



**World Council  
of Churches**

**CONTINUATION  
COMMITTEE ON  
ECUMENISM  
IN THE 21ST CENTURY**

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**FINAL REPORT**

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World Council of Churches

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*Holy Spirit, advocate and comforter,  
Purify us, carry us beyond our narrow personal and institutional concerns;  
Let us discern what God calls us to be and to do in this world.*  
(from the opening prayer of the first meeting of the committee)

## **I. Our Journey as a Committee**

### **1. The Continuation Committee on Ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – its membership and task**

The Continuation Committee on Ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (CCE21) was formed after the 2006 Porto Alegre Assembly and met for the first time in 2007 in Bossey. The formation of the committee was in many ways unique. It is a committee which is facilitated by the WCC but not a committee of the WCC. The rationale for membership and the mandate were endorsed, but not formulated by the WCC Central Committee. They were the result of two major conferences of the so called “reconfiguration process” that were held in Antelias in 2003 and in Chavannes-de-Bogis in 2004. Between these two meetings the emphasis changed and moved from “reconfiguration” to “ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century”. Reports on the two consultations were presented to the 2006 Porto Alegre assembly. Participants in these consultations included representatives of WCC member churches together with representatives of the Roman Catholic Church and other churches beyond WCC membership, of conciliar instruments, i.e. regional ecumenical organizations and national councils of churches, of Christian world communions, international ecumenical organizations, a variety of youth organizations etc. Therefore, the continuation committee – though small in numbers – included representatives of the same broader constituency.<sup>1</sup>

Of particular importance for the work of the committee has been the value statement of the 2004 Chavannes-de-Bogis conference. The statement articulates clearly the values that have emerged in ecumenical relationships:

*The ecumenical movement in the 21st century will be a special space:*

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<sup>1</sup> The committee included 5 representatives of member churches (selected by the WCC executive committee); 1 representative of the Roman Catholic Church; 1 representative of Pentecostal churches; 2 representatives from ecumenical youth organizations; 1 each from REOs, CWCs, NCCs, agencies/specialized ministries, international ecumenical organizations and ecumenical renewal communities.

*where increasing numbers of Christians are involved in the work of Christian unity, and the fellowship among the churches is strengthened;*

*where an open and ecumenically minded culture is fostered in the everyday lives of people in their own contexts, and where ecumenical formation is a central focus at all levels of church life, from the local to the global;*

*where spirituality is the basis of life of Christians together, and where, as individuals, churches and organizations, Christians can pray together and encourage each other to discern God's will for their lives;*

*where all, including the marginalized and excluded, are welcomed into inclusive and loving communities;*

*where relationships, built on mutual trust, are strengthened between all parts of the ecumenical family;*

*where each Christian can be supported in practising responsible stewardship, and where churches and Christian organizations can be mutually accountable to each other;*

*where the diversity of cultures and traditions is recognized as a source of creativity;*

*where hospitality is shown towards those of different faiths, and where dialogue is encouraged;*

*where women's visions of being church are shared;*

*where young people are encouraged to join in and lead;*

*where the ministry of healing is carried out in shared actions;*

*where the healing of memories leads to reconciliation;*

*where, together, we are able to be prophetic in confronting the injustices and violence of the world, and to take risks in our commitment to justice and peace when Christ calls us to do so.*

Receiving the two reports, the Policy Reference Committee of the ninth assembly of the World Council of Churches in 2006 in Porto Alegre made it clear that:

*The process of reconfiguring the ecumenical movement is in large part an effort to "choreograph" the intricate relationships among the various ecumenical instruments and new ecumenical partners, so that clarity, transparency, communication and cooperative efforts mark those relationships, and allow the ecumenical movement as a whole to offer to the world, and to the regions and local churches the coherent grace-filled spiritual message of Christianity.*

*... The process that has been called "reconfiguration" should be understood not as a patching up of the existing ecumenical structures, but as a dynamic process to deepen the relationships of the ecumenical movement to its spiritual roots and missionary identity, reaffirm the relationship of the ecumenical instruments to the churches, clarify the relationships among the various ecumenical instruments and ensure that the message and the effort be coordinated and coherent.*

The Policy Reference Committee recommended the formation of the Continuation Committee on Ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The committee was asked to build on the results of the two consultations of the reconfiguration process.

Membership and terms of reference of the committee reflected the insight of the CUV process that the ecumenical movement is polycentric and, indeed, an open ecumenical space. The WCC is not at the centre and does not own the space as such. However, because the WCC is not just an organization, but first and foremost a fellowship of member churches that have also created most of the other ecumenical instruments in their quest for unity and common witness to the world, the WCC was entrusted with the task to facilitate a common table that would serve to

- strengthen a shared vision and a shared analysis of the changing context,
- foster relationships with and among ecumenical partners,
- ensure coherence of the many actors in the ecumenical movement and
- identify and implement better ways of working together with clearer understandings of different roles, functions and levels of action.

The CCE21 was to reflect on these tasks and to propose feasible steps in this direction. It met four times:

- 2007 in Bossey, Switzerland;
- 2009 in Belém, Brazil;
- 2010 in Rome, Italy and
- 2012 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

All four places represent important contexts and concerns that were to be addressed by the committee: the ecumenical movement and the Ecumenical Institute Château de Bossey; the reality of rapid social change and new ecclesial realities in Belém; the tradition and worldwide scope of the Roman Catholic Church in Rome; and both the presence of one of the oldest Orthodox churches with its impressive roots in the history of Ethiopia and a Lutheran church that is nurturing charismatic expressions of faith in Addis Ababa.

In 2011, the moderator and some group members met with representatives of the Governance Review Continuation Committee (GRCC) and the Assembly Planning Committee (APC) to compare notes and focus the specific task of the committee more clearly so that it would complement and not duplicate the work of the others.

