



World Council of Churches

# **Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA)**

## ***Proceedings of the 51<sup>st</sup> meeting***

**Shanghai and Nanjing  
People's Republic of China**

**9 – 16 June 2012**





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## INTRODUCTION

The 51st session of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs took place from 9 to 16 June 2012 in Shanghai and Nanjing, Peoples Republic of China. The meeting was hosted by the WCC's member church in China – the China Christian Council (CCC) – and was an historic event in that it was the first WCC international ecumenical gathering to have taken place in China since the inception of the WCC in 1948 and the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The CCC extended all possible assistance to coordinating the event, which heralded a new phase in the deepening of WCC-CCC relations.

### Programme

During the meeting's first session, the Commission received the address of the CCIA moderator in his absence. The address focused on changes in the geopolitical landscape and included sections on the emergence of BRIC<sup>1</sup>, the financial crisis, democratization and emerging markets in Africa.

This was followed by the report of the CCIA director, which focused on emerging geo-political trends in Asia and their impacts on international relations as well as ongoing ecumenical engagement in international affairs and global advocacy. Both reports were well received, incited lively discussions and helped set the tone for issues to be addressed on the meeting agenda.

Reports were received from the Commission's four working groups on activities since their last meeting in Kingston, Jamaica in May 2011, i.e., from the groups on: Peace in the community, Peace and security, Rights of migrants, migrant workers and stateless people, Freedom of religion and rights of religious minorities.

The groups' deliberations during the meeting allowed for the development of agendas and programmatic foci for their future engagement up to the WCC's forthcoming Assembly in Busan, South Korea – at which time the mandate of the present Commission terminates – as well as the identification of priorities for advocacy in the post-Busan period.

Four proposals for public issues statements were identified for the Assembly. They would initially be proposed for consideration at the 2012 Central Committee meeting. The statements would address: 1. Freedom of Religion and Rights of All Religious Communities in the emerging global context and politicization of religion; 2. Human Rights of Stateless People; 3. Global Peace and Security such as in the Korean peninsula, nuclear considerations, the power shift to East Asia ; 4. Follow-up to the Porto Alegre mandate – An Ecumenical Declaration on Just Peace.

The WCC general secretary joined the group sessions from June 15 onwards to guide the discussion on the future focus, size and structure of CCIA in the post-Assembly period in light of the report of the Governance Review Committee. The ensuing recommendations emphasized the need to refocus the activities of CCIA mostly within the framework of international affairs, working with a smaller Commission that could meet more frequently, i.e., on a yearly basis. Criteria for participation were identified and the need for continuity in membership from previous commissions stressed.

As the moderator had been unable to attend due to visa problems, the sessions were moderated by CCIA co-moderator Ms Noemi Espinoza, with the exception of sessions on the

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<sup>1</sup> BRICS refers to the countries of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, which were all deemed to be at a similar stage of newly advanced economic development.

future programmatic thrusts, composition and structure of CCIA, which were moderated by commissioner Rev. Shirley DeWolf.

### **Spiritual Life**

The spiritual life of the meeting was thoughtfully prepared by WCC worship and spirituality and CCIA staff in careful consideration of the venue, programme and participation. Sessions began each day with thought-provoking prayer, song and biblical reflection. Commissioners took full responsibility for leadership and participation, including the formation of an ad hoc choir to prepare and lead the music, which included songs in English, French, Spanish, Latin, Portuguese and the languages of Zimbabwe and South Africa. Spontaneous singing throughout the meeting was also an inspiring feature.

Participants were enriched by participating in church services in Shanghai on Sunday 10 June. They were able to witness the vibrant church life in the city as well as visit Dushuhu Church in an effort to understand the role this church plays in its specific setting of a newly-built town.

### **Experiencing China**

Three seminars on “Understanding China” covered topics of economic development, religions and religious policies and the church in China today. This gave commissioners valuable insight into modern-day China along with the opportunity for question-and-answer sessions relevant to CCIA’s perspective on the issues evoked.

### **Visits in Nanjing**

Visits were made both to the offices of the Amity Foundation and its printing corporation, and showed the wide range of involvement of the church in the life of Chinese citizens and Christians abroad through its Bible-printing operation. Commissioners also visited the Nanjing Union Theological Seminary and learned of the various courses for students from all over China, this being the only nation-wide seminary.

### **Next steps**

Working groups would continue to work on their areas of engagement up until the 2013 Assembly. There would be no meeting of the full Commission in 2013; rather, meetings of the working groups would take place as opportunities arose for the members to meet in conjunction with other events – at minimal cost.

## **CCIA MEETING: PROGRAMME**

### **Sunday 10 June**

Members of the Commission gathered in Shanghai on the evening of Saturday 9 June, and on Sunday morning proceeded in two groups to church services in the old French Concessions area of the city.

One group of commissioners visited the Shanghai Community Church, where they were received for a moment of presentation, exchange and fellowship. This was followed by a service led by Rev. Zhu Xia-lei and Rev. Zhang Ai-li.

The other group attended a service in Shanghai Jingling Church, which was located in the area of northeast Shanghai. The service was led by Elder Yang Ji'en and the preacher was Rev. Zhuo Zhuyin.



Both groups then travelled to Nanjing with a stop-off in Dushuhu, a district of the city of Suzhou in Jiangsu Province. There, participants visited Dushuhu Church and were received by Pastor He Jiemiao, who explained the life, witness and ministry of the church in the newly developed industrial area where it was situated.

## **Monday 11 June**

### **Opening Worship**

Worship was led by CCIA co-moderator Noemi Espinosa as participants gathered and read together Psalm 118, *His Steadfast Love Endures Forever*. The Bible reading was from Luke 19:28-39, *The Triumphal Entry*. The response to the Word was a symbolic giving out of stones, one for each participant, each of whom associated it with a face and name of a person they knew who speaks out; participants kept the stones with them throughout the meeting. The sermon was preached by Rev. Bao Jiayuan, associate general secretary of the China Christian Council and WCC Central Committee member, and prayer and hymns were important elements of this opening ceremony.

### **Opening Session / Call to Order**

The CCIA co-moderator Ms Noemi Espinoza welcomed participants to the meeting, expressing her happiness for this opportunity to meet in China to be with friends and also to be part of the larger Christian family. The opportunity was unique, allowing participants to understand more about churches and society and learn about China's social, economic, cultural and religious realities. As this was the last Commission meeting before the Assembly in Busan, it would be a very important meeting, she said. Thanking the CCC for hosting the Commission and allowing the commissioners to visit the beautiful country of China, Espinoza also expressed appreciation for all the work done beforehand by CCC staff.

CCIA director Dr Mathews George conveyed a special message from the moderator, Rev. Kjell Magne Bondevik, expressing his best wishes for a successful meeting. The director also explained the reasons for the moderator's inability to attend the meeting, especially his practical difficulties in attempting to obtain an entry visa to China.

CCC general secretary Rev. Kan Baoping warmly welcomed the participants and expressed his delight at being able to greet everyone in the People's Republic of China at this first international conference in the new China, and in a new phase of relationship and partnership between the CCC and the WCC.

Both the WCC and the CCC go beyond the boundaries of their member churches as a sign of the love of Christ on the path for unity, Rev. Baoping said. Culture always forms theological reflections; in China, this gave rise to CCC unity in the form of post-denominationalism. Although China was a geographically diverse culture, compassion and tolerance were seen as core values and must prevail. There was still long way to go for the CCC to be fully united but, said Rev. Kan Baoping, he was confident that this could be achieved.

To that end, he highlighted the need to relate with churches ecumenically and share witness with brothers and sisters in other parts of the world. In recent years, it was hoped to find solutions to economic turmoil in democratization. Yet, he suggested, we might need to break away from the utopia of democracy of individual rights in favour of that of community. Individualism would only feed personal desire. It was time for Christians to rethink Jesus' teaching on being humble and being a church of the poor.

CCIA director Dr Mathews George welcomed all participants and expressed deep appreciation to the CCC for hosting this first international ecumenical meeting of the WCC to take place in

China since its foundation in 1948 and the foundation of the People's Republic of China in 1949.

He read out the names of all participants – commissioners, proxies, guests, accompaniers and co-opted CCC and WCC staff – attending the meeting, conveyed apologies from several members who had been unable to attend, and read a special message from the CCIA moderator Rev. Kjell Magne Bondevik and his wishes for a successful meeting in China.

Dr Mathews George then outlined the meeting programme, which was unanimously adopted with the following provisions:

- At least one more session to be scheduled for “Discussion on identifying issues and priorities for advocacy and WCC Assembly Public Issues Statements”
- The report from the Working Group on Peace and Security to be taken in session 4; one of the groups due to report during session 4 to do so in session 3.
- Flexibility to be exercised in sessions 13 and 14 to accommodate potential spill-over from session 12.
- Efforts to be made to see if the programme could accommodate some act of solidarity (for example a visit to the Memorial Hall) in memory of the “Rape of Nanjing” (when a Japanese invasion resulted in the killing of 200,000 persons 75 years ago).

In a subsequent discussion, it was also agreed to find a moment to talk about the WCC 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

### **Sessions 1 and 2**

## **Moderator's Address & Director's Report**

In the absence of the CCIA moderator Rev. Kjell M. Bondevik, Mr Roel Albersberg presented the moderator's address.

This was followed by the report of the CCIA director to the 51<sup>st</sup> meeting, which focused on emerging global trends in the context of Asian realities. Many commissioners expressed appreciation for the comprehensive and detailed report; Dr Mathews George thanked them for their encouragement which, he said, he took as a source of motivation for the continuing work of the WCC's International Affairs Commission.

### **Discussion on the Director's Report**

Rev. Dick Avi raised the issue of West Papua and its right to self-determination, and the problem of lack of support from WCC Indonesian member churches. Priority attention as well as education throughout the world should be given to the decolonization of West Papua, Avi said. The director agreed that the situation was difficult, but also highlighted positive signs of change: mainline churches in mainland Indonesia might slowly come round to support this issue as they had done for East Timor in the 1990's, Dr Mathews George suggested. The WCC had issued a statement in February 2012 regarding the right to self-determination for West Papua which was shared with the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI), who had not raised any objections to it. It might be a long journey, but the WCC was staying close to the issue and doing what it could despite limited resources. The Council had sent a solidarity visit that was much appreciated, and participants had brought back concerns that were highlighted. The director also mentioned the WCC general secretary's upcoming visit to West Papua in the week following the present meeting.

Rev. Dick Avi also expressed concern for the situations in New Caledonia and French Polynesia. The director explained that New Caledonia was already on the UN list of countries to be decolonized, and that a referendum for independence was scheduled for 2014. On other hand, efforts were currently being made to ensure that French Polynesia might be added to this list, since France had had it removed some years ago – a situation that might take much longer to resolve. The WCC member church in French Polynesia had already brought this issue to WCC attention; following a visit by the WCC general secretary to French Polynesia in August 2011, the issue was reported to the WCC Executive Committee. The CCIA director had arranged for the WCC president from the Pacific, Mr John Doom, to meet with a former high-ranking UN official to discuss this issue; Doom and Dr Mathews George had met with this official in March 2012 and worked out certain practical details on how to follow up this matter with the UN Committee 24 that deals with decolonization. The director also mentioned that the next Central Committee meeting would discuss and possibly adopt a statement on “Re-inscription of French Polynesia on the list of countries to be decolonized”.

Mr Musimba Kuchera asked for clarification on accompaniment of Zimbabwe and Zimbabwean churches as they approached upcoming elections, and ensuring preservation of life at this crucial time. The director explained that the WCC had formerly been involved through its Africa advocacy work in CCIA, but that now the All African Conference of Churches (AACC) had initiated a process to accompany churches and processes, and had appointed Melaku Kifle as its special envoy. Thus, the WCC would now collaborate with the AACC through the CCIA Africa advocacy programme, and WCC programme executive for Africa and former commissioner of the Ethiopian-Orthodox Church’s Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission, Dr Nigussu Legesse was already in discussion with the AACC and Melaku Kifle. CCIA organized a round table discussion at the Ecumenical Centre some time back; some representatives of churches and civil society organizations in Zimbabwe who came to the UN Human Rights Council had visited the WCC and led the discussion. International election observers had also been sent in the past and might be sent again next election time; additionally, a small meeting on how to move forward might be organized. Sufficient resources to be in involved to any further extent were lacking. The director assured Mr Kuchara hat the WCC nevertheless remained very committed to this cause.

