on the need for eschewing triumphalist forms

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of evangelizing, good relationships, mutual understanding and collaboration towards building a better society, some regard dialogue as a function of mission, while others see mission (or witness) as one mode of dialogue so that faith in such dialogue on the common quest for truth tend to supersede one's other convictions. Then dialogue, a sharing of life, becomes an end in itself. At this point a clear extension of what the ecumenical "house" that is inhabited takes place.

36. *A "wider ecumenicity"?*

The fellowship of churches (*oikoumene*) is typically portrayed in ecumenical theology in terms of the image of a household. However, there are also calls for a "wider" or a "deeper" ecumenicity which would incorporate all human beings (the living and the dead), based on *the "unity of humankind" and not only the unity of the church* and inviting dialogue with people of other living faiths (where the term "wider ecumenicity" is also used). Following insights from Philip Potter (the General Secretary of the WCC from 1972 to 1984), the original scope of the "whole inhabited and habitable world" in the Greek *oikoumene* is hereby recovered by seeing the whole (human) world as the house of God (*oikos*).

37. *The whole household of God as the global political economy*

The scope of ecumenicity may be widened even further, beyond the sphere of Christian, religious or more general social relationships, to *include the entire global political economy*, that is, with reference to the production, distribution and consumption of goods. This indicates an expansion in understanding what constitutes the "house" that is being inhabited. Alternatively, not only the inhabitation but also the construction, purchase and financing of this house are to be considered. The focus is no longer on some people (the church and / or its interaction with the rest of society), all religious people or all people, but on how the whole household is constructed and structured.

In the modern ecumenical movement the term "economy" typically follows the secular usage, namely with reference to the national or global political economy that can also be understood as the "management" of the (global) household or, more specifically, as the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services to all the human inhabitants of the household. This has been a major ecumenical concern given God's concern for human well-being. Indeed, God may well be portrayed, as Douglas Meeks (1989) suggests, as "The Economist". The term economic trinity then refers to the triune God's engagement with God's own beloved household. This suggests a form of ecumenicity broader than the church (see Oduyoye 2004:471).

38. *The planetary household*

As noted above, the ecumenical movement became deeply involved in *environmental concerns from the emergence of an ecological awareness* in the 1960s and 1970s. In these ecumenical discussions the etymological link between ecology, economics and ecumenical fellowship has been widely recognized. The common Greek root of these three concepts, namely *oikos* (household) has stimulated the emergence of what may be called oiko-theology where the planetary household is re-described and ascribed as the "whole household of God". Accordingly, the discipline of economics reflects on appropriate laws or rules (*nomoi*) for the household, on the art of administering the global household. The science of ecology gathers knowledge on the "logic" (*logos*) of the same household, that is, the incredibly intricate ways in which ecosystems interact to ensure the functioning of the biosphere. It is typically argued that the global economy has to follow the ecological rules of the household and not vice versa.

The metaphor of the household of God is indeed able to integrate a variety of ecumenical social concerns within an even larger framework, including a) the integrity of the biophysical foundations of this house (the earth's biosphere), b) the economic management of the household's affairs, c) the need for peace and reconciliation amidst ethnic, religious and domestic violence within this single household, d) a concern for issues of health and education, e) the place of women and children within this household, and f) an ecumenical sense of the unity not only of the church, but also of the human community as a whole and of all of God's creation, the whole inhabited world (*oikoumene*).

In the context of oiko-theology it is typically argued that the household of God cannot be conceived in crudely anthropocentric terms as a communion of human beings. The household includes more than family members, friends, neighbours, visitors, foreigners and – in African terms – the communion between the living and the dead. It also includes domestic animals, livestock, food supplies, clothing, furniture, appliances, energy supplies, water supplies, gardens, trees, flowers, soil, and all the building materials of the house itself. Accordingly, the earth itself is ultimately the larger house which human beings inhabit together with multiple other forms of life.

39. *The universe story – At home on Earth!*

The notion of the whole household of God can be extended even further to include the entire cosmos. In the context of contemporary dialogue on science and theology there has been considerable interest in renderings of the story of the universe

based on inputs from all the various natural sciences. This is epitomized by the work of Thomas Berry and Brian Swimme published as *The universe story: From the primordial flashing forth to the ecozoic era* (New York: Penguin Books, 1992). The reason for telling this story is to rethink the place of humanity within this much larger narrative. On the one hand the emergence of humanity may be regarded as insignificant given the vast expanses of the universe. In time the human species are late-comers arriving on the scene only very recently. On the other hand, given the criterion of increasing complexity, the emergence of consciousness and human self-consciousness may be regarded as a climax of this story, albeit that it may well lead to ecological catastrophe.

The moral of the story is primarily addressed at forms of Christianity that have proclaimed that we are nothing but pilgrims and sojourners on earth since our true home is with God in heaven. By contrast, the story suggests that such alienation has to be resisted. In the words of Thomas Berry (1991:14): "Gravitation ... binds everything together so closely that nothing can ever be separated from anything else. Alienation is an impossibility, a cosmological impossibility. We can feel alienated, but we can never be alienated." In response, it is widely argued, we as humans need to recognize that we are "at home on earth". The earth is our one and only God-given home. We belong to the earth. It is a simple fact of life that we have emerged here, on this planet. We are adapted to life here. We are not fit to live anywhere else. We are not tourists here. We are residents. This recognition suggests an ecological ethos: we should allow the whole household of God to flourish

40. *A return to Nicene Christianity*

The widening scope of the notion of ecumenicity prompted a response in which some critics (drawing inspiration from authors such as Leslie Newbiggin and Geoffrey Wainwright) pleaded for a renewed emphasis on Christian authenticity that would resist any weakening of Christian particularity for the sake of inclusiveness or social relevance. They argue, as captured by Smit (2003:309) that "the present ecumenical movement has given up the classical Christologically inspired and therefore Trinitarian vision of visible unity for a vague typically modern agenda of merely 'managing diversity' in the name of a Pneumatology of difference, otherness and dialogue." This tension is most obvious with reference to the Uppsala assembly of the WCC (1968). For some the vision for church unity became side-lined here for a revolutionary political agenda. For others, Uppsala was the turning point in the ecumenical movement's turn to address things that truly matter.

This critique is best regarded as a call for a return to Nicene Christianity, that is, to a form of Christianity that self-consciously maintains the first seven ecumenical councils as a point of departure for contemporary Christian living and thinking. Of course, the changing historical context will necessarily play a role so that a mere return would be impossible. Nevertheless, it is argued that Christianity can make a contribution to contemporary societies in which it finds itself only by retrieving the distinctiveness of the Christian faith as expressed especially in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed of 381. Nicene Christianity is the basis for a new ecumenism because it retrieves those beliefs and practices "without which the church can preserve neither its unity in Christ nor its identity as Christian" (in Seitz 2001:10). The Nicene Creed itself serves as a "badge" for Christian identity and has a unifying and confessional function also for contemporary Christianity.

41. *Bilateral conversations on matters of faith and order*
Such an emphasis on Nicene Christianity almost inevitably highlights the major theological differences that have caused schisms in the past. This may be associated with a series of bilateral consultations between ecclesial traditions in order to reach mutual understanding, a recognition of one another's position as authentically Christian, perhaps some consensus and to heal the wounds of the past in this way. It should be noted that such bilateral conversations suggest a shift away from Faith and Order consultations that address differences across the whole ecumenical movement. This may now be regarded as all too ambitious and somewhat shallow. Moreover, even if a small consultation could reach consensus the member churches would not necessarily receive, read and subscribe such decisions. Instead, the more humble and dedicated task may be to address very specific issues that have caused tensions in the past.

42. *A sense of belonging to Christian world communions within confessional traditions*
A similar recognition that the ecumenical movement has tended to cast its nets too widely has emerged through the growing emphasis on Christian World Communions (CWCs) within confessional traditions. The emergence of such CWCs has become a dominant feature of contemporary ecumenical movement. Meyer (2004:104) lists no less than 17 of these by the end of the 20th century. These include the Roman Catholic Church itself, the Lutheran World Federation, the Anglican Communion, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the World Methodist Conference, and the Baptist World Alliance – next to various other evangelical alliances or networks.

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One may say that Christians engaged in ecumenical fellowship are often forced to reflect on their own confessional identity precisely through ecumenical dialogue. In doing so they discover that such confessional identity is also rather elusive, especially in denominations that have spread across the globe. There may well be almost as much diversity within one confessional communion as in the ecumenical movement itself. Thus there emerges a need for contact and collaboration between churches standing within the same confessional tradition. Such fellowship is facilitated by historical links, doctrinal points of reference, liturgical coherence, common centres for theological training and a sharing of expertise and resources.

43. *Ecumenism as ad hoc collaboration*

Amidst all the above forms of ecumenicity and the sometimes lukewarm reception of the significance of the ecumenical movement, there are some emerging new forms of ecumenicity, also within the South African context. At a conference at UWC in 2003, Molefe Tsele, the then general-secretary of the SACC, commented that it seems far easier to gather together 50 000 worshippers for a gospel festival at Newlands rugby stadium on a particular Sunday (and to gather millions of rand for outreach projects in the process) than to attract 50 people to a meeting of the SACC on one of the major social issues that churches have to address. Likewise, the biennial Kirchentag in Germany attracts far more attention than regular Sunday services. One may also mention the popularity of pilgrimages to Taizé, Iona or Santiago de Compostela.

Three features of such gospel festivals may be noted. Firstly, these gatherings are undoubtedly inter-denominational albeit that they attract especially Christians from an evangelical or Pentecostal persuasion and not necessarily from mainline churches. Secondly, they are also non-denominational in the sense that they signal the demise of denominations because, as Martin Marty (2004:17-18) observes, "denominational organizations are still too coherent, routinized, static, unitive or coordinated to survive in the competition of a market economy of religion. Competition and supply-side religious economics lead to para-churches and post-denominational entities." Thirdly, they are based on ad hoc forms of collaboration with very specific targets and follow-up plans (also in terms of addressing social needs). What they lack in terms of the institutionalization of a movement they make up in terms of mustering considerable energies on the short term.

The laity are not perturbed by denominational differences or leadership tussles and are perfectly able to cooperate whenever

there is a need and in response to any threat or challenge. Ecumenical fellowship across denominational divides is a way of life amongst ordinary Christians. As Oduyoye (2004:491) observes, "the struggle for cooperation rather than union is itself an effort at ecumenical living."

44. *Inter-denominational reform and deform movements*

The modern ecumenical movement is indeed a movement. To sustain such a movement some form of institutionalizing is necessary. However, such institutionalizing may easily lead to stagnation so that a dialectical interplay between movement and institution is called for. Institutions are necessary to sustain the movement but cannot be an aim in itself. The movement is much larger than all the institutions together.

A first comment on these reform movements is that they seem to attract considerable attention and excitement, far more so than the modern ecumenical movement. They provide the sources of inspiration for ecumenical engagement. For example, in South Africa the mighty men conferences apparently attract tens of thousands of participants. Secondly, each one of these reform movements is regarded by others as a deform movement. They do respond to one or another form of stagnation but whether a particular reform movement offers an appropriate sense of direction is subject to considerable contestation. Thirdly, the criteria employed to judge such reform movements are highly contested. In general, rituals, ethos, experience, narratives and doctrine. This suggests the need for ecumenical dialogue on such criteria.

Finally, most of these reform movements are certainly inter-denominational and sometimes lead to new para-church organizations, but cannot be captured easily under one of the definitions of ecumenicity sketched above. They therefore stretch any understanding of ecumenicity, sometimes in rather uneasy ways. Such reform movements typically create tensions amongst the leadership of mainline churches and ecumenical structures since they cannot be encapsulated easily. These are typically examples of committed individuals who cross denominational boundaries and not so much of churches having fellowship together through their official representatives. As a result such reform movements stand in tension with official church policies and practices (e.g. around the position of women in the church). There is indeed an undeniable tension between "unity and renewal" even if the ecumenical movement has insisted on the indissoluble connection between the two: unity itself is the ecumenical way to renewal.

45. *The search for more inclusive ecumenical structures*

The discussion of the notions and forms of ecumenicity above suggests some fluctuation between attempts at an inclusive widening or a qualitative narrowing of what being ecumenical might entail. It is apparent that some are searching for more inclusive ecumenical structures. Such efforts are born from a growing awareness of the shifting centre of gravity in global Christianity. This may be understood geographically given secularization in the global north and a shift in the number of Christian adherents towards countries of the global south and more recently also towards the east. Added to this is shifting centre of gravity away from mainline churches towards free-standing local (usually evangelical) churches, charismatic groups, numerous neo-Pentecostal churches and a wide variety of indigenous churches, for example in the southern African context.

For example, the Global Christian Forum seems to provide a home for this new developing trend. The aim of this forum is one of "bringing into conversation with one another Christians and churches from very different traditions who have little contact or never talked to each other. It is about building bridges where there are none, overcoming prejudices, creating and nurturing new relationships." It seeks new opportunities for broadening and deepening such encounters through the creation of spaces where (a limited number of) participants can meet on an equal basis, to foster mutual respect, and to explore and address together common concerns.

The WCRC understanding of ecumenism

46. These above (22) forms and notions of understanding of ecumenical work are a clear indication that there is no one particular way to define what we mean by "ecumenical". Yet it is also true that an attempt to combine all of these definitions would be equally unsatisfactory. To do justice to all aspects of the ecumenical task would prove too vast for any one organization. It is in this stead then that we ask: What is the WCRC's understanding of ecumenical engagement? Is this understanding adequately relevant in the context of changes in the world today?

47. In attempting to answer this question, I shall refer to the work of the World Communion of Reformed Churches mainly since its inception in 2010. The Uniting General Council Papers of 2010 in a sense stipulated the ecumenical focus it would take through its seven core callings:

- To covenant for justice in the economy and the earth
- To search for spiritual renewal and renewal of Reformed worship.

- To foster communion within the Reformed family and the unity of the church ecumenical.
 - To interpret and re-interpret the Reformed tradition and theology for contemporary witness.
 - To foster mission in unity, mission renewal and mission empowerment.
 - To promote inclusivity and partnership in church and society.
 - To enable Reformed churches to witness for justice and peace.
48. In 2011 the Executive Committee of the WCRC took these callings and provided a further refined and renewed strategic direction in what is described as the five key directives. These key directives also help provide a current synopsis of the WCRC's ecumenical calling and vision. What are they?

Mission

49. The WCRC in its new strategic priorities has placed a strong emphasis on mission even though we have always believed that mission undergirds all that we do. The purpose of the Church is to proclaim the Good news of salvation and life in Jesus Christ. It does so in both Word and deeds. In this we embrace the holistic understanding of mission which includes: (a) propagation of the faith, (b) expansion of the reign of God, (c) conversion of those who do not yet believe, and (d) the founding of new churches.
50. The church as a community does not exist for itself. It has received a commission; it is sent into the world to proclaim and praise God. It is sent to be a sign, instrument, and foretaste of the realization of God's purpose in Christ for the whole humanity and creation. The mission of the church and the churches is founded on the sending out of disciples by Christ at the conclusion of his ministry and the empowerment of Christian community for mission at Pentecost by the gift of the Holy Spirit.
51. The church and churches proclaim in the name of the crucified and risen Lord God's saving grace and love for the whole world. In the midst of sin, brokenness, pain and suffering it proclaims to the world in word and deed that God's salvation, hope, and reconciliation have come into our midst in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. It does so in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.
52. We took a strategic focus in mobilizing member churches for mission because we recognize that mission happens essentially through local congregations and not in the bureaucratic structures of the denomination. As I have said previously, I believe that the future of ecumenism lies in the pews and not through institutional structures. If I had to put it another way, the future of

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ecumenism is not in institutional structures which increasingly is becoming expensive and difficult to sustain but in *relationships*. The relationships of ordinary Christians with one another, the world and creation are the new emerging space for ecumenical work and action.

53. We need to equip and empower local churches for mission in their given communities and beyond. People join churches that are alive and making a difference in their communities not ones that are insular and disconnected with the world. The key interest of young people today is not faith-tradition but faith-encounter. They are not so much interested in the tradition of their parent's church in as much as they are about a church that is 'doing' God's mission. They are keen to know about Jesus and what he means for the world today. This is the cutting-edge of mission: *Who is Jesus for me today?* If Reformed churches are to experience revival and unity, it is abundantly clear that it has to ask a new set of questions which relate to God and what is happening in the world. Its focus must not be exclusively internal but consciously and intentionally external as it focuses on the world. The stress here in ecumenism is the whole inhabited earth: *The whole gospel for the whole person to the whole world.*
54. In the time of the Middle Ages and the Reformation issues of doctrine and ecclesiology were crucial to the church. In fact many fought for these and Councils even killed for these aspects of the Christian church as it declared some to be heretics. Today, whilst these may still be important yet we do not go to such extent, of greater significance is the matter of Christian mission in the world. It seems that missiology is the new focus instead of ecclesiology.
55. The first word of mission is God and not Church. As we are drawn into our common understanding that the church is here to serve God's mission, we will realize the significance and necessity for unity. A mission focus will also call for a revival of the church's vision, purpose and structure. We need to ask whether Reformed churches are structured to meet the challenges in the world or are we going on with business as usual when the world around us is fast-changing? It must be recognized that many of our younger generation of Reformed people are not interested in the Reformed tradition, its confessions and its polity as such, but rather in a Church which is effectively and imaginatively addressing the challenges of mission and outreach in our time.
56. Reformed churches often tend to split over issues that deviate from the actual mission and purpose of the church. The majority of people sitting in the pews often do not have a clue about

what's happening; in fact they are not even interested. Instead what they are looking for, praying for and hoping for is the church witnessing to Christ in the world in the presence and demonstration of the Spirit's power. The WCRC needs to take cognizance of this and, consequently, embrace this missiological priority for ecumenical work. We have done this in the past with our focus on mission and unity programmes. We need to do this sort of engagement a lot more.

Communion

57. At the heart of the reformation was the intent to reform, revive and renew the church. Basic for the understanding of ecumenism is that the Reformers did not intend to found a new church but sought reform of the whole church. In their minds the church was not standing up to the realities of its time in confronting financial corruption, sexual immorality and political power. Reformers such as Luther, Calvin, Zwingli and the others called for the 'reawakening' of the Church to address these issues. In so doing they did not hesitate to point out the inadequacies and corruption of the church which impacted on its life, work, witness and theology. These, for example, are reflected in Luther's *95 Thesis* and Calvin's "*The Necessity of Reforming the Church*" (1543). This renewal was to impact on the structure, polity, theology, mission, worship and witness of the church.
58. John Calvin considered unity to be part of the nature of the church. His fourth book of the Institutes is a vivid expression of this conviction: "*On the True Church with whom we are to cultivate Unity because She is the Mother of all faithful*" (*Inst. 4.1*). He made repeated efforts to avoid the final rupture with the Church of Rome. In particular, he worked untiringly for the unity of the various Reformation churches. In this respect, his assumption was that as long as agreement on the essentials of faith was assured, diversity among the local churches was admissible. The one church consists of several Christian communions that are one in the essentials of the faith and recognize one another on this basis (Pierre Jurieu [1637-1713]). Reformed theologians persisted in hoping that one day the divided churches would gather in a universal council and confess together the fundamental truths of the gospel.
59. In the course of the centuries, Reformed churches were at the origin of many initiatives toward unity – both internal and intra-confessional. The hardening of the Reformed tradition into Reformed orthodoxy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and resulting splits provoked counter-movements. Both in Pietism and the revival movements, the quest for unity was alive. In spite of numerous challenges Reformed theologians played an

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outstanding role in the beginning and shaping of the modern ecumenical movement (e.g. FF Ellinwood, William Paton, Wilfred Monod, and Adolf Keller). The thought of some Reformed theologians had a decisive influence on the nascent ecumenical movement (e.g., Karl Barth, Josef Hromadka, John Mackay, Leslie Newbigin, Hendrikus Berkhof). The focus on Christian unity is on the agenda of many ecumenical organizations, one of the strongest proponents of this is the World Communion of Reformed Churches. This is explicit in our conversations/dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church, the Lutherans, Pentecostals and others. We must constantly be in dialogue with other Christians in the interest of Christian unity and witness, and more significantly, because our Lord prayed that “we may be one.”

60. In spite of these great efforts, internal division remains a characteristic of the Reformed family. While in some countries reunion of divided Reformed churches was successfully achieved (e.g. United States, Holland), the movement of dividing continues in other countries (e.g. Korea and parts of Africa). Reformed churches easily succumb to divisions. The history of the Reformed churches since the Reformation is a history of multiple divisions, and unfortunately the trend continues. Reformed churches have a tendency to split. In almost all countries in the world there is more than one Reformed church. Whilst this may be in some places the result of church planting by different missionary efforts, these are usually brought about by divergences over doctrinal or ethical issues or over aspects of church government or political options. In recent times the issues of the ordination of women and sexuality has led to further divisions and strife. In such a context we need to hear afresh the need for Reformed churches to be driven by the agenda of unity and tolerance. Whilst diversity may be one of the strengths which keep the Reformed family together, it is becoming increasingly apparent that it may also be its weakness.
61. We must not give up the quest to work for unity within the communion in as much as we continue to tarry with the vision for Christian unity in general. In fact, it is currently asserted that organizations such as the Global Christian Forum are becoming more popular as the expressions of the new ecumenism. The WCRC needs to embrace deeper conversations on this with the intention to understand the implications for our organization as Reformed churches in these new developments.

Justice

62. One of the key focal points for relevance is related to justice, struggles and sufferings in the world and how the Christian church is attempting to address these. People in the pews want

answers to their questions and they are not merely content with avoidance or spiritualization of these issues. They want to engage and understand them as they wrestle with their beliefs and faith. The social realities of our world have created a spiritual crisis that causes many youth to lose hope, and avoid our relationship with God and with each other.

63. The WCRC in its work has given and is giving due consideration to justice issues. We continue to engage this in the following ways:
 - We have said quite clearly that communion and justice go together; we cannot do the one without the other.
 - We have for a long time engaged theological reflection on social issues.
 - We have taken up the "social agenda" as we engaged issues of church and society, exercising a prophetic witness in many instances, e.g. against apartheid in South Africa as WARC.
 - We have produced the ACCRA Confession which addresses economic and gender injustices and "covenanting for the care of the earth." In the latter addressing ecological, environmental and climatic concerns. We have addressed the effects of globalization and its impact on the people.
 - We have also rightly stressed the need for gender justice and we will continue to actively engage this both inside and outside of the WCRC.
 - We have attempted to address injustices amongst ourselves in our Council, structures and relationships, even though we still have a long way to go.
64. Justice issues will, rightly, always continue to be a vital part of the ecumenical agenda. The WCRC will need to constantly assess its involvement in this area. We have for long been working with other ecumenical organizations on justice issues. We will need to continue with this endeavour of seeking collaboration and cooperation as we seek to make a difference in the world.
65. The tasks are too enormous for any one group to go alone and the cost of embarking on programmes and projects addressing issues of injustice is no longer financially sustainable by organizations that are dependent on donor support and funding. Ecumenical organizations will need to continue to build on these relationships and networks; seeking ways in which they can complement each other's work.
66. As Reformed churches we need to work with other churches, Christians and organizations to address the realities in the world. We may also be required to work with organizations that are not necessarily Christian and with organizations and people of other

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faiths to address issues of poverty, religious factions, reconciliation and peace, education, health, etc.

67. I believe that we are on the right track as the WCRC in giving priority to justice issues and we have taken the lead in providing tools for theological engagement on the same, for example, on the ACCRA Confession. However, we need to work in greater detail effort and energy to implement these both inside and outside of the communion, so that we start living out the call of justice. And even here we will need to continue to work with other partners (such as WCC, CWM and others) in addressing justice issues.

Ecumenical Engagement

68. As you know, ecumenical engagement is also one of the key directives of the WCRC. However, I shall not elaborate on this since this entire Address is focused on the direction of 'ecumenism'. It is important though to mention that we have decided as an organization that we will not engage any new programmes by ourselves without first talking to and involving our ecumenical partners and in all that we are currently doing, we would seek opportunities to include the participation of others who may be also doing or intending to do the same.

Renewal of Reformed Theology

69. As we speak about revival and unity we must recognize that everything we believe, say and do needs to be theologically and biblically based. There are many emerging trends practiced among churches today that are biblically questionable and even untenable. Nevertheless, for some reason or the other they tend to flourish. Here I am thinking about the rise of the churches that focus on the "prosperity gospel" and motivational speeches for sermons and yet they seem to draw hundreds and thousands of people.
70. Whilst Reformed Christians should not be driven by fads and trends, it is imperative that we ask fresh questions in terms of our theological emphases and priorities. Instead of seeking to be critical and judgmental on these developments, would it not be more appropriate to ask what we can learn from them and why are they growing at a rate that we do not usually see among Reformed churches, at least in Africa? The new ecumenism calls for cooperation and learning from one another than competition and a refusal to learn new things together.
71. Central to the 16th century Protestant Reformation is allegiance to the authority of the Bible as God's word; continuing recognition of that authority is basic to our identity in Christ as guided by the

Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3. 16-17). In Reformed theology, we affirm our focus on the sovereignty of God, covenantal theology, the priesthood of all believers, sola scriptura, sola fide, etc.

72. As Reformed churches we are also informed by credal and confessional documents that summarize our understanding of Scripture. In some places we are still having conversations, debates and disagreements over certain confessions and declarations. These are valid and necessary and we should not undermine them in any way but we should also be mindful of what Christians are concerned about today. Recently, I chaired a conference where brilliant Papers were presented on the Heidelberg Confession. I was deeply moved by what was said then and how relevant it is for us today. But that is precisely the problem, as Reformed theologians and Pastors we are failing to adequately relate these awesome confessions and teachings to our given realities and modern day life situations. Therein remains the challenge! We need to submit our own traditions and ambitions to constant reformation by the Spirit as we live as followers of Jesus Christ in ever changing cultures (*Ecclesia reformata semper reformanda* – the Reformed church always has to be reforming.)
73. In such an evolving context we need fresh understandings of reformed theology and new expressions of reformed identity. We need to take all that we have in the pool of Reformed theology, tradition, practice and spirituality and embed it in a contextual theology which reflects on our current realities, if we are to encourage revival, growth and unity.
74. The WCRC is doing this in the Global Institute of Theology (GIT) in which young Reformed theologians are asking new questions, and giving new shape to Reformed theological thinking and engagement. Our involvement in the network of seminaries and theologians is also crucial for fresh theological thinking and training. These are wonderful signs of hope and life that we must continue to encourage as we seek to “pour new wine into old wineskins.”

Spiritual and Worship Renewal

75. Reformed churches have experienced/ are experiencing conflicts, divisions and splits around the area of worship. What constitutes a proper liturgical style and basis for Reformed worship? There are some who have left the Reformed church because they believe that its style of worship is not what they prefer and if they desire to effect change then they must leave the Reformed family. Although, this is not true about the Reformed church because in reality we embrace a variety of ways and styles in

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worship and have the freedom to do so, yet in many local churches leaders are not prepared to think creatively about worship.

76. In my own denomination I have come across leaders who are prepared to see their young children and youth go to other churches rather than change the way they prefer worship: loud music, instruments and free style of praise and singing and use of spiritual gifts are simply not welcome. In most parts in Africa, for example, Reformed Christians seem to suffer an identity crisis because deep in their hearts they prefer Reformed teachings but in the expressions of worship they are more at home with Pentecostals. They love singing, dancing and being moved by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.
77. It is true that some of the Reformers, like Calvin, had much to say about worship and particularly music and singing in church. However, we need to realize that what was said in their time has to be relooked at in this new century. The fact of the matter is that most young people prefer more contemporary songs and music, visuals, lights, loudness, etc. It is imperative that we seek to find ways in integrating young people into the church; they are not just the church of tomorrow but, indeed, the church of today. It is okay to change our styles and approaches as long as we are able to maintain and teach in and through all of these mediums, the substance and essentials of our faith. There are many Reformed churches that are providing a balanced worship which caters for the needs and preferences of the variety of its members.
78. Part and parcel to the Reformed heritage is the stressing of the spiritual disciplines of prayer, fasting and the study of the Word. These are the 'power' bases for revival brought about by the Holy Spirit of God. For some reason these spiritual disciplines seem to be less emphasized in Reformed churches today. If we are to truly encounter revival and unity we need to return to these essential spiritual practices. I have noticed that churches that encourage and exercise these spiritual disciplines are flourishing in numerical and spiritual growth.
79. I have raised these matters here because I hope that we could engage this from fresh ecumenical perspectives and vision so that we are able to accommodate and create space for a variety of expressions in worship.

Summary

80. It can be seen from the above that the WCRC embraces and encompasses a broad perspective of the various notions and

forms of ecumenical understanding and engagement. These are all in some way or the other intertwined with our key directives. We are essentially a fellowship of Reformed churches attempting to participate in God's mission in the world. In so doing we have embraced the mandate of *communion and justice* as two integral aspects of our vision and purpose. I personally believe that these two words give an apt description of our point of entry and focus in the ecumenical discourse. Further, I believe that at this time the focus (emphasis) is right. However, as we continue to embrace our future we need to have before us the picture of an emerging ecumenism which calls us to engage our work with the following understanding:

81. We need to be less institutional and more relational as we network, develop partnerships and work with others in God's mission in the world. We need to give greater value to working with others in God's mission in the world.
82. We need to realize that the new ecumenical space is not just with ecumenical organizations and church leaders but with ordinary Christians who are daily seeking to understand their faith in a world of conflict, struggle and suffering. This thus deems it necessary for us to equip and empower the ecumenical 'agents' in the pews and 'market place'. What would this mean for us in our strategic plan?
83. We can no longer work as independent organizations in ecumenical work instead we must continue to foster interdependence, cooperation and collaboration. This will probably prove to be a challenge when we leave the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva and move to Hanover. We will need to make sure that we do not retreat into isolation or limited networks since the new trend in ecumenism is the exact opposite. We must not get fixated by our location but focus on the "ecumenical space" and consider how we may use it productively and constructively to achieve a world impact. We will need to give serious consideration of this when we move to Hanover.
84. We will need fresh expressions in thinking Reformed Theology, traditions and liturgy and ask how this impacts on Global Christian unity and witness today. How do we address these challenges which breed divisions, separation and distinctive identities? What do we say about confessions and creeds and its use in the quest for unity and mission? We will need to give considerations to these questions as we embrace the new trends in ecumenism and address the fragmentation among Reformed churches.

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85. How do we address the deepest fault-lines in ecumenical relationships as we address issues of ideologies especially in terms of race, ethnicity, sub-culture, class, gender and sexual orientation? These are issues that are dividing churches and creating disunity. Ecumenical organizations will have to address inclusion and exclusion. We will have to assess and reassess our endeavour of serving as an 'ecumenical platform' and providing a 'safe space' for churches in the communion to share their differences on issues but are still able to remain a part of the body/ communion.
86. As we consider issues of injustice, the need for security and peace in so many countries, religious factions, civil wars, etc. we will need to give greater consideration to these in ecumenical dialogue and deliberation.