Bible studies were always an important component of these meetings: on texts of the letter to the Ephesians and on key texts related to the ecumenical vision (John 17:21; Ephesians 1:10, Colossians 1:15 ff.; Luke 4:16 ff. etc). Listening to the texts of the Bible, the committee came to the conclusion that it would be misleading to call for a new vision for the

ecumenical movement. The Bible studies helped the committee to see that the main emphasis of the vision on the unity of the church and the unity of humankind was firmly rooted in the Bible and, indeed, a gospel imperative. Compared to more than sixty years ago when the WCC was founded, the horizons of this vision are broader today than in the past. This applies to both the changing ecclesial and religious landscape as well as the care for creation. In view of the changing horizons, the broader cosmic vision of Christ's reign in texts like the letters to the Colossians, the Ephesians or the Book of Revelation began to speak in new ways to the committee.

## **2. Bossey 2007 – the first step in the journey**

At the first meeting in 2007 in the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, the committee

- reviewed its mandate,
- started to explore the changing ecclesial and ecumenical landscape and to
- discuss the nature and shape of the next WCC assembly since the assembly would need to demonstrate progress concerning the tasks stated above.<sup>2</sup>

Robina Winbush shared reflections on the two consultations of the “reconfiguration process” held in 2003 in Antelias and 2004 in Chavannes de Bogis. The deputy general secretary, Georges Lemopoulos, spoke about six central questions for the work of the committee regarding the vision, the balance between broadening and deepening of the fellowship with a possible emphasis on accountability, the willingness to change, the power to set agenda, the need for a deeper understanding of the spiritual dimension of life, and for constant renewal. Rudolf von Sinner shared 12 theses on ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century for discussion, starting from the observations that:

- the centre of gravity of Christianity has moved to the South;
- the globalization and opening up of the world also brings injustice, fragmentation and fundamentalism;
- ecumenism is in crisis or in transition, and these two elements are usually intertwined;
- religions can foster war or peace and, therefore, for peace to exist among nations, peace among religions is necessary.

His first thesis underlined that the ecumenical movement had to be built on trust, which had (thesis two) the readiness for self-critique and repentance as pre-conditions.

These three contributions set the tone and the direction for the work of the committee. Based on the conviction that the next WCC assembly would be the decisive moment

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<sup>2</sup> The report of the meeting was published by the WCC in 2007: Continuation Committee on Ecumenism in the 21st Century, Papers for and a report of the first meeting of the committee, Geneva: WCC, 2007 (<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/continuation-committee-on-ecumenism-in-the-21st-century/report-on-the-first-meeting-of-the-continuation-committee.html> )

deciding on success or failure of the work of the committee and utilizing the presence of the many representatives of important partners in the ecumenical movement, the Bossey meeting included a discussion on the assembly and “expanded space” that was facilitated by Doug Chial.

### **3. Belém 2009 – vital challenges and new insights**

In 2009 in Belém, Brazil, in the beautiful surroundings of the Focolare Movement’s Mariópolis compound and supported by the Movement’s constant prayers, the committee explored the changing ecclesial and ecumenical landscape, looked at institutional challenges, and started to identify priority areas with the goal of greater coherence of the ecumenical movement and effectiveness of the work of all partners involved. The context of Belém, only days before the World Social Forum and the World Forum on Theology and Liberation took place in this sprawling harbour city in the Brazilian state of Pará, was indicative for many of the aspects of the changing conditions for ecumenical cooperation.

The second emphasis of the Belém meeting on the institutional challenges led to an important affirmation of the need for a committed fellowship of churches and the ecclesial character of the ecumenical movement. On this basis, the Belém report already included a list of roles and functions of the WCC that was later discussed in different fora, including the Central Committee of the WCC.<sup>3</sup>

The Belém report began to identify priority areas for the WCC and ecumenical partners with common foci, shared objectives and clear methodologies of cooperation. The committee analyzed the recent development of the classical streams of the ecumenical movement as they reflect the institutional environment of ecumenism and confronted this analysis with the major trends of the changing context. The classical streams do have their origins in basic dimensions of the life of the church. The impact of the changing context is, however, reshaping them and their institutional expressions. Business as usual is no longer possible. New configurations of actors and new challenges cannot be ignored. The Belém report serves as the core of this final report.

### **4. Rome – deepening reflection on the main foci**

With its third meeting in Rome, graciously hosted by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, CCE21 began to look more concretely at the contemporary challenges as they affect three of these priority areas: unity, mission, and justice, diakonia and advocacy

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<sup>3</sup> Continuation Committee on Ecumenism in the 21st Century, Report on the second meeting of the committee in Belém, Brazil, Geneva: WCC 2009 (<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/continuation-committee-on-ecumenism-in-the-21st-century/report-on-the-2nd-meeting-of-the-continuation-committee.html>)

(leaving reflections on peace to the IEPC). Inter-religious cooperation and ecumenical formation were seen as cross-cutting concerns.

Working in three groups on the priority areas and the impact of challenges and trends that affect all of them, the committee realized that the different priority areas are indeed closely linked to each other in dynamic and interactive relationships. This requires an institutional framework that, at this stage, only the WCC can offer under condition that the work is carried out with and through member churches and ecumenical partners, i.e. with the existing configurations of actors whose cooperation needs to be facilitated and nurtured.

## **5. Addis Ababa**

For the last meeting, the committee was strongly supported by the WCC member churches in Ethiopia: the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus. The committee concentrated on the theological affirmations and the recommendations for the final report mindful of the Ethiopian context and the impressive history of this country that was never fully colonized and has a strong Christian tradition from the early Church until today.

## **6. Concluding remarks**

It was a great privilege to serve as the moderator of this committee and to accompany it on its ecumenical journey. I want to thank all committee members for their commitment to the one ecumenical movement and their contributions to the work of the committee. I want to express my sincere gratitude for all who hosted meetings and facilitated our work. We offer the fruits of our considerations to the decision making bodies of all those who were represented in the membership of the committee, with the hope that they foster relationships and will lead to greater coherence and effectiveness of ecumenical initiatives and programmes . Let me conclude this introduction with the prayer that the Holy Spirit, advocate and comforter, will inspire all those who have the task of taking formative decisions for the future of ecumenism during the years to come.

Archbishop Michael Kehinde Stephen, Methodist Church of Nigeria



## II. Contemporary Challenges

From reports to the Ninth Assembly of the WCC in 2006 in Porto Alegre, Brazil, reports and documents received by the WCC Central Committee, publications by other ecumenical organizations and individual authors, and ongoing deliberations of the Continuation Committee, we have concluded that there are considerable commonalities regarding the main dynamics and challenges of our time.