Bishop Duleep de Chickera questioned the lack of mention in both presentations of developments in Palestine in the last several months, including the fact that a declaration of an independent state had almost been reached. The director explained that many initiatives were taking place on Palestine, that the WCC had had an established position on the future of Palestine for decades, regularly issued statements and was very clear and consistent about Palestine’s right to self-determination.

Rev. Dr Tony Richie requested clarification on the analysis and implications of the situation in North Korea. He questioned the apologetic tone used while human rights violations were rampant, and urged that the WCC not inadvertently come across as accepting and approving some of the violations. The director explained that it was difficult to know whom to rely on for information. The WCC related to both South and North Korea. The first visit to North Korea by the WCC had taken place In 1984 when the-then CCIA director Ninan Koshy had made a visit. Subsequently, CCIA had organized an international consultation in Tozanso in Japan; this had been the beginning of several direct contacts between parties from both North and South Korea. The WCC had facilitated several other meetings since then in what had become known as the Tozanso process, resulting in established links.

On another level, former WCC general secretaries Rev. Dr Konrad Raiser and Rev. Samuel Kobia had both visited North Korea and raised pertinent issues with the authorities. The current general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit would also visit to ensure participation of North Koreans at the Assembly. The situation was presently difficult because the South was now somewhat acrimonious towards the North. To talk overtly about the human rights situation was

inadvisable, particularly when it was not possible to meet with Christians on the ground without going through the Korean Christian Federation. If other Christian groups or members existed in North Korea without the knowledge of the government, meeting them would mean running the risk that they would be crushed. It was not yet time for the WCC to issue a statement on freedom of religion and human rights in North Korea, and even the churches in South Korea advised moving cautiously, the director warned. Citing the example of the situation in former Eastern European countries, he concluded by adding that moving slowly sometimes bears results.

Rev. Dr Tony Richie found this explanation encouraging, but reiterated his view that the WCC should not offer tacit approval for human rights violations anywhere; it was not imposing WCC views on another country when the UN and other bodies had already made similar comments, he said.

Dr Rogate Mshana raised a concern on the emergence of the G20 as the preferred option for negotiation on world affairs; he recommended that instead, it be the "G192". As the G20 still owned 85% of the world economy, it was unwise to presume that the BRICS were so powerful. The CCIA director explained that comparing the G20 to the G8 did not mean that one ought not to aim for a "G192" concept. While he agreed on the "G192" concept, he considered that it needed to be accepted and popularized. Indeed, this was how BRICS was started: as a counter-weight to exclusive clubs pretending to help all nations. He also mentioned the lack of focus in G8's directions, especially at its Chicago summit, where delegates had taken no concrete decisions, were generally lacking direction and could offer nothing as a panacea for the European economic crisis.

Ms Tsovinar Ghazaryan remarked that mention of Eastern European countries was missing in the director's report. The director agreed it was underrepresented in this particular report, but reminded the Commission that this had been a particular focus of the 50<sup>th</sup> CCIA meeting in Albania in 2011. Substantial discussion had taken place then on freedom of religion and the transition from socialism to a market economy, and particular country situations – Russia, Poland and Romania – had been highlighted.

Rev. Shirley DeWolf urged that as this was the last meeting of this Commission, it should look at what had had been the central learnings gathered during the period since the last Assembly, and make that its contribution to the WCC. She mentioned that the present meeting location and subjects had been deliberately selected to focus on transition and the attention of the churches to this. The director concurred that the WCC did need to see how it could focus on the mission of churches in transitional societies and situations.

Rev. Dr Tyrone Pitts enquired about the relation of the United Nations Liaison Office (UNLO) to the CCIA. Acting associate general secretary Dr Rogate Mshana explained that the New York office had always been a CCIA office (including in the recent past, when the UN office had been under the CCIA International Affairs (IA) office, and had then moved to Programme 3 (P3)). While CCIA remained in P3, the UNLO was now directly under Rev. Dr Heilke Wolters, one of the two associate general secretaries for Programme. The current WCC general secretary was considering incorporating an ACT Alliance (AA) component into the UNLO to enhance AA advocacy capacity. AA had wanted to start their own office, but many common partners had encouraged them to do this jointly with the WCC in order to avoid having to fund two bodies. It had been agreed to discuss this matter more fully when the general secretary arrived, Dr Mshana said.

Metropolitan Youannes enquired about advocacy work on Sudan. The director recalled the long history of WCC involvement there: in 1972, the Council had initiated the Addis Ababa peace process and had continuously followed developments since then. Currently, the WCC was not leading efforts, but nevertheless was actively participating in them, he affirmed. The AACC was

in the forefront of the peace process. Only the previous week, the WCC had brought church leaders from the north and south together in Nairobi at a meeting in which WCC programme executive for Africa and former commissioner of the Ethiopian-Orthodox Church's Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission, Dr Nigussu Legesse, had participated. In relation to the work with the Sudan Ecumenical Forum, former WCC general secretary Samuel Kobia was the special ecumenical envoy to Sudan, and AACC efforts were under his leadership. Unfortunately, the current situation was unfavourable for meaningful discussion for peace and reconciliation and the political situation remained difficult, the director noted.

Metropolitan Youannes also enquired about work on freedom of religion and religious minorities. The director reported that an international consultation had taken place in Istanbul towards the end of 2011 involving countries where WCC churches were active in this area. The consultation had been followed by a smaller meeting in Thessaloniki to compile a report. Fuller details were to be covered in a session related to this topic. It was lamented that there had been no contact with government, as that was where real advocacy and decision-making could be done. The director explained that the WCC had followed the mandate received from the 2011 CCIA meeting in Kingston, that the report was a draft and that further action could be decided upon in the coming days. The last time that the WCC had spoken out about freedom of religion had been at its 1981 Central Committee meeting; requests for action in this area were being received and this issue needed to be addressed.

Lastly, the Metropolitan enquired about concrete action being taken on situations such as those in Syria and Egypt. The director explained that sometimes, as for example in Syria, churches didn't want the WCC to talk openly. A minute had been issued at a recent Executive Committee meeting, but the WCC had later been informed that it had been inappropriate to have sent it out (although at least one body had approved the action). A subsequent solidarity visit had been appreciated by some, but not all. In any event, the director reported, the WCC consulted with its member constituencies before taking action and respected their advice, wishes and sensitivities.

Mr Noel Fernando spoke of some signs of hope in Latin America, where many governments were involved in joint ventures for the wellbeing of their peoples, and where the Bank of the South and Alba were bringing the attention of the whole world to the difficulties of migration to North America as well as to the violence in Mexico, Honduras and Guatemala. The director opined that these positive signs needed to be welcomed: a consultation on this topic was being planned for 2012. How to bring it to fruition would be explored with the commissioners (and especially Ms Noemi Espinoza). There would also be a solidarity visit to Honduras in the context of the work on peace and security in Latin America.

Some discussion took place on the future of the CCIA including a shift in composition as proposed by the general secretary and the Executive Committee, based on the questions raised by Ms Lina Moukheiber and Bishop Duleep de Chikera. One issue seemed to be the question of capacity, eliciting the suggestion that experts be brought in. This was supported in principle, but had to be balanced with a base in the churches. Reflections should focus on the fact that CCIA's relevance was based on its prophetic and visionary outlook for people, not institutions; this must not be lost. There was also the worry that merging AA into the UNLO would dilute CCIA's effectiveness.

The request to include feedback on decisions taken and recommendations made at previous meetings in future Director's Reports was registered.

### **Discussion on the Moderator's Address**

Several comments were made lamenting the unfortunate absence of the moderator and the fact that he would thus be unable to explain or respond.

Metropolitan Youannes was perplexed to read of a reference to “some being so tired of authoritarian regimes that they had become genuine democrats”.

Dr Audeh Quawas criticized the term Christian churches – as he presumed that all churches were Christian – and added that it was unclear whether this referred to structure or people. He was also very sensitive to the term “Christian minority” in his own situation in Jordan where he considered that ethnicity and citizenship should be the first criteria before religion for judging minority/majority status. He observed that it was inaccurate to suggest that the Arab Spring in Yemen resembled that of other countries, and that it was inappropriate to lump all Gulf countries together regarding public dissatisfaction with their situations, as the processes in each country were widely different. He also expressed dismay at the confusion between Islamist parties and Muslim brotherhoods, which were non-political and provided only social activities. Most heads of churches thought that if Muslims came into power, they would be in danger. But under a proper democratic regime, Christians might have more rights than they had now, Dr Audeh Quawas said.

Bishop Duleep de Chickera considered that the argument that some parts of the world were going through turmoil and were looking to other parts that were not demonstrating restlessness was unfair. Some areas were in turmoil *because* of the negative impact of countries that were ostensibly peaceful. So whether turmoil was visible or not, the WCC should stand for a safe, reconciled world and should beware of highlighting areas where there was supposedly no trouble.

Both Ms Lina Moukheiber and Metropolitan Youannes missed analysis on the Middle East and requested that an expert on the region be present at the next meeting.

Mr Musimba Kuchera remarked on emerging markets in Africa and the problems related to traditional aid and silence around trade. Imbalanced trade without aid could not take African countries out of poverty. Investment had to be founded on strong national laws. Without that, there would be serious problems and a repeat or recurrence of poverty through practices such as non-protectionist agricultural policies and the dumping of low-quality products. When these big imbalances were removed, even investment would no longer be relevant to Africa and aid might no longer be necessary.

Mr Thomas Kang agreed that traditional aid didn't work as it often went to corrupt sources and could kill infant sectors/markets.

Dr Rogate Mshana regretted that there was no reference to or call for action on finance. On the issue of growth in Africa, he made the point that it was only South Africa and countries with oil and minerals that were growing; the trend was not continent-wide.

In responding to these comments, the director reminded the Commission that the report was not a policy document. He regretted that CCIA moderator Rev. Kjell M. Bondevik was not present to bring more clarity. He had surely intended his oral intervention to flesh out the points in the written document. The moderator's address had always been used as a basis for meaningful dialogue to pick up on certain issues. Bondevik had said he wanted to focus on the European economic crisis and the Arab Spring; the ideas evoked might be used to sharpen the thinking on how to evolve ecumenical responses, and those experiencing on-the-ground realities could contribute more.

### **Session 3**

## **Report from the Working Group on the Rights of Migrant Workers in the Arabian Gulf Region**

Dr Audeh Quawas referred to the decision taken in Jamaica to start working on this issue. He expressed thanks to Dr Mathews George and Ms Seta Hadesian (MECC) for the exploratory visit they had undertaken to Dubai and Sharjah, and to Dr Mathews George and Ms Segma Asfaw for facilitating the work of the group since it had been formed in the Albania meeting. This had been followed by a May consultation in Kerala, India, which counts approximately one million migrant workers in the Gulf Region. The consultation had originally been slated to take place in Dubai, but was moved on the request of MECC. To compensate for the lost opportunity of meeting in Dubai, Dr Audeh Quawas and Ms Segma Asfaw had visited there just before the Kerala meeting and had spent a busy two days contacting church representatives, going to churches, speaking with migrant workers and visiting some migrant labour camps, where they had witnessed at first-hand the suffering of the inhabitants. They had also visited various churches, a small group of youth migrant workers in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church House, and the Anglican compound that accommodates more than 120 churches in separate homes.

Most migrant workers – numbering about 2 million – in the UAE region were Christians. In general, males worked in the construction industry at low grades and females in the domestic sector; all were under the *kafeel* system that was responsible for workers, retained their passports and restricted their movements and job change. Advocacy to end this system was badly needed, Dr Audeh Quawas said.

The living condition for many males was squalid and inhuman. Recruitment agencies were another major problem whose activity was tantamount to human trafficking with false contracts or exploitative rates to guarantee visas. Job contracts were in Arabic and the workers didn't understand what they were signing, which led to further complicate issues.

He concluded that the main target should be the ratification of the 1990 United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW). Churches must work towards achieving this. Since its creation, only 28 countries had ratified it so far.