Concluding Remarks

87. The WCRC is indeed on the right track and we are doing much. It is imperative that we bring our programme priorities in line with what are the established urgencies and priorities of the times. The move to Hanover will provide us yet another opportunity to do some 'navel gazing'. We must seize this opportunity and be courageous enough to make the necessary changes as we discern what God is calling us to do.
88. The past year has proved quite hectic and challenging as I tried to balance my duties as WCRC President, do my work as General Secretary of the UPCSA and spend time with my family. I am most grateful to my family and the UPCSA for graciously availing me the time to go about the business of the WCRC.
89. I was privileged to visit the Presbyterian Church in Mexico, preach at the ecumenical service at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA), address the Presbyterian Church of Ghana's Ministers' Conference, attend and speak at conferences, present Papers at universities, visit the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba, continue to mediate process of the Dutch Reformed family which is now looking most promising and optimistic, speak in Korea, and attend to many other appointments and meetings of the WCRC family and committees. The one notable rare privilege was the visit to the Vatican for the inauguration of Pope Francis. It was a truly inspirational and encouraging experience and I, personally, hope and pray that we could engage further dialogue and relationships than we already have.
90. I wish to express our thanks to the General Secretary, the Executive Secretaries: Douwe, Dora and Kristine, and all other

full-time and part-time staff: Yueh, Hartmut, Páraic, Ida, and Daphne for their faithful and dedicated service to the WCRC in the past year. We appreciate all that you have done under very challenging and trying circumstances.

91. Last but not least, I wish to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Officers for their wisdom and direction offered into the challenges we faced in the past year, indeed, I believe, that you have steered the ship well. In the same breath I wish to express my heart-felt thanks to the members of the Executive for your participation and contributions through what I consider to be one of the most difficult years in which we had to make some bold and even historic decisions in the future life and work of the WCRC.
92. Our challenges are not yet over. We still have to undertake the move to Hanover by the end of this year and the process to find the next General Secretary has to continue. I ask you to constantly hold the WCRC in your prayers and to assist as much as possible to help us as we embrace the new things that God is doing amongst.
93. Allow me to end from where I started with the words of the Psalmist: "But I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God; I trust in God's un failing love for ever and ever, I will praise you forever for what you have done; in your name I will hope, for your name is good. I will praise you in the presence of your saints." Let us keep praising God!

REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Setri Nyomi

Introduction

1. Moving, movement – believe it or not, these are positive words! In the face of challenges that beckon us to leave a location that has been our home for 65 years to a new place, it can be tempting to view moving and movement as negative. This can be so if departing from one location to another is accompanied by conflicting opinions and emotions in the family. Today, I want to state as clearly as I can that moving and movement are good words.
2. This year, the world Communion of Reformed Churches is on the move. In a few months, it will move its offices from Geneva to Hanover. In about a year the current General Secretary will hand over the baton of leadership to a new General Secretary. As the year progresses, we will be in a different place – but still as a communion building on the unity of our member churches, engaged in God’s mission, covenanting for justice in the economy and the earth, leading the way towards greater gender justice, stimulating leadership development, fulfilling our ecumenical calling and faithfully following our Lord Jesus Christ in many other ways.
3. It is important in such a time of change to pause to ask the question: *Quo imus?* Where are we going? We need to ask this question in the light of the strategic plan we adopted two years ago in the 2011 Executive Committee meeting and in the light of our ecumenical vision.
4. The WCRC is not a static organization that is comfortable with being what we are because this is our tradition or doing what we do because this is how we have always done it. We are a living movement following the directions of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are a movement following a vision – a vision that is constantly being fleshed out by General Councils and Executive Committees. We identify with Abraham as he responds to God’s calling to move from his comfort zone of Mesopotamia to a place unfamiliar and unknown (Genesis 12; Hebrews 11).
5. This reflection is not simply about the move of our offices from Geneva to Hanover. More importantly, it is about how we as a communion keep our vision and our self-understanding as a movement in this time of transition and beyond the transitions. It is about reaffirming our strategic plan two years after we begun

implementing it on the basis of our vision – “To live out our communion of Reformed Churches, participating in God’s mission, that all may experience the fullness of life in Jesus Christ.”

6. As we move our secretariat from Geneva to Hanover, some have specifically asked, “What happens now to our ecumenical vision?” As we leave the place in which we relate directly with three or four ecumenical organizations at no extra cost, will we not be too isolated in Hanover to be ecumenically engaged? What steps can we take to ensure that a move from one place to another does not result in blurring our ecumenical vision? These are the questions we hope this Executive Committee meeting will help us answer in the right direction.
7. Whether we operate from Geneva or from Hanover, whether it is under the leadership of Setri or the new General Secretary, we are a communion committed to justice. We are called to be a movement that supports our member churches as they carry out God’s mission and as we work together for the transformation of the world.

Strategic Plan

8. As you can see from this report, we remain on course in implementing the strategic plan that we adopted in 2011 for the years 2011-2017.¹ All our programme offices have sought to work within this framework, keeping in mind the five key directions we set and the renewed methodology we committed to. In different ways we have been active in building communion, in mission, in working for justice, in theological reflection and formation, and in our ecumenical engagement.
9. One weakness, in our own evaluation, is in working closely with our regional councils. We started well in February 2012, with a good meeting of WCRC staff and regional council secretaries. We set the parameters for working closely together. But alas, our follow up was problematic. We do not want to brush this failure away with excuses; but my colleagues and I agree that the year 2012-2013 was heavy with uncertainties around finances and location that really threw us out of gear some times. We need to put this planned cooperation back on course during this year.
10. We continue to be grateful for the vision and mission we have, and our activities show that we are working within that framework to live out our vision and to fulfil our mission. Your faithful staff are indeed carrying out our work in a manner that fulfils our vision to live out the communion of Reformed churches,

¹ Executive Committee minutes 2011, pp.144-169.

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participating in God's mission, that all may experience the fullness of life in Jesus Christ. It is our hope that Executive Committee members join us in inspiring member churches to live out this vision and to fulfil our mission.

11. If anybody asks where are we going? *Quo imus?* – one way we answer is that our movement is focused by this vision and mission. That is who we are and that is where we are going.

Work with the regional councils

12. In spite of the self-critical point made earlier, I am glad to say we appreciate the work done in regional councils and have journeyed with each of them throughout the year. In addition, the WCRC office was able to mobilize funds to strengthen AIPRAL and ACRC.
13. The African Communion of Reformed Churches, with a new programme secretary, had a productive year. It held a consultation for its West and Central Africa region in Togo in June 2012 and another one for its Eastern and Southern African regions in October 2012. Both consultations were important in gathering member churches to reflect on the WCRC vision and mission and designing plans to live these out in their communities. They also addressed the non-payment of membership contributions. The ACRC is currently planning an assembly for Kampala, Uganda, in May-June 2013.
14. The *Alianza de Iglesias Presbiterianas y Reformadas de América Latina* (AIPRAL) had a meaningful year as its leaders continued to accompany churches in fulfilling their mission. We worked with AIPRAL in organizing the financial and economic architecture consultation in São Paulo, Brazil. This was a good example of WCRC global and a regional council working together.
15. CANAAC continues to press on. Its administrative committee met in Trinidad and Tobago in October 2012 to take stock on where they are and to build a way forward. Our Vice-President Yvette Noble Bloomfield was active in that process. The cooperation with CANACOM continues.
16. The Northeast Asia Area Council (NEAAC) also continues to serve its member churches. The main work has been how the Northeast member churches have been in solidarity with one another as each responds to community challenges that they face.
17. WCRC Europe held its latest meeting in Athens, Greece. Our Executive Secretary for Justice and Partnership, Dora Arce Valentín, and I attended. The presence of WCRC Europe in Greece was a meaningful symbol of solidarity with our sisters and

brothers in Greece as they go through challenging times. The inputs we received from the Greek Evangelical Church leaders were insightful and inspiring. Some people in the European region had expressed concerns about the São Paulo statement, and our colleague Dora responded to these concerns. This is yet one more way of working together with our regions.

18. The new South Asia Area Council is still in its infancy. We have not seen much activity yet. The new Indonesia Regional Council has just adopted its constitution. This will be presented to the Constitution and Membership Committee for processing.

Networking and Strategic Partnerships

19. We continue to work closely with strategic partners. Specifically, our close partners this year have been the Council for World Mission (CWM), the World Council of Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, the *Evangelische Entwicklungsdienst* (EED) and the *Evangelisches Missionwerk in Deutschland* (EMW).
20. We continue to live out the agreements that CWM and the WCRC adopted after our joint meeting in February 2012. In November 2012, we held a joint senior staff meeting in Geneva where we deliberated on how we can work together. Several points of convergence were noted, and we began to identify how we can cooperate more in implementing our programmes.
21. CWM, the WCC and the WCRC co-sponsored the São Paulo conference on new financial and economic architecture. This is an outcome of the 2010 Uniting General Council mandate. The Lutheran World Federation has also come alongside, so now it is a strategic partnership of four organizations.
22. We are in the implementation phase of the joint partnership agreement with the EMW in Germany. This is enabling us to carry out our mission effectively. The strategic partnership with the EED has also strengthened our ministry through the Partnership Fund.
23. In accordance with our strategic plan, we will continue to seek ways of working in strategic partnership.

Programme Priorities

Theology, Mission and Communion

24. A highlight of the year was the Global Institute of Theology 2012 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 8 June-1 July 2012. The GIT community consisted in total of 67 people: 50 students, 14 faculty and staff and 3 guests. We had 24 male and 26 female students; 10 came from Indonesia, the others from all over the

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world. Students all followed the theme course: "God of life, revitalize our spirituality, our praxis and our theology". They each chose two elective courses out of: poverty and wealth; theology of disaster; interreligious dialogue; mission. The academic programme was accompanied by cultural immersion. We are grateful to the hosting institution of the GIT: Duta Wacana Christian University in Yogyakarta.

25. The Theology, Mission and Communion office has started preparation for the GIT 2014. It will be hosted by the Latin-American Biblical University in Costa Rica.
26. The Reformed-Pentecostal Dialogue report presented to you last year and accepted by the meeting has now appeared as a special issue of *Reformed World* with commentary by four authors.
27. The Roman Catholic-Reformed 2010-2015 dialogue round held its third meeting at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, USA, 7-13 April 2013. This year's theme was sanctification and commitment to justice.
28. A new round of dialogue with the Pentecostal community on the theme of mission is in preparation. The Executive Committee will be asked to approve a dialogue team, and a first meeting is planned for spring 2014.
29. The last Lutheran-Reformed Dialogue came to an end in February 2010, and the report of the dialogue is now on the table for reception and acceptance by the Executive Committee.
30. Exceptionally, *Reformed World* had only two issues in 2012. This was because the cost of publication could not come out of the core budget. In 2013 the core budget will, as before, support the publication. We will again seek your approval for a new process of acceptance of articles by a peer reviewed system. This will however be in line with our first objective to have *Reformed World* as a journal that gives possibility to young theologians to get experience in publishing academic articles.
31. We are in preparation of a consultation for representatives of member churches facing extreme situations of interreligious violence. The consultation is planned for October, possibly with the cooperation of the Al Alman Institute in Oman.
32. A global consultation focusing on being a communion is planned for September this year. The General Secretary will be responsible for this, together with the Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion.

33. The network of theologians had its second meeting in Rüdlingen, in the canton of Schaffhausen, Switzerland, 3-8 March. A report is available. For the next two years the network will work in four theme groups: *sola scriptura*; Christianity beyond denominational differences; places of epiphany; and church and society. Each group will have one face-to-face meeting together with the secretary in Hanover. The next plenary meeting is planned for early 2015. The network has already produced a lot of written material that is on its way to publication so that it can be of use within the communion. The network greatly helps the secretary with advice on how to do the work planned and to be proposed. And finally there is a close link between the network and the GIT.
34. The TMC Executive Secretary attended a board meeting of NetAct (Network of African Congregational Theology), an affiliate member of the WCRC, in Stellenbosch, South Africa, 1-5 September 2012. We have worked out a close model of cooperation between NetAct and the office for theology. The Executive Secretary will from now on attend NetAct's annual conferences, planned for this year in July in South Africa.
35. In his capacity as president of the programme commission of the John Knox International Reformed Centre, the Executive Secretary organized a John Knox consultation on churches and the rule of law, 28-31 October 2012. There were about 40 participants, including several members of the Executive Committee. The consultation was very well received. The publication with the papers of the consultation is almost ready. This theme should and does have a high level of interest also within our Communion committed to justice.
36. The Executive Secretary is involved in setting up theological formation courses as one of the outcomes of the São Paulo conference on new financial architecture (October 2012; see par 44 below). The aim is to have global courses in the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey alongside regional courses. This is a joint project of the WCC, CWM, the LWF and the WCRC, as was the São Paulo conference.
37. In 2006 the World Alliance of Reformed Churches produced a resource book for Reformation Sunday, with authors drawn from around the globe. Since then a resource book like this has not been produced. But the 2006 book was well received, and for Reformation Sunday 2013, the WCRC has decided that a resource book for Reformation Sunday should again be published. We want to focus on the 450th anniversary of the Heidelberg Catechism (1563). The Secretary has received all the articles for this publication, and we now work on translation and lay-out. We

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hope that this can again act as a good resource for our member churches.

38. In 2012 we announced again the Lombard theological essay contest. We invited young theologians under 35 to write on the theme, 'Paradise' as a source of inspiration for the renewal of global social and economic structures. We received eight essays by the deadline (15 February 2013), seven in English, one in French. Prizes will be awarded by an international jury. First prize is USD 2,500. Given the theme, the 2013 winners will be announced on Earth Day (22 April).
39. We are also cooperating with the WCC on a number of fronts. This includes the involvement of the GIT in the Global Ecumenical Theological Institute organized in conjunction with the 10th WCC Assembly in Busan, Korea, 30 October-8 November 2013. We have selected five students for this institute and will cover some of their costs. The GIT budget allows for that. Because of this event, the Secretary will attend the WCC Assembly.
40. The Secretary will also attend an international Reformation Jubilee conference organized by the Swiss Federation of Protestant Churches and the Evangelical Church in Germany in Zürich, 6-9 October 2013. He is asked by the organizers to give a presentation on: *Reformation and politics, between prophetic voice and blind authority obedience.*

Justice and Partnership

41. During the period under review, the Executive Secretary for Justice and Partnership worked until the end of 2012 as a consultant stationed in Cuba and begun work as Executive Secretary in the Geneva office in January 2013. January 2013 can thus be seen as the end of a long period of transition. As part of the transition, the Secretary met with her predecessor, Patricia Sheerattan-Bisnauth, in December 2012 in Louisville, Kentucky, USA.
42. Programmes of the Justice and Partnership office continue to follow the strategic plan approved in 2011 and the mandates of the 2012 Executive Committee. They cover the two sections that constitute the emphasis of the office: covenanting for justice in the economy and the earth, and gender justice.

Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth

43. The Executive Secretary participated in the AGAPE-Poverty, Wealth and Ecology Global Forum organized by the WCC in Bogor, West Java, Indonesia, 17-23 June 2012. The purpose was to bring together the regional studies and church consultations on

the AGAPE process that were undertaken in Africa 2007, Latin America 2008, Asia and Pacific in 2009, Europe in 2010, and North America in 2011. The goal of the forum was to come up with a message to the WCC 10th Assembly in Busan in October-November this year. It was also an opportunity to reflect theologically and practically on how to avert greed and promote justice, care and sustainability in the current context of intertwined global financial, economic and ecological crises. Final documents from this forum are available.

44. The office was a key instrument in organizing the Global Ecumenical Conference on New International Financial and Economic Architecture in São Paulo, Brazil, 29 September-5 October 2012. This was an initiative of the WCRC, organized together with the WCC and CWM, in line with the Uniting General Council mandate. Grand Rapids called us to start a process leading to a panel that would help provide a new financial architecture, like the initiative proposed by the Stiglitz Commission. The three ecumenical bodies invited more than 60 participants and speakers, representing a balance of expertise, gender, region and profession. The São Paulo statement, *International Financial Transformation for the Economy of Life*, came out of this meeting and is now a resource that we will place in the hands of the panel to be formed. The first panel meeting will, we hope, be in August 2013.
45. The general secretaries of our three organizations, along with the General Secretary of the LWF, which has now joined the process, met together with their justice staff in Geneva in December 2012 to strategize about how to go ahead. A small group representing the four organizations was named to help the general secretaries in naming the panel.
46. The Sao Paulo statement said that "an ecumenical school of governance, economics and management (GEM) should be established to develop economic competencies and empowerment within the ecumenical movement. In addition, educational materials should be developing to enhance the economic and financial literacy of church members". In line with this recommendation, representatives of the four organizations were named to form a small staff group to design and present a proposal about this ecumenical school. This group, in which we are represented by our Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion, Douwe Visser, has already met and will present a first draft as soon as possible. The São Paulo statement is available on the WCRC website (see: what we do/justice; www.wcrc.ch/sites/default/files/SaoPauloStatement.pdf).

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47. The Oikotree Global Forum held in Arnoldshein, Germany, in 2010 agreed that one of the focuses of the Oikotree movement would be to facilitate the Oikos theological movement through a roving faculty. This mandate was further developed by the Oikotree facilitation group that met in Frankfurt immediately afterwards. The group decided to organize a roving Oikotree theological school in different regions every two years and a global institute when some of the regional processes bore fruits. This institute was held in Jangseong, South Korea, 18-25 August 2012.
48. The Executive Secretary for Justice and Partnership was invited to be part of the roving faculty for this institute. A major goal of the meeting was to brainstorm a possible curriculum for Oikos theological education.
49. The WCRC, CWM and the WCC, joint sponsors of the Oikotree platform, convened a second Oikotree Global Forum in Johannesburg, South Africa, 3-8 March 2013. The Executive Secretary took part in many conference calls preparing for this forum. The goals of the forum were: 1) to create synergy and strength of the movements by raising common areas of struggle; 2) to re-strategize on the future leadership of the movement and, 3) to work out an effective methodology on how to link with each other. The forum was an extraordinary event in the life and witness of the Oikotree movement. Both identity and working agenda are now much clearer than before. The organizers sensed the full commitment of the sponsors and the participating movements. A new facilitation group is composed of conveners of five working groups and representatives of three sponsoring organizations, with a humble secretariat attached to the moderator. One of the agreements was to enrich the draft of the *Kairos* Global Faith Stance, a document to be presented in one of the Madang workshops at WCC Busan Assembly within the umbrella of the Oikotree movement. This document will be available before the Assembly.

Gender Justice

50. The Justice and Partnership office played a leadership role in the campaign to end violence against women. As part of the follow-up of some workshops and regional/local consultations previously organized by this office, and the office involvement with the We Will Speak Out coalition (a group committed to raising awareness of violence against women, among other things) we are moving forward to create more awareness within our member churches about this urgent matter in terms of gender justice. In communication with our UN Office we promote the Orange Day campaign (a UN campaign to mobilize people around the world to stand against gender violence). As a small step to make the

theme more visible we organized a flash mob on St Valentine's Day (14 February 2013) at the Ecumenical Centre, in partnership with gender desks at the WCC, LWF, WSCF, and YWCA, as a part of V-Day One Billion Rising (see *onebillionrising.org*). The flash mob included sharing a flyer with a Bible text and some questions about violence for participants to use in their communities as a resource. It allowed us to strengthen our partnership with other ecumenical bodies and to taste some different ways to create awareness. We have asked the worship organizers at the Ecumenical Centre to include violence against women in morning worship or prayers on the 25th day of each month (the day designated by the Orange Day campaign).

51. The office continues to manage the Theological Education Scholarship Fund for Women, but we are not receiving as many applications as we expected. We need to promote this opportunity and use it more intentionally to encourage churches to create spaces for the gifts of women in ministry.
52. The Executive Secretary participated actively in the promotion, nomination, selection and award ceremony of the Sylvia Michel International Prize – a partnership of the WCRC with the association of Swiss women presidents of the Reformed Churches in Switzerland (PANKS). The prize of USD 5,000 was presented to the Korean Association of Women Theologians (KAWT) in the context of worship service and celebration in Geneva, Switzerland, on 10 March 2013. The association has roots in initiatives for peace, reunification and human rights on the Korean peninsula. It was awarded the prize in recognition of its support for the study of theology from a feminist perspective and its promotion of the full participation of women in churches in South Korea. It will use the prize money to publish an English-language version of the history of the KAWT to be launched at the WCC Assembly in Busan.

Covenanting for Justice and Gender Justice Networks

53. The office organized a consultation on human trafficking in Matanzas Theological Seminary, Cuba, 18-20 March 2013, in partnership with CANACOM and with the presence of CANAAC leaders. The gathering focused on what is being done in response to human trafficking and what we can do as justice networks of the WCRC to create awareness among member churches and promote action at different levels within the WCRC and with ecumenical partners in the global campaign against these vicious expressions of slavery in the 21st century. The consultation allowed participants to hear how churches, ecumenical organizations and NGOs in the Caribbean are facing the diverse challenges of human trafficking and gave them the opportunity to

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identify linkages between human trafficking and economic, gender and ecological injustice. From the PCUSA/WCRC United Nations Office in New York, Ryan Smith helped us to understand, among other important aspects, the legal issues involved. His presence allowed us to strengthen the connections with the UN office as part of the justice networks.

54. Following the consultation on human trafficking, the two justice networks met in Havana, Cuba, 20-23 March, to develop concrete proposals for the Justice Core Group to discuss and approve for the work of the office in the second half of 2013 and in 2014.

Theology, Mission and Communion and Justice and Partnership

55. The two programme offices work closely together and have involved one another in planning and executing programmes. Both Executive Secretaries are convinced that we cannot engage our member churches in questions of justice without theological tools to support their commitment. On the other hand, there can be no theological reflection, from the Reformed perspective, that does not take seriously the prophetic content of mission – including raising our voices to further justice – because this is at the heart of our Christian faith.

Communication

56. The Communications office ensured the telling of WCRC stories and those of member churches. 34 news releases were issued in English during the period under review. 8 of these were translated into French, 5 into Spanish and 10 into German. These included coverage of events such as the financial architecture conference in Brazil, the selection of a Korean feminist theological association to receive the Sylvia Michel Prize, the rule of law conference at the John Knox International Reformed Centre, the OIKOTREE forum in South Africa, and the Global Institute of Theology in Indonesia. In addition, 26 messages from or about member churches were issued.
57. The Executive Secretary for communications made a trip to Taiwan hosted by the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan. This trip resulted in five stories published to the online news service of PCUSA, an article in the magazine published by the Presbyterian Church in Canada, *The Presbyterian Record*, a feature article published in Chinese by Taiwan Church News, a selection of stories to be published in the June edition of *Reformed Communiqué*, seven WCRC blog postings and two Facebook photo albums
58. A new monthly electronic summary of WCRC's English-language news stories and messages from and about member churches

was launched in January 2013. Also, since early 2013, postings to the website and social media sites are signalled in email alerts to Executive Committee members and staff.

59. The Executive Secretary wrote quarterly Overseas Letters to the United Church of Canada and the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Both churches contribute to the budget of the Office of Communications. The Secretary is a member of the Overseas Personnel for the United Church of Canada. As such she was a commissioner to the 2012 General Council of the UCC in Ottawa, Canada.
60. Four issues of *Reformed Communiqué* in English and French were produced in print and in electronic formats. Selected stories from all four issues were translated to Spanish and printed in *La Voz* in collaboration with AIPRAL. Selected stories from all four issues were translated to German by WCRC's volunteer Hartmut Lucke and posted to the website of the *Reformierter Bund*, the Reformed Alliance in Germany. Until 2012, selected articles from each issue of *Reformed Communiqué* had been translated in Germany for publication in its magazine *Reformiert*. In 2012, Jörg Schmidt, the General Secretary of the *Reformierter Bund*, informed the Office of Communication that publication of *Reformiert* would cease. The Executive Secretary arranged for WCRC to provide German translations of key articles for posting to the Reformierter Bund website.
61. A new format for the electronic edition of both the French and English editions of *Reformed Communiqué* was launched with the March 2013 issue. The new format allows publication of all articles in an issue (the previous format featured only six to eight stories, approximately one-half of the content in the average issue). Photos are now included with each story.
62. The Communications office continues to support various programmes and campaigns of the programme offices, such as the Orange Day Campaign, the Sylvia Michel prize and the Lombard prize.
63. The office has revised website references to WARC and REC and of description of WCRC's programme focus. The summary online description of WCRC no longer refers to its creation from a merger of WARC and REC; the Accra Confession is referred to as a WCRC document rather than as a WARC document; and the "boilerplate" (organizational description at the foot of news releases) has been redrafted to make the importance of WCRC's theological work as visible as that of justice initiatives.

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64. New stories are now posted to the home page of the website at least once weekly. Efforts have been redoubled to translate news stories to French, Spanish and German. Asia and Latin America have sent regional stories. Other regions have not.
65. Changes have been made to the donations page of the website pending a complete rebuilding of the website. Allan Buckingham, Steve Lytch and the Executive Secretary are rebuilding the site on a new platform. The objective is to make it attractive to donors and dynamic for WCRC member churches. A prototype in English is scheduled to be ready for preview when the Executive Committee meets in May 2013. A project description will be presented.
66. WCRC activity on Twitter, blog and Facebook increased during the period under review. Blog postings include monthly postings by the Director of Development and guest blog entries from events like the financial architecture conference in Brazil. There were 1,608 Facebook likes.
67. The Office of Communications offered assistance for the development of regional websites in Europe and Africa. The regional secretaries for each region were put in touch with WCRC's web consultant.
68. With a grant from the *Fondation de l'aide au Protestantisme* (FAP), the Communications office began developing websites in Korean, Chinese, Indonesian and Arabic. We are working with member churches in these countries for partnership in developing these websites. This will enhance our regional communications.
69. A South Korean Christian communications network has expressed interest in becoming a member of ENI and covering the budget shortfall. Discussions are underway between ENI's President and the network. WCRC's ongoing participation in and co-sponsorship of ENI are key to the success of the plan, as is WCC's involvement. WCC is committed to the new venture. WCRC has indicated that the continuation of a French-language ENI service is crucial to its interests. ENI's production has been suspended pending completion of the negotiations in South Korea.
70. The description of WARC and REC archival holdings has been completed. Discussions of a proposal to catalogue and preserve the paper archives in a joint project with Princeton Theological Seminary are now underway under the leadership of the senior archivist of the World Council of Churches. A concept paper about the project prepared by the Executive Secretary will be available at the time of the Executive Committee meeting.

71. The Office of Communications continues to provide support for fundraising initiatives. This includes providing support to, and following up on, meetings of the North American Trustees. The Executive Secretary created print and electronic material in support of the third annual year-end fundraising solicitation in North America. The intern assigned to the Office of Communications, Frans du Plessis, is also involved in supporting the fundraising and website redevelopment initiative.

Development

72. The Office of Development started functioning on 1 September 2012 with Stephens Lytch as the Director. For the year 2012-13 he is doing this as a volunteer.
73. The Director reports that we currently have approximately USD 50,000 invested with the Barnabas Foundation. Together with Peter Borgdorff, he met with the President of the Foundation and two of its board members in July 2012 for advice on our sustainability campaign. Action on developing planned giving has begun. The first planned gift completed with Barnabas foundation is one of USD 35,000 from a donor who is more than 90 years old.
74. For the third year, a mailing was sent out in November under the auspices of the North American/Caribbean Endowment Fund Trustees inviting contributions to the annual fund. We sent out 580 invitations. We received 36 responses for a total of USD 11,396. This was done with the full support of the Executive Secretary for Communications. The following chart shows results for all three years:

	2010 (# donors)	2011 (# donors)	2012 (# donors)
Nat. Amer. project	USD 2,500 (2)	USD 4,450 (5)	
Endowment	USD 3,250 (2)	USD 3,600 (3)	USD 8,592 (24)
Theo. Ed. South	USD 500 (1)	0	USD 750 (1)
Unrestricted	USD 1,325 (10)	USD 6,445 (26)	USD 1,554 (11)
Internship	-	USD 18,980 (20)	USD 500 (1)
N.A. Develop. Expense	-	USD 3000 (3)	USD 0
Total	USD 7575 (13)	USD 36,475 (58)	USD 11,396 (36)
N.A. Trustee donors	4	4	6

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75. The Sustainability Fund was established to ensure the viability of WCRC's core functions. Historically we have relied on fees from member churches to sustain functions such as pastoral visits to churches by the General Secretary and President, communications that keep us connected, and the work of the Executive Committee that embodies the Communion. While most member churches are faithful in their commitments, the long-term reliability of membership fees alone to sustain our work is questionable. Churches that have relied on member assessments and unrestricted gifts to cover their basic functions are looking for new funding models. Membership fees will continue to be the cornerstone of our financial structure, but the Executive Committee, representing the member churches, is charged with the duty of responding to a changing financial landscape.
76. The Executive Committee has taken actions to address these challenges. The actions include improving the fair collection of member fees (through a revised fair grid contribution table) and controlling expenses (through the decision to relocate to Hanover). Generous grants from CWM and the United Churches in Germany have given us a foundation from which to build a solid financial base. In addition, the Sustainability Fund was established to ensure that WCRC's witness to communion and justice will not have to depend on the vicissitudes of economic conditions or funding patterns. It is a commitment to the core values of WCRC, and an opportunity to invite others alongside us to support our work.
77. In May the Executive Committee adopted the initial goals and timeline towards raising CHF 10 million for the Sustainability Fund by 2017. Regional groups were asked to suggest names to serve on global and regional steering committees. That proved to be a daunting task, and no action has been taken toward constituting these committees yet.
78. The Executive Committee assigned each region goals for 2012-2013. The Director has been working with officers and Executive Committee members in the Caribbean and North American region to begin this process. Yvette Noble Bloomfield has helped initiate conversations in Jamaica. The Director and Peter Borgdorff have been meeting with potential donors and foundations such as DeVos Foundation in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The Director is also working with Douwe Visser to identify some European foundations that could be approached for the sustainability fund or other grants for WCRC.
79. The goals that the Executive Committee adopted for the Sustainability Fund are extremely ambitious for an organization

that has limited experience and infrastructure in funds development. Most donors begin their giving relationship with an organization by contributing to a particular project that intersects with their interest. The WCRC staff has done a remarkable job of finding donors for particular projects, and one of our challenges is retaining those donors while helping them broaden their vision of our work so they donate to a Sustainability Fund.

80. The cornerstone of an organization's fundraising efforts is its board. Board members are relied on to be lead givers, as well as to identify and help recruit potential donors. The character of our Executive Committee (the equivalent of a board) is somewhat different. For one thing, the cultures from which we come have differing approaches to philanthropy. In addition, members are not necessarily selected for their fundraising expertise but for other, equally valuable qualifications (ecumenical experience, commitment to justice, etc.). Therefore, it would be good if the Executive Committee could spend some time exploring how each Executive Committee member can best use her or his gifts to be an ambassador for WCRC in a way that ensures we have the resources we need to thrive. That is something most successful boards do, regardless of the members' experience in fundraising. We also need to look at what is unique about the WCRC in regard to fundraising. We want to explore together how the WCRC with our special commitments goes about raising support in a way that recognizes and respects a variety of giving cultures while maximizing our partnerships.
81. The Presbyterian Foundation of the Presbyterian Church (USA) has a strong interest in partnering with WCRC. We are moving forward with them on two projects: a pastors gathering in Geneva and Presbyterian mission exchange.
82. *Pastors gathering in Geneva* – We are planning a gathering in August of approximately 30 pastors - 20 from the North America and 10 from other parts of the world. They are being invited to think together about the future of the Reformed movement in the 21st century. In addition to learning about the work of the WCRC, participants will be asked to think together about how to sustain that work financially. One criterion for invitations is the potential of the attendees to connect us to sources of significant funding. The Presbyterian Foundation is underwriting this event with a grant of USD 20,000. Other funding will come from the budget of the development office (USD 2,100) and participants' registration fees (USD 400 for those from the Global North and USD 50 for those from the Global South).