Churches bear witness to Christ who gives meaning and fullness of life in a highly mobile, globalized context. Ecumenism can demonstrate how churches may faithfully define and discern ways that make for the justice and the peace for which Jesus wept and prayed, not seeking benefit for themselves alone but for the *oikoumene*. Such ecumenical engagement by the churches is rooted in their commitment to unity in Christ and is manifested in advocacy and solidarity. The ecumenical movement is a space where an effective witness is possible through bringing parties to the table to demonstrate paths to peace, providing Christian witness to an alternative model for politics, economy, ecology and identity. This can help to overcome the loss of identity that global pressures bring, by bearing witness to the life-giving fellowship that is offered in the body of Christ. The committee is convinced that the following issues affect all: individuals, church bodies and ecumenical actors.

An important change in recent decades is the shift of the centre of gravity of Christianity (in terms of numbers of people confessing Christ as Lord and Savior) towards the global South that is related to the growth of charismatic and Pentecostal churches.<sup>4</sup> Another important change is the impact of the historic process of globalization on the economic, political, cultural and religious spheres of societies. These changes have many consequences. Migration, whether forced or voluntary, changes in family structures, economic, ecological and social pressures have resulted in a mobility that creates a myriad of social and religious identities. Mobility and pluralism are factors that did not exist to the same extent at the beginning of the ecumenical movement. They now have a deeper impact on the way personal and institutional identities are understood; they affect the individual's sense of community, belonging and loyalty, as well as the churches' relationship to the ecumenical movement as a whole.<sup>5</sup> This ambiguous situation should not be confused with the richness of God-given diversity.

Major challenges for the common witness and advocacy of the churches were highlighted by the committee:

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<sup>4</sup> For most recent data see the World Christian Database, Center for the Study of Global Christianity, Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary - <http://worldchristiandatabase.org>; also Todd M. Johnson/Kenneth R. Ross, eds., *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910-2010* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009). It is important to note, however, that not in all cases the data seem to be based on sound statistical material.

<sup>5</sup> Mobility and identity become justice issues when they are coupled with an economic system that rewards the hyper-mobility of some while trapping others. This becomes visible in human trafficking and child labour.

a) Justice issues such as the consequences of slavery and colonial oppression, poverty, lack of land reform, unjust trade relationships, wars and conflicts for resources and control of entire regions, initiatives for basic health care etc. were always high on the agenda of the ecumenical movement. The financial crisis and economic recession are posing today a deep challenge for oral accompaniment, joint advocacy and action by the churches. The lessons of the economic downturn in 2008 confirm that the quest for justice and the critique of the prevailing economic paradigm remain a priority for the churches in today's world. This includes the concern for the just distribution of food, the fight against HIV/AIDS and preventable diseases, overcoming poverty, providing education, promoting health and advocacy for the most vulnerable communities including youth, women, indigenous communities and people with disabilities. Issues of gender justice and human sexuality have become church-dividing issues.

b) The concern for economic justice is closely intertwined with the concern for God's creation. The effects of climate change on the natural and human world, including resulting conflicts and migration, certain biotechnologies and the loss of biodiversity, are threats to life on earth that call for the witness of the churches to God the creator, the reign of Christ over the universe and the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit.

c) The concentration of different forms of power in the hands of a small minority of people and countries continues to be a major factor of global dynamics. The shift from the bi-polar world system that dominated the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has, however, not given way to a mono-polar system. The transition process with new competing centers of power has brought conflict and war. The biblical understanding of peace with justice and reconciliation is of utmost importance for the churches' witness in today's rapidly changing geopolitical arena.

d) Technology is changing the way people communicate and relate to one another, creating new and often ambiguous forms of community. These technologies challenge the churches to find new ways to relate to people and build authentic community.

The market logic, in which goods are more valuable than community, affects the churches' practice. In this context, churches often lose focus on identity in Christian community and compete with each other locally and globally. Where this dynamic exists, communities of faith that don't have the ability to compete or don't believe in the logic of competition are further marginalized. The decrease in financial support for churches and ecumenical organizations exasperates opportunities for ecumenical partnership and common witness.

There is a need for conversation with religions and ideologies – seeking to faithfully embody alternative ways of living together amid the rise of religio-national fundamentalism, relativism, privatization and market ideologies, recognizing that these are often attempts to

overcome the effects of marginalization. It is possible to support religious freedom while peacefully engaging religious diversity through interreligious dialogue and co-operation.

There are important differences concerning the ranking of more detailed analyses and the theological discernment of these main concerns, which account for controversies and tensions within and among churches and different actors in the ecumenical movement. This fact underlines even further the need for a common platform that enables the churches, and ecumenical organizations to encounter and to engage each other in addressing these challenges at various levels.

### III. Theological Affirmations

The ecumenical movement has its centre in the Triune God and not in human efforts, plans and desires. The committee affirms that the theological foundation of the search for the full visible unity of the church, and its common witness to the world is rooted in Scripture, namely in Christ's prayer for his disciples ("that they may all be one") as found in John 17:21. It is our understanding that the search for the goal of full visible unity of the church is also for the sake of the healing and transformation of the world. Common witness for justice and peace has always been central for the ecumenical movement. The theme of the forthcoming WCC Assembly at Busan resonates well with this conviction and trajectory: "God of life, lead us to justice and peace."

Christians live their faith in the context of different cultures and religions and within the wider horizon of God's creation. Acts 15 remembers the decisive moment when the apostles did not shy away from the difficult questions that arose when boundaries of ethnic, cultural and religious identities were being crossed and found the strength to open up to the universal horizon of the gospel message. Those of us who came from the "gentiles" would have never become Christians if this agreement to extend the mission of the apostles to the *oikoumene*, the inhabited earth, had not happened.