Ms Segma Asfaw added that one of the abuses migrant workers faced was lack of freedom of movement and association and to form trade unions. Most of the domestic migrant workers were from South Asia, but there were also currently three flights per day, each bringing some 200 domestic workers from Ethiopia. Treatment of the workers was deplorable: they were often confined to the house in which they were working, their *kafeel* held their passports as a form of coercion and they had no option but to stay there. Working hours were long; they were at times deprived of sleep, beaten, raped, and even killed. In some instances, the dead bodies were simply thrown away with no identity on them.

Of the 28 countries that had ratified the Convention, these were mostly the sending countries. A further international instrument, the ILO Convention 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers, had so far only been ratified by Uruguay despite the fact that its formation had been seconded by most member countries.

### **Discussion on the Report**

In response to Metropolitan Youannes' enquiry, the next step was to continue working on the issue and do advocacy with parliamentarians and politicians to get the ICRMW ratified and to strive for Ministry of Labour agreements in sending and receiving countries. Some countries

had regulations for persons leaving to work abroad. Sri Lanka, for example, would not allow any girl to go as a domestic worker for less than 350 dollars per month, one day's leave per week, a two-year contract and the salary paid into a bank account. On the other hand, the Ethiopian government was doing nothing, so their workers were the most vulnerable. Through the communiqué from the WG, all member churches were called to start working on this in their regions.

Rev. Dr Dan Sandu enquired whether the scope could be expanded to include, for example, migrants in Europe with human rights problems. Ms Kathryn Fournier evoked situations in Canada and wondered if the issue could be expanded to a global level. Rev. Dr Tyrone Pitts also spoke of the plight of Haitian, Mexican and Hispanic workers in the US and of Filipino workers in Hawaii who also suffered, and asked how to get this issue into churches and how CCIA and other WCC departments could do the lobbying to influence this through a process. Dr Audeh Quawas explained that the situations outlined above were not comparable to that of the Arabian Gulf Region, and regretfully, the scope of the issue could not be widened due to lack of resources. Ms Segma Asfaw added that the focus on the Arabian Gulf Region was decided by the Working Group on Rights of Migrant Workers according to the mandate from the CCIA Jamaica meeting. This region had been chosen because there were a lot of Christians there, but they had no structure to bring them all together in a common platform. It was hoped that some progress might be made on that count in the future in order to coordinate efforts for better impact. While the Roman Catholic Church was very well established, the WCC needed to exert its role to convene and make connections.

Mr Roel Aalbersberg urged that the member churches should strive towards getting governments to ratify conventions, and offered to connect the WCC with the Ecumenical Migrant Network – an offer that was readily accepted.

Rev. Shirley DeWolf stressed how the church needed to be there at all stages, not simply to deal with the end result of a bad system/process. The church needed to be involved in the accompaniment. The WCC used to have a programme dealing with migrants, refugees and uprooted people, with a strong emphasis on ministry to strangers. In Africa, when migrants had moved, they were no longer in church space and did not see that they had a connection. They needed a space to be designers of the way out of their problems. Where this had been available, re-integration had been much stronger. So the question was: how does the WCC engage and how do we get church back into migrants' hearts?

Dr Audeh Quawas said that while the communiqué was sent to all WCC member churches and governing body members, more still needed to be done. He concluded that receiving and sending countries didn't always have the ability to control the mobility of all persons, and opined that education was the only solution.

Ms Segma Asfaw added that there had been some bilateral agreements – India and the Philippines had tried to work towards that aim, and Indian NGOs had been very active: employers were obliged to report that persons had been employed, guarantee the minimum wage and ensure that workers got a cell phone. Churches in other countries had not been able to perform this kind of a ministry for migrant workers. We need to find ways to engage churches through their connections to talk to governments to ratify the UN Convention. If a receiving country signed it, this was a first step to recognize migrant workers as human beings.

The CCIA director added that the WCC used to have a programme with several executives for uprooted people, with a focus on migrant workers. Staff time allocated to this had diminished. Now, the emphasis of the migration-related programme was on "migration – a changing ecclesial landscape", and the project had been shifted to the Unity and Mission programme area. Attempts to bring it back to CCIA's remit had not been successful, but CCIA had tried to



refocus on this area through the Working Group on Migrant Workers and Stateless People, with the addition of the interfaith dimension.

## **Report from the Working Group on the Rights of Stateless People**

Mr Joyanta Adhikari presented the report from the Working group on the Rights of Stateless People which looked into the issues of Nepal and the Rohingya and other people in Bangladesh. A visit had been made to Nepal to meet with Bhutanese people there who had concerns about their citizenship status. A meeting had been held with the Nepal government; a Maoist minister had denied that there were stateless people in Nepal, and insisted that they pretend to be refugees but were not. In 2008, there had been about 100,000 concerned persons; with the assistance of UNHCR, the number now stood at around 57,000. Several rich countries had offered citizenship to them. Many (about 10,000) elderly persons felt they would not be able to settle elsewhere, so they had remained in Nepal. LWS in Nepal was giving support through food and regular and technical education so that persons could go to other countries. Churches were weak in Nepal, but were trying to get together and advocate on these issues.

Rev. Didier Crouzet reported on a visit to Bangladesh to a Rohingya refugee camp in Cox Bazaar. In the 1990s, a large body of Rohingya people had fled from Myanmar to Bangladesh because of persecution, but Bangladesh had considered them to be illegal immigrants. There were presently some 28,000 persons officially recorded, but as many as 200,000 were estimated to be living outside official camps, were denied all rights and were labelled as economic migrants. Official refugees got UNHCR help, but others had no assistance, no protection from the law, and received no education, health care, food, etc. There was consequently a lot of tension with local inhabitants.

In conclusion, the Rohingya people were called stateless, but knew where they came from, who they were, and their identity. The church in Bangladesh was very weak and not skilled enough to cope with the issue or lobby by themselves to the government. They needed the ecumenical family to lobby for them, to build links for their needs through local churches to approach the government, which does not respect international standards regarding stateless people.

### **Discussion**

Rev. Dr Tyrone Pitts remarked on how this opened up possibilities for stateless people internationally. In the US, there was a large group of stateless people through the Dream act: students who could not get jobs or benefits. The work there should be used for other groups, e.g., in the US, Lebanon and Palestine, by broadening the scope. Dr Rogate Mshana commented that some of the recommendations in the report were very broad while others were very specifically within the CCIA mandate, and asked within what framework more concrete proposals could be formulated.

Rev. Didier Crouzet explained that the Working Group was trying to find a formulation between local and general issues. Thus, the recommendation could be seen as an Asian or a worldwide issue, and the Working Group might make some differences for implementation of next steps.

Bishop Duleep de Chickera explained that the Rohingya were more than a community in Myanmar that had been driven out. It was a Muslim community, and some rights groups were taking this up as an issue of ethnic cleansing. They had been born in Myanmar, but were not welcome in Burma and so had been shipped out. WCC work in this field was new, so we might need to network with others like the Equal Rights Group in London, which had done considerable work on this issue.

**Tuesday 12 June**

### **Morning Prayer**

The morning prayer was led by Rev. Shirley DeWolf and included an antiphonal reading of Psalm 146, *Put Not Your Trust in Princes*. The text for the day was Mark 6:30-44, *Feeding the Five Thousand*. Bishop Duleep de Chikera gave a reflection on this, after which participants held Bible studies in small groups. Prayer and hymns complemented these other elements.

### **Session 4**

## **Report from Working Group on Freedom of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities**

The report of the group was available in Document 12. Speaking on process, Rev. Dr Dan Sandu referred to the Istanbul Conference that had gathered specialists on freedom of religion in their own contexts. The substantial outcomes had been circulated by e-mail only due to the volume of the material compiled at a subsequent meeting in Thessalonki, Greece. The text was built on the bases of spiritual values and the religious aspirations of all humanity. The WCC was fully aware of how the issue was related to human dignity as a basic value, but this was often not respected, e.g., in national religions.

Rev. Dr Tony Richie made reference to the theological content of the report. Discussion had been based on the image of God and all humanity; he stressed that human rights were a gift of God and not inherent. He also affirmed that human diversity in this context was comparable to the Holy Trinity, and freedom of religion extended to religious minorities addressing the alien as a stranger. Christianity had adopted a minority mind-set; we are a pilgrim people travelling through the world, so we should always identify with all aliens and strangers in our land. Christians must speak boldly and commit to freedom of religion.

The International Human Rights framework was based on International law and that made us responsible as Christians. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states:

*“Everyone had the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.”*

This had economic, social and cultural ramifications and encompassed many diverse aspects such as discriminatory issues, family law, freedom of expression and association, building places of worship, right to freely convert, apostasy laws and religious education.

In conclusion, religious minorities were often treated as second-class citizens and were discriminated against in all areas of life. While there was sometimes overt persecution in this post-Cold War situation, there was also a pervasive but subtle use of secularism to stifle and undermine religious freedom. Commissioners were urged to give their attention to the actions in the report.

Ms Christina Papazoglou added that while it was important to ratify the Convention, governments would seek to enact it rather than the legislation that was the real problem. Turkey had been chosen as the venue as it was a secular state with a predominantly Muslim population which allowed freedom for religious minorities. Three local eminent professors who participated in the meeting stressed the importance of maintaining the WCC presence in Turkey in order to keep the dialogue going on freedom of religion in their country.

## Discussion

Bishop Duleep de Chickera commented that to support the cause was to work towards a vision in which the mission of the church would be redefined. We don't want freedom so that we can convert the world to Christianity, but so that all may be free to practice the tenets of their own faith. If this was to be understood as a vision for a better world, it put the whole point of Christian mission into question.

Rev. Didier Crouzet strongly recommended the document "Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations for Conduct" (Code of conduct) as a useful resource; this was endorsed by Dr Mathews George, who added that the document had been widely welcomed in Christian and non-Christian circles. It was available on the WCC website and in hard copies. This was part of CCIA's work through Interreligious Relations and Dialogue in collaboration with Mission and Evangelism and Faith and Order. Rev. Dr Tony Richie also affirmed that the Code of conduct was helpful; it stressed the democratic system that went hand in hand with freedom of religion and was based on the image of God that transcended political approaches, including monarchy, socialism or any other regime. Freedom of religion allowed the context and environment for churches' mission to be carried out.

Ms Vanna der Ohanessian requested clarity regarding the implication – contrary to her own understanding – that Turkey was portrayed as a "good" situation for freedom of religion. Ms Christina Papazoglou explained that Turkey had not been used as an example of religious freedom; rather it was a unique example of a current administration giving more rights than any previous ones.

Dr Audeh Quawas underlined the need to differentiate between Sha'ria and Islam. Saudi Arabia was the only government that implemented Sha'ria. Turkey was a secular state and the government could not be officially linked to any religion; some small steps had been taken in recent times; the attitude had been changing.

Several members enquired about next steps. The last time freedom of religion had been openly addressed by the WCC was at a Central Committee meeting in 1981 when a statement had been issued. The next steps were in the hands of the Commission, but could include a public issues statement at the 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly on the issues highlighted by the study process.

### Working Group on Peace in the Community

Ms Emily Welty reported that the Working Group had concentrated on resource extraction, as this was a cross-cutting issue that also looked at poverty eradication and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Reviewed directions of thought had brought the group to include mining, oil, petrol, coal, fossil fuels, timber/forestry and fishing in their purview. This fitted well with the IEPC frameworks regarding just profits, was consistent with CCIA-WG guidelines and also fitted the Assembly theme.

There would be a report to recommend that churches encourage discussions at grassroots level covering:

1. Theological reflection, what does it mean for us as Christians, for our stewardship?
2. Economics, just profit, sustainability, value of people, God's view of profit. It fits with the greed line. Equity: who profits?
3. Ecological approaches, care for creation, sustainable development.
4. Human security, resource-based conflict, structural violence, human rights, inter-faith collaboration.

The report would conclude with recommendations for advocacy and a list of best practices. It might be published in the *Ecumenical Review* or as a stand-alone paper, and could be a starting point for more conversations at the Assembly.

## **Discussion**

Rev. Dr Carlos Intipampa remarked on how the West thought it had the key for peace for the rest of the world and was the main actor in peace-making. He argued that Indigenous People could witness on this too. Too often, we thought of peace in a Western way, and that the West was at the centre of the universe. But Indigenous Peoples looked at peace in a holistic way in the context of community; they thought of peace for all creation, not only for humans. God had made a covenant with every living thing, not only humans. So we must think also of an interreligious peace. The eradication of Indigenous Peoples had not been a good example of peace-making, and the prejudices of colonization remained.

