

World Communion of Reformed Churches
Executive Committee
10-17 May 2012
Berastagi, North Sumatra

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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 Penny Blachut and Christopher Dorn for their able assistance.

Kristine Greenaway, Executive Secretary for Communications

PARTICIPANTS

President

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

Vice-Presidents

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

Elected during the meeting

Johann Weusmann (Evangelical Reformed Church; Germany)

Members of the Executive Committee

Lydia Adajawah (Evangelical Presbyterian Church; Ghana)

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)

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)

Clayton Leal da Silva (Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil; Brazil)

Subha Singh Majaw (Presbyterian Church of India; India)

Cheryl Meban (Presbyterian Church in Ireland; United Kingdom)

Cheh Liang Mok (Presbyterian Church in Malaysia; Malaysia)

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

Gabriela Lucía Mulder (Reformed Churches in Argentina; Argentina)

Eliséé 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)
Stephens Lytch (USA)

Representatives of sister organizations

Collin Cowan (CWM; Jamaica)
Mangisi Simorangkir (LWF; Indonesia)

Speakers

Septemmy Lakawa
Andreas Yewangoe

WCRC Staff

Setri Nyomi, General Secretary
Dora Arce-Valentín
Penny Blachut
Yueh Cho
Kristine Greenaway
Páraic Réamonn
Aiko Widhidana Sumichan
Douwe Visser

Interpreters

Laura Gattinoni
Patricia Groeting

Recorder

Páraic Réamonn

Absent

Helis Hernán Barraza Díaz (Presbyterian Church of Colombia;
Colombia)
Brenda Bullock (Presbyterian Church in Trinidad and Tobago;
Trinidad)
Kobus Gerber (Dutch Reformed Church; South Africa)
Allen Nafuki (Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu; Vanuatu)
Mark Koenig (UN Representative; USA)

Local Committee

Rosmalia Barus
Khristiani Ginting

Stewards

Samuel Julius Tarigan
Dicky Kristian Sitepu
Dian Malem Bangun
Badia Tarigan
Empu Satrianta Sitepu
Fransiska Adelina br Sinuraya
Novita br Surbakti
Yusni Ruth br Sembiring
Martinelly br Sembiring
Wahyuni Hana br Purba

Visitors

Denver Bloomfield (Jamaica)
Ali and Devon Buckingham (Canada)
Sylvia Bukowski (Germany)
Esther Kang (Korea (Republic))
Henny Plaisier-Wendt (Hong Kong, China)

CORE GROUPS

THEOLOGY AND COMMUNION

Moderator: Bas Plaisier

Peter Bukowski

Brenda Bullock (absent)

Yael Eka Hadiputeri

Kobus Gerber (absent)

Najla Kassab

William T. Koopmans

Elisée Musemakweli

Gradye Parsons

Carola Tron Urban

Staff: *Douwe Visser*

JUSTICE AND PARTNERSHIP

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

Lydia Adajawah

Robyn Ellen Goodwin

Jan-Gerd Heetderks

Clifton Kirkpatrick

Clayton Leal da Silva

Veronica Njoki Muchiri

Subha Singh Majaw

Gabriela Lucía Mulder

Johann Weusmann

Staff: *Dora Arce-Valentín*

COMMUNICATION

Moderator: Yvette Noble Bloomfield

Peter Borgdorff

Allan Buckingham

Mary Fontaine

Yoshimitsu Fujimori

Yong-Kyu Kang

Stephens Lytch

Cheryl Meban

Cheh Liang Mok

Allen Nafuki (absent)

Salome Twum Ofori Danquah

Staff: *Kristine Greenaway*

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 (absent)

Carola Tron Urban

Staff: *Setri Nyomi*

PARTNERSHIP FUND COMMITTEE

Moderator: Kobus Gerber (absent)

Acting Moderator: Najla Kassab

Clayton Leal da Silva

Subha Singh Majaw

Bas Plaisier

Salome Twum Ofori Danquah

Staff: *Douwe Visser and Páraic Réamonn*

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Moderator: *Jerry Pillay*

Helis Hernán Barraza Díaz (absent)

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 (absent)

Jane Douglass (by phone)

Mary Fontaine

Stephen Kendall

William T. Koopmans

Stephens Lytch (president)

Gradye Parsons

Staff: *Kristine Greenaway*

The President and General Secretary are ex-officio parts of each committee and can also attend any core group.

TIMETABLE

Theme: *God of Life, our Communion prays for Justice and Peace*

Thursday, May 10, 2012

10.30 – 13.00	Officer's meeting, session 1
12.30 – 14.00	Lunch break
14.00 – 16.00	Officers meeting, session 2
16.00 – 18.00	Break
18.00 – 19.00	Dinner break
19.00 – 21.00	Plenary: Extended introductions and sharing of joys and concerns and prayers

Friday, May 11, 2012

08.30 – 09.30	Opening Worship
10:00 – 10.30	Snack break
10.30 – 12.30	Plenary: Opening actions, President's address and discussion, fraternal greetings
12.30 – 14.00	Lunch break
14.00 – 16.00	Plenary: General Secretary's report (including programme and finance updates)
16:00 – 16.30	Snack break
16.30 – 18.00	Plenary: Report on Officers meetings and discussion
18.00 – 19.00	Dinner break
19.00 – 21.00	Plenary: Regional Council reports, UN Office Report, John Knox Centre Report

Saturday, May 12, 2012

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

Sunday, May 13, 2012

Morning	Worship in various congregations
	Lunch and visits with the congregations
15.00 – 18.00	Officers 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	Officers and staff meeting

Monday, May 14, 2012

08.30 – 09.00	Morning Worship
09.00 – 10.30	Core Groups
10.30 – 11.00	Snack break
11.00 – 12.30	Committee meetings
12.30 – 14.30	Lunch break
14.30 – 16.00	Plenary meeting: Finance and Relocation
16.00 – 16.30	Snack break
16.30 – 18.15	The Mission and Challenges of the Batak Karo Church in Indonesia
18.15 – 21.00	Indonesia evening – Meal and entertainment

Tuesday, May 15, 2012

08.30 – 09.00	Morning Worship
09.00 – 10.30	Theme plenary
10.30 – 11.00	Snack break
11.00 – 12.30	Plenary: Relocation
12.30 – 14.00	Lunch break
	Over lunch: Officers meeting or Personnel Committee meeting
	Meeting of North American Trustees
13.15 –	Afternoon free
18.00 – 19.00	Dinner break
19:30 – 21.00	Plenary: Fundraising

Wednesday, May 16, 2012

08.30 – 09.00	Morning Worship
09.00 – 10.30	Plenary: Reports from Regions/Core Groups/Committees
10.30 – 11.00	Snack break
11.00 – 12.30	Plenary: Meeting of the WCRC (Michigan Corporation)
12.30 – 14.30	Lunch break
16.00 – 16.30	Snack break
18.00 – 19.00	Dinner
19:35 – 20:50	Closing Worship (with communion)

Thursday, May 17, 2012

All day

Departures

Actions of the Executive Committee 2012

The Executive Committee

1. approved the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, 5-12 May 2011.
2. received the address of the President (*Document 1*).
3. received the report of the General Secretary (*Document 2*).

Officers

4. received the first Officers' report (*Document 13*), the separate report on the search process for a new General Secretary (*Document 14*), and the second officers report (*Document 23*).
5. selected Johann Weusmann of the Evangelical Reformed Church of Germany to the Executive Committee as the next General Treasurer; and expressed gratitude to Gottfried Locher for his services as past General Treasurer.
6. agreed to appoint a General Secretary Search Committee with the following remit: to design a process for announcing the impending vacancy as of 1 April 2014 and for receiving and processing applications, engaging in other relevant actions that lead to discerning the right person for the office, short listing candidates and inviting prospective candidates for an interview; design a process and time for conducting interviews; outline a timeline for the entire process; and make a recommendation of the right candidate for the position.
7. agreed that members of the Search Committee should meet the following criteria:
 - specific expertise that will contribute to the identifying of the right person for an office of this calibre
 - a majority from the Executive Committee, but also including people with the right skills sets from outside the Executive Committee
 - the President to be a member to represent the vision and direction of the WCRC
 - gender-balanced
 - at least one person from each of the antecedents of WCRC (WARC and REC)
 - regional representation

Actions of the Executive Committee

8. appointed the following seven people as the General Secretary Search Committee:
 - Jerry Pillay
 - Yvette Noble Bloomfield
 - Sheilagh Kesting (*Moderator*)
 - Robyn Goodwin
 - Clayton Leal da Silva
 - Peter Borgdorff
 - Robert Setio
9. received with gratitude the joint CWM-WCRC statement “Covenanting towards a New Ecumenical Engagement” and agreed to make it part of the inspiration and operations of WCRC.
10. endorsed the CWM-WCRC “Agreements for a Strategic Partnership”.
11. expressed its gratitude to CWM for its partnership until now and its future partnership in the light of these agreements.
12. instructed the General Secretary to write to the President of Indonesia on its behalf expressing concern about situations inconsistent with the vision of harmonious intercommunal relations.
13. instructed the General Secretary to continue exploring the possibility of a joint General Council/Assembly with the Lutheran World Federation in 2017, with a progress report to the Executive Committee in 2013.

Regional Councils

14. received the report of the African Communion of Reformed Churches, ACRC (*Document 8.1*).
15. received the report of the Alliance of Reformed Churches in Latin America, AIPRAL (*Document 8.2*).
16. received a verbal report on the work of the Caribbean and North American Area Council, CANAAC.
17. received the report of the Northeast Asia Area Council, NEAAC (*Document 8.3*).
18. received the report of WCRC Europe (*Document 8.4*).

John Knox International Reformed Centre

19. received the report of the John Knox International Reformed Centre (*Document 9*).

UN Ministry

20. received the report of the UN Ministry (*Document 10*).

Finance Committee

21. received the report of the Finance Committee (*Document 16*).
22. adopted the 2011 audited statements.
23. confirmed the use of the Swiss GAAP RPC accounting standard for WCRC.
24. named the Compagnie fiduciaire de révision SA as WCRC auditor for 2012.
25. affirmed the updated 2012 core revenue and expense forecast, noting that decision-making on staff compensation levels, though closely related to the budget, is placed under the responsibility of the Personnel Committee, subject to principles adopted by the Executive Committee, and reported to the Executive Committee.
26. approved the 2013 Core budget (*Document 16.1*), assuming CHF1.1m in total membership fees and subject to adjustment in October 2012.
27. authorized the Officers to adjust the 2012 and 2013 budgets if necessary, up to 5 per cent, in consultation with the Finance Committee; adjustments in excess of 5 per cent should be decided by the Executive Committee.
28. agreed that following the preparation of a draft WCRC financial policy, the High Audit office of the EKD in Hannover should be engaged to come to Geneva in 2012 to perform a review on the financial management systems and risk assessment of the WCRC and make appropriate recommendations through the General Treasurer to the Officers for implementation; this should also extend to issues of financial management and sound administrative procedure, including their legality and regularity.
29. agreed that following the report of the High Audit office, the Executive Committee adopt a comprehensive financial policy and practices such as those used by the Protestant Church in Germany (EKD) and other member churches with similar standards.
30. adopted the following financial management structure and procedures:
 - since the oversight function is vested in the Executive Committee, it has to adopt the budget and monitor its implementation. To this end it receives financial reports of the General Secretary as well as the annual audit report

Actions of the Executive Committee

- the Officers exercise the oversight function of the Executive Committee in between its meetings. They are advised by the General Treasurer
 - the Executive Committee appoints a Finance Committee which, in addition to its regular responsibilities regarding budget preparation, shall monitor finances throughout the year and advise the Officers and Executive Committee
 - the General Treasurer in consultation with the General Secretary and the Financial Coordinator advises the Executive Committee, the Finance Committee and the Officers. The General Treasurer has the authority to mandate special audit reports at any time
 - the Finance Coordinator reports to the General Secretary and to the General Treasurer
31. adopted the following policy and procedures regarding a fair share membership contribution grid:
- The proposed grid is a fair share contribution grid, with authority given to the General Secretary, President and General Treasurer to negotiate, in exceptional circumstances and in advance, the recognition of equivalent membership contributions, which in all cases shall be reported to the Finance Committee.
 - The grid will serve as a guide to the collection of membership contributions in 2012, and by 2013 become the standard for collection.
 - The General Secretary shall be charged with implementing this policy. The Officers, Executive Committee members and secretaries of Regional Councils are expected to provide their support.
 - With gratitude to the churches that give above the grid, they are encouraged to continue giving at current levels.
 - Those who give below the grid will be given letters to the effect that they are not fulfilling their membership obligations.
 - In September or October of every year, the General Secretary will write to each member church indicating how much they are expected to pay in the next calendar year and asking that preferably the church pays all by 15 February of the year, or the church at least indicates how it will be paying (e.g. by monthly or quarterly instalments).
 - The churches send an acknowledgement that they will be paying the expected contribution fee.
 - The General Secretary shall monitor the payments and ensures that timely reminders are issued.

- WCRC will enforce the constitutional consequences of non-payment (*Constitution*, section VI J 6), recognizing that a church that has had its membership privileges withdrawn cannot have a member serving on the Executive Committee and is not eligible for financial support from the WCRC. At the 2013 Executive Committee meeting a list of churches that have neither paid membership contributions nor communicated about them for three years shall be presented to the Constitution and Membership Committee for follow-up.
32. agreed that the fair share contribution grid, together with actual contribution levels, be made available on request to any member church.
 33. affirmed the initial goals and timeline of the WCRC sustainability fund (see *Document 12*).
 34. agreed to embark on a fundraising drive with a target of raising 10 million Swiss francs between now and the next WCRC General Council.
 35. agreed to appoint a development director to coordinate this process.
 36. appointed Stephens Lytch as the Director of Development as a volunteer from 1 September 2012 to 31 August 2013.
 37. committed itself to being personally involved in the fundraising efforts.
 38. charged the Officers with determining where the start-up funds and any funds that come in should be invested.
 39. noting that much of the first year will necessarily consist of setting up the infrastructure for fund development, agreed that a major benchmark would be raising at least CHF350,000 by 31 March 2013.
 40. agreed that upon successful evaluation by the Officers and review by the Executive Committee in the May 2013 meeting, Stephens Lytch may be engaged for a further two years as Director of Development, with a salary level similar to WCRC executive secretaries.
 41. instructed the General Secretary to work with the Personnel Committee to make the adjustments necessary for the fundraising drive.

Relocation

42. received the report of the Officers on relocation (*Document 17*).
43. agreed that the WCRC office be moved away from Geneva.

Actions of the Executive Committee

44. agreed to appoint immediately a task force of four people with the right competencies to do the research and feasibility on where to move to with the following mandate:
 - a) take into account the work done in 2008/2009, and the work done (including documents developed) in 2011/2012
 - b) take into serious consideration the criteria established by the Executive Committee as a resource in shortlisting five possible venues from among the locations named in *Document 11*
 - c) further select two of the five locations to be seriously investigated as possible venues. Should any of the two turn out not to be a good location, one of the other three could be considered in its place
 - d) conduct an in-depth feasibility study on the top two shortlisted locations. This may be done for example by having a member of the task force with the right skills set visiting each of the locations with a comprehensive questionnaire that can be responded to as a resource
 - e) find out and document remuneration and social charges levels for the shortlisted locations in order to determine the cost to the WCRC
 - f) review Mercer Cost of Living indices for the two shortlisted locations
 - g) do a cost analysis related to the cost of moving and its implications for the WCRC
 - h) consult a relocation expert
 - i) consult a currency expert
 - j) consider the ecumenical and theological reasons for a move
 - k) make a proposal for the venue chosen with the rationale for it
 - l) recommend the time line by which a move should take place in the most efficient manner
 - m) develop a comprehensive report taking all these points into account on which the Executive Committee can take a well-informed decision
45. requested the task force to give a full report to the Officers within six months. Based on their recommendation of a new location, the Officers will take a decision which will serve as a recommendation to the Executive Committee.
46. resolved to vote in a mail ballot on the recommendation – voting “Yes” or “No” to the proposal.
47. instructed the officers to implement a mechanism to oversee the move to another allocation once decided, which must include measures for care and engagement with the staff.

48. appointed the following to the task force: Jerry Pillay, Gradye Parsons, John Bolt (*Convener*), Roberta Rominger, with the General Secretary serving as a resource to the task force

Theology, Mission and Communion

49. received the report of the Theology, Mission and Communion Core Group (*Document 18*)
50. agreed that the 2014 Global Institute of Theology (GIT) be planned with a location in Latin America.
51. adopted the Reformed-Pentecostal report and approved its preparation for publication along with some analysis and study documents.
52. prioritized involvement in ongoing dialogues as follows:
 - a) to continue the Catholic-Reformed dialogue, with the intention that we try to also incorporate greater youth involvement
 - b) to continue the Reformed-Pentecostal dialogue, with the proposed topic of mission, in an environment of learning
 - c) to engage in ongoing cooperation with Lutherans, Anglicans, etc., but not be involved in specific dialogue projects until such time as the need and relevance be demonstrated
53. on matters that are urgent and relevant to our WCRC mission, encouraged the Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion to engage in *ad hoc* and short-term contacts with other groups.
54. agreed that *Reformed World* be included again in the core budget for next year.
55. agreed that mission consultations continue in order to complete the objective of a mission document that will reflect the core values and priorities of WCRC.
56. instructed the executive secretary to develop mission consultations to focus on issues relevant to those living in front-line situations, i.e., Christians living under pressure from other religious groups.
57. instructed the executive secretary to work with the various regions to focus especially on mission dynamics relevant to their situations.
58. authorized the executive secretary to proceed with consultations on communion.
59. encouraged all regions, in cooperation with the executive secretary, to make the matter of communion an important part of their agenda, with a view to developing practical guidelines to strengthen our ability to relate to and work with each other amidst diversity.

Actions of the Executive Committee

60. expressed appreciation to Douwe Visser for his excellent work as Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion.

Justice and Partnership

61. received the report of the Justice and Partnership Core Group (*Document 19*).
62. reaffirmed the Accra Confession as a guiding document for the area of justice and for the work of the whole of WCRC.
63. agreed to initiate conversations with, and assist, regions and individual member churches to explore and adopt ways of living out the Accra Confession.
64. added Mark Koenig of the UN ministry to the Covenanting for Justice Network.
65. agreed to continue to develop biblical and theological resources and consultations for member churches in order to affirm and promote women's ordination.
66. added Grietje Couperus (Latin America) to the Gender Justice Network in place of Dora Arce-Valentín.
67. asked the Executive Secretary for Justice and Partnership, time allowing, to explore the possibility of working with the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF), in collaboration with Youth Departments in each region where applicable.
68. instructed the executive secretary to explore the possibility of holding a justice network meeting as soon as possible.
69. instructed the General Secretary to organize a thorough hand-over process between the previous and current secretaries (Patricia Sheerattan-Bisnauth and Dora Arce-Valentín) as soon as possible.
70. thanked the Moderators and also thanked Clayton Leal da Silva, who had been standing in for the Moderators, and especially Dora Arce-Valentín for her work.

Communications

71. received the report of the Communications Core Group (*Document 20*).
72. agreed that the Executive Secretary for Communications provide communications support to the strategic fundraising group and attend meetings of the group in order to be attuned and contribute to those conversations.
73. expressed its thanks to Kristine Greenaway for her hard and dedicated work over the past year.

Constitution and Membership

74. received the report of the Constitution and Membership Committee (*Document 15*).
75. approved the by-laws of the Northeast Asia Area Council (NEAAC), pending corrections.
76. welcomed the application by the South Asia Area Council to be recognized, encouraged the SAAC to continue working, and referred the application and constitution and by-laws to the Constitution and Membership Committee to work out the implications of multiple councils in a single region.
77. recognized the China Christian Council as an associate member of WCRC.
78. admitted the Church of Christ in the Sudan among the Tiv (NKST) into WCRC membership, effective 1 January 2012.
79. confirmed the appointment of Dario Barolín as Secretary of AIPRAL.

Partnership Fund

80. received the report of the Partnership Fund Committee (*Document 21*), thanked the staff for their hard work, and approved the broad directions being taken by the fund.
81. affirmed that the emergency action taken in 2011 should not be used as a precedent.
82. expressed warm appreciation for the work done by Antoinette Berkouwer as a volunteer and requested the General Secretary to find an appropriate way to recognize and honour this work.

Personnel Committee

83. received the report of the Personnel Committee (*Document 22*).
84. modified the staff structure as follows:
 - General Secretary
 - Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion
 - Executive Secretary for Justice and Partnership (until enough funds are available, this will remain an Executive Consultant position. This could change as early as January 2013)
 - Executive Secretary for Communications
 - Director of Development (same level as Executive Secretary), first year as a volunteer
 - Finance Coordinator
 - Deputy to Partnership Fund Coordinator (with some communications tasks assigned as needed)

Actions of the Executive Committee

- Administrative Assistant for the General Secretary and Operations
 - Administrative Assistant for Programmes
85. renewed the appointment of Douwe Visser as Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion for a second five-year term (1 July 2013 to 30 June 2018), noting that in the new contract, there will be a statement clearly stating that the office will be relocated outside Geneva during this term of office, and that this was understood before signing.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE WCRC MICHIGAN FOUNDATION

The Executive Committee

WCRC-MF 1. approved the minutes of the Executive Committee of the WCRC Michigan Foundation meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, 12 May 2011, with the correction that the date in action 1 be changed from "5-12 May 2001" to "5-12 May 2011".

WCRC-MF 2. agreed that the actions of the WCRC Executive Committee during its meeting in Berastagi, North Sumatra, Indonesia, 10-16 May 2012, be fully concurred in and entered into the permanent record of the WCRC Michigan Foundation.

NARRATIVE RECORD¹
of the meeting of the Executive Committee
Berastagi, Indonesia, 10-16 May 2012

THURSDAY 10 MAY

Plenary session 1: Thursday evening

The informal session was devoted to introductions and sharing of joys and concerns.

Bas Plaisier noted that the relationship between Europe and China continued to improve by contrast with the relationship between China and the United States. The position of Christians in China, especially in the house churches, however, had deteriorated in recent years; they needed our prayers.

Yueh-Wen Lu said the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan had elected a new president and the Presbyterian Church in Korea was about to elect a president. It was also an interesting year for Northeast Asia with new political leadership in North Korea.

William Koopmans reported that the United Church of Christ's study of the Belhar Confession would be discussed at the Synod in June.

The General Secretary expressed concern about Sudan and Southern Sudan and joy about churches in Indonesia, some living out their faith in very difficult circumstances.

Yael Eka Hadiputeri commented on the difficulties of making the unity of the Indonesian church real. Cheh Liang Mok spoke of the opening up of Burma (Myanmar) with the election of Aung San Suu Kyi and other signs of progress. There was a problem in Malaysia of deciding which churches were actually WCRC members. Subha Singh Majaw reported on moves to develop a regional or sub-regional WCRC structure for South Asia.

Mary Fontaine spoke about the pipeline that would take oil from the Canadian tar sands down through the United States. First Nations people were deeply concerned about their land and their environment.

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.

Narrative Record

Collin Cowan of the Council for World Mission spoke enthusiastically about the developing relationship between CWM and WCRC. Yong-Kyu Kang spoke of preparations for the forthcoming WCC assembly in Busan, South Korea, for which he was a member of the preparatory committee. Salome Twum reported that Ghana would be having an election.

Peter Bukowski spoke about the churches in Germany facing a steady decline. We should do wonderful things but spend a huge amount of time on finance and reorganization, he said. When ministers finished training, they had a problem finding positions. He hoped that the 450th anniversary of the Heidelberg Catechism would be like the Calvin year and would refresh and reinvigorate the Reformed churches.

Jan-Gerd Heetderks said that many churches in Europe were challenged by secularization. Now they also confronted economic crisis. Greece in particular was in a bad way and the small Greek Evangelical Church was struggling to deal with that.

Clifton Kirkpatrick has had health problems and narrowly averted a heart attack. The United States was already in its election season and it amazed him that questions of justice were so far off the agenda. American students – he is currently teaching in a seminary – had a passion about world issues but very little knowledge.

Lydia Adajawah served on the WARC Executive Committee, 1989-2004, and was happy to be back representing the African Communion of Reformed Churches. She spoke about the problems of youth and of intercommunal and interreligious violence in Nigeria.

Cheryl Meban said that during the time of sectarian violence in Northern Ireland (known as the “Troubles”), the Presbyterian Church had held on to its church attendance. With peace, ironically, the worry was Ireland would go the secularizing way of the rest of Europe.

The exchange concluded with prayer and music. The General Secretary distributed the First Officers Report (*Document 13*). Douwe Visser outlined the arrangements for worship.

FRIDAY 11 MAY

The meeting of the Executive Committee was formally opened with worship.

Plenary Session 2: Friday morning

The General Secretary called the roll and confirmed there was a quorum. Apologies for absence were received from Helis Hernán Barraza Díaz, Brenda Bullock, Allen Nafuki, and Kobus Gerber. Three new regional council presidents were welcomed: Lydia Adajawah (ACRC), Gabriela Lucía Mulder (AIPRAL), and Yoshimitsu Fujimori (NEAAC). Changes to the timetable were approved. It was duly moved and agreed to approve the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, 5-11 May 2011.

Action 1

Address of the President

The President presented his address (*Document 1*). Discussion followed on the tendency to division within Reformed churches and the quandary posed when breakaway churches apply for WCRC membership. The President suggested the formation of a group to look at how we handle division within churches. Gradye Parsons said our first response should be pastoral.

Differences in approach to sexual orientation were a threat to relationships between churches. Salome Twum asked whether WCRC should have a view on this question or leave it to member churches. The President said one of the virtues of our being a Communion is that we provide a platform for churches with different views to come together. We are all God's people, from different backgrounds and shaped by our contexts, but willing to struggle together with these questions. Peter Borgdorff added that the Office of Theology, Mission and Communion could help member churches in framing the questions.

Peter Bukowski said we needed to make clear what we mean theologically by Communion. What is our Reformed understanding of "reconciled diversity"? WCRC's Constitution says "common understanding of gospel, of the sacraments"; we should also collect what we have said in dialogues.

The address was received.

Action 2

Greetings

Matius P. Barus, Moderator of the Karo Batak Protestant Church (GBKP), presented greetings on behalf of the host church and introduced other members of the church's governing board known

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as “moderamen”. It was a great honour for his church to host such an international event, he said. Particularly important would be the Sunday visits by participants to congregations, reminding them that as Christians in Indonesia they are not alone.

Collin Cowan, General Secretary of the Council for World Mission, presented greetings on behalf of CWM. Lamenting a decline in passion and social radicalism in the ecumenical movement, he said it was urgent to secure resources both of people and money to renew the movement. CWM and WCRC had much in common, and a common approach to our common questions would go a long way to build community; he was passionately committed to this and hoped WCRC would be too.

Greetings from the Lutheran World Federation were presented on behalf of the LWF General Secretary, Martin Junge, by Mangisi Simorangkir, Christian Protestant Church in Indonesia.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, the General Secretary welcomed the local organizing committee and the stewards.

Plenary session 3: Friday afternoon

Report of the General Secretary

The General Secretary presented his report (*Document 2*) noting an addition to the text as circulated. The addition was that Edmond Perret, the former General Secretary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), died aged 87 in Geneva, Switzerland, on 24 March. Perret served as WARC General Secretary from 1970 to 1989 and had delivered a video message to the WCRC Uniting General Council. The General Secretary said that with Perret's passing the Reformed family of churches lost a brilliant mind, a loving leader and a pastor committed to social transformation.

Contributions to the presentation were made by other staff: Douwe Visser on theology, mission and communion and the Partnership Fund, Dora Arce-Valentin on justice and partnership, Kristine Greenaway on communications and Yueh Cho on finance.

Discussion again turned to the future of the ecumenical movement. Peter Borgdorff said that for at least a decade, we had been hearing that the future of ecumenism will bring change and we needed to think creatively about what that will be. But simultaneously we

seemed to be putting bolts in the existing structures – “partnerships” – that suggested everything would stay the same. When were we going to have the strategic conversation?

Clifton Kirkpatrick raised a question about the pattern of interconfessional dialogues. We got into this pattern because of the desire of the Roman Catholic Church, following Vatican II, to talk to different confessional families separately. But for all the repeated talk of breakthroughs, the dialogues in their current pattern made little impact at church level. We needed creative theological thinking in a way that promoted Christian unity and engaged our membership.

Douwe Visser agreed. We needed to be aware of the theological themes that really play a role in our churches. Dialogues should be more a training in ecumenical involvement and leadership. And there needed to be a pattern of reception. The problem was that WCRC was working for change – even for radical change – but how were we to get our dialogue partnership to change with us? How did we bring with us the Roman Catholics, the Orthodox, and the Oriental Orthodox?

In response to financial questions from Cheryl Meban, the General Secretary said that as early as 2009, WARC realized that deficit financing had to stop and reduced the WARC staff from 11 to 7. But there was still a hope that income would improve. Each time exchange rates dropped, we thought that surely we had hit the bottom. We also thought that uniting WARC and REC would generate energy and with it increased income. The ongoing financial difficulties didn't always damage WCRC programmes because our partners supported them but they drained staff energy and diverted the secretariat from its proper work.

Najla Kassab said that the WCRC presence was different where there were no regional councils. In the Middle East it was important to form a council quickly, she suggested. Bas Plaisier asked about the repeated use of “should” language in the relationship between the secretariat and regional councils: did that mean that coordination was a hope rather than a reality? The General Secretary replied that this language came from the meeting with regional secretaries, asking the councils to buy in to the strategic plan. In the Middle East, we had traditionally worked with the Fellowship of Middle East Evangelical Churches, which had a strong Reformed membership, although it went wider than that.

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Cheh Liang Mok said the persecution of Christians in many countries was a pressing problem. The General Secretary said his report did not contain everything WCRC had done on this (or other issues) but WCRC action was usually communicated to member churches by the Office of Communications.

The Executive Committee received the report.

Action 3

First Officers' Report

The Executive Committee turned to the first report from the Officers (*Document 13*).

In discussion, Johann Weusmann said there was now a high expectation of action to make WCRC sustainable. This had two parts. One was to increase our income by getting member churches to increase their contributions. The contributions grid should be fair but it should also be mandatory. Even member churches represented in the Executive Committee did not all contribute according to the grid. The second was relocating the secretariat out of Switzerland, a country that had now become prohibitively expensive.

Gradye Parsons voiced a concern about process: should the Executive Committee vote on the Officers' recommendations now or should they be referred to the appropriate committees and brought back?

On finance (section 2, recommendations *h.i-xiii*), Clayton Leal da Silva said that AIPRAL churches contributed twice – to WCRC and AIPRAL. How would this be dealt with? The General Secretary said that the Executive Committee wasn't being asked to vote on a particular grid, merely to agree that there should be one. The content of the grid would come from the Finance Committee.

Gradye Parsons objected that everything that followed (recommendations *h.vi-xi*) involved punitive policies based on a grid the Committee had not yet seen. Clifton Kirkpatrick wondered whether it might not be better to have a good discussion in plenary and then refer it to committees for further discussion and recommendation.

It was *agreed* to refer the financial recommendations to the Finance Committee.

On the location of the WCRC secretariat (section 3, recommendations *d.i-vi*), Clayton Leal da Silva asked if it were really the case that the Constitution had to be changed. The General Secretary replied that we had consulted with two Swiss lawyers who said that because Geneva was mentioned in the constitution as the registered operating location of the WCRC, it was indeed a constitutional issue, and amendment of the Constitution could only be done by a General Council, with the change going to churches a year ahead of time. The President added that an interim solution could be to have an office in Geneva and another elsewhere.

Clayton Leal da Silva also asked whether the proposed task force could also look at alternative methodologies of work. Dora Arce-Valentín was currently working from Cuba. Was this style of working cheaper, was it allowed by Swiss law? Peter Borgdorff said that Geneva was one of the most expensive cities in the world. In a virtual world, there were other ways of working. The task force should propose either a different way of working or a new venue.

Cheryl Meban was concerned by the phrase “if relocation is the answer” (see recommendation *d.iv*). If we left that question open, we might come back in 2012 saying we shouldn’t move. We should already rule out not relocating. Peter Bukowski said the proposed timeline was too long. The Executive Committee needed to move faster. Jan-Gerd Heetderks said he had come here hoping we could at least make a decision in principle.

Johann Weusmann said that if we looked just at location and the timeline for relocation, we missed the whole picture. Two priorities were difficult to reconcile: the financial imperative for relocation, and moving to where most of our constituency is. But the financial situation required that we decide quickly. And a new General Secretary would take office in early 2014.

Clifton Kirkpatrick agreed we were in a situation of urgency but worried that these decisions had long-term consequences and needed to be examined carefully and intelligently. Any decision about location had to be financially sustainable. He was uncomfortable with a decision without serious research; in the long run, it would do WCRC more damage.

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Gradye Parsons wondered if the Committee shouldn't take a decision on relocation in principle and refer the rest of the recommendations to the Officers to be brought back. He moved an amendment to that effect, seconded by Allan Buckingham.

The President asked for reactions to the proposed amendment. Peter Borgdorff said the Committee needed to be clear what it was being asked.

Following further discussion, it was *agreed* to refer the recommendations on location to the Officers to be brought back to the Committee on Monday.

The recommendations on Fund development were referred to the Finance Committee.

On the appointment of a new General Treasurer, Veronica Muchiri said she had no problem with the candidate proposed but wondered whether it might not be better to have two or three candidates among whom to choose.

The Executive Committee selected Johann Weusmann of the Evangelical Reformed Church of Germany to the Executive Committee as the next General Treasurer; and expressed gratitude to Gottfried Locher for his services as past General Treasurer.

Action 5

General Secretary Search Process

The Committee turned to the supplementary Officers' report on the search process for a new General Secretary (*Document 14*).

Reasons were advanced why candidates for the post should be ordained. Peter Bukowski said the General Secretary should be the chief theologian of the organization. Bas Plaisier noted the ecumenical role of the General Secretary. In equivalent posts in confessions with a higher church tradition, it was normal that you should be ordained. Gradye Parsons proposed that candidates be ordained ministers or elders. Peter Borgdorff said that the points raised could be met more inclusively by saying "ordination preferred" and this was accepted.

Clayton Leal da Silva pointed out that salary and conditions would need revising if the secretariat moved. Peter Bukowski said the new

General Secretary should have the same terms and conditions as equivalent posts in the country of location.

The Northeast Asia Area Council was not represented in the proposed Search Committee. Yueh-Wen Lu said the Officers had seen an Asian hole in the composition of the Committee which is why they were recommending Robert Setio.

The Executive Committee agreed to appoint a General Secretary Search Committee with the following remit: to design a process for announcing the impending vacancy as of 1 April 2014 and for receiving and processing applications, engaging in other relevant actions that lead to discerning the right person for the office, short listing candidates and inviting prospective candidates for an interview; design a process and time for conducting interviews; outline a timeline for the entire process; and make a recommendation of the right candidate for the position.

Action 6

The Committee agreed that members of the Search Committee should meet the following criteria:

- specific expertise that will contribute to the identifying of the right person for an office of this calibre
- a majority from the Executive Committee but also including people with the right skills sets from outside the Executive Committee
- the President to be a member to represent the vision and direction of the WCRC
- gender-balanced
- at least one person from each of the antecedents of WCRC (WARC and REC)
- regional representation

Action 7

The Committee appointed the following seven people as the General Secretary Search Committee:

- Jerry Pillay
- Yvette Noble Bloomfield
- Sheilagh Kesting (*Moderator*)
- Robyn Goodwin
- Clayton Leal da Silva
- Peter Borgdorff
- Robert Setio

Action 8

Peter Bukowski raised a point of order: Do advisors have the right to vote? The General Secretary replied that when the Executive

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Committee took decisions by consensus, advisors also raised cards to show they are part of the consensus. When the Committee took decisions by voting, however, only members of the Committee might vote.

The Committee returned to the section on the CWM-WCRC conversation (section 7).

The Executive Committee received with gratitude the joint CWM-WCRC statement "Covenanting towards a New Ecumenical Engagement" and agreed to make it part of the inspiration and operations of WCRC.

Action 9

The Committee endorsed the CWM-WCRC "Agreements for a Strategic Partnership".

Action 10

The Committee expressed its gratitude to CWM for its partnership until now and its future partnership in the light of these agreements.

Action 11

The Executive Committee received the first Officers' report (*Document 13*) and the report on the search process for a new General Secretary (*Document 14*).

Action 4

Regional Councils

Lydia Adajawah presented the report of the African Communion of Reformed Churches, ACRC (*Document 8.1*). The Executive Committee received the report.

Action 14

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

Action 15

Yvette Noble Bloomfield presented a verbal report on behalf of the Caribbean and North American Area Council. A joint assembly on the theme "Who is my neighbour?" was held with the Caribbean and North America Council for Mission (CANACOM) in December 2011

which adopted strategic priorities. CANAAC has a new steering committee, headed by Brenda Bullock (President) and Bill Thomas (Treasurer). The Executive Committee received her report.

Action 16

Yoshimitsu Fujimori presented the report of the Northeast Asia Area Council, NEAAC (*Document 8.3*). The Executive Committee received the report.

Action 17

Cheryl Meban presented the report of WCRC Europe (*Document 8.4*). The Executive Committee received the report.

Action 18

The Committee was informed that a new regional council was in the making in South Asia and the Indonesian churches (together with the member church in Timor Leste) were in the process of forming an Indonesian council.

John Knox International Reformed Centre

The General Secretary presented the report of the John Knox International Reformed Centre (JKIRC) (*Document 9*). Douwe Visser reported on the work of the JKIRC theology commission and presented the President with a copy of the latest JKIRC book. The Committee received the report.

Action 19

UN Ministry

The General Secretary presented the report of the United Nations (UN) ministry (*Document 10*). The UN office represents both the Presbyterian Church (USA) and WCRC, consults with the General Secretary and takes into account WCRC statements.

Lydia Adajawah asked why the report said nothing about communal and interreligious conflict in Nigeria. The General Secretary said that the UN office was obliged to focus on some specific questions and not try to deal with everything universally.

The Committee received the report.

MONDAY 14 MAY

Plenary session 4: Monday afternoon

Finance Committee

The President introduced the report of the Finance Committee (*Document 16*). He invited the General Treasurer, Johann Weusmann, to make a presentation explaining WCRC's financial situation and its challenges.

In 2009, Johann Weusmann said, 18 member churches contributed CHF840,000 to the WARC budget, 107 paid CHF180,000, 42 did not pay regularly and 61 did not contribute at all. Member church contributions in more recent years followed this pattern: 76 per cent of contributions came from 10 churches, representing only 20 per cent of WCRC members. More than half of contributions income came from Europe and more than half of that comes from two small German churches.

The churches that contributed irregularly or did not contribute at all were a "political" problem – they denied our solidarity as a Communion. But even if they were to contribute regularly, two-thirds of them were expected to make only the minimum contribution. This would not really help the budget.

The real financial problem with contributions lay elsewhere, with those wealthier churches that could contribute more but don't. If we want to improve our contributions revenue, we need to focus primarily on those churches, and only after that on the churches that don't contribute regularly or at all.

Almost three-quarters of our total income came from member church contributions; donations came mainly from Switzerland, with some from the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany and the Netherlands.

In the course of the last decade, the problem of insufficient income had been exacerbated by difficulties with currency exchange rate problems. The US dollar declined in value by 50 per cent from 2001 to 2011: a revenue base of USD300,000 was worth CHF520,000 in 2001 but only CHF250,000 in 2011. The Euro exchange rate was not bad until 2007/8. It rose to a high of CHF1.60 to the Euro then plummeted to near parity and was currently pegged by the Swiss

government at CHF1.20 to the Euro. Euro contributions that were worth over CHF1.1m in 2008 were currently worth CHF800,000.

The financial challenge was to decrease our costs or increase our income or both. We might decrease our costs by cutting staff or by moving to another country with a more favourable exchange rate. The first option was scarcely possible. We might increase our income by increased membership (from German or other united churches, for example) or by increased contributions. Here the main challenge was wealthier member churches that didn't pull their weight. Why should churches that pulled significantly more than their weight continue indefinitely to compensate for the under-giving of their peers? This was essentially a North-North problem.

The position was summarized with new data in section 1 of the report. It was important that our expenditure never again exceed our income.

The Executive Committee moved to the recommendations of the Finance Committee.

The Committee adopted the 2011 audited statements.

Action 22

In response to a question from Mary Fontaine on recommendation 2, the President confirmed that the action recommended held so long as the WCRC secretariat remained in Switzerland.

The Committee confirmed the use of the Swiss GAAP RPC accounting standard for WCRC.

Action 23

The Committee named the Compagnie fiduciaire de révision SA as WCRC auditor for 2012.

Action 24

On recommendation 4, questions were raised about decision-making in relation to staff compensation. It was proposed and agreed to amend recommendation 4 by adding the words "subject to principles adopted by the Executive Committee, and reported to the Executive Committee". The recommendation as amended was approved.

Accordingly, the Executive Committee affirmed the updated 2012 core revenue and expense forecast, noting that decision-making on

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staff compensation levels, though closely related to the budget, is placed under the responsibility of the Personnel Committee, subject to principles adopted by the Executive Committee, and reported to the Executive Committee.

Action 25

The Committee approved the 2013 Core budget (*Document 16.1*), assuming CHF1.1m in total membership fees and subject to adjustment in October 2012.

Action 26

On recommendation 6, Peter Borgdorff asked what if the adjustments were major? Wouldn't it be appropriate for the Executive Committee to respond to the proposal of a budget reduction – because we were then talking about the significance and the impact of the organization? It was agreed to limit the freedom of action of the Officers to changes of not more than five per cent.

The Committee authorized the Officers to adjust the 2012 and 2013 budgets if necessary, up to 5 per cent, in consultation with the Finance Committee; adjustments in excess of five per cent should be decided by the Executive Committee.

Action 27

The Committee agreed that following the preparation of a draft WCRC financial policy, the High Audit office of the EKD in Hannover should be engaged to come to Geneva in 2012 to perform a review on the financial management systems and risk assessment of the WCRC and make appropriate recommendations through the General Treasurer to the Officers for implementation; this should also extend to issues of financial management and sound administrative procedure, including their legality and regularity.