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83. *Presbyterian Mission Exchange* – The Foundation has invited us to participate in this method of collecting funds online. We now have a link on our website that connects to the Exchange where the Office of Communications has designed pages to convey our message. There is also a link for online donations. The Foundation charges only for its expenses, and it is cheaper than PayPal, which we had been using. The Foundation sends an acknowledgement to the donor, keeps track of donors, and keeps us informed of all gifts. We can also use the service to communicate directly with donors. The largest drawback to the Exchange is that it is not a comprehensive donor-tracking programme. We are exploring other possibilities for a more comprehensive donor-tracking programme. Allan Buckingham has provided essential guidance in these discussions.
84. The Director has arranged for opportunities of WCRC leaders attending large gatherings of member churches to also be used to reach out to others who can hear about the WCRC and be inspired to give. In July 2012, when Jerry Pillay preached at the ecumenical service at the PCUSA General Assembly in Pittsburgh, the Director organized a forum on WCRC that featured a panel including Jerry, Clifton Kirkpatrick, Neal Presa and Jane Dempsey Douglass. About 50 attended. In conjunction with the General Secretary's participation in the General Synod of the United Church of Christ in late June/early July 2013, the Director and Jane Dempsey Douglas are organizing events in Southern California for friends and potential friends of WCRC to meet Setri.
85. The WCRC has been invited to hold a workshop at the PCUSA Big Tent event in August.

Partnership Fund

86. In the last year the Partnership Fund has gone through some significant changes. As decided by the Executive Meeting in 2012, Páraic Réamonn was appointed as deputy PF coordinator. He works now 70% for the fund. We are grateful to the volunteer Antoinette Berkouwer who faithfully served us until 31 December 2012.
87. The *Evangelische Entwicklungsdienst* (EED), which gives us funds for the development projects of member churches, moved from Bonn to Berlin in 2012 and is now together with *Brot für die Welt* (Bread for the World, BfW). Our relation is now with BfW. Over the past years the many changes within the EED have not always made it easy for us to work together, but we can now count on stability on their side.

88. Unrestricted funds, ordinarily used for mission projects are, notwithstanding some donations, not at a high enough level. We will come to the Executive Committee with some ideas for fundraising.
89. We received approval in 2012 for a grant amounting to Euro 400,000 from BfW. This grant is for 2013 but runs for three years: it has only to be spent by 31 December 2015. We can apply for a new grant (2014-2016), already in 2013. However 2013 is intended to be the last year that we receive money from church – KED (*Kirchliche Entwicklungsdienst*) – funds. If we apply for funds for 2014 we will – if approved – receive money from German government funds. We have been made aware by BfW of the strict and detailed government rules of project approval and reporting. With government funds, we must absolutely fully comply with the rules because failure would make us an unreliable partner. This asks much of us working in the office but also of our partners, i.e. member churches who have applied for help. Given the changes in the life of the WCRC in the years 2013 and 2014, we are inclined to negotiate with the BfW to postpone the access to Government funds for one year and to ask to continue with the church funds for one more year.
90. Since 2010, the development funds also support member churches facing an emergency situation. We therefore have to make changes to the procedure of giving emergency funds in this year's Executive Committee meeting.
91. An overview of projects sponsored in 2012 both from the development and the mission funds is available. The total figures are as follows:
 - A. Development Funds: 6 projects; USD 50,040 & CHF 119,618
 - B. Mission Funds: 4 projects; USD 42,700 & CHF 30,000
92. We ended 2012 with a lot of development projects on the waiting list that could not yet be sponsored due to the fact that we had spent most of our funds. We will get the new funds from BfW once we have given a final report of the past period 2010–2012. Our first priority at the time of writing is to follow up churches that received funds to send us their reports.
93. Our working with regional coordinators is in development but has to be worked out further.

Finance

94. Attention to our finances has occupied a major part of our time and energy for the year under review. This is reflected in the fact that even before coming to this specific section on finances, we

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have already seen many statements on our finances throughout this report.

95. We finished the 2012 financial year with a surplus of about CHF 15,000, on revenue of CHF 1.3 million, which represents the second year of surplus since 2004. This year we did it without any external contributions.
96. Our net equity now stands at above CHF 1 million. This includes our General Reserve fund and our General Council fund. This level of equity includes the special contribution of CHF 362k from the German United (UEK) churches.
97. In terms of financial operations, one break-through made during 2012 was the implementation of the fair contribution table (grid), which has served as basis for our 2012 and 2013 billings and will significantly increase the transparency on our revenue management. As we implement the grid, we express gratitude for the churches that give above the grid. We need them to continue doing so in the next few years as we continue to stabilize our finances.
98. Membership fee collection has remained top priority throughout the year: In line with 2102 ExCom resolution, a complete list of defaulting member churches will be presented to Membership Committee in time for their decision making in May 2013. Unfortunately, this is a path towards suspension.
99. The audited 2012 financial statement will be put online at WCRC website by mid-April and more details on WCRC financial management will be found in the Finance Committee's report later on.

Location

100. In view of the challenging financial situation experienced by the WCRC, the 2012 Executive Committee took a decision for the WCRC to move its operational head office away from Geneva. A task force was appointed under the leadership of John Bolt, Chief Finance officer of the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The task force was asked to report to the Officers within six weeks and the Officers were in turn to make appropriate recommendations to the Executive Committee.
101. We are grateful to John Bolt for his diligence in concluding this task within the time stipulated and to him and the other members of the task force (Jerry Pillay, Gradye Parsons, and Roberta Rominger) for their commitment in carrying out this rather

difficult assignment. As General Secretary, I was the resource person for the task force.

102. The final decision of the Executive Committee was to move the WCRC office from Geneva to Hanover, Germany. By the end of the deadline, 23 of the 29 voting members of the Executive Committee voted for the recommendation to move to Hanover, 2 voted against, and there was one abstention. (We automatically added the three members who did not vote at all to the abstentions.) This amounted to a 79.3% vote for relocating to Hanover. However, two weeks after the deadline, we received one more "Yes" vote from one of the three who did not vote originally, making it a total of 24 "Yes" votes. So, depending on whether we go by the strict deadline or the number of votes cast, we can say that the decision was made either by a 79.3% or an 82.7% affirmative vote of the Executive Committee. The decision included a commitment to take steps to maintain our ecumenical links.
103. The process of voting was enriched by the discussion forum that was set up for Executive Committee members. We are grateful to Allan Buckingham for setting this up.
104. The move will take place in December 2013 with the expectation that the office will be fully functional in Hanover, Germany from the first week of January 2014.
105. In January 2013, we received the document that accords the WCRC the status of a public corporation according to religious law in Germany. Present at the ceremony where the Premier of Lower Saxony handed this document to the General Secretary were two of our German church leaders, Martin Dutzmann and Jann Schmidt, as well as our General Treasurer and Executive Secretary for Justice and Partnership.
106. We are currently in the process of working out an agreement with the German Federal Government. This agreement will provide the legal framework for our operations in Germany. So far the draft is good and will strengthen our ability to operate as an international church organization.
107. The new office is located in the Calvin House at 42 Knochenhauerstrasse, Hanover. We are grateful to the Evangelical Reformed Church in Germany for making it available to us.
108. We are grateful to the Swiss churches that have hosted the head office of the World Communion of Reformed Churches and its

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antecedents for more than 65 years and will continue to provide inspiration for us wherever we are located. The Reformed family traces its historical identity to the Swiss Reformation in which Zurich and Geneva play a major role. We are grateful to the German Churches for offering our operational offices a new home and giving us warm welcome as the WCRC continues in its prophetic mission throughout the world.

109. The relocation has also relocated our staff composition. One of the downsides to the relocation is the loss of some dedicated hardworking members of the staff team. My faithful assistant for ten years, Penny Blachut left at the end of July 2012, Daphne Martin-Gnanadason will leave at the end of April 2013, Kristine Greenaway will leave at the end of August 2013. These are painful departures. In addition, Yueh Cho, Páraic Réamonn, Ida Milli and our faithful volunteer Hartmut Lucke will not be joining the staff team in Hanover.
110. The nucleus of the Hanover team will be the General Secretary and the two hardworking and dedicated programme Executive Secretaries, Douwe Visser and Dora Arce Valentín. This is a good team to rebuild a staff team around. The tasks will not be easy – but the team has already begun working towards a good and hopeful future operating from Hanover.
111. In connection with move to Hanover, the Personnel committee will be considering and approving in this meeting a slight restructuring of the office staff team.

United Nations

112. We are grateful for how the office of the PCUSA ministry to the United Nations continues to serve us in following the critical issues that come through the UN. Our gratitude goes especially to Mark Koenig and Ryan Smith, who have been faithfully and diligently keeping us abreast with issues and bringing what we need to do to our attention. They have provided a full report, which we commend for your attention. We will also make the effort for them to present this report in the Dodowa meeting.

Ecumenical Relations

113. We have at several points shown how we work closely with various sister organizations. Our ecumenical commitment is strong. Our staff team have been involved with the World Council of Churches in various stages of planning the 10th Assembly in Busan. We are making arrangements for our officers to participate in the 10th Assembly and to also have our parallel meetings there.

114. The last conference of Secretaries of the Christian World Communions took place in Geneva in October 2012. Here we interact with colleagues who hold similar positions in different world communions.
115. Douwe Visser represented us in the Assembly of the Communion of Protestant Churches in Europe that took place in Florence, Italy, in September 2012 and brought greetings on our behalf.
116. In December 2012, I participated in a Symposium organized in Nairobi, Kenya, by the All-Africa Conference of Churches as one of the steps towards its Golden Jubilee Assembly.
117. Our President, Jerry Pillay, and I participated in the inaugural mass of Pope Francis at St Peter's Square in Rome on 19 March 2013. On 20 March we called on the Pope and presented him with a gift on behalf of the WCRC as we welcome him to his new role as the Bishop of Rome. We rejoice with the Roman Catholic Church as they begin a new journey with a new Pope with a different style of leadership.

General Secretary's visits to member churches and partners

118. I have continued to use my travels and visits to member churches and partners to further our closeness with member churches, resource them, foster the implementation of our strategic plan, encourage churches in difficulties, and altogether express our presence and solidarity with our churches and partners. Where my visit coincides with a Sunday, preaching in a local congregation has always been an important means of making WCRC visible to member churches at the local level.
119. Between the last Executive Committee meeting and this, my visits to churches and partners took me to the following countries: Romania, American Samoa, the USA, the UK, South Africa, Ghana, Korea, Brazil, Germany, Kenya, Greece, Italy, Vietnam, the Philippines and Japan.
120. The only regional council meeting I attended in the period under review was that of WCRC Europe in Greece in March 2013.
121. We have also received many visits in our offices in Geneva. Some are from leaders of our member churches while others are of leaders of ecumenical bodies with which we are linked. As different groups visit the Ecumenical Centre, opportunity is constantly created for us to also meet with them. My colleagues and I have enjoyed meeting with such groups and engaging in conversations on the WCRC.

Internship Programme

122. Our internship programme continues to do well. At the time of my last report, we had two highly qualified and dedicated persons as the first interns of the internship programme as we currently run it. Christopher Dorn of the Reformed Church in America and Aiko Sumichan of the Christian Church of Indonesia were the best candidates we could ask for. They both did very well.
123. Christopher ended his internship at the end of August 2012. We extended Aiko's internship for a further six months in order for her to serve my office as Assistant when Penny left and to finish some internship learning tasks that would make her internship more complete and meaningful.
124. Uncertainty about the place and time of relocation meant that we did not start a new internship programme until those issues were clarified. Therefore it was only in February 2013 that we welcomed two new interns. Viktória Koczian is from the Reformed Church in Hungary, Frans du Plessis from the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa. They have both made a good beginning.

Concluding Remarks

125. I give thanks to all our member churches for your prayers, encouragement and actions that picked up on what we have been doing for and with you this year and all other years.
126. Since we are having this meeting in Ghana, permit me to take this opportunity to express special thanks to the Ghanaian churches. I am especially grateful to my church, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church Ghana, and the Presbyterian Church of Ghana for nurturing me before my taking on this ministry as well as for standing by me, praying for me, hosting a General Council during my tenure, and fulfilling their role as faithful members of the WCRC. Even in hosting the 2013 Executive Committee meeting, they have invested in it time, energy and more than CHF 15,000 to welcome us and make us feel at home. To the Moderators, leaders and members, I say: "Thank you", "Akpe na mi", "Ye da mo ase".
127. I give thanks to God for our President Jerry Pillay, whose wisdom and leadership skills have helped us move forward through some enormous challenges. I give thanks to all officers and all of you on the Executive Committee including our advisers for the gifts you have brought to the communion. Your commitment to playing a key role in stabilizing this organization and giving it the future in which it will continue to fulfil its calling is remarkable. Thanks for your encouragement at various times. Your short emails of encouragement have been much appreciated.

128. I give special thanks to my staff colleagues for your role in the professional team that facilitates the work of this great family. In my 13+ years, people around the world have been amazed that we do as much as we do. Many assume that more than 100 people must serve this family of over 80 million. Without the hard work you do as staff, we could not have left such an impression. So to Douwe, Kristine, Dora, Hartmut (our faithful volunteer), Páraic, Yueh, Ida and Daphne (who has just left us), I say in the languages of Geneva and Hanover, "Merci beaucoup" and "Vielen dank". I include in this group for gratitude our former colleague Penny Blachut who served as my assistant for 10 years and left last year, and our new colleague Sybille Graumann who has just stepped into Daphne's shoes to support the Justice and Partnership office.
129. We thank God for what has been possible in this year 2012-2013. It has been the third challenging year of our new Communion. At this juncture, I can confidently say, we know who we are and where we are going. This Communion as a movement will move on to yet greater heights in participating in God's mission so that all may experience the fullness of life in Jesus Christ. As I enter my last year in this ministry, I look forward to a full and exciting 2013-2014 in which we will continue to work together. I look forward to how we will do this in the journey of our remaining time of operating from Geneva and our operating from Hanover. I look forward to the process that will identify a new General Secretary for this organization for which I have loved to work and to a time of handing over the baton. From everything we have done together, I can confidently say that I look forward to a great future for the WCRC and its member churches.
130. Thank you.

REPORT OF THE OFFICE OF THEOLOGY, MISSION AND COMMUNION

Douwe Visser

1. The past period in between Executive Committee meetings, May 2012 – May 2013, have been quite tumultuous for the office of Theology. We have been able on the one hand to do a lot of work, thanks to excellent cooperation as a team but on the other hand the decided relocation to Hanover has affected staff composition. Especially with Daphne Martin-Gnanadason having left us we have lost a very competent member of staff who was of great help for the office of theology.
2. I will now report about activities that could be done, following first the order of recommendations of the Executive Committee meeting in 2012 and thereafter follow up with some other activities.
3. A highlight was the Global Institute of Theology 2012 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia 8 June – 1 July 2012. The GIT community consisted in total of 67 persons. Of these 50 were students, 14 were staff and faculty and 3 were guests. Of the students 10 came from Indonesia, the others came from all over the world. We had 24 male students and 26 female. Students all followed the theme course: God of life revitalize our spirituality, our praxis and our theology. In the afternoon they followed elective courses making a choice of two out of: poverty and wealth; theology of disaster; interreligious dialogue; mission. In conjunction with the academic programme there was a cultural immersion programme. The local organization of the GIT was in the hands of Duta Wacana Christian University in Yogyakarta. We stayed in the dormitory of the University. The general evaluation of the GIT among students and staff was positive. It is however an ongoing discussion whether the GIT should focus more on being an academic programme or a programme of exposure. However most important for the students, also this time, is the fact of living together for four weeks in a real and vibrant international / intercultural community. Attached to this report there is the reporting package that was send to donors. We thank them for making this event possible.
4. In the mean time we have started preparation for the GIT 2014. This quite a challenge looking at the relocation side effects but we do not want to lose momentum. At the moment of writing this report (March 2013) we are discussing the possibility of having this GIT hosted by the Latin-American Biblical University in Costa

Rica. It looks that this will be the case and in September this year we will have an onsite preparatory meeting.

5. The Reformed – Pentecostal Dialogue report that was presented to you last year and accepted by the meeting, has now appeared as a special issue of Reformed World and has been commented by four authors in that issue.
6. The Roman Catholic – Reformed dialogue round 2010 – 2015 will have its third meeting 7-13 April 2013 at the Notre Dame University, USA. This year's theme is 'sanctification and commitment to justice'.
7. A new round of dialogue with the Pentecostal Community is in preparation. The Executive Committee will be asked to approve a dialogue team and a first meeting is planned for spring 2014. Theme of the dialogue will be 'Mission'.
8. Finally the report of the last Lutheran – Reformed Dialogue round is finished. This dialogue came in fact to an end in February 2010. The report is now on the table for reception and acceptance by the Executive Committee.
9. Reformed World (RW) had exceptionally only two issues last year. This was due to the fact that the publication could not come out of the core budget funds. For this year the core budget will, as before 2012, support the publication. I will again this year seek your approval for a new process of acceptance of articles by a peer reviewed system. This will however be in line with our first objective to have RW as a journal that gives possibility to young theologians to get experience in publishing academic articles. Again also I seek your approval for having RW published through an international publishing house.
10. We are in preparation of a consultation for representatives of member churches facing extreme situations of interreligious violence. The consultation is planned for October and possibly with the cooperation of the Al Alman Institute in Oman. The outline for this consultation you find attached to this report.
11. A global consultation focusing on 'being a communion' is planned for September this year. The General Secretary will be responsible for this together with the Secretary (for Theology, Mission and Communion). You find attached the draft programme for this consultation.
12. The network of theologians had its second meeting 3-8 March in Rüdlingen, Switzerland. Attached you find the report of this meeting. For the coming two years we will work in four theme

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groups: Sola Scriptura; Christianity beyond the denomination differences; places of epiphany; church and society. Each of these groups will have one face to face meeting together with the Secretary in Hanover. For spring 2015 a next plenary meeting is planned. The network has already a lot a written material produced that is on its way to publication so that it can be of inspirational use within the communion. The network also helps very much the Secretary with advice how to do the work planned and to be proposed. And finally there is a very close link between the network and the GIT.

13. The Secretary attended a board meeting of NetAct (Network of African Congregational Theology), a network of theologians, affiliated member of WCRC. The meeting took place in Stellenbosch SA, 1 – 5 September 2012. We have worked out a very close model of cooperation between NetAct and the office for theology. The Secretary will from now on attend NetAct's annual conferences, planned for this year in July in South Africa.
14. The Secretary in his capacity of president of the John Knox programme commission has organized a second John Knox consultation, 28 – 31 October 2012. This time the theme was: 'Churches and the Rule of Law'. There were around 40 participants. The consultation was very well received. Several members of the Executive Committee were among the participants. The publication with the papers of the consultation is almost ready. This theme should and does have a high level of interest also within our communion committed to justice.
15. The Secretary is involved in the set-up of theological formation courses as one of the outcomes of the Sao Paulo conference on new financial architecture (October 2012). The aim is to have global courses at the Bossey institute next to regional courses. This is a joined project of WCC, CWM and WCRC, as was the Sao Paulo conference.
16. In 2006 the World Alliance of Reformed Churches produced a resource book for Reformation Sunday. A global variety of authors contributed to this book. Since then a resource book like this has not been produced. But the book of 2006 was well received. For Reformation Sunday 2013 WCRC has decided that a publication for Reformation Sunday should again be done. With this publication we want to focus on the 450th anniversary of the Heidelberger Catechism that exists since 1563. In the mean time the Secretary has received all the articles that will be the content of this publication. We now work on translation and lay-out. Hopefully it can act again as a good means of resource for our member churches. Attached you find more information about it.

17. In 2012 we announced again the Lombard theological essay contest. We invited young theologians under 35 to write about the theme: 'Paradise' as a source of inspiration for the renewal of global social and economic structures. We received by the deadline (15 February 2013) eight essays, seven in English, one in French. Prizes will be awarded by an international jury. First prize is USD 2500. Because of the theme the announcement will be done on 22 April, Earth Day.
18. The secretary is involved in a new set-up of theological formation by WCC. A meeting for this will take place in Hamburg, 19-20 March. It has been noted that especially through our GIT we have experience in this work.
19. Also through GIT we are involved in the Global Ecumenical Theological Institute organized in conjunction with WCC's assembly in Busan, November this year. We have selected five students for this event and will carry some of their costs. The GIT budget gives room for that. The Secretary will because of this event attend the assembly.
20. The Secretary has been asked by the GS to attend an international Reformation Jubilee Conference, organized by the Swiss Federation of Protestant Churches and the Evangelical Church in Germany, 6-9 October 2013 in Zürich. He is asked by the organizers of the conference to give a presentation on: Reformation and politics, between prophetic voice and blind authority obedience.
21. The Secretary attended on behalf of the GS the meeting of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe in Florence, 20 – 21 September 2012 and brought greetings to the meeting.
22. The Secretary is regularly asked to give presentations to groups visiting the Ecumenical Centre, to other local gatherings. He also regularly is asked to write articles. It is time consuming but satisfactory work.
23. The work of the Office of Theology encompasses much and is enriching for staff involved. The workload however is substantial, taken into consideration that the Secretary is also supervising the work of the Partnership Fund. We can trust that once in Hanover we can have the same performance as in Geneva. For the rest of 2013 it has to be taken into consideration that, although we do our level best to meet the challenges, the relocation will have side effects of hindering a full performance.

REPORT OF THE OFFICE OF JUSTICE AND PARTNERSHIP

Dora Arce-Valentín

Introduction

1. This report includes two stages, first, June to December 2012, when I was based in Cuba as the Executive Consultant for the Office of Justice and Partnership function with travel to Geneva for specific and important periods no more than four weeks each time and second, from January to April 2013 as the Executive Secretary with full time responsibilities based in Geneva. Hence, the reporting period includes the period of setting up after a partial move to Geneva and a hand-over process between the previous and current Justice and Partnership executive secretaries on December 2012 in Louisville, Kentucky.
2. Guided by the strategic plans and the recommendations from the JP Core Group approved at the Executive Committee 2012, the following projects were implemented.

Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth

Agape-Poverty, Wealth and Ecology Global Forum in Bogor, Indonesia, June 17- 23, 2012.

3. The Executive Secretary of Justice and Partnership participated in this Global Forum on behalf of the General Secretary. The main purpose was to culminate regional studies and church consultation on the AGAPE process focusing on poverty, wealth and ecology which took place in Africa in 2007, Latin America in 2008, Asia and Pacific in 2009, Europe in 2010, and North America in 2011. The goal of the global forum was to come up with a message to the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches which will take place in Busan, October 2013. It was also an opportunity to reflect theologically and practically on how to avert greed and promote justice, care and sustainability in the current context of entwined global financial, economic and ecologic crisis. Final documents of this Forum are available.

Global Ecumenical Conference on New International Financial and Economic Architecture, Sao Paulo, Brazil, September 29- October 5, 2012.

4. This ecumenical initiative of WCRC, WCC and CWM is one of the mandates from the United General Council in Gran Rapids 2010 which called us to start a process that will lead to a panel that would help provide a new financial architecture similar to initiatives like Stiglitz's Commission. The three ecumenical bodies through the Facilitating Core Group and with a consultation process attached, invited 60 participants and speakers representing balance of

expertise, gender, regions and professions. A document, named The Sao Paulo Statement: International Financial Transformation for the Economy of Life that came out of this meeting as the resource, will be placed in the hands of the panel to be formed and meet hopefully, next August. The three General Secretaries and the General Secretary of the LWF that decided to join in the process, met in Geneva together with their staff related with the content of the process to strategize about how to go ahead. A small group representing the four organizations was named to help the GS to name the panel. On the other hand, as part of the recommendations of the Sao Paulo Statement, as the document expresses: "an ecumenical school of Governance, Economics and Management (GEM) should be established to develop economic competencies and empowerment within the ecumenical movement. In addition, educational materials should be developing to enhance the economic and financial literacy of church members" representatives of the four organizations were named to form a small staff group to design and present a proposal about it. This group, in which we are represented by our Executive for Theology, Mission and Communion, Douwe Visser, met and the agreement was to present a first draft as soon as possible. The Sao Paulo Statement is available in WCRC web page under Justice Programme content (what we do/justice).

*Oikotree Roving 's Theological Institute, August 18-25, 2012
Jangseong, South Korea.*

5. Within the framework of the Oikotree Movement and as a recommendation from the Oikotree Global Forum that was held in Anoldshein, Germany in 2010, it was agreed that one of the focuses of this movement would be to facilitate the Oikos Theological Movement through a Roving Faculty. This mandate was further developed by the Oikotree Facilitation Group meeting that took place in Frankfurt right after the Oikotree Global Forum. The Oikotree Facilitation Group decided to organize a Roving Oikotree Theological School in different regions every two years and a global institute when some of the regional processes bear fruits. The Executive Secretary of Justice and Partnership was invited to be part of the Roving Faculty and as such to participate in this first meeting. A major goal of the meeting in Jangseong was to brainstorm and come up with a possible curriculum for the Oikos Theological Education. In the meeting, ideas and methodologies were collected by observing and participating in the Oikos summer school. We explored new ideas in the light of challenges of the different contexts and regions and identified global faculty members for a inter-disciplinary Oikotree Roving Faculty. Finally we planned the initial course of the Oikotree Roving Institute. A report was submitted to 2013 Oikotree Global Forum and dates and place for the first encounter were approved.

Justice and Partnership Office

Oikotree Global Forum, March 3-8, 2013, Johannesburg, South Africa.

6. As a member of the Facilitation group, together with two more delegates from WCRC, the Executive Secretary participated in many conference call meetings to organize the II Oikotree Global Forum. In September the decision to postpone the Forum to March 3 to 8, 2013 was taken by the organizers.
7. The goals of this second gathering were to:
 - a) create synergy and strength of the movements by raising common areas of struggle;
 - b) re-strategize on the future leadership of the movement
 - c) work out an effective methodology on how to link with each other. The Oikotree Global Forum was an extraordinary event in the life and witness of Oikotree Movement.
8. Both identity and working agenda have better clarity. Organizers sensed full commitment of participating movements and from the three sponsoring body's representatives. A new Facilitation Group has been created with conveners of five working groups and representatives of three sponsoring ecumenical organizations. A humble form of secretariat will accompany the moderator. Finally, one of the agreements was to enrich the draft of the Kairos Global Faith Stance, a document that will be released and presented in one of the Madang workshops at WCC Busan Assembly within the umbrella of the Oikotree Movement. This document will be available before the WCC Assembly.

Gender Justice

Campaign to End Violence against Women

9. The Office has organized and been part of several workshops and regional/local consultations, such as the "We Will Speak Out coalition" (a group committed to raising awareness of violence against women, among other things). We move forward to create more awareness within our member churches about this urgent matter. Together with our UN Office, we are promoting the "Orange Day Campaign" (a UN Campaign to mobilize people around the world to stand against gender violence). To make our small steps more visible and to promote awareness on the theme of violence against women, we organized a flash mob at the Ecumenical Centre in partnership with gender desks of WCC, Lutheran World Federation, World Student Christian Federation, World Young Women's Christian Association as part of *VDay One Billion Rising Campaign* on 14 February 2013. This helped us to strengthen our partnership with Ecumenical bodies and to promote creative ways of promoting awareness. A flyer with a Bible text and some questions around violence was distributed during the flash mob as resources for people who were present. We invited the worship organizers at the Ecumenical Centre to promote awareness on the 25th of each month (as part of the Orange Day Campaign) and

include the theme of violence against women as part of the content of the liturgies.

Theological Education Scholarship Fund for Women

10. The office continues to manage the Theological Education Scholarship Fund for Women but we are not receiving as many applications as we expected. We need to promote this opportunity and use it more intentional within the goal of encourage churches to open spaces for the gifts of women in ministry.
11. The Scholarship Committee Meeting took place on 22 October 2012 at the general secretariat. Unfortunately, the committee was not able to select any of the candidates as the women who had applied for scholarship were not training to be pastors.
12. We hope and pray that the Scholarship Fund will be revived this year and that we will be able to widely promote this opportunity within the member churches from the South.

Sylvia Michel Prize for Women and Leadership

13. The Executive Secretary participated actively in the process of nominating and selecting and the award Ceremony of the Sylvia Michel Prize. The award ceremony with a beautiful worship service and ceremony was held in Geneva, Switzerland on March 10, 2013. The prize money of USD 5000 was awarded to the Korean Association of Women Theologians (KAWT) in recognition of its support for the study of theology from a feminist perspective and its promotion of the full participation of women in churches in South Korea. The association has roots in initiatives for peace, reunification and human rights on the peninsula, too.
14. The International prize is a partnership of WCRC and the association of Swiss women presidents of the Reformed Churches in Switzerland (PANKS). The association will use the prize money to publish an English-language version of the history of the organization in time for the publication to be launched at the assembly of WCC in Busan. I would like to extend my gratitude to Kristine Greenaway who stepped in my role and represented WCRC when I was not available. Her contribution during the organization of the ceremony award is greatly appreciated.

Promoting Positive Masculinities. The Manual

15. After several meetings and discussions a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by WCC Women and Society office and WCRC Justice and Partnership office regarding the use of the Manual as a publication in partnership with WCC.

Covenanting for Justice and Gender Justice Networks

Consultation on Human Trafficking, March 18-20, Matanzas Theological Seminary, Cuba.

16. Members of the two justice networks and representative from the Caribbean networks and CWM staff were invited to a consultation on Human Trafficking. In partnership with CANACOM and with the presence of CANAAC leaders, the gathering focused to hear about what has been done in response to human trafficking and to consider what we can do as justice networks in order to create awareness among the member churches and promote actions at different levels within WCRC and other ecumenical partners to engage in a global campaign regarding the problematic of the so-called slavery of the 21st century. The presentation given by Ryan Smith, from the UN Office of PCUSA/WCRC in New York, helped us understand, among other important aspects, the legal aspect of this issue. His presence allowed us to strengthen our connections with the UN office. The Caribbean perspective helped us understand the impact of this issue within the Region and how churches, ecumenical organizations and NGOs face these challenges. The Consultation also gave us the opportunity to identify interweaves of human trafficking and its links with economic, gender and ecological injustices.

Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth and Gender Justice Networks Meeting, March 20-23, 2013, Havana, Cuba.

17. Following the consultation on Human Trafficking the two justice networks met and developed concrete proposals for the Executive Committee Justice Core Group to be discussed and approved as part of the content for the Justice Programme office for the second part of 2013 and 2014.