Ms Kathryn Fournier recalled the repudiation of the doctrine of discovery that led to colonization and genocide. This also applied to the freedom of religion debate.

Ms Emily Welty agreed to stress a link to colonialism, to relate present efforts to history, and how the issue had been linked to violence. Indigenous Peoples' ways might be the model we move towards for best practices. The Western model was not a shining example and might need to be led by the Indigenous one.

## Working Group on Peace and Security

Rev. Shirley DeWolf explained that the Working Group had not met since Jamaica in 2011, but were now meeting in Shanghai and looking at staff activities and the input from some regional church gatherings and consultations as well as interviewing several commissioners. An overview of where the Working Group stood would include:

1. Interpretation for the churches' work in a Just Peace framework as a guiding concept.
2. Overview of priority concerns for work by the churches.
3. Observations on progress at global and regional levels, with some inspiring examples.
4. Red-flagging of issues that needed greater attention by the churches.

Ms Kathryn Fournier added that the four IEPC themes had been a helpful lens for understanding the issues. The revised *Just Peace Companion (JPC)* called this putting us in mind of Christ in forgiveness. It was not a passive or weak stance, but rather implied an emptying of self, responding to the costly call of discipleship. Referencing the *JPC* gave helpful direction and methodology for churches in their Christian pilgrimage to peace in the areas of prayer, service to the community, using money ethically, etc.

Rev. Shirley DeWolf outlined some areas of concern, stressing that these did not necessarily need to be compartmentalized to CCIA or the WCC:

1. Environmental degradation and climate change – irreversible, threat to future of entire planet.
2. Threatening use of nuclear weapons, heightened tensions, waste management, can't separate energy from warfare.
3. Continuing war industry driven by economic gain and projecting violence as best way to deal with conflict. Vulnerable populations come off worst. Proliferation of arms going into new conflict areas.
4. Dominant economic systems and control of access to life-necessary resources, water, mineral, food-producing land. Desperation, corruption, unaccountability threatens the stability of the planet
5. Politically repressive systems of government provoke violence as a response. New political systems in Africa always provoke violence. Impunity to justice leads to conflict.

6. Inter-group identity-driven hatred. Often related to other sources of conflicts.
7. Moral decline undermines social fabric and leads to violence.

All the above aspects interacted and intensified each other so there was a need to be integrated in the work we did. The group noted the efforts of churches, regional meetings and consultations such as:

- The 2011 Durban conference that stimulated African churches to come on board with climate change issues.
- Korean and Japanese work on a world without the threat of nuclear annihilations.
- Arms Trade Treaty started at the IEPC.
- The Greed-line study was important regarding exploitation.

In conclusion, items to be red-flagged included:

- a perceived decline in church involvement;
- a danger of looking only at macro-level churches; need to keep their eyes on the ground.
- political ethics had been more vigorous in the past;
- a need to get the right structures sharpened in the WCC;
- R2P needs to be built on.

### **Discussion**

Mr Roel Aalbersberg observed that most members of the ACT Alliance were working on these issues as well as the ones raised in the previous report, and that he would ensure that CCIA's work was shared with them. Rev. Dr Tony Richie urged that more attention be given to radicalization and religious terrorism vis-à-vis faith-based violence. Dr Audeh Quawas opined that this was better described as misuse of religion. Referring to the R2P basis for intervention in cases of atrocity crimes, Bishop Duleep de Chickera urged that the list of such crimes be expanded to include:

- manufacture of (weapons of mass destruction) WMDs and trafficking of them;
- dehumanizing economies that kill slowly, that dehumanize and humiliate;
- plunder of mother earth leading to global warming.

### **Session 5**

#### ***Seminar on Understanding China -1:*** **China's Development Goals: an Overview**

##### **China's Development Goals**

Prof. Tan, professor of management at the School of Administrative Management in Jiangsu Province, outlined the contemporary situation of economic development in China, with particular reference to China's transition from socialism to market-oriented reforms.

The last 30 years had seen great economic development, accumulated wealth and increased standards of living. There had also been an increasingly developed political culture with significant achievements but in 2012, there were several trends to observe:

1. China's economy had slowed down like that of the rest of the world.
2. The domestic consumption needs for a population of 1.3 billion put pressure on development.

3. Decreased demand for exports since 2009 was due to the world depression.

These declines signalled a need to change structures to reach balance. China had been called the world factory because of its continued growth of production industry, traditionally for export. As the yuan had appreciated against the US dollar, euro, pound sterling and other major currencies, a future in commercial exports was still foreseeable.

Recently however, China had become a very domestic market for its own products. That said, Chinese culture did not promote consumption, but rather an ethos to “save for rainy days”. So in the past, the pattern had been one of low consumption and high savings. In constructing the market economy, there was an effort to balance this with more investment. For the last 30 years, investment had been more than 20% of the GDP. Indeed, it had exceeded 30% in some years. This could result in problems like inflation, rising prices and decline of income. The province had tried to draw lessons from the past 30 years.

The government tried to build a harmonious society that was socialist with equal opportunities so that all might have the same level of wealth, and there was an attempt to reduce the gaps in income between regions and industries. A minimum wage was established, but this also put pressure on production, reducing the competitive edge and resulting in bankruptcies in some instances.

Real estate was at the centre of people’s and the government’s attention and a major obstacle to future growth. This market was going through a period of regulation and was also affected by the emergence of the virtual economy. The reality was that the real estate market was very close to the state of the Chinese economy in general. The government tried to ensure that sufficient resources were put into real estate for the lower-income class, but hadn’t yet done enough, and more regulation was still needed in this area.

### **Environmental Protection**

The situation with industrialization was similar to that of the rest of the world. There were many issues related to the environment, such as pollution. The government had realized the significance of the issue and was seeking solutions. There was less attention paid to this in the 1990s, but in this new century, the government was looking for new models to save energy, encourage environmentally-friendly industries and develop an eco-culture.

Water pollution was a particularly serious concern, particularly in the western part of the country in the coastal region which was the most developed. Contributing factors were the chemical industry in Nanjing, rural discharge of metal into rivers and soil, and farmers burning weed stalks in coastal areas. Efforts were being made to dissuade this practice, but they were not very effective. These environmental crises posed a threat to the stability of society and the welfare of human beings.

Saving the environment was costly, and low-efficiency technology was generally used. The country was consuming lots of energy, but there was investment in improving efficiency and training. There had been some successes: regulation of the discharge of heavy metal, water pollution, oxidization of lakes. The process was being controlled and investment for protecting environment had increased. As farmers got richer, they would be sensitized to these concerns.

In trying to control emissions reduction, regulation focused on certain industries such as iron, steel chemical, power, coal, paper and dyeing. Jiangsu Province was renowned for its heavily polluting industries, so efforts were being made to try to regulate these. Clean construction and recycling were being promoted to approach the international standard proposed by the G20. In the past decade, the regulations of the Tokyo Protocol had been followed to make reductions in iron and steel plant emissions and regulate car standards also for emissions. Only cars built before 2005 did not conform. The government was also making efforts to improve drinking

water quality and controlling air pollution; they were responsible, but had also to be held accountable.

### **Poverty Alleviation**

In 1978, China's very poor population was estimated at 250 million; by 2010, this had been reduced to 26.88 million. Due to an imbalance of social development, the welfare system was affected and it was not well coordinated. This was a typical problem of developing countries. The government tried to redress the situation by increasing income invested in social welfare.

The European recession could be largely attributed to its consumption policy. China should also beware of the high income trap, but probably needed to worry less about this. There was the need to improve the social welfare programme but at the same time be careful not to have lower efficiency of personnel and lose the motivation and impetus to work harder to increase income.

Poverty alleviation was a focus at state council level. 5 billion yuans had been put into a programme for this. Since early 2012, six thousand villages were in the programme to invest in the creation and cultivation of industries and talent. This was a change of concept compared to the past, when poverty alleviation consisted only of providing funds. There were plans for graduates to go to local villages to help the local population through the official village programme and training of personnel. More promising industries were introduced so that the villages could develop their economy, and enable the areas to develop partnerships and friendship with other areas.

### **“Marketization” Process and Reform**

The reform began in 1978 and was a period of transition; many countries, including for example Russia, were very devoted to this at that time. What China did was progressive. Some criticized this, but being radical would not have been good for China. In essence, China had promoted land reform in rural areas and the state-owned economy as a basis, to regulate financial power of local markets to break/prevent any monopoly of major goods.

Markets were regulated and systems set up to deal with problems; private industries were given help with reduced taxation and utilities prices. Development was linked with stability and there was an effort to reform distribution systems to improve the livelihood of the population.

### **Discussion**

Mr Thomas Kang remarked that environmental protection might be efficient in the short run, but costs would be paid later, and that it was important to talk about this. As church, it was important to state that growth was not the end of the process. The focus should rather be on people-approached development – what matters was the quality of life. Growth alone was not enough. Recognizing that education was the key to long-term poverty alleviation, he enquired what the basic policy was to prevent inequality and promote long-term growth and development.

Prof. Tan responded that human life, not growth, was the ultimate goal of human society. But economic development was a basis; without it, there was no starting point for the development of life. Education was one of the most important areas for development. In the past, only five years of school had been compulsory, but it was now nine years, and there were plans to expand this to twelve. This was an important indicator of human life conditions.

Dr Rogate Mshana enquired about China's Gini coefficient. Prof. Tan responded that it was between 3 and 4 but difficult to gauge as not all areas were covered and it varied from year to year.

Mr Masimba Kuchera asked how much the government had invested in clean energy and how much research had gone into developing this area for production and clean-related growth. The government invested 2% of the GDP in improving technology for this purpose and they were aiming to increase this to 3.5%, Prof. Tan responded.

Rev. Shirley DeWolf enquired about overseas investment and policy guidelines that help to develop it, especially in Africa. Overseas countries, especially in Africa, had been very grateful for the support they had received via foreign investment from China, Prof. Tan said. Efforts were being made to reshape enterprises to go abroad to manufacture, and industrialization was encouraged and promoted in some areas. In the Jiangsu Province, investment overseas was basically trading and manufacture.

### **Session 6:**

## ***Understanding China- 2:*** **Religions and Religious Policies in China**

The meeting was delighted to welcome Mr Jiang Jianyong, deputy minister of Religious Affairs of the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA), who spoke on the topic of “The Role of Religion in Building Harmonious Society in China”. Mr Jianyong had visited the WCC in 2003 as part of a People’s Republic of China religious affairs delegation at provincial level. His intervention today was from federal government level.

### **Religious Policies**

China was a multi-religious country, comprising the recognized faiths - Protestant, Catholic, Muslim, Taoist and Buddhist; coexistence of these religions had developed gradually over China’s long history. There were also considerable communities of folk religions and Russian Orthodox.

The government had instituted religious policies that corresponded to reality to ensure and implement religious freedom via independence, autonomy and positive guidance for socialistic society. There were six major aspects in this:

1. Religious freedom was a basic right for all citizens in the Constitution. Respecting and protecting this freedom was a very important embodiment of protection of human rights.
2. There was a policy in place to respect religious customs related to deep national, social and psychological roots that changed with society as it developed.
3. Belief was a private affair and citizens had the freedom to believe or not believe; there was no compulsion to believe or discrimination against those who did not believe in any religion. There were measures to respect and protect religious freedom in regions where minorities existed.
4. The state protected normal religious activities, but these must be performed in a framework and not interfere with affairs of the state. The government had functions to carry out, while religions had theirs. China was a secular country; all religions must observe secular laws. There was no predominant religion, and all were treated equally. The state could not develop nor extinguish any religion
5. Rights and obligations went hand in hand. Religions could not have rights only and not observe obligations. Religious people had to maintain compliance with China’s Constitution, laws and policies. To be a good believer was to be a good citizen.



6. The starting point to freedom was to encourage economic development and cultural harmony.

### **Administration of Religious Affairs by Law**

1. This referred to the management of religious affairs related to the interests of state and society. The main purpose was to protect lawful citizens against any illegal practices and to ensure that religious activities were carried out in an orderly manner. Regulations were signed and issued in 2004, and had been put into practice since March 2005, this was the first comprehensive set of laws enacted to protect religious freedom and promote harmony.