This committee believes that Christians are called to speak together to envision a new reality. It believes that ecumenism offers vision of communion which helps individuals, churches, movements and institutions discover an important dimension of their participation in the *koinonia* of the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.<sup>6</sup> This vision of *koinonia* is a foretaste of the fullness of life that is promised in Christ (John 10:10). It is life-

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<sup>6</sup> The Greek word *koinonia* refers to the communion or fellowship among churches and Christians which is based on the conviction that in Jesus, the Christ, the Triune God united with God self and with one another those dispersed by human sin and set against each other. Such relational understanding of salvation and of the church is, thus, rooted in the faith in the Triune God whose very being is *koinonia* (cf. *On the way to Fuller Koinonia: The Message of the World Conference*, in: Thomas Best and Günther Gassmann, *On the way to Fuller Koinonia. Official Report of the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order, Faith and Order Paper no. 166*, Geneva: WCC, 1994, pp. 225 ff.).

affirming and inspires action for the transformation of the world in the light of the coming of the Holy City and the Tree of Life, whose “leaves are for the healing of the nations” (Rev 22,2).

The ecumenical movement is called to deepen fellowship among its participants and broaden participation, and facilitate greater coherence. These three dimensions reflect the relational reality of the triune God, and the *koinonia* as the heart of the fellowship of member churches. This *koinonia* is not our own property but a gift of God, who wants the churches to participate in God’s reconciling and healing mission. Nobody can remain satisfied to limiting this *koinonia* to him or herself; it invites always to build new relationships, and to do so trusting in the mystery of God’s presence among the other.

For the World Council of Churches (WCC), Christian World Communions (CWCs), Regional Ecumenical Organizations (REOs) and National Councils of Churches (NCCs), there is agreement on the centrality of the church-based character of their expression of ecumenism. International Ecumenical Organizations, Ecumenical Renewal Movements, Specialized Agencies, International Ecumenical Youth Organizations, relate to the churches and bring their important gifts to the ecumenical movement. Together, all partners agree on the centrality of the ethos of fellowship, consensus<sup>7</sup> and common witness as foundational for a common vision. These relationships require mutual respect and trust as their base, in line with the core values as mentioned above (cf. page 2).

Worship (*latreia*) and proclamation (*kerygma*) are essential for nurturing the fellowship in the ecumenical movement through love and prayer. Community (*koinonia*), witness (*martyria*) and service (*diakonia*) lend themselves to structure the interaction between the different sets of actors in the ecumenical movement. All these are important features intrinsic to the life of the church.

Based on the committee’s analysis of the contemporary context, it identified five main areas that are crucial for the future of the ecumenical movement in the 21<sup>st</sup> century:

- The changing ecclesial landscape
- The relationship between mission and ecumenism
- The struggle for justice and peace
- Relationships with other faith traditions and religions
- Our deeper awareness of our relationship to creation

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<sup>7</sup> Consensus here refers to the practice as developed in the WCC and other bodies.

## Changing Ecclesial Landscape

Christians of different traditions are addressing these new horizons in various and serious ways. There are many practical examples of how churches translate these insights into action. Exchange between them through the diverse expressions of the ecumenical movement can strengthen and inspire their action, and co-operation can make it more effective.

In terms of the changing ecclesial landscape, as described in the section on the contemporary context with its challenges and opportunities, the theological questions raised involve who has the power to define truth and to include or exclude others. Trust has to prevail over competition because such trust is rooted in faith in the Triune God. Only on this ground is it possible to be open for a fresh perspective on one's own church, movement or institution, and others, which then includes a constructive way of being accountable. It allows the facing of conflict without separating, but remaining in dialogue in the midst of divergences.

Some churches grapple with the ecclesial-based nature of the ecumenical movement in a context in which an increasing number of Christian communities do not identify with a denominational model. The same is true for movements and organizations that are not church-based and may feel uneasy with the central place given to churches in the ecumenical movement. This raises the question of how to share space with such communities without letting go of the positive achievements of the past (e.g., results of ecumenical dialogues), deepening commitment and mutual accountability.

## Mission

The committee affirmed the central importance of a wholistic understanding of mission, including evangelism, witness and care for life, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century ecumenical movement. The Greek expression for mission is *exapostole*, sending. Our sending/co-mission by Christ is closely related to the sending of the Son by the Father. The divine objective of both is: "that they might have life, and might have *it* abundantly" (John 10:10 NAS). From this perspective, mission is indeed *missio Dei* with which we are entrusted. Therefore, Christ's love and care must be our prototype, relying on the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We learn from Christ's self-emptying love, *kenosis*<sup>8</sup>, which was the starting point of His mission. Mission workers are first accountable to Christ, and after that accountable equally to their brothers and sisters in Christ. Mission, love and *kenosis* are the inseparable premises for effectively preaching the Gospel of God.

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Philippians 2.5-11, especially verse 7.

In considering mission in the context of ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we reaffirmed that missionary *activities* and ecumenical dialogue require respectful relationships, accountability and trust. Undoubtedly, proselytism destroys this foundation and becomes a stumbling block to dialogue and responsible mission. Our common ground in Jesus Christ does not allow building “on someone else’s foundation” (Romans 15:20). This issue requires a serious discussion towards closer understandings as a step to assure each other of good intentions.

Besides the inter-confessional problems that might be raised when there is a lack of coordination and cooperation among Christian communities, uninformed mission activity can be problematic for local communities when sensitive relationships with people of other faiths are not acknowledged. Missionaries are called to take also into consideration new contexts for mission, and to think deeply about the factors, whether regional, political, economical, cultural, religious or gender specific, in that context.

### **The Struggle for Justice and Peace**

The quest for justice and peace is central to the church’s mission; it is the call of Christ to the Church. In the quest for justice and peace we recognize the significance of all of creation and each human being in relationship to God and each other. Through the communion with God, Christians are set in community with each other and are called to reflect the communion found in the Triune God. This makes justice an essentially relational matter, restoring *koinonia*. It is a call back to God’s intention that is wholeness and fullness in life. The implication of this is that justice seeks transformation of the present circumstances of life which is a precondition for peace. The quest for justice calls us to address the issue of unequal distribution and appropriation of power. This is often seen through various forms of oppression - economic, gender, racial and other forms of injustice.