Action 28

The Committee agreed that following the report of the High Audit office, the Executive Committee adopt a comprehensive financial policy and practices such as those used by the Protestant Church in Germany (EKD) and other member churches with similar standards.

Action 29

The Committee adopted the following financial management structure and procedures:

- since the oversight function is vested in the Executive Committee, it has to adopt the budget and monitor its

implementation. To this end, it receives financial reports of the General Secretary as well as the annual audit report

- the Officers exercise the oversight function of the Executive Committee between its meetings. They are advised by the General Treasurer
- the Executive Committee appoints a Finance Committee which, in addition to its regular responsibilities regarding budget preparation, shall monitor finances throughout the year and advise the Officers and Executive Committee
- the General Treasurer in consultation with the General Secretary and the Finance Coordinator advises the Executive Committee, the Finance Committee and the Officers. The General Treasurer has the authority to mandate special audit reports at any time
- the Finance Coordinator reports to the General Secretary and to the General Treasurer

Action 30

On section 5 on income collection, Cheryl Meban asked for clarification of the sentence "The fair contribution grid will be based on CHF1.2 m to overcome the current transitional phase of WCRC." Johann Weusmann explained that this was to ensure we met our income target.

On the Sustainability Fund (section 6), the General Secretary indicated that CWM would probably be willing to donate £1m as start-up capital but would like the WCRC to commit to its own fundraising effort. Clifton Kirkpatrick said that the two documents about CWM-WCRC strategic partnership presented on Friday were key to building for the future. Most of what we had been dealing with was crisis management but this might be the most significant step we could take for our future. Only if we matched, and more than matched, the CWM donation would the Fund fly. The President urged the Committee to aim high.

The General Secretary noted that all of the background was in the two documents. These recommendations dealt with one specific aspect of our growing relationship with CWM. Two steps were still necessary: CWM would need to affirm the statement we affirmed on Friday and CWM would need to put in the £1m, given that we affirmed our own commitment to work on the Sustainability Fund.

The Committee affirmed the initial goals and timeline of the WCRC Sustainability Fund (see *Document 12*).

Action 33

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The Committee agreed to embark on a fundraising drive with a target of raising CHF10 million between now and the next WCRC General Council.

Action 34

The Committee agreed to appoint a development director to coordinate this process.

Action 35

In response to a question from Robyn Goodwin about his willingness to serve as development director, Stephens Lytch confirmed that he was excited to serve and that his personal circumstances allowed him to serve for one year as a volunteer.

The Committee appointed Stephens Lytch as the Director of Development as a volunteer from 1 September 2012 to 31 August 2013.

Action 36

Stephens Lytch said Document 12 asked the Executive Committee to come back with CHF30,000. How members did that was up to them. In his culture, when people were on a board of directors, one of the expectations was that the members personally contribute to the organization in which they were leaders.

The Committee committed itself to being personally involved in the fundraising efforts.

Action 37

The Committee charged the Officers with determining where the start-up funds and any funds that come in should be invested.

Action 38

The Committee, noting that much of the first year will necessarily consist of setting up the infrastructure for Fund development, agreed that a major benchmark would be raising at least CHF350,000 by 31 March 2013.

Action 39

The Committee agreed that upon successful evaluation by the Officers and review by the Executive Committee in the May 2013 meeting, Stephens Lytch may be engaged for a further two years as Director of Development, with a salary level similar to WCRC Executive Secretaries.

Action 40

Robyn Goodwin asked what kind of adjustments were envisaged in the final recommendation. The General Secretary said a fundraising drive of this kind obviously would have major implications for the secretariat. It was about internal management and allocation of staff time.

The Committee instructed the General Secretary to work with the Personnel Committee to make the adjustments necessary for the fundraising drive.

Action 41

Discussion of the report of the Finance Committee was adjourned until Tuesday morning.

Mission and challenges of the GBKP

The President welcomed the leadership of the Gereja Batak Karo Protestan (GBKP) and thanked them for hosting the Executive Committee meeting. He then invited Matius P. Barus, the Moderator of the GBKP, to share with the Committee the life and mission of this church.

In his presentation, Matius P. Barus charted the history of the GBKP and described the challenges it had faced.

In 1890 Hendrik C. Kruyt, the first missionary from the Netherlands Zendelinggenootschap (Dutch Missionary Society, NZG) arrived. Six Karonese were baptized in 1893 and four more in 1894; by 1900, there were 17 baptized Karonese and 56 church adherents. But the church grew slowly. The NZG missionaries used the standard tools of education and health. But they were suspected of being agents of the tobacco companies or Dutch colonialism. Education was not valued: the children's role was to help their parents on the farm. And the traditional thinking of the Karonese was materialistic and down-to-earth; it was difficult to convey the spiritual meaning of Christianity. In 1940, the 50th anniversary of the mission, Karo Christians numbered only 5,000.

The first synod of the GBKP met in 1941 and two Karonese pastors were ordained. In 1942, the Japanese occupied Indonesia; in 1945, the Dutch returned. During the war of independence (1947-9) most GBKP members left their villages for the jungle or remote areas where their life was a good witness to their fellow refugees.

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After independence, congregations found themselves in economic difficulties; but solidarity in the congregations was strong and, again, a good witness to Christianity. In 1953, a whole Karonese battalion – about 1,000 soldiers – was baptized in Banda Aceh.

In 1965, the 75th anniversary of the mission, church members numbered 35,000. Karo Batak traditional music instruments and dances were used in the celebrations and the following year the Synod decided they could be used in church services. The GBKP became more interesting for the Karonese.

Following the military coup in 1965, the Suharto regime decreed that every citizen of Indonesia must choose one of five religions: Islam, Christianity (which in Indonesia means Protestantism), Catholicism, Buddhism or Hinduism. At that time most Karonese adhered to their traditional religion (*Perbegu*); most chose to become Protestant and especially to join the GBKP because it embraced Karo culture. In many villages there were mass baptisms, sometimes with 2,000 baptisms in a single day, and by 1970 church membership stood at 90,000.

This rapid growth in numbers in a church with only 11 ministers posed severe challenges. To deepen the faith of the new members, and their knowledge of God's Word, the ministers started family groups; from these groups they elected two presbyters (or elders) and a deacon. The church also recruited young people with the help of scholarships to train in seminary.

1972 saw a turn to holistic service. The GBKP created a community development department, set up credit unions in many villages and trained farmers in improved production. The church received first prize from the President of Indonesia for its environmental work on micro scale hydroelectric power and supply of water in many villages. Holistic service further encouraged mass baptisms and by 1990 GBKP membership stood at 225,000. Recruitment of elders and theological students was intensified.

Challenges in this period included the growth of charismatic movements in the church, especially among young people. At first, the GBKP reacted negatively to this development and members who were active in such movements were excluded from the church; but eventually, the GBKP reversed its position.

A further challenge was that many church members were first-generation Christians, with many different understandings of the Bible.

The main emphasis in the last two decades has been to improve the organization and spiritual quality of congregations, with many courses of training for ministers and elders. In 1992, a retreat centre was built in Sukamakmur. The GBKP also engaged in mission in Riau, Jambi and South Sumatra, where many Karonese seek new settlement for farming.

To support the growing credit union movement, in 1993 the GBKP founded a credit bank. In response to the Mount Sinabung eruption, the church organized many evacuation centres. It has also responded to other natural disasters in Indonesia. As a consequence, it established a Disaster Commission.

Current challenges include materialism on the one hand and fundamentalism on the other, political uncertainty, the difficulties of church building in predominantly Muslim areas, and living in an ethnically and religiously plural society.

Today the church has 300,000 members in 489 congregations. In the Karo region, 30 per cent of Christians are GBKP. Twenty per cent of the population is Muslim. The GBKP is the largest Christian denomination in the area.

In response to Salome Twum, Matius Barus said young Karonese got involved in charismatic movements at university. Integrating charismatic elements in church life was not a problem so long as they did not conflict theologically with the Bible. Some charismatic movements rejected the traditional culture and customs of the people as part of the darkness the gospel should overcome. The GBKP believed gospel and culture could be combined by reinterpreting traditional practices. Thus, they still prayed for the souls of their ancestors but now through Jesus Christ. Again: after eight days new-born children are brought to the river in the traditional way but now they are baptized – and not after eight days but when the pastors have time.

Yueh-Wen Lu asked why women and men sat separately in worship. Matius Barus said it was Karonese tradition – normally all Batak churches were like that. It was also, perhaps, influenced by Islam. In the mosque, men and women did not sit together.

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Lydia Adajawah asked about Christian-Muslim relationships. Matus Barus said as a result of Arab Islamist influence in Indonesia these were more difficult than before.

Mary Fontaine was encouraged by the presentation. Indigenous peoples in North America shared the experience of losing their culture and then regaining it and celebrating it again. Clayton Leal da Silva said that in Recife, Brazil, where he came from, Presbyterians were Christians inside the church and something else outside; this was not a healthy bifurcation.

Yvette Noble Bloomfield thanked Matus Barus for his presentation. Seeing mission through the eyes of this church touches our heart, she said.

In an evening of Karonese food, music and dance following Barus' presentation, participants in the Executive Committee heard songs played on traditional bamboo instruments and watched dances depicting rice planting and harvesting. The area's governor, Kena Ukur Karo Jambi Surbakti, welcomed the Committee. Surbakti, a GBKP church elder, was accompanied by former and current church leaders and the chair of the local arrangements committee.

TUESDAY 15 MAY

Plenary session 5: Tuesday morning

Theme presentations

Andreas Yewangoe, former chair of the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI), and Septemmy Lakawa, professor of missiology and contextual theology in Jakarta Theological Seminary, led an exploration of the theme, *God of life, our Communion prays for justice and peace.*

We pray, said Andreas Yewangoe, and rightly, because God is the true source of justice and peace. Justice is not justice if realized only for the strong and powerful. In Indonesia recently a child who stole some sandals was threatened with five years in prison while those engaged in corruption go free. The Bible understands justice as creative justice. God creates a space in which we may obtain our rights.

Likewise with peace. Even though the cold war is long over, the world still strives for peace based on a balance of power. But peace of this kind is an illusion. Real peace is to learn from the cross of Christ, to take it upon ourselves and thus contribute to peace as members of humanity.

In becoming human among us, God crossed the boundary between creator and creation. It is the courage to cross boundaries that makes possible peace with God and humanity.

Indonesia is not an Islamic state although most of its citizens are Muslims. The founders at independence tried to find a *modus vivendi* common to all Indonesians without regard to religion or ethnicity, a moderate way between an Islamic state and a state based on nationalism. This philosophy is known in Indonesia as *Pancasila*.

Despite this dream of harmony, Indonesia is a deeply polarized society. The causes of conflict are mainly internal, but radical Islamist groups from the Middle East help disturb the peace. Christian communities face threats to close down their houses of worship. Churches that have won in the Supreme Court the right to operate have not been permitted to reopen. Mosques too have often been closed. Closing places of worship is in conflict with the constitution but implementation of this provision is weak.

Indonesia is also divided economically. The fruits of growth have not been shared by the people. Wealth is enjoyed by the few. There is a gap between the centre and the periphery. Jakarta grows too quickly and is severely overcrowded. The government is losing the ideological war between neoliberalism which does not support social welfare initiatives and *Pancasila* which places importance on the common good.

Also unresolved is the question of Papua. Many Papuans demand independence. Jakarta wants only the wealth of Papua, they say; it doesn't care about the people. The PGI has demanded an end to the national-security approach to Papua.

Praying to God to guide us towards justice and peace must lead churches and Christians to an approach to life based on justice and regard for all peoples as a sign of the love of God for the world.

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Septemmy Lakawa began her presentation with a moment of silence to remember those who died and those who survived in the violence in Jakarta and other cities in May 1998 prior to the fall of Suharto.

She proposed that we see communion, community and just peace as intertwined in a group dance defining the church's mission and the living network that WCRC should be. Theo Noya, a student in her seminary, offered the model of a network as an alternative to an ecumenical movement that often becomes so structured and closed-in on itself.

In this missiological vision, the network of local churches is seen as a manifestation of God's economy and God's being in communion. Being in such a network allows the churches to reflect on their work as their participation in God's own communion.

She constructed her presentation around three stories from the history of ethnic and religious violence in Indonesia, 1995-2005, and specifically from the communal conflict that took place in North Maluku, 1999-2000, in which hundreds of villagers died.

Anthropologists, sociologists, economists and politicians have shown the complexity of this conflict, based on local demands for regional and political autonomy, the issue of land and mining and a long and complicated relationship between religion and the local Sultanate.

The final phase of the conflict came in June 2000 when the village of Duma was attacked by Laskar Jihad, Pasukan Jihad, and local Muslim radicals.

Duma, in the district of Galela in North Halmahera, is a symbol of the arrival of Christianity in the region. The Evangelical Christian Church in Halmahera (GMIH), a WCRC member church, traces its origins to the work of Hendrik van Dijken and other Dutch missionaries from 1866 on. Because Duma was the first Christian village in North Maluku, the fall of Duma was also seen as the "fall of Christianity" in the area.

Her first story was of a woman who had sought refuge in the church in Duma. The church was bombed and she was led away to a Muslim guard post. "As I was sitting by the door I remembered my two sons and wondered where they were. One was in the garden, in a cart, he had passed away because he lost too much blood. I stopped to see him... I cried a little and continued to walk. I followed

the church's alley until I reached an intersection and there on a zinc sheet was my son... but his throat had been slit."

Such stories show us the demonic face of interreligious communal violence. Faced with them we must listen and be still. We must ask ourselves whether our fine words and deeds towards justice and peace really embrace the experience of the survivors.

The second story is of a female pastor, early in the conflict, who intervened between Christian and Muslim groups who were preparing to attack each other at Barnabas Cape between Kao and Malifut. Wearing her ministerial gown, she stood between the two groups, drew a line on the ground, and said, "Whoever crosses this line shall surely die!" She then sat on a large rock on the line and prayed. She didn't manage to stop the conflict spreading to other areas. But she did stop these two groups attacking each other: in the midst of grim realities, one can also glimpse the face of grace.

The two groups at Barnabas Cape survived because they stayed on opposite sides of the line. This story brings out the ambiguity in talk of crossing boundaries and forces us to look carefully at the context in which we use this language.

The final story was of another female pastor who in the aftermath kept thinking of her failure to keep members of her congregations from taking part in the violence. She sought to cross the boundaries in the two villages, one Muslim, the other Christian, where she ministers by re-establishing ties with her Muslim neighbours, by shifting from "the other" as enemy to "the other as friend." In this, she felt God's forgiveness.

Lakawa quoted two theologians. Todd Linafelt shifts the understanding of "survival" from "the experience of remaining alive" to "the experience of that which one has lived through." Understood in these terms, survival demands a new theological reflection about what it means to go through interreligious communal violence. Serene Jones, in *Trauma and Grace* (p.59), writes of the circle of testifying and witnessing in the encounter with the survivor:

"In testifying, the survivor gives voice to previously unspeakable agony, and in witnessing, the receiver of the testimony is able to confirm that the survivor's voice is heard and that the plight no longer needs to be hidden in a dark corner of the soul, but can be pulled into the light of day and affirmed as a reality worthy of sustained lamentation and possible redress. As this reciprocal play

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of speaking and hearing unfolds, the two conversation partners together begin to undertake the task of writing a story about the trauma that allows it, in the long run, to be integrated into a broader and more expansive story of hope and hence of future possibilities for fullness of life.”

To listen to the stories of Christian survivors requires us also to listen across boundaries, to see the Christian and Muslim narratives as mirroring each other, no longer separated by the walls of religion.

In the aftermath of the communal violence, many congregations rebuilt their broken churches. In Duma, the Christian community chose a creative approach by connecting the three dimensions of their history in one room: a graveyard for victims of violence, a new church building, and a house of prayer for anyone, including Muslims, built from the ruins of the church destroyed during the attack.

This is the beginning of a new story, a story rooted in the collective memory of the history of violence but oriented to building a relationship without violence with the Muslim community. It is, perhaps, the story that will be passed on to the next generation.

It is possible, too, that we find from this story an answer to the bigger problems in the country, among others the fight for places of worship in the public space called Indonesia.

In discussion, Najla Kassab said that Lebanon had the same experience of villages that were attacked. Clifton Kirkpatrick said his sense of the world he came from was that both Christians and Muslims feel themselves as victims of violence. Cheryl Meban asked if Indonesians had found ways of memorializing the martyrs without turning them into an excuse for future generations to return to violence. Elisée Musemakweli said that when we privilege one element in our identity (the ethnic element in Rwanda, for example) this can be a source of death.

Andreas Yewangoe said the Indonesian government didn't respect the Papuans' identity as Indonesian because they were an ethnic minority. Papuans use the word genocide for what the government does to them. Septemmy Lakawa said that Christians and Muslims had for decades related through fear: for Christians, the political fear of an Islamist state, for Muslims, the fear of proselytism and conversion. She spoke of Christian monuments that embraced a

strategic point of view: we remember our martyrs but we frame their martyrdom within the vision of a non-violent future where we rebuild our relationships with our Muslim neighbours.

Finance Committee

The Executive Committee returned to the report of the Finance Committee (*Document 16*).

The Committee adopted the following policy and procedures regarding a fair share membership contribution grid:

- The proposed grid is a fair share contribution grid, with authority given to the General Secretary, President and General Treasurer to negotiate, in exceptional circumstances and in advance, the recognition of equivalent membership contributions which in all cases shall be reported to the Finance Committee.
- The grid will serve as a guide to the collection of membership contributions in 2012 and by 2013 become the standard for collection.
- The General Secretary shall be charged with implementing this policy. The Officers, Executive Committee members and secretaries of Regional Councils are expected to provide their support.
- With gratitude to the churches that give above the grid, they are encouraged to continue giving at current levels.
- Those who give below the grid will be given letters to the effect that they are not fulfilling their membership obligations.
- In September or October of every year, the General Secretary will write to each member church indicating how much they are expected to pay in the next calendar year and asking that the church pay the full amount by 15 February of the year or that the church at least indicate how it will be paying (e.g. by monthly or quarterly instalments).
- The churches are to send an acknowledgement that they will be paying the expected contribution fee.
- The General Secretary is to monitor the payments and ensure that timely reminders are issued.
- WCRC will enforce the constitutional consequences of non-payment (*Constitution*, section VI J 6) recognizing that a church that has had its membership privileges withdrawn cannot have a member serving on the Executive Committee and is not eligible for financial support from the WCRC. At the 2013 Executive Committee meeting, a list of churches that have neither paid

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membership contributions nor communicated about them for three years shall be presented to the Constitution and Membership Committee for follow-up.

Action 31

The Committee agreed that the fair share contribution grid, together with actual contribution levels, be made available on request to any member church.

Action 32

Johann Weusmann asked members of the Executive Committee to ensure that their churches take a lead in implementing the grid.

Peter Borgdorff underlined the significance of the decisions about the Sustainability Fund. Unless the Executive Committee fully embraced the fundraising campaign, the likelihood of its succeeding was low. Personal financial commitment was a minor but important aspect; more important was how the process is supported by the Executive Committee. There were questions about how it was going to work in culturally sensitive ways in different contexts and not become just another form of "empire". The Committee agreed to schedule a special plenary to discuss this further on Tuesday evening.

The Executive Committee received the report of the Finance Committee (*Document 16*).

Action 21

Relocation

Yvette Noble Bloomfield took the chair and the President introduced the Officers' report on relocation (*Document 17*). Relocation was a sensitive issue, he said. People asked lots of questions and needed lots of answers.

The original intention was to bring all the information to this meeting and appoint a task force to take the process forward but with a clear sense that everyone was involved. Financial difficulties required the Executive Committee to take a decision more quickly than originally envisaged, but the Officers felt uncomfortable about making a quick decision on financial grounds alone.

The Officers agreed that WCRC needed to move out of Geneva and needed to move quickly. But they pleaded not to rush the process.

The Committee needed to take into account the three criteria of stewardship, integrity to issues of justice, and solidarity affirmed by the Uniting General Council and to know the real costs of relocation. A task force needed to do some serious work. The Officers wanted people to believe the committee had come to a decision based on a full-spectrum consideration of the facts and factors.

In six months, the Executive Committee will make a decision. But it also needs to have people on board and to have ownership of the decision. The committee was to decide the composition of the task force before the end of the Executive Committee meeting. The Officers would journey with the task force and ask for interim reports.

Allan Buckingham appreciated the desire to move things faster. His concern was that this was a hard decision that many people had opinions on and if the Committee wasn't able to have the conversation face to face around the table, it would be difficult. An email ballot of 50 per cent plus would leave a lot of people unhappy.

The Executive Committee turned to recommendation 1: That the office be moved away from Geneva.

Clifton Kirkpatrick agreed with all the recommendations except this one. The giving of his church (Presbyterian Church U.S.A.) was higher than 10 years ago but the value of that giving had been cut in half. That was intolerable; but we shouldn't take Geneva off the table before the work was done. We should probably move but he wouldn't want to preclude staying in Geneva if the facts indicated that. He wanted people to feel the Executive Committee had made a decision that took all the facts into consideration.

Peter Bukowski disagreed. To leave the meeting without a decision meant that the Executive Committee just talked and talked. Our Reformed churches would not understand that.

Cheryl Meban said this was a decision we should have made in principle in 2011. We were at the edge of a cliff; and it was a dangerous thing to sleepwalk at the edge of a cliff. She was not sure that moving would save the organization. She was pretty sure that staying would kill it.

Robyn Goodwin said the recommendation didn't have a timeline but it expressed our intention and adopted a direction.

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Bas Plaisier said that only a week earlier he had agreed with Cliff Kirkpatrick. It was painful to leave Geneva. He had hoped for a solution that allowed us to stay. But he came to the conclusion that if we did not take this decision first, we would come into real difficulties.

Peter Borgdorff said that if the Executive Committee backed away from this decision, it would lose credibility. It would be said that WCRC can't make a tough decision. Committee members were elected leaders to preserve the best of the Communion.

Clayton Leal da Silva asked about the impact on the staff of moving to where salary costs were significantly lower. Johann Weusmann said it would mean a decrease in salary but not in standard of living. In real terms no one should be worse off.

Mary Fontaine felt the recommendations should say more about deciding on the basis of a complete report. She thought there was something missing in the wording. Jerry Pillay responded that the recommendations as formulated obliged us to do the necessary research but invited her to make an amendment if she so desired.

Having no amendment to propose, Mary Fontaine consented to the Committee moving on.

The Executive Committee agreed that the WCRC office be moved away from Geneva.

Action 43

On recommendation 2, Robyn Goodwin asked for a clear comparison table of advantages and disadvantages of the two shortlisted venues. She wondered why a task force of just four people.

Jerry Pillay agreed to her first point and in response to the second said the work needed to be done quickly. Johann Weusmann added that it would cost money that so far was not in the budget.

The Executive Committee agreed to appoint immediately a task force of four people with the right competencies to do the research and feasibility on where to move to with the following mandate:

- a) take into account the work done in 2008/2009 and the work done (including documents developed) in 2011/2012
- b) take into serious consideration the criteria established by the Executive Committee as a resource in short listing five possible venues from among the locations named in *Document 11*

- c) further select two of the five locations to be seriously investigated as possible venues. Should any of the two turn out not to be a good location, one of the other three could be considered in its place.
- d) conduct an in-depth feasibility study on the top two shortlisted locations. This may be done for example by having a member of the task force with the right skills set visiting each of the locations with a comprehensive questionnaire that can be responded to as a resource.
- e) find out and document remuneration and social charges levels for the shortlisted locations in order to determine the cost to WCRC
- f) review Mercer Cost of Living indices for the two shortlisted locations
- g) do a cost analysis related to the cost of moving and its implications for WCRC
- h) consult a relocation expert
- i) consult a currency expert
- j) consider the ecumenical and theological reasons for a move
- k) make a proposal for the venue chosen with the rationale for it
- l) recommend the time line by which a move should take place in the most efficient manner
- m) develop a comprehensive report taking all these points into account on which the Executive Committee can take a well-informed decision

Action 44

On recommendation 3, Allan Buckingham asked that the Executive Committee receive all the information about both venues, as well as a recommendation for one. The President agreed.

On funding the work, Bas Plaisier offered to ask his church and said others could do the same.

The Executive Committee requested the task force give a full report to the Officers within six months. Based on the task group's recommendation of a new location, the Officers will take a decision which will serve as a recommendation to the Executive Committee.

Action 45

On recommendation 4, Najla Kassab asked that the Executive Committee see the whole report and not just to be asked to vote yes or no. Would the decision be by simple majority? Allan Buckingham asked for a two-week period to read the documents and a forum for debate, before voting.

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The President agreed to these suggestions. On the question of voting, the General Secretary said that the constitutional requirement (*Article X E*) was a majority of one-half plus one of all the members of the Executive Committee.

Bas Plaisier said that a two-week discussion period would allow Committee members to have a buzz group and that would be excellent. Robyn Goodwin asked that advisors also receive the report (but not to vote) and the President agreed.

The Executive Committee resolved to vote in a mail ballot on the recommendation – voting “Yes” or “No” to the proposal.

Action 46

On recommendation 5, Gradye Parsons said the relocation plan should be shared with the whole Executive Committee and the President agreed.

The Executive Committee instructed the Officers to implement a mechanism to oversee the move to another allocation once decided which must include measures for care and engagement with the staff.

Action 47

The Executive Committee received the Officers’ report on relocation.

Action 42

Plenary session 6: Tuesday evening

Sustainability Fund

Yvette Noble Bloomfield chaired a brainstorming session on the WCRC Sustainability Fund.

Stephens Lytch presented the initial goals of the Fund (see *Document 12*). Meeting the initial annual goals in each region would demonstrate that WCRC had the ability to move forward. At the heart of the exercise was an opportunity to grow in faith and commitment as a community of Reformed Christians. To do that we would need to look beyond our own internal resources.

The comment was made that the Fund should be marketed as a vehicle for creating a compelling organization. We should describe the effort in a way that captured donors.

Making WCRC better known could be a challenge. One member noted that WCRC had provided good information when she made a presentation to her presbytery. Good resources would be needed from the WCRC office to help churches with the programme.

Participants from the AIPRAL region said they would go home and set a reasonable goal for Latin America which might perhaps be folded into the AIPRAL member church contributions. There was a lot of work yet to do on this with the churches. They would also consult at home and send the names of regional working group members to the General Secretary.

Participants from the CANAAC region were very supportive and had already thought about names for a regional and global committee. European participants said that this kind of fundraising was difficult in Europe where it was always easier to raise funds for programmes than for either undesignated income or endowment. There was a deep commitment in Europe (especially in some German churches) to the future of WCRC. Cheryl Meban was working to contact all the British churches.

Participants from Asia said there had not been enough time in their region to discuss the Fund as yet. Many Asian churches were small and even member church contributions posed difficulties. But they were confident that something could be done. Lydia Adajawah and other African participants outlined fundraising possibilities on that continent.

Carola Tron Urban asked for theological and contextual reflection: the danger was that fundraising would be approached from a northern and western perspective. In a deeply unequal world, the capacities of churches and Christians in different regions to contribute to WCRC differed widely. Even in the committee, it was sometimes hard to be with others who had more and could more readily contribute. We need to find a better way to share what we are and what we have.

Yvette Noble Bloomfield affirmed that even small contributions counted. Despite differences in circumstance, we were one family. In CANAAC for example the economic differences between Jamaica and the Cayman Islands were huge; but no one should feel their contribution was insignificant.

The General Secretary reminded the committee of the common understanding with CWM that what we do must be consistent with

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who we are. Regions come to fundraising with different cultural perspectives and economic possibilities but the goal is to resource WCRC in a way that can be sustained.

In closing, the President reiterated the importance of members owning the organization. He encouraged members to work on fundraising in their countries and regions and to contribute personally as they were able.

Elisée Musemakweli closed the session with prayer.

WEDNESDAY 16 MAY

Plenary session 7, Wednesday morning

Theology, Mission and Communion

The Executive Committee took up the report of the Theology, Mission and Communion Core Group (*Document 18*).

Cheryl Meban spoke appreciatively of the role of the Global Institute of Theology (GIT) in training a new generation of Reformed leaders. She wondered how the Roman Catholic Church, with its more hierarchical structures, reacted to WCRC suggestions for change in the conduct of bilateral dialogues.

Clifton Kirkpatrick suggested the need for a group of theologians to look at the ecumenical calling of Reformed Christians and churches in the 21st century. Lack of such reflection might be one reason why "reception" of dialogue results was a persistent problem.

William Koopmans said WCRC went into dialogue with assumptions about what it meant to be Reformed but also about what it meant to be ecumenical. It was necessary to reflect on this from time to time. What was the role of dialogue in ecumenicity and what was the role of ecumenicity in dialogue? Clifton Kirkpatrick said that was exactly the question: how WCRC was to exercise ecumenical leadership in the 21st century from a Reformed perspective for the sake of the whole ecumenical movement.

Peter Borgdorff asked if the many recommendations for action were in some order of priority. One responsibility of the Executive Committee was to ensure staff did not get overloaded. One

executive secretary could scarcely be expected to do all that was contained in the report.

Bas Plaisier said the core group shared this concern: it didn't want Douwe Visser to be exhausted or see the quality of his work suffer. But it had considered the workload carefully. There was one executive secretary but he worked with a lot of other people. The workload would be reviewed again in 2012.

Douwe Visser offered to circulate the paper on new approaches to dialogue to the whole Executive Committee. He noted that the relocation discussion had implications for WCRC's ecumenical engagement. In 1948, WARC moved to Geneva out of ecumenical engagement. Once WCRC moved out of Geneva, it would have a challenge to sustain its ecumenical commitment.

The Executive Committee agreed that the 2014 GIT be planned with a location in Latin America.

Action 50

On recommendation 2, Cheh Liang Mok asked which Pentecostal groups or organizations constituted the dialogue partner in Reformed-Pentecostal dialogue. The response was that the Pentecostal world was even more complex than the Reformed family. Dialogue did not include the neo-Pentecostals but did embrace Pentecostals who had a lot in common with Reformed Christianity. Observable also was a convergence in real life, with more charismatic worship in Reformed circles and more systematic theology among the Pentecostals.

The committee adopted the Reformed-Pentecostal report and approved its preparation for publication along with some analysis and study documents.

Action 51

The committee prioritized involvement in ongoing dialogues as follows:

- a) to continue the Catholic-Reformed dialogue with the intention that we try to also incorporate greater youth involvement
- b) to continue the Reformed-Pentecostal dialogue with the proposed topic of mission in an environment of learning
- c) to engage in ongoing cooperation with Lutherans, Anglicans, etc. but not be involved in specific dialogue projects until such time as the need and relevance be demonstrated

Action 52

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On recommendation 4, Cheh Liang Mok asked what “other groups” meant. Douwe Visser said this referred to such groups as the World Council of Churches’ Faith and Order Commission or the Reformed Alliance in Germany for the Heidelberg Catechism Jubilee in 2013.

The Executive Committee, on matters that are urgent and relevant to our WCRC mission, encouraged the Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion to engage in *ad hoc* and short-term contacts with other groups.

Action 53

The committee agreed that *Reformed World* be included again in the core budget for next year.

Action 54

On recommendation 6, Cheh Liang Mok asked about the current status of the mission document. Douwe Visser said it was still a work in progress.

The Executive Committee agreed that mission consultations continue in order to complete the objective of a mission document that will reflect the core values and priorities of WCRC.

Action 55

The committee instructed the executive secretary to develop mission consultations to focus on issues relevant to those living in front-line situations, i.e. Christians living under pressure from other religious groups.

Action 56

The committee instructed the executive secretary to work with the various regions to focus especially on mission dynamics relevant to their situations.

Action 57

The committee authorized the executive secretary to proceed with consultations on Communion.

Action 58

The committee encouraged all regions, in cooperation with the executive secretary, to make the matter of Communion an important part of their agenda with a view to developing practical guidelines to strengthen our ability to relate to and work with each other amidst diversity.

Action 59

The committee expressed appreciation to Douwe Visser for his excellent work as Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion.

Action 60

The President also thanked the moderator and secretary of the core group, Bas Plaisier and William Koopmans. The Executive Committee received the report of the Theology, Mission and Communion Core Group (*Document 18*).

Action 49

Justice and Partnership

The Executive Committee turned to the report of the Justice and Partnership Core Group (*Document 19*).

Introducing the report, Clayton Leal da Silva said its recommendations were in order of priority. They were almost the same as in 2011. Until Dora Arce-Valentín took up her post, the core group could not do much and her current working conditions are not ideal. When WCRC has the necessary means, Dora should work from the same secretariat and on the same terms and conditions as other staff.

On recommendation 1, Clayton Leal da Silva observed that the Accra Confession had not been much mentioned in the meeting. Justice was a central issue for the WCRC; the Accra Confession was central to all the work of the Communion and had to be present in its documents and decisions.

Peter Bukowski said the Accra Confession was indeed central but asked what the recommendation meant technically. Peter Borgdorff said the Confession was already affirmed as part of the uniting process and agenda. If the core group wanted to say it was a bigger part, that was a bigger discussion. Clifton Kirkpatrick responded that as Dora Arce-Valentín began her work, the core group wanted to reaffirm the centrality of the Confession. Peter Bukowski observed that the Theology, Mission and Communion Core Group already integrated theology and justice. Cheryl Meban asked the committee to acknowledge that it could have shown more explicitly that Communion and justice framed the debate about finance and relocation, that the hard decisions it took were in order to advance Communion and justice and not to lose money keeping the secretariat in one of the most expensive cities in the world.

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The President suggested substituting “reaffirms”. Peter Borgdorff moved an amendment: “The Executive Committee *reaffirms* the Accra Confession as *a* guiding document”. WCRC was about both Communion and justice and we would keep these as a unity in tension. The amendment was accepted.

The Executive Committee reaffirmed the Accra Confession as a guiding document for the area of justice and for the work of the whole of WCRC.

Action 62

The committee agreed to initiate conversations with, and assist, regions and individual member churches to explore and adopt ways of living out the Accra Confession.

Action 63

The committee added Mark Koenig of the UN ministry to the Covenanting for Justice Network.

Action 64

The committee agreed to continue to develop biblical and theological resources and consultations for member churches in order to affirm and promote women's ordination.

Action 65

The committee added Grietje Couperus (Latin America) to the Gender Justice Network in place of Dora Arce-Valentin.

Action 66

The committee asked the Executive Secretary for Justice and Partnership, time allowing, to explore the possibility of working with the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) in collaboration with youth departments in each region where applicable.

Action 67

In response to a question, the General Secretary said the two justice networks appointed in 2011 had not yet met. There were also regional justice networks but these were different.

The committee instructed the executive secretary to explore the possibility of holding a justice network meeting as soon as possible.

Action 68

The committee instructed the General Secretary to organize a thorough hand-over process between the previous and current

secretaries (Patricia Sheerattan-Bisnauth and Dora Arce-Valentín) as soon as possible.

Action 69

The committee thanked the Moderators and also thanked Clayton Leal da Silva, who had been standing in for the core group moderators and especially Dora Arce-Valentín for her work.

Action 70

The Executive Committee received the report of the Justice and Partnership Core Group (*Document 19*).

Action 61

Communications

The Executive Committee turned to the report of the Communications Core Group (*Document 20*).

With regard to the grid, Lydia Adajawah asked what was meant on page 172 by "autumn". Yvette Noble Bloomfield said in practice it meant between October and December 2012. She added that the core group would like to know that one of the new interns would have communications skills.

The Executive Committee agreed that the Executive Secretary for Communications provide communications support to the strategic fundraising group and attend meetings of the group in order to be attuned and contribute to those conversations.

Action 72

The committee expressed its thanks to Kristine Greenaway for her hard and dedicated work over the past year.

Action 73

The Executive Committee received the report of the Communications Core Group (*Document 20*).

Action 71

Constitution and Membership

The Executive Committee took up the report of the Constitution and Membership Committee (*Document 15*).

The Executive Committee approved the by-laws of the Northeast Asia Area Council (NEAAC), pending corrections.

Action 75

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The General Secretary asked that recommendations 2 and 3 be referred back to the Constitution and Membership Committee. Bas Plaisier agreed: there was no choice but to split the continent of Asia into several parts but the consequence was there would eventually be many sub-regional Asian councils. The General Secretary asked the Constitution and Membership Committee to look at how the regional structures were to unfold: should there, for example, be an Asian regional structure of which the sub-regional councils were part? Carola Tron Urban commented that AIPRAL was a single regional council but worked with sub-regions. Gradye Parsons said the issue for him was not the number of regional councils but the number of healthy regional councils.

In response to a question, Subha Singh Majaw said the SAAC had invited all the WCRC member churches from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. It had not started functioning but already had officers. It would be quite difficult for the SAAC to work together with the NEAAC.

Clifton Kirkpatrick agreed WCRC needed to think through the patterns but thought the Executive Committee should also welcome the formation of the SAAC.

Following further discussion, the Executive Committee welcomed the application by the South Asia Area Council to be recognized, encouraged the SAAC to continue working, and referred the application and constitution and by-laws to the Constitution and Membership Committee to work out the implications of multiple councils in a single region.

Action 76

On recommendation 4, Cheh Liang Mok asked whether this would affect the status of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan. Bas Plaisier asked whether this was a move from our side. The General Secretary explained that for many years the China Christian Council had lived with an ambiguous relationship to WARC and now WCRC. On paper, the council was a member church; but it saw itself as post-denominational and, depending on the decade, was either comfortable or uncomfortable with membership in a Reformed and United family. If the council continued to be classified as a member church, it would need to pay the membership contribution of a very large church, failing which it would be liable to suspension. Changing the council's status to associate membership was truer to its own identity and in practical terms more realistic. It had no impact on the status of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan.

The wording of the recommendation was adjusted and the Executive Committee recognized the China Christian Council as an associate member of WCRC.

Action 77

The Executive Committee admitted the Church of Christ in the Sudan among the Tiv (NKST) into WCRC membership, effective 1 January 2012.

Action 78

The committee confirmed the appointment of Dario Barolín as Secretary of AIPRAL.

Action 79

The Executive Committee received the report of the Constitution and Membership Committee (*Document 20*).

Action 74

Partnership Fund

The Executive Committee turned to the report of the Partnership Fund Committee (*Document 21*)

In the absence of Kobus Gerber, who was recovering from illness, the report was presented by Najla Kassab.

Cheryl Meban wondered if the Partnership Fund Committee had considered making a recommendation with regard to the emergency measures taken in 2011. The damage that would be done if WCRC were to do this again would be incalculable.

Following discussion of a suitable form of words, the Executive Committee affirmed that the emergency action taken in 2011 should not be used as a precedent.

Action 81

The Committee expressed warm appreciation for the work done by Antoinette Berkouwer as a volunteer and requested the General Secretary to find an appropriate way to recognize and honour this work.

Action 82

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The Executive Committee received the report of the Partnership Fund Committee (*Document 21*), thanked the staff for their hard work and approved the broad directions being taken by the fund.

Action 80

Personnel Committee

The Executive Committee turned to the report of the Personnel Committee (*Document 22*).

On recommendation 1, Peter Borgdorff said job titles were important. Recognizing the importance of communications in fundraising was not the same thing as “communications and fundraising support”. It was agreed to drop “and fundraising support” on the understanding that “communications” included communications support for fundraising.

The Executive Committee modified the staff structure as follows:

- General Secretary
- Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion
- Executive Secretary for Justice and Partnership (until enough funds are available, this will remain an Executive Consultant position. This could change as early as January 2013)
- Executive Secretary for Communications
- Director of Development (same level as Executive Secretary), first year as a volunteer
- Finance Coordinator
- Deputy to Partnership Fund Coordinator (with some communications tasks assigned as needed)
- Administrative Assistant for the General Secretary and Operations
- Administrative Assistant for Programmes

Action 84

On recommendation 2, Robyn Goodwin asked why the Personnel Committee proposed a five-year contract here but a two-year contract for Dora Arce-Valentín. Allan Buckingham asked why the proposal was not to appoint two consultants. The General Secretary explained that Executive Secretaries were appointed for five years; Dora Arce-Valentín had been appointed initially as a consultant because of financial restrictions but the intention was to appoint her as soon as possible as an Executive Secretary. Peter Borgdorff said it was wrong to frame the question as one of fairness rather than financial necessity.

In response to a question on recommendation 2, the President said it was also understood that there were salary implications in the relocation of the secretariat.

The Executive Committee renewed the appointment of Douwe Visser as Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion for a second five-year term (1 July 2013 to 30 June 2018), noting that in the new contract there will be a statement clearly stating that the office will be relocated outside Geneva during this term of office and that this was understood before signing.

Action 85

The Executive Committee received the report of the Personnel Committee (*Document 22*).

Action 83

Second Officers' Report

The Executive Committee took up the second Officers' report (*Document 23*).

On recommendation 1, Robyn Goodwin wondered why her nomination did not feature in the proposed relocation task force. The President explained that the Officers had selected four people from a long list of nominations.

Peter Bukowski proposed to substitute Cheryl Meban for Roberta Rominger.

Allan Buckingham asked for more information about Roberta Rominger. The President said she was very capable and what she brought to the process was discernment. Clayton Leal da Silva thought it was good to have two members from inside and two from outside the committee. Peter Borgdorff said he had known Cheryl for years and thought she was a fair and balanced person but he was willing to go with the Officers' recommendation. Finding no strong reason to change names, Carola Tron Urban suggested the committee vote for the four people listed.

There being no consensus on the suggested change, the President took a formal vote and the list proposed by the Officers was approved. The Executive Committee appointed the following to the task force: Jerry Pillay, Gradye Parsons, John Bolt (*Convener*),

Narrative Record

Roberta Rominger, with the General Secretary serving as a resource to the task force.

Action 48

In response to questions on recommendation 2, the General Secretary said he had visited the GKI on his way to Berastagi and they said a public statement would not be helpful but a letter to the President of Indonesia would be.

The Executive Committee instructed the General Secretary to write to the President of Indonesia on its behalf expressing concern about situations inconsistent with the vision of harmonious inter-communal relations.

Action 12

The committee instructed the General Secretary to continue exploring the possibility of a joint General Council/Assembly with the Lutheran World Federation in 2017, with a progress report to the Executive Committee in 2013.

Action 13

The Executive Committee received the Second Officers' Report (*Document 23*).