2. The principles of independence and autonomy were a key for relations with overseas religious groups, and religious groups in China should be indigenous, not controlled from overseas. This preserved sovereignty and the dignity of the state. Overseas forces must be resisted.

3. Religious groups had always been encouraged to have international relations with mutual respect, and to take part in the promotion of world peace through contacts with people of different countries. All groups had had lots of communication with overseas groups and had shown great accomplishments. The CCC intended to take bigger steps in terms of international relations in the future.

4. Positive guidance was given to religions so that they might be compatible with socialist society in order to adapt to changing society and persevere in solidarity and promote harmony and cultural prosperity. Religions were encouraged to handle the relation between tradition and modernity and to update doctrines that would prosper and harmonize. The administration opposed extremism and heretical teaching.

### **Roles that Religions Could Play**

Groups were encouraged to promote societal harmony, cultural prosperity and economic development. Harmony was linked with work and politics and was in a fairly new stage. Without religious harmony, there could be no social harmony. This was essential for pluralistic co-existence and applied in four areas:

1. Harmony within one religion was a prerequisite;
2. Interfaith harmony;
3. Harmony between religions and society for peaceful order;
4. Harmony between religions and state was most important and impacted all other aspects.

At a recent interfaith harmony week, all five religions published a common declaration of love for their country and promotion of religious tolerance through active roles. These were important also for economic development via the Chinese manner of building socialism. Believers were active in all industries, loved work and made sacrifices.

CCC/TSPM would hold a symposium on how they could contribute to the economic development of the country. They also provided social welfare and services. Compassion and helping the vulnerable had been good traditions of religious groups, and this had helped social accountability. Poverty alleviation, disaster relief, education, free medication, funding poor students and environmental protection were practical ways to boost economic development. Since the opening-up phase, religions had actively served society. The current policy was not so clear; there were limited resources, projects were small-scale and not very standardized. To support this, SARA was trying to establish development through encouragement and regulation, and helped contacts with other bodies including government departments to stimulate religions to be more active in social welfare and charity work.

Religion was not only a matter of faith, but also culture. Faith had interplayed with culture and civilization in history, literature, art, medicine, music, etc.; these all stemmed from religion. Thus, groups were encouraged to adhere to their culture and protection of their heritage.

## **Discussion**

Father Podznyayev of the Russian Orthodox Church based in Hong Kong observed that China had become more involved in international relations, and cited successful events like the 2008 Olympic Games and the 2010 World Expo. He asked what spiritual contributions international religious societies could bring into China and, likewise, what contributions Chinese religions would want to bring into international areas.

Mr Jianyong responded that the State Administration of Religious Affairs had always encouraged the CCC to strengthen exchanges with overseas churches and institutions because it was still a growing church and needed support and help from overseas. For example, CCC was working on theological renewal, education, personnel training and diakonia work, and the Administration thought that they could benefit from the experience of their counterparts elsewhere in the world.

Rev. Dr Carlos Intipampa asked if religious harmony was only a formality or a reality, with theological dialogue between religions.

Mr Jianyong replied that while all religions made contributions to China's major value systems, only one was indigenous – Taoism. All others came from other countries. Buddhism was introduced from India 2000 years ago, but had integrated and was part of Chinese traditional culture. Both religions had rich ideals of harmony and oriental wisdom, and could help us to find solutions to conflicts and frictions in the world. Their councils had made great efforts in that regard.

Confucianism was a core cultural value and played an important role. There were links and commonality with Christianity, and both could make contributions to the development of the world. Harmony among religions was important for the harmony of society.

If there was a definition of a religion, was there space for more religion under the current system? Ms Cristina Papazoglou asked.

Mr Jianyong responded that religion was hard to define. Even today, religious communities could not reach an agreement, but that should not affect the effectiveness of regulations. The government was aware of other religions such as Eastern Orthodox Christianity, Judaism, Hindu, Baha'i and Mormonism. Their freedom was respected, but the government had not as yet recognized them officially.

Mr Roel Aalbersberg was impressed that a role was seen for religions to play in creating a harmonious society. Referring to increased cooperation between African countries and China in the past decade, he asked whether churches in China could facilitate a dialogue with churches in Africa to exchange insights on the best ways to cooperate. Mr Jianyong confirmed that exchanges between churches in China and Africa were being supported.

Ms Vanna der Ohanessian asked how non-denominational churches came into being. Mr Jianyong commented that while the CCC was post-denominational, Christians in China still respected those with a confessional background, and added that the CCC president would elaborate more on this in the next presentation.

Rev. Dr Dan Sandu enquired about relations with the Vatican, where a head of state was also the head of the church, and appointed cardinals. He asked to what extent the Chinese state

imposed the appointment of bishops, and what happened when tenets of faith contradicted those of the state, e.g., on the question of having many children.

Mr Jianyong remarked that following the changes in the system since Vatican II, the Catholic Church in China was autonomous and independent and chose its own bishops. This was a choice made after non-approval of a candidate in 1958, after which they had begun to choose and consecrate bishops by themselves, consecrating some 70 to 80 bishops since then. Since opening up, the Vatican had sought to improve its relationship with the Chinese government, but this would necessitate that it stop diplomatic relations with Taiwan. The Chinese government was still in touch and in dialogue with the Vatican, but had not reached consensus on some things and still had a long way to go; it lived in hope.

Dr Rogate Mshana asked what percentage of Chinese were considered to be religious, and about their contributions to socialist values and social development, especially how they could be encouraged to do the latter to a greater extent in a more coordinated and professional way.

A rough estimation, made through surveys and studies, was of 100 million believers across the five major religions, but it was believed that the real number must be higher. However, it was not possible to be accurate. Core values would absorb all good elements of civilizations in society; more studies and exploration for social welfare and charity work were being undertaken, especially in training of expertise and personnel as well as learning from counterparts like NGOs.

Where there any state officers that were believers, asked Rev. Didier Crouzet . There was no restriction but it was not common, was the answer. For example, a high functionary in Sichuan Province was a committed Buddhist, and this did not affect his career.

Mr Joyanta Adhikari asked if missionary activity was discouraged. Mr Jianyong responded firstly that freedom of religion was a private affair. Evangelization was not restricted, but must be conducted on religious sites. Christianity was the fastest-growing religion since opening up, although all five religions had grown in the recent past.

Mr Jianyong concluded the session by thanking participants and inviting them to visit SARA if they came to Beijing.

### **Session 7:**

## ***Understanding China -3:*** **The Church in China Today**

Dr Mathews George introduced and welcomed the president of CCC, Rev. Gao Feng, who was the most prominent Christian official in the country and had held office for three years. He emphasized that Rev. Gao was of a younger generation of Christian leaders than his predecessors, and had been exposed to a wider range of realities, studied outside of China, travelled extensively, visited the WCC and participated in international programmes. He was also president of the Nanjing Union Theological Seminary.

Rev. Gao began by expressing sincere gratitude on behalf of the CCC and the STPT to the commissioners for coming to meet in China.

He briefly related the history of Christianity in China, brought to the country in 1807 by the first Protestant missionaries. Before then, mention of Christians in historical records referred to Nestorianism in 635 AD, which had prospered for some 200 years; Franciscans were sent by

the Pope in the 13<sup>th</sup> century; and Jesuit fathers in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, of whom the Italian Matteo Ricci was the most successful. He had shifted to a Chinese lifestyle in dress, food, customs, respect for traditions and ceremonies, but disagreements and controversy on rituals had still arisen, so in 1720, the church had been banned and lacked any roots before 1807.

Missionaries had worked hard during this phase, but it was difficult for them to evangelize because of the church ban. Then, there had been a massive entry of missionaries from the Roman Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox churches after the two opium wars, when the government had signed treaties with foreign powers such as Britain, France, the US and Russia, which included patronage articles with terms to protect the missionary movement.

Still, missionary activity was associated with imperialism and this perception had been reinforced in modern history due to various imperial invasions and attacks. Thus, citizens were strongly averse to and resisted western forces and the church. In addition to conflict between civilians and church, anti-Christian movements had arisen. Christians had become a target for all to attack and had suffered a lot.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, some visionary church leaders had realized that they could not rely on protection, so they had initiated self-supporting movements. Some pastors had set up self-supported administered churches for the propagation of the gospel, and had not looked for protection from patronage articles or financial support from abroad. Many independent churches had been established in this period. In 1949, when the PRC was founded, the church had been faced with the challenge of how it could continue to survive in China. Some church leaders had therefore launched the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM); ever since then, the CCC had become independent and autonomous and held up the tenets of the TSPM.

The present church had four characteristics. It was:

- independent and autonomous;
- post-denominational;
- fast-growing;
- faced with lots of challenges and emerging difficulties.

#### *Independent and autonomous*

The CCC took the TSPM approach, upholding the three-self principles in accordance with teaching in the Bible. While the church was independent, the ecumenical and catholic nature of the church could not be ignored. Thus, the CCC stressed the importance of relations with ecumenical communities. In 1948, when the WCC was inaugurated, four Chinese churches had joined. In 1991, at the WCC's 7<sup>th</sup> Assembly, the CCC had been readmitted into official membership of the WCC. With headquarters in Shanghai, the overseas relations department was a very important one, mixing with all denominations and receiving up to several delegations/visits per day.

#### *Post-denominational*

In the 1950s at the time of the Korean war, many denominational mission societies had moved out of China and churches had lost their financial support, human resources and church members. Without this support, the churches could no longer function individually and in 1958, leaders and ministers had discussed how to get together and hold united worships, which led to a non-denominational structure from which came the post-denominational name. It was not an entirely united church, yet, although the CCC could learn something about unity from the WCC.

#### *Fast-growing*

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, religious policy had resumed and churches were able to be reopened. Two things were important at that time: printing Bibles, and the setting-up and

opening of seminaries. The period of the cultural revolution in the 1960s and 1970s had been disastrous: all Bibles had been destroyed, thus the need for new ones. The first seminary to be re-opened was in Nanjing. Bible publication was still a major work; in recent times 3.5 million Bibles were produced every year. In November this year, the Amity Printing Company would celebrate the printing of a 100 million Bibles. In the 1980s and 1990s, three churches had been reopened or built every two days. Over 400,000 persons had been baptized every year. It was estimated that there were more than 20 million Protestant Christians in China but it was difficult to be sure. There were 3,700 ordained pastors – a third of whom were women – 5,600 elders, and 190,000 lay leaders. The churches continued to grow. There were 21 seminaries and Bible colleges, and other ministries had seen great development of social services and publications.

### *Challenges*

There was a severe shortage of pastors and well trained lay leaders. Many grassroots churches didn't have ordained pastors. Urban churches were growing fast; with demographic change, groups of more educated members and more businessmen were emerging. There were not enough preachers to serve those groups. Lay training was also a challenge; due to the shortage of pastors, there was a need to rely on them to shoulder responsibilities. They could manage church affairs and preach on Sundays, but mostly did not have formal theological education. Seminaries lacked faculty members and books. Unity was the goal, but some denominations wanted to remain as such, so the challenge was to respect their conditions yet retain unity. There was also the problem of how registered churches could care for unregistered churches which didn't have government recognition.

### **Discussion**

On ways in which the registered church cared for the unregistered church, there were six criteria to be fulfilled for registration (number of preachers, finance, etc.), and the registered church tried to help unregistered churches to meet the necessary criteria so that they could, for example, publish and provide Bibles. There were different kinds of unregistered churches, and some didn't want to be registered. They might think on a doctrinal basis that they didn't need to be registered. Some didn't have identity cards or were supported by overseas bodies and encouraged not to register.

On pastoral training: there were two-, three-, and four-year programmes; local congregations sent young candidates who then returned to their local congregation to serve for three years. Then, if their work was recognized, they would be recommended to the provincial council and after a certain process, ordained. There was a shortage of pastors because citizens were reluctant to send their children for training. The Christian population was growing fast, but the rate of pastoral training lagged behind and had left a gap. In the past three decades, the 21 seminaries had trained 10,000 graduates, but not all had reached the stage of ordination. Statistics showed that one pastor had a large number of faithful to care for: 4,000 in urban situations and 40,000 in rural situations.