Power that is used in ways that contribute to the destruction of life and creation leads to brokenness and separates us from God and one another. By rejecting the misuse of power, we discover our shared humanity in the vulnerability of the Crucified. It is out of this vulnerability that we are called to a life of justice. As we consider the question of power and vulnerability, we look to our understanding of the incarnation and *kenosis*. By coming into the world as a baby in a poor refugee family, God chose to identify with human vulnerability. Our understanding of the self-emptying of God and willingness to endure the reality of the cross radically redefines power and vulnerability. In our identity as Christians, we are called to appropriate power in ways that heal and transform human communities and a groaning creation.

The fruit of the Spirit assures a favorable environment for justice and peace (Galatians 5:22-23). By working for justice and reconciliation, peace is fostered. Justice brings the dynamics

of power and vulnerability into balance in human relationships and social systems. It exists to eliminate avoidable suffering and contributes to peace. The church's active expression of justice interfaces with and gives purpose to uniting the church for the sake of the world. We recognize that the commitment to the work of justice may also at times bring tension in the church. However, it is the gift and call of unity that graces us with the capacity to work through such tensions toward sustaining wholeness.

*Diakonia* is an immediate response to sufferings that are present in the world. *Diakonia* is a natural partner with mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Justice is linked to *diakonia* in that it functions best when justice is at work. Justice wrestles with the underlying issues that make *diakonia* necessary. *Diakonia* without justice becomes anemic. Justice without *diakonia* can be heartless and even destructive.

We are called to join in partnership with people's movements, organizations and peoples of other faith traditions to work for justice in the world we share.

### **The Ecumenical Movement and Interreligious Dialogue**

Acknowledging the potential of religions to both be instruments of peace and of conflict, we indicate the need for continuing dialogue between religions and ideologies to find different ways of living together in peace. In some regions of the world people of different faiths have lived side by side for centuries – both in peace and in conflict. In other regions a multi-religious society is a more recent fact due to post-colonial migration and globalisation. In some regions Christians have lived as a minority among other faiths for centuries; in others, Christianity has been virtually the only religion. These different contexts lead to variant departing positions in interreligious relations and cooperation that need to be recognised and accounted for in dialogue within the ecumenical movement and with representatives of other faith traditions.

Christians are called to be agents of peace and to be witnesses to the peace of the risen Christ, who has sent his disciples into the world, sustained by the Holy Spirit (John 20.19-23 and Acts 1:8). This requires solidarity with all who struggle in conflicts that have a religious undertone. Where this solidarity is lacking the credibility of dialogue is at stake.

In the conviction that all humans are created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1.27), religious diversity in turn can be considered as a source of enrichment. How can this common humanity lead us to challenge the boundaries that we set for ourselves and others? Christians are called to enter into a relationship with representatives of other faiths that challenges exclusion without ignoring the differences that exist among us.

## Creation

Churches are called to be the living mystery, the sign and instrument of God's reign to come and contribute through their very being to reconciliation and healing of the whole creation (Coll. 1.15; Eph 1:10) that is suffering from injustice, war and environmental destruction. Overcoming their own divisions and the dividing walls of hostility by the grace and love of God, the churches participate in the wide horizon of the ongoing and new creation of this world.

*Oikoumene* understood as God's household of life points to this wide horizon and the eschatological expectation of God's reign to come, which is also a response to the groaning of creation (Rom 8:18 ff.). The common witness of the churches carries the promise of the transformative power of the life-sustaining and life renewing Holy Spirit and contributes to justice, reconciliation and peace for humankind and all of God's creatures on planet earth. The ecumenical movement is meant to be a fellowship where the churches see their common role in participating in the wholeness of God's work.

The first to be said about this world, about life, is to be said about God; God the will of life, God the word of life, God the Spirit of life<sup>9</sup>. In this Trinity of the God of life is everything potentially present and bound together in unity of diversity. God the creator is the God of the life-giving word. The first words of the book called Genesis, the beginning, are about the power to create light and order in darkness and chaos by words. Reading the first chapter of the Gospel according to John, we hear that *the word was with God and the Word was God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.* Christians are invited to participate in the use of creative words, words giving life, to communicate light and order in the midst of darkness and chaos. God the creator is God the Spirit, the omnipresent Spirit. The breath of God is giving life to the entire creation. The Spirit of God is moving the whole world, the *oikoumene*, and therefore also the churches.

Life is a gift of God and can only be received as a gift. A gift to be given - to others, for others. The texts of the creation stories are not neutral; they include human beings, and are not leaving us like outside spectators. They call for humility, a stronger love to everything created, and a new will to care for creation. When the future of life on earth as we know it is at stake – with a single strike from a nuclear weapon, over decades through climate change and the loss of biodiversity, and every day through conflicts and wars, through poverty and hunger that kill millions of people and poison and destroy fields, water sources and animals – churches need to act for the life of generations to come.

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<sup>9</sup> Cf for this and the following: Olav Fykse Tveit, *Christian Solidarity in the Cross of Christ*, Geneva: WCC, 2012 pp. 3ff.



## IV. Institutional challenges

There are three different sets of institutional challenges:

- the first concerns the classical streams of the ecumenical movement;
- the second relates to the different institutional expressions of the ecumenical movement that developed in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century;
- the third refers to new institutional challenges that reflect the changing context.

The major streams<sup>10</sup> of the past are still visible, although they have changed considerably in recent decades. If it was the genius of the founding generation of the WCC to combine the major streams of the young ecumenical movement in one organization that was based on member churches, it is very important now to understand how the major streams continue to be represented in the movement and institutions we encounter.

The stream of ecclesially-centred ecumenism today goes beyond the work of the Commission on Faith and Order. With the Roman Catholic Church joining the ecumenical movement after the Second Vatican Council, the bilateral dialogues pursued by the Roman Catholic Church and other World Communions at various levels have become an important element of the search for visible unity, with the Christian World Communions as primary actors.<sup>11</sup> The question to be addressed is, “What is the role of the World Council of Churches and Christian World Communions within this stream, and how do they relate to each other?”

The Mission movement and the Life and Work Movement have also changed considerably in recent decades, especially under the influence of contextual theologies and a more active role of churches from the global South. Perspectives of contextual theologies with a strong focus on culture and social justice have broadened the scope of mission theologies and approaches to issues of church and society. This happened not without tension and conflict, dynamics that are still echoed in contemporary debates.