Other Activities

18. The Executive Secretary was invited to participate for one week in the Global Institute of Theology in Jogjakarta, June 2012, to interact and share with the students the challenges of justice issues as part of the work of WCRC.
19. The Executive Secretary took part in a Seminar on Diaconal Work for the Caribbean region organized by the Latin American WCC Office, in Matanzas Theological Seminary in Cuba in July 2012.
20. The Executive Secretary coordinated a gathering of Cuban Presbyterian Women with a group of PCUSA Outreach Foundation Women under the theme, Women and Global Mission today, at Matanzas Theological Seminary in Cuba, October 2012.
21. As part of the hand-over process between the former Executive Secretary and the current Executive Secretary, an opportunity to visit the General Assembly of PCUSA took place in December

2012. The hand –over and the visits were organized with the leadership and help of Robina Winbush. The visit included meetings with Katherine Reeves from the Presbyterian Women Mission staff, Rob Fohr from the Young Adult office, Andrew Bartlett-Kang from the Hunger Programme, Maria Arroyo from the Latin American office and Steve Lynch, among others.

22. The Executive Secretary was invited to attend WCRC Europe Assembly in Athens, March 7-9, 2013. The main purpose was to be introduced to the Regional body, and to introduce the Sao Paulo Statement as part of the Global Ecumenical Conference on New Financial and Economic Architecture.

Conclusion

23. The work of the office of Justice and Partnership is a very important part of what we do and what we are as Communion of Reformed Churches. As part of the strategy to tackle the way we work as a very, very small staff we continue to seek concrete ways to work as close as possible as programmes. Both programme executive secretaries are convinced that we cannot engage our member churches on justice without theological tools that may support that commitment. On the other hand, there can be no theological reflection, at least from the Reformed perspective, which does not take seriously the prophetic content of the mission, that is, the need to raise our voice in defence of justice because is the heart of our Christian faith.
24. The Executive Secretary is based in Geneva from January 2013 as full time staff joining the rest of the group and this is a great opportunity to work closely with other colleagues at the general secretariat. It will also give the programmes the opportunity to put justice matters at the same level as others and will help us to strengthen and enrich the prophetic witness of WCRC family in more visible ways. I am grateful for all bodies and ecumenical partners who made it possible.
25. I would like to extend my gratitude to Douwe Visser and Kristine Greenaway who have been wonderful to work with. The partnership between the executive secretaries has been encouraging and I am very happy to work with them. I also thank my colleague Daphne Martin-Gnanadason for her work and dedication to the Office of Justice and Partnership. Daphne has left WCRC in May 2013 and we wish her God's blessings. Last but not least, I thank God for the privilege to promote and work for justice around the world!

REPORT OF THE OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Kristine Greenaway

1. The report of the Office of Communications for 2013 is based on the priorities for 2012-2013 presented to WCRC's Executive Committee in May 2012. See *Executive Committee Minutes 2012* pages 225-228.
2. *Ensuring WCRC stories are told*
News stories
 - 34 news releases were issued in English between 1 May 2012 and 30 March 2013. (Translations: 8 French, 5 Spanish, 10 German). These included coverage of events such as the financial architecture conference in Brazil, the selection of a Korean feminist theological association to receive the Sylvia Michel Prize, the Rule of Law conference at the John Knox Centre in Switzerland, the OIKOTREE forum in South Africa, and the Global Institute of Theology in Indonesia.
 - 26 messages from or about member churches were issued between 1 May 2012 and 30 March 2013.
 - A trip to Taiwan by the ESC hosted by the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan resulted in:
 - A series of five stories published to the online news service of PCUSA
 - An article in the magazine published by the Presbyterian Church in Canada, *The Presbyterian Record*
 - A feature article published in Chinese by Taiwan Church News
 - A selection of stories to be published in the June edition of *Reformed Communiqué*
 - Seven WCRC blog postings and two Facebook photo albums
 - The ESC was elected as an Overseas Personnel Commissioner to the meeting of the General Council of the United Church of Canada in Ottawa, Canada in August. She wrote articles for the daily GC news service: two of them were selected for publication in French in the church's magazine *Aujourd'hui Credo*.
 - The ESC wrote quarterly Overseas Letters to the United Church of Canada and the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Both churches contribute to the budget of the Office of Communications. The ESC is a member of the Overseas Personnel for the United Church of Canada.
 - *New:* A monthly electronic summary of WCRC's English-language news stories and messages from and about member churches was launched in January.
 - *New:* Since early in 2013, postings to the website and social media sites are signalled in email alerts to Executive Committee members and staff.

Newsletter

- Four issues of *Reformed Communiqué* (English) were produced in print and in electronic formats – PDF copy posted to the website and a highlights edition distributed by email.
- Production of the French edition of the newsletter, *Communiqué réformé* (French) was re-launched when funds in the core budget were earmarked for this purpose. Four editions were produced in print and electronic formats including posting a PDF version to the website and distributing an electronic edition of highlights by email.
- Selected stories from all four issues were translated to Spanish and printed in *La Voz* in collaboration with AIPRAL.
- Selected stories from all four issues were translated to German by WCRC's volunteer Hartmut Lucke and posted to the Reformierte Bund website. Until 2012, selected articles from each issue of *Reformed Communiqué* had been translated in Germany for publication in the magazine *Reformierte*. However, in 2012 Joërg Schmidt informed the Office of Communication that RB would no longer be producing the magazine. The ESC arranged with Schmidt for WCRC to provide German translations of key articles for posting to the RB website.
- *New:* A new format for the electronic edition of both the French and English editions of *Reformed Communiqué* was launched with the March 2013 issue. The new format allows publication of all articles in an issue (the previous format featured only six to eight stories, approximately one-half of the content in the average issue). Photos are now included with each story.

Campaigns

- WCRC's support of the Orange Day Campaign was launched in combination with support for the 1 Billion Rising worldwide series of public awareness events held on 14 February 2013. Both initiatives are focused on prompting action against violence against women and girls. WCRC coordinated a flash dance in the Ecumenical Centre cafeteria on 14 February that gained widespread coverage, particularly in social media.
- Campaigns were designed and initiated to encourage nominations for the Sylvia Michel Prize and submissions to the Lombard Prize.

3. *Revision of website references to WARC and REC and of description of WCRC's programme focus*

The summary online description of WCRC no longer refers to its creation from a merger of WARC and REC; the Accra Confession is referred to as a WCRC document rather than a WARC document; and the "boilerplate" (organizational description at the foot of news releases) has been redrafted to make the importance of WCRC's theology work as visible as that of justice initiatives.

4. *Regular website updates*

New stories are now posted to the home page of the website at least once weekly. Efforts have been redoubled to translate news stories to French, Spanish and German. Asia and Latin America have sent regional stories. Other regions have not.
5. *Donations page*

Changes have been made to the donations page pending a complete rebuilding of the website. Allan Buckingham, Steve Lytch and the ESC are rebuilding the site on a new platform. The objective is to make it attractive to donors and dynamic for WCRC member churches. A prototype in English is scheduled to be ready for preview at the time the Executive Committee meets in May 2013. A project description will be presented at that time.
6. *Global Fundraising campaign*

Discussions of a global fundraising campaign are to be held during the meeting of the Executive Committee in May 2013.
7. *Fundraising staffing needs*

An intern, Frans du Plessis, has been assigned to the Office of Communication in support of fundraising as well as the archiving project and website redevelopment initiative. The ESC is greatly appreciative of the ideas and enthusiasm Frans brings to the task. The Geneva phase of his internship runs from February through October 2013. He builds on the wonderful work done by the previous Communication and Justice Intern, Aiko Sumichan.
8. *Creation of a secure website for regions to have access to fundraising promotional material*

This will be created following approval of a global fundraising strategy, if funds for producing promotional material are identified.
9. *Social media*

WCRC activity on Twitter, blog and Facebook increased.

 - Blog postings from 1 May 2012 – 30 March 2013: 37.
 - These include monthly postings by the Director of Development and guest blog entries from events like the financial architecture conference in Brazil.
 - Facebook likes: 1608
10. *Regional communication*

The Geneva-based Fondation de l'aide au Protestantisme (FAP) has provided a grant for the development of websites in Korean, Chinese, Indonesian and Arabic.

 - A memo of understanding (MOU) has been signed with GBKP in Indonesia for this work to be done under its auspices.

- An MOU is under negotiation with the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan for the creation of a Chinese-language website.
- Two member churches in South Korea are discussing response to WCRC's invitation to create a Korean-language site.
- Plans for an Arabic-language site are on hold given instability in the area.

11. *ENI*

A South Korean Christian communications network has expressed interest in becoming a member of ENI and covering the budget shortfall. Discussions are underway between ENI's President and the network. WCRC's ongoing participation in, and financial support of, ENI are key to the success of the plan, as is WCC's involvement. WCC is committed to the new venture. WCRC has indicated that the continuation of a French-language ENI service is crucial to its interests. The Lutheran World Federation withdrew from ENI at the end of 2012. ENI's production has been suspended pending completion of the negotiations in South Korea.

12. *Identification of funds for resumption of production of French-language newsletter, Communiqué réformé.*

These have been found. (See # 1)

13. *Archives project*

The description of WARC and REC archival holdings has been completed. Discussions of a proposal to catalogue and preserve the paper archives in a joint project with Princeton Theological Seminary are now underway under the leadership of the senior archivist of the World Council of Churches. A concept paper about the project prepared by the ESC will be available at the time of WCRC's Executive Committee meeting. An MOU may also be ready for WCRC's Executive Committee to approve at that time.

14. **Matters arising from the 2012 Communications Core Group report** (See *Executive Committee Minutes 2012*, page 224)

15. **Relocation:** The relocation of WCRC's offices from Geneva, Switzerland to Hanover, Germany was approved by the Executive Committee in an online vote in November 2012. The ESC has given notice and will leave WCRC effective 31 August 2013.

16. **Regional websites:** The Office of Communications offered assistance for the development of regional websites in Europe and Africa. The Area Secretaries for each region was put in touch with WCRC's web consultant.

Communications Office

17. **Fundraising:** The Office of Communications continues to provide support for fundraising initiatives. This includes providing support to, and follow up on, meetings of the North American Trustees. The ESC and the Communications Intern are following up on plans for fundraising in North America that were approved by the North American Trustees in a conference call early in 2013. The ESC created print and electronic material in support of the third annual year-end fundraising solicitation in North America.
18. The Director of Development spent a week in Geneva with staff in February. Plans for fundraising initiatives in North America and Switzerland were developed at that time.
19. There is no budget for producing fundraising materials.
20. **2012 Recommendation:** The Communication Core Group recommended the ESC should support the Strategic Fundraising Group and attend their meetings. This group has not been formed.
21. **Appreciation**
The ESC wishes to express appreciation for the support of staff colleagues Penny Blachut (until her departure in September 2012), Ida Milli and Daphne Martin-Gnanadason and of interns Aiko Sumichan and Frans du Plessis. Their willing and skilled involvement in the work of the Office of Communications made it possible to meet targeted objectives throughout the year. Hartmut Lucke volunteers his time as a German and French translator. The ESC is deeply indebted to him for his knowledgeable and skilled contributions.
22. It has been a great pleasure working with the Communication Core Group Moderator, Yvette Noble-Bloomfield. Her wisdom and counsel have been unfailingly helpful.
23. Thank you to the members of the Communication Core Group and the Communications Advisory Group. Your attention to the work of the Office of Communications is appreciated.

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COORDINATOR

Yueh Cho

1. I am glad to report that in 2012, WCRC has again delivered its committed financial objective of maintaining a balanced account. In fact, without any special contribution, the Core operation of WCRC has generated a surplus of CHF 15'169. This would also make 2012 the second year in a row since the organization's return to profitability. It proves to the larger world that WCRC is financially viable organization.
2. 2012 can also be marked as the year during which the organization has successfully implementing the fair contribution table or the grid. It is a break-through, not because every member church is contributing according to the grid but because most of our currently 226-strong member churches now accept the grid as a fair benchmark. Over time, this grid will certainly help the organization to achieve a sustainable revenue management in the years ahead, wherever it is based.
3. No less importantly, WCRC net equity including reserves for the next General Council has reached again CHF 1'000'000 mark at the end of 2012. In this regard, a special appreciation should be reserved for UEK of Germany for its major contribution of EURO 300'000. To continue with this favourable trend, we are now able to, 5 months into 2013, forecast with relative confidence another break-even year in 2013. In other words, the organization that leaves the city of Calvin at the end of this year will be one of solid financial footing with projected net equity of nearly CHF 1'100'000.
4. During this meeting, it is likely that a group of WCRC member churches will be suspended, in line with art. VI / J / 6 of WCRC Constitution. While we all feel truly sorry for this even temporary loss of membership for the organization, let us also bear in mind that a self-confident professionally run organization who truly believes in the values it delivers to its constituency should have the stamina to tackle issues of this nature.
5. Since the last Executive Committee meeting in Berastagi, we have pursued the work on formalizing and documenting our policies and procedures of financial management which covers general budgeting, expense management and procurement. In the coming months, we will continue to refine these policies and procedures and make them a true safeguard for a sound system of internal controls.

Communications Office

6. Based on the electronic ballot of Executive Committee last November, a corporation of German public law that will substitute WCRC in current form as a Swiss association has been created earlier this year in Germany. In order to comply with the audit requirement for 2013 accounting year, we will need a separate specific Executive Committee resolution now which authorizes transferring all WCRC equity or its own funds, net of any eventual additional liabilities, to the new German entity at 2013 year end.
7. A balance of about CHF 971'000 for custodian or programme funds was recorded on WCRC balance sheet at 2012 year end and a similar, if not higher amount at 2013 year end. These programme funds are donated, some under legally binding contracts, to WCRC in its current form. Because WCRC does not have ownership but only the safeguard of these funds, further research including possibly consultation of concerned donors and the auditor, seems desirable before the funds are effectively transferred out to the new German entity.
8. Our current auditor, CFSA has been retained by Executive Committee to audit our books since 2005 and the question of rotation had been brought up last year already. But given the imminent move of the organization and changes on staff finance person, it makes sense to me to retain CFSA for another year (2013) during which WCRC annual financial statements are to be established under Swiss GAAP for the last time.

**WORLD COMMUNION OF REFORMED
CHURCHES**

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

AUDITED ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2012

AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Executive Committee of the

WORLD COMMUNION OF REFORMED CHURCHES

Geneva, Switzerland

As statutory auditors, we have examined the financial statements (balance sheet, income statement and notes) of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches for the year ended 31 December 2012.

The financial statements are the responsibility of the governing board. Our responsibility is to perform a limited statutory examination of the financial statements. We confirm that we meet the licensing and independence requirements stipulated by Swiss law.

Our audit was conducted in accordance with the Swiss Standard of limited Statutory Examination. This standard requires that we plan and perform a limited statutory examination to identify material misstatements in the financial statements. A limited statutory examination consists primarily of inquiries of organisation personnel and analytical procedures, as well as detailed examination of organisation documents considered necessary in the circumstances. It should be noted that the examination of operational procedures and internal control systems, as well as inquiries and in-depth examination to detect fraud or other legal violations, are not within the scope of this examination.

Based on our limited statutory examination, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the financial statements do not comply with Swiss law and the company's articles of incorporation as well as to the Swiss GAAP RPC 21 regulation.

As a result of our examination, we recommend that the accounts for the year ended December 31, 2012 be approved.

Geneva, 19th April 2013 / 10 - 2

Cf compagnie fiduciaire de révision sa

Christian FURRER
Chartered accountant

Jean-Paul DORTHE
Chartered accountant
Auditor in charge

Enclosures:

- Financial statements (balance sheet, income statement and notes)

Balance Sheet

	Dec. 31, 2012 CHF	Dec. 31, 2011 CHF
CURRENT ASSETS		
CASH	0	12'328
BANK	1'847'562	1'570'057
ENDOWMENT	45'710	45'753
INVESTMENT	253'770	228'584
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	84'254	NA
TRANSIT ACCOUNTS	44'306	132'895
FIXED ASSETS		
IT INFRASTRUCTURE	4'502	NA
TOTAL ASSETS	2'280'104	1'987'617
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
TRANSIT ACCOUNTS		
WCC	-367	-3'439
AMEX	-352	NA
DONATIONS FOR BARNABAS FOUNDATION	9'290	2'379
ANTEX	16'549	NA
ACRRUED EXPENSE & DEFERRED REVENUE	13'336	57'430
DEPOSIT		
EUROPEAN COUNCIL FUND	262'027	248'632
	<u>300'464</u>	<u>305'002</u>
CUSTODIAN FUNDS I		
THEOLOGY & MISSION OFFICE PROGRAMS		
GLOBAL INSTITUTE OF THEOLOGY (GIT)	59'763	141'954
THEOLOGICAL DIALOGS	5'530	7'382
MISSION	31'656	23'525
MADIP	34'208	34'208
GEORGES LOMBARD PRIZE	20'516	20'682
	<u>151'674</u>	<u>227'751</u>
JUSTICE & PARTNERSHIP OFFICE PROGRAMS		
COVENANTING FOR JUSTICE	44'957	72'000
GENDER JUSTICE	149'233	147'648
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION FOR WOMEN	204'973	208'318
NEW ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ARCHITECTURE (NEFA)	90'056	NA
	<u>489'219</u>	<u>427'965</u>
PARTNERSHIP FUNDS		
PARTNERSHIP FUND A	-26'878	7'845
PARTNERSHIP FUND B	65'710	80'989
PARTNERSHIP FUND D	21'999	21'999
PARTNERSHIP FUND E	72'874	72'874
	<u>133'705</u>	<u>183'707</u>
GENERAL PROGRAMS		
WCRC REGIONAL SUPPORT	0	27'421
JUSTICE & PARTNERSHIP OFFICE SUPPORT	0	18'318
GENERAL SECRETARY PROGRAMS	11'470	31'854
YOUTH PROGRAM	0	-41
GLOBAL SOUTH INTERNSHIP SUPPORT	36'900	46'953
NORTH AMERICAN INTERNSHIP SUPPORT	14'511	41'393
NATIVE AMERICAN PROJECT	3'871	1'205
REGIONAL COMMUNICATION SUPPORT	15'000	NA
	<u>83'753</u>	<u>166'902</u>
TOTAL	858'350	1'006'324
CUSTODIAN FUNDS II		
COOPERATION & WITNESS	22'038	22'038
CALVIN PUBLICATIONS FUND	32'565	32'565
PUBLICATIONS FUND	7'589	7'589
KCTE	18'678	19'678
UCC EATH	6'331	6'331
PROVISION LA PENSEE ECONOMIQUE / A. BIELER	20'622	20'622
EQUATORIAL GUINEA	5'180	5'180
TOTAL	<u>113'004</u>	<u>113'004</u>
OWN FUNDS		
WCRC CAPITAL	205'659	188'862
UEK SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION	362'190	NA
GENERAL COUNCIL FUND	425'048	357'428
CURRENT YEAR RESULT	15'169	16'998
	<u>1'008'266</u>	<u>563'287</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	2'280'104	1'987'617

Income Statement

	2012	2011
REVENUE		
MEMBERSHIP FEES		
MEMBERSHIP FEES AFRICA	92046	67403
MEMBERSHIP FEES LATIN AMERICA	28421	41176
MEMBERSHIP FEES CANAAC	341947	249348
MEMBERSHIP FEES ASIA	210925	54092
MEMBERSHIP FEES PACIFIC	37522	47705
MEMBERSHIP FEES EUROPE	538370	478875
	<u>1245931</u>	<u>859400</u>
EXTRA MEMBERSHIP FEES COLLECTED		
EXTRA AFRICA MEMBERSHIP FEES	11564	
EXTRA LATIN AMERICA MEMBERSHIP FEES	4689	
EXTRA CANAAC MEMBERSHIP FEES	66974	40287
EXTRA ASIA MEMBERSHIP FEES	18945	
EXTRA EUROPE MEMBERSHIP FEES	153773	
	<u>252925</u>	<u>40287</u>
BAD DEBT ALLOWANCE		
MEMBERSHIP FEES AFRICA	-63010	
MEMBERSHIP FEES LATIN AMERICA	-21089	
MEMBERSHIP FEES CANAAC	-63892	
MEMBERSHIP FEES ASIA	-130503	
MEMBERSHIP FEES PACIFIC	-28203	
MEMBERSHIP FEES EUROPE	-214185	
	<u>-541392</u>	<u>NA</u>
	956964	899688
DONATIONS		
SWISS CANTONAL CHURCH GENERAL DONATION	143881	157471
OTHER INSTITUTIONAL GENERAL DONATION	2921	6266
MEMBER CHURCH GENERAL DONATION	14907	13711
INDIVIDUAL GENERAL DONATION	2168	17966
	<u>163878</u>	<u>195414</u>
OTHER REVENUES		
OTHER REVENUE	54962	940
INTEREST INCOME	162	-372
INVESTMENT INCOME	11056	7154
PUBLICATION SALES	281	717
	<u>66060</u>	<u>8438</u>
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION FEES		
GIT	6000	0
GENDER JUSTICE	0	7827
COVENANTING FOR JUSTICE	0	7417
PARTNERSHIP FUND B SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION	0	200000
CJM	28512	22900
EMW	16212	10796
PARTNERSHIP FUND	21170	24925
	<u>71894</u>	<u>272965</u>
TOTAL REVENUE	1258795	1376504
EXPENSE		
OPERATING		
GENERAL SECRETARIAT		
BASE PAY	652233	657050
OVERTIME & AWARD	0	22193
SOCIAL CHARGES	200466	189758
EXPAT EXPENSE	0	13395
OTHER STAFF EXPENSE	2479	1943
GENEVA OFFICE RENTAL	73923	67669
IT CHARGES	31816	32938
GENEVA OFFICE EXPENSE	9917	19576
US OFFICE EXPENSE	7	151
	<u>970741</u>	<u>1003338</u>
GOVERNING BODY		
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE EXPENSE	82094	70728
PRESIDENT EXPENSE	6323	4435
OFFICERS EXPENSE	7716	1829
	<u>96133</u>	<u>76982</u>
PUBLICATIONS		
REFORMED COMMUNIQUE	16921	38790
REFORMED WORLD	0	38573
	<u>16921</u>	<u>75363</u>
GENERAL SECRETARY		
GENERAL SECRETARY EXPENSE	21014	23659
GENERAL SECRETARY REPRESENTATION	4781	850
RECRUITMENT	10593	8986
GLOBAL CHRISTIAN FORUM	700	700
GLOBETHICS	987	924
	<u>38465</u>	<u>35118</u>
DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNICATION		
DEVELOPMENT OFFICE	7655	NA
EM	30061	30163
WCRC PROMOTION	9871	12382
	<u>47386</u>	<u>42544</u>
FINANCE		
BANK TRANSACTION FEES	2823	5650
BANK ADVISORY FEES	3730	
AUDIT FEES	4510	7844
ACCOUNTING FEES	0	13160
OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES	3037	3315
INSURANCE	627	869
	<u>14927</u>	<u>30658</u>
TOTAL	1184564	1264214
NON-OPERATING		
ANNUAL GENERAL COUNCIL FUND CONTRIBUTION	67820	64455
FINANCIAL PROVISIONS	31222	12010
FOREIGN EXCHANGE LOSS	22664	18928
	<u>59082</u>	<u>95293</u>
TOTAL	1243626	1369507
TOTAL EXPENSE	1243626	1369507
NET INCOME	15169	16998

Cash Flow Statement

		2012	
	RECEIPT	K CHF PAYMENT	VARIANCE
SUBLEDGER			
CASH RECEIPTS	2'234		
CASH PAYMENTS		910	
GENERAL LEDGER			
DIVIDEND	8		
BARNABAS DISTRIBUTION	2		
ANTEX		454	
WCC		554	
AMEX		29	
PAYOUT TO WCRC EUROPE		10	
	2'244	1'957	287
Program	708	856	
Core	1'536	1'101	
FOREIGN EXCHANGE ADJUSTMENT			-22
NET VARIANCE AFTER FOREIGN EXCHANGE ADJUSTMENT			265

Statement of Changes in Capital

JAN. 1, 2011 DEBIT CREDIT DEC. 31, 2011 DEBIT CREDIT JAN. 1, 2012 DEBIT CREDIT DEC. 31, 2012 DEBIT CREDIT JAN. 1, 2013

OWN FUND ACCOUNTS

GENERAL RESERVE	96483	7456	99835	188862		205859		205859	221028
UEK SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION							362190	362190	362190
GENERAL COUNCIL FUND	230998	1313420	1439850	357428		357428	67620	425048	425048
CURRENT YEAR RESULT			16998	16998			15169	15169	
TOTAL	327481	1320876	1556682	563287		563287	444979	1008266	1008266

WORLD COMMUNION OF REFORMED CHURCHES

Geneva, Switzerland

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended Dec. 31, 2012

Summary

World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) is a non-profit association founded in June 2010 pursuant to articles 60ss of the Swiss Civil Code.

WCRC remains legally registered in Geneva, Switzerland as of Dec. 31, 2012.

Per Executive Committee resolution of November 2012, the office of the General Secretariat of WCRC will be relocated to Germany at the end of 2013.

The present financial statements have been prepared, as in 2011, in accordance with the generally accepted accounting principles of Switzerland (Swiss GAAP RPC) and have followed the guidance and provisions that are specifically developed for charitable, social non-profit organizations, Swiss GAAP RPC 21.

Accounting Policies and Process

Effective Jan. 1, 2012 and in line with recommendations of Swiss GAAP RPC 21, accrual-based accounting was adopted, mainly due to the increased size of WCRC balance sheet which stood above CHF 2 million by year end.

Effective Jan. 1, 2012, expenditures on fixed assets were capitalized and were recorded on the balance sheet. A 3-year straight-line depreciation is applied.

The present financial statements will be put before WCRC Executive Committee for approval during its annual meeting in Accra, Ghana in May 2013.

Income Statement

For the second successive year, WCRC achieved an operating surplus of CHF 82'789 (incl. contributions made into General Council Fund) in 2012.

Total 2012 membership fees billings stand at around CHF 1.2 million, as authorized by Executive Committee in May 2012. The billings were produced on the basis of newly developed fair contribution table.

The United Church of Canada contribution for WCRC Communication Office was recognized as assimilated membership fees payment and is adjusted accordingly on the ledger.

The bad debt allowance for membership fees is essentially determined on the basis of membership fees collected up to March 2013.

Other Revenue is mostly government subsidies for WCRC employing on its staff team one individual benefitting a special government employment assistance program.

Exceptionally, expenses related to Reformed World are paid out by program in 2012.

Program related cash inflows and outflows continue to be booked directly through respective balance sheet accounts.

A contribution of CHF 67'620 is earmarked from 2012 operating surplus and is credited to the General Council Fund.

Balance Sheet

Accounts Receivable was recorded on the balance sheet in 2012 as the result of WCRC adopting accrual-based accounting. The net amount was duly substantiated by adequate bad debt allowance.

The securities held by WCRC had generally performed well in 2012 and were recorded at market value as of Dec. 31, 2012.

Petty cash that was previous held "in-house" has been deposited to PostFinance account in 2012.

The donations for Barnabas Foundation under Transit Accounts / Liabilities were endowment donations received in 2012 and the total amount had been subsequently transferred to Barnabas Foundation early 2013.

A debit balance of CHF 26'878 at year end for Partnership Fund A was exceptionally allowed on the basis of the contractually committed donor contributions for 2012.

No special transfers from or into the Custodian Funds took place in 2012.

As of Dec. 31, 2012, there were no pending legal cases intended against WCRC.

As of Dec. 31, 2012, no financial guarantees or any other type of off balance sheet financial obligations towards third parties were undertaken by WCRC.

As of Dec. 31, 2012, WCRC had bank accounts at:

- BNP Paribas (Suisse) SA, Geneva, Switzerland

- La PostFinance, Geneva, Switzerland
- Lombard Odier Darier Hentsch (LODH), Geneva, Switzerland
- UBS, Geneva, Switzerland (added in 2012)
- 5th 3rd Bank, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA

Cash Flow Statement

The direct method was applied to produce the present Cash Flow Statement. At the end of Dec. 2012, the net cash and cash equivalent position of WCRC was increased by around CHF 265'000, compared with a year ago.

Statement of Changes in Capital

WCRC Net Equity or Reserve Fund stood at CHF 1,008,266 at year end which represents an increase of 79%, compared with a year ago.

A major special contribution of CHF 362,190 was made in 2012 by Union Evangelischer Kirchen (UEK) in Germany and was booked directly into Reserve Fund.

Performance Report

The mission of WCRC is to assist its member churches by

1. widening and deepening understanding and community among the member churches and helping them to fulfill their own responsibilities in the service of Christ;
2. facilitating the transformation of the member churches into interdependent missional communities that support, empower and challenge each other as partners in the one mission of God;
3. promoting the full and just participation of all members, of all ages, in all aspects of the church's life and its public witness;
4. promoting the full and just partnership of women and men in church and society;
5. encouraging and promoting diaconal service in the church and society.

and to contribute to the ecumenical movement and the transformation of the world by

1. promoting economic and ecological justice, global peace, and reconciliation in the world;

2. promoting and defending religious, civil, and all other human rights wherever threatened throughout the world;
3. encouraging and promoting relief and sustainable development in the world and focusing on the eradication of poverty;
4. providing Reformed perspectives on church unity.

The main governing body of WCRC is its General Council which meets every 7 years. Its role is assumed by its Executive Committee (30 members) in between.

WCRC President, General Treasurer and General Secretary are its authorized legal signatories and are duly registered with Geneva cantonal authorities.

The following individuals are currently registered with Geneva cantonal authorities as WCRC Executive Committee members:

1. Pillay Jerry, South Africa, President, joint legal signatory
2. Barraza Díaz Helis Hernán, Colombia, Vice-President
3. Lu Yueh-Wen, Taiwan, Vice-President
4. Noble Bloomfield Yvette, Jamaica, Vice-President
5. Plaisier Bastiaan, The Netherlands, Vice-President
6. Nyomi Setriakor, Ghana, General Secretary, joint legal signatory
7. Weusmann Johann, Germany, General Treasurer, joint legal signatory
8. Abou Sawan Najla Kassab, Lebanon
9. Borgdorff Peter, USA
10. Buckingham Allan, Canada
11. Bukowski Peter, Germany
12. Fontaine Mary, Canada
13. Gerber Jacobus, South Africa
14. Hadiputeri Yael Eka, Indonesia
15. Kirkpatrick Clifton, USA
16. Leal da Silva Clayton, Brazil
17. Mok Cheh Liang, Malaysia
18. Majaw Subha Singh, India
19. Meban Cheryl, UK
20. Muchiri Veronica Njoki, Kenya
21. Musemakweli Elisée, Rwanda
22. Nafuki Allen, Vanuatu
23. Parsons Gradye, USA
24. Tron Carola, Uruguay
25. Twum Salome, Ghana

The following individuals are in the process of being registered:

1. Gabriela Mulder, Argentina
2. Jan-Gerd Heetderks, The Netherlands

3. Yoshimitsu Fujimori, Japan
4. Lydia Adajawah, Ghana
5. Brenda Bullock, Trinidad and Tobago

All Executive Committee members serve as volunteers except the General Secretary who is an ex-officio Executive Committee member and WCRC employee at the same time. WCRC General Secretary received a base pay of around CHF 137'000 in 2012.

The expense of WCRC governing body is reimbursed on an effectively incurred expenditure basis. No other cash payment was made to members of WCRC governing body in 2012.