On ethnic minorities: there were 55 ethnic minority groups that had their own traditions, mostly in the south-western part of China. Some regions had a high percentage of Christians: in some villages, all the inhabitants were Christian. But it was still hard to do mission work in some Muslim regions as they were exclusive and missionary activity sometimes even involved a life risk.

On China's challenges and opportunities compared to those of other Asian countries where Christianity is a minority: the majority of the total world population are believers. There are 1.2 billion atheists, and most of them are in China. The believing population had grown fast over the last three decades, but compared with the whole population, it was still very small. We could compare this to South Korea for example, where a third of the population were Christian and the government played an important role. Some challenges were also blessings, i.e., growth. The letters that Paul wrote to the early churches showed that they did not have adequate

leadership, but the Lord was faithful to them, and we believe that the Lord is with the Church in China.

### **Wednesday 13 June**

#### **Morning Prayer**

The morning prayer was led by Ms Emily Welty with an antiphonal reading of Psalm 82 *Rescue the Weak and Needy* after the opening words. The biblical reading was from Romans 14: 13-19, *Do Not Cause Another to Stumble*, and the reflection on this given by Rev. Shirley DeWolf. Bible study in small groups, prayer and hymn were also part of the service.

#### **Sessions 8 and 9:**

### **Meetings in Working Groups**

Working Groups met separately to identify issues and priorities for advocacy and WCC Assembly Public Issues Statements.

#### **Session 10**

### **Reports from Working Groups on deliberations during sessions 8 and 9 on identifying priorities for global advocacy and Public Issues Statements for the Assembly**

#### **Peace in the Community**

*Focus on the post-MDG period:* While the goals had not been achieved, some progress had been made and we needed to ask what should come next. On sustainable development, we needed to go beyond development as growth and human wellbeing and extend it to all creation. The idea was to examine and engage in goals for this.

*Poverty eradication:* The situation was worse after the financial crisis, the gap between rich and poor had widened and we needed a campaign and different statements. The space for civil society was shrinking. The issue should be approached at all levels: UN, governments, churches, donors, the corporate sector and individuals.

*Energy and resource extraction:* This should continue as a strengthened emphasis, with water and land (land-grabbing, large companies buying for fuel production) and the green economy added.

*Finance from an ethical and moral perspective:* debt, micro-finance, tax havens and other avoidances. Finance should be a tool of the people, not one that controls them.

#### **Rights and Dignity of Migrants, Migrant Workers and Stateless People**

*Proposals for programmatic work until the Assembly:* As a follow-up to the Alwaye consultation, to hold a global conference in an Arabian Gulf country on the rights of migrant workers, in collaboration with MECC, CCA and AACC. This consultation would deal with the issue of migrant workers in different parts of the world.

- Accompany the work of the migrant churches in the Arabian Gulf countries by creating an ecumenical platform that would assist in coordinating their efforts to avoid duplication of goals and objectives.
- Raise ecumenical awareness on migrant workers by celebrating December 18, i.e., International Migrants' Day.
- Staff in Geneva to attend sessions of the Committee on the Convention on Migrants, Migrant Workers and their Families, and report back to the CCIA Working Group on Migrants.
- Work towards the ratification of the 1954 and 1961 UN Conventions dealing with stateless people. Ask the UNLO to take up this issue of ratification.
- As a follow-up of the December 2011 Bangladesh consultation, hold a consultation in the USA hosted by NCC USA/any US Churches and UCLA Law Centre, on the DREAM Act and other stateless people around the globe. Participants of this consultation – including stateless people – would prepare the first draft of a Public Issues statement on the human rights of stateless people that would be presented at the Busan Assembly.

#### *Proposals for the Busan Assembly:*

- Hold a *Madang* on the human rights of stateless people;
- Hold a *Madang* on the human rights of migrant workers in the Arabian Gulf;
- Public issue statement on the human rights of stateless people;
- Space on the Assembly programme, with worship, an ecumenical conversation, a presentation in plenary, etc., on stateless people read by a stateless person (Korean, Japanese);
- Ask for a Decade on Poverty Eradication and the Sustainability of Creation;
- Have a Public Issue Statement on the Christian presence in the Middle-East, particularly after the Arab Spring;
- Ask for an action from the Assembly on member churches in Jerusalem and the negative effects of the occupation on the Palestinian people.

### **Freedom of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities**

*Public Issues Statement on Freedom of Religion:* the last one was made in 1981 and so much had occurred since. This should be based in theology but applicable to all religions, be principle-oriented. Five main points from resolution of 1981 were reaffirmed (see Doc. 12 page 6).

#### *Priorities for global advocacy:*

- Religious freedom in the Middle East (this had implications for the west and vice versa);
- Fundamentalism in all religions was a matter of safety as it disturbed peace in community and church; further interreligious dialogue, framed in human rights was called for. Religious fundamentalism was a recurring theme in different contexts. An historic example was the genocide of Armenians in Turkey. This was religiously motivated. Modern examples in Asia included Buddhist fundamentalism in conflict with Muslim Rohingyas, Pakistani Muslims against Christians, banning the use of the word Allah by non-Muslims in Malaysia, demonization of Indigenous people, etc.

#### *Recommendations to CC and EC:*

- CCIA to initiate a new programme thrust on freedom of religion within the context of human rights, involving the Vatican and other world religions; effectively a study by all for all.
- Focus on politicization of religion.

### **Peace and Security**

*Public Issues Statements.* Several options proposed on:

- Arms, conventional arms, meeting in Korea with unification as part of the discussion, the issue of arms proliferation not only in Asia but in Latin America and Africa falling into wrong hands. State how churches should continue working on the Arms Trade Treaty. Disarmament.
- Nuclear arms. There was a minute from the Porto Alegre Assembly in 2006, but the group felt that the issue should be approached through three dimensions – humanitarian, ecological and energy-related.
- Climate change from the point of view that those who were contributing least but suffered most consequences, for example, in the Pacific. Note other vagaries of climate change which the Peace in the Community group could expand on or that we could combine with.
- Governance gap in three dimensions – the failure of election systems, resulting in manipulations or unsuccessful coalitions; the weakness of national governments to cope with multinational companies (land used to grow food for other countries); the geopolitical shift to Asia and corresponding moves by other geopolitical players to further destabilize the region, which did not enhance security for people.
- R2P with a focus on the responsibility to prevent. Churches had to do this before considering or moving to intervention.

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## Discussion

Ms Tsovinar Ghazaryan called attention to the alarming situation of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict over the Karabakh. Peace talks had been fruitless; people – both civilians and soldiers – had died on border lines. She urged a call to remove snipers from the frontline and for help for church in peace-building. She also proposed a focus of upcoming work in support of the Armenian cause in 2015 on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their Genocide.

Bishop Duleep de Chickera commented on the politicization of religion and suppression of some religions by other dominant ones, e.g., in Myanmar, where Buddhists were attacking Rohingyas. If the Rohingyas began a war for a separate state and independence, it would mean that the international community had failed to prevent this. This was another sign of how we must strengthen work in prevention. He also re-urged widening the list of atrocity crimes to include weapons of mass destruction) WMDs manufacture and transactions, or at least restricting such transactions. Mr Joyanta Adhikari opined that climate change should be taken up in a very serious way at the Assembly, as many countries, e.g., Bangladesh, would be under water in 50 years.

Regarding ratification of the ICMW, Mr Roel Aalbersberg urged that in addition to efforts at the UN, our own network of member churches be used to approach their respective governments, thus working from both sides. He also spoke in favour of a decade for poverty eradication which, he felt, could encompass all the concerns that the Commission was dealing with.

Rev. Shirley DeWolf commented that some aspects, e.g., climate change, had come up in the Peace and Security (P&S) report that this Working Group didn't normally deal with, but that this needed to come from that group as a security concern in order to see how we could feed this into another Commission.

Ms Kathryn Fournier said that in addition to Public Issues Statements (PISs), Peace and Security had also discussed advocacy more generally and had not come up with specific items but rather guiding principles: It had to be possible to follow PISs up. The WG felt strongly that the Just Peace lens and framework added value to the work and urged use of the *Just Peace Companion*.

Dr Mathews George explained the procedure of PISs at the Assembly: the Assembly would look for new things to highlight and say as a world church body. Proposals might also come from the floor. Some had been proposed for areas where we already had ongoing engagement



and that had already been reported on in previous sessions. We could provide more clarity on these. Some had just started, like the ratification of the ICMW, that even sending countries hadn't ratified. The guiding questions should be how we could intensify our work, what platforms we would use. PISs were not always the only or the most obvious way.

As the groups had reported back in varying formats and proposed some overlapping issues or a volume of work that CCIA did not have the capacity to undertake, a small group comprising Mr Thomas Kang, Ms Vanna der Ohanessian, Rev. Dr Tyrone Pitts and Mr Masimba Kuchera was appointed to synthesize, prioritize and streamline the suggestions.

### **Session 11:**

#### **Visit to the Amity Foundation**

Participants joined in a visit to the Amity Foundation, an autonomous Chinese voluntary organization that was created in 1985 on the initiative of Chinese Christians to promote education, social services, health, and rural development. The commissioners were cordially received by the general secretary Mr Qiu, Ms She Hongyu and senior members of staff. In his welcome speech, Mr Qiu spoke of the long-standing relationship between Amity and the WCC and welcomed the delegation with a warm heart.

This was followed by presentations on:

- NGOs in modern China;
- A 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary film entitled "Love Never Ends";
- A new initiative in NGO incubation;
- Church and social service programmes.
- The visit ended with a round of discussions, and the outing concluded with a convivial dinner in a restaurant in the vibrant Confucius Temple Square area of the city.

### **Thursday 14 June**

#### **Morning Prayer**

The morning prayer was led by Bishop Duleep de Chickera, and included the communal reading of Psalm 138, *Give Thanks to the Lord*. The Bible reading was from Matthew 5:44-48, *Love Your Enemies*, and the reflection on this was given by Dan Sandu. Bible study in small groups, prayer and song were also part of the service.

### **Sessions 12 and 13:**

#### **A new thrust for CCIA in the post-Busan Assembly period**

It was decided to request Rev. Shirley DeWolf to moderate these sessions.

Greetings from the WCC General Secretary, Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, and Discussion on the Future of CCIA

The general secretary expressed his great pleasure at being present at this meeting amongst friends, and for the opportunity to discuss how best to use available resources in order to fulfil the WCC's mission in the field of international relations.

He observed that many people's image of the WCC had been shaped by CCIA's responses to international affairs challenges. CCIA work had been a WCC trademark, a sign of strength and relevance. There had also been critiques: a common criticism had been that the Commission was too political. But it had been vital for the WCC to respond to political challenges, and it had accepted this responsibility long before others had begun to assume this task. What CCIA had done was to find a common voice and a way to deal appropriately with difficult questions, i.e., around a common table with well prepared discussion, qualified staff, etc.

The fact that the WCC had undertaken actions that the world had listened to was a gift and a calling from God, he declared. The Commission had been controversial, and had had an impact on thinking and on reality. This had encouraged reflection on how things should be, how God wants the world to be. While we didn't know everything, we still believed – in all humility – that we had something to contribute. We must always be open and courageous; it really made a difference whether we did/said something or not.

Fykse Tveit emphasized the need to look at how available instruments were helping the WCC to perform its task in this field. Reflection had already begun at staff and governing body level. Given the resources, context and situation, it was necessary to define the most strategic way forward, what to do with available instruments, how to shape them for today and tomorrow to allow the Council to do what it was called to do. This also involved reflection on the mandate and structures given to commissioners. Now was the time to reflect on these issues – a time of change and opportunity, but also of continuity; CCIA should bring the best of the past into future.

The general secretary expressed his great appreciation for the Commission's work in defence of and on behalf of many people around the world. Commissions were strong instruments and it would be very unwise to disconnect from them. The WCC governing bodies recognized the need for input from WCC commissions to lead and guide their work, Fykse Tveit affirmed.

He reported that CCIA was regularly solicited in various ways. On the one hand, there were daily questions regarding the WCC position on diverse issues. If the issue had already been discussed, it was often possible to respond concretely, especially if the response could be supported by existing statements, documents, etc.

A greater challenge was how to address newly emerging issues, or those that were evolving. Even if the WCC had already taken a stance, situations changed. The general secretary thus needed a Commission that could guide him on how to react to new situations such as that of North Africa last year, or events evolving in the Middle East.