Another notable shift is a consequence of the growing importance of financially strong specialized ministries in the field of ecumenical diakonia and development. Mission societies that have been active in the domains of health, education and social action for decades are increasingly asked to avoid duplication with development agencies or to merge activities. Fundraising and advocacy campaigns by specialized ministries have also had an influence on

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<sup>10</sup> The three classical streams of the ecumenical movement are the Missionary movement (1910 Edinburgh), the Faith and Order movement (1927 Lausanne) and the Life and Work movement (1925 Stockholm). Faith and Order and Life and Work came together to form the WCC, while the International Missionary Council joined the WCC only in 1961. There were other, smaller entities, e.g. the Commission on International Affairs (included in the WCC in 1948 already), the World Council of Christian Education (included 1971) etc. that also contributed to life and action of the WCC.

<sup>11</sup> It is important to note in this context the renewed impetus for a Panorthodox Council; cf. the statement by the Synaxis of Orthodox Hierarchs in November 2008 in the Phanar.

the understanding and methods of advocacy with governments and other national actors and with the UN at the international level. At times, the impression was given that these were competing and not complementary approaches. The inequalities in existing distribution of financial resources within the ecumenical movement have raised new questions of power relations in mission engagement and ecumenical efforts.

After decades of alienation between some Evangelicals and some Ecumenical organizations, the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) has started to reach out to Charismatic, Pentecostal and African Instituted Churches. These groups have reciprocated and responded to invitations to join together with the CWME. The process towards the centenary of the 1910 World Mission Conference at Edinburgh is a case in point. Another important process, including inter-religious involvement, is the series of consultations concerning a Code of Conduct on Conversion. Differences regarding the understanding of mission today, evangelism, conversion, syncretism and proselytism need to be addressed, while efforts still have to be made to build trust and reliable working relationships. The Global Christian Forum (GCF) has emerged as a different platform for the broadening participation in the ecumenical movement in dialogue with Charismatic, Pentecostal and African Instituted Churches.

These observations point to the fact that the institutional arrangement of the ecumenical movement has become more diversified. The same factors that changed the outlook of the traditional streams also influenced changes in and among the main organizational expressions of the ecumenical movement in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Analysis of the relationship between the different spheres of ecumenism shows that there is growing intentional cooperation and a division of labour, between the WCC and Regional Ecumenical Organizations (REOs), National Councils of Churches (NCCs) and in Africa sub-regional Fellowships of Churches.<sup>12</sup> This is partly due to the fragile financial situation of many of the National Councils and Regional Ecumenical Organizations. While the REOs are confronting these challenges, the WCC and other ecumenical partners have continued to accompany and support them. What is emerging is a clearer understanding of the different priorities in response to the context and the need for a clear division of labour so that different ecumenical efforts complement each other.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Jill Hawkey presented results of her study mapping current ecumenical structures and relationships at the consultation on Ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in Chavannes de Bogis/Switzerland (Appendix V to the report, pp. 66-80). A wealth of data on work by different partners that is financed by the specialized ministries is made available by the yearly Partner Survey for the WCC Roundtable. Making use of these data, the WCC has analyzed the development of Regional Ecumenical Organisations and two World Communions that are based also in Geneva (LWF and WARC).

<sup>13</sup> The following are just a few examples for improved co-operation: the WCC together with REOs (All Africa Conference of Churches, Conference of European Churches, Middle East Council of Churches, Christian Conference of Asia, Caribbean Council of Churches and Pacific Conference of Churches) have fostered inter-regional co-operation on migration and trade; the AACCC is contributing to the WCC's work on economic justice

A number of organizations that are concentrating on specific target groups or concerns are loosely defined as International Ecumenical Organizations. Some of them, such as the World Student's Christian Federation (WSCF), the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) date back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century – whereas others such as Ecumenical News International, ACT International and ACT Development have been created only in recent years. The general secretary of the World Association for Christian Communication and the executive director of the WSCF represented them on the Continuation Committee. It is important to map their individual contributions and explore the linkages with other ecumenical organizations. It is encouraging to see, for instance, increasing co-operation between organizations focusing on young people, e.g. the World Student Christian Federation, Syndesmos, Young Men's Christian Association and Young Women's Christian Association. The creation of the WCC's ECHOS youth commission, which includes membership beyond WCC member churches, has also contributed to improved co-operation. The YWCA has also strengthened its financial basis through clearly focused priorities (e.g. work on HIV/AIDS). The need for clearer priorities seems a common trend for all those organizations that depend on specialized ministries and other donors for their funding.

The Christian World Communions (CWCs) include the Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches, and different Church families. While they differ in the extent to which they engage in mission, ecumenical actions and diakonia, one main contribution they make to Christian Unity is involvement in bilateral dialogues. The annual meetings of the Secretaries of the CWCs provide an opportunity to deepen fellowship and develop ecumenical co-operation, and the World Council of Churches and the World Evangelical Alliance also send representatives.

There are three new institutional challenges that reflect the changing context (again influenced by some of the same trends that surfaced earlier):

First, there are the new forms of networking. There are two basic models that have developed: these networks either concentrate on particular issues – which allows for the co-operation of a broad coalition of different actors - or they concentrate on one set of actors with the ability to address a broader agenda. The Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA) is an example of the first approach; the ACT Alliance, the merger of ACT International and ACT Development into ACT Global is an example of the second approach.<sup>14</sup>

Second, there are new platforms for broader participation beyond the classical ecumenical movement, such as Churches Together, Christian Councils or the Global Christian Forum.

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through its focus on poverty in Africa; the same is true for the Pacific Conference of Churches and its focus on Climate Change.

<sup>14</sup> See the most recent Joint Newsletter of ACT International and ACT Development, Dec. 2008.

These platforms tend to focus more on open dialogue and much less on the discipline of mutual accountability.

Third, there is an increasing number of inter-religious councils locally and nationally. Some of these are replacing local councils of churches, while others are focusing on reconciliation and peace in situations of conflict. Internationally there are new opportunities emerging to work together with inter-religious partners.