Action 4

Executive Committee of the WCRC Michigan Foundation

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

The Executive Committee of the WCRC Michigan Foundation approved the minutes of the Executive Committee of the WCRC Michigan Foundation meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, 12 May 2011 with the correction that the date in action 1 be changed from "5-12 May 2001" to "5-12 May 2011".

WCRC-MF Action 1

The Executive Committee agreed that the actions of the WCRC Executive Committee during its meeting in Berastagi, North Sumatra, Indonesia, 10-16 May 2012, be fully concurred in and entered into the permanent record of the WCRC Michigan Foundation.

WCRC-MF Action 2

The President invited Allan Buckingham 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 WCRC Executive Committee and thanked all who had contributed to the work of the meeting. He was thanked in turn for his leadership.

The Executive Committee closed with worship.

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

“God of Life, lead our Communion to Justice and Peace”

Jerry Pillay

Introduction

1. Psalm 136 is an expression of praise and thanksgiving to God as the Psalmist considers the loving and faithful presence of Almighty God. He acknowledges God as Creator who has set everything in place. This probably bears testimony to the fact that God is in control. From verses 11-26 he takes a little different approach as he ponders on the history of Israel and remembers how God rescued her from foreign powers and oppression. He comes to the conclusion that God’s love endures forever.
2. As we consider the work of the WCRC in the past year we, too, can come to the same conclusion of God’s faithful abiding presence and love. The year has had its fair share of joys and celebrations but it was filled with stressful moments as we wondered about our financial challenges. I will return to these later but for now it is important to say that words of the Psalmist holds true for us also. Indeed, the love of the Lord endures forever.
3. The Theme for this Executive Committee is: “God of life, lead our Communion to justice and peace.” This prayer, as it is intended to be, either directly or indirectly tells us two significant things: 1) It declares our desire of where we wish to be and, (2) it confesses that we are not already there. The vision for a Communion with justice and peace must always be before us because this is what God wills and wants of us that we may “love justice, show mercy and walk humbly with our God”. The prayer also attests to the fact that we need God to lead us to justice and peace, it is impossible to achieve this on our own. Ultimately it is God who takes the initiative and calls us to embrace and exemplify God’s own character. It is to God that we give all glory, honour and praise because God’s love endures forever.

WCRC context

4. In order to appreciate this prayer it is necessary to understand the context in which the WCRC is embedded, in and through its member churches across the world. A picture of the world

depicting its challenges and struggles is captured well in the book, *Dreaming a Different World*:

"We are shocked by stories of injustice worldwide and disturbed by accounts of ecological destruction. We are moved by experiences of oppression, violence and being violated; experiences of exclusion and marginalization, often of minorities; experiences of human trafficking and modern-day slavery; experiences of vulnerability and neglect, lack of education, employment, protection, health, dignity, more often than not the experiences of women and children. We listen to warnings of climate change, prophesies of local disasters, dangers to air and sea; we hear accounts of coral reefs that are lost and deserts that grow of the atmosphere that is polluted and snow that disappears. We are told of threats to the future of our children and our children's children. We receive reports about lack of clean water and abuse of natural resources. We see the devastation of militarism and violence and war. We read studies about unfair trade and out-of control finance and deepening poverty that disturb us. We learn about statistics describing our time and our realities and they shame us.

Behind much of these, we observe in our world a coming together of economic, cultural, political and military power into a spirit of domination that seems to lord it over all and everything. We experience this presence in a pervasive spirit of destructive self-interest, even greed — the worship of money, goods and possessions; in a spirit that lacks compassionate justice and shows contemptuous disregard for the household of life and the gifts of creation. We recognise this spirit of our time in an all-encompassing way of life that serves, protects and defends the interests of powerful corporations, nations, elites and privileged people, while willing to sacrifice humanity and creation. We even hear proclaimed today a gospel of consumerism, supported by powerful propaganda and believed and followed by many, religiously spreading and justifying this spirit of our time. We sense the seductive power of idolatry, the danger of losing our soul."

5. The WCRC which consists of 229 Member Churches in 108 countries with a membership of over 80 million Christians is found in the midst of such experiences which may vary somewhat in different contexts but, nevertheless, embodies such realities and experiences. It is in such a context in which we are called to proclaim the *whole Gospel* to the *whole person*

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and to the *whole world*. Of course, not all the stories are bad there is lots of good news to share of wonderful things taking place which brings people together in hope and celebration.

6. As a Communion of Reformed churches we are challenged to take cognizance of the different realities which constitute our family often shaped by socio-economic and political realities. We are a Communion of women and men, a Communion between different ethnic, cultural and linguistic communities, between rich and poor, and a Communion embracing different expressions of worship, spirituality and church governance. In such a context of great diversity we need to understand and appreciate afresh what it means to be a world Communion.

What does it mean to be a Communion?

7. Allow me to unpack and explore a little on what it means to be a Communion. Our Communion is founded in the life, presence, and activity of the Triune God and continuously sustained by the gospel in Word and sacrament.

Called to Unity

8. We are drawn together by the same Lord Jesus Christ who makes us one through his Spirit. Therefore we are called to “make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:3). This should find expression in all dimensions of Christian life: in witness, service, worship, and in sharing of spiritual life and economic and financial support.
9. Communion (*Koinonia*) is not an association formed by the common interest of individuals of equal social standing. It is a *gift* of God that implies the commission to Christians to shape their lives as *Koinonia*, and acknowledge this gift in their *koinonia* with one another (John 17). It is this use of *Koinonia* as a relational concept, integrating the different dimensions of the life of the Christian community that accounts for its significance for contemporary ecclesiological reflection and ecclesial practice.
10. We are one in Christ. This unity, however, does not mean uniformity. We are not called to suppress our unique and diverse particularity. In Christ our diversity is embraced and transformed into a mutually supportive communion. This communion requires more than mutual tolerance; it calls us to a mutual recognition, acknowledgement, and welcome. We are bound by the love of Christ which enables us to love the other.

11. The reality of communion invites us to live out our unity with greater recognition and acceptance of diversity and realize our diversity with a greater will toward unity. However, diversity is not fragmented unity, and unity cannot be cemented diversity. The love of God in Christ Jesus calls us to be more.
12. I am stressing this understanding of unity because; I must admit that I am becoming increasingly concerned by Reformed churches and their tendency to split. In almost all countries of the world there is more than one Reformed church. How could this happen? A variety of reasons can be named: conflicts, divergences over doctrinal or ethical issues, church governance and political differences, personalities and power. Whatever the reasons we need to ask: Why is it that Reformed churches are so easily driven apart? Why are they inclined to solve internal conflicts by parting roads? Why is it that divisions are so readily accepted as an inevitable fact? The explanation must be sought in Reformed ecclesiology. Is it perhaps because Reformed churches do not sufficiently recognise that the Church is God's *gift* but treat it as a voluntary association?
13. It is quite disturbing to learn that in some parts of the world Reformed churches are literally at war with each other to the extent of violence and bloodbaths, using military might, power and government influence to stake their claim and authority. It is also alarming to see how many churches are fighting their battles in the courts of law and bringing injury and insult to their Christian witness in the world.
14. In recent times we have witnessed breakaway groups in some of our member churches and breakdown of relationships among member churches within the WCRC on different views of sexual orientation. The WCRC leadership has been consulted on these and in some instances has been requested to intervene to save relationships that have been there between member churches for such a long time. This, of course, inevitably impacts on the WCRC because we are all part of the same family. Although this does not currently threaten the soundness of our Communion, it has the potential to become an issue. How do we address this?
15. Without attempting to pontificate on the matter may I humbly offer the following: Our unity must be reconceived as the mutual interaction of the many differing views on the subject to find mutual flourishing and blessing to others? Mission is based

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upon a theology of generosity and hospitality arising from our understanding of the truth which is revealed in Christ. Yet we must be willing to risk that understanding in conversation with others. Just as mission involves giving and receiving, gathering and multiplying, so it also involves challenging and being challenged. In being challenged, we need something more than arguments and counter-arguments. We need to find each other in the love, grace, peace and unity of Jesus Christ.

16. Recognizing the church as created by God, we need to learn to affirm the gift of communion with one another and “maintain the bond of love”, despite diversities and conflicts, imperfections and frustrations that arise from failures in the face of difficulties. Reformed churches need to ask what justifies their separate existence and to consider opportunities for developing new bonds of communion. Reformed churches accept the liberty of opinion and accommodate a variety of views. In this light, are we not prepared to agree to disagree in the desire to preserve something of greater importance: the unity of the church and its witness to the world?
17. We need to constantly work at breaking down the walls that divide us as we claim our unity in Jesus Christ. This is captured well for us in the words of the following song:

*There is a place of commanded blessing
Where brethren in unity dwell
A place where anointing oil is flowing
Where we live as one*

*You have called us to be a body
You have called us as friends
Joined together in the bond of the Spirit
Unto the end*

*Father we join with the prayer of Jesus
As You are so let us be one
Joined together in unity and purpose
All for the love of Your Son*

*We will break dividing walls
We will break dividing walls
We will break dividing walls
In the name of your Son
We will break dividing walls*

*We will break dividing walls
And we will be one.*

May it be our continued joy and desire to break dividing walls so that we may have the unity that God wills and desires for the church.

Called to Mission

18. The church as a communion 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 of 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.
19. 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.
20. As we engage God's mission in the world, we need to work with people of other faiths in seeking peace and reconciliation. There are so many conflicts and violence in the world today generated by religious conflicts and struggles. We need to discover afresh what it means to rest in God's peace. Peace is not just the absence of war. It is resting in God's *shalom* which speaks of reconciliation, healing and justice.

Called to Justice and Community

21. *Koinonia* is furthermore a proclamation of unity among churches and believers which must be expressed in tangible spiritual and economic ways. This is most striking in Acts 2, and in Paul's appeals to the Gentile churches to share their financial resources. Early Christians lived out their *koinonia* in the breaking of bread, in prayers, and also in the sharing of possessions (*Koina*) and the distribution of goods to those in need (Acts 2: 43-47). Similarly, Paul viewed the collection of money for Jerusalem as a central expression of Christian unity.

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22. This passage emphasises that communal worship and the celebration of the Lord's Supper were an integral part of a community that understood *koinonia* in the most comprehensive sense as having all things in common. *Koinonia* in this sense transcended the distinctions based on social status and wealth; the *Koinonia* experienced in worship and in the Lord's Supper shaped all dimensions of the life of the Christian community.
23. In this sense, we need to explore what our Communion can contribute to alleviating suffering and to transforming our societies. God created this world and wants to preserve his world until it comes through its end to its future in a "new heaven and a new earth". It is God's will that human life be a life in communion, peace and justice.
24. Of course, this knowledge is not new to us. The founding history of the Accra Confession remains with us. In this we have spoken quite strongly and powerfully about justice and its impact on economic and gender matters. We have spoken extensively about "covenanting for justice and the care of the environment and earth". It is encouraging to note that this Confession has been offered as a gift to other ecumenical bodies, some of which have taken it and formulated their Theological Statement and work on its declarations. Moreover, some of the things it has stated have come true, for example, the economic recession we encountered in 2008. The challenge now is to continue to live out this Confession in our daily lives and practices.
25. Perhaps this challenge needs to begin with us as the WCRC family. Proclaiming truth to power and exercising our prophetic calling can sometimes embarrass us because we often struggle to practice what we preach. I was some time ago in India and had the opportunity to visit a Dalit village where the "untouchables" and poorest of the poor live. I enquired from the leaders about what they were doing to challenge the existent caste system and help the people in the village; they confessed that they were not doing much. On further prodding, it was disclosed that the church was benefitting from the system and therefore preferred to remain silent. It is sad that the church should allow itself to become susceptible to the temptations of power but it is a reality in many parts of the world. I wonder how these impacts on the relationships we have within the WCRC family.

26. I get the impression sometimes that we don't mind talking about communion but we get slightly irritated when we talk about justice. We need to understand that the God of justice and peace expects us to work towards these as well. As I said previously, we cannot have communion without justice or justice without the desire for communion. Justice is a necessary part of building a Communion. We cannot have a *true* Communion without addressing issues of injustice.
27. Our communion should reflect: unity, sharing of spiritual and material gifts, mission, working for justice and peace in the world. Such an understanding of communion will enable us to make decisions which reflect the engagement and participation of all members of the WCRC. It is not a matter of the rich and powerful telling those who are not, what the WCRC should do. Instead, it is an acknowledgement that (even) the poor and disadvantaged are equal before God and have much to offer to the WCRC, which does not necessarily amount to money.
28. A recent conversation with CWM articulated the above point in a very able way as we deliberated on how money can be a curse and a blessing. The following extract from the Statement we issued with CWM speaks for itself:

“Both the WCRC and CWM are faced with the struggle and the contradiction of money in a world where money, and not relationships, defines power. The thought that these ecumenical bodies could be constrained by the challenges of money is a concern that we are committed to addressing together. We have agonised with the dysfunctional social landscape in which we operate, where money, as a social currency, is given greater premium than it ought to have. We have acknowledged that the power dynamics associated with it consume us and often prevent us from critiquing ourselves, and we agreed that there is an urgent need for us to engage ourselves in a diligent examination of the theology of money in this climate of economic and social injustice. Recognising that “the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof”, we affirmed that our resources belong to God and that our stewardship of these resources falls short. However, our worship together, at the beginning of the season of Lent, helped us to see with fresh eyes our need for penitence and hope. Having been reminded, and having considered, that in classical Chinese writing the word “crisis” is represented by the two characters for “danger” and “opportunity”, we welcome this moment as an opportunity

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to confess our complicity, embrace the values of our faith and recommit ourselves to living in faithful obedience to the God of justice, whose gift of grace beckons us to act with grace."

29. As we consider relationships within our Communion, we need to seriously consider the issue of money, power and rights. We need to understand these from a Biblical and theological perspective so that we do not say the same thing as the world says and behave in ways which does not depict an "alternative way of life" which Jesus exemplified in his life and teachings. What does this mean for our Communion?

WCRC during the past year

30. Since the 2011 Executive Committee many things have been accomplished which will feature more comprehensively in the report of the General Secretary but let me mention a few:
- a. We started to implement the new Vision and Mission of our Communion with enthusiastic determination and drive.
 - b. The President and General Secretary had opportunity to visit regional councils and to present the new vision and mission and strategic plan of the WCRC. This was received well by all the regions we visited. The General Secretary was able to visit most of the regions; I managed to get around to at least two.
 - c. Meetings took place with staff and other stakeholders to set in motion programme priorities and projects and as usual the staff has continued to work hard and well at what they do. We have worked with a very limited number of staff and we were not in a financially able position to add any more to the team. It must be noted that even the new appointment we made in the area of Justice and Partnership had to be on a part-time basis because of the financial constraints.
 - d. We met with leaders of other Ecumenical organizations to share with them our new directions and strengthen our partnerships.
 - e. We visited member churches, spoke at their General Assemblies, and sat down with their leaders in numerous conversations.

- f. conducted visits to partner churches of my denomination and took the opportunity in each place to speak about the work of the WCRC.
- g. The Officers held regular teleconferences, met in November in Geneva to address significant matters, and are constantly keeping in touch via Skype.
- h. The President and General Secretary have a monthly, sometimes more, teleconference and these days Skype conversations.
- i. We have met with various people and groups to address the financial situation of the WCRC.

WCRC financial situation

31. I am aware of the fact that the General Secretary's report will quite comprehensively cover the issues of WCRC financial situation and location, however, given the significance of these matters in the life and work of the WCRC at the moment, I feel it is absolutely necessary for me as President to say something about these matters to the Executive Committee. We may want to park these discussions to be dealt with under the General Secretary's Report but at least for now it offers some insight in my own thinking on these very important matters.
32. As said previously, the WCRC has experienced serious financial challenges brought about mainly by the fluctuation of the USD and the Euro against the Swiss franc in which we do most of our business.
33. Consequently, we were forced to draw from our reserves in order to meet our monthly costs. According to Swiss law, engaging in the latter is reason enough to file for bankruptcy. Whilst we have adequate funding for programmes and projects, it is with the core budget (salaries and administration) that we struggle with insufficient funding.
34. We were able to engage discussions with CWM for some funding assistance and partnership in programmes. We are pleased to report that CWM gave us 100 000 pounds in 2011 and agreed that a certain percentage could go into administrative costs. We wish to express our sincere thanks to CWM for this wonderful gesture and act of kindness.

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35. In December 2011 a group met in Frankfurt at the initiative of our German churches to discuss the WCRC financial crisis and what could be done to remedy the situation. This meeting was chaired by the WCRC President. At a teleconference meeting of the Officers in January 2012 this group was formally appointed as an Advisory Group under the chairmanship of Dr Weusmann to discuss the financial situation, make recommendations and offer them to the Officers to take up in preparation for the 2012 Executive Committee or to act on immediately, where possible and permissible. The Group met again in March 2012 and offered such recommendations some of which will come to this meeting.
36. I wish to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to this Group for the time and effort they put into doing this piece of work for the WCRC bearing the cost of travel, etc. It is the willing spirit of such people who make the concerns of the WCRC their concerns which indicates the hope and joy we have of surviving as an organization. Thank you so much!
37. In order to address the financial situation the Officers have: 1) requested the General Secretary to write to all member churches about the WCRC financial situation, 2) write to defaulting member churches, 3) apply the Constitution on defaulting churches, 4) relook at the fees grid, 5) approach certain member churches to give more, 6) ask those who are not giving according to the set expectation to so do, 7) look at fundraising possibilities and set up a structure for this, and 8) speak to other ecumenical partners.
38. On the matter of membership fees, I need to appeal to all defaulting member churches to take this seriously as a sign of their commitment and ownership of the WCRC. Understandably, there are those who struggle to meet the basic requirements but they need to discuss this with the General Secretary rather than simply stay quiet or not respond to letters on the same. We should never allow money to be the basis for participation or non-participation but the willingness to give to the life and work of the organization avails us the sense of pride and dignity to belong. It enables us to function out of our zones of "conditioned poverty" as we are reminded that the church in Macedonia gave not out of her riches but out of her poverty: "Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their

ability. *Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints...*" (Italics mine).

39. A second meeting with CWM early this year led to: 1) a drafting of a Statement defining our relationship, 2) agreements on how we can work together, 3) a commitment from CWM to provide financial support for the Justice and Partnership Executive Secretary post and, 4) possible assistance to set up an Endowment Fund for the on-going work of the WCRC. I wish to place on record my sincere thanks and appreciation to CWM for their commitment to assist the WCRC in these challenging times. It is a marvellous indication that here is an organization which is prepared to use its "gift of grace" to graciously enable others to share in the *Missio Dei* (God's mission) in the world.
40. The European region has also taken some decisions to address the WCRC situation, for which we are most grateful and appreciative. The General Secretary will say more about this in his report. We also appreciate the solidarity actions from other regions.
41. I wish to express my sincere thanks to the United Churches in Germany for their commitment to contribute financially to the WCRC in order to help us ascertain stability. Their contributions would go largely to build up our depleted reserves. In particular, I would like to thank Dr Johann Weusmann for his role in this effort.
42. Although we are not completely out of our financial difficulties, I am pleased to report that we were able to close our 2011 Books on a slight surplus and we have measures in place to ensure a break-even situation at the end of 2012. I wish to express my thanks to Yueh Cho, Setri Nyomi and the Finance Committee for their roles in this regard. May I hasten to add that a financial break-even situation does not necessarily mean that we are completely fulfilling our vision and plans for the WCRC. We are only able to do what our income enables us to do, for now.
43. Our financial situation, among other things, calls for a possible restructuring of the governance, management and office of the WCRC. This meeting will, hopefully, give some attention to this matter.

Address of the President

Location

44. The 2011 Executive Committee raised the matter of location and requested the Officers to direct a process in this regard.
45. At its very first meeting since the 2011 Executive Committee, the Officers put in place a process and procedure to address the issue of location. The process was based on wide consultation and involvement of member churches and ecumenical partners. This information was to be collected and collated and passed on to a Task Group on Location to be appointed at the 2012 Executive Committee in Indonesia.
46. Given the financial situation of the WCRC in the past year, the issue of location was given more attention and discussion. It was proposed by the Group which met in Frankfurt that in order to address the financial crisis of the organization that we should propose to the Executive Meeting in May 2012 that we move out of Geneva and into a place in the Euro zone. Admittedly, this position driven by urgency brought about by our financial situation made much sense.
47. However the Officers, even though they agreed that the WCRC Office would need to move from Geneva because it is the 3rd most expensive city in the world, exercised caution on making a decision based purely on financial reasons. The criteria established at the Uniting General Council in Grand Rapids said that location should be considered for the following reasons: Stewardship, Integrity to issues of justice and Solidarity.
48. In my opinion, a process needs to be put in place which enables us to make a decision about location at least at the 2013 Executive Committee meeting. I trust and pray that the Executive Committee would be most prayerful and discerning about this matter.
49. There are other matters to consider, for example, the WCRC Constitution, etc. These will be discussed under the General Secretary's report.

Mediation between the DRC and URCSA

50. I mention this matter in particular because prior to becoming President of the WCRC, I was requested to oversee the mediation process between these two churches and ultimately the entire Dutch Reformed family.

51. In 2009 an international delegation of the then WARC conducted a mediation process with the Dutch Reformed Church and the Uniting Reformed Church, at their request. Prior to this invitation to assist the process, the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa voted in favour of a moratorium on union talks with the DRC. The meeting was very successful in that the URCSA agreed to dialogue with the DRC on the issues that led to the moratorium though not focusing on the union. The WARC Team requested me to continue with the process.
52. Since then there have been meetings between the two churches, one significant one took place at Carmelite with the appointed Mediator. That meeting proved to be most helpful with the establishment of three Commissions led by co-chairs from both churches: 1) Church unity and commitment, 2) the Belhar Confession, and 3) Reconciliation and Restorative Justice.
53. Progress has been really slow because of added complications in the relationships and involvement of the other two sister churches; the DRC wanted them to be brought on board in the conversations but the URCSA delegates felt that issues between the DRC and themselves should be first tackled independently. Also, raising the necessary finances for this endeavour has proved to be a challenge.
54. During the past year, it seemed that we were making very slow progress on the journey. However, the energy, drive and motivation to work towards possible re-(unification) were given a huge impetus by the overwhelming decision of the DRC General Synod in 2011 to accept the Belhar Confession. The process though is not completed; the congregations and Synods still have to endorse this decision. It is hoped that this time the DRC may achieve the 2/3 majority which is needed to accept it as a Confession.
55. In the meantime, there is a vigorous drive by both churches to work together on the issues which prompted the moratorium on unification talks placed by the URCSA. It seems that the URCSA may revisit its decision at its General Synod in October this year. The mediation meeting in March 2012 took decisions paving the way for, hopefully, a positive outcome. A further meeting is set for the last week in July 2012. Please keep this process in your prayers.

Address of the President

Acknowledgements

I wish to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the following:

56. The General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Setri Nyomi, for his faithful work and dedication to the WCRC.
57. The Executive Secretaries for their untiring service and labour under trying and demanding circumstances.
58. The finance, administrative and supporting staff, as well as volunteers for their labour in love.
59. The volunteers in the internship programme and the many people who help us from time to time in various ways.
60. All regional leaders and member churches for their involvement and participation in the life and work of the WCRC.
61. The Officers for their valuable input to our meetings, dedication and devotion to the WCRC and their additional work in their Regions.
62. All members of the Executive for your presence in this meeting, your work on the ground and your contributions to our discussions and decisions in the Executive Committee.

Conclusion

63. Drawing from what I have said in this Address, I would like to offer the following summary as a way forward for the WCRC. We need to understand our unity as a gift in our Triune God and seek to work with a more positive energy as we embrace our diversity and work towards unity. We need to emphasise that which unites us and not that which divides us and makes us distinctly separated. We need to address issues of justice amongst us; we need to share our spiritual and material gifts realizing that all our gifts are from God in the first place. We need to work together to proclaim Christ and transform the world through his love. We need to work together to implement the WCRC vision, mission and priorities. We need to work towards the stability and financial sustainability of the WCRC and in this respect we all need to fulfil our given roles and responsibilities. I call for your commitment and dedication to the life, work and witness of the WCRC as we move forward.

64. May I conclude from where I began, as we consider the life, work and witness of the WCRC we give thanks to God for God's enduring love and faithfulness. We also give thanks to God for all those wonderful servants of God who continue to do all sorts of things within the WCRC; for your love and devotion and sincere belief in the purpose and work of the Communion. May God continue to bless us all with wisdom and grace as we serve Him both in the WCRC and beyond!

Thank you!

REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Setri Nyomi

Introduction

God of Life, Lead our Communion to Justice and Peace

1. Prayer is a lifeline for the church and for all Christians. Like the air we breathe, we cannot survive without it. Our theme for this year's Executive Committee meeting is a prayer. God of life, lead us to justice and peace. In this prayer we acknowledge the attribute of God linked with life. The news coming from Syria, Afghanistan, Iran, South Sudan, and other parts of the world remind us of the strong forces of death and destruction. In the face of climate and economic injustice that endangers the lives of millions of people, natural disasters and diseases that lead to untold suffering, it is easy to be cynical and to yield to the forces that negate life. Despite the forces of death surrounding many nations and many communities in the world, we dare to see God as the God of life as we offer our prayers to be led to justice and peace.
2. This kind of prayer is dangerous. We are not passively asking for God to bring justice and peace or to work through others to bring justice and peace. We are asking, "Lead our Communion to justice and peace." We are offering ourselves as instruments that God may use in mediating justice and peace. The question is, "How prepared are we to be instruments of God no matter what the cost in order to mediate justice and peace in our churches and in the world?"
3. We affirm that we are a Communion committed to justice. We know that where justice is present, shalom is not far from it. The words of Micah 6.8 constantly remind us that our God requires only one set of things from us – to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with our God. This is the recipe for the justice and peace we want. The psalmist (later echoed in the first letter of Peter) recognizes that peace can be elusive and therefore indicates that it should not only be sought – it needs also to be pursued (Ps 34.14, 1 Pet 3.11).
4. As an organization, our shalom has been challenged many times during this year, but we have experienced God leading us to justice and peace and inspiring us to be even more

committed to justice and peace for our Communion and for the world. It is my prayer that in this year's Executive Committee meeting we will be of one mind and one heart as we pray together, "God of life, lead us to justice and peace." Even more important, I hope we will be united in our resolve to "walk our talk" and to see the WCRC strengthened in our commitment to justice and peace.

Strategic Plan

5. This is our first report since the Executive Committee approved the Strategic Plan for the years 2011 to 2017. I therefore intend for the major part of this report to account for how we have lived out the tenets of the Strategic Plan. It was not always easy, especially since the financial challenges continued to plague us.
6. While some may question whether this organization has the right focus or even the right priorities, my colleagues and I believe that the Executive Committee has succeeded in establishing a clear vision and mission, as well as several key directions, foci and priorities, which are guiding us in this era. We are grateful for your leadership in this regard. We have begun the journey of implementing the Strategic Plan and, in this first year, we can indeed thank God for how far we have come. There is still much work to be done – but the focus is clear and we are forging ahead.
7. The vision of living out the Communion in participating in God's mission that all may experience the fullness of life in Jesus Christ has guided what we do whether in Geneva or outside Geneva in every place that we have found ourselves. In my own work, including visits to the churches and the Regional Councils, as well as in the work and travels of my colleagues, we have sought to inspire and live out this vision. We have done the same with the mission.

Work with the Regional Councils

8. A major methodological emphasis of the Strategic Plan is to work with and through the regions. Our President and I decided that it was very important that at least one of us be at the Regional Council meetings that take place in 2011 and 2012, in order, among other things, to unpack this methodology and explore with the regions how we can translate this part of the plan into reality. To this end, I attended the General Assembly of the Alianza de Iglesias Presbiterianas y Reformadas de

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América Latina (AIPRAL) in Guatemala in August 2011, the Caribbean and North American Area Council/Caribbean and North American Council for Mission (CANAAC/CANACOM) Assembly in the Dominican Republic in September, the Northeast Asia Area Council (NEAAC) Consultation and Council meeting in Taiwan in January/February 2012 and the WCRC Europe Council meeting in Austria in March 2012. At the Vienna meeting I was also joined by my colleagues Douwe Visser and Yueh Cho. Our President Jerry Pillay attended the African Communion of Reformed Churches leaders' meeting in South Africa in October 2011. Executive Committee members from the region were also involved in each of these Regional Council meetings.

9. In each of these meetings we shared the key elements of the Strategic Plan and were available to help the councils to reflect on ways in which WCRC at the global level could work closer with and through the councils.
10. In February 2012, we called the Regional Council secretaries together in Geneva to reflect on concrete ways of living this out. In that meeting, we agreed on a number of things, including the following:
 - a) Regions should collaborate closely with programme staff especially on programme issues of mutual concern. We agreed that some programmes need to be either regionally or globally autonomous.
 - b) There is a need to develop a protocol for programme development in and among regions and with the global office.
 - c) Geneva staff should inform regions when someone is appointed from their region to a task group.
 - d) Regional Council secretaries should assist in collecting membership fees from churches in their regions and to send their audited accounts to the global office on time.
 - e) There is need of an enforceable membership contributions grid that reflects global and regional needs as a means towards transparency in how churches fulfil their obligations.
 - f) There is need to meet annually and to come to future meetings with draft regional priorities with which to identify similar interests in other regions and at the global level.
11. We agreed that it will be good to find space in each Executive Committee meetings including this one for Regional Council

presidents and staff to meet and continue to deepen this process.

12. We also noted that there are some churches which are not covered by regions and we will continue to explore ways of meeting their needs without duplicating structures. In some cases, we are exploring working with Council for World Mission (CWM) structures. In others we are discussing with existing structures ways forward. For example, in the Middle East, a natural ally is the Fellowship of Middle East Evangelical Churches.

Networking and Strategic Partnerships

13. Still on the subject of methodology, we have strengthened our networking with sister organizations and ecumenical partners in order to fulfil our mission and programme priorities more effectively.
14. We have continued to work closely with the World Council of Churches (WCC), CWM and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) on several fronts. The work of WCRC, CWM and WCC on Oikotree continues to provide a good platform for addressing issues of justice. We are also working together on the financial architecture conference. The LWF is interested in working with us on this programme as well.
15. We have now concluded a strategic partnership agreement with the Evangelisches Missionwerk in Deutschland (EMW). This partnership is focused on strengthening our work in the areas of mission empowerment and two areas of leadership development (Global Institute of Theology (GIT) and the Internship Programme), as well as strengthening our programmes in our Latin America and Africa regions. We also affirmed our continuing partnership that brings support for the Theological Education Scholarship Fund for Women. We signed this partnership agreement in December 2011. We appreciate this partnership and the impact it will have on our member churches and the communities we serve.
16. Our strategic partnership with CWM has taken on new focus and energy. CWM provided resources to strengthen our programmes and operations in the last half of 2011.
17. CWM appointed five representatives to meet with five representatives of WCRC. This meeting took place in South

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Africa in February 2012. The representatives from both sides made it clear that we understand our calling to be instruments of renewing the ecumenical movement and for justice in the world. On both sides we are committed to playing our critical roles in this endeavour. We recognize the mutual benefits of being closer together. CWM's thirty-one member churches include 27 WCRC member churches.

18. Participants in the meeting had a very healthy critical theological discussion on money and God's mission. Among other things, everything possible must be done to overcome obstacles (including financial ones) in our carrying out God's mission.
19. We identified especially the areas of justice, theology and mission as areas of cooperation. We agreed to nurture a new generation of young ecumenical leaders and facilitate the re-reading of scripture by looking at how we can re-design programmes such as the GIT, Training in Mission (TIM), Internship, Face to Face and the New Face.
20. We have also strengthened our strategic partnership with the Evangelische Entwicklungsdienst (EED) especially in connection with our Partnership Fund A and E. More is said about this in the Partnership Fund section.
21. We continue to accompany the WCC on its journey towards the 10th General Assembly in Busan, Korea in 2013. In fact, the theme for this year's Executive Committee meeting is an adaptation of the WCC Assembly theme. Our Officers will be part of the 10th Assembly as a sign of our commitment to greater coherence in the ecumenical movement. During the year under review, we have worked with the WCC in some of our programming and have also received visitors together – e.g. the Archbishop of Canterbury and a delegation from the Taizé Community.

Programme Priorities:

Theology, Mission and Communion

22. The Office of Theology, Mission and Communion plays a substantial role in four of the five key directions outlined by the Strategic Plan. The following highlights of what the office facilitated responds to actions 16 – 25 in the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting 2011.

23. The first consultation of the Network of Theologians took place from 21 to 26 October 2011 in Mangalore, India. Twenty theologians from all regions took part in what was a lively and creative exchange and discussion. The papers presented during the consultation have been further worked out and published as articles in *Reformed World*. The Network focuses on Communion, Mission, Theology of Justice, and Christianity beyond the Differences. It has now divided itself into four smaller working groups that correspond with each of these four major themes. They will work in email discussion groups with a view to a second consultation. The Network will also develop ways of working within the regions in order to further enhance the theological and missional capacity of the Communion. The Network will have a changing composition according to the themes we work on and the expertise required for each. The WCRC Executive Committee Core Group of Theology, Mission and Communion requested to be a virtual member of this network. It will be good to discuss during the Executive Meeting 2012 how it can give real input in this role.
24. A mission consultation took place in Makurdi, Nigeria from 5 to 7 September, 2011. It aimed at understanding the nature of God's mission in the Nigerian context. Participants asserted that "[i]n Nigeria, our context is multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and broken in many ways—with mal-administration, systemic injustice, ecological pollution and degradation, economic exploitation, poor infrastructure, political instability, poor health care, diseases, unemployment, flooding, and all forms of conflicts and violence, to mention but a few. These contexts demand various missional responses from the Church." The consultation concluded that "[t]he mission of God . . . is the work of the Triune God in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit which invites, encounters, equips and propels the Church into a holistic mission in the world that involves evangelism, social services, participation in justice for the economy and the earth and practically challenges all persons in the multiplicity of their religious and ethnic context towards the fullness of life in Christ."
25. The GIT 2012 is in the advanced state of its preparation. In June 2011 a preparatory meeting in Yogyakarta, Indonesia worked out the theme for this GIT and its various courses. Thereafter a team of lecturers was composed. After producing an attractive brochure and sending it out to member churches and seminaries, we received 100 applications. We selected 50

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students. We are working intensely together with Duta Wacana Christian University in Yogyakarta, which will host this GIT. The dates for the GIT are 8 June to 1 July 2012. This third GIT will be the first that will not take place in conjunction with a General Council as was the case in 2004 and 2010. The budget of the GIT amounts to CHF 290,000. At the moment of writing this report, CHF 240,000 was secured. Although it is a challenge to organize a GIT and to seek funds for it, the enthusiasm for it is so overwhelming that it can be seen indeed as the “flagship” of the Office of Theology. The moderator of the core group, Bas Plaisier, is the president of the GIT and plays a major role in its preparation.

26. Since last year's Executive Committee meeting, we produced three issues of *Reformed World*. The latest of these is the March 2012 issue (Youth). For the remainder of 2012 two more issues are planned: September (GIT and essays from students) and December (Regions). A great challenge for this year is that the publication of *Reformed World* will not be supported from funds of the core budget.
27. The Reformed-Pentecostal Dialogue came with a final report after a small team consultation in Chicago, early December 2011. The report is presented to the Executive Committee. A proposal for a new round of dialogues will be on the table.
28. One of the actions from the May 2011 Executive Committee meeting was to plan a consultation process of member churches for the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification. This has been kept on hold. Some reactions from member churches gave reason to wait on carrying out this action in order to have further discussion on how to carry out this consultation process.
29. From 27 April to 3 May 2012 the second session in the current round of dialogues with the Roman Catholic Church will take place. We will be hosted by Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia (United States). The theme for this session is: “Justification and Sacramentality, Sacraments and Rites”. The Executive Committee meeting comes too soon after this session to have a report available, but an oral update will be given to the Core Group.
30. On 1 and 2 June 2011 a meeting took place between three representatives from WCRC and two from the Anglican

Communion. The meeting focused on a possible new round of dialogues. The proposal for it will be on the table for decision.

31. We are now ready to present the report of the Reformed-Lutheran Working Group.
32. The Executive Secretary and two representatives of WCRC attended the meeting of the Bilateral Forum that took place from 8 to 14 March 2012 in Tanzania. This forum focused on the evaluation of ecumenical dialogues and especially how the reception of these dialogues has been in the churches in the African context. The discussions included whether or not it is useful to continue with these consensus dialogues or seek new forms, with a higher level of regional and youth participation. It is in any case more and more difficult to find funds for these dialogues. A newer model may be more attractive to possible sponsors.
33. As President of the John Knox Programme Commission, the Executive Secretary leads in living out WCRC's deep involvement in the work of John Knox as well as in the Protestant Church of Geneva. During the last year some work was done with the community of migrant churches. A conference is planned for October 2012 on the theme "Making Power Negotiable, Churches and the Rule of Law". While the Executive Secretary invests substantial time in the work of the John Knox Centre, much enrichment for WCRC comes through this cooperation.
34. We are working with the Reformed Alliance (Germany) on the 2013 anniversary of the Heidelberger Catechism that saw light in 1563. We are also involved in preparatory discussions concerning the 2017 Reformation Jubilee.
35. Regarding the action of the May 2011 Executive Committee meeting to have the voices of indigenous people included in the theological and missional discourse of WCRC programmes, the September 2011 issue of Reformed World had two articles from the indigenous community in Taiwan with at least one article setting very general principles. In the GIT there will be attention given to this within the curriculum as well as within the Network of Theologians.
36. One focus of the Network is what it means to be a Communion. A paper presented on this subject was published as an article in

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the March 2012 issue of *Reformed World*. Further concentration on this subject can be expected from the Network. However, in the meanwhile the Communion will focus on developments that need attention not only from the perspective of theology but also from that of the governance of WCRC. Plans for a consultation from these two perspectives are on their way.

37. The Executive Secretary is also involved in the shared work of the Ecumenical Centre. He is member of the Library Consolidation Committee, the Worship Committee, and the WCC Programmatic Development on Koinonia. The first came into existence after WCC's decision to close the Ecumenical Centre library and to concentrate resources at the library at Bossey Ecumenical Institute. The third is preparing for the discussion of koinonia at WCC's assembly in 2013 and for programmatic work on this theme in the future. Each of these committees has a monthly meeting.

Justice and Partnership

38. One of the challenges was to fill the position of the Executive Secretary for this office. We needed to restart the process as well as to find a way to finance the position. The search committee found the right person for the position, and the Executive Committee members voted overwhelmingly in favour of her appointment. However, the end result is that we could not fill the position as provided for in the structure. The Officers, working according to the Executive Committee's directive to monitor the finances before undertaking any new financial commitments, had to change the way in which to fill this office in view of our critical financial challenges. Thus the Rev. Dora Arce Valentín was appointed to head the Office of Justice and Partnership as an executive consultant operating from Cuba for two years. Dora started in January this year – although she was also involved in activities as of December 2011. We are grateful to CWM and WCRC Europe for commitments made to raise the necessary funds so that the office can be filled as originally planned in the same location as that of the rest of WCRC staff. All things working well, we aim at realizing this in 2013.
39. We held a couple of workshops with indigenous women in the Northeast of India. These Festivals of Peace were coordinated by Rev. Dr. Rini Ralte of the United Theological Seminary in Bangalore with substantial involvement of the Women's Department of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church. The first was

held in Aizawl, Mizoram in September 2011 with 317 participants. The second was held in Imphal, Manipur in December 2011. The Festivals of Peace focused on the life of indigenous women of India. They provided space for women in the church to openly express and voice the hard realities of their lives, especially for those who are the primary wage earners in their families struggling to support their families' day to day existence and survival with their meagre income. They gave the celebration of "Festival of Peace" a new meaning. For they served as the occasion for women to articulate clearly that to be able to celebrate "peace" in its truest sense, concerns have to be voiced, and pertinent questions raised. These included: "Is celebration of 'peace' possible in the church while many women in the church are in the clutches of utter poverty, discrimination, violence, distress, displacement, etc.?"

40. The Office of Justice and Partnership is involved in the "We Will Speak Out" coalition. This is a coalition led by Tear Fund in London. The WCC also participates. It is directly linked with Action 29 of the May 2011 Executive Committee, which relate to addressing violence against women including human trafficking and slavery. This coalition is committed to making visible a message against gender violence and in finding ways to overcome it. Our intern, Aiko Sumichan, participated in the coalition meeting in London in November 2011. She continues to follow up on this on behalf of Justice and Partnership.
41. The Office continues to manage the Theological Education Scholarship Fund for Women.
42. In connection with the decision to convene a conference on seeking a new global financial and economic architecture, WCRC worked with CWM and the WCC to bring together a core group to plan this conference. The core group decided to hold a conference for about 70 persons in Brazil from 29 September to 5 October 2012. The following goals were identified for the conference:
 - Engage diverse proponents of a new international financial and economic architecture to set criteria, framework and actions for an alternative system that serves climate justice while promoting ecological justice, overcomes greed, and serves the real economy, people and Earth; and

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- Prepare an action plan and milestones of transformation based on the criteria and framework to be established at the conference.
43. Among other things, the conference will focus on theologies of liberation and transformation, alternative power structures and relations, an economy of life for people and the earth and just finance. Various working groups are taking responsibility for different aspects of the conference planning. The executive consultant is the staff member responsible for coordinating it. She has been working tirelessly with colleagues in Brazil to find the right location and to have the grounds prepared.
 44. The executive consultant participated in the Conference of European Churches (CEC) – Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI) Task Force on Globalization meeting in Havana, from 16 to 21 January 2012. Among others, the discussions focused on such themes as churches in the public domain, good governance, global governance, debt and climate justice, and growth. The opportunity was also taken to talk about the coming New Financial Architecture Conference.
 45. The executive consultant participated in the Oikotree facilitation group meeting in Philippines in March 2012. This meeting took place just before the CWME Assembly. Among other things, the meeting confirmed plans for an Oikotree forum in October this year in South Africa.
 46. The executive consultant participated in the North America Covenanting for Justice meeting in March through Skype. She also participated in the Ecumenical Advocacy Days in Washington, DC in March 2012. She had meetings with representatives of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (PCUSA) participating in the meeting and with peace and reconciliation groups on behalf of WCRC.
 47. The Office of Justice and Partnership is closely following the use of *Created in God's Image*, the manual promoting positive masculinities. The WCC held a workshop in India in March 2012. WCRC named a couple of representatives, including Dr. Phillip Peacock, a member of our Gender Justice Network. He is also one of the editors of the manual. We have some concerns about how the WCC is handling issues around its use. We recognized we need to enter into a memorandum of agreement

with the WCC for a healthier handling of how this good material is used.

