



Report of the Programme Committee

Introduction

This report reflects on the dialogue engaged and decisions made by the programme committee as it examined the documents referred to it, among other things. It offers the recommendations to the central committee and additional notes where necessary.

GEN 01 - Reflection on the moderator's address

Recommendation:

The programme committee **recommends** to the central committee as follows:

1. **The moderator's address to be received with appreciation.**
2. **The WCC becomes the platform for reflection and engagement on the rise of secularization, religious fanaticism and anti-religious extremism.**
3. **The implementation of a process to work together in addressing the issue of racism and transformation in significant ways.**
4. **The need to make the pilgrimage also attractive and invitational for young people, in the language that is accessible to all.**
5. **The need to collate programmatic initiatives of member churches and explore the possibility of these becoming part of the WCC's Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, where appropriate.**

Notes:

1. There is a need to highlight the spiritual perspective as we speak as church members. In addition, a deep understanding and analysis of the economic systems of this world should be given attention.
2. It was further affirmed that the WCC should give due consideration to working with member churches and ecumenical partners where possible.
3. We participate in the youth meeting taking place in Amsterdam in 2018 commemorating 70 years WCC as part of the PJP.

GEN 03 – Report of the general secretary

Recommendation:

The programme committee **recommends** to the central committee:

1. to receive the report of the general secretary with appreciation.
2. the programmes on HIV and AIDS, climate change, violence against children, stateless people and human trafficking should be continued.

Notes:

1. Programme committee appreciates the concern for the Middle East situation with special focus on Syria and Iraq. However, it was felt that concrete steps and methodologies towards these concerns should be given further attention.
2. There is a feeling that in the report of the general secretary, Mission and Evangelism was not adequately mentioned.
3. We need to be aware that in our dialogue with the Pentecostal Churches that the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) and Pentecostal World Fellowship are two different bodies.

GEN PRO 02 – Recommendations of the Central Committee (July 2014) on programme work – An accountability report

Recommendation

The programme committee **recommends** to the central committee to receive the report with appreciation.

GEN PRO 03 – Progress Report on the implementation of the WCC Strategic Plan 2014-2017

Recommendation:

The programme committee **recommends** to the central committee:

1. to receive the report with appreciation.
2. to ensure to strengthen the youth work in consultation with ECHOS,
3. to ensure the participation of young people from different confessional and geographical backgrounds in the stewards programme.
4. to ensure that all WCC work in the Strategic Plan incorporates the participation of EDAN, Indigenous Peoples and youth.

Notes:

In line with the five strategic objectives, the programme committee noted the following:

1. Consideration must be given to linking up with work done by member churches, the involvement of EDAN, youth and Indigenous Peoples.
2. Care must be taken to frame the conclusion, challenges and learnings for the future in the language of the pilgrimage of justice and peace.
3. We must be cognizant that in our *diakonia* work with others, for example the UN, to always bear in mind our Christian values as the primary point of reference.

GEN PRO 04 – Report of the Gender Advisory Group

Recommendations:

The programme committee **recommends** to the central committee to:

- 1. Amend paragraph C.1. on page 5 to read as follows:**

WCC central committee leadership and the Permanent Committee on Consensus and Collaboration develop new mechanisms which would lead to the implementation of this commitment. The Gender Advisory Group suggests amending the WCC Rules Par. VI.8.a.vi which calls for “fair and adequate representation of lay persons, indigenous peoples, and differently-abled people, and balance of men, women and young people” to address ways in which ways each church and family of churches can achieve a fair and adequate representation and consider, among other things, whether some seats should be left vacant in order to avoid making the balances harder to achieve.

- 2. Affirm the direction of the Council’s work on just community of women and men as presented in the Report of the Gender Advisory Group (GEN PRO 04), and approved**
- 3. request the executive committee, commissions, reference groups and the general secretary to study the relevant recommendations and to report back to the central committee in 2018 on actions taken.**

Notes:

Consideration must be given to training for participation in governing bodies and commissions

GEN PRO 05 – World Mission Conference

Recommendation:

The programme committee **recommends** that the central committee approve the proposal of the CWME to hold a World Mission Conference in Arusha, Tanzania, from 8-13 March 2018 with the theme: ‘Moving in the Spirit: Called to Transforming Discipleship’.

Notes:

Consideration must be given to the following:

1. Increase the number of African and Africans in diaspora participants as the budget would allow, making every effort to find additional funding.
2. Do everything possible to include the involvement and concerns of Indigenous Peoples, EDAN, and young people and to provide for translation, including sign language.

