

By-laws of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA)

1. Name and Organization

- 1.1 The Commission shall be called the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs.
- 1.2 The Commission is an agency of the World Council of Churches, responsible to the Central Committee.

2. Aims

- 2.1 It shall be the task of the Commission to witness to the Lordship of Christ over all creation and history and serve people in the field of international relations and promote reconciliation and oneness of humanity; to God's gracious and redemptive action in history; and to the assurance of the coming kingdom of God in Jesus Christ. This service is demanded by the continuing ministry of Christ in the world of priestly intercession, prophetic judgment, the arousing of hope and conscience and pastoral care. This task necessitates engagement in immediate and concrete issues as well as the formulation of general Christian aims and purposes.
- 2.2 In seeking to fulfil this task the Commission shall serve the Council, the member churches, the national and regional ecumenical organizations and Christian world communions with which the Council is related and such other international Christian bodies as may be agreed by the Council, as a source of theological reflection, information and guidance in their approach to international problems, as a medium of counsel and action and as an organ in formulating the Christian mind on world issues and bringing that mind effectively to bear upon such issues.
- 2.3 The Commission will call the attention of churches and councils to problems which are especially claimant upon the Christian conscience at any particular time and suggest ways in which Christians may act effectively upon those problems in their respective countries and internationally and respond to issues raised by churches and national and regional ecumenical organizations.
- 2.4 Special relations may be negotiated from time to time by the Council with the Christian world communions, other international Christian bodies and with regional and national councils of churches and the Commission shall assist them in their approach to international affairs and be assisted by them.
- 2.5 The Commission shall encourage:
 - a) the promotion of peace with justice and freedom;
 - b) the development of international law and of effective international institutions;
 - c) the respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms, special attention being given to religious liberty and gender equality;
 - d) the promotion of the rights and welfare of refugees, migrants and internally displaced people;
 - e) efforts for disarmament;
 - f) the furtherance of economic, social and environmental justice;
 - g) acceptance by all nations of the obligation to promote to the utmost the welfare of all peoples; democracy, that contains transparency, accountability, good governance, rule of law.
 - h) the promotion of the right of self-determination of peoples under alien or colonial domination;

- i) the international promotion of social, cultural, educational and humanitarian enterprises.
- j) theological reflection on advocacy in terms of CCIA's mandate.

3. Functions

- 3.1 To initiate and carry out appropriate actions for the furtherance of the aims.
- 3.2 To advise and assist in the formulation of the Council's policies on international affairs.
- 3.3 To assist churches and national and regional ecumenical organizations in the formulation of their policies on international affairs and to consult them.
- 3.4 To share with the churches information and analysis on critical political issues as part of the educational task.
- 3.5 To monitor national and international political developments and to analyze and interpret them, especially as they affect the life and witness of the churches.
- 3.6 To arrange for or promote research on selected problems of international justice, world order and peace and to utilize the results in the furtherance of the work of the Commission.
- 3.7 To support the efforts of the churches and related groups in their activities in conformity with the aims of the Commission.
- 3.8 To follow up and support at the international level initiatives taken by churches and ecumenical organizations in the areas of concern of the Commission.
- 3.9 To be a forum for exchange of information and experience among churches and groups in international affairs, especially related to conflict resolution and the promotion of peace and human rights, including the rights of uprooted people.
- 3.10 To make representations to governments in accordance with the policies of the Council in matters of concern to the Council or to any of its member churches.
- 3.11 To develop relationships in study and action with non-member churches and organizations, including those of other faiths, sharing aims similar to those of the Commission.
- 3.12 To maintain and provide for the maintenance of contacts with international bodies such as the United Nations and its agencies, including regional bodies and other non-governmental organizations, which will assist in the attainment of the aims of the Commission.
- 3.13 To represent the Council or to provide for its representation and the coordination thereof before these international bodies, as may be specifically arranged. The Commission may also represent, facilitate and help coordinate the representation of member churches, related international Christian organizations and non-member churches before such international bodies.

4. Membership, Leadership and Staff of the Commission

- 4.1 The Commission shall be composed of not more than 30 members out of which one quarter should be members of the outgoing commission in order to ensure continuity and, ex officio, the Director of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs.
- 4.2
 - a) The Leadership of the Commission shall be the Moderator, who shall be elected by the Central Committee, a Vice-Moderator, who shall be elected by the Commission, and, ex officio, and the Director of the Commission.
 - b) The commission shall be divided into working groups on specific issues and themes.
 - c) A core group shall consist of the Leadership of the Commission plus the moderators of working groups.
- 4.3 Christian knowledge and commitment and technical competence in international affairs and related subjects shall be the chief qualifications sought in all members. There will be an emphasis on laymen and laywomen as members of the Commission and a proper balance of the membership in respect of gender, geography, age, race, culture and confession shall be sought.
- 4.4 The task of the core group, shall be:
 - a) to carry forward strategic and policy guidelines approved by the commission

- b) to take actions for urgent international issues in between the meetings of the commission
- c) to advise the GS concerning global issues.