48. The executive consultant has begun making contacts with the key partners who contribute financially to the work of the Office of Justice and Partnership to build on our partnership. She has renewed the partnership with the World Day of Prayer, Switzerland – one of the major supporters of the WCRC gender justice programme. They have committed to continue the partnership for the next three years.
49. A similar contact was made with the Church of Argau in Switzerland and the President of the Association of Swiss Women Presidents within the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches. Our working together on the Silvia Michel Prize for women and leadership was reaffirmed. On March 8 this year, one of the actions in celebrating the International Women's Day was to announce a new edition of the Sylvia Michel Prize. The deadline for applications is August this year and a prize will be awarded next year.
50. Other contacts made include the Reformed Churches of Bern-Jura and Solothurn in Bern and the gender office of the World Council of Churches. These times of reconnection also represent expressions of our commitment to work together on common agendas.

Programme Complementarity

51. Last year in my report, we made it clear that communion and justice go together. In fact, what I said was, "Communion and Justice are the key action orientations of the World Communion of Reformed Churches." We are committed to rising up to the challenge of having a mutually inspiring interaction between the justice and theology programmes. Given the special arrangement we made with the Office of Justice, the two staff members responsible for programmes are not often together at the office in Geneva. But several ways have been found to make cooperation and interaction happen. The Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion has worked hard to make sure that the executive consultant for Justice and Partnership is present at the GIT 2012, where she will give a presentation to the students. She will also participate in the Network of Theologians. She has also invited the Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion to the

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conference on a new financial and economic architecture, and other such processes.

Communication

52. The Executive Committee at its meeting in May 2011 approved actions for the Office of Communications in response to recommendations submitted by the Communications Core Group. Actions 47, 48 and 49 are listed on pages 5 and 6 of the minutes for the meeting. The Executive Secretary of the Office of Communications has taken the following action on those items.
53. On the basis of Action 47 of the May 2011 Executive Committee meeting, the Executive Secretary asked the WCC and the LWF to provide the funding needed to sustain Ecumenical News International (ENI). Reports in March 2012 indicate that WCC has added to what had initially been budgeted for their annual contribution and that LWF will match that proportionately. In addition, ENI's officers are seeking special funding for the current financial year. Indications are that by 2013 there will be new partners and that ENI will be in a better financial position. A Swiss cantonal church has provided a substantial grant for 2012 to help cover the anticipated shortfall.
54. WCRC has been producing information in clear and comprehensible language to communicate the Communion's objectives and programmes. One example is the clear explanation of WCRC's key concepts (mission, communion, ecumenism, justice, theology), being published in a five-part series in Reformed Communiqué. Each of these explanations is posted to the home page of the website simultaneous to its publication in the newsletter.
55. The people appointed by WCRC's Executive Committee to the Communications Advisory Network are kept connected through e-mailings sent by the Moderator of the Communications Core Group, Yvette Noble-Bloomfield. They also receive copies of news releases. Individual members are approached by the Office of Communications for advice as needed. This is a group whose expertise is important to the WCRC's objective of connecting members of the Communion worldwide and their contributions are appreciated.
56. The activities in the Office of Communications focused on the Strategic Plan with particular emphasis on making WCRC

visible, projecting images of Reformed churches and individuals in action on justice and communion concerns, and connecting with WCRC regions.

57. To address the issue of visibility the Office of Communications took the following actions:

- a) New website features
 - Links to regional websites and to member church websites, which include links to a blog in Indonesian
 - Creation of a website to make the United States corporate entity visible online
 - Home page feature “Messages from Churches” features calls for prayer in support of member churches that are faced with trauma and calls for celebration of special events or moments in the liturgical calendar
 - Definition of WCRC’s five key concepts posted to home page
- b) Social media
 - Blog views: 1712
 - Twitter followers: 589
 - Facebook followers: 1120
- c) Promotional material
 - Introducing WCRC (PowerPoint presentation)
 - 2011 Annual Report

58. Concerning coverage of WCRC action on justice and communion concerns, the following is to be noted:

- a) Four issues of Reformed Communiqué were published. Features included: stories about Partnership Fund projects; definition of WCRC’s five key concepts in clear language; articles on how Worshiping the Triune God applies to worship life in parishes; and news about member churches and partner organizations.
- b) As of 2012, the production of the French edition of WCRC’s newsletter Communiqué réformé was discontinued for financial reasons. It is hoped to find alternate ways of producing regular French-language stories about WCRC. Meanwhile, ENI produces three to four articles per week in French on topics related to global ecumenism. This service is available on subscription via a link from www.wcrc.ch.

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Translation is provided by ProtestInfo, a Swiss religious news service supported by the Swiss Protestant Church.

- c) Selected articles from Reformed Communiqué are translated for publication in Die Reformierten (German) and in La Voz (Spanish).
 - d) WCRC news releases issued from 1 May 2011 to 15 March 2012 include 25 English, four French, two German and one Spanish.
 - e) Messages from churches posted on website from 1 May 2011 to 15 March 2012 include 20 English and 10 Spanish. Regions and countries featured include the Middle East, Horn of Africa, Japan, Korea, Syria, Nigeria, Switzerland, Scotland, Germany, India, United States, Dominican Republic and Mexico.
59. The Office of Communications engaged in regional relations in the following ways:
- a) A regional communication strategy was drafted for presentation at the meeting of regional secretaries and programme executive secretaries in February 2012 in Geneva.
 - b) Focused coverage of member churches was made possible by travel to Taiwan, Northern Ireland and cantons in Switzerland outside Geneva.
 - c) Web links to regional sites were created. These include sites in Indonesian and Spanish. Europe and Africa regions are building sites to be linked to www.wcrc.ch.
 - d) The March issue of Reformed Communiqué features preparatory articles and stories about the Executive Committee meeting, mission conference and the GIT, all scheduled to be held in Indonesia in 2012.
60. The second annual fundraising campaign was held in North America. The Office of Communication created print and electronic material for distribution to selected potential donors in the region. This initiative is undertaken by WCRC's Endowment Fund Trustees.

61. It would be impossible to do the work of communicating the WCRC effectively without ENI, the ecumenical news agency that picks up and relays WCRC stories into the news rooms of international media such as BBC World Service.
62. Having an office at the Ecumenical Centre has allowed the Executive Secretary to interview people who visit it and provided ready contact with communicators in sister organizations who offer advice, contacts, practical support and equipment. Without these connections to the other communicators the challenges would be insurmountable.

Partnership Fund

63. The Partnership fund continues to make an impact on the ways in which our churches in the Global South engage in mission and development projects. We have endeavoured to make it a source of empowerment without its being a crutch for dependency.
64. We are grateful to the EED for the trajectory we are on to increase the level of their investment in the development component of the Partnership Fund. We have done some critical introspection around what this means. Questions include whether or not the increases – especially when we start having access to the government funds – will change the character and ethos of the WCRC to become something other than what our core calling leads us to. In the process, we went back to how churches responded to our questionnaires in the early part of our strategic planning process. We also went to the mission statement in the Strategic Plan as well as the opening articles of the WCRC Constitution. All these point to the fact that keeping in this trajectory will actually enhance what we are called to do and contribute to the strengthening of the mission of the WCRC member churches. We are aware that we should be careful not to do this at a level beyond our capacity. However the trajectory we are on is well within our capacity and will enhance what we are called to do.
65. The partnership with EED requires skills for monitoring and reporting of projects. Both Douwe Visser and Páraic Reamonn attended a workshop of EED about reporting and monitoring. It has also been helpful that we received special training from Frank Riesmann who works as a consultant for EED.

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66. The mission component of the Partnership Fund will need to be replenished. As a result of the financial challenges of 2011, we had to ask special permission from the sources of the funding to reallocate it to the core budget. This was graciously granted. The Executive Secretary in charge of the Partnership Fund has some proposals for fundraising to replenish this component. In joint action with the Office of Communications a strategy for raising funds has been worked out. The aim is to raise CHF 500,000 so that the Partnership Fund will be able to fund projects that cannot be funded with EED funds, since from these funds we are not allowed to support projects that are beyond the range of "neutral" development projects. In the long term, as the WCRC endowment fund grows, this component can also eventually become one of the beneficiaries.
67. We are very grateful for the partnership that exists between the Partnership Fund and the Fondation pour l'aide Protentantisme (FAP) based in the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva. The Executive Secretary attends the FAP board meetings and is able to give helpful input since the partners FAP works with do mostly belong to WCRC. We are very grateful for good cooperation with Silvia Adoue Renfer, FAP's Executive Secretary, who will retire at the end of June.
68. Since June 2010 twenty-six applications have been processed. A good number still await approval by the Partnership Fund committee.
69. Plans are being developed to cooperate more with our Area Councils for receiving and processing applications. We also expect helpful assistance for reporting on the projects. To this end, Area Council secretaries were part of an EED training in February this year.
70. We are grateful to the coordinator Douwe Visser, and the two deputy coordinators, Ms. Antoinette Berkouwer and Rev. Páraic Reamonn for the good work done in administering the fund. We thank Antoinette for her gift of volunteering her time and energy. Páraic has been diligent with very little cost to us. As the work we do on the fund increases, we need to regularize his role in the staff team, so what he does can be even more effective. This is within our ability.

Finances

71. We place much value on being good stewards of the funds that come through WCRC. We have in all these years managed to do much with limited resources and to be good managers of these resources. We continue to streamline our financial management systems so that we can be better stewards.
72. It is also true that in times of scarcity, many questions are raised about management. In such times, suspicion and mistrust may even play roles. These are to be expected. The challenge often is how to handle these so that WCRC's best interest is preserved. Taking up this challenge can save WCRC from taking actions based on rumours and innuendos. Two issues in particular have come up in recent questions received. These are highlighted in the next two paragraphs.
73. The critical question of why WARC had deficits for nine out of ten years is a valid question which needs to be responded to. Already, the Executive Committee meeting of 2009 addressed this and laid the groundwork for ensuring that from 2011 onwards, this never happens again. The 2009 Executive Committee also noted that it was not a question of overspending approved budgets. It was a question of less income received than was expected – mostly due to currency problems. In hindsight, decisive action on downsizing the staff should have been taken much earlier to avoid the deficits. That this did not happen was financially problematic. With the impact our programmes were making especially in the post-Accra period and soon afterward with the move towards union, any move that would reduce staff was at that time felt to be detrimental to the life of the organization. There was still the hope that the income situation would improve.
74. A second critical question had been raised around 2011 challenges in particular. Executive Committee members left Geneva in May 2011 feeling that the situation was very difficult, but not to the point of not being able to support a staff of seven paid persons. They therefore commissioned a new search process for the Office of Justice and Partnership. Then a few months later they learned that the finances were so difficult that extraordinary steps had to be taken and that the Office of Justice and Partnership could not be filled. The question was: What changed?

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75. As soon as the curtains closed on the May 2011 Executive Committee meeting we were faced with even greater financial challenges. The deterioration of major world currencies went further than we anticipated with the dollar hitting as low as 82 Swiss centimes for each US dollar and the Euro coming close to parity with the Swiss franc. It would take a couple of months before the Swiss authorities took action to bring some stability to this situation by taking an executive decision never to let the Euro drop below 1.20 Swiss francs. By then the damage had already been done. Without quick decisive action, we would have found ourselves in a deficit situation.
76. With all these developments, we recognized that our budgeted 2011 revenue from membership contributions of CHF 1258 could not be reasonably achieved as we had thought when the budget was being drawn. We took the extraordinary step of consulting contributors to the Partnership Fund B for permission to transfer 200,000 francs into the core budget income. We also re-evaluated the 2011 budget in October 2011. This was discussed and validated by the Finance Committee in a telephone conference on 10 November 2011 and Officers on 20 November 2011. We re-evaluated the budget for 2012 on the same basis.
77. In the May 2011 Executive Committee meeting, we made a commitment to having zero deficits in our budgets from that time on. With the extraordinary efforts we made to shore up the income side, and with not filling the Office of Justice and Partnership in the way envisaged, we made it and have a small surplus to report. This adds to our equity. We have taken further measures to ensure that our 2012 and 2013 budgets remain balanced budgets. Our long experience of watching expenditures will be an element of these measures. The development of a fair contribution grid with each church acknowledging that the grid indeed points to what their church is committed to paying to WCRC will be a major step in this endeavour. The new grid is aimed at predicting our future revenue with much increased reliability. The 2012 and 2013 budgets are based on the new fair contribution grid.
78. As this was happening, we began hearing about the very difficult situation of the WCC pension fund of which we are also a part. We were informed that the fund was losing value at an alarming rate per month. One of the reasons was that the active members have reduced while retirees have increased. At

the worst point, the WCC pension fund stood at around 70% of its value. This meant if it had been forced to liquidate, we would have lost 30% of our funds.

79. This was a very trying time for all of us. We were all very unhappy about how the Pension Fund Board could have let things deteriorate so much. Our staff team, which this affected the most, has acted with wisdom and has initiated a migration away from the WCC pension fund. Officers agreed on this path in mid-September. We wrote immediately to the WCC Pension Fund Board, which indicated we could only migrate at the end of March 2012. Ongoing discussions with the staff team, WCC colleagues, Officers, and in the end a lawyer from whom we sought advice all contributed towards enhancing the diplomatic and delicate work that needed to take place. We thank God that in the process the WCC found a favourable response to resources they were seeking, which helped towards the final solution. We have now happily migrated our pension fund to AXA Winterthur. The concept has also changed from being benefit-based to being contribution-based.
80. WCRC Officers have been on top of all these difficult financial issues. In order to address them comprehensively, they also called a face to face meeting for 20 and 21 November 2011 where the financial situation formed the major objective of the meeting. To set the tone, Dr. Johann Weusmann was invited to make a presentation on the financial situation.
81. We are grateful to the churches that graciously responded to our request to reallocate a part of what they had originally allocated to the Partnership Fund. We are also grateful to our German churches and the Reformed Alliance in Germany for their leadership role in our search for lasting solution to this challenge. We are especially grateful to Dr. Johann Weusmann for his leadership in this endeavour. Through that leadership we have engaged in some conversations which are bound to help us overcome our challenges. Some involve very difficult decisions. But we do need to do everything possible to stabilize WCRC financially and put it on the path of sustainability.
82. Through the initiative of our German colleagues, United Churches in Germany have graciously agreed to provide 300,000 Euro specifically for our reserve fund. The German united churches are also considering a further contribution of

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200,000 Euro to WCRC for the next three years. These commitments can become reality on a number of conditions:

- a) The churches, especially in contexts of high GDP, which have not been contributing to their level are expected to pull their weight and demonstrate their commitment. The United Churches would not be happy with a situation in which they are simply “bailing WCRC out” while some WCRC member churches are not contributing to the level they are expected to. All member churches are called upon to play their role in contributing faithfully to the upkeep of WCRC.
 - b) The Executive Committee takes clear decisions to ensure that WCRC’s financial systems are trustworthy and provide management standards which are at a similar level to EKD standards.
 - c) The Executive Committee and leadership of WCRC take actions to ensure the financial stability and sustainability of the organization. Such actions may include the relocation of the organization where risk to the organization is minimized.
83. Earlier, I mentioned the joint meeting of CWM and WCRC in Johannesburg. One of the proposals from this meeting is aimed at addressing these issues comprehensively. The meeting agreed to propose a stabilization fund for WCRC. It involves CWM giving a substantial grant towards kick-starting such a fund. It also involves WCRC making a commitment to have a fundraising drive for this fund that will more than double the grant. It is our hope that this Executive Committee will agree to these proposals, and that the CWM trustee body will agree to it in their meeting in June. We are grateful to CWM for its partnership with us in this and many other ways. The materializing of these plans will be a major boost for our financial stability and sustainability.

Location

84. In discussing the Finance Committee report at the UGC in Grand Rapids, the following was minuted:
“Comments on the expense of having offices in Geneva were made and a request that the Executive Committee in their meeting of 2012 consider this matter for the following reasons:

- Stewardship.
- Integrity to issues of justice.
- Solidarity.

WCRC should be the first to move out of Geneva ..." (Proceedings, 32).

It is 2012, and the Executive Committee is called upon to engage in this responsibility.

85. In its action 11, the May 2011 Executive Committee meeting "referred questions of the location of the Secretariat and how it fits into the Strategic Plan to the Officers and asked them to report to the Executive Committee in 2012". In taking that decision, the Executive Committee further clarified that "the Officers weren't being asked to make a recommendation about location themselves but rather to make a recommendation on how the question should be handled" (Executive Committee 2011 Minutes, 17 and 18).
86. Officers took this responsibility seriously and commissioned a letter to all member churches, Area Councils and Executive Committee members as a mechanism of consultation on the issue of location in which they were also asked to make proposals for possible venues to which to be relocated. This was the first of many steps which include a proposal to set up a Location task group, which will take the views of member churches in developing criteria for choosing the venue of relocation, doing the feasibility, considering constitutional and personnel related implications, and making concrete proposals. The task group is to be given a short time within which to complete its work so that the Executive Committee can take a well informed decision in a timely fashion.
87. On the request of Officers, I wrote a letter to the General Secretaries of the WCC and the LWF asking them to consider relocating out of Geneva with us. It should be noted that in February and March this year, comments on relocation were made in two meetings. The next two paragraphs address these.
88. The CWM-WCRC joint meeting indicated that "If WCRC decides to relocate, it should look for a location that would provide possibilities for other ecumenical organizations to consider. That meeting also noted that "part of the paradigm shift in the global ecumenical movement is the significance of the Global

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South and we hope that WCRC will take this seriously in its decision about relocation”.

89. The advisory group on the WCRC financial crisis that met in Hannover in March this year made the following points:
 - That WCRC decide to move its office location out of Geneva as soon as logistically possible and on a schedule approved by the Executive Committee (or its Officers).
 - That the WCRC Offices be relocated to the Eurozone at this time.
 - That, if and when an invitation to locate in Germany is received, WCRC accept that invitation with appreciation.
90. It is our hope that the WCRC Executive Committee meeting in Berastagi will be able to take the clear timely decision about location that will respond to our needs at this time in our history.

United Nations

91. We continue to work with the Rev. Mark Koenig, the director of the PCUSA ministry to the United Nations office to follow up on those critical issues that the UN is addressing which are tangential to our vision. The work of the ministry 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.
92. The office has addressed such issues as environmental justice, seeking peace for the people of South Sudan and Sudan, arranging a meeting of UN staff with Zambian partners on issues related to HIV/AIDS, addressing women’s concerns, and carrying out a survey that involved WCRC member churches on the empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges. The office also worked on Israel-Palestine issues, called attention to the political crisis in Madagascar, encouraged advocacy on behalf of children, participated in the interfaith harmony week, worked on issues of human trafficking, addressed issues related to religious freedom, and participated in the NGO working group on food and hunger.

Ecumenical relations

93. WCRC continues to be ecumenically engaged. Apart from the work we do in bilateral dialogues and with sister organizations, I also represent Christian World Communions on Ecumenism in

the 21st Century Continuation Committee. Among other things, this process has been reflecting on relationships of different players within the ecumenical movement and how to bring coherence within the movement. The latest meeting was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in January this year.

94. We continue to have some meaningful discussions with LWF. One key theme in these discussions is how we can engage in a meaningful commemoration of 500 years of the Reformation between now and 2017.
95. I attended the second international gathering of the Global Christian Forum in Manado, Indonesia in October 2011. This ecumenical forum gathers diverse expressions of Christians. We also helped to bring some of the Reformed participants to this forum.
96. The 2011 Conference of Secretaries of Christian World Communions took place in Washington D. C. in October 2011. One of the agenda items was to address the denial of visas which several Christian World Communions experienced in connection with significant gatherings in the USA. We had discussions in offices of the White House, with White House staff and State Department staff. A small group was formed to follow this up. I was named to be a member of this small group.
97. In October 2011, at the invitation of Pope Benedict XVI, I was among the religious leaders who went on a journey of peace with him to Assisi. There we spent a day in prayer and reflection about peace in the world.
98. In November, I was in the Middle East Council of Churches General Assembly held in Paphos, Cyprus. This was a meaningful day – the third of its kind after Pope John Paul II initiated the first one in 1986.

General Secretary's Visits to Member Churches and Partners

99. Between the last Executive Committee meeting and the 2012 Executive Committee I have continued to plan my visits carefully to achieve four things:
 - a) To make significant contacts with Regional Councils in order to inspire how we work together under our Strategic Plan and to engage in conversations with leaders of our member churches in ways that impact how we can serve

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the Communion better. Regional Council meetings constitute the place where the leaders of most of our member churches gather.

- b) To resource significant events and programmes or mediate particular crises. Some of these are initiated from the global office, and others are by invitation. Such resourcing helps bring healing, inspire our constituency, and ensure the vision and mission we have gets meaningful channels of dissemination. It also normally has the by-product of enhancing the visibility of WCRC for our members and ecumenical partners.
- c) To encourage member churches in certain parts of the world as an expression of our Communion. I do this part often in connection with some difficult challenge the church is going through, to express our gratitude for something special the church has done, or to encourage and inspire the church on my way to some other event.
- d) To meet with partners in order to produce significant programmatic and financial impact on our programmes and operations.

Where my visit includes a Sunday, preaching in a congregation and having conversation with members have always been an important way of getting people in the pews so that they can experience their belonging to a worldwide Communion.

100. I was at the Assemblies/Council meetings of AIPRAL (August 2011), CANAAC (September 2011) and NEAAC (January/February 2012). I was also at the General Assemblies/Synods of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (June 2011), the Reformed Church in America (June 2011), the Waldensian Church in Italy (August 2011), and the Reformed Alliance in Germany (September/October 2011). I also attended the Middle East Council of Churches Assembly in Paphos, Cyprus (November 2011).
101. I have also visited member churches and partners in the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Guatemala, Germany, Indonesia, Taiwan, South Africa, Ethiopia, Egypt, United States and Austria. The Germany visit which President Jerry Pillay and I made together provided a good time of conversations with our member churches and the Reformed Alliance as well as some

good linkage with German United Churches. Jerry preached at the opening of the Reformed Alliance Assembly while I preached on the Sunday in the Barmen Church as a guest of the Rhineland Church.

Internship programme

102. Our Internship Programme took off on 1 September 2011 when Aiko Sumichan of the Christian Church of Indonesia and Chris Dorn of the Reformed Church in America arrived at the office to begin their one year with WCRC. They come as talented young people with gifts, enthusiasm, focus and friendly team spirit. Chris has been working mainly with the Office of Theology, Mission and Communion, while Aiko has been working mainly with the Offices of Communications and of Justice and Partnership. This is an expression of WCRC's commitment to leadership development.

Conclusion

103. The time from May 2011 to the time of writing this report has not been easy. Prayer has been key to every single day of wading through the deep waters that characterized this year. I am grateful that in our Reformed experience prayer is not simply cosmetic acts of uttering some platitudes to God for a few minutes each day. It is an encounter with the living God, a two-way communication that results in actions in which we are confident that with the presence of God we can move on. It can be dangerous in that it puts us often in places that we may not choose to go – but even there, we are in the presence of the living God. We have truly experienced and will continue to experience our theme's content: God of life, lead our Communion to justice and peace.

104. I thank our President, Jerry Pillay, for his wisdom and leadership in these challenging times. Gratitude to all Officers – for your tireless efforts to give this organization stability and sustainability. We thank Gottfried Locher for his services to the WCRC as General Treasurer until 1 March 2012. We are sorry to see him leave as an Officer, but are grateful that he remains a committed part of WCRC as a church leader. Our thanks go to all members of the Executive Committee for the various roles you have played in leading this organization. Some of you have gone the extra mile in representing us in different meetings.

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105. We have a very small staff team. We thank God that Dora has joined us, although as a consultant from a distance. We have a new team spirit although we have also gone through many challenges. I am indeed very grateful to God for this dedicated team without which we could not have come this far. I will never cease to be amazed at the gifts that this great team places at the disposal of WCRC. It is in this spirit that I express my deep gratitude to Penny, Daphne, Yueh, Kristine, Douwe and Páraic, Dora, and our faithful volunteer Hartmut. This team is enhanced by our two equally very dedicated interns. So to Aiko and Chris, I say "Thank you". I am grateful to my wife Akpene and all our spouses and families whose prayerful support and patience gives us the space to do what we do.
106. We thank God for this year's Executive Committee meeting and pray that God will guide our deliberations and lead our Communion to justice and peace.

REPORT OF THE OFFICE OF THEOLOGY, MISSION AND COMMUNION

Douwe Visser

The 2011 Strategic Plan sets five key directions:

- Mission
- Communion
- Justice
- Theology
- Ecumenical Engagement

The Office of Theology plays a substantial role in four of these five key directions. Thanks to the excellent team work within this office we could fulfil this role. The order of reporting of what was done will now follow the actions 16–25 as recorded in the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting 2011.

The Network of Theologians was further developed with a first consultation, which took place from 21 to 26 October 2011 in Mangalore, India. Twenty theologians from all regions took part in what was a lively and creative exchange and discussion. The Network came with a report as well as a plan of action that will guide its work for this year. The papers presented during the consultation were further worked out and published as articles in *Reformed World*. The Network focuses on Communion, Mission, Theology of Justice, and Christianity beyond the Differences. It has now divided itself into four smaller working groups that correspond with each of these four major themes. They will work in email discussion groups with a view to a second consultation. The Network will also develop ways of working within the regions in order to further enhance the theological and missional capacity of the Communion. The Network will have a changing composition according to the themes we work on and the expertise required for each. Attached to this report are the report of the consultation and the plan of action for the coming year. The core group Theology, Mission and Communion requested to be a virtual member of the Network. It will be good to discuss during the Executive Committee meeting 2012 how it can give real input in this role.

A mission consultation took place in Makurdi, Nigeria from 5 to 7 September, 2011. It aimed at understanding the nature of God's mission in the Nigerian context. Participants asserted that "[i]n

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Nigeria, our context is multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and broken in many ways—with mal-administration, systemic injustice, ecological pollution and degradation, economic exploitation, poor infrastructure, political instability, poor health care, diseases, unemployment, flooding, and all forms of conflicts and violence, to mention but a few. These contexts demand various missional responses from the Church.” The consultation concluded that “[t]he mission of God . . . is the work of the Triune God in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit which invites, encounters, equips and propels the Church into a holistic mission in the world that involves evangelism, social services, participation in justice for the economy and the earth and practically challenges all persons in the multiplicity of their religious and ethnic context towards the fullness of life in Christ.”

The Global Institute of Theology (GIT) 2012 is in the advanced state of its preparation. In June 2011 a preparatory meeting in Yogyakarta, Indonesia worked out the theme for this GIT and its various courses. Thereafter a team of lecturers was composed. After producing an attractive brochure and sending it out to member churches and seminaries, we received 100 applications. We selected 50 students. We are working intensely together with Duta Wacana Christian University in Yogyakarta, which will host this GIT. The dates for the GIT are 8 June to 1 July 2012. This third GIT will be the first that will not take place in conjunction with a General Council as was the case in 2004 and 2010. The budget of the GIT amounts to CHF 290,000. At the moment of writing this report, CHF 240,000 was secured. Although it is a challenge to organize a GIT and to seek funds for it, the enthusiasm for it is so overwhelming that it can be seen indeed as the “flagship” of the Office of Theology. The moderator of the core group, Bas Plaisier, is the president of the GIT and plays a major role in its preparation. Attached are more details about the GIT and its team of staff and lecturers.

Since last year’s Executive Committee meeting, we produced two issues of *Reformed World*. For the year 2012 three issues are planned: March (Youth); September (GIT and essays from students); December (Regions). A great challenge for this year is that the publication of *Reformed World* will not be supported from funds of the core budget.

The Reformed-Pentecostal Dialogue came with a final report after a small team consultation in Chicago, early December 2011. The

report is presented to the Executive Committee. A proposal for a new round of dialogues will be on the table.

One of the actions was to plan a consultation process of member churches for the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification. This has been kept on hold. Some reactions from member churches gave reason to wait on carrying out this action in order to have further discussion on how to carry out this consultation process.

From 27 April to 3 May 2012 the second session in the current round of dialogues with the Roman Catholic Church will take place. We will be hosted by Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia (United States). The theme for this session is: "Justification and Sacramentality, Sacraments and Rites". The Executive Committee meeting comes too soon after this session to have a report available, but an oral update will be given to the core group.

On 1 and 2 June 2011 a meeting took place between three representatives from WCRC and two from the Anglican Communion. The meeting focused on a possible new round of dialogues. The proposal for it is attached and will be on the table for decision.

Finally the report of the Reformed-Lutheran Dialogue can be presented. The dialogue came to its conclusion in February 2010 but the report was still on hold since a part of it, to be written from Lutheran side, took a long time until its completion. There is no proposal in any sense for a continuation of this dialogue.

The Executive Secretary attended the meeting of the so-called Bilateral Forum that took place from 8 to 14 March 2012 in Tanzania. This forum focused on the evaluation of ecumenical dialogues and especially how the reception of these dialogues has been in the churches in the African context. A report is attached.

A proposal for discussion will be on the table concerning the ecumenical dialogues as carried out over the years until now. It is a matter of debate within our community whether we should continue with these so-called consensus dialogues or seek new forms, with a higher level of regional involvement and youth participation included. It is in any case more and more difficult to find funds for these dialogues. A new model may be more attractive to potential sponsors.

The Executive Secretary is president of the John Knox Programme Commission. This provides a good opportunity for WCRC not only to

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be deeply involved in the work of John Knox but also in the Protestant Church of Geneva, including, very essentially, the community of migrant churches. A conference is planned for October 2012 on the theme of constitutionalism. It should be noted that the work schedule of the Executive Secretary is quite challenged by his substantial involvement in the work of the John Knox Centre. But much enrichment for WCRC comes through this cooperation. Attached is more information about the October conference.

The Executive Secretary is asked by the Reformed Alliance (Germany) to be involved in the 2013 anniversary of the Heidelberger Catechism that saw light in 1563. He is also involved in preparatory discussions concerning the 2017 Reformation Jubilee.

One of the actions is to have the voices of indigenous people included in the theological and missional discourse of WCRC programmes. The September 2011 issue of *Reformed World* had two articles from the indigenous community in Taiwan with at least one other article setting very general principles. In the GIT there will be attention given to this within the curriculum as well as within the Network of Theologians.

One focus of the Network is what it means to be a Communion. A paper presented on this subject was published as an article in the March 2012 issue of *Reformed World*. Further concentration on this subject can be expected from the Network. However, in the meanwhile the Communion will focus on developments that need attention not only from the perspective of theology but also from that of the governance of WCRC. Plans for a consultation from these two perspectives are on their way.

The Executive Secretary is also involved quite extensively in work within the Ecumenical Centre. He is member of the Library Consolidation Committee, which came into existence after WCC's decision to close the Ecumenical Centre library and to concentrate resources at the library at Bossey Ecumenical Institute. He is also a member of the Worship Committee of the Ecumenical Centre. And finally he is a member of a WCC Programmatic Development Committee on Koinonia, which will prepare for the discussion of this theme at WCC's assembly in 2013 and for programmatic work on this theme in the future. Each of these committees has a monthly meeting.

The Executive Secretary attended the WCRC Europe annual meeting in Vienna, which took place from 22 to 24 March 2012.

A challenge is to have a mutually inspiring interaction between the justice and theology programmes. The two secretaries are not often together in the office in Geneva. But several ways have been found to make cooperation and interaction happen. The Executive Secretary for Justice & Partnership will be present at the GIT 2012 and will give a presentation there to the students. She will also be involved in the Network of Theologians.

The Executive Secretary for Theology also acts as coordinator of the Partnership Fund. The work of this fund is described in a separate report.

The work of the Office of Theology is highly demanding and also requires a lot of fundraising. The pressure of the workload is great but the satisfaction of the work that has been accomplished compensates for it. Thanks to God's grace, the blessing of the work can be daily experienced.

REPORT OF THE OFFICE OF JUSTICE AND PARTNERSHIP

Dora Arce-Valentín

I. Introduction

This report covers the period January to April 2012. This has been a time of setting up an office in Cuba and following-up on the projects received from the previous Executive Secretary for Justice and Partnership. The first part of the report accounts for activities between May and December, 2011. The second part reports on follow-up to WCRC's strategic plan, taking the Justice Core Group Report from the Executive Committee 2011 as a guide. The third part of this report includes additional information about the activities of the Executive Consultant for Justice and Partnership. The report ends with a brief conclusion.

II. From May to December, 2011

An initiative called "Festivals of Peace" was coordinated by Rev. Dr Lalrindiki Ralter, professor in the Department of Women's Studies at United Theological College in Bangalore, India in cooperation with the Women's Department of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church. The programmes were framed as workshops/seminars with Indigenous women in the Northeast of India and with women theologians and women activists from different parts of India. The first event was held in Aizawl, Mizoram in September 2011 with 317 participants. The second was held in Imphal, Manipur in December 2011.

The Festivals of Peace programmes included a time for participants to share experiences of activism and engagement on the issues of violence against women, children and others; panel discussions on analysis of the structures, systems and strategic discrimination against people living at the margins of society; and information about action plans to promote peace in their communities.

III.I Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth

1. Before officially taking up her new position with WCRC, the Executive Consultant participated in the New Financial Architecture Conference Preparatory Core Group Meeting, December 2011. As part of WCRC's strategic plan, the Office of Justice and Partnership initiated preparation for the Conference that will take place in Sao Paulo, Brazil, October 2012. The Executive Consultant is participating in two different groups as part of the Core Group's work. She also made a visit to Sao Paulo to select a venue for the meeting.

2. The Executive Consultant – as a former member of the Globalization Task Force of the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and of the Council of Latin American Churches (CLAI) – participated in the group’s meeting in Havana, January 16-21, 2012. Among other matters, the discussions focused on the different perspectives on themes like churches in the public domain, the churches and issues of good governance; global governance; and debt; and climate justice and growth. There was also opportunity to talk about the planning meeting for the New Financial Architecture Conference and how to share the task group’s experience in dialogue at the conference.
3. The Executive Consultant participated in the Oikotree Facilitating Group meeting in Manila, Philippines in March as part of the follow-up to the Oikotree People’s Forum 2011 and in preparation for the Global Forum 2012 in Africa. It was a forward-looking meeting in which the three organizations represented on the facilitating group, (the World Council of Churches (WCC), Council for World Mission (CWM) and WCRC) recognized the importance of sustaining and strengthening such a valid space that brings together our respective networks engaged in justice around the world.
4. The Executive Consultant participated in the Ecumenical Advocacy Days, in Washington, United States, in March.

Ecumenical Advocacy Days is an annual conference organized by churches and ecumenical institutions offices in Washington, D.C. Every year they select a theme and invite their partners to come together and exchange information on domestic and international issues affecting people around the globe. The idea is to share information, mainly through workshops and conferences. The programme includes time for training participants on how to present these issues when they visit their elected representatives on the last day of the conference. The 2012 theme was: “Is This the Fast I Seek? Economy, Livelihood and Our National Priorities”. It had to do with the discussion within the American Congress about the national budget and the proposal to cut funds for Social Services. There were workshops in matters that Churches and Ecumenical Institutions present on behalf of their partners around the world.

During this event, the Executive Consultant met with representatives of the Presbyterian Church (USA) who were

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attending the Compassion, Peace and Justice Training Day: "Presbyterians and Economic Justice", sponsored by the Presbyterian Church (USA) ministries of Compassion, Peace and Justice.

We also met with the staff working at the Presbyterian Church (USA) office at the United Nations who represent WCRC at the UN. These meetings in Washington were a very good opportunity to make WCRC visible and to connect with departments and groups that work closely with us or whose mandate relates to ours.

III. II Gender Justice

1. The Office of Justice and Partnership is following up on the use of the manual on "Positive Masculinities" produced in partnership with WCC. A workshop held in India in March not only had participation of one person representing WCRC but also benefited from the expertise of Dr Phillip Peacock as member of WCRC's Gender Justice Network. Dr Peacock is one of the authors of the manual entitled Created in God's Image: from Hegemony to Partnership. We recognise the need to improve the plan for use of the manual.
2. We are involved in the We Will Speak Out coalition. This group is committed to raising awareness of gender violence, speaking out against it and finding ways to overcome it. One of our Interns, Aiko Sumichan, represented WCRC at the first meeting in November 2011, and is our current link to the coalition.
3. The office continues to manage the Theological Education Scholarship Fund for Women.
4. World Day of Prayer (WDP), Switzerland is one of the major supporters of WCRC's gender justice programme. While in Geneva early in 2012, the Executive Consultant had a meeting with Ms Melanie Gonin of WDP who confirmed that WDP will continue its partnership support of the programme for the next three years.
5. The Executive Consultant, accompanied by the Executive Secretary for Communications, visited the headquarters of the Swiss Protestant Church in Aargau and met with the church's president who is the head of the Association of Swiss Women Presidents of the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches (PANKS). We assured her of our commitment to the Silvia Michel Prize for women and leadership offered by PANKS and issued a

news release about the prize linked to the March 8 celebration of International Women's Day. We translated the news release and the application form into the official languages of WCRC and ensured every regional body received the information about how to nominate women to receive the prize.

IV. Other activities

1. The Executive Consultant, together with the other WCRC staff members, participated in the Area Council Secretaries' meeting in February, giving us the opportunity to have a better perspective about what is happening in the different geographic areas and members of our family. The meeting offered a perspective on the challenges WCRC faces at the global level. All participants agreed to the importance of such a good exchange of experiences.
2. We visited the offices of the Swiss Protestant Churches in Bern-Jura and Solothurn to reconnect with them and expressed officially our commitment to work together on common agendas.
3. We also visited the office of Dr Fulata Moyo head of WCC's gender programme and her associate, Maria Cristina Rendon, for discussion about our organizations' common concern for gender issues.

V. Conclusion

The Executive Consultant has organized a small office in Havana. Communication is a challenge due to limited access to the internet but we are doing our best to stay connected to colleagues in Geneva.

On a personal note, I wish to conclude this report by sharing my gratitude for the staff we have. Each of my colleagues is doing an amazing job in a spirit of hope, love and friendship. I feel honoured to be part of this family and to have such a wonderful and gifted group of colleagues working hard despite the challenges of being such a small staff, working in confidence, giving testimony of our calling to be a Communion committed to justice.

May God strengthen us and bless us, the wonderful family of the WCRC.

REPORT OF THE OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Kristine Greenaway

The report of the Office of Communications is in two parts. The first part reports on action taken in response to Action items named in the minutes of the 2011 Executive Committee meeting in Geneva, Switzerland. The second part offers an overview of the activities undertaken by the Office of Communications from May 2011 to May 2012.

A. Review of 2011-2012 Action items for Communications Office

The Executive Committee at its meeting in May 2011 approved actions for the Office of Communications in response to recommendations submitted to the committee by the Communications Core Group. Actions #47, 48, 49 are listed on pages 5 and 6 of the minutes for the meeting. The Office of Communications has taken the following action on those items.

47. The General Secretary has asked the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) to provide the funding needed to sustain Ecumenical News International (ENI). Reports in March 2012 indicate that WCC has added to what had initially been budgeted for their annual contribution and that LWF will match that proportionately. In addition, ENI's Officers are seeking special funding for the current financial year. Indications are that by 2013 there will be new partners and that ENI will be in a better financial position. A Swiss cantonal church has provided a substantial grant for 2012 to help cover the anticipated short fall.
48. WCRC has been producing information in clear and widely-understood language to communicate the Communion's objectives and programmes. One example is the clear-language explanation of WCRC's key concepts (mission, communion, ecumenism, justice, theology) being published in a five-part series in *Reformed Communiqué*. Each of these explanations is posted to the home page of the website simultaneous to its publication in the newsletter.
49. The people appointed by WCRC's Executive Committee to the Communications Advisory Network are kept connected

through e-mailings sent by the Moderator of the Communications Core Group, Yvette Noble-Bloomfield. They also receive copies of news releases. Individual members are approached by the Office of Communications for advice as needed. This is a group whose expertise is important to the WCRC's objective of connecting members of the Communion worldwide and their contributions are appreciated.

B. Report of activities of the Office of Communications May 2011-May 2012

Activities in the Office of Communications focused on the Strategic Plan with particular emphasis on making WCRC visible, projecting images of Reformed churches and individuals in action on justice and communion concerns, and connecting with WCRC regions.

Visibility

1. New website features
 - Links to regional websites and to member church websites: these include links to a blog in Indonesian
 - Creation of a website to make the United States corporate entity visible online
 - Home page feature: "Messages from Churches" features calls for prayer in support of member churches that are faced with trauma and calls for celebration of special events or moments in the liturgical calendar
 - Definition of WCRC's five key concepts posted to home page
2. Social media
 - Blog views: 1712
 - Twitter followers: 589
 - Facebook followers: 1120
3. Promotional material
 - *Introducing WCRC*, PowerPoint presentation
 - 2011 Annual Report

Coverage of WCRC action on justice and communion concerns

1. Four issues of *Reformed Communiqué* were published. Feature series included: stories about Partnership Fund projects; definition of WCRC's five key concepts in clear language; articles on how *Worshiping the Triune God* applies

Communications

to worship life in parishes; and news about member churches and partner organizations.

2. As of 2012, production of the French edition of WCRC's newsletter *Communiqué réformé* was discontinued for financial reasons. It is hoped to find alternate ways of producing regular French-language stories about WCRC. Meanwhile, ENI produces three to four articles per week in French on topics related to global ecumenism. This service is available on subscription via a link from www.wcrc.ch. Translation is provided by ProtestInfo, a Swiss religious news service supported by the Swiss Protestant Church.
3. Selected articles from *Reformed Communiqué* are translated for publication in *Die Reformierten* (German) and in *La Voz* (Spanish).
4. WCRC news releases issued from 01 May 2011 to 15 March 2012: 25 English, 4 French, 2 German and 1 Spanish.
5. Messages from churches posted on website from 01 May 2011 to 15 March 2012: 20 English, 10 Spanish. Regions and countries featured included: Middle East, Horn of Africa, Japan, Korea, Syria, Nigeria, Switzerland, Scotland, Germany, India, United States, Dominican Republic and Mexico.