Summary of Custodian Funds Movement

PROGRAMS	OPENING BALANCE	DEBIT	CREDIT	CLOSING BALANCE
	Jan. 1, 2012			Dec. 31, 2012
	CHF			
GLOBAL INSTITUTE OF THEOLOGY (GIT) TOTAL	141'954	195'654	113'464	59'763
THEOLOGICAL DIALOGS TOTAL	7'382	10'518	8'666	5'530
MISSION TOTAL	23'525	14'798	22'930	31'656
2714 MADIP TOTAL	34'208	0	0	34'208
GEORGES LOMBARD PRIZE TOTAL	20'682	166	0	20'516
COVENANTING FOR JUSTICE TOTAL	72'000	27'043	0	44'957
GENDER JUSTICE TOTAL	147'648	3'312	4'897	149'233
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION FOR WOMEN TOTAL	208'318	6'821	3'476	204'973
WCRC REGIONAL SUPPORT TOTAL	27'421	63'653	36'232	0
JUSTICE & PARTNERSHIP OFFICE SUPPORT TOTAL	18'318	47'883	29'565	0
GENERAL SECRETARY PROGRAMS TOTAL	31'654	27'751	7'568	11'470
YOUTH PROGRAM TOTAL	-41	0	41	0
GLOBAL SOUTH INTERNSHIP PROGRAM TOTAL	46'953	44'003	35'951	38'900
NORTH AMERICAN INTERNSHIP FUND TOTAL	41'393	27'333	452	14'511
NATIVE AMERICAN PROJECT TOTAL	1'205	84	2'749	3'871
NEW ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ARCHITECTURE (NEFA) TOTAL	NA	153'077	243'133	90'056
REGIONAL COMMUNICATION TOTAL	NA	0	15'000	15'000
PARTNERSHIP FUND A TOTAL	7'845	188'963	154'240	-26'878
PARTNERSHIP FUND B TOTAL	80'989	44'887	29'608	65'710
PARTNERSHIP FUND D TOTAL	21'999	0	0	21'999
PARTNERSHIP FUND E TOTAL	72'874	0	0	72'874
TOTAL	1'006'324	855'945	707'972	858'350

Asset Details

	Dec. 31, 2012 CHF	Dec. 31, 2011 CHF
CURRENT ASSETS		
CASH		
CASH CHF	0	11'542
CASH US	0	12
CASH EUR	0	774
CASH	0	12'328
BANK		
POSTFINANCE CHF ACCOUNT	556'720	191'839
BNP PARIBAS CHF ACCOUNT	3'502	-12'413
BNP PARIBAS US ACCOUNT	871'748	1'355'423
BNP PARIBAS EUR ACCOUNT		364
BNP PARIBAS GBP ACCOUNT	1'007	3'654
5TH 3R BANK US ACCOUNT	42'499	31'155
UBS CHF ACCOUNT	9'921	NA
UBS EURO ACCOUNT	362'024	NA
WORLDPAY CHF ACCOUNT	140	36
BANK	1'847'562	1'570'057
ENDOWMENT		
BARNABAS FOUNDATION	45'710	45'753
ENDOWMENT	45'710	45'753
INVESTMENT		
UNITE UTILITIES PLC	9'784	9'784
UNITE UTILITIES PLC PROVISION	-5'856	-6'306
PRUENTIAL PLC	82'427	82'427
PRUENTIAL PLC PROVISIONS	15'937	-11'016
LLOYDS TSB GROUP PLC	80'029	80'029
LLOYDS TSB GROUP PLC PROVISIONS	-74'213	-76'924
ING GROEP NV	125'723	125'723
ING GROEP NV PROVISIONS	-95'919	-102'061
ROYAL UTCH SHELL PLC	81'930	81'930
ROYAL UTCH SHELL PLC PROVISIONS	-800	8'150
DEUTSCHE POST AG	29'956	29'956
DEUTSCHE POST AG PROVISIONS	-14'541	-18'828
SWISS LIFE HOLING	475	475
SWISS LIFE HOLING PROVISIONS	982	562
LODH FUND	23'283	23'283
LODH FUND PROVISIONS	-6'653	-2'481
ECUMENICAL DEVELOP. COOP. SOC. (EDCS)	1'295	1'295
EDCS PROVISIONS	-68	586
INVESTMENT	253'770	226'584
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE		
AFRICA ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	6'186	
LATIN AMERICA ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	4'205	
CANAAC ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	3'485	
ASIA ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	38'638	
PACIFIC ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	1'723	
EUROPE ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	30'018	
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	84'254	NA
BUSINESS ADVANCE		537
BUSINESS ADVANCE - JERRY PILLAY	3'576	
BUSINESS ADVANCE - DORA ARCE	2'000	
BUSINESS ADVANCE - STEVE LYTCH	4'538	
BUSINESS ADVANCE - VERONICA MUCHIRI	137	
BUSINESS ADVANCE - DARIO BAROLIN	810	
ACCRUED REVENUE & DEFERRED EXPENSE	33'246	132'358
TRANSIT ACCOUNTS	44'306	132'895
FIXED ASSETS		
IT INFRASTRUCTURE	4'502	
IT INFRASTRUCTURE	4'502	NA
TOTAL ASSETS	2'280'104	1'987'617

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Steve Lytch

Endowment Fund

1. We currently have approximately \$50,000 invested with the Barnabas Foundation. Peter Borgdorff and I met with the President of the Foundation and two of its board members in July. We informed them of our sustainability campaign and solicited their advice.

A planned gift of \$35,000 has been completed with Barnabas. The donor is in the 90+ age bracket.

Annual Fund

2. For the third year, a mailing was sent out in November under the auspices of the North American/Caribbean Endowment Fund Trustees inviting contributions to the annual fund. We sent out 580 invitations. We received 36 responses for a total of \$11,396.

3. Here is a chart showing results for all three years:

	2010 (# donors)	2011 (# donors)	2012 (# donors)
Nat. Amer. project	\$2500 (2)	\$4450 (5)	
Endowment	\$3250 (2)	\$3600 (3)	\$8592 (24)
Theo. Ed. South	\$500 (1)	0	\$750 (1)
Unrestricted	\$1325 (10)	\$6445 (26)	\$1554 (11)
Dorn internship	\$0	\$18,980 (20)	\$500 (1)
N.A.Devel. Expense	\$0	\$3000 (3)	\$0
Total	\$7575 (13)	\$36,475 (58)	\$11,396 (36)
N.A. Trustee donors	4	4	6

NB Some donations had more than one designation

Sustainability Fund

4. The Sustainability Fund was established to ensure the viability of WCRC's core functions. Historically we have relied on fees from member churches to sustain core functions such as pastoral visits to churches by the General Secretary and President,

communications that keep us connected, and the work of the Executive Committee that embodies the Communion. While most member churches are faithful in their commitments, the long-term reliability of membership fees to sustain our work is questionable. Many of the churches upon which we rely for the largest contributions are facing financial challenges. Churches that have relied on member assessments and unrestricted gifts to cover their basic functions are looking for new funding models. Membership fees will continue to be the cornerstone of our financial structure, but the Executive Committee, representing the member churches, is charged with the duty of responding to a changing financial landscape.

5. Among the steps the Executive Committee has taken to address that changing landscape are actions to improve the fair collection of member fees (through a revised fair grid contribution table) and to control expenses (through the decision to relocate to Hanover). Generous grants from CMW, EMW and EKD give us a foundation from which to build a solid financial base. The Sustainability Fund was established to ensure that WCRC's witness to communion and justice will not have to depend on the vicissitudes of economic conditions or funding patterns. It is a commitment to the core values of WCRC, and an opportunity to invite others alongside us to support our work.
6. In May the Executive Committee adopted initial goals toward raising £10 million by 2017 for the Sustainability Fund. Regional groups were asked to suggest names to serve on global and regional steering committees. That proved to be a daunting task, and no action has been taken toward constituting these committees.
7. The Executive Committee assigned each region goals for 2012-2013. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield, working with Norbert Stevens, General Secretary of the United Church of Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, identified 4 members of UCJCI whom they contacted about supporting WCRC. In December, two of those members participated in a Skype call with Yvette, Norbert and myself. It was stated that any fundraising in UCJCI would need to be targeted toward specific programmes. There was considerable interest in the work that Justice and Partnership is planning to address human trafficking. Both church members offered their expertise and knowledge of the Caribbean church to assist in raising funds to support that work.
8. In November Peter Borgdorff and I met with a potential donor in Grand Rapids. Peter is working on developing that relationship. We also met with the DeVos Family Foundation (see below).

9. The goals that the Executive Committee adopted for the Sustainability Fund are extremely ambitious for an organization that has limited experience and infrastructure for funds development. Most donors begin their giving relationship with an organization by contributing to a particular project that intersects with their interest. The staff of WCRC has done a remarkable job of finding donors for particular projects, and one of our challenges is retaining those donors while helping them broaden their vision of our work so they donate to a Sustainability Fund. (Douwe Visser has identified two European foundations that have supported specific programmes that are ready to be approached for sustainability grants.) But it takes time for these kinds of commitments to particular aspects of our work to translate into a desire to support the Sustainability Fund.
10. The cornerstone of an organization's fundraising efforts is its board. Board members are relied on to be lead givers, as well as to identify and help recruit potential donors. The character of our Executive Committee (the equivalent of a board) is somewhat different. For one thing, the cultures from which we come have differing approaches to philanthropy. In addition, members are not necessarily selected for their fundraising expertise but for other, equally valuable qualifications (ecumenical experience, commitment to justice, etc.). Therefore, it would be good if the Executive Committee could spend some time exploring how each Executive Committee member can best use her or his gifts to be an ambassador for WCRC in a way that ensures we have the resources we need to thrive. That is something most successful boards do, regardless of the members' experience in fundraising. We also need to look at what is unique about WCRC in regards to fundraising, i.e. how a global organization that has our special commitments goes about raising support in a way that recognizes and respects a variety of giving cultures while maximizing our partnerships.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation

11. The Presbyterian Foundation has a strong interest in partnering with WCRC. We are moving forward with them on two projects:

Pastors gathering in Geneva – We are planning a gathering in August of approximately 30 pastors - 20 from the Global North and 10 from the Global South. They are being invited to think together about the future of the Reformed movement in the 21st century. In addition to learning about the work of WCRC, participants will be asked to think together about how to sustain that work financially. One criterion for invitations is the potential of the attendees to connect us to sources of significant funding. The Foundation is underwriting this event with a grant of

\$20,000. Other funding will come from the budget of the development office (\$2100) and participants' registration fees (\$400 for those from the Global North and \$50 for those from the Global South).

Presbyterian Mission Exchange – The Foundation has invited us to participate in this method of collecting funds online. We now have a link on our Web site that connects to the Exchange where the Office of Communications has designed pages to convey our message. There is also a link for online donations. The Foundation charges only for its expense, and it is cheaper than PayPal, which we were using. The Foundation sends an acknowledgement to the donor, keeps track of donors, and keeps us informed of all gifts. We can also use the service to communicate directly with donors. The largest drawback to the Exchange is that it is not a comprehensive donor-tracking programme. I have been in conversation with Blackbaud about their donor-tracking programme for small organizations (which costs \$9.90/month for a database of up to 1000 names), and we can proceed with that if the Mission Exchange proves inadequate. Allan Buckingham has provided essential guidance in these discussions.

DeVos Foundation

12. In November Peter Borgdorff and I met with the executive director of the DeVos Family Foundations to ascertain their interest in supporting WCRC. The executive director offered to provide the services of two of their professional researchers in helping us design focus groups for pastors in order to hone our message and build relationships. Peter has been in continuing conversation about this.

Denominational gatherings

13. In July Jerry Pillay preached at the ecumenical service at the PCUSA General Assembly in Pittsburgh. The day before the service, we hosted a forum on WCRC that featured a panel including Jerry, Cliff, Neal Presa and Jane Dempsey Douglass. About 50 attended.

In conjunction with Setri's participation in the General Synod of the United Church of Christ in late June/early July 2013, Jane Dempsey Douglas is organizing events in Southern California for friends and potential friends of WCRC to meet Setri. WCRC has been invited to hold a workshop at the PCUSA Big Tent event in August.

I represented Setri at the 200th anniversary celebration of Princeton Theological Seminary in October and will represent him at the General Synod of the CRCNA in June.

REPORT OF THE REFORMED CHURCHES PARTNERSHIP FUND

Douwe Visser

Report 2012 for the Executive Committee 2013

1. In the last year the Partnership Fund (PF) has gone through some significant changes. As decided by the Executive Meeting in 2012, Páraic Réamonn was appointed as deputy PF coordinator. He works now for 70% for the PF. The volunteer Antoinette Berkouwer decided to ask to be released from her duties and ended her work on 31 December 2012.
2. Our only donor for the development part of the PF, the Evangelische Entwicklungsdienst (EED), moved from Bonn to Berlin and is now together with Brot für die Welt (BfW), and our relation is now with BfW. Over the past years the many changes within EED have not always made it easy for us to work together but we can now count on stability on their side.
3. The funds for the mission part are, notwithstanding some donations, still not at a high enough level. We will come at this meeting with some ideas for raising funds.
4. We received approval in 2012 of a grant amounting to Euro 400,000 from BfW. This grant is for 2013 but runs for three years: it has only to be spent by 31 December 2015. We can apply for a new grant (2014-2016) already in 2013. However 2013 is the last year that we receive money from church – KED (Kirchliche Entwicklungsdienst) – funds. If we apply for funds for 2014 we will – if approved – receive money from German government funds. We have been made aware by BfW of the strict and very detailed government rules of project approval and reporting. With government funds we must absolutely fully comply with the rules because failure would make us an unreliable partner. This asks much of us working in the office but also of our partners, i.e. member churches who have applied for help. We have to take at this meeting a final decision whether we apply for government funds this year or whether – in light of all the changes related to relocation – we postpone this for one year.
5. Since we also since 2010 support with development funds member churches facing an emergency situation, we have – under the German government rules – to make further changes in the procedure. You will be asked to approve this during our Executive Committee meeting.

6. In light of new the new staffing situation a changed job description has been made. This is attached to the report. We have to see how the situation will be in the coming year when the PF coordinator will work in Hanover with the Deputy PF coordinator working – until his retirement on 30 June 2014 – in Geneva.
7. You will find below an overview of grants approved from both the development and the mission funds. The total figures are:

Development Funds: 6 projects; USD 50,040 & CHF 119,618
Mission Funds: 4 projects; USD 42,700 & CHF 30,000
8. We ended 2012 with a lot of development projects on the waiting list that could not yet be sponsored due to the fact that we had spent most of our funds. We will get the new funds from BfW once we have given a final report of the past period 2010–2012. It should be of first priority now to follow up churches who received funds to send us their reports.
9. Our working with regional coordinators is still in development but has to be worked out further.

A AND B PROJECTS APPROVED IN 2012

1. **0112B**
Reformed Theology and God's Mission in Central America, AIPRAL. USD 18,200 (Meeting deferred until 2013)

Dialogue and encounter about Reformed theology and God's mission in the sub-region between AIPRAL member churches, theological seminaries and social organizations related to Reformed and ecumenical churches. A three-day meeting, followed up by systematizing and publishing the results.

2. **0212A**
Active stewardship of creation and promotion of just and harmonious societies, AIPRAL. USD 17,040

The project is a follow-up to the continental consultation on water held in Guatemala in August 2011 (also supported by the Partnership Fund). It seeks to raise awareness and share information on climate justice, water and human rights. It involves an awareness seminar and training on climate justice and water with leaders of churches and other organizations in Central America and production of a handbook of resources.

3. 0312A

Social Evangelical Action Day Centre, Evangelical Church of the River Plate (IERP). USD 33,000

The beneficiaries of the project are people living in a situation of great social vulnerability – especially children, teenagers and youth – in the San Lorenzo, San Francisco and San Jorge neighbourhoods of the Municipality of San Fernando. The focus of the work is on 45 impoverished households, comprising about 250 people.

The Day Centre includes a mental health service, accompaniment of young people in trouble with the law who are on probation, workshops (bakery, macramé, painting, sewing), support for school children (English and other subjects), and a youth orchestra. A staff of 20 educators, professionals and volunteers is coordinated by the pastor.

4. 0412A

Empowerment of communities through capacity building, Sri Lanka. CHF 29,618.

This project is part of a larger programme to strengthen the Presbytery of Lanka. It aims to strengthen the mission stations to meet the challenges of justice, peace, human rights, and development and to enhance the lives of people in the needy communities they serve.

These communities are multiply vulnerable: they face economic risks, environmental hazards, and political uncertainties. The Indian Tamils in the plantation sector are a particularly neglected group.

5. 0512A

Out of Africa – into Malta, St Andrew’s Scottish Church/ Church of Scotland. CHF 30,000

One consequence of the Arab Spring was a small flood of immigrants and refugees from North Africa (and sub-Saharan Africa) into Malta. St Andrew’s Scots Church (a joint congregation of the Church of Scotland and the Methodist Church UK) has been in the forefront of efforts to care for and settle these people. Now the aim is to enable them to make a new life.

Malta Microfinance, a limited company established by the church and other partners and modelled on the Grameen Bank, will offer ways to stabilize families and community groups, building a

future for themselves. The grant of CHF30,000 is intended to provide start-up finance.

6. 0612B

CAP camp, Rwanda 2012. USD 14,000

CAP 2012 is the twelfth in a series of intercultural Christian youth camps that began in 1985 as the United Protestant Church in Belgium and the Église presbytérienne au Rwanda revised their traditional mission relationships. In 1997, the Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa made the camps a three-way relationship. Currently the Evangelical Reformed Church in Germany is a fourth partner. The Evangelical Church of the Congo and the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden have also been involved in the past.

Historically, these camps have been supported by WARC and WCRC through the Partnership Fund and, in 2006 and 2008, formed part of the MADIP (transforming mission) project.

7. 0712A

Christian-Muslim understanding and reconciliation, (Evangelical Church of Egypt, Synod of the Nile). CHF30,000

The Evangelical Church of Egypt has long recognized the need for dialogue between Christians and Muslims. A new Egypt is in the making, and the voice of Christian and Reformed minorities needs to be strengthened in witness to the saving grace of God and the principles of democracy, justice, peace, liberty and human rights, and in opposition to extremism and fundamentalism of all kinds.

As a first step, the project will organize worships to train small groups of pastors and laypeople in dialogue in different cities and villages all over the country. Books, booklets, CDs and a newspaper are also planned.

8. 1012B

Purchase of a second-hand vehicle for the the Congregational Church of Myanmar (Congregational Federation of Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand). USD10,500

The Congregational Federation of Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, with about 3,000 members, is one of the smaller WCRC churches. For the last decade, it has worked in partnership with the Congregational Church of Myanmar, an even smaller church established in 2000 by Elvis Sa Do. The Congregational Federation would now like to help Elvis Sa Do to buy a second-

hand vehicle to enable him to travel more easily to and from the churches in his field of mission.

9. 1212A

Agape Dream Centre (Presbyterian Church of Malaysia, GPM).
CHF30,000

For the last two decades, Gereja Grace Batu Pahat, a congregation of the GPM, has conducted missionary work among the indigenous people of the Iban tribe in the interior of Sarawak. In recent years, people from this rural tribe have migrated to the city of Sibu, Sarawak. They cannot afford to send their children to the local kindergartens, which charge high fees. This means their children are at a disadvantage when they start school and often become discouraged and drop out.

The Agape Dream Centre will train and equip two to four indigenous women in early childhood education and will also provide training for young indigenous mothers struggling to adapt to the urban environment. The project intends to becoming self-sustaining after two years.

10. 1312B

GlobeTheoLib (WCRC Office of Theology, Mission and Communion)
CHF30,000

Globethics.net is a worldwide ethics network based in Geneva. It provides an electronic platform for ethical reflection and action. Its founding conviction is that more equal access to knowledge resources will enable people and institutions from the global South to make their voices heard in the global conversation on values. Its central instrument is the internet site www.globethics.net.

The Global Digital Library on Theology and Ecumenism (GlobeTheoLib) was inaugurated in September 2011 to foster theological exchange within and between countries and regions and to create greater visibility for theological knowledge and insights from churches of the global South. Development of the library is overseen by a consortium of Christian ecumenical organizations including WCRC.

Globethics.net will work with the WCRC Office of Theology, Mission and Communion to develop content on Reformed theology and ethics within GlobeTheoLib, which as it grows will become a significant resource for the Global Institute of Theology and the WCRC theological network.

REPORT OF THE AFRICAN COMMUNION OF REFORMED CHURCHES (ACRC)

Lydia Adajawah

This report is based on the ACRC regional consultations conducted with representatives of member churches. Given the geographically wide spectrum within which ACRC member churches are located in Africa, it was feasible to adopt the strategy developed by the Reformed Churches in Southern Africa- to allow member churches that are close together to work through sub-regional structures and bring in the executive Committee members for meetings. The process led to two consultations that built on the resolutions from the ACRC Conference in Kapanong, Johannesburg on 27-28 October 2011. These two consultations were scheduled as a build-up towards the ACRC 2013 General Assembly on 29 May-2 June 2013 in Kampala, Uganda.

Togo Consultation

The African Communion of Reformed Churches (ACRC) West African consultation took place in Kpalime, Togo from the 17th to the 21st of September 2012 under the theme, "The Journey of the African Communion of Reformed Churches (ACRC)". This consultation sought to address the following themes:

- a) Improving communication within the ACRC
- b) Accompanying churches in difficult situations (Focus on Nigeria)
- c) Funding ACRC programmes and ensuring sustainability
- d) WCRC Sustainability Fund- strategies for ACRC contributions
- e) Sharing information on the Partnership Fund

Resolutions from the Togo Consultation

1. Having considered the report on the WCRC Sustainability Fund and the need for ACRC to mobilize resources to sustain its work and contribute CHF 25 000 towards the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC)'s Sustainability Fund, we agreed that member churches should contribute \$1000 each (\$500 towards WCRC and \$500 towards ACRC).
2. After listening to a report and presentation on strategies to improve organizational communication within the ACRC, we resolved the following:
3. To ensure that contact details for ACRC member churches are continuously updated and circulated to member churches.
4. To ensure that information on ACRC activities is circulated on time to allow for member churches to organize themselves, especially where invitations to participate in programmes are concerned.
5. We re-affirmed the need for ACRC to take advantage of communication technology and utilize the new ACRC website

(www.acrc.za.org), internet, face book, skype, cell-phone texting, telephones and use of postage where necessary.

6. To encourage member churches to appoint responsible people with integrity into positions and ACRC participation so that they can report back and guide implementation of ACRC programmes at local level.
7. To encourage ACRC member churches to develop sub-regional or local activities and networks to implement WCRC and ACRC vision and Mission Priorities.
8. Having listened to a presentation on one the ACRC themes, “accompanying churches in difficult situations” with specific reference to the Nigerian situation of the churches in the North, we learnt of the challenges related to the activities of Boka Haram and increasing threats from Islamist extremists, we resolved the following;
9. To mobilize member churches to pray for one another and seek common solutions to challenges affecting ACRC members, especially Christians spread out in communities where there are growing religious tensions like northern Nigeria.
10. Empower the churches to respond to challenges we face in our communities through
 - Leadership development: training and developing leaders who will “match their words” and live out their faith boldly, courageously and in righteousness.
 - Addressing gender discrimination and provide equal opportunities for women.
 - Education: encouraging member churches to develop educational programmes
 - Gift of Presence as symbolic giving. Encouraging leaders to visit affected areas as a pastoral dimension of our communion and ecumenical fellowship within ACRC.

Kenya Consultation

Representatives from Churches in East and Southern Africa met under the theme “*God of Life, our Communion prays for Justice and Peace*”. In our sharing and from the reports regarding the involvement in the work and life of the WCRC and the ACRC we noted with joy that the WCRC is on the agenda of most members, but also with concern that more work still needs to be done for ACRC to be an effective regional body of WCRC. Member churches were encouraged to see to it that this communion, “*our communion,*” is constantly on the agenda and the communication of churches to own this body and take part in its activities.

Recommendations from Nairobi, Kenya Consultation

1. On communication

Participants shared their experiences in communication challenges within member churches and information was circulated that a regional

website (www.acrc.za.org) has been developed to improve communication. We resolved to plead with the leadership of member churches and their administrations to make sure that all correspondence receives due and timely attention – for the wellbeing of the Communion.

2. On Finances

It was noted that a large number of member churches are in arrears regarding their membership contributions to the WCRC. In the light of WCRC decision to terminate membership of non-affiliated churches, communication has been sent to affected member churches. We reminded churches that according to WCRC resolutions, member churches that are three years in arrears will have their membership suspended

2.1 WCRC Sustainability Fund

Information was shared regarding the long term sustainability of the WCRC, established by the Executive Committee in May 2012. In line with the resolution made in Togo, it was agreed that member churches should each contribute a minimum of \$500 towards this initiative.

3. Accra Confession

A discussion was conducted on the Accra Confession in the light of our current situation and contexts in Africa. We took note of work that has been conducted by CWM and the WCC on the Accra Confession, and also of the huge input from European Churches on the Accra Confession. We were also encouraged to learn that there are churches in Africa who have developed strategic plans to deal with various themes in the Accra Confession, inter alia economic, gender and ecological justice. There were examples given where Churches have engaged with their governments on these issues on the basis of the Accra Confession. We, however, also learned that we have not succeeded in owning the Confession fully.

To assist member churches in reflecting on the ACCRA Confession, the consultation came up with recommendations through group discussions that were focused on two questions:

3.1. What can members churches do to live out and implement the Accra Confession?

The following suggestions were raised:

- Communicate the Accra Confession to every local church and member. It is so easy through the existing communication channels of churches.
- Engage with the Accra Confession in the practical congregational ministry: discussion groups, bible studies, workshops, sermons, liturgies, etc. Women's groups and

youth groups can take stewardship for inter alia the environment and launch a project to plant trees or recycle.

- Collaborate with other churches, religions and organizations to address the core issues of the Accra Confession.
- Make the Accra Confession part of the teaching curriculum in seminaries and in the teaching ministry of the local church.
- Use the Accra Confession when issuing statements on issues regarding justice.
- Participate with civil society regarding the issues addressed in the Accra Confession.

3.2. What can we as ACRC do to assist member churches to live out the Accra Confession?

We will try to do the following:

- Make sure the ACRC website is functioning and that regular regional communiqués are circulated.
- Develop contextual literature for study and pamphlets for grass root communication.
- Facilitate workshops in different countries with church leaders.
- Emphasize that the message and spirit of the Accra Confession is the most important: we do not want churches to get stuck in detail with which they may disagree.
- Develop a generic document based on the Accra Confession for all faiths: this must be done together with the other religions.
- Conduct a critical analysis of the African context.
- Find ways for churches to act together on common issues.
- Dialogue with politicians and academics on the issues in the Accra Confession.
- Develop an African-contextual Bible study book on Accra.
- Simplify/ summarize/ contextualize Accra.

4. Accompaniment of churches in difficult situations

Time was also spent on the discussion on ways in which the ACRC can accompany and assist churches in difficult situations. The question was asked: *How can we facilitate discussions, create safe and open spaces, and keep relations intact?* In this accompaniment process we recognized two approaches:

- (1) Being in solidarity with affected churches -walking alongside them through prayer and support) and/ or
- (2) Exercising a prophetic witness towards a church or society (speak the truth to powers).

We noted that member churches are struggling inter alia with the following issues: tribalism, intolerance, violence, corruption, HIV-Aids, poverty, terrorist attacks, ordination of women, issues regarding sexuality, violence against churches (religious violence), and the question how does the church protest against corruption, crime,

governments, violence against law enforcers, the powers behind wrongdoing. We heard the story of the uprooting of people in the late 60's in Mauritius by the USA and which has not been resolved in that community.

As ACRC we can assist the accompaniment process through education and empowerment, statements by the ACRC encouraging churches, organizing prayers with them, challenge governments on justice issues, collecting good data and facts to address issues, etc.

5. Project on Human Dignity and the Value of Life

We were disturbed by the spiral of violence in our region, and this spiral leads to a lot of other problems and back to violence again: corruption, crime, abuse, etc. We resolved to do a critical analysis of violence, crime and corruption in Africa. We also decided to be proactive and give serious attention to human dignity (life-affirming and life-empowering actions) in our region. In this regard we want to ask member churches to assist with a possible programme *Human dignity and the value of life* to be launched at the ACRC meeting in 2013. We are convinced that we can be instruments to restore and heal Africa. A task team from Southern Africa will work on a discussion document to be presented at the ACRC General Assembly in Kampala, Uganda.

6. Attention to the work of the WCRC and ACRC on Reformation Sunday

We agreed that we will ask our member churches to share information on the WCRC and ACRC, using the material from the WCRC, and pray for the WCRC and ACRC on Reformation Sunday of each year.

7. The Partnership Fund

There was also information sharing on the Reformed Churches Partnership fund and details of the fund were outlined including the criteria and processes by which members could access the fund. For additional information and sample forms members were referred to the WCRC website (www.wcrc.ch).

Preparations for the ACRC Assembly

Member churches were reminded that the ACRC will meet in conjunction with the AACC from the 29th of May to the 2nd of June 2013 in Kampala, Uganda. The ACRC has sent registration forms for member churches to confirm delegates to the ACRC General Assembly. An application has been submitted to the WCRC Partnership Fund for assistance to meet the expenses of the Assembly in Kampala.

REPORT OF THE ALLIANCE OF PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED CHURCHES IN LATIN AMERICA (AIPRAL)

Gabriela Mulder

AIPRAL Departments

- The department of *Justice and Communion* organized for the Mesoamerican Region an encounter on climate justice in Costa Rica in March. It also organized in November a visit to the national churches in Guatemala, Honduras y El Salvador to give continuity to this event. For the present year it is working with the same issue but in the southern region (Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil). At the same the coordinator of the department will have two meetings, one in Mesoamerica and another in Southern region to mobilize the national churches.
- The department of *Theology and Mission* prepared a meeting in Guatemala to dialogue on the theology of mission in the area from a Reformed perspective. It focused on the challenges of mission with youth, women and indigenous peoples. In this last topic we could not advance so much. This show that the churches in the area are a little behind in this matter, even when in many cases the indigenous communities constitute most of the membership. For the present year, this department needs to work in the project of "Jóvenes (re)formados en mision" (Re)formed youth in mission. This project should be a shared work between this department and the youth department.
- According to the strategic plan the *Women's Department* did not have any activity in the past year. However, it is planned a meeting in Honduras on "Women, builders of peace". The coordinator visited Mexico in February. See below.
- The *youth department* is behind in its activities. It is still working in the project for the present year.

Proclame 2012

In November 2012 the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil organized *Proclame 2012*, an event on evangelization. Because this is a crucial issue in the Southern area, we agreed with this church to include an invitation to the churches in the region. We considered this way to organize the event as a new perspective because it is organized not by AIPRAL but by a national church, with AIPRAL enabling the participation of nearby churches. In this way the event is positively transformed into a regional event and is enriched by the presence of other reformed churches of the area. The participation of AIPRAL churches was coordinated by the executive secretaries of AIPRAL and the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil, Roberto Mauro.

Companion to National Churches

The situation and relationship with the *National Presbyterian Church of Mexico* significantly occupied AIPRAL. This church invited AIPRAL to be present in one of the five worships organized to celebrate the 140th anniversary of this church. The executive secretary was invited to preach in the worship celebrated in Cancun on June 16, also he visited and preached in two local churches. The occasion was also used to have several meetings with local churches, authorities of the presbytery and with the general Assembly executive committee. In this meeting we dialogued with the president, treasurer and executive secretary about the situation raised by the decision of the General Assembly to ban women from deacon, eldership and pastoral ministry. The position of WCRC and AIPRAL on this issue was communicated, and the dialogue was cordial but tense.