He also received daily requests to deliver lectures, write articles and in general provide input to discussion in the field of international relations. There was a rich store to glean from, but it was important to keep it updated, he said.

Fykse Tveit then informed the meeting that the WCC was facing a situation of limited resources. It therefore needed to be a good steward and avoid having too many structures. The February 2012 Executive Committee meeting had asked that he bring a proposal for a revised CCIA. He had agreed that before doing so, he would consult with the CCIA moderator and commissioners.

The Executive Committee believed that WCC commissions should play stronger roles as groups of resource persons and experts to serve the WCC and the ecumenical movement, he said. A smaller CCIA that met more often (once a year) in order to provide more regular updates might be one solution, he suggested.

A discussion on whether CCIA could include other mandates had begun in 2006, partly due to the need – in view of budget restrictions and an effort to avoid fragmentation – to streamline the commissions system.

However, even if CCIA's format remained unchanged, new programmatic areas could rely on their reference groups and would not be left unaccompanied, Fykse Tveit assured the meeting.

Rev. Shirley DeWolf suggested three entry points for the discussion:

- Mission and mandate – how to sharpen the understanding of CCIA's mission.
- How to design the instrument /structure to reflect integrated realities on the ground and ensure a sharply honed Commission that was clearly focussed to play a specific role; operational methodology and mechanisms that would allow CCIA to offer a rapid response service when needed, with informed analyses and responses from the viewpoint of the local church, interfaced with the problems we face in the world.
- How to introduce changes for effectiveness without destroying progress and momentum already achieved.

CCI director Dr Mathews George clarified the background of the Memorandum in Document No. 17a. This provided general background information on the WCC restructuring process and ongoing debate at governing bodies' level, and included the views and advice of the general secretary and the Governance Review Committee. It was motivated by the fact that the mega-sized Commission had proved unwieldy and unfocussed at the operational level.

A CCIA sub-commission on by-laws had met since 2006 to monitor the issue and had identified flaws in the present structure such as, for example, a lack of links with other bodies and activities like the IEPC (although subsequent attempts were made to rectify this with the formation of the Reference Group for IEPC Follow-up on which CCIA was well represented).

CCIA officers and moderators of working groups had met on 9 June 2012 regarding CCIA's future structure and possible by-laws changes, and had used this as starting point for the discussions. These had been initiated by staff, but had referred to ongoing debate in other bodies and groups; the Memorandum would also be helpful background information for the deliberations of the entire Commission.

Metropolitan Youannes reflected that the main need in his region was for advocacy work as this was what had the greatest impact.

In response to a request for the notes from the 9 June meeting, Dr Audi Quawas explained that this was unnecessary since the discussions had been inconclusive. There would be no need to change by-laws until the whole group had heard from the general secretary. In fact, there was much reluctance to make changes because of the UN ECOSOC status allowed by the present by-laws; rather, appendices might be used to reflect any modifications. At present, all that might need changing was the number of commissioners and staff positions mentioned therein.

Bishops Duleep de Chickera thanked the general secretary for consulting the Commission before concluding the process. He could see the reason for moving the focus back to international affairs exclusively, but at the same time saw the need for integration with other programmatic areas whose issues would always be relevant for CCIA's work. The Commission had seen a lot of changes, especially in the recent past, and he questioned whether adequate time had been allowed for these seeds to flourish. Dealing with a complex world must not make us panic and rush into change.

Another concern was the time required for new commissioners to fully understand how CCIA worked; a one-day orientation with the presence of the general secretary would be needed.

The general secretary explained that in the context of appointing a new Commission after the Assembly, the purpose of the present discussion was to look at what needed to change, ensure that by-laws reflected that, and take on board what had been learned over the last period. However, while by-laws were important, they were not the main issue. More important was where and how CCIA could make the strongest contribution. This session was a hearing phase; it would be followed by a decision-making phase.

The Commission could serve the WCC in different ways. In its present form, it had been complicated for CCIA to join all the programmatic agendas. The WCC must develop the advocacy voice of churches; excluding some dimensions of the former structure would not necessarily mean excluding ACT Alliance (AA) concerns however. CCIA could work with a smaller number of commissioners; size should be defined as a function of how to carry out work at the most efficient level while ensuring representation of the WCC and beyond. Commissioners should each be able to satisfy criteria like thematic competence; gender, regional and confessional balances. Nevertheless, a minimum number of members – around 20 – would be required to get the right balance. Frequency of meetings could also be discussed. Formal status in the UN system must be maintained. An effective Commission could even be re-created with just some small modifications. The change did not have to be radical, Fykse Tveit concluded.

Mr Masimba Kuchera urged that the link between the Commission and staff be strengthened. Commissioners should not be surprised to learn about what had been happening in the Geneva office; they needed to be kept up to date.

In relation to the UNLO, it was important to remember that part of what had made CCIA effective had been how it had related to the UN and had communicated the churches' position to governance. It would be good to know what advocacy issues UNLO was working on now. The Commission needed information on ongoing UNLO work to be effective. A kind of information apartheid had put some Commission members into a position of being unable to contribute; a deliberate organic link should be built into the new ways of working, Kuchera urged.

Ms Emily Welty agreed that commissioners needed more information, but suggested that they also needed to be ready to contribute more. More regular meetings would be helpful, but efficiency could also be improved through other means such as Skype, e-mail, etc. When recruiting commissioners, it would be helpful to inform them on what was expected of them in terms of time and other commitments. Lastly, she remarked that keeping some continuity from the previous Commission would help new members to get up to speed and become fully functional as quickly as possible.

Dr Audeh Quawas pleaded for a relaxation of the pressure of balances when appointing the new Commission in order to recruit the necessary levels of expertise.

Rev. Shirley DeWolf commented on the frustration felt by commissioners at their ineffectiveness; some hadn't really understood the latitude or expectations. Dr Bertie Ramdanajan, a former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights who had been close to the WCC and CCIA in the 1980s, had commented at last year's CCIA meeting in Albania that he no longer heard the voice of the CCIA. This signalled a need to be clear about CCIA's specific focus. Continuity and building on seminal work done was essential.

Even before the term R2P was used and concerned with what it saw on the ground and among church populations, the WCC had already brought forward some of the ethical and principled

ways of dealing with the “Responsibility to Protect”. This had fed into the UN process. In the last few years however, the Council had seen the UN invoking this international agreement in unfortunate situations like Libya. Such use of R2P was not what the WCC had envisioned. Now there was the situation in Syria and the need to avoid making the same mistakes, but the church had been relatively silent. There was a need to finish what had been started, to move it forward and to be consistent.

Speaking truth to power was one of the Council’s central *raison d’être*; if it was to concentrate on international affairs, it was difficult to see how that could be done without the UNLO. CCIA used to be responsible for that office, evaluate and ensure its good functioning, yet had lost contact with UNLO for some time. UNLO might well serve churches or the WCC, but certainly not CCIA except perhaps during the annual advocacy week in New York, when delegations could speak directly to representatives from members’ countries.

DeWolf spoke in favour of these events, and stressed their importance for CCIA. Lastly, she urged considering methodologies for cross-fertilization, for example, with Faith and Order for theological work, and suggested that it could be good to have a representative from the Act Alliance (AA) at CCIA meetings.

Ms Tsovinar Ghazaryan urged the WCC to establish a baseline, set indicators for measurement of effectiveness of the next Commission, and build in monitoring and evaluation steps, i.e., set up goals and measure their attainment. Also, as all issues – Armenia-Azerbaijan for instance – reached the news, it would be good for CCIA to keep their eyes and ears open for such issues that also need and merit its attention.

Rev. Dr Carlos Intipampa evoked the Indigenous concept of the need to look both forwards and backwards. The WCC had helped to make the voice of the poor audible and had given help when needed, thus playing a prophetic role in the world. It must not be forgotten how helpful it had been for the most needy. In our efforts to continually transform the world, we needed to rethink how we could play a more prophetic and important role from now on, read the signs of the times and ensure that CCIA had an impact.

Referring to CCIA’s involvement in prophetic ecumenical witness. Dick Avi noted that it needed expertise to counteract harmful developments on the ground that, like the IMF, represented symbolic failures in our communities. CCIA had been effective at the UN and in parallel side events, but still lacked the courage of its own constituency on solidarity actions around the world. It needed to beware of staying at a level of expertise that was too high to impact the community. WCC was not visible on the ground any more, Avi said.

Bishop Duleep de Chickera opined that it would be good to evaluate the work of every commission at the end of its tenure, asked to have a UNLO person at future meetings of the CCIA, and thought that more regular meetings could increase CCIA’s efficiency. Regarding recruitment, he preferred to speak of people being well versed/specialized in certain disciplines rather than use the word expert. There was also a need for balance between expertise and spirituality – CCIA mustn’t lose that dimension.

The general secretary acknowledged the importance of all the issues raised. They merited more than a quick response but, given the time limitations, he could share only the following reflections:

Regarding expertise, competence and qualifications three components of knowledge were essential:

1. Knowing the background to an issue. This expertise could be brought in by staff or other experts presenting an issue; they didn’t necessarily have to be permanent members of CCIA.

2. Knowing how the church and churches discern together what they should do and say in responding to issues, and identifying the role of the church therein.
3. The ability to formulate messages with expertise in areas such as human rights and political science, but also theological ethics, communication and knowledge of contexts.

In order to be effective, CCIA ought to profit from past experience, but also needed those who would lead the Commission into new ways of work for tomorrow.

There was a need to re-establish the connection with the UNLO and develop a strategy to combine relevant efforts, improve methodologies for better impact and influence. CCIA could not work as before, but needed to develop new ways and exercise careful stewardship over its resources.

The Commission could reduce the number of its members; it needed to be more focussed and use commissioners' capacities more extensively between meetings by, for example:

- Ongoing involvement by staff with commissioners as they prepared for governing bodies meetings;
- Appointing a core group for at least conference calls between Commission meetings;
- Meeting annually.

The ACT Alliance (AA) should be represented in CCIA in order to bring their issues for discussion; that link should also happen through staff. The relationship with governing bodies should be strengthened to ensure their increased presence in the discussions; commissioners needed to be well informed.

CCIA had been perceived in the past as representing the moral voice of the churches, although it had also been "accused" of being too concerned with political issues. Its role had been to take steps ahead of what the churches could do. The churches needed CCIA to encourage and empower them, and we thank God that we had voices that could do that for the benefit of all. We are all responsible to the calling to being church, and we can always learn more about the will of God by praying and staying together in our witness.

Commissioners asked for a synopsis of the morning's discussion, and the session concluded with intercessory prayers for the imminent elections in Egypt.

### **Visits to Bible Printing Press and Nanjing Union Theological Seminary**

On the afternoon of Thursday 14 June, participants visited the Amity Printing Company, a joint venture between the Amity Foundation and the United Bible Societies. Since its inception in 1988, the Amity Bible Printing Company had produced over 80 million Bibles and would have reached 100 million by November 2012. It was the largest Bible printing operation in Asia with an ongoing mission and priority to serve the Christian Church in China. Besides its domestic production, Amity was also a major exporter to over 60 countries including the US, Britain, Spain, Australia, South Africa, the Philippines, Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria. During the visit, all participants were given a personalized English Standard Version of the Bible in Chinese and English, the general secretary signed an 80-millionth edition and also received a version of the same as a gift.

The participants then continued to Nanjing Union Theological Seminary, where they were warmly received by faculty members and students alike. Designated as the Church of China's national seminary, it focuses on training pastoral workers, teachers and researchers. In order to promote overall development of the students in both spiritual and theological knowledge, the seminary emphasizes "spirit, virtue, knowledge, health, and community".

The visit began with musical presentations from the students, followed by introductions to the seminary's life and syllabus. The visit concluded with a convivial moment of fellowship around dinner.

## **Friday 15 June**

### **Morning Prayer**

The morning prayer was led by Rev. Dr Dan Sandu with the Bible reading from Luke 18:1-8, *The Parable of the Persistent Widow*. The reflection on this was given by Ms Emily Welty. Bible study in small groups, prayer and song were also part of the service.