Regional relations

1. A regional communication strategy was drafted for presentation to the meeting of regional secretaries and programme executive secretaries in February 2012 in Geneva.
2. Focused coverage of member churches was made possible by travel to Taiwan, Northern Ireland and cantons in Switzerland outside Geneva.
3. Web links to regional sites were created. These include sites in Indonesian and Spanish. Europe and Africa regions are building sites to be linked to www.wcrc.ch
4. The March issue of *Reformed Communiqué* features preparatory articles and stories about the Executive Committee meeting, mission conference and Global Institute for Theology, all scheduled to be held in Indonesia in 2012.

Fundraising support

The second annual fundraising campaign was held in North America. The Office of Communication created print and electronic material for distribution to selected potential donors in the region. This initiative is undertaken by WCRC's Endowment Fund Trustees.

Expression of appreciation

The support of the moderator of the Communication Core Group, Yvette Noble-Bloomfield, has been invaluable. We have met by Skype and email to plan and to review work underway. Her support and advice enrich WCRC's communication initiatives.

I am greatly indebted to Hartmut Lucke, a volunteer translator, editor, and connector to Swiss churches. His contribution is invaluable. This year, WCRC has the added benefit of the presence of two interns, Christopher Dorn and Aiko Sumichan. Aiko has been working to expand WCRC's web presence and use of social media. Chris has been assisting in the production of *Reformed World*. Aiko has also translated key WCRC texts into Indonesian. Penny Blachut offers valuable support to the Office of Communication while at the same time working with the General Secretary.

It would be impossible to do this job effectively without ENI, the ecumenical news agency that picks up and relays WCRC stories into the news rooms of international media such as BBC World Service.

Having an office at the Ecumenical Centre allows me to interview people whom I would not otherwise meet as the travel budget for the Communication Office is extremely modest. I benefit as well from contact with communicators in sister organizations who offer advice, contacts, practical support and equipment. Without these connections to other communicators, my job would present nearly insurmountable challenges.

THE REPORT OF THE FINANCE COORDINATOR

Yueh Cho

Financial Accounting

1. For the first time since 2004, we finished the year (2011) with a small surplus of CHF 16'998 and have thus delivered the break-even commitment that we had taken 12 months ago.
2. The audited financial statement had been distributed prior to the meeting already and we recommend its adoption.
3. Beyond the numbers, I believe we have made one major progress in 2011 by simultaneously adopting Swiss GAAP RPC 21, the accounting norm that is commonly in use for Swiss-based non-profit organizations and installing WinBIZ, a proven ERP (enterprise resource planning or integrated management information system with functionalities in accounting, budgeting, payroll, etc.) that was specifically developed for small and mid size organizations. The migration from a manual-based to a system-based accounting can be a true enabler to uplift our operational effectiveness and efficiency to the next level.
4. The aim of accounting is to offer the financial visibility on our operations as it is and if we failed to inform properly our stakeholders about the dramatic financial situations in the past (deficits in 9 years out 10 and accumulated loss of more than CHF 800k), we believe that unfortunate page has been definitely turned with the new accounting set-up.

Financial Planning

5. We maintain our forecast of 2012 and present our preliminary 2013 budget, both at break-even level, for your review.
6. For 2012, assuming a stable environment on USD (EURO being already pegged to CHF) and our current headcount level, we are confident of achieving break-even again and thus continue the financial stabilization of the organization.
7. For 2013, we aim to roll out our new membership fees model and by doing so, we will fundamentally change the way we run our financial planning: we will be spending the money we *know* we will have instead of the money we *think* we will have. For that, we are adopting a 2-step approach with Nov. 2012 being

set as target (final) completion date for 2013 budget: the governing body will be able to pronounce again later this year on 2013 budget which is assuming an increased revenue base and headcount (by one).

8. If financial accounting is to tell today's story or where we stand now, financial planning has the mission to foresee the future or where we are heading for. And if transparency is the key word for the former, reliability would be the one for the latter. In that sense, the implementation of new membership fees model will be instrumental for enhancing our ability to reliably forecast the future or more precisely future revenue.

Financial Operations

9. The issue of WCRC is not on FX rates but on business model and organizational governance and that applies to general financial management too.
10. On membership management, we have first and foremost the task of cleaning up the past dues of unpaid membership fees. Over the years, our member churches (concerning actually about 2 thirds of our total member churches) have accumulated huge amount of unpaid membership fees and we need to prepare the ground now if we intend to implement art. VI / J / 6 of Constitution in 2013 as we said we would. Here, I look to the decisive and joint leadership of Finance and Membership Committee to support our identified actions.
11. To set the new standard or how the membership fees for each member church is our top priority now and it requires consultation at large scale, at both global and regional level. The key differentiator of the new system is its increased legitimacy (it is directly linked to the total budget) and transparency (everyone sees how much everyone else is supposed to pay and is actually paying).
12. Otherwise, in parallel to our essentially membership fees funded "Core" operations, we also run various thematic programmes for which additional funding is required from other sources. Currently, we only report actual results (money raised and spent for the programme during the year) and would recommend programme budgeting on a consistent way as well.

Finance

13. On accomplishing all of these critical financial issues, the question of who does what remains a central subject and I wish the organization would find the wisdom to define the lines
14. Of responsibility at the general secretariat in such a way that we could all contribute, to our full abilities, in reaching our common goal.

Appendix I

Please find below the list of recommendations that I would be commenting on during the session.

A.

- adopt audited WCRC 2011 financial statements
- confirm Swiss GAAP RPC as official accounting standard for WCRC
- retain CFSA as WCRC auditor for 2012
- maintain CHF as WCRC ledger currency

B.

- acknowledge updated 2012 Core P&L forecast
- confirm the following principles on budgeting
 - the General Secretary presents budget to the Executive Committee through Finance Committee
 - Finance Committee reviews budget on behalf of the Executive Committee and advises the Executive Committee for its eventual approval
 - the Executive Committee makes budgetary decisions during annual the Executive Committee session or remotely the rest of the time
 - budgeted expense needs to be linked to budgeted revenue in all times and budgeted loss is generally not allowed
 - budgeted revenue equals to revenue commitment taken up by the General Secretary
 - budgeted expense equals to spending authority given to the General Secretary by the Executive Committee
 - spending authority is given by budgetary category and not in lump sum
 - budget needs to be finalized and formally approved before the calendar year starts
 - decision making on headcount, though closely related to budget, is placed under the exclusive responsibility of Personnel Committee

- confirm the 2-step process for 2013 budgeting with target final closure by Nov. 2012
- approve the preliminary 2013 Core P&L budget assuming CHF 1.1m as total membership fees

Appendix II

The grid or the fair contribution table is a tool that injects clarity, credibility and accountability into the system. If deployed successfully, it can serve as a breakthrough for our organizational reengineering.

The methodology or the allocation key is neutral. Once established, it can be applied for any total budgetary figure. Currently, we have the following factors:

Church size: this refers to the number of confirmed / communicant / professed church members of each member church.

GDP per capita of the country: we assume the members of our member churches dispose of the average national income level.

Theoretical contributing capacity: this is the product of church size and GDP per capita. Short of collecting annual financial statement of each of our member churches, this is the closest measurement that is consistent and comparable across board.

Total budgetary figure to break down: in 2013 draft budget, it is assumed that CHF 1.1m will come from membership fees.

Regional sub-total: when applying an allocation key world-wide, it is critical to insert an extra layer of stability. In our case here, this could very well be the regional sub-total based solely on theoretical contributing capacity. So the grid for a given member church can be adjusted away from the theoretical level in both directions as agreed upon among his peers within the region so long as the regional total remains unchanged.

Solidarity factors: within a region, it can be agreed to grant special adjustments to member churches of the region. This can be a deduction for those who constitute recognized minorities in their home country or a member church which enjoys good growth (as a way of encouragement). It can also be an increase under some specific circumstances.

Finance

Above grid contributions: we have traditionally a small group of member churches who contribute way above their fair contribution level, whatever way you look at it. The goal of our model is not to discourage them from continuing their generosity but to establish a standard that those at the other end of the spectrum would recognize.

Regional segmentation: currently, all countries east of Europe and north / east of ACRC are folded into the same block. Over time, this may change as we complete our regional coverage set-up.

**WORLD COMMUNION OF REFORMED
CHURCHES**

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

AUDITED ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2011

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CH-1205 Genève

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Av. Général-Guisen 64
CH-1009 Pully

E-mail: info@cfbs.ch
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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 2011.

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 a result of our examination, we recommend that the accounts for the year ended December 31, 2011 be approved.

Geneva, 30th April 2012 / 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)

	Dec. 31, 2011 CHF	Dec. 31, 2010 CHF
CURRENT ASSETS		
CASH	12,328	8,958
BANK	1,570,057	1,710,964
ENDOWMENT	45,753	0
INVESTMENT	226,584	224,510
TRANSIT ACCOUNTS	132,895	218,654
	<hr/>	
TOTAL ASSETS	1,987,617	2,163,086
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
TRANSIT ACCOUNTS		
WCC	-3,439	13,044
DONATION / BARNABAS FOUNDATION	2,379	0
ACRRUED LIABILITIES & DEFERRED REVENUE	57,430	48,626
UGC-2010-INCOME	0	1,368,050
UGC-2010-EXPENITURE	0	-1,307,790
DEPOSIT		
EUROPEAN COUNCIL FUND	248,632	258,885
	305,002	380,815
CUSTODIAN FUNDS I		
THEOLOGY & MISSION OFFICE PROGRAMS		
GLOBAL INSTITUTE OF THEOLOGY (GIT)	141,954	91,962
THEOLOGICAL DIALOGS	7,382	9,156

Audited Accounts

MISSION	23,525	14,310
MADIP	34,208	41,900
GEORGES LOMBARD PRIZE	20,682	20,682
JUSTICE & PARTNERSHIP OFFICE PROGRAMS		
COVENANTING FOR JUSTICE	72,000	106,110
GENDER JUSTICE	147,648	179,760
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION FOR WOMEN	208,318	209,993
PARTNERSHIP FUNDS		
PARTNERSHIP FUND	0	644,322
PARTNERSHIP FUND A	7,845	0
PARTNERSHIP FUND B	80,989	0
PARTNERSHIP FUND D	21,999	0
PARTNERSHIP FUND E	72,874	0
GENERAL PROGRAMS		
WCRC REGIONAL SUPPORT	27,421	0
JUSTICE & PARTNERSHIP OFFICE SUPPORT	18,318	0
GENERAL SECRETARY PROGRAMS	31,654	22,679
YOUTH PROGRAM	-41	910
GLOBAL SOUTH INTERNSHIP PROGRAM	46,953	0
NORTH AMERICAN INTERNSHIP FUND	41,393	0
NATIVE AMERICAN PROJECT	1,205	0
	1,006,324	1,341,785
CUSTODIAN FUNDS II		
COOPERATION & WITNESS	22,038	22,038
CALVIN PUBLICATIONS FUND	32,585	32,585

PUBLICATIONS FUND	7,589	7,589
KCTE	18,678	18,678
UCC EATH	6,331	6,331
PROVISION LA PENSEE ECONOMIQUE / A. BIELER	20,622	20,622
EQUATORIAL GUINEA	5,160	5,160
	113,004	113,004
OWN FUNDS		
RESERVE FUND	115,689	73,240
NORTH AMERICAN RESERVE FUND	36,458	0
GENERAL COUNCIL FUND	357,428	230,998
IT PROVISIONS	14,757	14,757
WCRC NORTH AMERICAN TRUSTEES	13,471	0
THE 21ST CENTURY REFORMATION FUND	4,849	4,849
ALLIANCE FOR LIFE FUND	3,637	3,637
CURRENT YEAR RESULT	16,998	
	563,287	327,481
	<hr/>	
TOTAL LIABILITIES	1,987,617	2,163,086

Audited Accounts

	INCOME STATEMENT	
	2011	2010
REVENUE		
MEMBERSHIP FEES		
MEMBERSHIP FEES AFRICA	67,403	
MEMBERSHIP FEES LATIN AMERICA	4,176	
MEMBERSHIP FEES CANAAC	249,348	
MEMBERSHIP FEES ASIA	54,092	
MEMBERSHIP FEES PACIFIC	4,705	
MEMBERSHIP FEES EUROPE	479,675	
	859,400	987,288
DONATIONS		
SWISS CANTONAL CHURCH GENERAL DONATION	157,471	
OTHER INSTITUTIONAL GENERAL DONATION	6,266	
MEMBER CHURCH GENERAL DONATION	13,711	
UCC SPECIAL DONATION	40,287	
INDIVIDUAL GENERAL DONATION	17,966	
	235,701	177,769
OTHER REVENUES		
OTHER REVENUE	940	
INTEREST INCOME	-372	
INVESTMENT INCOME	7,154	
PUBLICATION SALES	717	
	8,438	
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION FEES		
GENDER JUSTICE ADMINISTRATION	7,827	
COVENANTING FOR JUSTICE ADMINISTRATION	7,417	
PARTNERSHIP FUND B SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION	200,000	
CWM CONTRIBUTION	22,000	
EMW CONTRIBUTION	10,796	
PARTNERSHIP FUND A ADMINISTRATION	24,925	
	272,965	222,953
TOTAL REVENUE	1,376,504	1,388,010

EXPENSE

GENERAL SECRETARIAT FIXED EXPENSE		
BASE PAY	657,050	987,121
OVERTIME & AWARD	22,193	
SOCIAL CHARGES	188,758	282,429
EXPAT EXPENSE	13,395	
OTHER STAFF EXPENSE	1,943	6,191
GENEVA OFFICE RENTAL	75,069	88,295
IT CHARGES	32,838	29,442
GENEVA OFFICE EXPENSE	10,576	15,700
US OFFICE EXPENSE	1,515	
	1,003,338	1,409,177
GOVERNING BODY EXPENSE		
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE EXPENSE	70,728	6,827
PRESIDENT EXPENSE	4,435	
OFFICERS EXPENSE	1,829	14,703
	76,992	21,530
PUBLICATIONS		
REFORMED COMMUNIQUÉ	38,790	34,744
REFORMED WORLD	36,573	42,146
	75,363	76,890
GENERAL SECRETARY		
GENERAL SECRETARY EXPENSE	23,659	24,130
GENERAL SECRETARY REPRESENTATION	850	
RECRUITMENT		
GLOBAL CHRISTIAN FORUM	8,986	
GLOBETHICS	700	
	924	
	35,118	24,130
COMMUNICATION		
ENI	30,163	30,236
WCRC PROMOTION	12,382	30,136
	42,544	60,372

Audited Accounts

FINANCE		
BANK SERVICE CHARGE	5,650	
ACCOUNTING FEES	13,160	
OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES	3,315	
AUDIT FEES	7,844	
INSURANCE	889	
	30,858	22,627
NON-OPERATING		
ANNUAL GENERAL COUNCIL FUND CONTRIBUTION	64,455	
FINANCIAL ADJUSTMENTS	12,010	
FX LOSS	22,720	
FX GAIN	-3,893	
	95,293	
TOTAL EXPENSE	1,359,507	1,614,726
NET INCOME	16,998	-226,716

MOVEMENT OF CUSTODIAN FUNDS	Dec. 31, 2010	DEBIT	CHF		Dec. 31, 2011
			CREDIT		
GLOBAL INSTITUTE OF THEOLOGY (GIT)	91,962	50,847	100,838		141,954
THEOLOGICAL DIALOGS	9,156	13,467	11,693		7,382
MISSION	14,310	8,149	17,363		23,525
2714 MADIP	41,900	7,692			34,208
GEORGES LOMBARD PRIZE	20,682				20,682
COVENANTING FOR JUSTICE	106,110	56,863	22,753		72,000
GENDER JUSTICE	179,760	60,010	27,898		147,648
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION FOR WOMEN	209,993	26,554	24,878		208,318
PARTNERSHIP FUND A	72,249	308,518	244,114		7,845
PARTNERSHIP FUND B	457,200	404,196	27,984		80,989
PARTNERSHIP FUND D	21,999				21,999
PARTNERSHIP FUND E	92,874	20,000			72,874
WCRC REGIONAL SUPPORT		21,825	49,246		27,421
JUSTICE & PARTNERSHIP OFFICE SUPPORT			18,318		18,318
GENERAL SECRETARY PROGRAMS	22,679	8,705	17,679		31,654
YOUTH PROGRAM	910	951			-41
GLOBAL SOUTH INTERNSHIP PROGRAM		13,907	60,860		46,953
NORTH AMERICAN INTERNSHIP FUND		13,495	54,888		41,393
NATIVE AMERICAN PROJECT		2,840	4,044		1,205

DONATIONS**235,701**

SWISS CANTONAL CHURCH GENERAL DONATION	
EV. REF. LANDESKIRCHE AARAU	30
EVANGELISCH-REFORMIERTE KIRCHE DES KANTONS BASEL- LANDSCHAFT	1,000
EVANGELISCH-REFORMIERTE LANDESKIRCHE DES KANTONS ZÜRICH	30,000
EVANG. REFORM KIRCH NEUHAUSEN AM RHEINFALL	228
EVANG. REFORM KIRCH NEUHAUSEN AM RHEINFALL	547
EVANGELISCH-REFORMIERTE LANDESKIRCHE DES KANTONS ZÜRICH	500
EVANG.-REF KIRCHGEMEINDE FLAWIL	1,000
KIRCHGEMEINDE BADEN	500
EVANGELISCH-REFORMIERTE KIRCHE DES KANTONS ST.GALLEN REF KIRCHGEMEINDE BREMgarten-MUTSCH	531
REFORMIERTEN KIRCHGEMEINDE BREMgarten-MUTSCHELLEN	5,000
REF. PFARRAMT KIRCHGASSE THUNSTETTENN	50
EGLISES RÉFORMÉES BERNE-JURA- SOLEURE	30,000
EVANGELISCH-REFORMIERTE LANDESKIRCHE DES KANTONS ZÜRICH	23,000
EVANGELISCH-REFORMIERTE KIRCHE BASEL-STADT REFORMIERTE LANDESKIRCHE AARGAU	30,000
KIRCHGEMEINDE MERISHAUSEN- BARGEN, SCHAFFHAUSEN	32
HILFSWERK DER EVANGELISCHEN KIRCHEN SCHWEIZ (HEKS)	4,000
KIRCHGEMEINDERAT MÜNCHENBUCHSEE-MOOSSEEDORF	500
EGLISES RÉFORMÉES BERNE-JURA- SOLEURE	10,000

REFORMIERTE LANDESKIRCHE AARGAU	15,554	
Total		157,471
OTHER INSTITUTIONAL GENERAL DONATION		
PLYMOUTH CRC	540	
MINNEAPOLIS PC USA	213	
SHONG-SHANG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (TAIWAN)	1,853	
THE HOEP TRUST	1,290	
REF. GEM. FRANKFURT DONATION	260	
DONATION	365	
HOPE TRUST DONATION	1,426	
Total		6,266
MEMBER CHURCH GENERAL DONATION		
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)	369	
IERP	1,916	
CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA	818	
LIPPISCHE LANDESKIRCHE	4,500	
REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA	423	
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND	2,904	
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA	2,281	
CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THAILAND	500	
Total		13,711
UCC SPECIAL DONATION		40,287
INDIVIDUAL GENERAL DONATION		17,966

Audited Accounts

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended Dec. 31, 2011

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 completed its legal registration with Geneva Registre du Commerce in June 2011.

Accounting Policies and Process

The financial statements have been prepared 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 nonprofit organizations, Swiss GAAP RPC 21.

All WCRC transactions are accounted for in the present financial statement.

Swiss Franc (CHF) remains the ledger currency for the present financial statements.

WCRC is exempt from Swiss federal and cantonal income tax and aims to qualify for VAT tax payer status in view of obtaining federal VAT tax refund, starting 2012.

An accounting software, WinBIZ (version 8.0), has been installed as of 2011 and the accounting operations have been brought entirely "in-house".

Capital expenditures, if any, are expensed during the current year. Donations in kind (e.g., in case a participant in WCRC meetings voluntarily waives entitlement for expense reimbursement) are not recorded on the present statements.

The financial statements will be put to the executive committee of WCRC for approval during its annual meeting to be held in Berastagi, Indonesia in May 2012.

Balance Sheet

WCRC assets are all current assets, mostly in the form of demand deposit at banks. During 2011, no transaction of the securities held has taken place and the market value of those securities at Dec. 31, 2011 was mostly unchanged, compared to a year ago.

A new bank account (5th 3rd bank) was added as the result of the accounting merger with REC, one of the 2 antecedent organizations of WCRC. The 2011 opening balance was put temporarily into 2 accounts: North American Endowment Administration (CHF 14'252) and North American Reserve Fund (CHF 34'783).

The assets placed at Barnabas Foundation were inserted into the balance sheet (2011 opening balance of CHF 46'687) upon confirmation that the balance can be withdrawn, with some restriction, under the agreement currently in force.

An aged loan to a regional sister organization has been written off and the loss is recognized in 2011.

The 2010 UGC related provisions that had been carried on the balance were dissolved and the balance (CHF 61 '975) was booked directly into General Council Fund in preparation of the next general council in 2017.

The assets under custody that belongs to WCRC Europe were stated in a specific category as of 2011.

The Custodian Funds are classified into 2 categories, Custodian Funds I for the active funds and Custodian Funds II for the inactive ones.

Partnership Funds have been formally segmented (A, B, C, D and E) on the ledger for clarity and reporting purposes.

Per concurrence of identified donors and approval of governing body, a one-time transfer of CHF 200'000 was operated from Partnership Fund B in favor of Core P&L.

The balance of Own Funds at Dec. 31, 2011 has been considerably strengthened (by 72%), compared with a year ago. It is to note that, among the Own Funds categories, General Council Fund requires special approval from WCRC governing body should the effective use differ from its stated purpose.

Audited Accounts

Income Statement

The revenue and expense recognitions continue to follow the adjusted cash basis approach. For the transactions of the current year, they were booked on the ledger only when cash receipt (e.g., membership fees contribution) or cash disbursement (e.g., vendor invoice payment) took place. For "cross-year" transactions, they were accrued or deferred through the balance sheet.

Program related cash inflows and outflows are directly booked into the respective balance sheet account.

Revenue is essentially classified in 2 categories, transactions with cash inflow and the internal accounting adjustments.

The joint (the General Secretary and Finance office) approval remains the generally applicable policy governing all non-payroll disbursements. A cash payout (CHF 22'000) to compensate unused vacation for a departing former employee was granted exceptionally by the General Secretary, in agreement with the Personnel Committee.

Employment contract of the Geneva general secretariat staff are managed by the General Secretary under the direct supervision of the governing body.

Expense classification is slightly modified to better align with the budgetary ownership.

The annual contribution (7.5% of net membership fees collected, CHF 64'455 for 2011) to the General Council Fund was resumed.

Cash Flow Statement

The amount of cash and cash equivalent has reduced by CHF 137'537 (incl. FX adjustment) during 2011 out of which CHF 109'963 was resulted from program related activities.

Statement of Changes in Capital

Please refer to the relevant statement.

THE 21ST CENTURY REFORMATION FUND and ALLIANCE FOR LIFE FUND were originally set up as fundraising vehicles and have not been active in the recent past.

Statement of Operations

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. The President and the General Secretary of WCRC currently hold joint legal signatures for the organization.

Per constitution, WCRC is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. All executive committee members serve as volunteers except the General Secretary who is ex-officio executive committee member as well as a WCRC employee (receiving a base pay of CHF 137'268 in 2011).

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 2011.

As of Dec. 31, 2011, WCRC has bank accounts at:

- BNP Paribas (Suisse) SA, Geneva, Switzerland
- La PostFinance, Geneva, Switzerland
- Lombard Odier Darier Hentsch (LODH), Geneva, Switzerland
- 5th 3rd Bank, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA

As of Dec. 31, 2011, there were no pending legal cases intended against WCRC.

As of Dec. 31, 2011, no financial guarantees or any other type of off balance sheet financial obligations towards third parties were undertaken by WCRC.

WCRC holds no inventory of fixed assets on its ledger as of Dec. 31, 2011.

K CHF	2010	2011	2011	2011	2012	2012	2012	2013
	Actuals	Forecast Nov.'11 Version	Actuals	Budget Nov.'11 Version	Budget Nov.'11 Version	Forecast May'12 Version	Budget May'12 Version	
MEMBERSHIP FEES	987	784	859	910	910	910	1,100	
DONATIONS	218	169	236	209	209	225	225	
OTHER REVENUE			8			48	60	
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION FEES	183	374	273	96	96	118	219	
TOTAL REVENUE	1,388	1,327	1,377	1,215	1,215	1,302	1,604	
GENERAL SECRETARIAT FIXED EXPENSE	1,410	1,043	1,003	921	921	966	1,199	
GOVERNING BODY EXPENSE	22	76	77	81	81	86	86	
PUBLICATIONS	77	85	75	40	40	40	80	
GENERAL SECRETARY	24	35	35	37	37	37	42	
COMMUNICATION	60	38	43	40	40	41	45	
FINANCE & OPERATIONS	23	47	31	24	24	35	27	
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE	1,615	1,324	1,264	1,144	1,144	1,204	1,479	
TOTAL NON-OPERATING EXPENSE			95	71	71	97	125	
TOTAL EXPENSE	1,615	1,385	1,360	1,215	1,215	1,301	1,604	
NET INCOME	-227	-58	17	0	0	0	-0	

REPORT OF THE REFORMED CHURCHES PARTNERSHIP FUND

Douwe Visser

The Partnership Fund continues to make an impact on the ways in which our churches in the Global South engage in mission and development. We have endeavoured to make it a source of empowerment without its being a crutch for dependency.

We are grateful to the *Evangelische Entwicklungsdienst* (EED) for the trajectory we are on to increase the level of their investment in the development component of the Partnership Fund. We have done some critical introspection around what this means. Questions include whether or not the increases, especially when we start having access to German Government funds, will change the character and ethos of the WCRC to become something other than what our core calling leads us to. In the process of reflection, we went back to how churches responded to our questionnaires in the early part of our strategic planning process. We also went to the mission statement in the strategic plans as well as the opening articles of the WCRC Constitution. All these point to the fact that keeping in this trajectory will actually enhance what we are called to do and how the WCRC member churches can feel us as strengthening their mission.

The partnership with EED requires skills for monitoring and reporting projects. Douwe Visser and Páraic Réamonn both took part in an EED workshop on reporting and monitoring at the end of February 2012 and in 2011 also received special training from Frank Riesmann, who works as a consultant for EED.

The unrestricted or mission component of the Partnership Fund needs to be replenished. We spent roughly CHF 140,000 on mission projects in 2011. In addition, as a result of the particular financial challenges of 2011, we asked special permission from the original donors to reallocate part of the unrestricted funds to the core budget. This was graciously done. In cooperation with the Office of Communications a strategy plan for raising funds for this mission component has been worked out. The aim is to raise CHF 500,000 so that the Partnership Fund will be able to fund more effectively projects that cannot be funded with EED funds, which are restricted to development projects. For the long term, as the WCRC endowment fund grows, this component can also eventually become one of the beneficiaries.

Partnership Fund

We are very grateful for the partnership between the Partnership Fund and the *Fondation pour l'aide au protestantisme réformé* (FAP), also based in the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva. Douwe Visser attends the FAP board meetings and is able to give helpful input since the partners FAP works with mostly belong to WCRC. We are very grateful for good cooperation with Silvia Adoue Renfer, FAP's executive secretary, who will retire at the end of June.

As can be seen from the two appendices, 25 applications have been processed in 2011. At the time of writing, 10 further applications have been sent for voting to the Partnership Fund committee.

Plans are being developed to cooperate more with our Area Councils for receiving and processing applications. We also expect helpful assistance for reporting on the projects. To this end, Area Council Secretaries were part of EED training in February 2012.

The Partnership Fund activities are coordinated by the Executive Secretary for Theology, Douwe Visser. Most of the processing work is done however by the Deputy Coordinator, Páraic Reamonn, who started to work for the Fund on 1 July 2011. Páraic has been diligent, with very little cost to us. As the work we do on the Fund increases, we need to regularize his role in the staff team, so that what he does can be even more effective. This is within our ability. And we are grateful to Antoinette Berkouwer for her gift of volunteering her time and energy to help with the activities of the Fund. A lot of work could be done in 2011 with this small team.

Appendix 1

Reformed Churches Partnership Fund List of projects in 2011 supported from restricted (EED) Funds

1. 0311A Grenada: "Awake Deborah" leadership retreat *A leadership training project (Grant: USD 1,440)*

Politics in Grenada is divisive; tensions rise at election time. In a patriarchal, tribalistic and uncivil political culture, the cross-party Grenada Women's Parliamentary Caucus aims to build consensus on matters affecting women and their families. In September 2011, the Presbyterian Church in Grenada held a weekend retreat for 15 women parliamentarians.

The *objective* was to help women leaders to share the challenges of leadership and how they handle them, to understand how their lives impact their service, and to work better together through open dialogue and creative engagement.

Indicators: Implementation of the national gender policy; gender mainstreaming; effective participation of women in parliament.

2. 0411A Congo: Voluntary AIDS testing

A community medicine project (Grant: USD 13,200)

The *objective* of the project, sponsored by the Communauté Presbyterienne au Congo, is to test people in Kasai Oriental for AIDS.

Indicators: People trained to do the tests and tag them correctly; communication of test results to those tested; people informed about risky behaviour and AIDS prevention.

3. 0511A Burkina Faso: Computer training centre for young people

A computer training project (Grant: EUR 13,293)

The computer centre run by the National Youth Union of the Association of Evangelical Churches in Burkino Faso will, in the first instance, train 960 young people in word processing, spreadsheets and internet searching.

Training is not just for young people in schools and colleges, but also for school dropouts, young workers in the public and private sectors, and youth members of civil society organizations. The project conforms to the national framework for education contained in the National Strategy for Sustainable Development.

The *objective* is to promote the right to education, popularize information technology, and compensate for the underrepresentation of girls and women in formal education by involving them in the centre both as students and as administrators.

Indicators: Young people trained; gender balance.

4. 0611A Liberia: Training for youth in conflict with the law, teenage mothers and teenage expectant mothers

A training project for young people (Grant: CHF 30,000)

Liberia is still struggling to recover from the lingering effects of civil war that left the country in economic ruin, with four-fifths of the 4.1m population living below the international poverty line.

Most vulnerable are young people aged 12-35, who form more than half of the population. Some were actively involved in the fighting; others were born during the conflict. Some are engaged in petty or not-so-petty crime – from picking pockets to armed robbery. Drugs and substance abuse are also of great concern to the church. The war resulted in many single mothers, most of whom were left to fend for themselves.

The *objective* of the project is to provide education and training for members of this vulnerable age group over the next two years, with the aim of reintegrating them into society.

Indicators: Multipurpose church centre completed; number in target group trained in useful skills; number in target group trained in life skills; number in target group in employment (including self-employed); trends in prostitution, HIV/AIDS and teenage pregnancy in the target group; extension of the project to other areas of the country.

5. 0711A Burma (Myanmar): Hannie Memorial Centre, Matupi

A small-building project to enhance the effectiveness of a church working in difficult circumstances (Grant: USD 30,000)

Christians and Muslims face many hardships and difficulties in what is a predominantly Buddhist country and still, effectively, a military dictatorship. For 25 years, the Christian Reformed Church was prevented from building a centre for its work, but now the local government has given its permission.

The Hannie Memorial Centre is so named in memory of Mrs Hannie, former leader of the CRC women's association, who died in 2008. It will include a medical clinic, a medical store, a book store and a library; a space for meditation open to all; and offices for the church, the women's association, and the youth department.

Matupi is located in a mountainous region in southwest Burma. Transporting construction materials is more expensive than the construction itself; materials must be carried on a narrow, bumpy road from Pakokku, 200 miles away. Two construction engineers from the church offer their services free, and much of the work will be done by voluntary labour.

The *objective* of the project is to create a multipurpose church centre, including health and educational services.

Indicators: Number of people making use of the medical, library and meditation facilities; improvements in the women's and youth work of the church.

6. 0911A Malawi: Fight Malaria – Save Life

A community health project, promoting self-help among the rural poor (Grant: USD 15,000)

Kadziyang'ane church, a congregation of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Nkhoma Synod, is located in an area where malaria has the highest death rate for children under five. Health centres use drugs to treat malaria, but these are often unavailable or the centres are too far away to be reached in good time.

The *objective* of the project, supported by the Ministry of Community Services, is prevention rather than cure by supplying the community with mosquito nets and teaching people how to use them.

Indicators: A community sensitized to the dangers of malaria; nets distributed to all families irrespective of religion; volunteer workers trained to apply mosquito repellents to the nets; this knowledge passed on to others.

7. 1011A Northeast India: "Improve the quality and quantity of media representation of peace and poverty"

A media project to promote peace and combat poverty (Grant: CHF 29,750)

The population of the eight states of northeast India is over 25 million, including more than 400 indigenous groups. Two-thirds of the people, most of them landless, are engaged in traditional and marginal farming. Villages lack basic infrastructure – roads, health facilities and water supplies. Lack of education and development gives rise to militant groups, which in turn leads to social instability

Partnership Fund

and economic insecurity. Ethnic clashes, rooted in questions of identity, survival, land and livelihood, are frequent.

The *objective* of the project is to break this vicious circle by organizing and promoting peace-building programmes, to highlight the problems of poverty, and to give a voice to the oppressed.

It will organize workshops to encourage inter-tribe and interfaith communication, highlight the need for a media ministry, and encourage the mainstream media to run more stories in depth on poverty. It will organize concerts that promote dialogue and peace and highlight the ill-effects of poverty. A fully equipped video and sound production studio will produce news items, public service announcements, features and documentaries on peace and poverty in addition to CDs and DVDs of the workshops and concerts. It will begin with at least two workshops and two concerts, progressively increasing their frequency.

Indicators: Numbers participating in workshops and concerts; numbers of CDs, DVDs, and media items produced and circulated; indications of reconciliation in communities in conflict; improvements in living standards.

8. 1211A Greece: Shelter for women victims of domestic violence, Mylotopos

A women's project (Grant: EUR 45,000)

The *objective* of the project is to provide a shelter for women victims of domestic violence and to offer them psychological and spiritual support. The need for the project became apparent from the work of the church's congregations. Some women, along with their children, needed a place to hide because their husbands or partners were threatening to kill them.

The house is located in a village in southern Greece, remote from the big cities, with an active women's group and a congregational leadership willing to engage in a diaconal ministry to battered women. It will serve the whole Greek Evangelical Church. The start-up cost is about EUR 90,000, with about EUR 35,000 coming from church and other local resources.

Indicators: Number of women served by the shelter; growth in awareness of domestic violence in congregations of the church.

9. 1311A Rwanda: Tumekutana

A project to train women leaders and promote reconciliation and peace (Grant: USD 36,497)

In Kiswahili, "Tumekutana" means "We have come together". In September 2011, the Presbyterian Church in Rwanda will host the second conference of African Presbyterian women leaders; the conference will examine how women can be agents of justice, healing and reconciliation; participants will visit a genocide memorial.

The *objective* is to bring African women leaders together to share their experiences of conflict, how this affects women and children, and how peace may be restored; and to learn in particular from the experience of Rwanda.

Indicators: Recommendations that can be implemented back home; increased capacity to respond to violence and help restore justice and peace; a network of committed women working together on healing and reconciliation.

10. 1411A Madagascar: Constructing a community school

An educational project with a development purpose (Grant: CHF 30,000)

The policy of the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar is to deepen congregational engagement in social outreach and service, targeting vulnerable populations. Madagascar is among the world's poorest countries, with its poverty exacerbated by political crisis.

Since 2007, the congregation in Soamanandrarinny has run a clinic providing community health services. Now it plans to build a community school: Over 40 per cent of the population of Soamanandrarinny is under 20.

In designing the project, the congregation canvassed the opinions of the community it aims to serve. The project is supported by local government and the Madagascar Department of Education. Much of the work will be done by volunteer labour.

The *objective* is to build first a primary school and then a secondary school.

Partnership Fund

Indicators: A school built to World Bank standards; a community hall where extracurricular and recreational activities will promote overall development; use of the hall for income-generating activities.

11. 1611A Guyana: Empowering survivors of domestic and sexual violence

A project to empower women (Grant: USD 20,000)

The *objective* of the project, sponsored by the Guyana Presbyterian Church, is to end violence against women in the Demerara region. The church can play a strategic role in confronting this social problem.

Indicators: Women and men sensitized to domestic and sexual violence and educated in how to stop it; counselling provided to victims of domestic and sexual violence; skills developed and income-generating opportunities provided to enable them to rebuild their lives.

12. 1711A Lebanon: Establishing a community centre

A community development project (Grant: CHF 30,000)

The National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon plans to establish a community centre in the village of Minyara, Akkar, Lebanon. Women and youth are represented in the committee overseeing the project.

The *objective* is to provide community services for the village and its hinterland.

Indicators: Workshops, training and other activities to equip men, women, youth and children with knowledge and skills; access to needed educational resources; work opportunities in the bookshop and cafeteria; youth motivated to stay in the area and serve the community; bridges built between people of different backgrounds and traditions; a space for dialogue and a culture of peace.

13. 1911A Cuba: Repair of a bus donated by the Partnership Fund

A project to enhance the effectiveness of a church in difficult circumstances (Grant: CHF 3,500)

Transport in Cuba is difficult. Two decades ago, the Partnership Fund made a grant to the Presbyterian Reformed Church of Cuba for the purchase of a bus to serve the Central Presbytery (Matanzas).

The bus is used to transport women and men, youth and children, for workshops and other training projects organized by the Christian Institute for Gender Studies in cooperation with the Presbyterian Reformed Church and other churches, and for other forms of outreach. It has been carefully maintained and according to technical reports is in good condition, except for one small thing: after two decades of regular use, it needs a new engine.

The *objective* of the project is to buy and install the new engine.

14. 2011A Angola: Women's vocational training centre, Uige
A training project for women (Grant: CHF 30,000)

Most women in Uige province are engaged in subsistence agriculture that doesn't generate a surplus for sale. About 75% are illiterate. Many young women, often as young as 14 or 15, drop out of school because of pregnancy.

The *objective* of this project is to improve the lives of these women and young women by offering them income-generating work and integrating them in the economic and social life of the province.

The project will train them in sewing and cutting in order to make clothing for sale. It will purchase the start-up equipment needed and establish legal cooperatives (to protect the women). It will also provide literacy training and, in partnership with the government, classes on the management of small enterprises. It will allow for an exchange of experiences with other IERA women who are already engaged in such activities.

The project has been designed in consultation with women. It will be managed by women, in cooperation with the IERA diakonia department. It will benefit women from IERA and other churches and women who belong to no church.

Indicators: Numbers of women trained in literacy and in clothes-making skills; development and success of cooperatives; extension of project to other parts of Angola.

15. 2811A: Reformed participation in SITP colloquium on the practice of reconciliation

A peace project (Grant: CHF 4,656)

The *objective* of the project is to enable the participation of Reformed practical theologians in an all-African colloquium on the practice of reconciliation organized by the International Society of Practical Theology in Yaoundé, Cameroon, in October 2011.

The colloquium will focus on reconciliation between tribes and peoples, or in countries where there is an ethnic conflict or civil war; reconciliation with the neighbour, because crises between friends or relatives can last for years, with detrimental effects on families and communities; and reconciliation within churches, which are prone to internal conflict and division.

Practical theologians play a key role in promoting reflection, analysis and action within WCRC member churches.

This is the first African colloquium organized by the SITP in Africa, and something they have been attempting to arrange for almost a decade. Without help from the Partnership Fund, African Reformed practical theologians will be underrepresented.

Indicators: Number of African Reformed participants; impact on their churches and theological institutions.

16. 3111E: Iglesia Reformada Calvinista de El Salvador

Emergency relief (Grant: CHF 5,000)

17. 3211E: Iglesia Evangélica Nacional Presbiteriana de Guatemala

Emergency relief (Grant: CHF 5,000)

18. 3311E: Church of Christ in Thailand

Emergency relief (Grant: CHF 10,000)

Appendix 2

**Reformed Churches Partnership Fund
List of projects in 2011 supported from non-restricted
(mission) funds**

1. 0111B: Celebrar y aprender en comunidad, Cuba, January 2011

Celebrating and Learning in Community (USD 20,000)

This was a three-day workshop at the Evangelical Seminary in Matanzas for families and young people in the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba devoted to Bible study, celebration of faith in community, mission, and time to design programmes for their congregations.

2. 0211B: Alliance of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in Latin America (AIPRAL)

- 2nd Workshop on Spirituality and Worship, June 2011 (*USD 18,650*)
- Reformed Youth Forum, August 2011 (*USD 14,600*)
- Continental Women's Forum, August 2011 (*USD 14,600*)
- Continental Consultation on Water, August 2011 (*USD 19,100*)

3. 1811B: Global Institute of Theology 2012 (CHF 30,000)

The purpose of the Global Institute of Theology (GIT) is to give theological students and faculty from all over the world an opportunity to learn, teach, and do theology in an intercontextual and ecumenical way, situating the theological task in local, regional, and world contexts. The World Communion of Reformed Churches will hold the third GIT in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 8 June-1 July 2012, in collaboration with and under the academic auspices of Duta Wacana Christian University, Yogyakarta.

4. 2711B: African Communion of Reformed Churches, October 2011 (CHF 30,000)

This focused on what it means to be African and Reformed: a two-day all-African workshop in Johannesburg.

REPORT OF THE AFRICAN COMMUNION OF REFORMED CHURCHES (ACRC)

Lydia Adajawah

Introduction

Before June 2010, this Area Council was the Alliance of Reformed Churches in Africa (ARCA), which included Africa member churches of the then World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) with its President Rev. Dr. Jerry Pillay of the Presbyterian Uniting Church in South Africa, Mrs Lydia Adajawah, Vice President and other executive members.