This situation was complicated a couple of months later when the Synod of Federal District raised about 14 charges against the pastors than support women ordination. Remarkably, none of them was related to the issue behind, the ordination of women. In this situation we sent letters to the National Church offering our presence there to be companions in this harmful process. Our presence was not accepted. Finally the seven pastors were excommunicated from the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico.

Another important aspect in our relationship with this church is that they have become a member of the World Reformed Fellowship and are the motors of this organization in the region. So, they are still part of AIPRAL but the feeling is that their heart is not longer with us.

Comunión Mexicana de Iglesias Reformadas y Presbiterianas

As the result of the excommunication of seven pastors of the *Iglesia Nacional Presbiteriana de México*, those pastors with their respective congregations initially and then followed by others formed this new church. Immediately, they become in touch with AIPRAL inviting in different instances of their organization. We emphasized that the correct process will be their application to become part of AIPRAL/WCRC according AIPRAL's bylaws. However several churches of the region have already accepted and welcome this new church. Recently, we accepted one of their invitations and the Women's coordinator, María Jimenez participated as an *observer* in a women's meeting to organize their movement.

Beside this we keep contact with most of the church members of AIPRAL. Worth noting are the following events:

- Meeting with the president and executive secretary of Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil
- Meeting with treasurer of the United Presbyterian Church of Brazil.

AIPRAL

- Participation in the synod of the Evangelical Church of River Plate and Reformed Churches of Argentina
- Participation in a national event of the National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala with members of church's committees
- Participation in the synod and other formative instances of the Presbyterian Church of Venezuela.
- Continue Dialogue with the Evangelical Church of Peru to return to AIPRAL.

La Voz

In June and December we published our magazine of 40 pages, La Voz. Number 56 in June focused on climate justice and Number 57 in December focused on the Global Ecumenical Conference on Economy and Evangelism.

Beside the print edition, and its online publication on our internet site, we send a resume through email. The distribution of printed material in Latinoamerica is complicated, especially outside the major cities.

ALC Noticias

As AIPRAL we participate in the directive board of "ALC noticias" in an effort to facilitate communication of social and ecclesial issues inside the church and in society, especially related to human rights in Latin America. In April 2013, ALC Noticias will elect a new director.

Compañerismo en Misión

As AIPRAL we continue the participation in this editorial enterprise through former president of AIPRAL, Clayton Da Silva.

PEAC

The responsibility of represent WCRC/AIPRAL in the ecumenical programme of accompaniment to Colombia was of German Zijlstra. Recently, in communication with the Presybterian Church of Colombia they feel that a major commitment of us is need.

Global Ecumenical Conference in Sao Pablo

We participated in the event organized by WCRC, WCC, CWM on economy. The document was presented in different settings with a positive reception. It was given to the religious secretary of the Argentinean government , the Women's Bank of Venezuela, and in different local churches and presbyteries that invited us.

Finally, an important issue to resolve with WCRC is the double membership fees of AIPRAL's churches, because they pay as WCRC members but also as AIPRAL members.

REPORT OF THE CARIBBEAN AND NORTH AMERICAN AREA COUNCIL (CANAAC)

Bill Thomas

This has been a difficult triennium for CANAAC. The present Steering Committee was elected at the September, 2011 General Assembly in Santo Domingo, The Dominican Republic. Much of the difficulty has arisen from the almost 100% turnover on The Steering Committee, with only one person continuing on and all three members of the Executive being new to leadership within CANAAC.

The Executive has spent much of our time orienting ourselves to the roles and responsibilities of CANAAC, within the Region and in relationship to the WCRC.

It is the intention of the present Steering Committee to ensure a level of continuity in the leadership of CANAAC henceforth. This will be achieved through the staggering of terms, with 50% carry-over of Steering Committee members each triennium.

1. I note that during the upcoming WCRC Executive Committee meeting the topic of Suspension of Membership is on the agenda. From the membership of CANAAC we note that The Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad is being considered for suspension and The Guyana Congregational Church and Dominican Evangelical Church are listed as concerns. Within CANAAC we are trying to discern how best to engage with our member churches in an effort to, in turn, have them engage in the work of the council. We have also had conversation, with no resolution concerning membership contributions to CANAAC. At present there is no structure, and Member churches' contributions are on a voluntary basis. However, we would encourage the Executive Committee of the WCRC to not suspend any of the CANAAC membership churches until we have communicated with our membership concerning these, (and other) matters.
2. It is recognized that, given the large geographic area, CANAAC needs a strong web presence in order to communicate with our member churches. When we began the process of updating the CANAAC website it was discovered that the website had been overwhelmed with viruses and was vulnerable to such attacks given a very low level of security. Also, with the turnover in leadership of CANAAC in September, 2011, CANAAC lost the services of the webmaster who had been administering our web page. We have since engaged the services of another web page administrator who has temporarily disabled the site, removed the

CANAAC

plethora of viruses, installed a number of security features and we are now uploading new material. This has been a very long process but now looks to be coming to an end, (or at least a new beginning).

At the same time we are exploring the possibility of having a public CANAAC presence on Facebook as well as a private (or closed) page for The CANAAC Steering Committee.

We are also continuing our exploration into the possibility of providing a space for our member churches to have an online presence. This is not necessarily an issue for the larger denominations, particularly those in the north, but is an issue for some of the smaller denominations.

3. We continue to look for ways to engage and be engaged in the initiatives of The WCRC. There has been conversation concerning The Accra Confession and how it has been utilized within member churches. Last month Bill Thomas (United Church of Canada) participated in the Human Trafficking Consultation (Matanzas and Habana, Cuba). We will explore how to have member churches, as well as CANAAC itself engaging in this initiative. Brenda Bullock represents CANAAC to the Executive Committee of the WCRC and we do communicate, (although not as regularly as might be desired), with Yvette Noble Bloomfield.
4. We continue to dialogue with CANACOM. We have identified youth and youth engagement as an area where dialogue//partnership with CANACOM could be helpful. Also, recognizing the many ways that the work of CANAAC overlaps with and/or complements that of CANACOM we will once again be meeting jointly for our triennial General Assemblies in March, 2014 in Jamaica.
5. In 2012, CANAAC was approached to provide a scholarship for a student from The DR studying at San Francisco Theological Seminary. The student was known to us as she was part of the hosting community when we met in Santo Domingo. It was decided that we could support this student and that we might want to make student sponsorship a part of the work of CANAAC, but it was decided that at present this would be a one time commitment and would not be precedent setting and that this conversation would continue as we considered the role of CANAAC.
6. We recognize a number of priorities in the region:
 - a) Migration and Human Trafficking
 - b) The on-going situation in Haiti
 - c) North-South disparities
 - d) Indigenous Peoples – Doctrine of Discovery

- e) Engagement with The Accra Confession
- f) Communication Strategies
- g) Building a Relationship with AIPRAL and to a lesser extent the other Regional Councils

We also recognize the unique challenges and opportunities faced by CANAAC as the only regional council with member churches in both the global north and the global south.

REPORT OF THE NORTH-EAST ASIA AREA COUNCIL (NEAAC)

Yoshi Fujimori

1. Organization

New offices were elected at the area council meeting held in Taiwan in 2011 and ratified by the executive committee held in Indonesia in 2012.

Moderator	Elder Yoshi FUJIMORI (Fujimori@calvin.jp)	CCJ
Vice-Moderator	Yang-en CHENG Eric SO KANG Kyung Shin	PCT HKCCCC PROK
Area Secretary	HEO Baekki (baekki@mac.com)	KCCJ
Treasurer	LEE Myung Choong	KCCJ

2. Member Churches

NEAAC covers four countries/regions in northeast Asia: China, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan. The following are the current member churches.

China	Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China
Japan	Church of Christ in Japan Korean Christian Church in Japan
Korea	Presbyterian Church of Korea (Tong Hap) Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea Presbyterian Church in Korea (Daeshin) Presbyterian Church in Korea (Hap Dong Chung Tong)
Taiwan	Presbyterian Church in Taiwan

Japan Presbytery of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church is currently expressing their interest in officially joining the NEAAC. Officers discussed this issue with General Secretary Setri Nyomi, and confirmed that there was a similar case to this in the Communion. We will further pursue this issue this year.

We continue the dialogue with the Reformed Church in Japan, a former member of the Reformed Ecumenical Council and suspended their REC membership before the Uniting General Council. Since they have very rigid guidelines and principles with regard to their ecumenical involvement, it seems joining the Communion is not an easy path for them. We are, however, encouraged by the fact that they are willing to maintain close contact with the Communion through continue sending observers to the General Council meetings as well as NEAAC meetings.

We are aware that we need to have more 'aggressive' approach for two non-active members in Korea: the PCK Daeshin and the PCK Hap Dong Chung Tong to encourage them to get more involved in the area council activities as well as the entire WCRC issues. Thanks to our Area Secretary and General Secretary of KCCJ, we managed to contact with both churches. Apparently there has been some communication problems, and they indicated that they do want to stay as members of the WCRC. NEAAC is willing to assist Geneva office to continue dialogue with these churches to solve their membership status issue.

3. NEAAC meeting

Next area council meeting was originally scheduled in Fall, 2013, however, since the WCC General Council is going to be held in Korea in October 2013, we are rescheduled our meeting sometimes in early 2014. Officers in Japan had three meetings so far to make some proposal to the administrative committee. The theme of the council meeting will be chosen based on the current issues and concerns of the northeast Asia area. We are also planning to propose a youth gathering before or after the area council meeting this time.

4. Challenges in the region

We recognize three urgent challenges which both churches and societies in the northeast Asia area are facing: a) rising tension in the Korean peninsula, b) issues over territorial conflict between Korea and Japan, and China, Taiwan and Japan, c) unstable and unpredictable situation of the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear plant in Japan.

We can do little to do for the Korean peninsula except prayers. As many of you have received, the PROK sent a note asking for prayers and the all the members of the NEAAC pray for peace. Territorial conflicts are more difficult to deal with since these issues have strong connection with politics, nationalism and historical understanding of each country. These political conflicts have created hostility toward the other nation and xenophobia in each country. As Christian churches who serve the Lord of reconciliation it has been a serious challenge how are we going to deal with the issue. The problem of the nuclear power plant in Japan has become the universal problem. Its unstable and unpredictable situation of the plant has the serious concern for everyone. Although we briefly discussed the issue at the last NEAAC meeting, we need to have some serious theological consideration on nuclear power and technology.

5. Make WCRC more visible and accessible

In corporation with the Office of Communications, PCK and PROK is preparing Korean, and PCT is preparing Chinese web sites. CCJ and KCCJ are talking about hosting either blog or Facebook page for WCRC in Japanese. These effort should be considered as one of the top priorities in the region simply because many congregation members do

NEAAC

not know much about the activities or concerns of WCRC, and for many of them, they need to have some material in their native language.

6. By-Laws Change

The By-Laws of the NEAAC has modified at our last meeting in 2011, and then ratified by the Executive Committee held in Indonesia in 2011. The Executive committee made some moderate editorial recommendations, and they will be incorporated into the final revision of the By-Laws.

7. Financial Report

Revenue

Balance from (2009-2012)	USD 4,100
Membership Fee	USD 2,000
Total	USD 6,100

Expenditure

Travel Expense for WCRC Ex. Comm. Mtg.	USD 1,000
Expenditure Total	USD 1,000

Current Balance USD 5,100

REPORT OF THE SOUTH ASIA REGION (SARC)

Subha Singh Majaw

Introduction

The South Asia Region, with member churches in four countries (India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka), shares a common ethnic, social and economic background. The South Asia Region is home to one-fifth of the world's population and accounts for fifty percent of the world's illiterate and forty percent of the world's poor, according to a WCC report. At the same time this region continues to be one of the most volatile regions in the world.

Issues that Concern Member Churches

These countries face many challenges, including sharing the water of 54 international rivers that flow from India to Bangladesh, controlling terrorism, and promoting economic development. Plurality of religions, common culture, poverty and growing terrorist activities are the most prominent features of this region. The region is also facing lots of problem due to communal and ethnic violence. As a result of all this, there is a loss of lives and properties creating resentment and tension especially for the government both at the national level and in the region. Society is full of forms of violence, killing, kidnapping, robbery, all types of unrest and chaos. A contributing factor is the wide gap between the rich and the poor, the rich are becoming richer and the poor are becoming poorer due to rampant corruption at different levels of society and government and also to the unethical impact of globalization. As the church we cannot remain indifferent to this danger. But we strongly believe that mutual acceptance can lead to peace, harmony and growth.

Religious minorities, especially the Christian are losing their fundamental and human rights every day. Rampant illegal migration of people from one country to another country threatens the livelihood and existence of indigenous people, especially the small people groups. Border disputes along the international and national boundaries are a long-standing problem. Almost every year, because of this problem: violence, unrest, tensions and bloodshed have taken place. This problem needs immediate attention for the sake of amicable solution and to bring mutual understanding so that peace and tranquility can be seen.

Human trafficking: Children and women are the most vulnerable victims of the existing social evil.

Global warming and climate change brought severe drought in many parts of India, melting of snow in the Himalayas and Kenchenjunga,

SARC

etc., which cause flood in the plain areas, landslides in most Himalayan region, and deforestation.

As member churches of WCRC, we cannot remain as mere spectators: we need to take a pro-active role to address these problems.

Programme

The member churches in the region have identified the following priorities for mission:

1. Strengthening local churches through spiritual renewal, creating awareness of their role and responsibility in the mission of the church, rightful participation in the life and ministry of the church
2. Equipping the pastoral ministry
3. Training and re-training the pastor, organizing refresher courses and developing effective methods of evangelism
4. Capacity-building for children, young people, women and the community in general
5. Peace and justice concerns
6. Service to the community such as rural health programmes, health awareness campaigns
7. HIV and AIDS awareness programmes

The Office Bearers of the Regional Council

During the meeting held at CSI Synod Secretariat: CSI Centre, Chennai, South India on 13 April 2012 we appointed the following to be the office bearers of SARC for the period 2012-15:

President: M.M. Philip, General Secretary, CSI

Vice President: Prubal Dutta, Bishop of Durgapur Diocese

Secretary: S.S. Majaw, Presbyterian Church of India

Asst Secretary: Ms Shuntilla, Coordinator Women Synodical Church of Pakistan

Treasurer: A.Z. Beirons, R Pres. Church, Manipur.

Conclusion

We expect that during the Executive Committee of the WCRC in Ghana, 6-17 May 2013, the Region will get full recognition as one of the WCRC Regional Councils, for the sake of its further growth and development.

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF WCRC EUROPE

Jan-Gerd Heetderks and Sandy Horsburgh

Athens Council Meeting

At the Vienna meeting of the Council of WCRC Europe in March 2012, it was decided to hold the 2013 meeting in Athens. It was felt that the meeting of the Council in this country in crisis at this time was a special occasion which confronts us with the question: What does it mean to be a communion as churches who are living in a continent which is more and more divided into rich and poor countries? What does it mean to live out community and communion?

The Meeting was structured round the need to stand in solidarity with those who suffer and to confront all of us with the question of what justice means. The Council was privileged to be addressed by Meletis Meletiadis, the Moderator of the Greek Evangelical Church who spoke movingly about the sense of humiliation his country feels and about the how the church is meeting the challenges of the current time. Cheryl Meban led a probing and thought provoking discussion under the theme, "If one part suffers, all parts suffer with it." Guy Liagre, General Secretary of CEC, brought the Council up to date with developments in CEC and preparations for the Assembly in Budapest in July 2013 and Dora Arce-Valentín led discussion on the São Paulo Statement. Setri Nyomi discussed finances, the relocation to Hanover and other matters pertaining to the global office.

Follow-up from Vienna Council Meeting

Fair grid for membership contributions

The Steering Committee has promoted support of the fair grid for membership contributions was brought it to the attention of the churches.

Support for Executive Secretary for Justice and Partnership

The Steering Committee actively approached several member churches and organizations in Europe for additional funds for the employment of the Executive Secretary for Justice and Partnership. Unfortunately there was little response. Kerk in Actie from the Netherlands promised €20,000 a year for the next four years. The member churches have also been asked to support the employment of the Executive Secretary for Justice and Partnership. The Steering Committee decided to look further for additional funds, but also decided that, notwithstanding the pledge from Kerk in Actie and other funds we will hopefully find, WCRC Europe will have to support the post of the Executive Secretary for Justice and Partnership with € 30,000 a year for the next four years.

WCRC Europe

Theological work

This is continuing the focus on hermeneutics from the Council in Vienna. In many member churches there are discussions with hermeneutic aspects (for example same-sex relationships and the ministry). Owing to illness, this work has been on hold for a little while.

Solidarity

WCRC Europe has a special responsibility towards member churches or reformed communities in the Eastern part of the continent, especially those which are in a difficult, minority situation and are challenged by majority religions or the state. Right now two churches in particular are in focus. In Lithuania we have been in touch with Rimas Mikalauskas on a regular basis on the progress of the legal action taken by the church. There are positive developments and we are assured that the WCRC solidarity visit in December 2011 had good effects and was much appreciated. We facilitated the provision of experts as witnesses from member churches in the legal process at the Lithuanian court on the side of the Reformed Church in Lithuania. The Steering Committee sent a letter of solidarity to Géza Pap, Bishop of Cluj. On 1st September 2012, church delegations of different denominations from all over Transylvania/Romania gathered at the Székely Mikó Reformed High School in Sepsiszentgyörgy (Sfântu Gheorghe), to protest against an order issued in favour of the Romanian government to renationalize the school which is lawfully owned by the Transylvanian Reformed Church District in Romania. Géza Pap, Bishop of the Transylvanian Church District asked all deans, ministers, elders and congregation members to join the cause and raise their voices together against the unfair decision of the Buzau Court.

Pieter Holtrop

On August 3rd, 2012 Pieter Holtrop passed away. He was, for many years, active in WARC and WCRC and he was also, until 2004, the European Vice-president of the WARC. The president attended the memorial service in The Hague and the Steering Committee sent a letter of condolence on behalf of WCRC Europe to his wife, Gunilla Gunner, who has herself given many years of dedicated service to WARC and WCRC.

Heidelberg Confession

On October 7-9 2012, the Reformed Churches in Hungary and Austria, along with the Reformed Alliance in Germany and participants from the Ukraine, Romania, Croatia, Italy and Poland, held a Regional Conference where they reflected on the importance of the Heidelberg Confession of faith. The Steering Committee provided a grant of €1000 to support the co-organizers of the conference for the following reasons: it involved quite a number of member churches; it deepened

the fellowship and co-operation among them; and it strengthened the theological work of reformed churches in Europe.

Asylum issues

Vice-President Martina Wasserloos-Strunk has continued to work with CCME and, since the middle of last year, the Committee für Öffentliche Verantwortung of the Protestant Church of Rhineland has included her as representative of WCRC Europe in their working group on "Non-European borders".

Installation of Béla Kató

The President got an invitation to the installation of the new bishop of the Transylvanian Reformed Church, Béla Kató. Vice-President Balázs Ódor represented WCRC Europe.

United Protestant Church of France

The Steering Committee noted with great pleasure the decision of the Reformed Church of France and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of France to unite and that the new United Protestant Church of France will hold its first national synod in May 2013. The Steering Committee sent a message of congratulations

Website

The Steering Committee worked on a new website for our area. The design is ready and will be implemented in the next few months.

Future Steering Committee meetings

The Steering Committee decided to combine meetings of the Steering Committee with visits to member churches. For the coming year we agreed to meet in Cluj in September 2013 and in Vilnius in January 2014. Holding meetings in these places is intended to be a sign of solidarity.

REPORT OF THE JOHN KNOX INTERNATIONAL REFORMED CENTRE

Cyril Ritchie

1. As President of the John Knox International Reformed Centre – now entering my 17th year in that post – I greet the World Communion of Reformed Churches Executive Committee, meeting in beautiful, peaceful and democratic Ghana. I thank the host country Ghana for giving two eminent sons to international service: My dear friend Setri Nyomi as General Secretary of WCRC; and the outstanding Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan.
2. The John Knox Centre has a long and cordial relationship with WCRC and its predecessor WARC. We have established and maintained mutual relations of consultation and confidence with the officers, the General Secretary and the staff. We recall with continuing gratitude that it was the then United Presbyterian Church in the USA that generously made it possible for the then Foyer John Knox to open its doors in Geneva in 1953 and subsequently to flourish.
3. That the Centre should flourish economically is a *sine qua non* for its continued existence as a conference and residential campus; for the Centre is an entirely independent and self-sustaining institution, receiving no public subsidy. The John Knox Centre survives on the 19,000 annual overnights that it books in; on the scores of seminars, colloquia and courses that occupy its several meeting rooms; on renting office space to several NGOs; and on the income from its high-quality self-service restaurant. To accomplish all of this we are able to rely on a competent and committed staff led by our Director, Pastor Marc Appel.
4. While cherishing its autonomy the John Knox Centre of course does not live in a vacuum. This has two different aspects. Firstly, we are naturally not insulated from the broader economic and financial downturn of recent years. We depend on international, academic and ecumenical organizations to fill our meeting rooms and accommodation.

Financial pressures on such bodies in the past couple of years have led to the Centre suffering many cancellations or restrictions of reservations, such that we have had to absorb significant annual deficits. We have however at the same time invested in upgrading our facilities to be more competitive, more attractive in today's tough market. We will be undertaking new fundraising

initiatives notably to upgrade our buildings – and I trust some here present will be receptive to such appeals!

5. The second aspect is strictly non-financial, but programmatic. The John Knox Centre has a Programme Commission, led for many years by the late and ever-lamented Lukas Vischer. Under his aegis some 16 seminars or consultations were held on topics ranging from Mission in Unity to Ecology. I deeply thank WCRC's Douwe Visser for taking on the leadership of the Programme Commission from 2009 and for organizing since then two very successful seminars: in 2011 on "Churches Speaking Truth to Power-Christian Communities as Agents of Justice"; and in 2012 on "Churches and the Rule of Law". All of these seminars and colloquia over the years have resulted in publication in the John Knox Series – a list of publications is available to you on the tables.
6. In 2013 the John Knox Centre commemorates 60 years of existence and 500 years of John Knox himself! In three weeks' time we are having a series of public events to mark the Anniversary. These include
 - A Seminar on "Redeeming the Market: theological contributions to an Alternative Economics".
 - Exhibitions of sculptures, paintings and photographs in the Centre's park and meeting rooms.
 - An Anniversary Service in the Ecumenical Centre Geneva, with significant contributions from the foreign communities and churches that participate in the John Knox Centre's programme "Witnessing Together in Geneva".
 - An Open House and barbecue for visitors.

The new John Knox Centre brochure, issued in this Anniversary year, is available on the tables.

Please arrange your itineraries so that you can be in Geneva to celebrate with us between May 31 and June 3!

7. My last observation concerns the future of the relationships between WCRC and the John Knox Centre. This future is in part conditioned by the inescapable fact that WCRC's offices will soon no longer be in Geneva; that it will no longer be possible to "drop in" to each other's buildings; or to ask each other for little services, "tomorrow morning if possible"!

More significantly the John Knox Centre is concerned that our programmes and Assemblies will not have the regular benefit of the quasi-automatic participation of several of your professional

John Knox Centre

and highly-dedicated staff. We thus resonate to what the WCRC Vice-President, referring to the move from Geneva, called "the challenges of change and the costly risk of relationships".

8. In these circumstances, Mr President and members of the WCRC Executive Committee, I wish to declare to you that the John Knox Centre will seek every opportunity, and take any positive step, to have continued and renewed fruitful interaction with the "new" WCRC headquarters. We shall look forward, not back, and will seize – or create – occasions to reinforce the mutually beneficial relationship that has permeated the last 60 years. We are losing WCRC's abiding presence in Geneva, but we are definitely not losing the abiding communion (with a small "c"!) between WCRC and the John Knox Centre.

REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS MINISTRY

Mark Koenig and Ryan Smith

1. The 2013 report of the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations to the World Communion of Reformed Churches' Executive Committee meeting features elements of the ongoing witness in the name of Jesus made possible by an ongoing presence at the UN in New York. This is not an exhaustive report.
2. This report covers the time period from April 2012 through February 2013. It points to work that will take place in March 2013. Much of the work referenced remains ongoing.
3. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) holds special consultative status as a non-governmental organization with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. This allows the church to speak to a truly global audience and to contribute to its agenda by attending international conferences and events sponsored by the UN, making written and oral statements at these events, and taking part in advocacy and networking. This recognition secures accreditation for specific consultation and participation at UN Commissions and with individual Programmes and Agencies.
4. The Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations represents the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at the UN. The ministry is guided by the policies of the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in its work. Staff members consult with colleagues in appropriate programmes and ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly in this work. PC(USA) mission partners are also consulted.
5. The Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations represents the World Communion of Reformed Churches at the United Nations. Staff members consult with Setri Nyomi, Dora Arce-Valentín, and WCRC statements.
6. The ministry's work falls into two broad areas: to equip individuals and communities to engage in global discipleship and to advocate for justice and peace in the name of Jesus Christ, based on policies of the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
7. Mark Koenig serves as the director of the Presbyterian Ministry to the United Nations. Ryan Smith serves as the Presbyterian Representative to the United Nations. A number of volunteers and seminary field education students augment our ministry.

UN Ministry

8. Rooted in the Reformed tradition, we affirm that God, Creator and Sovereign of all, so loved the world that Jesus the Son was sent with a message of justice and peace, redemption and reconciliation. God calls us to serve as Christ's ambassadors working for peace, justice, and reconciliation in a world where humanity and creation are wounded, broken, and in need of healing.¹ Together we seek life in all its fullness by:
9. Addressing *Environmental Justice* through participation in the Rio +20 Conference. A Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) staff colleague took the lead in this effort.
10. Seeking peace for the people of *South Sudan* and *Sudan*. Advocacy efforts focus focused on: and end to violence and a just peace for the border regions and Darfur, protection of Christians and other religious minorities in Sudan, and an end to the tribal violence in South Sudan. Partner churches in South Sudan have provided information related to the tribal violence.
11. Working with the NGO working group, *Ecumenical Women* to address women's concerns in the United Nations Community. The Association of Presbyterian Women Aotearoa/New Zealand is a member of Ecumenical Women.
12. Engaging the *57th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)*. The CSW is meeting as this report is prepared. This year's theme is the "elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls." Our participation takes place in partnership with Ecumenical Women. Churches around the world were asking for input on how to address the theme. The results helped shape the talking points. Ryan chaired the Advocacy Committee. Three key issues emerged from the survey and formed the basic talking points being used at the CSW:
 - Cultural, structural and economic violence are underlying factors that must be addressed.
 - Education is a vital part of the change process, especially societal change; education must incorporate men and boys alongside women and girls.
 - We must pay particular attention to the needs of rural and minority populations and improve their access to resources and services.Anticipated highlights of our presence at this year's CSW include:
 - A side event on *Moving Men from Bystanders to Allies*, co-sponsored with the Permanent Mission of Botswana to the

¹ 2 Corinthians 5:18-20.

- United Nations; the Presbytery of Detroit arranged a number of speakers.
- A parallel event on From Hurt to Hope: Women of the Church Confronting Institutional Violence, co-sponsored with the Association of Presbyterian Women Aotearoa/New Zealand, Presbyterian Women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and Interfaith Worker Justice.
13. Mark co-chairs the NGO Working Group on *Israel-Palestine*. The group provided a number of educational events for the UN community on issues related to Israel-Palestine that included a presentation by Richard Falk, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, an event entitled *Life in Gaza after the Arab Spring*, and a film festival featuring films made in Gaza and on the West Bank.
 14. Advocating, as the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and in partnership with the NGO Working Group on *Israel-Palestine*, that Member States encourage their governments "to stand with Palestine and recognize their right to self-determination" on the vote to upgrade the status of Palestine to Observer State.
 15. Participating as an NGO observer to the *Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People*.
 16. Offering worship resources for the *International Day of Peace* (September 21), *United Nations Day* (October 24), and *Human Rights Day* (December 10).
 17. Encouraging participation in *Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF* that provides general funding to support children worldwide. Encouraging participation in the *UNICEF Tap Project* that provides clean water.
 18. Partnering with UNICEF and the United States Fund for UNICEF to work on behalf of *children*. This included participation in conversations on religion and children at UNICEF headquarters. A consultation was arranged for staff members from the U.S. Fund for UNICEF with staff members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
 19. Promoting the *Red Hand Campaign* to end the use of children as soldiers. This effort seeks to establish an international consensus that children should not be used as soldiers. It asks states to ratify the *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict* – an international treaty committing states to address this issue. In the

UN Ministry

past year, 6 states have ratified the Optional Protocol; another state signed. There remain 41 UN Member states that have not ratified.

20. Participating in the UN observance of *World Interfaith Harmony Week* on February 14 and promoting the week through our electronic media.
21. Inviting support for efforts to ban the use of *landmines* on the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action – April 4.
22. Working on issues of *human trafficking*. Ryan chairs the Task Force on children and youth for the NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons. We partner with ECPAT (End Childhood Prostitution and Trafficking) USA on local business commitments to stop trafficking and with the Freedom Network USA on a human rights based approach to trafficking. We also partner with the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, and the U.S. Fund for UNICEF.
23. Addressing issues related to *religious freedom* through participation in the NGO Committee on Freedom of Religion or Belief and work with the Office of International Religious Freedom at the US Department of State.
24. Participating in the NGO Working Group on *Food & Hunger*. The group sponsored a forum series on issues related to the global food crisis for the NGO and diplomatic communities. Topics included land grabbing and the impact of climate change on agriculture.
25. Hosting representatives of the *National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon* in September 2012. They met with representatives of three Member States serving on the Security Council and had an opportunity to share their story with the UN NGO community.
26. Cosponsoring an event for the UN community on *Haiti* that looked at the causes of the cholera epidemic and the responses to the epidemic.
27. Holding an event for the NGO community with a representative of the *Presbyterian Church in Colombia* and arranging for the representative to meet with staff of the UN Department of Political Affairs.
28. Delivering the statement of the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to the UN Member States

supporting a peaceful, diplomatic solution to the issues between the *United States and Iran*.

29. Sponsoring events for the NGO community for Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) partners or mission co-workers from *Guatemala, Peru, and Sri Lanka*.
30. Advocating that human rights be honored and justice and peace pursued in *Madagascar, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Philippines, and Nigeria*, in addition to the countries previously mentioned.
31. There continue to be needs and opportunities for the Reformed family to work and witness for peace and justice within the context of the UN.
32. Ideas that could further our cooperation with WCRC:
 - Identify ways to share communications more effectively.
 - Learn what connections WCRC member churches have to UN programmes in their respective countries.
 - Explore the possibility of a joint parallel event with representatives of other WCRC member churches who attend the Commission on the Status of Women or similar UN events.
 - Pick days or events, which we could promote together.
 - Work more effectively to solicit input for the ecumenical statement used during the Commission on the Status of Women.
33. We give thanks for all who have been partners in the work described above and who support the ministry through prayer, participation and financial gifts. We are particularly grateful for the ecumenical community at the UN.

Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations – Electronic Communication Tools

- Web page – www.pcusa.org/un
- Blog – www.pcusa.org/blogs/swords-plowshares
- Twitter – <https://twitter.com/#!/PresbyUN> (@PresbyUN)
- Facebook – <https://www.facebook.com/PresbyterianMinistryUN>
- Email newsletter – email mark.koenig@pcusa.org to subscribe

Feel free to contact us with any questions:
Mark Koenig (mark.koenig@pcusa.org)
Ryan Smith (ryan.smith@pcusa.org)

REPORT OF THE SEARCH COMMITTEE FOR THE WCRC GENERAL SECRETARY

Sheilagh M Kesting

1. The WCRC Executive set up the Search Committee in 2012; a Committee of seven people, five from the Executive Committee and two others. The membership was as follows:

Sheilagh Kesting – Moderator
Jerry Pillay – President
Yvette Noble Bloomfield - Vice-President
Peter Borgdorff
Clayton Leal Da Silva
Robyn Goodwin
Robert Setio

The Search Committee was asked to:

- design a process for announcing the impending vacancy as of April 1, 2014, receiving and processing applications and engaging in other relevant actions that leads to discerning the right person for the office.
 - design a process for shortlisting candidates and inviting prospective candidates for an interview.
 - design a process and time for conducting interviews.
 - outline a time line for the entire process
 - make recommendations of the right candidate for the position to the May 2013 Executive Committee meeting.
2. The Search Committee met in the Netherlands in August 2012 in order to get to know one another and to begin the planning process. At that meeting the Committee agreed:
 - a timeline that would allow it to bring a name to the Executive Committee meeting in May 2013
 - the text of a letter to member churches
 - the wording of an advertisement to be circulated to member churches
 - the wording of the application form
 - the text of a letter to be sent to potential applicants
 - the contents of an 'application pack' (letter, application form, job description, terms and conditions, the strategic framework)
 - the qualities that would be looked for in a candidate: spiritual maturity, communication skills, enthusiasm for the mission of WCRC, involvement in the ecumenical movement, commitment to WCRC's priorities of building communion and

- advocating for justice in the global society and the ecology of the earth
- what would be required of the applicant (a letter of motivation, a statement (500 words maximum) which described those aspects of the Christian faith which were most important to them personally, their theological vision for WCRC and their sense of what God is doing in the world today, a paper written previously for a journal or specifically for this application on a theme relevant to the Reformed family today, certified copies of their qualifications, and a letter of endorsement from their church (a member church of WCRC)
 - a draft programme for the interview, including the topic for a 10 minutes presentation (Drawing from the 'Accra Confession', what is your understanding of communion and justice within the context of the World Communion of Reformed Churches?)
 - a date in February (12th) for a video-conference to draw up a shortlist of a maximum of three applicants for interview in March (22-23). Initial short-listing was to be done by email.
 - the deadline for applications (31st December), but the process was to remain open until the nominee was selected
 - that a psychologist should be in attendance throughout the interview process (Juliane Arnold of the Church in Köln was invited to come).
3. Applications were slow to come in, many being completed only after the end of the year. There were 9 in all with a further one arriving after the shortlisting was completed. The Search Committee met in video-conference as planned in February and quickly eliminated five of them because they fell short of the requirements set by the Executive Committee. There was a short discussion about two and a decision taken between them. The late applicant was informed that his application would only be considered should the current process fail to produce an agreed candidate for the post.
 4. The three chosen applicants were called to interview and a letter was sent to the unsuccessful candidates.
 5. The Search Committee met in Hanover ahead of the interviews and agreed the questions to be asked – two questions per Committee member. The questions were entered onto a grading sheet for each member of the Committee. The Interview process was thorough. It was an open process, a slightly modified version of the one used on the last occasion. On the first day, each of the candidates gave their 10 minute presentation on the agreed topic with the 20 minutes for questions and discussion. Thereafter each candidate was given the opportunity of a half hour meeting, first with the current General Secretary and then with the Theological

Search Committee

Secretary. All three candidates accepted this opportunity. Then, despite the bitterly cold weather, the Committee and the candidates went for a walk around the city centre. Georg Schmidt of the Reformed Alliance stopped from time to time to give a little history of the place. In between, members of the Committee engaged in informal conversation with the candidates as they walked. The informal conversation continued during the evening meal in a nearby restaurant. The following day each candidate met the Committee for an hour-long interview. Each candidate was asked the same questions and members of the Search Committee took notes to help them grade the responses afterwards.

6. The Search Committee had a preliminary discussion before lunch – enough to determine that they did not need to meet further with any of the candidates. After lunch the Search Committee met for over two hours as it struggled to come to a common mind. It had been clear from the beginning that scoring alone was not sufficient. Had it been, there was a clear outcome. The Search Committee had also to take into account personality and the way in which each candidate interacted with others. It was discussion of these latter aspects that led the Search Committee to conclude, with reluctance, that it could not bring a name to the Executive Committee that had the unanimous backing of the Committee. This decision was reached having listened carefully to the reflection of the psychologist.
7. It cannot be emphasized enough that the Search Committee came to this conclusion with heavy hearts. The Search Committee agreed that the Officers should be informed of the situation and their guidance sought. The Officers were able to convene quickly by Skype, and advised that the process should continue to the end of the year. The Moderator of the Search Committee wrote to the three candidates informing them that they had not been successful.
8. It should be reported that the candidates, although unsuccessful, all spoke positively about the process the Committee had used. It is one that the Search Committee would wish to repeat.
8. It is with deep regret that the Search Committee has not been able to fulfil the last part of the remit given to it – “to make recommendations of the right candidate for the position to the May 2013 Executive Committee meeting”.

RELOCATION OF WCRC OPERATIONAL OFFICE

A. Time Line

Date	Action	Key players
October 2012	Recommendation made by officers after receiving and processing report of the Task Force	Relocation Task Force Officers
November 2012	Executive Committee completed voting by mail ballot. 82% agreed for office to be moved to Hanover.	Executive Committee General Secretary
November 5, 2012	Announcement made	President General Secretary
November 7, 2012	GS, GT, and President worked with input from German colleagues to establish salaries and other remuneration packages for Hanover based staff	President General Secretary General Treasurer Officers
November 2012	All WCRC staff served with notice that the operational office is being moved from Geneva to Hanover, and therefore Geneva based contracts are ending on December 31, 2013. Each was given an offer for choosing to move to Hanover or indicating their clear choice not to move. At the end of the deadline only the two Programme Executive Staff chose to move with the organization. The status quo for those who chose not to move is that they have adequate notification that their contracts will be terminated on December 31, 2013. If they choose	General Secretary WCRC staff

Relocation

	to stay until the end, they will receive one month salary as bonus. It was clear that some may look for other things and leave before then.	
January 2013	Received document establishing WCRC in Germany as a Public Corporation according to German Law from Premier of Lower Saxony. Setri and Dora visit to Hanover. Visit included discussions with church leaders, school proprietors, pension fund managers, etc.	General Secretary General Treasurer Dora Arce Valentine Heads of WCC member churches in Germany Reformierte Bund GS Paul Oppenheimer
January 2013	Kristine informed us that she has accepted a position in Canada which will commence on September 1	Kristine GS
February 2013	Daphne informed us that she is moving back to India at the beginning of May.	Daphne GS
February 2013	Agreement between WCRC and German Federal Government formally initiated. It will take some time to complete	Johann Weusmann and other colleagues in Germany GS
March 2013	The General Secretary and officers begun working on a new document of Personnel Policies and Practices that will serve the Hanover based office	Officers GS Dora Douwe
March 2013	Setri met with the architects and the Finance Officer of Leer church to finalize the layout of the offices. Discussions with General Secretary of Reformierte	GS Finance officer, Leer Reformierte Bund GS Architect

	Bund, Jörg Schmidt on practicalities of the move.	
March 2013	Douwe and Antoinette visit to Hanover with Setri	Douwe and Antoinette GS
May 2013	Executive Committee meeting in Ghana	All
Late May 2013	Advertisements for Administrative Assistants to be published in Germany with deadline of August 20, 2013	GS Reformierte Bund
June 2013	Process of searching for the Communications Executive Secretary to begin Douwe and Antoinette to visit Hanover for house search	GS Yvette UCC in Canada Search committee
By June 15, 2013	Signing of contracts with Staff moving to Hanover	Setri Douwe Dora
Late August 2013	Shortlisting of candidates for Administrative Assistants for the office	GS, WCRC Executive staff
September 1, 2013 onwards	Douwe moves to and essentially operates from Hanover	Douwe and Antoinette
October 13 to 18, 2013	Visit of Setri, Douwe and Dora to Hanover. This visit will also include interviews of shortlisted Administrative Assistant candidates, and appointment of three of them to start work on January 2014. It also includes further work on housing possibilities for Dora and Setri Exploration of office Equipment options	Setri Douwe Dora Jörg Paul Oppenheimer Johann
October 28 – November 10	WCC Assembly in Busan – Officers to receive and discuss a review of progress.	All

Relocation

November 2013	Purchase of furniture and office equipment in Hanover	Jörg Setri, Douwe and Dora
December 11, 2013	Service of Farewell in Geneva	President Officers who are able to come Geneva church reps Swiss church reps German church reps Leaders of ecumenical partners Past and Present staff
December 20, 2013	Moving Company collects all moveable property from the Geneva office	Office staff Moving Company
January 2, 2014	First official Day in the Hanover office. Moving Company delivers moveable property to the office in Hanover	Office staff Moving Company
January 2 and 3, 2014	Settling into the office in Hanover	Office staff
January 6, 2014	First full working day in the Hanover office	Office staff
January 12, 2014	Service of Welcome to Hanover at the Local Reformed Church	President German Church leaders Swiss Church reps WCRC staff

B. Staff costs

Annual cost to WCRC in Hanover – including pensions and social charges HC = 8	Annual Cost to WCRC in Hanover – including pensions and social charges HC = 8 + 1	Geneva Annual cost to WCRC – including pensions and social charges HC = 8
€639,786 CHF767,743	€717,866 CHF859.040	€801,666 CHF962,000

1. Column 1 is based on a staff head count of 8 persons as it currently is.
2. The Hanover headcount is going to be the 8, plus if the Executive Committee confirms a paid Director of Development then there will be a total headcount of 9. This is reflected in Column 2.
3. The total of a 9 headcount with Hanover base will be about €715,866 or CHF859.040. This is about 89% of the CHF962,000 of Geneva for a headcount of 8.
4. This reality will become clear for the 2015 budget year. For the 2014 budget year, transitional realities will make it necessary for the staff costs to be higher, and closer to the Geneva costs.
5. These bridging realities mainly concern the fact that the current General Secretary and the current Deputy Partnership Fund Coordinator.
 - a. The current General Secretary will be leaving in 2014, and it will be counterproductive to move his family from Geneva and to move them again to Ghana only after months of being in Hanover with implications for school, etc. He will in fact be keeping two homes during that period – One home in Geneva and a small apartment in Hanover. Therefore it is expedient to keep him on the Geneva based salary for those months.
 - b. The Deputy Partnership Fund Coordinator was engaged with a subsidy provided by the Canton of Geneva. This scheme will be ended on June 30, 2014. Until then we have an obligation to keep him in Geneva.
6. Together, these two positions will have a bridging difference of around €40,000.
7. In addition there will be a one month overlap of General Secretaries.
8. All these bring the 2014 staff costs to a level higher than what it will be from 2015 onwards.

C. Additional recurrent expenses:

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Office rent in Hanover | €48,000 |
| 2. School fee subsidy | €20,000 - €100,000 |
| depending on number of children of expat staff | |
| 3. Geneva office – one office plus work station | €10,000 |
| 4. Provision for staff travel to Geneva | €10,000 |

D. Ex-Gratis gesture

Staff not going receive one month salary as ex-gratis gesture from WCRC in December 2013.

Staff not going to Hanover – YC – one month salary

Staff not going to Hanover – IM – one month salary

The total for this will be around CHF 20,000

Relocation

E. Removal and settling allowance

1. Staff going to Hanover will get €7,000 each for settling allowance (for furniture, household equipment. This applies to Douwe and Dora for a total of €14,000
2. The settling allowance for the General Secretary will be in the form of the rental for a small furnished apartment for the period he will be there. This is likely to be around €7,000 – same as the settling allowance amounts.
3. Air travel from Geneva to Hanover with 100kg baggage for staff and 100kg for each spouse and dependent.
4. Shipment/trucking of household effects of Douwe and Dora together of up to 80m3. This is expected to be not more than €20,000
5. Removal of Kristine – back to Canada including Air travel and shipment of household effects

F. Office furniture and equipment to be purchased around November 2013

11 workstations at €1000 per station

Heavy duty photocopier

Heavy duty printer

6 laser printers/scanners)

2 colour printers

Telephone/fax infrastructure and equipment

Power point projector

Furniture

The costs are yet to be determined. But there is a provision of up to €40,0

G. Legal procedures in Geneva and Hanover

Lawyers fees in Geneva CHF6,000

H. Pre-visits

Staff visits in December 2012, January 2013, March 2013, June 2013, October 2013, November 2013 withn a total of CHF 7,000.

I. Provision for retraining

We need to make some provision for staff and dependents who may want to take German courses to prepare themselves.

Provision for up to CHF 20,000.

J. Total relocation costs

For all the extra items due to the relocation a budget line of CHF225 is in the 2013 Budget.

REPORT OF THE THEOLOGY, MISSION AND COMMUNION CORE GROUP

I. Present

Peter Bukowski; Brenda Bullock; Kobus Gerber; Yael Hadiputeri; Najla Kassab; William Koopmans (reporter); Elisée Musemakweli; Grayde Parsons; Bas Plaisier (moderator); Carola Tron Urban; Douwe Visser (staff).

II. Materials

- Report of the Office of Theology, Mission and Communion (*Document 3*)
- Global Institute of Theology 2012: Report from the Field (Peter Wyatt)
- GIT 2012 Report (Summary); GIT 2012 Expenditures statement
- WCRC Global Network of Theologians 2013 report
- WCRC Consultation on Communion
- WCRC Mission Consultation
- Summary outline regarding World Communion of Reformed Churches Resource Book for Reformation Sunday 31/10/2013
- Proposed team for the round of dialogue with the Pentecostal Community 2014-2019

III. Observations regarding activities and sectors of work

The Core Group has reviewed the work of Douwe Visser, secretary in the office of Theology, Mission and Communion. We wish to recognize the highly commendable results of this work, especially as it was conducted in the midst of the uncertainties generated by relocation. The details that follow will highlight significant aspects of that work and provide the basis for recommendations.

A. Global Institute of Theology (GIT) 2012 Summary and Future Planning

1. GIT 2012 in Yogyakarta

The theme was "God of life revitalize our Spirituality ... our Theology ... and our Praxis." According to established criteria, 51 students from 27 countries around the world were selected. Staff worked well to make this another effective and successful event. They all committed to stay for the full four weeks – a significant commitment that contributed greatly to the quality and success of the GIT experience. Faculty, other than local teachers, were present for two weeks.

Total income raised for this cause was CHF305,729 and expenditure was CHF 239,619, which leaves a balance of CHF 66,110. The GIT received high evaluation and may be considered to be another very successful expression of theological training in line with the WCRC vision and goals.

2. Future GIT Planning

We have in the past agreed that in principle the GIT should occur every two years, not only in connection with General Councils, and should be the “flagship” of WCRC theological work. The next GIT has been scheduled for 2014 in a Latin American context. Considering the unusual circumstances, primarily the current relocation complexities, consideration was given to postponing the GIT for a year. However, after due consideration of various aspects, including commitment of finances by donors, a decision was made to follow the original plans. Contact was made with the Latin-American Biblical University in Costa Rica. It is proposed to hold the GIT there on 5-28 July 2014, with staff retained from the previous GIT and a preparatory meeting with local participants in September 2013.

In our planning we recognize the unique nature of the GIT. It is not a strictly academic enterprise, but rather a merging of sound theology with the practical context of various global locations. The GIT thereby becomes a practical “theological laboratory experience” for the students and staff. We need to protect the reality that this is a global “institute” that remains uniquely committed to the WCRC goals and visions, attaining a high academic standard without being constrained to fit into an academic university mould.

The core group brainstormed about the possibility of a future reunion of students that have participated in previous GITs.

B. WCRC Global Network of Theologians

The second consultation of the WCRC Global Network of Theologians took place at the *Begegnungszentrum* in Rüdlingen, Switzerland, 3-8 March 2013. The network is a kind of theological think tank. Four theme groups have been established to focus on “*sola scriptura*,” “Christianity beyond denominational differences,” “places of epiphany,” and “church and society.” The members of the network are increasingly connecting with each other. In addition, the development of the network themes is also being interconnected with advancing GIT themes and curriculum. That link is essential in terms of the function and purpose of the network.

At the second consultation, a key focal point of discussion centred on “How to continue?” in the present context of developments in WCRC.

We are pleased to note that in general the WCRC Global Network of Theologians is developing in a positive way. Accordingly, the core group recognizes the benefits of now expanding access to the theological discussions of the Network. Depending upon availability of staff, and assistance to the staff, it would be desirable to set wider and more vibrant connections with the work of the Network of Theologians.

C. Reformed World

Ordinarily three issues are published annually. In 2012, for financial reasons, only two issues appeared. Nevertheless, *Reformed World* continues to generate good reactions. The September issue of 2012 in particular received very positive feedback. It is especially valued as a theological journal with so many young authors.

The first issue of 2013 has already been published, featuring the results of the Reformed-Pentecostal Dialogue. The September issue will be dedicated to articles contributed in conjunction with the Lombard theological essay contest. Finally, in December there will be a "themeless issue". It is anticipated that, among other contributions, it will include theological reflections by our President, Jerry Pillay.

As in discussions of the core group in previous years, consideration was given to the option of a peer-reviewed format of publication. The secretary suggests turning to a form of mild, peer reviewed academic screening, and that this provision be reviewed after two years. The core group attempted to assess the pros and cons, relative to the nature and goals of our unique theological engagement as WCRC, of seeking status as a SAGE publication. *Reformed World* has a unique niche in the circles of academic theological publications. We recognize the importance of having a venue for young theologians to publish at an acceptable standard. However, there is an inherent risk in coming under the auspices of SAGE, and the core group does not wish to move in that direction. The core group does affirm the value of a "mild peer review" format.

D. John Knox consultations

Involvement of our executive secretary in the consultations of the John Knox International Reformed Centre has contributed positive results and was of value for our WCRC profile. Regrettably, with the relocation of the WCRC offices to Hanover, it is not possible for the executive secretary to maintain the present terms of engagement with the John Knox board and consultations.

We recognize that there would be value in maintaining an involvement with John Knox Centre, and in this way to continue a tangible presence in Geneva. Among other benefits, this ongoing local presence would be highly valued by the Swiss churches. For these reasons other options of representation and involvement could be explored. However, it is our understanding that the John Knox board would not be able to provide financial assistance to meet the expenses for travel to participate in the board or to participate in the programmes committee. It seems prudent from the WCRC perspective to wait for further invitations from John Knox Centre. Other means and locations for consultations could also be explored.

E. Lombard prize

The Lombard prize is an essay contest that is open to participants aged 35 and under. The present theme is "'Paradise' as a source of inspiration for the renewal of global social and economic structures." There has been a good response of participants. The prize includes an honorarium of \$2,500 USA and enrolment in the GIT. Four winning essays will be published in *Reformed World*.

F. Dialogues

Dialogues are a substantial part of WCRC's theological engagement. We note the following involvements:

International Reformed-Roman Catholic Dialogue: continues to meet to discuss the theme this year of "sanctification and commitment to justice". Next year it will meet in Scotland, with an additional meeting in 2015, and then the whole process is expected to be completed in 2017. In 2015 a final draft report will be presented to the churches, to serve as the basis for consulting the member churches on accepting the "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification" in 2017.

Reformed-Pentecostal Dialogue: was completed last year and the resulting report was published in *Reformed World*.

A new round of dialogue with the Pentecostal community is in preparation, with a first meeting being planned for 2014 with a theme of "Mission."

A list of names for potential participants has been received. All of these representatives have already been contacted and have indicated that they are willing to serve.

1. Setri Nyomi – WCRC General Secretary, Ghana
2. Bas Plaisier – Moderator of the Core Group, The Netherlands
3. Nadia Marais – PhD student Stellenbosch, attended GIT 2010, South Africa
4. Gabrielle Rácsok – Principal Assistant, Systematic Theology Sociology Department, Sárospatak Reformed Theological Academy, Hungary
5. Karla Ann Köll – Latin American Biblical University, Missiology, Costa Rica/USA
6. Carmelo Alvarez – McCormick Seminary Chicago, USA, member of the Disciples, expert in Pentecostalism, USA / Puerto Rico
7. Anna Donata Quas – Minister in Köln, Germany
8. Douwe Visser – Ex Officio, Executive Secretary for Theology WCRC

Lutheran–Reformed Dialogue: This dialogue came to a conclusion in 2010, but the final report has unfortunately not yet been completed. We deeply regret that due to complications and tardiness from the Lutheran side a document is not available for acceptance by the Executive Committee.

Anglican–Reformed Dialogue: Exploratory talks between the Anglican Communion and the World Communion of Reformed Churches have been held but need to be advanced and evaluated further prior to any official proposal being launched.

Concluding observation: We appreciate the new model of dialogue that focuses upon more than purely doctrinal comparisons, concentrating also on relationships and contextualization. Funding for dialogues is not easy to attain; prospective donors tend to suggest that funding should come from core budgets. Some foundation funding may however be available.

G. World Communion of Reformed Churches Resource Book for Reformation Sunday, 31 October 2013

This resource book contains numerous worship aids by a variety of Reformed authors, as well as reflections, hopes, and aspirations (especially by younger authors who were involved with the GIT). The intent is to make this book available first of all by PDF.

H. Consultations

1. *WCRC Mission Consultation:* Member churches in the frontline of violent interreligious situations

This consultation was planned first in the context of violence and suffering, with a particular focus on Muslim–Christian tensions. The consultation is being planned to be held in Oman, in cooperation with Al Almanah Institute, to start on 25 November. The consultation will have representation from Reformed background, not multiple religions, for safety reasons. The venue will only be confirmed when there is an assurance that there is truly safe space for participants.

In this WCRC Mission Consultation we are not including participation from other religions, and we will monitor whether that can and should be expanded. However, we are also conscious of restrictions of time and finance, and do not wish to duplicate what is being done by other groups.

2. *Global consultation on "being a communion"* to be coordinated jointly by the General Secretary and the Executive Secretary.

Theology, Mission and Communion Core Group

This will provide an opportunity to take stock of differences that exist within the communion, noting factors that can challenge unity, and to engage in a deeper discussion of the theology of communion. There are numerous denominations that struggle with some issues that make it difficult for them to feel fully embraced in the communion. There is also much to celebrate in terms of communion and unity that has been attained and expressed. This consultation will occur in Hanover at the end of January 2014.

I. Network of African Congregational Theology (NetAct)

A model of close cooperation between NetAct and WCRC has been worked out. This may be seen in some ways as a very positive pilot project for cooperation with regions. Annual conferences are planned. The core group recommends involvement in this network.

J. Missions

The core group agreed to postpone focus on an in-depth mission discussion until 2014, to be prepared by the Executive Secretary.

The WCC mission document will be sent to some theologians within our Reformed community and their responses will be published in a future *Reformed World*.

K. Spirituality and Worship

A book entitled "The Wise Church" was produced by the Calvin Institute. We appreciate the quality of this book and the WCRC has committed to advertise the availability of this document to our membership.

L. Jubilee

The Executive Secretary has been asked to attend a Reformation Jubilee Conference, organized by the Swiss Federation of Protestant Churches and the Evangelical Church in Germany, to be held October 6-9, 2013. He has also been invited to make a presentation at that event.

M. Work in the Ecumenical Centre

The relocation will have significant impact upon the contacts that currently exist with various organizations and institutions in the context of the ecumenical centre. Efforts will be made to continue these meaningful contacts, but there is a loss that must be acknowledged.

N. Relationship between the Theology and Justice offices

There is joint involvement in various projects and initiatives, as the respective programme secretaries work very well and closely in many capacities.

O. Finances and Fundraising

The work of the theological programmes is supported by numerous generous donors and a substantial total is raised annually by the executive secretary. The move to Hanover includes some realignment of the work of staff.

IV. Recommendations

1. That the WCRC Executive Committee support plans to hold a 2014 GIT in Latin America.
2. That the Executive Committee, depending upon availability of staff and assistance to the staff, encourage wider and more vibrant connections with the work of the Network of Theologians.
3. That the publication of *Reformed World* continue to be included in the core budget for next year.
4. That the Executive Committee acknowledge that as a consequence of relocation it will not be possible to maintain the present level of involvement of the TMC executive secretary with the John Knox Committee and Programme Commission.
5. That the Executive Committee take appreciative note of the importance of the various ongoing dialogues that constitute a significant part of our theological engagement.
6. That the Executive Committee approve the following members to represent WCRC in the new round of Reformed – Pentecostal Dialogue:
Setri Nyomi, Bas Plaisier, Nadia Marais, Gabrielle Rácsok, Karla Ann Koll, Carmelo Alvarez, Anna Donata Quas, Douwe Visser.
7. That the Executive Committee affirm its support for the Mission Consultation that is being planned for November 2013, with a tentative location in Oman.
8. That the Executive Committee approve continued involvement in Network of African Congregational Theology (NetAct).
9. That the TMC executive secretary and the General Secretary be encouraged to continue to advance their work with the various regions to focus especially on mission dynamics relevant to the regions' situations.
10. That the WCRC Executive Committee express appreciation to Douwe Visser for his excellent work as TMC executive secretary, especially in the context of many extraneous circumstances and demands pertaining to relocation.

REPORT OF THE JUSTICE AND PARTNERSHIP CORE GROUP

1. Core Group membership:

Co-Moderators: Helis Barraza Diaz and Yueh-Wen Lu

Members: Clifton Kirkpatrick (North America), Subha Singh Majaw (Asia), Veronica Muchiri (Africa), Robyn Goodwin (Pacific), Lydia Adajawah (Africa), Gabriela Mulder (Latin America), Jan-Gert Heetderks (Europe), Johann Weusmann (Europe), Mary Fontaine (Canada)

Absent: Clayton Leal Da Silva (Latin America)

Staff: Dora Arce-Valentín

Guest: Collin Cowan (CWM)

2. Key Issues Discussed

a) Report of the Office for Justice and Partnership

The core group received the programme report with gratitude to the staff.

b) Report of the Consultation on Human Trafficking and the Networks Meeting.

The core group received reports on the Consultation on Human Trafficking and the Networks Meeting that took place in Cuba, in March 18–22, 2013 with further discussions regarding the recommendations from the consultation and the networks meeting.

The core group agreed that these recommendations will be incorporated into the future working plans for the time of 2013–2015.

c) The Sao Paulo Statement and Proposal for a Follow-up Ecumenical Panel for Global Ecumenical Conference on a New Economic and Financial Architecture.

The core group invited Collin Cowan to be part of the discussion regarding to the documents of Sao Paulo Statement and the Proposal for the Follow-up Ecumenical Panel.

Questions were raised by the group regarding the ownership of the process and the follow-up details. Further actions will be incorporated into working plans for 2013–2015.

d) Women's Ordination.

The fact that some WCRC member churches have in recent years 'de-ordained' women was discussed. The core group affirms the importance of continue promoting gender justice within member churches. Working priorities were set up for the period 2013–2015.

3. Recommendations

- a)** The Core Group for Justice and Partnership recommends that the content of the attached chart be approved as the priorities for Justice and Partnership programmes for the period 2013–2015.

Facing the dilemma that not all members in two networks can be together at the same time, the core group agreed to add 3 extra names into networks, and recommends that:

- b)** Daphne Martin Gnanadason (India) and Peter Cruchley-Jones (Wales, UK) to be added into the network of Gender Justice. Tom Milligan from PCUSA to be added into the network of Covenanting for Justice and Economy.

In addition,

- c)** That the Core Group review the entire membership of the two networks at the 2014 Executive Committee meeting.

Priorities	Objectives	Strategies	Actions	Led by	Cronogram				Resources	Comments
					13/2	14/1	14/2	15/1		
I. 10th Anniversary of the Accra Confession	I.1 To measure the impact of the Accra Confession within the churches and ecumenical partners. A follow up of the relevance in different contexts	<p>I.1.a Promote programmes to update churches and Regions about the Accra Confession</p> <p>I.1.b Facilitate access to the information promoting the AC and its follow up</p>	Ask to have 10th Anniversary of the Accra Confession as the central theme of the 2014 Executive Committee meeting	Core Group				15/1	Core Budget	
			Organize a theological consultation: "Called to communion, committed to justice: the AC ten year later" in partnership with the Theology office	The two Programme Executives				Fundraising needed		

Priorities	Objectives	Strategies	Actions	Led by	Cronogram				Resources	Comments
			<p>Improve the information about the AC and its impact on our website</p> <p>Create a Facebook page for the Justice Networks (JNs)</p> <p>Promote blogging by our JNs about Justice issues in their regions and local contexts.</p>	<p>Communi-cations Executive</p> <p>Executive and Assistant</p> <p>Executive, Core Group members and Regional Secretaries</p> <p>Executive, and 2 more people as part of the Facilitating Group</p>					<p>CJ budget</p> <p>Not needed</p> <p>Not needed</p> <p>Fundraising will be needed for a more effective presence</p>	
		<p>1.1.c Continue working in partnership with other ecumenical bodies</p>	<p>Reaffirm our commitment to the Oikotree Movement with an active presence in their working</p>							

Doc 13.1 Justice and Partnership Priorities, 2013-2015

Priorities	Objectives	Strategies	Actions	Led by	Cronogram			Resources	Comments
II. Human Trafficking (HT)	II.1 To create awareness among the member churches and ecumenical partners	II.1.a Promote actions at the global level	groups and networks						
			Design a Lent campaign named "All may be free" with a good communication strategy involving Regions and youth groups	Executive and Regional secretaries				Fundraising will be needed	
			Connected Regions & localities currently working in HT	Executive and Regional secretaries				CJ and GJ budget can be use if it is needed	
		II.1.b Promote actions at the regional level	Mapping resources available to create awareness at this level.	Regions				CJ and GJ if it is needed	

Priorities	Objectives	Strategies	Actions	Led by	Cronogram			Resources	Comments
			Facilitate connections within Regions	Executive				CI and GJ if it is needed/Regional resources	
		II.1.c Promote actions at the local level	Networking with churches and NGOs working on HT	Local through Regions				Fundraising may be needed	
			Improve the access and the use of resources available at the Regional and the global level.	Executive/Communication office and Regional Sec.				Fundraising may be needed	
	II.2 To build global solidarity through local, regional and global involve-ment	II.2.a Promote actions at the global, regional levels	Advocate with governments to sign protocols related with HT (in partnership with UN	Executive, Regions, Core Group, Networks				Fundraising may be needed	

Priorities	Objectives	Strategies	Actions	Led by	Cronogram			Resources	Comments
			office& other NGOs)						
			Advocate for state policies to create awareness and protect the potential victims (in partnership with UN office& other NGOs)	Executive, Regions, Core Group, Networks			Fundraising may be needed		
			Encourage interregional dialogues to create solidarity and shared programmes	Executive			Fundraising needed		

Priorities	Objectives	Strategies	Actions	Led by	Cronogram			Resources	Comments
	II.3 To link HT with theological bases to engage it, as the AC	II.3.a Promote actions at the global level	Produce an introductory document to link the AC with HT, with the perspective on human rights and human dignity	Executive					
		II.3.b To promote actions at regional and local levels	Ensure that global actions can be reproduced at the regional and local level.	Executive and Regions				Fundraising needed	

Priorities	Objectives	Strategies	Actions	Led by	Cronogram	Resources	Comments
III. New Economic and Financial Architecture	III.1 Dialogue on and follow-up of the Sao Paulo- document	III.1.a Follow up the process in partnerships with the ecumenical bodies	Panel: General Secretaries revisit proposed panel membership to reflect the twin criteria of expertise plus deep commitment within the life of a member church of the four member organizations School of leaders	General Secretary, Executives		Fundraising needed for the follow up of the panel after the first meeting	

		<p>III.1.b Encourage regional and interregional dialogues about the São Paulo document and start a process of follow-up. The results to be brought to the Panel and Executive Committee</p>	Facilitate interregional dialogues	Executive with Regions		Fundraising needed	
<p>IV. Relationship with Theology</p>	<p>IV.1 To continue and increase the dialogue and collaboration with the Theology Programme</p>	<p>IV.1.a Participate actively in the Global Institute of Theology (GIT)</p>	Take part in the 2014 GIT programme	Executive			

V. Gender Justice	V.1 Continue promoting gender justice within member churches	V.1.a Improve the information about the Scholarships for Women among the member churches	Ensure the information reaches all member churches	Executive/ Assistant and Communications office					GJ budget if needed	
		V.1.b Promote the use of the Positive Masculinity Manual	Facilitate workshops in different Regions using the Manual	Executive with Regional secretaries					GJ budget and fundraising needed	

REPORT OF THE COMMUNICATIONS CORE GROUP

1. The Communications Core Group met on Friday May 10, Saturday May 11 and Monday May 13, 2013. All members of the Core Group were in attendance except on Monday May 13, 2013.
2. **Budget:** We reviewed the work from the past year comparing it to the chart provided in the Minutes from the last Core Group meeting. Of note was the continued need to ensure a budget line for the work of communications, including a travel budget, so that the communications personnel have the ability to be present at banner events and emerging stories. Communications is facilitated by being present at events to find the personal stories and tease them out.
3. **Vacancy:** The Core Group conveyed its sincere gratitude for the work of the outgoing Executive Secretary of Communications, Kristine Greenaway.
4. We talked about the work that will be done before the ES Communications position becomes vacant including, the completion of the website, dealing with the archiving of physical documents and the upcoming Pastors' Conference in Geneva. As a Core Group we are committed to working with the General Secretary to find the best staffing solution for the office of communications in the near future.
5. **Future networking:** There was support for the concept of a conference on migrant Francophones proposed by the United Church of Canada. Ideally we would like to see the conversation expanded, but recognize the scope of the current project. There was also recognition that migration was the main issue of Public Issues Committee of the last General Council. We wonder if WCRC should/could continue the wider conversation. Where, How?
6. **Relocation:** The transition of the digital files of WCRC from Geneva to Hanover has the possibility to be quite complicated. When looking at new systems we recommend that cloud based solutions are explored. As a global institution with people traveling a lot this could be a large benefit to the organization. Also:
 - Look at long-term solutions rather than duplicating what we have. See the move as an opportunity to set up the system that will serve us best.
 - Ensure that a budget exists for this process. We need expert advice to discern which items to defer and which to take the opportunity to address. (Allan Buckingham has volunteered to help with this.)