All three dimensions of institutional challenges demonstrate how new realities and dynamics drive institutional development and change. There is a need a) to deepen the relationships between those belonging to the fellowship of ecumenically committed churches, b) to broaden participation in the ecumenical movement and c) to ensure greater coherence of the different institutional expressions and organizations involved. These actions need to be informed by analysis of the trends that can be observed. There is also a need for thorough theological reflection on guiding vision and values, as the process of the Special Commission on Orthodox Participation in the WCC and the subsequent work of the Permanent Commission on Consensus and Collaboration have clearly shown. There is an ongoing need to map ecumenical activity, to define the charism of each ecumenical organization and to plan how to support each organization in its work.

Deepening the fellowship, broadening participation in the ecumenical movement and maintaining greater coherence are tasks that the WCC is willing to perform in service to its member churches and to benefit all partners in the ecumenical movement. The WCC has begun to approach this task in new ways by convening all who need to interact and to talk to each other in one ecumenical space or around one table. The Continuation Committee on Ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and the WCC Assembly Discernment Committee<sup>15</sup> are the most recent examples of both the willingness of the WCC to fulfill this convening role and the readiness of ecumenical partners to recognize the WCC as the privileged instrument of the ecumenical movement, demonstrating the ecumenical commitment of the fellowship of its member churches, but not demanding to be recognized as the centre of the movement.

Such a convening role facilitates developments, but it also requires the capacity to discern the signs of the time and to stimulate new insights – very much in the same way as the convening function should enhance and not mute prophetic voices. In addition to accepting the privileged role of convening, the WCC is willing to be a participating member in shaping and encouraging the discourse. The WCC is able to provide a space where conflicts are not

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<sup>15</sup> The WCC ninth assembly in 2006 in Porto Alegre, Brazil, had a vision of an “ecumenical assembly that would assemble all churches to celebrate their fellowship in Jesus Christ, and to address common challenges facing the church and humanity”, and agreed on the specific mandate “to explore the feasibility of a structure for WCC assemblies that would provide expanded space for Christian world communions and confessional families to meet for the purpose of deliberation and/or overall agenda” (policy reference committee report). The Assembly Discernment Committee was established by the WCC Central Committee in February 2008 to work on this recommendation, cf. Continuation Committee, Belém report, p. 32.

avoided but may be identified and worked through. These steps are preconditions to fulfilling a prophetic role.

## V. Main foci

There has been a shift from the *reconfiguration of the ecumenical movement*, i.e. ecumenical institutions to the emphasis on *ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. This shift requires that more attention be given to the convergence between theological, contextual and institutional challenges.

Churches are building common ground by recalling the spiritual roots of the ecumenical movement – that they are one in Christ, who calls us to make that oneness visible through unity and witness. Christians are meant to be an answer to Christ’s own prayer (John 17:21). Re-affirming the ecclesial nature of the search for visible unity and common witness, they remind each other of their common roots and their common journey. The churches – their members and their leaders along with their doctrines and traditions – are the primary actors in the ecumenical movement. The churches engaging with each other more deeply in common witness will strengthen not one, but all ecumenical instruments.

Worship (*latreia*) and proclamation (*kerygma*) are essential for nurturing the fellowship of the ecumenical movement through love and prayer. Community (*koinonia*), witness (*martyria*) and service (*diakonia*) lend themselves to structure the interaction between these different sets of actors in the ecumenical movement, as some examples demonstrate:

- a. The search for visible unity will benefit from deliberate interaction between the bilateral approach and the multi-lateral approach. The WCC-convened forum on bilateral dialogues provides a model for this interaction that has the potential to clarify the different roles in this arena and the different understandings of unity that have emerged.
- b. Mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is a core issue at stake in the relationship between WCC member churches, and Evangelicals, charismatic and Pentecostal churches. Edinburgh 2010 has been a crystallizing event for this agenda that needs further reflection and action. The Roman Catholic Church and other ecumenical bodies are engaged in critical issues important to mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- c. The churches’ engagement for economic justice, creation, peace and reconciliation provides a single focus for “one arena of engagement”. The role of the churches, the WCC some Christian world communions, and specialized ministries in ecumenical diakonia and global advocacy belongs to this arena in which the relationship between churches and specialized ministries has to be addressed.

d. The previous three foci need to be accompanied by a fourth focus on the role of different ecumenical actors in inter-religious dialogue and co-operation. This is an urgent matter given the pressing need for successful models of inter-religious co-operation at local, national and international levels.

Other concerns have become a priority for almost all involved in the ecumenical movement, i.e. the nurturing of the spiritual roots of ecumenism and the need for concentrated and sustained efforts for ecumenical formation at all levels.

A question to be addressed: Is it possible to say that these four foci lend themselves to re-focus the common efforts of different actors involved in the ecumenical movement?

Lessons learned in the process on ecumenism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century so far seem to suggest that a shared understanding of contemporary challenges, the combination of theological reflection on the basic elements of the new horizons for the ecumenical vision, the nurturing of the ethos of fellowship and consensus, followed by work on the four main thematic foci, indeed, lead to a more solid basis for common action and facilitate a renewed flourishing of the ecumenical movement.

## **VI. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on our analysis of the contemporary and institutional challenges and our theological affirmations, we, the members of the CCE21, are convinced about the opportunity to live out the gift of ecumenical calling in more intentional cooperation by all, and make the following recommendations to the World Council of Churches, Regional Ecumenical Organizations, National Councils of Churches, Christian World Communions, Ecumenical Youth Movements, Specialized ministries, Renewal movements, The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and churches and organisations whether or not traditionally seen as ecumenically engaged. This includes Pentecostal, charismatic and Evangelical churches.

### **FOUNDATIONAL**

We recommend that all involved in the ecumenical movement:

- Commit to the biblical call to oneness in Jesus Christ (John 17: 21) and the call to be instruments for the fullness of life for all (John 10: 10);
- Understand our work together to be based on belief in the Triune God who calls us to unity and gives us the gift of communion;

- Find constructive ways of living out our unity even in the face of the challenge of engaging the theological and ethical issues that threaten to divide.