After the merger of WARC and REC in Grand Rapids, United States, it became necessary and obvious to change the name and elect a new president, as Dr. Jerry Pillay was elected as President of the newly formed WCRC. In a meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa in October 2011, the Vice President became the Acting President till December 2013, when we will have a full house to enable us to vote for the designations.

Main issues

ACRC vision and mission statement

Vision: "Reformed churches networking for the mission of God in Africa."

Mission Statement: Our mission shall include but not be limited to:

- Theological reflection as an ongoing commitment to our work
- Seeking to accompany member churches as they confront sociopolitical and economic injustices in their contexts.
- Seeking to build the prerequisite leadership that responds to contemporary issues and challenges.

For the above vision and mission to be successfully realized, we have committed to developing communications technology to improve communication and update contact details for member churches. We are currently working on a regional website that will be useful in helping us to walk with member churches facing socioeconomic and political challenges. We have plans to make publications of all papers presented at ACRC consultations on various themes. Beyond this, projects will be developed in the areas of theology, justice, peace, reconciliation and gender issues as we

seek to implement the resolutions that were taken at the last General Assembly.

What we have done so far

Appointment of the ACRC Regional Secretary

We are glad to report that ACRC appointed Rev. Buhle Mpofu to the position of Regional Secretary effective from January 2012. In February 2012 he attended a Regional Secretaries meeting in Geneva and has since been working with the Regional Committee to facilitate implementation of ACRC programmes.

Way forward

- Host two consultations with a view to the Uganda 2013 Council, possibly in Kenya and Togo.
- Develop a website and systems to improve communication.
- Hold Executive Committee meetings during the consultations.
- Engage member churches on ACRC vision and Priority Areas for programmes.
- Disseminate information on Partnership Fund among member churches.

ACRC Accounts

6995-8569

DATE	PROGRAMMING VALUE	OPERATIONS VALUE
05/03/2012	102,391.37	97721.77
05/03/2012	-186.33	-186.33

Bhle Salary Jan-Mar @ R 4090.00

Bal 31/03/2012	102,577.70	12,270.00
Balance	85,270.00	
31/03/2012		

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

Gabriela Mulder

*"With God are wisdom and strength;
he has counsel and understanding."*

Job 12:13

May God guide our deliberations and show us, with his advice, the way we should take. This is our prayer.

A key activity in the past year was the XI General Assembly of AIPRAL. It took place last year in Guatemala from 12 to 14 August under the theme "The fruit of justice is sown in peace and communion", inspired by James 3:18. We were welcomed and hosted by the National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala, introducing us to a country of Central America, which in recent years has been marked by violence, death, armed conflict, injustice and the destruction of God's creation. Certainly, Guatemala is not the only country with those characteristics in the region. Nowadays, most of the countries in the region are going through a continual process of deterioration on account of megaprojects exploiting natural resources and natural disasters, often caused by human hands. Our continent has some of the largest freshwater reserves in the world and these are being threatened not only by pollution and contamination but also by the privatization of this vital resource. What should be a right for everyone and every being for fullness of life has become a scarce resource, out of reach for the excluded and the poor in our countries, and hoarded by a few as a means of enrichment.

Under this theme we held a consultation on, "Water, God's Gift and a Human Right for Fullness of Life on the Earth". All the delegates, as well as the Continental Youth and Women forum, ecumenical and sister organizations participants attended this event. The consultation was held from 10 to 11 August.

Under this same theme, some 25 youths from AIPRAL member churches gathered in Guatemala from 8 to 10 August to participate in the Latin American and Caribbean Reformed Youth Forum, which focused on leadership training in Reformed identity, Bible study, theology and liturgy; the integration of regional youth networks;

and motivating and strengthening youth in ethical resistance campaigns.

At the same time, 25 women gathered to participate in the Women's Continental Forum to celebrate their achievements and share their difficulties with respect to working conditions in churches, communities and at the institutional level in relation to women's rights, empowerment, leadership and gender equality from a biblical and theological perspective. They also sought to reflect and strategize on ways of achieving peace, justice and communion in churches and communities and institutional organizations, raising their voices against any kind of violence against families, children, elderly people, teenagers, youth and women.

One of the main issues addressed by AIPRAL during the five year period (2007-2011) was Reformed spiritual, musical and liturgical renewal, respecting cultural, generational, idiomatic and gender diversity. Without creating a new department, a liturgical team worked with AIPRAL to find answers and coordinate specific activities to achieve liturgical renewal.

Two sub-regional events were organized on Liturgy and Spirituality. One was held in El Salvador (November 2010) and the other in Argentina (June 2011). The resulting liturgical resources were used in the Youth and Women's forums and in the General Assembly, and are now being used by member churches.

During the General Assembly AIPRAL's By-laws were amended to comply with those of the WCRC.

1. Institutional issues

- a. The By-laws of AIPRAL were modified to match the WCRC Statutes. At the moment they are being modified to encompass gender inclusive language.
- b. The organizational structure was adapted to comply with the financial situation and the terminology and structure of WCRC. We now have just four departments: Youth, Women, Justice and Communion, Theology and Mission, as well as a smaller Executive Committee. This will substantially reduce AIPRAL's budget.

AIPRAL

c. Executive Committee details:

- **President:** Gabriela Mulder, Argentina, Reformed Churches in Argentina, gabymulder@hotmail.com
- **Vice-president:** Agnaldo Pereira Gomes, Brazil, Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil, agnaldopgomes@superiq.com.br
- **Treasurer:** Santos Espinoza Espinoza, Costa Rica, Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Costa Rica, floysan@hotmail.com
- **Executive Secretary:** Darío Barolin, Uruguay, Waldensian Evangelical Church of the River Plate, secretaria@aipral.org or dariobarolin@yahoo.com.ar
- **Women's Department:** María Jiménez, Venezuela, Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Venezuela, marijicha53@gmail.com o marijicha53@hotmail.com
- **Youth Department:** Gustavo Quinteros, Colombia, Presbyterian Church of Colombia, pjcolombia@hotmail.com
- **Theology and Mission Department:** Myror Jenner Miranda Calderón, Guatemala, National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala, jemical@hotmail.com
- **Justice and Communion Department:** Carlos Tamez, Costa Rica, Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Costa Rica, tamezcladec@yahoo.com.mx

d. Legal status: the Executive Committee was mandated by the General Assembly to establish AIPRAL as an internationally recognized legal entity and is examining the possibility of doing so in Costa Rica or Uruguay in a first instance.

e. The Executive Secretary's salary needs to be legalized through the establishment of a legal entity or through the churches. The Executive Committee is studying different options.

2. Challenges

- Improve and strengthen the Communion at the local and regional church leadership levels.
- Improve communication and proactive relationships with the member churches having a low level of involvement.
- Keep the agenda geared towards a high involvement in social, justice, economic and environmental issues and include new issues such as evangelism, mission, liturgy, etc.
- Keep working on gender issues, as it is one of AIPRAL's priorities and there is a strong need in our region.

- Work towards AIPRAL's financial sustainability and search for new, long-term alternatives to maintain its programmes and executive secretariat.
- Address indigenous theologies; achieve a more systematic theological production and work in a more coordinated manner with other institutions such as the WCC, CLAI, etc.

3. Programme

The General Assembly strongly underlined the issue of Climatic Justice and Water as one of the central aspects of AIPRAL's programme. Accordingly, AIPRAL organized a sub-regional encounter on Climatic Justice and Water. It was organized by the department of Justice and Communion and it took place from 23 to 25 March in San José, Costa Rica. Outcomes will be published in *La Voz*.

The Executive Committee met the day before (from 20 to 22 March) to plan for the period 2012-2016 and search for strategies and the best way to answer the new challenges and the mandates of the General Assembly.

One aspect emphasized was achieving greater closeness to congregations and member churches which can be done by addressing issues closer to their needs and trying to promote the exchange of knowledge, experiences and emotions.

AIPRAL does not need to organize every event; it may however support and participate in events organized by its member churches, thus regionalizing local events.

It is very important to identify those issues and concerns that AIPRAL and member churches have in common.

Finally, we must consider not just what we can do but also what we may accomplish with AIPRAL.

AIPRAL

Department activities for the next five-year period

	Caribbean	Central America	South America
Theology and Mission	2013 Venezuela	2012 Guatemala, 2015 Mexico	2014 Argentina
Justice and Communion	2014 Cuba	2012 Costa Rica, 2015 El Salvador Committee 1 st semester	2013 Chile Committee 2nd Semester
Women	2014 Colombia	2013 Honduras	Pre-Assembly 2016, Brazil
Youth	2013 Dominican Rep.	2014 Nicaragua	Pre-Assembly 2016, Brazil

Finally, the Executive Board will try to respond to the challenges of AIPRAL membership, visiting the churches and participating in relevant events in the life of member churches.

We face many challenges and much work. Only humbly and under God's guidance will we achieve them.

May the peace of God be with you all.

REPORT OF THE NORTHEAST ASIA AREA COUNCIL

Yoshi Fujimori

1. Organization

The following are the current member churches participating in the NEAAC meetings:

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

It is our great joy to announce that the HKCCCC formally joined NEAAC from this year. NEAAC has also shown concern regarding the membership status of the China Christian Council. We therefore sent a letter of inquiry to our General Secretary Setri Nyomi regarding this issue. Upon receiving his reply, we confirmed the official status of the CCC, and decided to continue our discussions on how to approach the CCC in future.

PCK (Hap Dong Chung Tong) rarely send their representatives to the NEAAC meetings, and need more close attention. We also have one member church, the Reformed Church in Japan, which has currently suspended their membership. NEAAC has been in close contact with the RCJ and has asked them to rejoin the Communion.

The Cumberland Presbyterian Church has its presbytery in Japan, and NEAAC usually sends them an invitation to its meetings. They did respond to our invitations in the past, and we would like to continue working with them in the future.

NEAAC has also been seeking closer ties with other Asian regions, and has invited guests from India, the Philippines and Indonesia to past meetings.

2. NEAAC meeting in 2011

The last theological consultation was held in Hshinchu, Taiwan from 30 January through to 2 February. The theme for the meeting was:

"Justice for Ecology and the Environment." We had three major presentations including General Secretary Setri Nyomi's keynote address on the Accra Confession and ecological concerns; two theological reflections on nuclear technology and reports on projects and activities member churches have done surrounding the issue.

3. By-laws changes

The By-laws of NEAAC were modified, and these need to be ratified by the Executive Committee. Most of the modifications were made in order to correspond to the WCRC Constitution, however, there are a couple of minor changes. (See appendix to this report.)

4. Future meetings of the Area Council

In 2009, we decided to hold both Area Council meetings and theological consultations every other year. The next council meeting will be held in 2013 in Tokyo. The Administrative Committee, which is held every year, is going to meet in November 2012 in Tokyo where we are going to discuss the topic for the next council meeting.

5. Future Challenges

- *More Closer Ties within the Council*
Although we have annual meetings, we don't have any active communication and exchange between meetings. We need to find out ways to communicate better, so that we have closer ties with each other. We also need to provide our member churches with better briefing in advance, especially for those who come to NEAAC meetings for the first time, so that we can maintain the continuity of our discussions.
- *Communicating through the Internet: NEAAC web page*
One of the major problems is that WCRC and/or NEAAC activities are not visible or accessible enough to local congregation members. It often happens that the discussions of the meeting never leave the meeting room, and we need to have a way to share the rich discussions, useful resources or proceedings of the meeting with a wider audience, and we strongly believe the Internet is currently the best tool to achieve this goal.
- *Youth Gathering and Exchange*
We've been discussing holding a NEAAC youth gathering since a long time, but nothing has happened yet. I personally consider

this one of our major priorities, since youth is our vital resource for the future.

6. Officers

The following are the officers of NEAAC (2011-2013) elected at the Council meeting held this year. Both Area Secretary and Treasurer have to be confirmed by the Executive Committee.

Moderator	Elder Yoshi FUJIMORI	CCJ
Area Secretary	Rev. HEO Baekki	KCCJ
Treasurer	Rev. LEE Myung Choong	KCCJ

7. Financial Report

Revenue

Balance from (2009-2011)	USD 5,191
Membership Fee	USD 3,000
Total	USD 8,191

Expenditure

NEAAC Administrative Comm. meeting	USD 1,078
Travel Expense for WCRC Ex. Comm. Mtg.	USD 1,838
NEAAC meeting	USD 175
<u>Donation to WCRC</u>	<u>USD 1,000</u>
Expenditure Total	USD 4,091

Current Balance

USD 4,100

Appendix 1

Current NEAAC By-laws:

I

AUTHORITY TO ORGANIZE AREA

Article IX of the Constitution of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, as adopted in 1970 and amended in 1982 and 1989, provides:

"In order to promote the closest possible community and cooperation among member churches in particular areas of the world and the effectiveness of the total work of the Alliance, the General Council may authorize the organization of an Area by the member Churches in any given area of the world. The number, bounds, and names of the Area shall be determined by the General Council and ordinarily shall be set forth in the By-Laws of the Alliance. The organization of an Area shall be effected by the member Churches within the Area in conformity with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Alliance, under By-Laws drawn up in the Area and ratified by the General Council or the Executive Committee."

II

NAMES AND BOUNDARIES

- 1 The name of the Area shall be "Northeast Asia Area".
- 2 The boundaries of the East Asia Area shall be those which currently delineate the places and regions commonly referred to as Northeast Asia - including Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan - subject to such determination and geographical adjustments as the Executive Committee shall provide.

Adopted changes underlined:

I

AUTHORITY TO ORGANIZE AREA

Article XVI of the Constitution of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, as adopted in 2010 provides:

"To promote the closest possible community and cooperation among member churches in a particular area of the world, and the effectiveness of the total work of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the General Council may authorize the organization of a Regional Council composed of the member churches in that defined geographical area. Such a Regional Council shall be accountable to the General Council of the World Communion of Reformed Churches through its appointed administrative structures."

II

NAMES AND BOUNDARIES

- 1 The name of the Area shall be "Northeast Asia Area".
- 2 The boundaries of the East Asia Area shall be those which currently delineate the places and regions commonly referred to as Northeast Asia - including Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and China - subject to such determination and geographical adjustments as the Executive Committee shall provide.

Current NEAAC By-laws:

III

MEMBERSHIP

- 1 Qualifications for membership in the Northeast Asia Area Council are the same as those for membership in the Alliance, as provided for in Article II of the Constitution of the Alliance, to wit: "Any church which accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, holds The Word of God given in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be supreme authority in matters of faith and life; acknowledges the need for the continuing reformation of the Church catholic; whose position in faith and evangelism is in general agreement with that of the Reformed confessions; recognizing that Reformed tradition is a biblical, evangelical and doctrinal ethos, rather than any narrow and exclusive definition of faith and order, shall be eligible for membership. United Churches which share this understanding of the nature and calling of the Church shall be eligible for membership. Membership in the Alliance does not restrict the relationship of any church with other churches or with other inter-church bodies."
- 2 Member churches of the Alliance whose constituency and organized work mainly fall within the boundaries of the Northeast Asia Area shall automatically be members thereof.
- 3 Admission to membership in the Alliance and, therefore, to the Northeast Asia Area, shall be by vote of the General Council of the Executive Committee of the Alliance, following review by the Area Council or by its Administrative Committee.
- 4 In applying officially for membership, a church shall supply statistical data with respect to its membership, organization, and programme; information with respect to its history, doctrine, and government; and a statement explaining why it desires to affiliate with the Alliance.

Adopted changes underlined:

III

MEMBERSHIP

- 1 Qualifications for membership in the Northeast Asia Area Council are the same as those for membership in the Communion. ~~as provided for in Article II of the Constitution of the Alliance, to wit: "Any church which accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, holds The Word of God given in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be supreme authority in matters of faith and life; acknowledges the need for the continuing reformation of the Church catholic; whose position in faith and evangelism is in general agreement with that of the Reformed confessions; recognizing that Reformed tradition is a biblical, evangelical and doctrinal ethos, rather than any narrow and exclusive definition of faith and order, shall be eligible for membership. United Churches which share this understanding of the nature and calling of the Church shall be eligible for membership. Membership in the Alliance does not restrict the relationship of any church with other churches or with other inter-church bodies."~~
- 2 Member churches of the Communion whose constituency and organized work mainly fall within the boundaries of the Northeast Asia Area shall automatically be members thereof.
- 3 Admission to membership in the Communion and, therefore, to the Northeast Asia Area, shall be by vote of the General Council of the Executive Committee of the Communion, following review by the Area Council or by its Administrative Committee.
- ~~4 In applying officially for membership, a church shall supply statistical data with respect to its membership, organization, and programme; information with respect to its history, doctrine, and government; and a statement explaining why it desires to affiliate with the Alliance.~~

Current NEAAC By-laws:

V

OFFICERS

- 1 The Officers of the Northeast Asia Area Council shall be: a Moderator, two or three Vice- Moderators, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and such other officers as the Area Council may from time to time designate.
- 2 All the Officers, except the Secretary and the Treasurer, shall be elected by the Area Council from among its members, and shall hold office from the close of the Area Council meeting at which

they are elected, to the close of the next Council meeting, or until their successors are elected thereafter.

- 3 The Secretary and the Treasurer shall be elected by the Executive Committee of the Alliance, pursuant to Article VII of the Constitution of the Alliance, after nomination by the Area Council.

IV

- 6 The number of voting delegates for each member church shall not exceed four. (Amended on 27 November 2007)

Adopted changes underlined:

V

OFFICERS

- 1 The Officers of the Northeast Asia Area Council shall be: a Moderator, two or three Vice- Moderators, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and such other officers as the Area Council may from time to time designate.
- 2 All the Officers, ~~except the Secretary and the Treasurer,~~ shall be elected by the Area Council from among its members, and shall hold office from the close of the Area Council meeting at which they are elected, to the close of the next Council meeting, or until their successors are elected thereafter.
- 3 The Secretary and the Treasurer shall be confirmed by the Executive Committee of the Alliance, pursuant to Article XVI of the Constitution of the Communion, after nomination by the Area Council.

IV

- 6 The number of voting delegates for each member church shall not exceed five. (Amended on 27 November 2007)

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF WCRC EUROPE

Jan-Gerd Heetderks and Sandy Horsburgh

A new Steering Committee was elected in Prague in 2011 and the elections ratified by the Executive Committee in May 2011. The Steering Committee has tried to plan out the work for the next few years and intends to give a new impulse to the work of WCRC Europe. Since the last meeting of the Council, the Steering Committee has met three times.

Strategy

The Steering Committee has tried to translate the WCRC Strategic Plan to the European region. Five foci were agreed:

- *Sharing policy development*
It was considered important that member churches should be encouraged to make contact with each other, possibly through WCRC Europe, if they are tackling an issue which may also be an issue for other member churches in order to share insights and seek help. The Steering Committee will also look for other possibilities to share information in Europe.
- *Theological themes*
At each meeting of the Council, a theological issue will be on the agenda, prepared by the theological group. The goal of this theological work is to support the members of the Council of WCRC Europe in their ministry and tasks. The theological work should help the members of the council, who are often in church leading position, to interpret the times and developments on the basis of Reformed theological exchange.

It is hoped that the preparation of the meeting and the deliberations at the meeting will be spun off as publications which make the ideas accessible to the wider audience. It would not always have to be a publication in the form of a book (or for example in *Reformed World*), but could also be a publication on the Internet.

For 2012, the Steering Committee selected "Scripture and Hermeneutics" as the theme for theological discussion. In future years "Theology of religions", and "Catholicity and Globalization" will be considered.

- *Visits*
The Steering Committee is trying to identify churches which might find a visit helpful. Member churches will be contacted to see if they would like such a visit. Vice-President Balázs Odor visited the Evangelical Reformed Church of Lithuania.
- *Justice*
The Council of WCRC Europe has been greatly concerned that it has not been possible to appoint a full-time Executive Secretary for Justice to work in Geneva. At its meeting in Vienna in March, 2012, it undertook to seek funding for this post from diaconal organizations within the region.

The book *Europe Covenanting for Justice* was published in German in 2011.

In 2014, there will be a follow up on the covenanting for justice process. The idea is to bring together the European vision for justice and to report on work that has been done. The Reformierter Bund in Germany is coordinating a conference. It is part of a series of conferences relating to the decade of Reformation anniversaries.

The Steering Committee discussed the possibility of being engaged in European advocacy work for refugees in coordination with the CCME (Churches Commission for Migrants in Europe). It is hoped that there may be a broad ecumenical coalition on this issue to which we can lend support. The urgent issue at the moment is the number of refugees stuck in Northern Africa unable to enter Europe or return to their countries of origin.

- *Anniversaries*
The next significant Reformation anniversary will fall in 2013, at which the Heidelberger Catechism will be celebrated. WCRC Europe is trying to coordinate the sharing of information about events to mark this between member churches.

Communications

The importance of communication for the European region was underlined by the Steering Committee. The possibilities of human and financial input are limited. In partnership with the Reformierter Bund we are working on a new website. Brief newsletters are being published on an occasional basis in order to keep the member

WCRC Europe

churches informed on certain developments. Two newsletters have been published.

Solidarity

The Steering Committee has tried as far as possible to express solidarity to member churches in difficult circumstances. Contact was made with the Greek Evangelical Church. When church buildings of the Evangelical Reformed Church in Lithuania were in danger of being confiscated, letters were written to the President, the Minister of Justice of Lithuania and the Evangelical Reformed Church. This church was also visited.

The churches in Eastern Europe which had been involved in the former Mission in Unity Project were informed that they should be in contact with the Steering Committee if there is anything that the Steering Committee could do.

Finance

The Council of WCRC Europe remains gravely concerned with the financial situation of the WCRC. At its meeting in Vienna, it expressed commitment to the proposed Fair Membership Contributions Grid and to working with those churches which are currently paying below the required level while expressing deep gratitude to those churches which are paying above it, some very considerably so.

The Steering Committee is in the process of registering the Council of WCRC Europe as a legal entity under Swiss Law which will enable it to hold its own bank account.

Relocation

The Council of WCRC Europe gave serious consideration to the question of whether the global office should be relocated from Geneva. The results of its deliberations are the subject of a separate letter to the General Secretary.

Next meeting

The next full meeting of the Council will take place in March 2013 in Athens when it is hoped that there will be a valuable interaction with the Greek Evangelical Church, congregations of which are currently feeding tens of thousands of people who have lost all livelihood because of the financial crisis in Greece, while also being at the forefront of voluntary work among thousands of immigrants to Europe who enter the continent through Greece.

REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS MINISTRY

Mark Koenig and Ryan Smith

1. The report of the Ministry at the United Nations to the 2012 Executive Committee meeting of the World Communion of Reformed Churches highlights elements of the ongoing witness that a presence at the UN in New York makes possible. This is not an exhaustive report. It reflects on places and moments where the ministry has engaged both the UN community and the Church.
2. This report covers the time period from April 2011 through March 2012. It should be noted that much of the work referenced is 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 our voice to be heard by a truly global audience and to contribute to its agenda by attending international conferences and events, making written and oral statements at these events, organizing side and parallel events, and taking part in advocacy and networking. This recognition secures accreditation for specific consultation at UN Commissions, fora, and with individual Offices 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 General Assembly Mission Council 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 the Rev. Dr. Setri Nyomi and the statements of the WCRC. Staff members look forward to engaging with the Rev. Dora Arce-Valentín in future efforts.
6. The work of the ministry falls into two broad areas: to equip individuals and communities to engage in global discipleship and

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to advocate for justice and peace in the name of Jesus Christ, based on policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

7. The Rev. 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.
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 ambassadors for Christ seeking God's peace and reconciliation in a world where humanity and creation are wounded, broken, and in need of healing.² Together we seek life in all its fullness by:
9. Addressing the issue of Environmental Justice through participation in the process leading to the Rio +20 Conference. One of our PC(USA) colleagues takes the lead in this effort.
10. Seeking peace for the people of South Sudan and Sudan. The period covered by this report saw the birth of a new nation and its admission to the United Nations. South Sudan became the 193rd Member State of the UN on July 14, 2011. The ministry communicated in writing to all UN Member States to support admission of South Sudan to the UN. Advocacy efforts since then have focused on: peace for the border regions, a just peace for all the people of Sudan, and an end to the tribal violence in South Sudan. Partner churches in South Sudan have provided information related to the tribal violence. While he was in New York, visits were arranged for the Director of the Resource Centre for Civil Leadership (RECONCILE) in South Sudan with representatives of the Mission of the United States to the United Nations, United Nations of the Development Programme, and also with representatives of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.
11. Offering a public event on the situation in Sudan in June 2011 (before South Sudan achieved independence). PC(USA) staff who had recently visited the country spoke as did our partners from UNICEF.

² 2 Corinthians 5:18-20.

12. Helping coordinate prayer vigils prior to South Sudan's independence on July 9, 2011.
13. Arranging a meeting with partners from the Church of Central Africa in Zambia and UN staff working on issues related to HIV/AIDS.
14. 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.
15. Engaging the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). This year's theme was "The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges." Ecumenical Women sent a survey to churches around the world asking for input on how to address the theme. With Dr. Nyomi's assistance, this survey went to WCRC members. The survey was only in English. Our goal is to have it available sooner and in other languages for next year. The results did help shape the talking points. Forty-four women from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) observed the official sessions of the CSW, participated in side and parallel events, sponsored a parallel event on connecting stories between the Church North and South, and took part in advocacy on the Agreed Conclusions document (this is the outcome document that contains recommendations for the UN, international organizations, and Member States). Ryan Smith served as the co-chair of the Advocacy Committee. Five issues emerged from the survey and formed the basic talking points used at the CSW:
 - Address climate change, farming, food security and food sovereignty
 - Access to education
 - Access to transportation and resources
 - Access to medical care
 - Address isolation and exclusion from decision-makingThe Advocacy Committee noticed that the zero (initial) draft of the Agreed Conclusions failed to address the issue of access to transportation. The committee met with representatives of UN Member States, found previously internationally-agreed-upon language on access to transportation, and submitted to member states for its inclusion. The Association of Presbyterian Women of Aotearoa/New Zealand submitted the language to the Permanent Mission of New Zealand to the United Nations, who

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proposed it to the commission. Unfortunately the Commission failed to reach any Agreed Conclusions this year. Still a number of positive results can be identified from our participation:

- *The UN Member States heard our voice through the sharing of the talking points with all the permanent missions*
- *Participants learned from each other and from women around the world how women living in rural areas work to overcome hunger and poverty and how to support their efforts.*
- *In side and parallel events participants received and shared inspiration for ministry and ideas for advocacy in the United States.*
- *Networks and relationships were built and strengthened.*

16. Co-chairing the NGO Working Group on Israel/Palestine. This group hosted a number of educational events during the course of the year that focused on the question of membership in the UN for Palestine, agricultural issues, and the implications of the settlements particularly in Jerusalem and East Jerusalem.
17. Advocating, in partnership with the NGO Working Group on Israel/Palestine and independently, on behalf of membership for Palestine in the UN based on the principle of Palestinian self-determination.
18. Participating as an NGO observer to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. The ministry was the only member of civil society recognized by the chair of the Committee as making a statement of solidarity on the *International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People* (29 November 2011).
19. Providing a forum to call attention to the ongoing political crisis in Madagascar. A Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission co-worker, and a member of the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (FJKM) spoke. Additional information on the situation has been provided through our electronic communications tools.
20. Offering worship resources for the International Day of Peace (September 21), United Nations Day (October 24), and Human Rights Day (December 10).
21. Encouraging participation in the UNICEF Tap Project that provides clean water to children and Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF

that provides general funding to support children worldwide.

22. Partnering with UNICEF and the United States Fund for UNICEF to encourage advocacy on behalf of children. This included participation in promoting the UNICEF resource *Partnering with Religious Communities for Children*.
23. 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 past year, 4 states have ratified the Optional Protocol; another state signed. There remain 49 UN Member states that have not ratified.
24. Calling for participation in World Interfaith Harmony Week, the first week in February.
25. Inviting support for efforts to ban the use of landmines on the International *Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action* – April 4.
26. Working on issues of human trafficking. Our staff 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 on a human rights based approach to trafficking. We also partner with the US Department of State and the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons.
27. 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.
28. 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. The group authored a policy statement for the UN General Assembly in September 2011. This policy guided the advocacy and educational efforts of the Working Group.

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29. Advocating that human rights be honored. Areas of particular focus included Colombia, the Philippines, and Nepal.
30. 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.
31. In conversation with the Rev. Dora Arce-Valentín at the March Ecumenical Advocacy Days sponsored by the U.S. ecumenical community, the following ideas were identified that could further our cooperation:
 - Identify ways to share communications more effectively.
 - Contact WCRC member churches to learn what connections they have to UN programmes in their country.
 - 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.
32. 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 or go to <http://gamc.pcusa.org/subscriptions/lists/discipleship-global-community/> to subscribe

REPORT OF THE JOHN KNOX INTERNATIONAL REFORMED CENTER

Cyril Ritchie

1. Greetings to the WCRC Executive Committee in Indonesia in May 2012. May your deliberations be fruitful. We regret that distance and therefore cost prevent us from being present in person. But our absence this year will in no way diminish the value and cordiality of the ongoing JKIRC-WCRC interactions and exchanges. We shall continue to seek cooperation and shared activities.
2. One cannot begin this review of highlights of the past year without referring first and foremost to the much-regretted death of a “shared person”, Edmond Perret. While he was General Secretary of WARC, Edmond was also a pillar of the John Knox Centre and he continued to serve many years on the Centre’s Committee, including as Committee Secretary. His wisdom, experience, joviality and good sense were treasured by the Centre and are still warmly remembered. I was moved by Setri Nyomi’s tribute to Edmond at the funeral service in Geneva. Edmond remains in our hearts.
3. Setri and several WCRC staff members are valued members of the John Knox Association and their participation in activities is always welcome. I must single out Douwe Visser, who has taken on the chairing of the JKIRC Programme Commission, as successor in that post to the still regretted Lukas Vischer. Douwe led the organization in 2011 of a most interesting (and externally-funded) JKIRC colloquium on Speaking Truth to Power, of which you will have seen the Report. He is also advancing with planning a further JKIRC colloquium in 2012, on Churches and the Rule of Law (for which external funding has now been secured). These activities, in which a number of WCRC personalities participate, strengthen our links and contribute to international theological and social debate. I am deeply grateful to Douwe for his leadership on programmatic matters.
4. A sub-programme of the Centre is entitled “Witnessing Together in Geneva”, which is led by pastors Roswitha Golder and Olivier Labarthe. The Witnessing programme creates fellowship among some 80 “foreign” church communities existing in the Geneva region, creating links with local established churches and social service bodies, and with the ecumenical organizations. Following a successful innovation in 2010, the

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Witnessing programme will again in 2012 transform the main Geneva Protestant Fasting Day (September 9 this year) into an international event, with significant support from the Canton of Geneva Protestant Church. If any of you find yourselves in Geneva on September 9, please join in!

5. The John Knox Centre continues to be financially very stable, though the year 2012 is likely to bring some diminution in income, as the global financial strain also affect many of the Centre's users - intergovernmental, nongovernmental, ecumenical, academic. Our competent Director, Marc Appel, and his staff are constantly improving the meeting and lodging facilities, and the Centre remains a highly attractive and calm oasis encouraging reflection, dialogue and respect.
6. In 2013 the John Knox Centre will celebrate its 60th Anniversary. As, according to some, 2013 is also the 500th anniversary of the birth of John Knox, the Centre has "appropriated" that event to augment the outreach of our commemorations. We shall be holding an Open House Day and a meeting of John Knox Centre "alumni". We shall also organize a symposium to highlight principal features of Lukas Vischer's life work, to honour and advance the causes he advanced, largely through the Centre, over the past 20 years. The 60th Anniversary will also be the occasion for a new fundraising campaign to carry forward - and go beyond - the major renovations we undertook at the time of our 50th anniversary. You will hear more of all these matters in coming months.
7. I close by renewing the Centre's best wishes for a successful WCRC Executive Committee meeting, and look forward to further strengthening of our relationship over the coming twelve months.

LOCATION OF THE WORLD COMMUNION OF REFORMED CHURCHES

Background

1. In discussing the Finance Committee report in the UGC in Grand Rapids, the following was minuted:
“Comments on the expense of having offices in Geneva were made and a request that the Executive Committee in their meeting of 2012 consider this matter for the following reasons:
 - Stewardship.
 - Integrity to issues of justice.
 - Solidarity.

WCRC should be the first to move out of Geneva.” (UGC Proceedings, page 32)

It is 2012, and the Executive Committee is called upon to engage in this responsibility.

2. In its Action 11, the May 2011 Executive Committee meeting “referred questions of the location of the Secretariat and how it fits into the Strategic Plan to the Officers and asked them to report to the Executive Committee in 2012”. In taking that decision, the Executive Committee further clarified that “the Officers weren’t being asked to make a recommendation about location themselves but rather to make a recommendation on how the question should be handled.” (Executive Committee Minutes 2011, pages 17 and 18).
3. Officers took this responsibility seriously and commissioned a letter to all member churches, area councils and Executive Committee members as a mechanism of consultation on the issue of location in which they were also asked to make proposals for possible venues to be relocated to. This was the first of many steps which include a proposal to set up a Location Task Force which will take the views of member churches in developing criteria for choosing the venue of relocation, doing the feasibility studies, considering constitutional and personnel related implications, and making concrete proposals. The task force is to be given a short time within which to complete its work so that the Executive Committee can take a well informed decision in a timely fashion.

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4. In February and March this year, three meetings also made comments on relocation.
 - a) The CWM-WCRC joint meeting indicated that "If WCRC decides to relocate, it should look for a location that would provide possibilities for other ecumenical organizations to consider. That meeting also noted that "Part of the paradigm shift in the global ecumenical movement is the significance of the Global South and we hope that WCRC will take this seriously in its decision about relocation.
 - b) The advisory group on the WCRC financial crisis that met in Hannover in March this year made the following points:
 - That WCRC decide to move its office location out of Geneva as soon as logistically possible and on a schedule approved by the Executive Committee (or its Officers).
 - That the WCRC Offices be relocated to the Euro-zone at this time
 - That, if and when an invitation to locate in Germany is received, WCRC accept that invitation with appreciation.
 - c) The WCRC Europe Council meeting in Vienna in March indicated among other things the following:
 - i) In this financial crisis, the Council is of the opinion that the decision on relocation should be made on the basis of securing a sound financial future for the organization. With the significant extra injection of cash to fund core expenditure being made by certain European Churches in 2012, approximately two thirds of the money for core expenditure will be paid in Euros. In order to make the process of financial planning much more stable and straightforward, it would be advantageous if the majority of the organization's expenditure was given in the currency in which it is spent. This would help reduce exposure to expensive currency exchange and volatile currency fluctuations. This makes the argument for relocation to the eurozone particularly strong.
 - ii) The Council would like to ask the Officers of the WCRC to propose clear criteria to the Executive on which a sound and informed decision on where to relocate to may be made. As much detail as possible will need to be provided. This should include an assessment of the potential impact upon existing staff members,

including moving costs, timeframe, and the impact of soft factors. We strongly encourage you, in conjunction with those member churches which have made suggestions of potential sites for relocation, to research and provide to the Executive Committee very full information on all realistic locations for the office, in order that the decision can be made in Indonesia in May and not be postponed. The Council recommends that all this information has to be provided to the Executive Committee before its meeting in May so that members of the Committee may have time to give it the consideration it deserves.

5. Officers commissioned a letter to the General Secretaries of the WCC and the LWF asking them to consider relocating out of Geneva with the WCRC. Both responses are reproduced in the boxes below.

a) The World Council of Churches

Dear Setri

Thank you for your letter of March 15, 2012 sharing this information about your discussions in the WCRC.

The WCC as host of the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva is, as you know, involved in a process of developing the property here in Geneva to better serve the WCC and the ecumenical movement in the future. There is no agenda in our governing bodies that question this plan and there is, to the contrary, a strong affirmation of the importance of strengthening the churches visibility and presence in the international Geneva, and an affirmation of the WCC's role to continue to offer office space for sister organizations in the one Ecumenical Centre here in Geneva. We would very much like the WCRC to be part of this in the future, as well.

I am ready to discuss this further with you at any time.

Sincerely yours,

Rev. Dr. Olav Fykse Tveit
General Secretary

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b) The Lutheran World federation

Dear Setri,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Thank you for your letter dated March 15 informing me about decisions and discernments of the Meeting of Officers of the WCRC regarding the location of the offices of the WCRC.

For the LWF the question of the location of the Communion Office has been discussed extensively during the so-called "LWF Renewal Committee", which submitted its report to the LWF Council in October 2009. In the report no conclusions were offered on the question whether the LWF Council should work toward relocation or not. The matter was then referred to the incoming Council, which was constituted in July 2010. As of now, the LWF Council has not dealt with this matter. Hence, there aren't currently any concrete plans to relocate the LWF Communion Office in the near future.

It is possible that the information that I will submit to the LWF Council in June 2012 on the WCC plans to cover the deficit of the pension fund and develop the property of the Ecumenical Centre may trigger a conversation on the location of the LWF Communion Office. It is not likely that such conversation would lead to quick conclusions. The size of the LWF Communion Office and the financial implications of a possible relocation would require very detailed analysis. I very much welcome a reflection process as the one you are indicating in your letter, in which the ecumenical organizations and the Christian World Communions located in the Ecumenical Centre share information about their own processes of discernment and /or their actual plans. Such a process would provide for joint reflection about ways to continue expressing the one ecumenical movement, while acknowledging at the same time the dramatically changed contexts, in which the different organizations find themselves today.

In Christ, whom we serve

Martin Junge

General Secretary

6. All these elements form the background that led to the development of this document with the research and feasibility studies that can lead to a meaningful decision on the location of the WCRC offices.

Results of consultation with churches on location

7. The letter to member churches, Executive Committee members and regional councils was sent out in January 2012. The following countries in alphabetic order (with specific suggested cities) were proposed in the responses:
 - Argentina – Buenos Aires
 - Austria – Vienna
 - Belgium – Brussels
 - Brazil – Sao Paolo
 - France – One of the cities close to Geneva, Switzerland
 - Germany – Hannover
 - Ghana – Accra
 - Indonesia – Jakarta
 - The Netherlands – Amsterdam
 - Romania – Cluj/Kolozsvar
 - South Africa – In the Johannesburg-Pretoria area or around Cape Town
 - The United Kingdom – London

On April 30, we received a letter from our member church in Guatemala indicating they would like us to consider Spain as a possible location also.

8. Officers were intentional that churches should be consulted first before a task force is appointed which will develop clear criteria for locating the office, so that the basis of the criteria can be owned by the churches. The following are the criteria which have been gleaned from the responses from churches which should influence the final decision:
 - a) A venue which will contribute to addressing WCRC's financial challenges.
 - b) The location if different from Geneva has to demonstrate that the cost of living in and operating from there is much cheaper than the cost of living in and operating from Geneva.
 - c) A place where the work of the WCRC can be coordinated from efficiently and effectively.
 - d) A place where easy access to and connection to ecumenical organizations, international organizations and theological institutions, can be possible.
 - e) A place where it is relatively easy to employ international staff.
 - f) A place that has good infrastructure – including a constant power supply and good internet access.

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- g) A place that is easily accessible for travel – for example – it is an air hub or railway line hub.
 - h) A place where there is as little difficulty as possible in acquiring visas and work permits.
 - i) A place that has at least one strong member church of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.
 - j) A place where English is widely understood.
9. Letters were written to churches in all the countries proposed seeking their concurrence that their country could be considered as a suitable site for the offices of the WCRC. Checklists were also sent out to facilitate the feasibility studies in these countries. The following sections summarize the responses from each country

Feasibility studies summaries

10. Austria
As at May 2, there was no response from our member church in Austria.
11. Argentina
Our churches in Argentina and AIPRAL would welcome the office moving to Argentine. A detailed response to the feasibility checklist we sent is available on the website as Loc 1 (under reference documents).
12. Belgium – Brussels
As at May 2, there was no response from our member church in Belgium.
13. Brazil – Sao Paolo
We received a preliminary response confirming the interest of our member churches that the offices be located in Sao Paolo. However, we have not yet received a detailed response to the feasibility checklist.
14. France – One of the cities close to Geneva, Switzerland: The Eglise réformée de France (ERF) has no opposition to having the WCRC headquartered in France. It however cautioned that the relocation of the WCRC in France could face two problems:
- It is increasingly difficult for foreigners, especially Africans, to obtain visas for France.
 - The real estate prices are very high in cities close to Switzerland.

15. Germany – Hannover

In their response, German churches were eager to welcome the WCRC offices to be located in Hannover with a readiness to support and to have other partners support also. They are also ready to work with German and local authorities to have the conditions of service that will give the WCRC and its staff the standing and space needed to operate efficiently. The full response to the feasibility checklist is available on the website under Loc 2.

16. Ghana – Accra

The Ghanaian churches are ready and willing for the WCRC to locate its offices in Ghana. The responses to the feasibility checklist can be found on the website as Loc 3.

17. Indonesia – Jakarta

Indonesia – Jakarta: The response indicates enthusiastic interest in having the office located in Jakarta or Denpasar or Manado. The feasibility checklist is based on Jakarta. In this feasibility there is also a note that Denpasar will be a better location if Indonesia is chosen. It can be found on the website as Loc 13.

18. The Netherlands – Amsterdam

The Protestant Church of Netherlands would support the WCRC offices locating in the Netherlands. They have asked that the WCRC consider other Dutch cities such as Utrecht and Amersfort in addition. In fact they would offer space in the PCN ministry offices in Utrecht for the WCRC at a rental price subject to negotiation. The detailed response to the feasibility checklist can be found on the website as Loc 4. In addition, we also have a letter supporting this from the Remonstrant Brotherhood.

19. Romania – Cluj/Kolozsvár/Napoca

Preliminary response indicates the WCRC member church's readiness to welcome the WCRC office in Cluj. We have not yet received any response to the feasibility checklist.

20. South Africa – In the Johannesburg-Pretoria area or around

A couple of member churches have enthusiastically welcomed the possibility of locating the office in South Africa. The feasibility study report which was submitted in 2009 was revised and is available on the website as Loc 5A. The Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa has also completed a feasibility checklist. That is also available as Loc 5B.