Communications Core Group

- We want to ensure that there is budget for modern computer equipment for the staff in the new office.

7. Recommendations:

- That consideration should be given to gathering people with communications responsibilities in member denominations in order that they be given more direct exposure to WCRC, so that they might take more interest and be more willing to share our stories.
- That attention be given to the time commitment that ES Communications is putting into fundraising, and that the Executive Committee bear this in mind in the appointment of a successor to ES Communications.
- That all Area Councils co-brand themselves with the WCRC logo as well as any logo of their own that they might have.

8. Motions:

- That WCRC maintain current funding of ENI and provide organizational support, including that the ES Communications is assigned the responsibility to support ENI and the management, including financial support for attendance of ES Communications plus two WCRC representatives to ENI (one of whom would serve as an officer to ENI's Board). (M/S: Allan Buckingham/Cheryl Meban)
- That the WCRC accept MOU, including an on-going commitment of CHF3000, regarding archives between the WCRC and the WCC and that CHF5000 be made available from the relocation costs to provide for appropriate preparation of physical documents for removal and archiving. (M/S: Salome Twum/Allen Nafuki)
- That the attached new budget items for the office of communications be accepted. (Since we don't have our own budget line we were not sure where to put these.) (M/S: Cheh Liang Mok/Cheryl Meban)
- That the Executive Committee joins with the Core Group in placing on record profound gratitude and deep appreciation to Kristine Greenaway , the current ES for Communication who demits office on August 31, 2013.

**Office of Communications
New Items - Budget 2014 (REV)**

03.05.2013

Retainer fee for Indonesian website (ongoing from 2014)	Sumichan	Paid in CHF500 X4 instalments	CHF2000
*ENI			CHF3000 0
**Archives maintenance			CHF3000
***Archives advice			CHF5000
Creation promotional material			CHF5000
Costs of set-up in Hanover: electronic infrastructure including database, computer equipment, licensing software			TBD

*ENI is in suspension but discussions are underway that may see it re-opened at a date TBD.

**See MOU Archives between WCC and WCRC re: costs from 2014 onwards for maintaining collection in Geneva and working with research requests

*** See MOU Archives between WCC and WCRC about classifying intermediate paper archives (2010-2013) and their relation to electronic archives prior to Hanover move

REPORT OF THE CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Members in attendance: Cheryl Meban, Convenor, Peter Borgdorff, Brenda Bullock, Carola Tron, Yael Hadiputeri, Lydia Adajawah, Allen Nafuki, Gradye Parsons, Yoshimitsu Fujimori, Setri Nyomi ex officio.

Regional Councils

1. Changes in AIPRAL By-Laws
Recommendation 1: The committee recommends approval.
2. Creation of WCRC-Indonesia - Acceptance as a regional Council - Ratification of By-laws
Recommendation 2: The committee recommends interim approval of the Indonesia. Regional Council and its bylaws with full approval to be referred to General Council in 2017. Constitution Article XVI
Indonesia Moderator then becomes member of Executive Committee in 2017.
Recommendation 3: The committee recommends ratification of the following officers for the Indonesia Regional Council (Constitution Article XVI D, E):
Secretary: Arliyanus Larosa
Treasurer: Olvi Prihutani

New Member Churches

3. Reformed Presbyterian Church in Africa (Uganda) Church formed in 2000. It contains 10 congregations and 10 preaching stations with 669 members.
Recommendation 4: The committee recommends approval for membership in WCRC.
4. Die Evangelisch-altreformierte Kirche in Niedersachsen, The Evangelical oldreformed Church in Lower Saxony. Church over 150 years old with 14 congregations and 14 preaching stations with 6,849 members.
Recommendation 5: The committee recommends approval for membership in WCRC
5. Sudanese Reformed Churches. Church formed in 1994. It contains 3500 members in 16 churches and 11 preaching stations located in Sudan and South Sudan.
Recommendation 6: The committee recommends approval for membership in WCRC
6. ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians. The church, located in the United States, was formed in 2011 and contains 38 congregations and 18,084 members.

Recommendation 7: Approval for membership in WCRC subject to engagement in constructive conversation with Executive Committee members Yvette Noble Bloomfield and Peter Borgdorff leading to satisfactory conclusion.

Recommendation 8: That the attached letter be approved.

7. Relational Principle regarding serious engagement between new member churches and WCRC, and ensuring WCRC regions and executive committee are engaged in these relationships:

Recommendation 9: That the executive committee ask the Constitution and Membership Committee to propose a mentoring programme for new members

Recommendation 10: That all correspondence when appropriate between the operational office and individual churches be copied to the Executive Committee member assigned to that church

Member Church Withdrawals

8. **Recommendations 11, 12, 13:** That the following churches request for withdrawal of membership be approved:

1. Christian Reformed Church in Australia
2. The Protestant Church of Reunion Island
3. The Presbyterian Church of Argentina

Recommendation 14: The committee recommends authorizing the convenor to work with appropriate executive committee members to communicate our sorrow at their withdrawal and encourage them to stay in relationship with WCRC churches in the region

Regularization of Membership

9. **Recommendation 15:** The committee recommends that the Unida Ecumenical de Cristo in the Philippines be recognized as the continuing member of the WCRC.

The Unida Evangelical de Cristo was the original name but split over ecumenical engagement. The signers of the original application for membership are in the Unida Ecumenical.

Contributions in Arrears

10. There are 74 churches that have not made any contributions to the WCRC since 2010. Letters have been sent in 2012 and early 2013. The committee also asked each region to discuss who had contacts in those churches or knowledge of those churches.

Feedback from that discussion revealed that the reasons some churches have not responded are:

- change of address
- letters not addressed in local language
- change in church leadership

Constitution and Membership Committee

- internal divisions
- genuine lack of funds

There are currently two broad groups of churches. Onegroup has not responded at all to any correspondence to date. One group has responded with promises to make payments or formally explain why not.

Therefore, following the constitution in Article VI.J.6.

Any member church that fails to make membership contributions and does not communicate the reason to the secretariat for three consecutive years shall have the privileges of membership withdrawn by the Executive Committee until the requirements of membership are fulfilled. A member church whose membership privileges are withdrawn shall be considered an inactive member. An inactive member church may attend a General Council meeting as an observer but will not have the right to speak or vote. Inactive members do not qualify for financial support from the WCRC.

Recommendation 16: That those churches who have not responded to any efforts to communicate with them have their membership privileges withdrawn and be placed on the inactive list as of January 1, 2014.

Recommendation 17: That those churches who have promised to make a payment and do not do so by January 1, 2014 have their membership privileges withdrawn and be placed on the inactive list.

Recommendation 18: The committee recommends that the committee convener, president of relevant regional council (where appropriate) and the General Secretary approve any exceptions for any church of the approved dues structures.

Recommendation 19: That the bylaws be amended by adding the following:

Bylaw IV – Operational Offices

1. In addition to its registered office, the World Communion of Reformed Churches shall have its operational office in Hanover, Germany.

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Finance committee membership: Johann Weusmann (Convener and General Treasurer), Yueh Cho (Finance coordinator), Jerry Pillay, Clifton Kirkpatrick, Yueh wen Lu, Cheh Liang Mok, Stephen Lytch, Veronica Muchiri, and Stephen Kendall (recorder). Setri Nyomi also joined the committee.

The Finance Committee is grateful for the services provided to the WCRC by the current Finance Coordinator, Yueh Cho. His expertise has greatly assisted the organization during his time with us. Since Mr Cho will not be moving to Hanover with the WCRC, various steps are under way to ensure a smooth transition of our finances.

2012 WCRC Accounts

The audited 2012 accounts have been distributed to the Executive and are satisfactory to the Finance Committee.

Recommendation 1: That the 2012 audited financial statements be adopted.

Financial Transition to Hanover

Following an analysis of the current management of finances and the resources that will be available in Hanover, the Finance Committee has endorsed the proposal of the General Treasurer and General Secretary that straightforward book keeping take place at the WCRC office and an online accounting system based out of the Leer church and with their support will be used. This is expected to save considerable funds. The finance coordinator from the Leer Church would look after the accounting and be available to the WCRC to assist as necessary in advising the General Secretary and helping staff. The General Secretary remains accountable and will be advised by the Finance Coordinator. The EKD High Audit Office will perform the 2014 audit as previously agreed. A half time book keeper would be needed in our Hanover office and the services of the Leer Church would be volunteer. Reporting can be generated any time by the software from Hanover. Payroll services will be provided by the Leer church at their usual rate.

Recommendation 2: That from January 2014, the offer of the Leer Church for financial coordination services be accepted, under the authority of the General Secretary, and a half time book keeper be engaged by the WCRC for the Hanover office.

Subject to the agreement of the Personnel committee, salaries paid in Hanover will be according to the EKD grid. These are the levels included in the draft 2014 budget that is before the Executive. Pensions for executive staff will be part of a pooled plan from the

Finance Committee

German churches. Other staff can be part of that plan or of the public social security system.

Relocation costs

A commitment to provide €200,000 in 2013 to assist in WCRC transition costs from the United Churches in Germany has been gratefully received. This is anticipated to cover the full cost of relocation. The Executive has already received estimate for relocation in the amount of 225,000 Chf.

Recommendation 3: That the €200,000 grant offered by the United Churches in Germany be used for relocation expenses.

2012 Finance Committee report follow up

At the last meeting of the Executive, several recommendations were adopted regarding the policies of WCRC finance and these were reviewed by the committee and have led to several recommendations below.

Recommendation No. 7, 2012 in the finance report to the Executive (p. 206) called for a review by the High Audit Office of the WCRC financial management system and a risk assessment of financial operations. This has not taken place since the current policies are based on Swiss systems that will change in 2014.

Recommendation 4: That permission be granted to defer action on recommendation 7, 2012 (p. 206, review by High Audit Office), with a full report to the May 2015 meeting of the Executive, and a progress report in 2014.

Report of the Finance Coordinator

This document is before the Executive at document 6.0 and in the third last paragraph, the Finance Committee noted that a recommendation is required by law to transfer the assets of WCRC out of Switzerland.

Recommendation 5: That the transfer of all WCRC funds, net of any eventual additional liabilities, to the new WCRC German entity, be authorized.

For 2013 the Finance Committee recommends that the services of the same audit company that has been used in recent years be used.

Recommendation 6: That *Compagnie fiduciaire de révision SA* be appointed auditors for WCRC for 2013 accounts.

WCRC Finance Policy Documents

General budget provisions

A draft policy was reviewed by the finance committee. It will come into effect provisionally on January 2013, and be considered for ratification by the May 2014 Executive meeting. Members of the executive will

receive the document by email and are asked to submit comments to the office prior to 30 September 2013 so that revisions can be considered in time for provisional implementation.

WCRC procurement policy

This document will also be circulated for comments as with the budget provisions and will come for final approval in May 2014.

Recommendation 7: That the WCRC procurement policy be provisionally adopted effective May 2013.

WCRC expense policy

This document will also be circulated for comments as above and will come for final approval in May 2014.

Recommendation 8: That the WCRC procurement policy be provisionally adopted effective May 2013.

2013 budget (approved May 2012 and amended by Officers in November 2012))

A new format for the budget was reviewed by the finance committee and is presented for information to the Executive. The General Treasurer will walk through the new format with the Executive.

2014 budget (see annex document)

The Finance Committee is very grateful to the United Church of Canada for significant support to the Communications portfolio during Kristine Greenaway's time with the WCRC. This support will come to an end later this year and will be reflected in amendments to the budget that will need to be made along with others by the Officers as the year unfolds and more clear information becomes available about costs for operations in Hanover.

The Finance Committee understands that the personnel committee is recommending that the position of Director of Development not be included in 2014. This will also need to be reflected in a revised budget.

Recommendation 9: That the 2014 budget be approved subject to adjustment in October 2013.

Recommendation 10: That the Officers be authorized to adjust the 2014 budget if necessary, in consultation with the Finance Committee.

Fair contribution grid

The Finance office has followed through with the implementation of the fair share contribution grid as approved in May 2012. The procedures followed with respect to implementing the grid and following up on

Finance Committee

churches that are a) not contributing, and/or b) not communicating with the WCRC office and/or c) not paying according to the grid, can be found at page 209 in the 2012 Executive Committee minutes. The membership committee will present proposals regarding churches where there has been neither payment nor communication for three years.

The grid will continue to be used in the manner approved in 2012.

REPORT OF THE PARTNERSHIP FUND COMMITTEE

The Partnership Fund Committee met on Friday, 10 May, and on Saturday, 11 May. *Present:* Kobus Gerber (moderator), Yvette Noble Bloomfield, Najla Kassab, Subha Singh Majaw, Bas Plaisier, and Salome Twum. *Apologies:* Clayton Leal da Silva. *Staff:* Douwe Visser (coordinator), Páraic Réamonn (deputy coordinator).

The meeting opened with prayer. The moderator invited members to share significant events in their lives or countries. He thanked Najla Kassab warmly for standing in for him in 2012.

The agenda was accepted, and Páraic Réamonn was appointed as reporter. The Report of the Partnership Fund (*Document 7*) was introduced by Douwe Visser and discussed in detail.

The Partnership Fund makes small grants to member churches, particularly in the global south, for mission and service projects they otherwise cannot afford. It works with a mix of restricted and unrestricted funds: *A funds* from *Brot für die Welt* (BfW)¹ in Germany that are restricted to development projects, and *B funds* from other sources that can be applied to any purpose but are mostly used for mission projects that fall outside development, however broadly defined.

Difficulties in 2012

The committee noted that only 12 projects had been approved in 2012, compared with 26 projects in 2011. This was due to two factors.

- 1) In 2012, our German funding partner EED (*Evangelische Entwicklungsdienst*)² moved its offices to Berlin to integrate with *Brot für die Welt* and was unwilling to fund any new projects for project partners in this transition year. Consequently, the Partnership Fund received from EED only €150,000 in A funding. In accordance with standard EED/BfW practice, a percentage of this was withheld until the 2010-2012 project was closed, and our A funds ended the year with a temporary deficit of CHF26,878.³ This deficit will be cleared when the project is closed. The Committee *noted* that with each BfW project it was essential to use the whole amount granted.
- 2) Our B funds were also considerably reduced from the level of the previous year.

¹ Bread for the World

² German Protestant Development Service

³ Audited Accounts, Summary of Custodian Funds Movement

Partnership Fund Committee

This put the Partnership Fund in a difficulty. As a result of the publicity campaign in October 2011, many more member churches were now aware of the Fund, and there are many requests for help still outstanding.

2013 and beyond

1. A funds

This year we begin a new three-year project (2013-2015) with BfW, with a grant of €400,000. This needs to be used by the small projects we support within these three years. In 2014 we can ask for a supplementary grant of €50,000.

In 2014, we should start a new three-year project. BfW works with a mix of German church (KED) and German government (BMZ) funds, and the intention was that we should shift to government funding in 2014. The period from 2010 was seen as capacity building in the Partnership Fund office, working in practice to the stricter reporting requirements for government funding, so that by 2014 we would be well equipped to meet those standards.

BfW recently informed us that the German government has now made its requirements even more demanding. In particular, instead of transferring our grant to a member church in one lump sum and requiring narrative and financial reports only when the project is complete, we shall need to work to a schedule of reporting and part-payments recurring every three months. Evidently, this requires much more, not just from us, but also from our partner member churches.

Next year – and this we did not know in 2010 – is also our transition year, as the WCRC operating offices move from Geneva to Hanover.

In these changed circumstances, BfW cautions us against a shift to government funding in 2014:

In all honesty, we believe that it will be very difficult for WCRC and your partners to implement these very strict standards; to be frank, we are struggling ourselves, under much better conditions (at least we have moved offices already)...

We therefore strongly advise you not to use the BMZ funds at this point in time. We know that the funds are needed and being requested within your organization and by your partners. However, we believe it is better to explain to your partners the current situation and the high risk of taking these funds now, than to try and implement the project and to have to explain later why it had to be stopped half-way.

The Committee agrees with the BfW advice. It would be unwise and imprudent to decide already in this meeting to switch to government funding in 2014.

Instead, we shall take two steps. One is to develop new implementing procedures for our A projects, in consultation with BfW, so that from now on all new A projects work according to the new government regulations instead of the old.

The second is to discuss with BfW whether it is possible to increase the level of church funding in 2014, given that the demand from our member churches is large and growing. We would then switch to government funding only in 2015.

2. *B funds*

We closed 2012 with a balance of CHF80,989 in our B funds. There is also a balance of CHF72,874 in our E funds.⁴

These E funds were set aside to respond to emergencies.

Since 2010, however, we have agreed with EED/BfW that emergency projects may be funded out of our A funds. The Committee *noted* that such projects need to comply with the same procedures as other A projects.

The Partnership Fund Committee therefore *agreed* that the E funds should be transferred to the B funds, bringing the total of B funds as of 1 January 2013 to CHF158,863.

Our target is to increase these funds to €500,000 by 2015. We need a substantial fund to support mission projects that, even on the broadest definition of development, do not fall within the criteria for our A funds.

3. *Pending projects*

As indicated in *Document 7*, in the first part of this year the staff priority has been to close the 2010-2012 EED/BfW project. Without this, BfW will not release to us funds from the €400,000 2013-2015 project. We should receive the first instalment of these funds in June. Together with the consolidated B funds, this will allow us to begin to clear the backlog of project applications.

It was *agreed* that staff would provide Committee members with a list of existing applications from member churches in their regions and would notify them of new applications. It was *noted* that cooperation with secretaries in the regions still needed further development.

4. *Staffing*

The Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion is also the Coordinator of the Partnership Fund. He has worked with the

⁴ Audited Accounts, Summary of Custodian Funds Movement

Partnership Fund Committee

support of Páraic Réamonn, as Deputy Coordinator of the Partnership Fund (70%) and until recently Daphne Martin-Gnanadason, as Assistant for Theology, Mission and Communion (70%): in total, 140%. He has also been helped by a full-time intern and, until end 2012, by Antoinette Berkouwer as a Partnership Fund volunteer.

From 1 January to 30 June 2014, he will have 120% support: Páraic Réamonn for the Partnership Fund (70%), based in Geneva, and a 50% Assistant based in Hanover.

From 1 July 2014, when Páraic retires from his post, Douwe will have 100% support in the Hanover office.

The Committee wishes to see adequate arrangements in place for the working of the Partnership Fund office for the period from September 2013, when Douwe moves to Hanover, and end June 2014, when Páraic retires. It cannot at this time predict the level of Partnership Fund support Douwe will require in the second half of 2014 – this depends on the level of funding to administer. But its concern is that the office should at all times be adequately supported, particularly once the A fund switches to German government funding.

Recommendations

1. The Executive Committee *receives* the Report of the Partnership Fund Committee, *approves* the direction taken by the Partnership Fund in relation to A funding, and *asks* the Partnership Fund staff to continue discussions with BfW.
2. The Executive Committee *thanks* Douwe Visser, Antoinette Berkouwer, and Páraic Réamonn for their hard work.

REPORT OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

A. Personnel-Related Transitional Arrangements

In addition to the decision making processes around relocation, a major activity of the Personnel Committee has been to accompany staff in addressing the implications of the move from Geneva to Hanover. It is very clear that staff were the most affected by the decision to relocate. The principle was to engage in the move in a manner which respects staff and reflects flexibility to accommodate staff needs inasmuch as possible without irresponsibly dissipating WCRC's funds. The personnel committee received a report from the General Secretary on the process and affirmed the following actions:

- a) A salary scale was calculated with appropriate salaries for every staff position in the WCRC. This was based on the EKD conditions of service for persons in similar positions. Based on this appropriate offers were made to staff.
- b) The General Secretary will be managing the change from Geneva to Hanover. He will have just a few months before his term of office comes to an end. While he will move to the Hanover office, his family will remain in Geneva. The Personnel Committee has agreed that in view of the fact that his expenses will be in Switzerland, he will continue with a Geneva salary base.
- c) The WCRC has also entered into a contract with the canton of Geneva for a period which concludes in June 2014 for one other staff person – Páraic Réamonn. In return the canton subsidizes his salary. Breaking this contract in December 2013 when the office moves has consequences that are more costly than keeping it until the end of the contract in 2014. Therefore the Personnel committee has also agreed that this particular staff member will also have a Geneva-based salary until the end of the contract in June 2014.

Recommendation 1: That the Executive Committee affirms this direction

The Personnel Committee is grateful to the Evangelical Reformed Church, Leer for offering the WCRC their Finance officer to be a part of the WCRC team. He is Mr Gerhard Plenter. He will provide service as WCRC's Finance Coordinator – working from Leer. He will be assisted by a bookkeeper/Admin Assistant for 50% time in Hanover who will likely start orientation before the end of the year 2013. This is a service that the Leer church is offering to the WCRC for which the WCRC does not have to pay anything.

Recommendation 2: That the Executive Committee with gratitude to the Evangelical Reformed Church in Leer, appoint Mr Gerhard Plenter as the WCRC's Finance officer.

Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee affirmed flexible ways in which the General Secretary is working with staff who are moving to Hanover to facilitate their move and commend that the move continues to be managed in this spirit.

B. Communications Executive Secretary

The Executive Committee appreciates the work Kristine Greenaway has done as Executive Secretary since January 2009 and wish her well as she moves back to Canada to serve her church. Communications in the WCRC is very important especially at this point of transition and needing for WCRC's story to be told in a manner that can attract the right investments in our vision, and therefore the position needs to be filled as soon as possible. In the process there will be discussions with the United Church of Canada to see the extent to which they can support the office as they have done in the past. The UCC has alerted us this will be difficult.

Recommendation 3:

- a. That the following be named on the search committee for a new Executive Secretary to take office by January 1, 2014:
Yvette Noble Bloomfield – Convener
Jan Gerd Heetderks
Cheryl Meban
The current General Secretary
The General Secretary-elect
- b. That the Moderator of the Communications Core Group and the General Secretary work together to find a good interim solution to cover the work that needs to be done from September to December 2013.

C. Director of Development Position

The Personnel committee did an evaluation of the office of development. It acknowledged that the financial benchmark that was set in the 2012 meeting was not reached. The Personnel Committee expresses thanks to Stephens Lytch for volunteering his service to the WCRC and appreciates the beginning stages of strategic thinking, setting up an infrastructure and developing the relationships that will begin the work of fund development. It however decided to discontinue the office of development at this time because of all the transitions going on in the life of the WCRC.

Recommendation 4: That the office of Development be discontinued at this time, and to express gratitude to Stephens Lytch for his services to WCRC.

D. Personnel Policies and Practices

In the last few months the officers authorized the development of a new Personnel Policies and Practices that will be the operating

personnel document for the operational office in Hanover. This was developed based on the WCC rules and regulations which WCRC currently uses and the Personnel Policies and Practices of the WCRC. In addition a consultant from the EKD office in Hanover went through the document carefully and provided inputs that ensure the document has taken care of the German context as well as the legal requirements in Germany. Officers have reviewed the document and now commends it for adoption:

Recommendation 5: That the Executive Committee adopts the Personnel Practices and Policies.

E. Staff Complement in Geneva

The following staff complement is agreed upon for Geneva. This will become fully operational with effect from July 2014. In the first six months of January 2014, the arrangements in the office that deals with Partnership Fund will be slightly different.

1. General Secretary
2. Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion (with responsibility for PF)
3. Executive Secretary for Justice and Partnership
4. Executive Secretary for Communication
5. Finance Coordinator (at no cost to the WCRC)
6. Administrative Assistant to the General Secretary
7. Administrative Assistant for TMC (including PF assistance)
8. Administrative Assistant (with bookkeeping knowledge) for Finance and Communication*
9. Administrative Assistant for J & P as well as fund development and other related issues*

*These two positions will be further configured during the recruiting process ensuring that skills are matched with the needs of the WCRC.

F. Transition in the Finance Office

The Personnel Committee looked at different options of ensuring that even after the move to Hanover, the 2013 accounts which should be based on the Swiss GAAP are audited properly and all other lingering finance related obligations are well taken care of. In the end the following recommendations were made in the best interest of the WCRC.

Recommendation 6:

Have the current Finance Coordinator do a thorough closing of the third quarter accounts (YTD September 2013) by the end of October 2013 and have it reviewed by the Finance Committee and officers.

- a. Appoint Antex International which currently runs our payroll services and have the capacity to provide accounting services.

Personnel Committee

- b. From October to December, have Antex International work with the current Finance Coordinator with a view of getting them to understand our system and to be in a position to prepare for and bring the accounts of 2013 to a final audit in an efficient timely manner.
- c. ANTEX International shall bring our 2013 Geneva accounts to auditors and see the auditing through by the end of March 2014.
- d. After March 2012 until the last Geneva based payroll obligations are completed, Antex shall have a scaled down version of the WCRC Geneva accounts coordinating and if necessary bring it to a final auditing.

REPORT OF THE OFFICERS

Preamble

Since the 2012 Executive Committee meeting, officers had three Skype meetings and one face to face meeting in October, 2012. The main subjects has been the relocation, WCRC budget and finances, and the General Secretary search. Here in Dodowa, the officers have had meetings to consider a number of issues which are covered in this report.

A. Departure from Geneva and Beginning in Hanover

It will be important to mark the departure of from Geneva and the opening of the operational office in Hanover in liturgically symbolical ways. The departure from Geneva will also provide an opportunity for staff to say goodbye in Hanover.

Recommendation 1:

- a. That the departure from Geneva be symbolically marked with a farewell service and reception on December 11, 2013.
 - b. That a Service of Welcome be organized in Hanover on January 12, 2014.
 - c. That representatives of WCRC member churches in Switzerland and Germany be invited to both events.
 - d. That the General Secretary and General Treasurer consult with a small group in Germany in the planning the service in Hanover.
- B. The 26th General Council of the WCRC will take place in 2017 which is just about four years from now. The 26th General Council will be held in the 500th year of the Reformation in 2017. WCRC has constantly expressed the need to hold a joint Assembly/Council with the LWF. The 2017 gives such an opportunity which needs to be explored. In order for the necessary decisions to be made in the 2014 Executive Committee meeting, it is important for officers and staff to be authorized to engage in some preparatory processes between now and the next Executive Committee meeting. This will enable the 2014 Executive Committee to meaningfully take the necessary decisions.

Recommendation 2:

- a. The General Secretary be authorized to coordinate a process in which necessary research can be conducted leading to the proposal of a possible venue or venues for the 26th General Council and possibilities for a theme be proposed. The process may include indicating to WCRC member churches that they could invite the WCRC's next General Council.

Officers Report

- b. In this process the long-standing commitment of the WCRC to organize a joint Council/Assembly with the Lutheran World Federation should be a major consideration.
- c. This consideration should be such that the WCRC and LWF should come in as equal partners especially in choosing a theme and planning the contents of the parts of the joint Council/Assembly that they will do together.
- d. The General Secretary should work with the LWF counterpart in exploring this possibility of a joint Council/Assembly, recognizing that the June 2013 LWF Council meeting will already be taking some decisions regarding the next LWF Assembly.
- e. A letter should go from the WCRC Executive Committee on this to the LWF.
- f. If the idea of holding a joint General Council/Assembly prevails, then the WCRC proposes a joint Assembly committee established or a joint and well-coordinated planning process.
- g. Officers be authorized to provide policy oversight for this process which includes receiving reports from the General Secretary and processing it for the next Executive Committee.
- h. In the May 2014 meeting officers should bring a report with appropriate recommendations that will begin the process of full discussion of all aspects of the 26th General Council.

C. 2014 Executive Committee meetings

The 2014 Executive Committee meetings will take place from May 10 to May 18 with a possibility of one or 2 day immersion preceding for those who may want it. This is two days shorter than our normal Executive Committee meetings. This is mainly because we are working within a window of time during which the hotel in Hanover is available. It means we will have less meeting times for Core Groups and Committees. Provision will be made for those who desire one or two days of immersion visits. We will talk with our German counterparts to see what is possible. The installation of the new General Secretary will take place during the Executive Committee meeting.

Recommendation 3: To support this direction in principle.