GEN PRO 06 – The Gift of Being – Called to Be a Church of All and for All***Recommendations:***

The programme committee **recommends** to the central committee that:

1. **Paragraphs 12 and 13 in the document be amended to read as follows:**

“12. We acknowledge that some theological viewpoints interpret human createdness in ways that are not favourable to persons with impairments, particularly cognitive impairments. Looking for ‘the seat’ of the image, some theologians asked wherein, the divine the image was to be found. The notion of being created in the image of God in terms of the human intellect came with considerable costs. It implied that human beings with profound intellectual and developmental impairments were not recognisable as truly human.”

2. **The amended document be adopted and commends it to member churches for further study.**

GEN PRO 07 – Religion and Violence***Recommendations:***

The programme committee **recommends** that the central committee:

1. **refer the document to the executive committee for further improvement and further processing leading up to the next central committee.**
2. **requests the executive committee to take up religion and violence, non-violence and peace building as an important subject for the development of the Council’s work in the coming years.**

Notes:

1. The mandate that came from the executive committee held in Paralimni, Cyprus, 21-26 November 2014 included violence against religion and violence in the name of religion.
2. In light of the above point consideration should be given to a more descriptive title, such as: “Churches Responding to Conflict: Theological Reflections on Violence in the Name of Religion and Violence Against Religion.”
3. Consideration is to be given to reflecting on the concept of ideology as well.
4. Central committee suggestions must be in writing by 15 October 2016 to the office of the General Secretary

GEN PRO 08 – Principle for Child Friendly Churches***Recommendations:***

The programme committee **recommends** to the central committee to receive the document on Principles for Child-friendly Churches and refer it to the Reference Group for further elaboration and further work in combining the documents of theology and principles for a child friendly church, including further work on the theological reflections on this issue, bearing in mind the comments noted, and present it to the next executive committee.

Notes:

1. The document came out of a partnership relationship with UNICEF.
2. There is a need to review the title. Bearing in mind that this document is intended for churches, the attention should be focused on the involvement of children in the faith community.

GEN PRO 09.REV – Churches Recommit to Accelerate HIV Response

Recommendation:

The programme committee **recommends** to the central committee that the central committee adopt the amended pastoral letter as a call to action to the WCC member churches to recommit to an accelerated response to HIV through the actions outlined in this document.

GEN PRO 10 – Review of the reports of the commissions

Recommendations:

The programme committee **recommends** to the central committee that the following reports of commissions be received for information:

1. **The 2015 Meeting of the Commission on Faith and Order**
2. **The 2015 Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) Meeting**
3. **The 2015 Ecumenical Education and Formation (EEF) Meeting**
4. **The 2015 ECHOES Commission on Youth Engagement in the Ecumenical Movement Meeting**
5. **The 2015 Commission of the Churches on International Affairs Meeting**

GEN PRO 11 - Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace Reference Group

Recommendations:

The programme committee **recommends** to the central committee that:

1. **The Report of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace Reference Group be accepted with appreciation and; Approved.**
2. **commends that the Invitation to the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace be sent to the churches for further study and implementation.**
3. **The WCC secretariat and member churches:**
 - a. initiate a series of “pilgrim-teams of justice and peace” to visit churches and regions, providing accompaniment and solidarity (following the methodology of the “living letters”), inviting all member churches to participate in these;
 - b. notes that these “pilgrim-teams of justice and peace” should assemble at some point prior to the next Assembly to share their experiences – as one of the stations of our common pilgrimage of justice and peace.

Notes:

1. Keeping in mind the workload of the staff in Geneva and financial challenges, every effort should be made to raise funds to make these visits possible.
2. The central committee receives word for an invitation of a pilgrimage of justice and peace focus in Korea and north east Asia in 2018 and refers it to the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace Reference Group for consideration and discussion among other possibilities.

Recommendations for future meetings

The programme committee received information on the work WCC staff are engaged in developing new methods for meetings, using the WCC Round Table meeting with the specialized ministries as a test case. The programme committee, therefore, recommends an analysis of these experiences as a way to develop new methodologies for central committee meetings and in particular for the larger committees such as the programme committee.

Additional Recommendation:

The programme committee **recommends** continuing to develop the ECHOS commission mentor programme that has been piloted at the central committee in June 2016.

APPROVED