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21. The United Kingdom – London: The United Reformed Church (URC) in the UK pointed to the experience of the Council of World Mission (CWM) which considered remaining in London alongside other options and eventually decided to relocate in Singapore. They pointed out that this move was primarily due to the difficulties in obtaining visas by staff and visitors! The CWM General Secretary was refused a visa on numerous occasions, despite the church's efforts to persuade the UK border agency that it was an essential appointment. The URC feels the WCRC would have similar issues if they moved to London. The URC has furnished us with the feasibility report that was done when the CWM was debating its own location. Loc 6.
22. Spain: The proposal came so late that we could not make any inquiries regarding Spain.
23. Geneva: Since the office is currently located in Geneva. It appears good to have the views of the Swiss churches in mind as the WCRC reflects on where to move to. Therefore the Swiss churches response to the January letter is also available on the website as Loc 7.

Cost of living Comparisons

24. The best and most comprehensive source of data on cost of living indices is the Mercer Consulting services. However their data is not free. It will cost around Euro 2,000 to obtain comprehensive information for five cities. Therefore if the WCRC wants to pursue it, it will be good to do so only for a shortlist. Meanwhile, to aid in the decision making process even for a short list, some websites have some free information. Information gathered from several websites³ indicate the following comparisons:
- a) Argentina - Buenos Aires is 62% Cheaper than Geneva, Switzerland
 - b) Austria – Vienna is 41% Cheaper than Geneva, Switzerland
 - c) Belgium – Brussels is 37% Cheaper than Geneva, Switzerland

³ We credit the following websites for the information here:
www.numbeo.com, www.mercer.com, www.finfacts.ie/costofliving.htm,
www.expatisitan.com/cost-of-living/index, www.xpatulator.com,
www.expatisitan.com/cost-of-living/index

- d) Brazil – São Paolo is 30% Cheaper than Geneva, Switzerland
- e) Germany - Hannover is 43% Cheaper than Geneva, Switzerland
- f) Ghana – Accra is 53% Cheaper than Geneva, Switzerland
- g) Indonesia – Jakarta is 56% Cheaper than Geneva, Switzerland
- h) The Netherlands – Amsterdam is 23% Cheaper than Geneva, Switzerland
- i) Romania – Cluj-Napoca is 70% Cheaper than Geneva, Switzerland
- j) South Africa – Cape Town is 58% Cheaper than Geneva, Switzerland
- k) South Africa – Johannesburg is 51% Cheaper than Geneva, Switzerland

25. It should be noted that these figures are based on cost of living as experienced by local people. In many countries there are expatriate rates which are higher than the local cost of living indicators. The Mercer consulting services have these figures. However it is not available for free. When there is a shortlist, one can do further analysis, including salary figures that WCRC staff are likely to earn in each of these contexts.

Cost of Living rankings

26. The following are the Cost of living index rankings of the cities named in the responses⁴.

RANK	CITY
5	Geneva
10	São Paolo
28	Vienna
35	Amsterdam
56	Brussels
69	Indonesia
131	Johannesburg
156	Accra
158	Cape Town
161	Buenos Aires
Rank – not found	Hannover
Rank – not found	Cluj-Napoca

⁴ These rankings are also gleaned from the same websites as above. We could not find rankings for two cities.

Legal Issues

27. Officers instructed the General Secretary to obtain legal advice on two particular issues:
- a) The consistency of relocation with the WCRC Constitution.
 - b) The implications of relocation for WCRC staff and any legal obligations involved.
28. We consulted two lawyers and received similar responses. On the WCRC Constitution,
- a) A Fribourg-based lawyer sent in the following comment: According to Art. XVII, A of the Constitution of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (in the following: WCRC Constitution), the constitutional document is to be considered as being the legal status (of the organization) in the sense of Swiss law on (regulating) associations. The articles (statutes) of the association thus explicitly indicate that the official office is in Geneva, a city located in Switzerland. This statutory determination expresses the will that the (registered) seat should not be modified by simply relocating the de facto administration (to another place) (cf. Art. 21 par. 2 IPRG). Should the seat of the World Communion of Reformed Churches be relocated, an appropriate modification of Article XVII- A of the WCRC Constitution would be necessary. Such a modification would require an action of the General Council (Article VII-B-2 of the WCRC Constitution), the procedure to be followed being indicated by Article XVIII of the WCRC Constitution.
 - b) A Geneva-based lawyer made the following comment: The meaning of article XVII of the Constitution is that the head office of WCRC is in Geneva. This further means that in case of relocation of WCRC, a change of the Constitution has to be made pursuant to article XVIII of the Constitution. Beside the statutory aspect of the relocation of the head office, the legal issue of the transfer of the head office of an association has to be analyzed, in particular at the place of relocation. It should be clarified if the authorities from the new country of domicile would accept to register an entity previously located abroad. This would of course simplify the relocation and avoid having to liquidate the existing entity and create a new one abroad.

- c) In further discussion with the Geneva-based lawyer, he clarified that if circumstances are such that the WCRC has to move, there are two possibilities:
 - i. The WCRC may keep a formal address and office in Switzerland and move its operation into a new place temporarily while waiting for the formal action of a General Council. Ideally temporarily should not exceed one year – otherwise authorities in both the country of legal registration and the new location will raise questions which can adversely affect the reputation of the organization.
 - ii. The WCRC may open a branch office in the new location and move most of its staff to the branch office and operate from there. At such a time that the formal General Council decision is made, the branch office becomes the main office and the former head office ceases to exist as such.
 - d) It is also entirely possible that the WCRC calls an extraordinary General Council to consider the move with the required number (one-fifth) of member churches requesting it (Article VIII-B).
29. On the implications for WCRC staff, the Fribourg-based lawyer did not comment.
- a) The Geneva-based lawyer made the following comments:

As to the implication for relocation on the staff and families, the employment contract of the staff should be analyzed. Basically, the relocation means a change in the employment contract of your staff. One may consider that the amendment to the employment contract would not only refer to the place of employment but also to the other terms of the contract, e.g. the salaries. The question here is to decide whether the WCRC intends to continue with the same staff at the new place of location or to terminate the employment contract of all the Geneva staff. The needed action depends on the WCRC's decision on this as well as on the number of employees and the conditions of the employment contract. The obligation of the WCRC with regard to the employment contract is

limited to the termination period defined in the contract. There is furthermore an obligation to announce the termination if it is for at least six employees at least one month before (article 23 of the Loi sur le service de l'emploi et la location de service (LSELS), J.2.05).

- b) The lawyer was made aware of the fact that WCRC contracts refer to the WCC rules and regulations, and the WCRC Personnel practices and policies. It is therefore in the WCC regulations that one can find the contractual obligation regarding termination. The relevant WCC regulations are in Section 6. In italics below we have the regulation governing termination. Should relocation be decided upon, this is the reference that will guide WCRC's obligations to the staff who may choose not to move with the organization.

Section 6 : Ending of Service

A member of the staff may end his/her service by resigning. He/she shall submit his/her resignation to the General Secretary in writing respecting the relevant notice periods.

For members of staff employed under indefinite contracts:

- a) *employment may be ended by either party giving three months notice period for the end of a calendar month during the first five years of service, except during the probation period of three months, when it shall be one month for the end of a month;*
- b) *for staff who have served for over five years, the notice period shall be six months for the end of a month for both parties.*
- c) *By mutual agreement the two parties may shorten or waive the required notice period.*
- d) *The notice period for termination of contract may be reduced by mutual agreement. When it is deemed appropriate, the General Secretary may require or authorize a member of the staff to leave before the end of the notice period.*
- e) *A member of the staff who is required to leave shall continue to receive payments in accordance with his/her*

contract or letter of appointment during the statutory period of notice.

The notice period for termination of contract may be reduced by mutual agreement. When it is deemed appropriate, the General Secretary may require or authorize a member of the staff to leave before the end of the notice period

A member of the staff who is required to leave shall continue to receive payments in accordance with his/her contract or letter of appointment during the statutory period of notice.

- f) For Executive staff on term contracts, it is sufficient to write in any new renewals the fact that the office may be moving away from Geneva. In this case, then the notice period of three months for executive staff who have worked for less than five years and six months for executive staff who have worked for over five years applies. This applies to staff who choose not to move with the organization.
- g) For staff who agree to move, the WCRC will have the obligation to move them and their families to the new venue. Work permit and residence permit issues would have to be worked out with the country of the new location.
- h) While this is not a legal obligation, the WCRC will demonstrate responsibility by choosing a venue in which spouses of employees have the best possibility of getting employment, and where laws about employing spouses of employees are not prohibitive.

Questions

30. What kind of recommendations can Officers make to the upcoming Executive Committee meeting? Options include:
- a) A process by which the relocation discussion can be done effectively to include a task force which is given a three-month, a six-month, or a one-year time line to thoroughly carry out work that includes defining criteria, feasibility studies, venue, time line, and work with churches to bring about a clear decision on the location by Executive Committee members at the time defined. This process can be discussed and affirmed in the Berastagi Executive Committee meeting.

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- b) A process backed by a solid resource paper (which includes criteria) by which the Executive Committee can come to a decision on the location of the WCRC during the May 2012 Executive Committee meeting in Berastagi
 - c) A document from Officers with clear recommendations on where the WCRC offices can be located with a time line on when and how this will happen. This document needs to include the criteria used to arrive at this decision.
31. If a decision is made to recommend an immediate relocation of the WCRC,
- a) would there be a consideration of an early General Council or a special General Council in order to address the constitutional challenge?
 - b) Would there be a consideration of creating a branch office in the recommended new location where most operations can be handled from before the next General Council? Would this constitute decentralization, and would the WCRC with a small staff be able to work efficiently with this model?
 - c) How would the WCRC handle staff related issues?
32. Without desiring to prejudice the process, WCRC staff wants to place on record the question of how the process of decision making will take on board in its cost-benefit analysis "below-the-accounts-line" benefits of the WCRC being in the same location as other ecumenical partners (See italics below for some below-the-line costs that are eliminated by having the organizations in the same location).

Meetings with WCRC constituency members who visit the centre for meetings with other organizations (currently WCC, LWF, ENI, CEC, ACT Alliance, EAA, and WSCF): This allows WCRC staff to meet with people who are active in WCRC networks and advisory groups, regional groups, advocacy networks and governing bodies without paying their travel and accommodation costs.

Participation in consultations, seminars, planning sessions, and ecumenical events that happen in Geneva: These include events focused on theology, ecumenical dialogue, interfaith dialogue, human rights, aboriginal rights, International Women's Day, migrant churches, HIV&AIDS, climate justice and youth.

In-kind support: There is frequent exchange of specialist services among staff of sister organizations on issues related to theology, justice and communication. WCRC staff is called upon by sister organizations to contribute input and advice and the favour is returned later when WCRC calls for advice and support. This cooperation allows the small WCRC staff group to do more than would normally be possible.

Visibility: WCRC's General Secretary and Executive Staff are invited to speak or be present at high profile events (e.g. in 2011-2012: leadership of EKD, visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury).

33. Is it possible to engage a relocation specialist to provide a list of criteria to be considered when deciding on office location? These criteria would be added to the criteria already generated by WCRC member churches and to the list the Executive Committee will set at its 2012 meeting.
34. What can be learned from other similar-sized organizations that assessed the feasibility of changing office location? What examples are there of organizations who believe their move increased their ability to effectively fulfil their mission and maximize their financial resources? What are the factors to which they attribute that success?
35. These questions are not meant to discourage relocation. But to help the process to take into account every key question so that when it decides to relocate it will be clear that the reflection towards a good decision took on board every question.

WCRC SUSTAINABILITY FUND INITIAL GOALS

The ultimate goal is to raise £10 million to sustain WCRC by 2017.

In year one (2012-2013) CWM will grant WCRC £1 million. WCRC will raise 400,000 Swiss francs (CHF).

Goals for May 2012 Executive Committee Meeting

1. Each region will make a commitment and formulate strategies to raise a specified amount by the 2013 Executive Committee meeting in order to meet the target of raising CHF400,000 in the first year.
2. Each member of the Executive Committee will pledge something substantial to contribute for a total of CHF30,000. Possibilities are:
 - a. Each Executive Committee member could pledge around CHF1000 in some cases with the help of close friends and acquaintances.
 - b. Each Executive Committee member pledges something between CHF400 to CHF2000 depending upon the country from which they come. Here too close friends and acquaintances can help.
3. The Executive Committee will approve job descriptions for the campaign steering committee and for regional campaign networks.
4. Executive Committee members will submit names for consideration as members of the steering committee and the regional networks.

First year goals for each region

Africa – CHF25,000

Possible strategies can include challenging churches to give in honour of Setri Nyomi as he completes his service as General Secretary and as the Executive Committee meets in Ho in 2013 or in honour of the President Jerry Pillay. These strategies may be especially meaningful in Ghana and South Africa.

Asia and the Pacific – CHF225,000

Strategies may include:

- a. Challenging 5-10 congregations in Korea to pledge CHF200,000 each spread over 5 years. The installment for 2012-13 can be part of this CHF225,000. Setri and Steve will work with head offices of PCK and PROK to arrange this.
- b. Approach friends of WCRC in Taiwan.
- c. Work with churches in Indonesia to access congregations and individuals who can give substantially.
- d. Work with other countries in Asia.
- e. Work with church leaders in the Pacific to determine what is realistic.

Europe – to be determined

Consult with European members of the Executive committee to determine what a realistic target can be, and what strategies can be used to reach it.

Middle East – to be determined

Consult with Najla Kassab to determine what a realistic target can be, and the strategies to adopt to reach it.

North America and Caribbean – CHF 150,000

Ask pastors of large churches who have participated in WARC/WCRC programmes in the past – such as Westminster Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis and Independent Presbyterian in Birmingham, AL).

Latin America – to be determined

Ask Latin American Executive Committee members and AIPRAL to determine what a realistic target can be, and what strategies can be used to reach it.

The Director of Development will work with each area council president or the WCRC vice president from each region and other key contacts to reach these goals.

Possible Time Line for a Capital Campaign

Goal: £10 million or CHF14 million

The rule of thirds: 1/3 of the total comes from 10 lead gifts
1/3 comes from 100 major gifts
1/3 comes from everyone else

Year 1 (2012-2013)

Tasks: Conduct feasibility study; approach selected member churches (Germany,

Sustainability Fund

Korea, USA?). Organize campaign steering committee and regional networks

Target: £1.25 million (including initial grant from CWM)

Year 2 (2013-2014)

Tasks: Contact lead gifts; identify major gifts

Target: £1 million

Year 3 (2014-2015)

Tasks: Finish lead gifts; begin work on major gifts; plan general campaign

Target: £2.5 million

Year 4 (2015-2016)

Tasks: Complete major gifts; kick off general campaign that includes

denomination-wide appeals

Target: £3.5 million

Year 5 (2016-2017)

Tasks: Complete campaign and celebrate at General Council

Target: £1.75 million

OFFICERS' REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. **Preamble:** This report is a result of meetings of Officers on telephone, Skype and face to face. These include a meeting in Geneva in November 2011, Skype conferences in January and April 2012 and a meeting in Berastagi on 10 May 2012.

2. **WCRC finances:**

- a. The year was a very challenging year in which the WCRC found it extremely difficult to go through the year unscathed. The Swiss franc further strengthened against major currencies until mid-August 2011 when the Swiss banking authorities took steps to stabilize against the Euro.
- b. Under the circumstances two extraordinary steps were taken:
 - i. Appointing the Justice and Partnership Executive Secretary to take office in Geneva was put on hold until the finances stabilized.
 - ii. Donors to the Partnership Fund B were asked for the permission to use CHF 200,000 for the core budget.
- c. WCRC member churches in Germany initiated a process with the German United churches requesting special assistance to address the WCRC's finances. We received a message that the German United Churches are willing to respond by giving Euro 300,000 for the reserve fund in the year 2012, and a further Euro 200,000 for each of the years 2013, 2014, and 2015. They attached the following conditions:
 - i. Making sure that WCRC member churches pay a fair annual membership contribution.
 - ii. Financial administration according to EKD standards.
 - iii. Investigating between now and 2013 the possibility of moving or relocating the offices of the WCRC to the Eurozone in order to avoid potential long-term currency exchange risks.
- d. The German member churches also initiated a process to call together some of the highest member church contributors to the WCRC for a meeting on how best to mobilize more funds for the WCRC. This meeting was held in Frankfurt in December 2011. That meeting requested Officers for a task force on finances to meet. In response, Officers appointed an Advisory Group which held its meetings in Hannover, Germany in the first two days of

Officers' Report

March 2012 with recommendations to the Officers. These recommendations are on the secure website created for members of the Executive Committee.

- e. Officers received a report from the CWM-WCRC joint meeting about a call for an endowment/stabilization fund towards which the CWM could generously contribute a start up amount.
- f. At the WCRC Europe meeting in Vienna in March 2012, the member churches of WCRC in Europe also made some recommendations in view of the finances. The WCRC Europe letter is also on the website.
- g. Officers reviewed the audited accounts of the year-end 2011 and were satisfied that the steps taken have ensured that the WCRC did not have another deficit in 2011, and that their instructions to ensure that going forward there will never be a deficit ever again were followed. To that end, they affirmed the proposed 2012 forecast and preliminary 2013 budget as steps in the right direction.
- h. Recommendations to the Executive Committee
 - Safeguarding 2012-2013 budgets
 - i. Once the Finance Committee reviews the 2012 forecast and the 2013 budget, the Executive Committee's actions should also include Officers reviewing the 2013 budget in October 2012 before it is implemented.
 - ii. In that October review, no decision would be taken on spending without assuring there is adequate provision for it in income.

Comprehensive financial policy

- iii. The WCRC should appoint the High Audit office of the EKD in Hannover to come to Geneva and perform in 2012 a review on the financial management systems and risk assessment of the WCRC and make appropriate recommendations through the General Treasurer to the Officers for implementation. This should also extend to issues of financial management and sound administrative procedure, including their legality and regularity.
- iv. Following the report of the High audit office, the Executive Committee adopts a comprehensive

financial policy and practices such as those used by the Protestant Church in Germany (EKD) and other member churches with similar standards.

Income collection

- v. A new enforceable fair contributions grid based on GDP and size of the church be adopted. That it serves as a guide to the collection of membership contributions in 2012, and that by 2013 it becomes the standard for collection.
- vi. The General Secretary should be charged with implementing this policy. The Officers, Executive Committee members and secretaries of Regional Councils are expected to provide their support.
- vii. That with gratitude to the churches which give above the grid, they be encouraged to continue giving at current levels.
- viii. That those who give below the grid be given letters to the effect that their membership is at stake unless they fulfil their obligation.
- ix. That in the last quarter of every year, the General Secretary write to each member church indicating how much they are expected to pay in the next calendar year and asking that:
 - ✓ Preferably the church pays all by 15 February of the year, or the church at least indicates how they will be paying (e.g. by monthly or quarterly instalments);
 - ✓ The churches send an acknowledgement that they will be paying the expected contribution fee;
- x. That the General Secretary monitors the payments and instruct the relevant staff to issue timely reminders.
- xi. That WCRC enforce the constitutional consequences of non-payment, recognizing that a church which has been suspended cannot have a member serving on the Executive Committee.
- xii. That the proposed grid be referred to the Finance Committee for further appropriate recommendation to be made for action by the Executive Committee.

Financial management structure and procedures

- xiii. That the following financial management structure and procedures be followed:

Officers' Report

1. Since the oversight function is vested in the **Executive Committee**, it has to adopt the budget and monitor its implementation. To this end it receives regular financial reports of the General Secretary as well as the annual audit report.
2. The **Officers** exercise the oversight function of the Executive Committee in between its meetings. They are advised by the General Treasurer.
3. The Executive Committee appoints a **Finance Committee** which advises the Executive Committee on the basis of the above-mentioned reports.
4. The **General Treasurer** in consultation with the General Secretary and the Financial Coordinator advises the Executive Committee, the Finance Committee and the Officers. The General Treasurer has the authority to mandate special audit reports at any time.
5. The **Finance Coordinator** reports to the General Secretary and to the General Treasurer.

3. Location:

- a. A prerequisite reading for discussing this issue is Document 11. Finding the right location for the WCRC in view of our challenging financial circumstances and our value for closeness to our constituency and our ecumenical engagement is a very complex enterprise. It is important that the Executive Committee treats it with the urgency and the sensitivity it deserves. The WCRC cannot continue to operate in a very expensive city without a full soul searching.
- b. The reasons given by the UGC for location are good guidelines – Good stewardship of resources, integrity to issues of justice and solidarity.
- c. Based on the urgency expressed, the financial challenges, the legal advice received, and the feasibility studies received, it was clear that while Officers would have liked a quick decision to be made in the 2012 Executive Committee meeting, this may not augur well for the WCRC. It appears any attempts to hasten relocation, even for a good reason could be detrimental to the organization unless the WCRC

was willing to hold a General Council a few years earlier in order to amend the Constitution, or to have its offices in two locations (a small one in Geneva and a branch office in the new location). Officers felt that under the circumstances it will be healthier to follow through on the original mandate from the UGC and the 2011 May Executive Committee meeting. The issue of relocation is very important and needs to be processed urgently and at the same time carefully so that no mistakes are made in the process.

- d. Recommendation to the Executive Committee meeting:
- i. A Task Force with the right competencies should be appointed with a clear mandate, guidelines, time line to conduct a thorough process that will take into account the work done in 2008/2009, and the work done (including documents developed) in 2011/2012.
 - ii. The Task Force should review the criteria for determining location, review the various locations that are possibilities, engage in conversations with stake holders, review Mercer Cost of living indices, make arrangements for site visits to the most likely locations and develop a comprehensive report based on which the Executive Committee can take a well-informed decision.
 - iii. The Task Force should give a preliminary report to Officers within six months, and a full report to the Executive Committee at the May 2013 Executive Committee meeting.
 - iv. That a definite decision on the location of the WCRC be taken in the May 2013 meeting. If relocation is the recommendation, then the Task Force's report should include the recommendation of the new venue, and time line for moving.
 - v. That Officers appoint such a Task Force by the middle of June 2012.
 - vi. That in the process both a relocation expert and a currency expert should be consulted.

4. Fund Development:

- a. It is clear that the financial challenge of the WCRC is not simply one of spending. In fact, while there is concern over spending more than income available for almost every year in the past, there is no overspending against the budget for

Officers' Report

any of the years in question. Therefore a major part of the problem is that of income.

- b. It is very important and urgent that the WCRC finds creative means of developing new funding sources.
- c. The time has come for the WCRC to put in place a major fundraising drive which will establish an endowment/stabilization fund. This is also inspired by one of the outcomes of the CWM-WCRC joint meeting in February 2012. Such an endowment fund would stabilize the WCRC for the medium and long term.
- d. This will take the full energy and commitment of all on Executive Committee, staff and member churches.
- e. It also needs to be coordinated by a Development Director who will work with a steering committee as well as with networks in every region developing appropriate fundraising strategies for each region. This also has implications for adjusting the WCRC staff complement to give the best possibilities for success.
- f. The WCRC reviewed the offer of Rev. Dr Stephens Lytch to volunteer his services as a fundraiser for one year (1 September 2012 to 31 August 2013), and is satisfied that he has the skills to lead in this effort. The General Secretary was instructed to develop an appropriate job description with benchmarks for measuring success.
- g. Recommendations for the Executive Committee
 - i. That the WCRC embarks on a fundraising drive with an immediate target of raising ten million Swiss francs between now and the next WCRC General Council.
 - ii. That the WCRC appoints a Development Director to coordinate this process.
 - iii. That Rev. Dr Stephens Lytch be appointed as the Director of Development as a volunteer from 1 September 2012 to 31 August 2012.
 - iv. That the Executive Committee members commit to being personally involved in the fundraising efforts.
 - v. That Officers be charged with determining where the start up funds and any funds that come in could be invested.

- vi. That much of that first year will necessary consist of setting up the infrastructure for fund development. However a major benchmark would be raising at least 350,000 Swiss francs by 31 March 2012.
- vii. That upon successful evaluation by the Officers and review by Executive Committee in the May 2013 meeting, Dr Stephens Lytch may be engaged for a further two years as Development Director – with a salary at similar levels as WCRC Executive secretaries.
- viii. That the General Secretary work with Officers (as Personnel Committee) to make the adjustments necessary for the fundraising drive.

5. General Treasurer position:

- a. In November 2011, Dr Gottfried Locher informed Officers that in view of the heavy burden of his current commitments as the President of the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches, he is unable to continue any more as the General Treasurer of WCRC. Officers received this and thanked God for his services to the WCRC. Officers noted that Dr Johann Weusmann has the commitment, dedication and skills to assume this position if selected to do so. He is a seasoned lawyer, the Vice President and church lawyer of the Evangelical Reformed Church. He is one of the authors of the WCRC Constitution. He has been very instrumental in the current stronger relationship between the WCRC and the EED as well as the relationship with the EMW. He was instrumental in getting the German united churches to offer the contribution they are about to make. He has understanding of the WCRC finances and has raised the critical questions that need to be asked at this time. Dr Weusmann is willing to serve, although he has quite a heavy schedule for the rest of the year 2012.
- b. Recommendation to the Executive Committee
 - i. That the Executive Committee select Dr Johann Weusmann of the Evangelical Reformed Church of Germany to the Executive Committee as the next General Treasurer.
 - ii. The Executive Committee expresses gratitude to Dr Locher for his services as past General Treasurer.

6. General Secretary Search:

The term of office of the current General Secretary will end on 31 March 2014. It is therefore necessary to name in this

Officers' Report

meeting the Search Committee that will lead the search for a new General Secretary. The discussions and decision points are in a separate paper to be tabled with relevant recommendations.

7. **CWM-WCRC Conversation Update:**

- a. Officers give thanks to God for the outcomes of the CWM-WCRC strategic partnership meeting that took place in Johannesburg, South Africa in 21 – 23 February 2012.
- b. Officers note that the outcomes demonstrate that the strength of relationship goes far beyond money issues to more important things such as mutual strengthening of programmes for mission and justice as well as commitment to renewing the ecumenical movement.
- c. Recommendations to the Executive Committee:
 - i. That the Executive Committee receive with gratitude the statement from the meeting and endeavour to make it part of the inspiration and operations of the WCRC.
 - ii. That the Executive endorse the Agreements document of the CWM-WCRC Strategic Planning Joint Meeting
 - iii. That the Executive Committee express its gratitude to the CWM for its partnership until now and its future partnership in the light of these agreements.

8. **Pension Fund:**

During the year 2011-2012 Officers were called upon to monitor developments around the Pension Fund which faced a major challenge. The WCRC was part of the WCC retirement fund, which was hemorrhaging at an alarming rate. After some rather difficult months filled with uncertainties, the WCRC staff pension funds were successfully migrated to AXA Winterthur with 100% of the capital.

GENERAL SECRETARY SEARCH PROCESS 2012-2013

1. The term of office of the current General Secretary, Setri Nyomi, will end on 31 March 2014. In the May 2011 Executive Committee meeting, Officers were asked to design the process of a search for a new General Secretary to begin his/her term on 1 April 2014.
2. In November 2011, Officers asked for and received a history of how past searches were conducted. That document is now being shared with all Executive Committee members for reference.
3. Officers reviewed the 1998-99 search document showing qualifications and job description of the General Secretary. Based on this appropriate changes were made and now the document is proposed for the May 2012 Executive Committee to review and reshape for adoption for the 2012-13 search.
4. Officers now make the following **recommendations** to the Executive Committee:
 - a) That a General Secretary Search Committee be appointed by the Executive Committee with the following remits:
 - i. To design a process for announcing the impending vacancy as of 1 April 2014, receiving and processing applications and engaging in other relevant actions that leads to discerning the right person for the office.
 - ii. Design a process for shortlisting candidates and inviting prospective candidates for an interview.
 - iii. Design a process and time for conducting interviews.
 - iv. Outline a time line for the entire process
 - v. Make recommendations of the right candidate for the position.
 - b) That the persons that the Officers will nominate for the consideration as members of the Search Committee be on the basis of the following criteria:
 - i. Specific expertise that will contribute to the identifying of the right person of the office of this calibre.

General Secretary Search Process

- ii. Majority to be from the Executive Committee, but to also include persons with the right skills set from outside the Executive Committee.
 - iii. The President be a member to represent the vision and direction of the WCRC.
 - iv. Gender balanced
 - v. At least one person from each of the antecedents of WCRC (WARC and REC)
 - vi. Regional representation
- c) That the following seven persons be considered by the Executive Committee for appointment as the General Secretary Search Committee:
- ✓ Rev. Prof. Jerry Pillay, President of the WCRC.
 - ✓ Rev. Dr Yvette Noble-Bloomfield – WCRC Vice President for the North America Caribbean region.
 - ✓ The Very Rev. Dr Sheilagh Kesting to serve as the Moderator of the Search Committee – Ecumenical Officer of the Church of Scotland with a wide administrative experience and skills in processing appointments. She was also the Moderator of the Church of Scotland.
 - ✓ Dr Robyn Goodwin – Consultant to the Executive Committee – representing the voices of young people.
 - ✓ Rev. Clayton Leal da Silva – Member of the WCRC Executive Committee. Former President of AIPRAL.
 - ✓ Rev. Dr Peter Borgdorff – Member of the WCRC Executive Committee. Former president of the REC.
 - ✓ Rev. Robert Setio, Former General Secretary of the GKI in Indonesia. A seasoned church leader who will bring his experience to bear.
- d) The Search Committee will begin its work soon after the May 2012 Executive Committee meeting. It will provide progress reports to Officers in November 2012 and in March 2013. It will present a full report to the Executive Committee meeting of 2014 with a suitable candidate to be elected as General Secretary.

Appendix 1

**QUALIFICATIONS AND JOB DESCRIPTION
FOR THE GENERAL SECRETARY**

2012 - 2013 SEARCH

The General Secretary is “the chief Executive Officer of the World Communion of Reformed Churches and shall be responsible to the General Council and to the Executive Committee to direct and to coordinate the work of the Communion” (*Constitution, Article XII*). Other roles of the General Secretary are spelled out in the Constitution and By-laws of the WCRC.

Qualifications Required

1. A firm commitment to the Reformed faith;
2. Pastoral sensitivity and spiritual leadership;
3. A member in good standing of a WCRC member church (ordination preferred)
4. Theological training, with post graduate degree (at least Masters);
5. Familiarity with and commitment to Reformed tradition as well as with current theological trends;
6. Familiarity with current international issues;
7. Commitment to strengthening the common witness of the Reformed churches and to making a contribution to the ecumenical movement in the 21st century;
8. Experience with Reformed churches in different parts of the world;
9. Understanding of cultural and religious diversity;
10. Sensitivity to gender and youth issues;
11. Experience and innovation in management and administration;
12. Experience and skills in raising and managing funds;
13. Experience of working in and managing a team;
14. Creativity and imagination in developing and carrying out the programmes of an organization;
15. Effective communication skills, both orally and in writing;
16. Language requirements: demonstrate fluency in written and oral English (knowledge of the other working languages of the Communion – French, German and Spanish – would be an advantage).

General Secretary Search Process

Job Description

1. The General Secretary has overall responsibility for the activities of the Communion's secretariat, including:
 - a. Supervising the work of the Communion;
 - b. Leading the staff team of the Communion;
 - c. Managing and administering the Communion's organization;
 - d. Supervising the preparing of and executing the budget;
 - e. Supervising fundraising;
 - f. Supervising publications of the Communion;
 - g. Handling correspondence of the Communion.

2. The General Secretary represents the Communion and its concerns in a collegial and pastoral way to:
 - a. The member churches and the whole Reformed family;
 - b. The ecumenical movement, in particular to the World Council of Churches (WCC), the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), the World Evangelical Alliance and other Christian World Communions;
 - c. The wider public.

And maintains a regular presence in the life of the member churches by:

- a. Visiting member churches and sharing with them in times of crisis;
 - b. Delegating staff, the Officers and/or the Executive Committee members to visit member churches;
 - c. Visiting member churches in order to strengthen their witness;
 - d. The General Secretary lives out this regular presence in the life of member churches in close collaboration with the President and Officers.

3. The General Secretary, in close collaboration with the President, the Officers and all the members of the Executive Committee, is responsible for carrying out the mandates of the General Council.

Term of Office

The General Secretary shall be appointed for an initial 7 years, and shall be eligible for re-election. There is a mid-term review three and half years into each term of the General Secretary.

The appointment shall be renewed upon the recommendation of the Personnel Committee and the approval of the Executive Committee.

Salary and Conditions of Employment

Conditions of service are specified in 'Personnel Policy and Practices of the World Communion of Reformed Churches', which are consistent with the Personnel Policies of the WCC. Other salary information is available on request.

Application

Qualified candidates are encouraged to apply with the endorsement of their member church. Ordination is preferred. The position, however, is open to all member of WCRC members churches, women or men.

The Application package may include:

- a. Application and motivation letter.
- b. Endorsement by the candidates church (a member church of the WCRC).
- c. At least two professional references to be sent directly to the convenor.
- d. Relevant certificates and degrees.
- e. A statement of the faith journey of the applicant.
- f. A paper either written previously for a journal publication or specifically for this application process on a theme relevant for the Reformed family today.

WORLD COMMUNION OF REFORMED CHURCHES GENERAL SECRETARY SEARCH PROCESSES

Brief background

Since the WARC offices moved to Geneva in 1948, four General Secretaries have been in office:

Dr. Marcel Pradevand (Switzerland)	1948-1971
Rev. Dr Edmond Peret (Switzerland)	1971-1989
Rev. Prof. Milan Opocensky (Czech Republic)	1 January 1990- 31 March 2000
Rev. Dr Setri Nyomi (Ghana)	1 April 2000-due to end on 31 March 2014

The last General Secretary (Minister Secretary) of the International Congregational Council at the time of the merger with the World Presbyterian Alliance in 1970 was Dr Fred Kaan (United Kingdom).

The REC had two General Secretaries from its beginning until 2010. With no office or staff structure, the RES/REC had no General Secretary until 1963. The first General Secretary, therefore, began in 1963.

Dr Paul Schrotenboer (USA)	1963–1988
Dr Richard van Houten (USA)	1988–2010

The following are the processes of electing the last General Secretary of the REC and the last two General Secretaries of WARC:

REC General Secretary Search (1985–88)

1. The REC advertised for the position about three years before the appointment, due at the June 1988 Synod/Assembly. The application included about six or seven essay questions covering the various issues the REC faced, such as South Africa and Racism, Homosexuality, view of the Scriptures, view of Mission, and so on.
2. The search was carried out by the Executive Committee which was five persons plus the incumbent General Secretary.
3. It is not known how many candidates applied, but the Executive Committee decided to interview three persons. One of the three pulled out at the last minute, not trusting the finances of the REC sufficiently, so he was not sure how

long such a job might last. They interviewed one of those candidates in 1985, and in 1986, they invited the second candidate, Dr Richard van Houten who was then living in Hong Kong to come to the REC Executive Committee meeting in Amsterdam.

4. The Executive Committee spent two days with him informally. He attended some of the meetings, and shared meals with them, and then they conducted a formal interview of about two hours. At the close of the interview, they deliberated briefly, and then offered the position to him. This was in 1986.
5. The General Assembly of 1988 received this information in 1988 and confirmed it. Dr Richard van Houten started as General Secretary in that Assembly in 1988.
6. Richard van Houten wrote "In our case, the former General Secretary was present during the interviews and the decision making. I do not know, of course, what he said, but he had known me in other circumstances since my college years, so his voice may have had some impact. Of course, he was also personally familiar with the other two candidates, more so than any individual Executive Committee member."

WARC General Secretary Search (1987–88)

1. In the Executive Committee meeting held in Geneva in October 1987, the Executive Committee appointed the following as members of the Search Committee:
Dr William P. Thompson, USA (Moderator)
Dr Allan Boesak, South Africa (WARC President)
Mrs Joy Michael, India
Mrs Janine Rappaz, Switzerland
Dr Chung-Hyun Ro, Korea
2. The Search Committee held its first meeting while the Executive Committee was still in session and made the following report to the Executive Committee before it adjourned:
 - a) The search will be based in the United States of America in the office of the Moderator of the Search Committee.
 - b) No one will be excluded from consideration.
 - c) The Search Committee intends to secure all resumé's for the position by February 1988.

General Secretary Search Process

- d) There will be communication between the General Secretary, Search Committee and the search process.
- e) The Committee intends to present its candidate for the position of General Secretary to the WARC Executive Committee meeting in 1988 (the proposed dates for the 1988 meeting – October 1988 in Belfast, Northern Ireland).

These points were voted on and accepted by the 1987 Executive Committee meeting.

- 3. The main letter announcing the position and application and nomination process was signed by the President of WARC requesting responses to be sent directly to the Moderator of the Search Committee in the USA.
- 4. The Search Committee continued its work for the year between the two Executive Committee meetings, receiving applications and nominations and sifting through the candidates. They shortlisted and interviewed and agreed on one candidate to recommend to the Executive Committee. All these were coordinated from the office of Dr William Thompson in the USA.
- 5. In its meeting in Belfast in October 1988, in a closed session, the Executive Committee elected Professor Dr Milan Opocensky to be its next General Secretary after the retirement of Dr Edmond Peret on 31 December 1989.
- 6. Dr Opocensky was installed into office at the close of the 1989 General Council in Seoul. But he actually took office on 1 January 1990.

General Secretary Search (1998–99)

- 1. July 1998 – The Executive Committee appointed the following as members of the Search Committee:
 - Rev. Elizabeth Nash, United Kingdom (Convenor)
 - Rev. Dr Choan-Seng Song, Taiwan, (President)
 - Rev. Roberto Jordan, Argentina
 - Dr Bukelwa Hans, South Africa
 - Rev. Dr Clifton Kirkpatrick, USA
- 2. The Search Committee operated mainly by telephone. But they had two physical meetings – one to confirm the process and the second to conduct the interviews in Geneva

and to make a decision on the recommendation to the Executive Committee.

3. As background, the Search Committee asked the Incumbent General Secretary to produce a paper to describe the role, qualifications, and conditions of service of the General Secretary. This was reviewed and updated by the Search Committee.
4. The Search Committee decided on a two pronged approach:
 - a) Notices to all WARC member churches seeking suitable candidates.
 - b) Consultations with people who might know suitable candidates – “head hunting”.
5. An announcement was sent out to all member churches directly from the President of WARC requesting all responses to be made to the Search Committee convenor. The announcement invited applications and supporting documents to be sent to the convenor
6. Documents requested included:
 - a) Application and motivation letter.
 - b) Endorsement by the candidate’s church (a member church of the WCRC).
 - c) At least two professional references to be sent directly to the convenor.
 - d) Relevant certificates and degrees.
 - e) A statement of the faith journey of the applicant.
7. The deadline was set for six months after the announcement. At the deadline, there were 34 candidates from all over the world including two Executive staff in the office in Geneva.
8. The Search Committee shortlisted six candidates for the interview. Four of these were candidates that were not previously on staff at the WARC. The Search Committee chose to automatically shortlist any Executive staff of WARC that applied. So the two Executive staff then on staff (from Korea and the United Kingdom) who applied were shortlisted. The four others on the shortlist came from Jamaica, USA, Cuba and Ghana.

General Secretary Search Process

9. The six were all invited to be at the interview at the same time. They were housed together with the Search Committee at the John Knox Centre for a three day process. The Search Committee made it clear that both the informal times at meals, walks and conversations as well as the formal times at the interviews were part of the process and were all going to be used in the discernment of who the next General Secretary would be.
10. The informal times included meal times and a three hour walk by the lake in Geneva where Search Committee members took turns engaging in conversations with each candidate.
11. The formal time was a two hour interview with each candidate. The first half hour was given to the candidate to make a presentation on any theme of her/his choice. After that the interview took the normal format of questions from the Search Committee and answers from the candidate. The candidate was asked if she/he had any questions at the end.
12. After the last interview, the Search Committee deliberated for about two hours and came up with a recommendation which they shared with the candidates.
13. The process concluded with dinner that evening with all candidates in attendance.
14. The Search Committee presented its recommendation to the July 1999 Executive Committee meeting in Taiwan. The recommended candidate was in attendance at the meeting.
15. The Executive Committee voted affirmatively on the recommendation and the Rev. Dr Setri Nyomi gave an acceptance speech, thus becoming the General Secretary-elect to take office on 1 April 2000. He was asked to begin work in March 2000 so that there could be a one month overlap with the outgoing General Secretary.
16. The installation into office took place in St Pierre Cathedral on 6 April 2000 during the April 2000 meeting of the Officers.

REPORT OF THE CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Cheryl Meban, Covenor

Members attending: Lydia Aku Adajawah, Yael Eka Hadiputeri,
Corola Tron, Peter Borgdorff, Gradye Parsons

For Information:

1. The Committee met with the Finance Committee to discuss membership and membership contributions. The Committee decided to review the Constitution and By-laws and bring to the Executive Committee meeting in May 2013 possible recommendations for amendments relating to membership, membership privileges and membership contributions.
2. The Committee reviewed the application for membership by the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Africa (Uganda). The Committee referred it back to the General Secretary for more information and background.
3. The Committee postponed consideration of changes in the By-laws of the Alliance of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in Latin America (AIPRAL) until a translation could be available.

Recommendations:

1. That the By-laws of the North East Asia Area Council (NEAAC) be approved pending corrections.
2. That formation of the South Asia Area Council (SAAC) be approved. (India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.)
3. That the Constitution and By-laws of the SAAC be approved pending corrections and editorial changes.
4. That the China Christian Council be invited to an Associate Membership relationship with the WCRC.
5. That the Church of Christ in the Sudan among the Tiv (NKST) be accepted into membership in the WCRC effective 1 January 2012.

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee made up of: Johann Weusmann, General Treasurer and Moderator, Clifton Kirkpatrick, Yueh Wen Lu, Cheh Liang Mok, Stephen Lytch, Veronica Muchiri, and Stephen Kendall (recorder). Setri Nyomi (General Secretary), Jerry Pillay (President) and Yueh Cho (Finance Coordinator) also joined the Committee.

1.0 Current financial challenges

1.1 *Membership contributions*

The Finance Committee has reviewed how our member churches are contributing to the WCRC.