4.5 The tasks of a Commissioner shall be:

- a) to attend meetings of the Commission and to participate in its work;
- b) to correspond with the leadership, drawing their attention to matters which in his or her view should occupy their attention, and to advise them in pursuit of such matters,
- c) to work with recognized councils and church agencies and committees in his or her national and regional context in educating public opinion.

5. Panels or Advisory Groups

The Commission may appoint panels or advisory groups on particular aspects of its work in pursuance of its aims and the performance of its functions.

6. Meetings of the Commission

- 6.1 a) The Commission shall normally meet every second year at a place and time determined by the Director in consultation with the Moderator.
- 6.1 b) The core group shall normally meet every six months.
- 6.2 Any ten members of the Commission or the General Secretary of the Council may require a meeting to be convened for any purpose within the aims of the Commission and the Moderator shall forthwith convene a meeting giving due notice of its purpose.
- 6.3 In the case of members who are unable to attend meetings, substitution of members are allowed without the right to participate in the decision making process.
- 6.4 Consultants may be invited by the Moderator and Director to attend meetings of the Commission based on their having special competence on major matters under consideration. They shall have the right to speak, but not to vote.
- 6.5 The quorum for meetings of the Commission shall be a simple majority of the members.
- 6.6 The Commission shall determine the general policies to be followed by the Moderator, Vice-Moderator, core group and staff in fulfilment of its aims. The Commission may also approve statements proposed for general publication in the name of the Commission, subject to the relevant rules of the Council.

7. Finance

- 7.1 The staff shall prepare a budget for the activities of the Commission, to be submitted as part of the unified programme budget to the Finance Committee and the Central Committee.
- 7.2 The Commission will receive reports on the budget and funding of the work and will provide oversight of the detailed planning and policy in relation to the funding of programmatic activities and projects relating to its work within the overall policies and budget approved by the Central Committee.
- 7.3 The Commission should assist in developing the financial resources available for the work of international relations.

8. Contacts with Governments and Intergovernmental Bodies

- 8.1 General principles

- a) The Commission may negotiate directly in its own name and in the name of the Council with the United Nations and other international bodies in conformity with the policies of the Council.
- b) In making representation to national governments or other national entities to advance a Christian view on any problem in accordance with its aims, the Commission shall do so ordinarily in consultation with member churches, national councils and the Commission members in the country or countries. However, in exceptional circumstances the Commission may make such representations without such consultation and even when national or regional bodies do not concur.

8.2 Representations

- a) the Commission, when meeting, may propose representations in keeping with Council policy;
- b) the Moderator and Vice-Moderator, in their official capacities, may make such proposals, provided that it is also in agreement with the decisions of the Commission/core group and after consultation with the General Secretary of the Council and the Moderator of the Central Committee and with their concurrence;
- c) the Moderator of CCIA in consultation with the director of CCIA may authorise a member of the Commission to act in the name of the Commission; .
- d) the Commission may, in addition, prepare and recommend statements through the appropriate channels to the governing bodies of the Council for their consideration and to any appropriate assemblies or conferences meeting under the auspices of the Council and to such bodies with which relationships have been agreed under the provisions of by-law 2.4.

8.3 Procedures for contact with the United Nations

- 1. In accordance with the arrangements provided by the United Nations and its specialized agencies, the staff in consultation with the General Secretary of the Council, are empowered to seek and maintain consultative status with the United Nations, its specialized agencies and other intergovernmental bodies on behalf of the Council.
- 2. Such contacts with other organs and specialized agencies may be necessary to accomplish the Commission's aims and the programmes of the Council;
- 3. The Commission shall, with the approval of the General Secretary of the Council, be responsible for facilitating and arranging such direct contact with organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations as may be requested by other programme staff of the Council and by bodies with which special relations have been agreed under the provisions of by-law 2.4.

9. Amendments to the By-Laws

- 9.1 These by-laws may be amended by the Central Committee on the recommendation of, or in consultation with the Commission.
- 9.2 'Three months' notice shall be given to members of the Commission in respect of any proposal to consider an amendment to the by-laws at a meeting of the Commission.