### **IMPLICATIONS OF THE CHANGING ECCLESIAL LANDSCAPE**

Especially bearing in mind the shift of the demographic centre of gravity of Christianity to the global South and the worldwide emergence of new churches that are not currently engaged with the ecumenical movement, the CCE21 recommends that all of the partners:

- Discern and engage the implications of this within their relationships and actions;
- Take seriously and activate the full participation of the global South;
- Be prepared to receive the contributions of those who may not currently be around the ecumenical table;
- Receive migration and emerging migrant churches all over the world as an opportunity for integrating the North and South;
- Address the issue of unequal distribution and appropriation of power by being vigilant against the abusive use of power and promoting models of learning from each other through the receiving of gifts whether of affluence or poverty from each other regardless of the context from which they operate.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

While ensuring ecumenical engagement is a movement and the new ecclesial landscape has polycentric features, there are organizational implications to deepening and expanding the fellowship of ecumenical space. The CCE21 therefore recommends:

- That the World Council of Churches take on a convening role as a gift to the churches and ecumenical partners;<sup>16</sup>
- That the WCC convene the partners in the ecumenical movement in a way that is larger than itself (recent positive models include the setting up of the CCE21 and the assembly preparatory process), and does not claim to be recognized as the centre of the movement;
- That as part of its convening role, the WCC governing bodies rethink the set up work and content of commissions, as well as its assembly and post assembly structures;

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<sup>16</sup> The convening role is exercised in recognition of and within the limits set by the 1950 Toronto Statement, which clarifies that the WCC is not a church nor a super-church.

- That the WCC and other organizations find appropriate structures and methodologies by which they can engage;
- The affirmation of the larger space and call on all to make every effort to mutually address negative images attached to one another, and affirm the gifts that each brings to the continuing ecumenical movement;
- The Evaluation of the Global/Regional dynamics with a vision of developing effective ways of actively connecting National Councils of Churches and their participants in national and local levels and to strengthen coherence at all levels.
- Connecting to the lived reality of local congregations and communities, and affirming innovative ways of hospitality.
- Taking seriously current financial constraints and finding creative ways of staying focused and coherent while encouraging churches to invest in and find resources to sustain the life-giving impact of the the vision and work of the ecumenical movement.
- Addressing the financial changes and challenging power relations within the movement – so that agendas are not mainly determined by sources of income;
- Finding creative ways of accompanying one another and responding in solidarity in the different regions on behalf of the whole movement. These may include having representatives of the organisations serve as links to other parts of the ecumenical movement or sending delegations of “living letters”.<sup>17</sup>
- Taking note of the cooperation that took place in the process on “Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World:”<sup>18</sup> we call upon all actors to take every opportunity to work together on issues that will overcome common challenges and produce common ways forward.<sup>19</sup>
- Strongly affirming the conciliar model of ecumenism, and at the same time valuing and supporting bilateral and multilateral conversations.
- Affirming the distinctiveness of the various processes and gifts that different organizations bring.

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<sup>17</sup> The WCC has conducted pastoral team-visits as “living-letters” to member churches and their countries during both “The Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women” and “The Decade to Overcome Violence”.

<sup>18</sup> World Council of Churches, Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, World Evangelical Alliance, *Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations for Conduct*, Geneva: WCC, 2011

<sup>19</sup> The representative of Eastern Orthodox churches on the committee requested to minute that he was not in consensus with referencing the document on “Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World” in the recommendations.



- Reviewing and affirming new processes and platforms for engagement which brings others around the table, in recognition that some new processes need to mature in order to create space for open respectful dialogue and mutual accountability to the core values as stated in this document.<sup>20</sup>

## **VII. Members of the Committee**

### **Archbishop Michael Kehinde Stephen, Moderator**

Methodist Church Nigeria

### **Rev. Dr Karin Achtelstetter (as of 2012)**

World Association for Christian Communication

### **Rev. Mitchell Bunting**

Iona Community

### **Fr Dr Gosbert Byamungu**

Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity

### **Rev. Rothangliani Chhangte, proxy of Rev Dr Cheryl Dudley in 2009, Belem**

### **Mr Christophe D'Aloisio**

SYNDESMOS - The World Fellowship of Orthodox Youth

### **Rev. Dr Cheryl Dudley**

Church World Service

### **Ms Christine Housel (as of 2011)**

World Student Christian Federation

### **Rev. Pravinkumar Israel, proxy of Rev. Dr Wonsuk Ma in 2007, Bossey**

Assemblies of God

### **Archimandrite Dr Jack Khalil**

Patriarchate of Antioch/ Orthodox Church

### **Rev. Vineeth Koshy**

Orthodox Oriental

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<sup>20</sup> Cf. page 2.

**Rev. Dr Wonsuk Ma**

Asian Pentecostal Society

**Dr Larry Miller**, proxy of Rev. Dr Setri Nyomi in 2007, Bossey

Mennonite World Conference

**Rev. Dr Randolph Naylor** (2008 – 2010)

World Association for Christian Communication

**Rev. Dr Setri Nyomi**

World Alliance of Reformed Churches

**Rev. Sukhwan Robert Oh**, proxy for Rev. Dr Wonsuk Ma in 2011, Chavannes

Oikos Community church

**Ms Nienke Pruiksma**

Protestantse Kerk in Nederland

**Archdeacon Hratch Sarkissian** (2008 – 2010)

Armenian Apostolic Church (Holy See of Etchmiadzin)

**Rev. Dr Hermen Shastri**

Council of Churches of Malaysia

**Rev. Dr Rudolf von Sinner**

Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil

**Rev. Michael Wallace** (2008 – 2010)

World Student Christian Federation

**The Venerable Colin Williams** (2008-2010)

Conference of European Churches

**Rev. Robina Winbush**

Presbyterian Church (USA)

**Selected participants of the essay contest at the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the WCC – present at the Belem meeting in 2009**

**Ms Erin Brigham**

Roman Catholic Church

**Mr Mengfei Gu**

China Christian Council

**Mr Beril Huliselan M.Th**

Presbyterian Church (Indonesian Christian Council)

**Revd Dr Peniel Jesudason Rufus Rajkumar**

Church of England

**Rev. Chad Rimmer**

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

International Church of Copenhagen

**Ms Lucy Wambui Waweru**

Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Kenya