- 15 member churches paid CHF722 thousand in 2011
- 72 member churches paid CHF137 thousand in 2011
- 139 churches did not contribute at all in 2011
- 144 churches have not been paying their contributions regularly in the period 2005 to 2011. The fair grid contribution table for about 2/3 out of these 144 member churches are at the minimum USD500 level. Should they contribute regularly, this would raise an additional amount of approximately CHF50 thousand. This would be an excellent step toward increased ownership, but would not solve the financial issues. For that to be successful, we need as an immediate first step to focus on churches with more income that are not paying enough.

1.2 Impact of currency exchange rates

Because of the negative impact of the currency exchange rate, the value of contributions in Euros or US dollars to the WCRC, when changed into Swiss francs has been very costly. In 2008 one Swiss franc equaled more than 1.6 Euros. Now it is fixed by the Swiss government at a minimum of 1.2 Euros. This means that over that time, the value of contributions made in Euros has decreased by 25%. The US dollar has decreased from 1.1 in comparison to the Swiss franc in 2008 to 0.9 now. This is a decrease of 18%.

1.3 Cost of living in Geneva

Since salaries and social charges make up three quarters of the WCRC budget, the impact of the high cost of salaries in Geneva is significant. The same financial standard of living for staff would cost approximately between 25%-35% less in other parts of the world.

2.0 Financial statements and budget

The Finance Committee has reviewed the 2011 audited statements and is satisfied with them.

Recommendation 1: That the 2011 audited statements be adopted.

The Finance Office has adopted the Swiss GAAP RPC accounting standard for its work. While this has been done on a voluntary basis it provides a high level standard for the maintaining of our finances. It should be noted that Swiss Francs is used as the WCRC ledger currency and all accounting is now done in-house.

Recommendation 2: That the use of the Swiss GAAP RPC accounting standard for WCRC be confirmed.

Recommendation 3: That the Compagnie fiduciaire de révision SA be named WCRC auditor for 2012.

The Finance Committee has received and reviewed an updated 2012 revenue and expense forecast which is presented on Doc. 16.1. It forms a more accurate estimate than that which was adopted at the last Executive Committee meeting.

Recommendation 4: That the updated 2012 core revenue and expense forecast be affirmed.

As a reminder to the Executive, the following process and principles for budgeting are noted for information:

- The General Secretary presents the budget to the Executive Committee through the Finance Committee.
- The Finance Committee reviews the budget on behalf of the Executive Committee and advises the Executive Committee for its eventual approval.
- The Executive Committee makes budgetary decisions during the annual Executive Committee session or remotely the rest of the time.
- Budgeted expenses need to be linked to budgeted revenue at all times and budgeted losses are generally not allowed.
- Budgeted revenue should equal the revenue commitment taken up by the General Secretary.
- Budgeted expenses must not exceed the spending authority given to the General Secretary by the Executive Committee.
- Spending authority is given by budgetary category and not in a lump sum.

Finance Committee

- The budget needs to be finalized and formally approved before the calendar year starts.
- Decision making on staff compensation levels, though closely related to the budget, is placed under the responsibility of the Personnel Committee.
- The 2013 budget shall be closed by October 2012, on approval of the Officers (see recommendation 6).

Recommendation 5: That the 2013 Core budget as presented on Doc. 16.1 be approved assuming CHF 1.1m in total membership fees and subject to adjustment in October 2012.

The Finance Committee will meet throughout the year to monitor the finances of the WCRC. As noted in the budget procedures above, once the Finance Committee reviews the 2012 forecast and the 2013 budget, mid-year adjustments may be required in order to assure that no decisions on spending are made without adequate provision for it in income. Since the Executive is charged with the responsibility to approve budgets, authorization for a mid-year (normally October) adjustment needs to be granted.

Areas of possible income and expenditure that are not currently included in the 2013 budget are the grant from CWM, fundraising efforts, and a possible relocation. Those issues will require further budgetary adjustments if and when decisions are taken on them.

Recommendation 6: That the Officers be authorized to adjust the 2012 and 2013 budgets if necessary, in consultation with the Finance Committee.

3.0 Comprehensive WCRC financial policy

The Finance Committee is committed to overseeing the implementation of a comprehensive financial policy for the WCRC. In order to facilitate the next recommendation, the General Treasurer, Finance Coordinator and General Secretary will obtain an English version of the EKD financial policy and prepare a draft policy (that shall include an ethical investment policy for the organization) that can be used in the proposed review.

Recommendation 7: That following the preparation of a draft WCRC financial policy, the High Audit office of the EKD in Hannover be engaged to come to Geneva and perform in 2012 a review on the financial management systems and risk assessment of the WCRC and make appropriate recommendations through the General

Treasurer to the Officers for implementation. This should also extend to issues of financial management and sound administrative procedure, including their legality and regularity.

Recommendation 8: That following the report of the High Audit office, the Executive Committee adopt a comprehensive financial policy and practices such as those used by the Protestant Church in Germany (EKD) and other member churches with similar standards.

4.0 Financial management structure and procedures

The Finance Committee reviewed the financial management structure and procedures presented by the Officers (DOC 13) and recommends their adoption as follows:

Recommendation 9: That the following financial management structure and procedures be adopted:
Since the oversight function is vested in the Executive Committee, it has to adopt the budget and monitor its implementation. To this end it receives financial reports of the General Secretary as well as the annual audit report.

The Officers exercise the oversight function of the Executive Committee in between its meetings. They are advised by the General Treasurer.

The Executive Committee appoints a Finance Committee which, in addition to its regular responsibilities regarding budget preparation, shall monitor finances throughout the year and advise the officers and Executive Committee.

The General Treasurer in consultation with the General Secretary and the Financial Coordinator advises the Executive Committee, the Finance Committee and the Officers. The General Treasurer has the authority to mandate special audit reports at any time.

The Finance Coordinator reports to the General Secretary and to the General Treasurer.

5.0 Income collection

Recommendations pertaining to the adoption of a new enforceable fair contributions grid based on GDP and size of the church were referred from the Officers' report to the Finance Committee. The Committee is in favor of the approach.

Finance Committee

Recommendation 10: That the following policy and procedures regarding a fair share membership contribution grid be adopted:

The proposed fair contribution grid can be found on Doc. 16.2

The proposed grid is a fair share contribution grid, with authority given to the General Secretary, President and General Treasurer to negotiate in exceptional circumstances and in advance, the recognition of equivalent membership contributions, that in all cases shall be reported to the Finance Committee.

The grid will serve as a guide to the collection of membership contributions in 2012, and by 2013 become the standard for collection.

The General Secretary shall be charged with implementing this policy. The Officers, Executive Committee members and secretaries of Regional Councils are expected to provide their support.

That with gratitude to the churches which give above the grid, they be encouraged to continue giving at current levels.

That those who give below the grid be given letters to the effect that they are not fulfilling their membership obligations

That in September or October of every year, the General Secretary will write to each member church indicating how much they are expected to pay in the next calendar year and asking that:

Preferably the church pays all by 15 February of the year, or the church at least indicates how they will be paying (e.g. by monthly or quarterly installments);

The churches send an acknowledgement that they will be paying the expected contribution fee;

The General Secretary shall monitor the payments and ensures that timely reminders are issued.

The WCRC will enforce the constitutional consequences of non-payment, (Constitution, section VI J 6) recognizing that a church which has had their membership privileges withdrawn cannot have a member serving on the Executive Committee and is not eligible for financial support from the WCRC. At the 2013 Executive Committee meeting a list of churches that have neither paid membership

contributions nor communicated about them for three years shall be presented to the Membership and Constitution Committee for their follow up.

5.1 Fair contribution grid

The grid or the fair contribution table is a tool that injects clarity, credibility and accountability into the system. If deployed successfully, it can serve as a breakthrough for our organizational reengineering.

The contribution capacity of each church is based on the church size and GDP per capita of the country. Currently, we have the following factors:

- Church size: this refers to the number of confirmed / communicant / professed church members of each member church.
- GDP per capita of the country: we assume the members of our member churches dispose of the average national income level.
- Total budgetary figure to break down: in the 2013 draft budget, it is assumed that CHF 1.1m will come from membership fees. The fair contribution grid will be based on 1.2 m to overcome the current transitional phase of WCRC.

Recommendation 11: That the fair share contribution grid, together with actual contribution levels, be made available on request, to any member church.

6.0 WCRC Sustainability fund (see Document 12)

Recommendation 12: That the initial goals and timeline of the WCRC sustainability fund (see Document 12) be affirmed.

7.0 Fund Development

A final item related to finance from the Officers Report (Document 13) was not formally referred to the Finance Committee due to time available in plenary, but has nevertheless been reviewed and affirmed by the Finance Committee. The following recommendations flow from that report:

Recommendation 13: That the WCRC embark on a fundraising drive with an immediate target of raising ten million Swiss francs between now and the next WCRC General Council.

Finance Committee

Recommendation 14: That the WCRC appoint a Development Director to coordinate this process.

Recommendation 15: That Rev. Dr Stephens Lytch be appointed as the Director of Development as a volunteer from 1 September 2012 to 31 August 2013.

Recommendation 16: That the Executive Committee members commit to being personally involved in the fundraising efforts.

Recommendation 17: That Officers be charged with determining where the start up funds and any funds that come in could be invested.

Recommendation 18: That much of that first year will necessarily consist of setting up the infrastructure for fund development. However a major benchmark would be raising at least CHF 350,000 by 31 March 2013.

Recommendation 19: That upon successful evaluation by the Officers and review by the Executive Committee in the May 2013 meeting, Dr Stephens Lytch may be engaged for a further two years as Development Director – with a salary at similar levels as WCRC Executive Secretaries.

Recommendation 20: That the General Secretary work with Officers (as Personnel Committee) to make the adjustments necessary for the fundraising drive.

REPORT OF THE OFFICERS ON RELOCATION

A. Background information

1. Document 11 and the relevant portions of document 13 already presented to the meeting are key background documents to this paper.
2. The reasons given by the UGC for location remain good guidelines. These are good stewardship of resources, integrity to issues of justice and solidarity. In addition, other compelling factors such as where most of the members of the Communion are located, constitutional issues, impact on staff, were also part of the discussion.
3. The reason of good stewardship is not simply one of the best ways of spending available resources. It has become an urgent issue of survival because of lack of income for operating from a very expensive city with all the currency challenges. Therefore it takes on a dimension that drives the timing of a decision on the matter.
4. Officers deliberated on all the points made in the 11 May 2012 debates on relocations and are therefore coming with consolidated proposals. In making these proposals, it is realized that not everybody will be pleased. But in challenging times hard and painful decisions need to be made in the interest of the organization. In the light of the financial situation and the safeguarding of the WCRC, the Officers find it necessary to make the following proposals.

B. Recommendation to the Executive Committee meeting:

1. That the office be moved away from Geneva.
2. That a task force of four persons with the right competencies be appointed immediately to do the research and feasibility on where to move to with the following mandates:
 - a. Take into account the work done in 2008/2009, and the work done (including documents developed) in 2011/2012.
 - b. Take into serious consideration the criteria established by the Executive Committee (See Appendix) as a resource in shortlisting to five possible venues from among the locations named in Document 11.

Relocation

- c. Further select two of the five locations as the two to be seriously investigated as possible venues. Should any of the two turn out not to be a good location, one of the other three could be considered in its place.
 - d. Conduct an in-depth feasibility study on the top two shortlisted locations. This may be done for example by having a member of the task force with the right skills set visiting each of the locations with a comprehensive questionnaire that can be responded to as a resource.
 - e. Find out and document remuneration and social charges levels for the shortlisted locations in order to determine the cost to the WCRC.
 - f. Review Mercer Cost of living indices for the two shortlisted locations.
 - g. Do a cost analysis related to the cost of moving and its implications for the WCRC.
 - h. Consult a relocation expert.
 - i. Consult a currency expert.
 - j. Consider the ecumenical and theological reasons for a move.
 - k. Make a proposal for the venue chosen with the rationale for it.
 - l. Recommend the time line by which a move should take place in the most efficient manner.
 - m. Develop a comprehensive report that takes all these points into account on which the Executive Committee can take a well-informed decision.
3. The task force should give a full report to Officers within six months. Based on their recommendation of a new location, Officers will take a decision which will serve as a recommendation to Executive Committee.
 4. The Executive Committee members will be invited to engage in a mail ballot on the recommendation – voting “Yes” or “No” to the proposal.
 5. Instruct the Officers to implement a mechanism to oversee the move to another allocation once decided, which must include measures for care and engagement with the staff.

Appendix

The following criteria should be the basis of a decision on the location:

1. Location should reflect good stewardship of WCRC's resources, integrity to issues of justice and solidarity.
2. A venue which will contribute to addressing WCRC's financial challenges.
3. A place where the work of the WCRC can be coordinated from efficiently and effectively.
4. A place where easy access to and connection to ecumenical organizations, international organizations and theological institutions, can be possible.
5. A place where it is relatively easy to employ international staff.
6. A place where there is as little difficulty as possible in acquiring visas and work permits.
7. A place that has at least one strong member church of the WCRC.
8. A place where English is widely understood.
9. A place that has good infrastructure – including a constant power supply and good internet access.
10. A place that is easily accessible for travel – for example – it is an air hub or railway line hub.
11. A location which has educational facilities that cater for the families of international staff (e.g. International schools).
12. A location in which WCRC staff, guests and participants in meetings will not spend most of their time in traffic.

REPORT OF THE THEOLOGY, MISSION AND COMMUNION CORE GROUP

I. Core group members present:

Peter Bukowski
Mary Fontaine
Yael Hadiputeri
Najla Kassab
William Koopmans (reporter)
Elisée Musemakweli
Grayde Parsons
Bas Plaisier (moderator)
Carolla Tron Urban
Douwe Visser (staff)

II. Core group members absent:

Kobus Gerber
Brenda Bullock

III. Materials:

- Doc. 3 Report of the Office of Theology, Mission and Communion
- Report of the Reformed – Pentecostal Dialogue
- Report of the Exploratory Talks between the Anglican Communion and the World Communion of Reformed Churches
- International Reformed – Catholic Dialogue
- GIT 2012 Expenditures statement
- Searching a New Involvement in Ecumenical Dialogues
- Outline of Works since May 2011, Planned Activities, Sectors of Work, Finance and Fundraising, etc.

IV. Observations

The Core Group for Theology, Mission and Communion has reviewed the work of Douwe Visser, Executive Secretary in the office of Theology, Mission and Communion, and acknowledges with much gratitude the many fine achievements of the past year. The present report highlights some of the major areas of involvement and will provide the background for the recommendations with which the report concludes.

Global Institute of Theology (GIT)

The core group appreciates the excellent arrangements that appear to be in place for another cutting-edge GIT to be held next month in

Indonesia. There will be three weeks of teaching, with core courses and electives as part of the curriculum.

Arrangements have also been made for worship and other aspects of the meetings. The core courses will be taught by international lecturers and the electives will be taught by Indonesian teachers. The mission emphasis will focus on indigenous issues.

In keeping with the central purpose of the GIT, the focus will also center on issues pertaining to youth. And there will be an intentional exposure to issues of Javanese culture as well as timely treatment of matters pertaining to the dynamics of disasters, as they have affected the region. It is a large task to coordinate such a GIT and we appreciate the excellent preparations that are taking place. The budget for the GIT was presented and comments and explanations were offered. The network of theologians is integrated into the budget of the GIT, which also helps for the securing of sponsors. The fundraising has gone extremely well and a surplus is anticipated, so the GIT is financially secured, for which we give thanks.

A setting in Latin America is proposed for the 2014 GIT, which would allow for more Latin American representation in leadership and focus at that time. We appreciate the goals of the GIT, which include training leaders, mission empowerment, and exposure to and training in ecumenical leadership. These goals are given due consideration in the selection of the theme and the courses that are part of each GIT.

The September 2011 issue of *Reformed World* was produced in conjunction with the university in Taiwan and is part of the required reading for the GIT.

Network of Theologians

The core group received a report on the consultation in October 2011 in Mangalore, India. The papers presented there were published in *Reformed World*. The function of the network in the coming year is critical; the work needs to continue between consultations. Participation in the network needs to remain active, so if there are some members who are not fully active there must be a flexibility to add or subtract members, and to adjust the focus of discussion and topics. Members of the core group are considered to be “virtual members” of the network and have the opportunity to respond to topics and to send in comments. The next consultation is planned to begin on 1 March 2013, in Nairobi, Kenya.

Theology, Mission and Communion Core Group

Dialogues

The Core Group received reports and engaged in discussion regarding the following:

- Reformed – Pentecostal dialogue.
- International Reformed – Catholic Dialogue.
- The exploratory talks between the Anglican Communion and the World Communion of Reformed Churches.
- Searching for a new format of involvement in Ecumenical Dialogues.

We wish to record the following observations regarding these areas of dialogue.

- (a) The core group expresses deep appreciation for the work that is reflected in the very significant paper of Reformed-Pentecostal dialogue entitled “Experience in Christian Faith and Life: Worship, Discipleship, Discernment, Community and Justice.” Ongoing discussion and work within the Reformed-Pentecostal dialogue can be constructed to meet the goals of our envisioned new format of dialogue (see below), involving youth in an educational format. These dialogues are anticipated to help us to understand current developments in Pentecostal circles.
- (b) The core group believes that the dialogue with Catholics has been fruitful and certainly warrants continuation. The topic of the Reformed-Catholic dialogue, “Justification and Sacramentality: Christian Community as Agents for Justice,” is very relevant to our WCRC focus on justice.
- (c) We are aware of the benefits that could result from the exploratory talks between the Anglican Communion and the World Communion of Reformed Churches. However, we do not consider this to be a dialogue that warrants our priority for continuation at present.
- (d) We express great appreciation for the quantity and quality of work that staff has completed in the area of dialogues. At the same time, we also agree with the analysis that the format of dialogue needs to change, as presented in the paper referenced above. For example, dialogue as a form for ecumenical training – especially for young people – suggests a positive direction for a helpful new format.

We are excited to promote ecumenical dialogue that is part of a process that includes growth in self-

awareness, education of membership, involvement of youth and application to life issues. This reflects our conviction that there is a need to move in a new direction in dialogue that also includes a new spirit of working together, from our divergent perspectives and backgrounds, on common challenges and interests.

Reformed World journal

The financial situation pertaining to this journal is reviewed. Last year, due to financial constraints, it was taken out of the core budget and financed separately. The future of *RW* needs to be carefully considered. This journal has existed, under various names, since 1879 and enjoys global readership. An option is to have it changed to a peer reviewed journal and brought under SAGE publication. A benefit would be that this action would secure the financial situation. However, that would also have some consequences in terms of what could be published as standards for inclusion of articles might change. Subscribers would likely have to pay more, and internet access might change.

It is evident to our group that *Reformed World* cannot continue to be funded outside of the core budget. However, before a decision could be made to switch to a peer reviewed journal we would need to have a more detailed evaluation of pros and cons. The Executive Secretary is asked to prepare a paper on the objectives and future of *Reformed World* for discussion next year.

Mission Consultations

The core group reviewed the work that has been reported in the realm of mission consultations that have taken place. We were also brought up-to-date on plans for ongoing involvements in this area. We see the realm of missions being integrated in various areas of WCRC involvement. It plays a role in the material for dialogues, GIT, mission consultations, and various areas of justice involvement and activities, regional topics, and interaction with other organizations. The Theology, Mission and Communion Executive Secretary is working on a document that can serve as a basis for future work in the area of mission. We look forward to the conclusion of the mission consultations through the production of this mission statement. The core group also takes note of the urgency to deal with front-line situations of Christians living under pressure from other religious groups. A mission strategy that incorporates this dynamic is crucial.

Consultation on Communion

As the WCRC, we continue to reflect on the meaning and implications of the reality that we define ourselves intentionally as a Communion. Areas of our communion are under pressure for various reasons, e.g. due to diversity of position and practice on certain ethical or moral issues. It is the intention of the consultation on communion to help to bring greater understanding and respect for diversity within the unity of the Communion. Our declaration of communion compels us to try to develop respect and unity within the diversity of WCRC and find practical ways to relate and work together. Again, working within the regional structures is essential to develop communion theology, policies and guidelines.

Recommendations:

1. That the 2014 GIT be planned with a location in Latin America.
2. That the WCRC Executive Committee adopt the Reformed-Pentecostal report and approve its preparation for publication along with some analysis and study documents.
3. That the WCRC Executive Committee prioritize our involvement in on-going dialogues as follows:
 - (a) To continue the Catholic- Reformed dialogue, with the intention that we try to also incorporate greater youth involvement.
 - (b) To continue the Reformed-Pentecostal dialogue, with the proposed topic of mission, in an environment of learning.
 - (c) To engage in on-going cooperation with Lutherans, Anglicans, etc., but not be involved in specific dialogue projects until such time as the need and relevance be demonstrated.
4. With matters that are urgent and relevant to our WCRC mission, the Executive Secretary of Theology, Mission and Communion be encouraged to engage in *ad hoc* and short-term contacts with other groups.
5. That *Reformed World* be included again in the core budget for next year.

6. That mission consultations continue in order to complete the objective of a mission document that will reflect the core values and priorities of WCRC.
7. That the Theology, Mission and Communion Executive Secretary develop mission consultations to focus on issues relevant to those living in front-line situations, i.e., Christians living under pressure from other religious groups.
8. That the Theology, Mission and Communion Executive Secretary work with the various regions to focus especially on mission dynamics relevant to their situations.
9. That the Theology, Mission and Communion Executive Secretary proceed with consultations on communion.
10. That all regions, in cooperation with the Executive Secretary, be encouraged to make the matter of communion an important part of their agenda, with a view to developing practical guidelines to strengthen our ability to relate to and work with each other amidst diversity.
11. That the WCRC Executive Committee express appreciation to Douwe Visser for his excellent work as the Theology, Mission and Communion TMC Executive Secretary.

REPORT OF THE JUSTICE AND PARTNERSHIP CORE GROUP

1. Introduction

The Office for Justice and Partnership serves to build the communion through empowerment of churches to act for Justice and right relations. The core group on Justice and Partnership is tasked with three programmatic priorities: 1. Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth, Living out the Accra Confession, 2. Gender Justice, 3. Justice, Peace and Reconciliation.

As in 2011, group recognised that priority 3 (above) has specific aims that are best dealt with directly by the General Secretary's office in collaboration with specialised task groups but that the core group receives reports and updates on activities and happenings.

1.1 Core Group membership

Two additions to the core group were made. The group warmly welcomed Gabriela Mulder and Lydia Adajawah. One of the two co-moderators, Helis Barraza Diaz, was unable to be present. The group determined that Clayton Leal Da Silva would stand in for him where necessary. Thus, the composition of the core group, responsible for generating this report, is as follows:

Moderators: Yueh-Wen Lu (Asia) and Clayton Leal Da Silva (Latin America)

Membership: Clifton Kirkpatrick (North America), Subha Singh Majaw (Asia), Veronica Muchiri (Africa), Robyn Goodwin (Pacific), Lydia Adajawah (Africa), Gabriela Mulder (Latin America), and Jan-Gert Heetderks (Europe)

Staff: Dora Arce Valentin.

2. Key issues discussed

- a. A major concern for the group was the conspicuous lack of discussion about, or reference to, the Accra Confession in plenary sessions thus far. The group recognised that justice is a central issue for the WCRC, and that a focusing on, and committing to, issues of theologically motivated justice is the major unique and necessary contribution that WCRC makes to the present ecumenical landscape. Thus, it is expected that justice would be at the heart of the WCRC's decision making processes.
- b. Another concern for the group was the current working arrangement for the Justice and Partnership Executive

Secretary. The group expressed their heartfelt thanks to Dora for her commitment, and their appreciation for the large amount of work she had accomplished in such a short time since her appointment. However, although the part-time, arrangement in place is a result of financial necessity; it was strongly felt that it was a less than optimal arrangement. Thus the core group strongly felt that, should finances become available, the position be moved to the same geographical location as the rest of the secretariat and subject to the same employment conditions.

- c. Further, given the large gap between the previous incumbent leaving and Dora starting, the transition has been slightly disjointed. Some initiatives have lost momentum and it is possible that some gaps are not being covered.
- d. The priorities and recommendations developed by the core group in 2011 (for 2012-2013) were reviewed. The recommendations not yet actioned (or in the process of being actioned) were prioritized in relation to the constraints and opportunities that were identified characteristic of the present situation.

2.1 Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth – Living out the Accra Confession

- a. The group discussed the issue of exploring "a new financial architecture" in partnership with the Christian World Mission and World Council of Churches. This initiative is the principal way in which the WCRC is acting on its priority of "Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth – Living out the Accra Confession" and covers a broad spectrum of issues (such as the global food crisis and human trafficking). The results of this partnership will need to be explored under the framework of the Accra Confession.
- b. The group agreed that the presence of WCRC needs to be felt strongly in meetings that it is involved with, for example, the Oikotree Global Forum in December, because we work in *partnership*. That is, our physical presence and our position on justice needs to be felt strongly by others. It was noted that this visibility is an important signal for our member churches.

Justice and Partnership Core Group

Recommendations:

1. That the WCRC affirm the Accra Confession as the guiding document for the area of Justice, and for the work of the whole of the WCRC.
2. That the WCRC initiate conversations with, and assist, regions and individual member churches to explore and adopt ways of living out the Accra Confession.
3. That Rev. Mark Koenig, the PC(USA)-WCRC ministry to the United Nations, be added to the Covenanting for Justice Network.

2.2 Gender justice

- a. Several core group members shared stories from their own contexts highlighting that the issue of women's ordination is more important than ever before. Regretfully, several member churches known to the group have removed women from their office of ministry, which poses a confronting question to the WCRC: how do we deal with churches who refuse to mutually recognise ordination? This issue is the heart of the WCRC's constitutional basis for membership!
- b. The core group recognised the need for the WCRC to dedicate effort toward addressing this issue; ideally through educational channels, and through providing non-threatening entry points for people/member churches to constructively engage with it. Further, that silence on this issue was not helpful, and that the WCRC needs to look for ways to actively engage people/member churches in conversation about it.

Recommendations:

1. That the WCRC continue to develop biblical and theological resources and consultations for member churches in order to affirm and promote women's ordination.
2. That Rev. Dr Grietje Couperus (Latin America) be added to the Gender Justice Network to take the place of Dora Arce Valentin (now filling the staff role).

Further Recommendations for programmes for 2012–2013:

1. That, time allowing, the Office for Justice and Partnership explore the possibility of working with the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF), in collaboration with the Youth Departments in each region (where applicable).

2. That the office for Justice and Partnership explore the possibility of holding the justice network meeting as soon as possible.
3. That the General Secretary organise a thorough hand-over process between the previous (Patricia Sheerattan-Bisnauth) and current (Dora Arce Valentín) Justice and Partnership executive secretaries as soon as possible.

REPORT OF THE COMMUNICATIONS CORE GROUP

Present: Yvette Noble Bloomfield (Convenor), Peter Borgdorff, Allan Buckingham, Yoshi Fujimori, Yong Kyu Kang, Steve Lytch, Cheh Liang Mok, Cheryl Meban, Salome Twum, Kristine Greenaway(staff)

Apologies: Advisers (Skype call unavailable), Allen Nafuki

The Communications Core Group met three times. Members received and discussed the report of Office of Communication. See issues and actions that emerged from discussion in grid below. In addition we discussed:

Relocation: It was noted that in the Executive Committee conversation about relocation, the impact on communication in terms of current synergies at the Ecumenical Centre should be born in mind.

Regional websites: In a matter of particular interest for all members of the Executive Committee and Regional Councils, staff reported that websites for WCRC Regions may have their own hosts or be hosted on the wcrch website. There is a template that can be tweaked to adapt to Region's needs (see www.wcrcusa.org). Regional website administrators can receive news releases automatically and decide which to use/translate into their own languages. The person who populated the WCRC website can be contacted via the Communications office and offers reasonable rates for advice and information on best use.

Fundraising: It is our understanding that communication for fundraising will remain under the Communications Core Group. New fundraising initiatives underway change the work for this Core Group and increase the need to do even better on general communication, whilst targeting different audiences.

Priorities for 2012-2013

	Issue	Action	By whom	By when
1	Ensuring WCRC stories are told.	Interviews, news releases, articles, photos, etc.	Kristine	Ongoing
2	Website: Need to embrace who we are as WCRC – move past having been WARC and REC – rebrand with our new self. Not who we were but who we are. Need to claim Accra Confession as WCRC's, not WARC.	Take old logos off website. (Done 13 May). News releases need to offer a picture and WCRC logo.	Kristine	By mid-July
3	Website updates require fresh information.	Remember to send articles so the page can be refreshed regularly – should try to contact churches in our Region to ensure we communicate effectively.	Core group, Secretaries of Regions, Executive Committee members.	Regularly
4	Donations page – needs redynamising to drive people to the Donate part of the website.	Need general donations page improvement.	Kristine, Steve and Allan.	End of August 2012.

Communications Core Group

5	Global fundraising campaign.	Create communication strategy & budget Design & produce materials based on prospective donors	Kristine, Steve, WCRC Endowment Fund Trustees, Regional steering bodies	By autumn. (Sustainability fund link will not be ready this year.)
6	Communication for fundraising adding extra demands to department	Source Intern dedicated to the department	Executive staff	ASAP
7	Promotional material. Create secure website for Regions to use to access templates of promotional material.	Make template of publications available to Regions, which can be translated/adapted.	Kristine.	By October
	<u>Secondary Priorities</u>			
8	Social Media – twitter and Facebook – current results are good, given how little staff time available, but needs more input.	- Recruit Intern -Continue current work -Get GIT participants involved -Encourage Executive Committee members to comment on Facebook page in their own	Kristine Allan Executive Committee members	-By June 30 -Ongoing -At GIT (June) -Ongoing

		language		
9	Regional Communication.	Ensure that churches in each Region understand what WCRC is doing, and what each other are doing. Core Group notes importance of print –e.g. Posters for Congregations – designed in global office but available for local printing.	Regional Steering Committee	Regularly
10	ENI - – Monies not significantly increased from WCC and LWF. Seeking bridge funding to 2013.	Help seek bridging funding.	Kristine	May, June 2012
11	<i>Reformed Communiqué</i> in French.	Find resources to ensure translation into French	Kristine	In progress

Observations:

Financial and staffing resources for the kind of fundraising implicit in the fundraising proposal must be above what we are currently staffed and budgeted for.

Communications Core Group

Recommendations:

That Executive Secretary for Communications should be staff support to the strategic fundraising group and attend meetings of the group, in order to be attuned and contribute to those conversations.

The Core Group would like to express its thanks to Kristine Greenaway for her hard and dedicated work over the past year.

REPORT OF THE PARTNERSHIP FUND COMMITTEE

The Partnership Fund Committee met on Saturday, 12 May, and on Monday, 14 May. In the absence of the moderator, Kobus Gerber, who was ill, the committee was chaired by Najla Kassab. Also present: Bas Plaisier, Clayton Leal da Silva, Salome Twum, Subha Singh Majaw, Yvette Noble Bloomfield. Staff: Douwe Visser (coordinator), Páraic Réamonn (deputy coordinator).

The meeting was opened with prayer, including prayer for the speedy recovery of Kobus Gerber. Yvette Noble Bloomfield, who was absent in 2011, and Páraic Réamonn, who has served as deputy fund coordinator since 1 July 2012, were welcomed to the meeting. The agenda was accepted. The Report of the Partnership Fund (Document 7) was discussed.

The Partnership Fund makes available to member churches, particularly in the global South, small grants for mission and service activities that otherwise they cannot afford. It works with a mixture of restricted and unrestricted funds: funds from the *Evangelische Entwicklungsdienst* (EED) in Germany that are restricted to development projects, and funds from other sources that can be applied to any purpose but are mostly used for mission.

Progress

The committee noted with pleasure the considerable progress in the work of the Fund since it last met. Twenty-six projects had been approved in 2011, and as a result of a publicity campaign in October 2011, many more churches were now aware of the Fund.

On the other hand, the Fund now had significantly more applications than it could approve, especially as the expected growth in development funding had been temporarily disrupted by the move of the EED to Berlin, where it will merge with Bread for the World. The growth in EED funding should resume in 2013. This would result in more work for the secretariat.

The staff had benefited from repeated training visits by Frank Riesmann (EED) and from an EED workshop on monitoring and reporting organized in March 2012 for the whole Ecumenical Centre. Regional secretaries had also undergone training, in the expectation that they could in future play a growing role in encouraging member churches to submit applications and helping them with that process.

Partnership Fund Committee

Improvements had already been made to Partnership Fund procedures and forms. Further improvements would be made: to the contracts between the Fund and the member churches that had been introduced, for example, and in the reporting process.

Emergency measures

The committee was concerned that a financial emergency in 2011 had led to a drawdown of CHF200,000 from the Partnership Fund's unrestricted funds. Donors had been asked for permission for this exceptional step and had given it; and the committee moderator (Kobus Gerber) had been informed of the proposal. But the committee as a whole had not. This was felt to be unacceptable for the future.

The committee also affirmed that no repeat of this drawdown would be acceptable to it. Donations to the Partnership Fund were intended for the benefit of struggling member churches. It would be impossible to fund-raise in future unless donors could be confident that their gifts would be used strictly for the purposes stated.

Communication and methodology

It was agreed more generally that more frequent communication between the secretariat and the committee would be good. Regular updates on applications received would be helpful.

Future perspectives

The committee hoped for growth in EED restricted funds to €400,000 in 2013 and €600,000 in 2014, with the possibility of still further growth thereafter. It also endorsed a fundraising target for unrestricted funds of CHF500,000; the Fund had already received a grant of €25,000 from the Evangelical Church of Westphalia towards this target.

The committee looked carefully at whether this growth might unbalance the overall work of the WCRC. It felt strongly that it would not. The projects funded in 2011 showed that the Fund was meeting real needs in member churches, needs that otherwise would not be met. And the projects submitted as a result of the publicity drive showed that even with the growth anticipated, the Fund would still struggle to meet all the needs identified, never mind the needs that were not yet known.

The committee affirmed that the Fund was a valuable instrument in building communion between the WCRC and some of its poorest churches. It was a practical way in which the WCRC made a real

difference. Mission and service were however inseparable and it was important therefore to maintain a good balance between restricted and unrestricted funds.

As the Fund developed its work, it would be important to enhance the capacity of member churches to make applications and to deepen the three-way partnership between the secretariat, the committee, and regional secretaries.

Criteria, voting procedures, and processing

The committee reviewed minor changes to the Fund criteria and approved them. There had been an informal understanding that a member church could not apply more than once in two years, but this was not part of the formal criteria, and the committee resolved that it did not need to be. General criterion 8 stipulated that no application from a member church could be considered unless the final report and financial statement for the previous project had been received and approved, and this was felt to be sufficient.

Approval of a project was ordinarily by unanimous consent. But the committee agreed that where at least five of the seven committee members had voted “yes”, but one or more had not responded, the committee moderator could authorize the disbursement of funds. Given the present uncertain circumstances, where the moderator was ill, the committee agreed to appoint Najla Kassab as co-moderator, to act if the moderator could not.

Where one or more members voted “no” (something that had not yet happened), a committee Skype might help resolve the disagreement. The application form should include a commitment guaranteeing a response (positive or negative) within six months.

Committee methodology

It was agreed that in future meetings of the Executive Committee, the committee would dedicate one of its sessions to processing some of the applications to the Fund. Following the example of the *Fondation pour l'aide au protestantisme réformé* (FAP), applications would be circulated to the committee, and each member would be asked to process one project and present it to the committee for discussion and approval. This would have the dual advantage of involving the committee more intimately in the work of the Fund and deepening its understanding of the work of the secretariat.

Partnership Fund Committee

Staffing the Fund – and funding the staff

As Partnership Fund coordinator, Douwe Visser supervises the work and relates to donor agencies: making Fund applications, reporting, making sure the Fund fulfils donor requirements. His work for the Fund is the equivalent of one day a week (20%). As deputy coordinator, Páraic Réamonn processes applications and organizes voting and the transfer of funds. He works two days a week (40%). Antoinette Berkouwer, who has played a crucial role as a volunteer, is still available as a back-up should the volume of applications get too large. All three, with help from the Communications Secretary, are involved in developing fundraising materials.

EED regulations allow the Fund to spend up to 15% of the grant on administrative costs, and the Fund applies a similar principle to unrestricted funds. Costs include administrative expenses and modest salary costs for the coordinator and deputy coordinator. To cope with the anticipated growth in workload, it is proposed to increase the percentage of time worked by the deputy coordinator to three days (60%), with help from the Canton of Geneva: this is a matter to be discussed with the Personnel Committee.

This level of staffing should be sufficient to support the Fund for the next two years. If the Fund continues to grow, it may be necessary (and possible) to engage a full-time coordinator.

As the Fund grows, it should also be possible to use some of its income, within the 15% limit, to support the work of regional secretaries, whose contribution to the effectiveness of the Fund may become increasingly important.

Recommendation 1: The Executive Committee receives the Report of the Partnership Fund Committee, thanks the staff for their hard work, and approves the broad directions being taken by the Fund.

Recommendation 2: The Executive Committee expresses warm appreciation for the work done by Antoinette Berkouwer as a volunteer and requests the General Secretary to find an appropriate way to recognize and honour this work.

REPORT OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

A. Review of staff structure

1. Current needs of the WCRC are changing. Recent factors in such changes include the fact that we have increased our profile with the Partnership Fund, and it has simply become impossible to do it with just a part of the role of an Executive Secretary and a volunteer assistant. In addition, as the WCRC has taken steps in this meeting to take seriously its need for fundraising, it needs to respond accordingly in the structure that continues to facilitate the strategic plans of the WCRC as well as needs for fundraising and the Partnership Fund. It must be noted that the higher profile in Partnership Fund also injects into the WCRC core fund an increase in funds which is necessary for the WCRC's current trajectory. The work on Communications and fundraising support will increase with the major fundraising drive envisaged. Currently the dedicated staff of the WCRC all have very heavy schedules.
2. It is important to do some necessary changes without any extra burden on the current budget and resources.
3. The **recommendation** is to modify slightly the staff structure as follows:
 - General Secretary
 - Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion
 - Executive Secretary for Justice and Partnership (Until enough funds are available, this will remain an Executive Consultant position. This could change as early as January 2013)
 - Executive Secretary for Communication and Fundraising support
 - Director of Development (same level as Exec. Secretary) – First year as a volunteer
 - Finance Coordinator
 - Deputy to Partnership Fund Coordinator (will have some communications tasks assigned as needed)
 - Administrative Assistant for the General Secretary and operations
 - Administrative Assistant for Programmes

Personnel Committee

4. Some financial considerations
 - a. In this model, the General Secretary, 3 Executive Secretaries, Finance Coordinator and 2 Administrative Assistants will remain the same. So financial commitments will remain similar to current levels.
 - b. Director of Development is a volunteer for the first year. So we can see by the Executive Committee meeting of 2013 whether we can afford this or not. For the first year, it has no salary consequences for the 2012 and 2013 budget. In 2013 when the Executive Committee decides to go ahead with appointment for a paid position, the 2013 Budget will need to be adjusted. Before then, where the extra funds will come from will also be identified.
 - c. The Deputy to the Partnership Fund Coordinator salary will be covered from the increased allocation to the Core budget from the funds EED provides. We are in conversation with authorities in the Canton of Geneva to have this in a scheme subsidized by the Canton. He will also be providing some services for the increased communication tasks of the WCRC.

B. Renewal of contract

1. The first term of office of the Rev. Dr Douwe Visser will come to an end on 30 June 2013. Douwe is currently the Executive Secretary for Theology, Mission and Communion. He started his work as Theology Secretary at a very busy time in the life of the then WARC, and immediately demonstrated his professional expertise as a theologian and one who cares for the church and the Reformed family worldwide. Douwe's responsibilities have grown since then. He represents us on the John Knox Board and is chair of its Programme Commission. He is also the coordinator of the Partnership Fund in which he has been ably assisted by his wife Antoinette as a volunteer. Douwe has proved to be an asset to the WCRC staff team.
2. The Personnel Committee **recommends**:
 - a. That the term of office of Rev. Dr Douwe Visser be renewed for a second five year term (1 July 2013 to 30 June 2018).
 - b. That in the new contract that is signed, there will be a statement clearly stating that the office will be relocated

outside Geneva during this term of office, and that this was understood before signing.

C. Information on appointments

1. This Executive Committee has already taken steps to appoint Rev. Dr Stephens Lytch as Director of Development.
2. The position of Deputy to the Director of Partnership Fund is a technical position and therefore is appointed by the General Secretary. The position is being offered to Rev. Páraic Réamonn. Note that it is possible to go ahead with the appointment if the Geneva Cantonal authorities agree to the subsidy.

OFFICERS' REPORT TWO

The first Officers' report was discussed on Friday, 11 May 2012. This second report is a brief report to cover matters that arose and were dealt with during the course of this meeting.

A. Task Force for relocation

1. The following are being proposed for the Task Force on relocation:
 - Jerry Pillay (President)
 - Gradye Parsons (Executive Committee member)
 - John Bolt
 - Roberta Rominger

The General Secretary will serve as a resource to this committee.

Profile of members who are not on the Executive Committee:

John Bolt – Chief Finance Officer for the Christian Reformed Church of North America with wide experience in different countries and relocation issues.

Roberta Rominger – General Secretary of the Uniting Reformed Church in the UK.

2. That the Task Force plan to have two meetings – one in the beginning and the other after all the necessary data and findings are collected. Other meetings on telephone and through email will be part of the *modus operandi* of this committee.

Recommendation: That the Executive Committee agrees on the composition of the Task Force.

B. Letter to the Indonesian President

1. It is proposed that the Executive Committee writes a letter to the President of Indonesia, since we are meeting in Indonesia.
2. The letter should be in the framework of gratitude – but also touch on the following issues:
 - Permits for building churches in general with the following two churches as examples:
 - The Yasmin church
 - The Filadelfia church
 - West Papua.

Recommendation: That such a letter be written in the name of the Executive Committee.

C. Joint Assembly/Council

1. The WCRC in its ecumenical commitments has been a strong advocate for joint Assemblies. In 2017, the WCRC and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) are scheduled to have their General Council/General Assembly. Officers heard from the General Secretary that there are preliminary conversations between him and the LWF General Secretary on this. It would be good for the Executive Committee to encourage the exploration of a possible joint Assembly.

Recommendation: That the General Secretary continues to explore the possibility of a joint General Council/Assembly with the LWF and give a progress report to the Executive Committee meeting in 2013.