### **Session 14:**

#### **Continued Discussions on the Future of CCIA**

A summary of what had emerged from discussions regarding the future of CCIA with the general secretary on the previous day (sessions 12 and 13) was distributed and accepted as a true record. The floor was then opened for further elaboration and/or fine-tuning. The following modifications were proposed:

- add continuity when Commissions roll over after the Assembly;
- ensure better liaison with UNLO representation, including participation in CCIA meetings in whatever capacity;
- include the relationship with the wider ecumenical family (see point 3.7 of doc 17);
- ensure orientation for new commissioners and state expectations of commitments;
- incorporate the central mission of CCIA – speaking truth to power;
- stress how CCIA should be one or two steps ahead of the churches.

Mr Masimba Kuchera felt that with these additions, the synopsis could be a useful guide, but felt it should also contain practical guidelines with concrete recommendations. This suggestion was endorsed by Rev. Shirley DeWolf.

Rev. Dr Tyrone Pitts agreed, reminding the meeting of the need to establish a document for the general secretary to take to the Executive Committee. The Governance Review Committee (GRC) was also interested in having CCIA feedback, so he hoped that the synopsis could serve both purposes and also include mention of CCIA's appreciation for this consultation process.

The general secretary fully concurred that it would be helpful to have a document as CCIA's conclusion of the conversation with recommendations, including any proposed changes in by-laws, to bring to the governance group.

Mr Masimba Kuchera and Ms Kathryn Fournier volunteered to succinctly pull the thoughts together to capture the spirit of what had been discussed.

Bishop Duleep de Chickera attempted to summarize what the general secretary had said: there was a need for the WCC through the general secretary – and sometimes Executive or Central Committee – to respond rapidly to questions and issues that emerged. Consequently, even although CCIA had done some good work, there was a need to restructure it so that it could support this particular challenge. On people's competence to serve on CCIA, that connected with numbers. It might be prudent to work towards a smaller 20- to 25-person Commission. It might also be better to meet once per year as opposed to every 18 months. In essence, composition should be judged in terms of competence and numbers, frequency of meetings and some mechanism for accessibility and rapid response in relation to WCC's responsibility in current affairs.

The general secretary added that more than either monitoring or developing programmes, CCIA's most important role was policy-making for the WCC on issues that needed to be discussed. There was a need for more dynamic communication between staff and the Commission.

In the selection of future commissioners, competence and specialized knowledge in the following areas were needed:

- technical expertise
- local knowledge
- matters of faith and wisdom
- knowledge of how the churches function
- being involved in the practice of what the Commission was focussing on
- knowledge of how the political institutions worked and made decisions
- a WCC and CCIA relationship with Pentecostal and Evangelical churches
- diversity of voices, including, for example, the Roman Catholic Church
- members able to fulfil multiple roles/representation/areas of competence

Much debate ensued around the number of new Commission members, bearing in mind the wish for more regular meetings against budget restrictions. It was decided to propose "not more than 30" members; the new Commission should conform to the GRC principles for all commissions to ensure fair and adequate representation, i.e.,

1. Personal expertise
2. Fair and adequate confessional representation
3. Geographical and cultural representation
4. Representing the main interests of WCC
5. Representing world interests
6. Nominations to come from churches
7. Maintaining a balance of laypersons, gender, youth and disabled persons.

Some doubt was expressed about the concept of "fair and adequate representation" as it could be open to many interpretations. Rather, an ethos of trust should reign.

It was also agreed to recommend yearly meetings, and that frequency should take precedence over size; the aim would be to have the highest number possible that could meet yearly. The general secretary reminded the meeting that it would also be possible to bring in resource persons for particular discussions as necessary.

Some minor technical changes to the by-laws would be required, notably in articles 4.1 and 4.2 regarding the size of the Commission and staff job titles. There should be no changes in article 8.2d). Otherwise they were well reaffirmed.

The general secretary acknowledged this consensus for keeping the by-laws largely as they were with the proviso that necessary adjustments might be made in light of Central Committee general decisions on all commissions plus those specific to CCIA. Thus, the general secretary requested that the CCIA officers be authorized to ensure that these steps be implemented.

Dr Audeh Quawas said that giving this task to CCIA officers was not a legal way to proceed. The appointment of the new Commission with appropriate changes would happen some two years hence, but the current Central Committee did not have the power to approve these changes in addition to all the other work they had to do. The Nominations Committee had to review the work of the Governance Review Committee (GRC), so bringing more work related to by-laws would not be helpful. Rather, the new Commission should be aware of the situation and agree on necessary by-laws changes at the first full post-Busan Central Committee meeting.



The general secretary agreed that as the current by-laws were largely fine, the next Commission could deal with these changes.

Regarding interpretation of the by-laws, clarity was sought on UN relations in general and with the UNLO in particular in order to see how these instruments could be used for CCIA's advocacy work.

The general secretary explained that the WCC related to the UN in different ways via its headquarters in Geneva and the UNLO in New York, through events and staff relating to the different UN bodies. For example, the WCC brought members of its constituency to make interventions at the Human Rights Council, organized side events and had direct contacts UN agencies such as the World Health Organization and the International Labour Organization. In New York, there was involvement with the Security Council, General Assembly and other bodies.

The UNLO had one full-time programme executive and two assistants. The question of whether the ACT Alliance might appoint a person to work in that office was currently under discussion, but it was clear that any AA person would be under the jurisdiction of the WCC. Ms Margareta Grape, former international director of the Church of Sweden, headed up the office and had been seconded to the post by the Church of Sweden. There was no WCC budget for this post; without this secondment, there would be no one to run the office. As Margareta Grape would retire in three years, there was a need to think of replacement.

More work needed to be done on how the office related to the Security Council and the General Assembly; proper connections needed to be made between the office's agenda, its work and the CCIA reflections.

Ms Kathryn Fournier urged that the need to explore ways to maintain the UNLO link in whatever way possible be passed on to the next Commission. It would be important for the Commission to know the UNLO's focus of interest and work.

Rev. Shirley DeWolf reminded commissioner that they were still active until the Busan Assembly and thus could work already on some of these issues.

The need for continuity on the Commission was reiterated. Ms Lina Moukheiber requested the WCC to establish a database of all commissioners who had served on CCIA since its inception in 1946; this would give a profile of very important leaders and serve as a helpful bank for resource persons. Dr Mathews George explained that these details were already recorded in various books and report forms, and provided a number of pertinent names but not everyone. To do what was requested would be a herculean project, and he requested the general secretary to take the decision on that. Ms Lina Moukheiber qualified her request as being simply for a list of names and mini profiles. Rev. Shirley DeWolf added that persons with ongoing skills and involvement in churches should be a good pool to draw upon.

Regarding continuity, i.e., including a certain number of members of the present Commission in new one, Dr Audeh Quawas reminded the meeting that commissioners would need to request their own churches to re-nominate them.

Rev. Dr Tyrone Pitts recommended that the Commission have a clear document going to Central Committee, the Executive Committee and the Governance Review Committee (GRC).

The general secretary agreed that it would be good to have a reading of the recommendations being made to be sure of encapsulating all that was proposed. He hoped that most of the issues could be aired at Central Committee, but that some issues related to the composition of

next Commission would be more long-term, and more time would be needed to reflect on how that would happen. He hoped to be able to give initial feedback following the Central Committee meeting.

The CCIA director said that a report from this Commission meeting to the next Central Committee meeting would be shared. A draft would be circulated to the members of the Commission in the proposed template format, and commissioners would be expected to provide feedback.

It was agreed that a small group (Ms Emily Welty, Bishop Duleep de Chickera, Mr Masimba Kuchera, Dr Audi Quawas and Rev. Shirley DeWolf) would prepare a document consolidating the discussions and bring it to the afternoon session.

### **Session 15:**

#### **Feedback from Small Group Programmatic Foci**

Mr Thomas Kang presented on screen a synopsis of discussions from Session 10 on identifying priorities for global advocacy and Public Issues Statements for the Assembly. The synopsis had been compiled by the small group appointed to do this, which had met twice with the assistance of staff.

The overriding principles applied were:

- To synthesize all suggestions in nine issues for future work and four public issues statements (PISs)
- To maintain a link for continuity and synchronization
- To add value and quality to the current work.

Ms Vanna der Ohanessian explained that the proposals for advocacy work corresponded to the aims of the by-laws and addressed the areas of

1. Freedom of Religion and Human Rights in the emerging global context (involve other world religions and members of World Christian Communions, etc); Politicization of Religion
2. Global Advocacy on Ratification of the 1990 UN Convention on Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families (sending, receiving and transit countries – involving WCC constituencies, etc.)
3. Rights of Stateless People in different global contexts (US, Europe, Koreans in Japan, Rohingya, etc.)
4. Post-MDG impact assessment: follow-up advocacy actions
5. Responding to conflict situations and accompanying churches, developing preventive diplomacy (e.g., Middle East and Arab Spring, Armenia-Azerbaijan-Karabakh, Burma)
6. 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Armenian genocide (healing the memories of conflicts)
7. Global Advocacy on the Right to Self-determination (e.g., French Polynesia, West Papua)
8. Advocacy on the Rights of indigenous People (resource extraction, land grabbing, etc.)
9. Decade on Eradicating Poverty and Ensuring Sustainable Development

And that the proposed PISs were on

1. Freedom of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities in the emerging global context and politicization of religion
2. Human Rights of Stateless People
3. Peace and Security in the Korean Peninsula
4. Follow-up of the: Port Alegre Assembly mandate – An Ecumenical Declaration on Just Peace

Session moderator Rev. Shirley DeWolf thanked the group and invited comments.

Ms Moukheiber requested that the Middle East be added to advocacy proposal number 3, and Mr Joyanta Adhikari asked that Bhutan also be added. Both suggestions were accepted.

Mr Roel Aalbersberg said that a Decade to Eradicate Poverty sounded like a huge assignment; the Assembly would need to take a decision on this. Therefore, this did not carry the same weight as the other eight other proposals.

The general secretary advised against proposing more decades. If they were parallel to other programme work, the Council was unable to do both, and this could undermine its capacity to do real work on programmes. He stressed that his comment was related to methodology.

Dr Audeh Quawas requested changing the language in advocacy proposal 2 to reflect the inclusion of constituencies outside formal WCC membership, such as the Roman Catholic Church.

Rev. Dick Avi was concerned by an absence of reference to the language of violence. For example, in the struggle for self-determination, the need to combat violence related to such situations should be stressed.

Rev. Didier Crouzet requested clarity on identifying advocacy issues as being the work of CCIA. He was not sure that this was what CCIA should be doing. Rather, many of the issues related to WCC-wide programmes; he did not see how CCIA could take on all of them. He recommended delegating some follow-up to programmes that were already working on some of the issues to ensure they were dealt with. Then we should decide what would be specifically worked on within this Commission. Nine items were too many.

Rev. Shirley DeWolf said that some of the work could be picked up in working groups over the next 15 months. Dr Mathews George added that the presentation had been based on recommendations coming from WGs, and that it had originally been much wider. There had been an effort to see how the proposals were related to CCIA's focus, aims and objectives. However, this didn't necessarily mean that CCIA had to undertake all of them; some aspects were actually already on-going programmes. Rather, the list should be seen through the lens of post-Busan priorities. Programmatic implementation was not the Commission's role. On PISs, he mentioned that there was no guarantee that the Commission's proposals would be accepted at the Assembly.

Bishop Duleep de Chickera requested that aspects covering good governance and rule of law, collapse of institutions and authoritarian regimes be incorporated. This was added as a 10<sup>th</sup> area of engagement. He added that something had to be done about weapons of mass destruction) WMDs too. An 11<sup>th</sup> area for this was thus included in the document. The Reference Group on IEPC Follow-up had raised the concept of Just Peace not as another programme but as an ingredient in all programmes. If this concept was to impact on any of the commissions, CCIA must be first.

The general secretary responded that if the proposed PISs were to be forwarded to the Assembly, they would need a lot of work done on them. He added that follow-up on IEPC had to be the hermeneutical key for all we did at Assembly and for future programmes, so it was vital to see what it meant to work for Just Peace.

In response to a request from Dr Audeh Quawas not to use the term "minorities" in PIS #1, it was agreed to replace this with "all religious communities".

At the suggestion of Rev. Dr Tony Richie, it was agreed to add the words “as much as possible” after the word “involve” in advocacy issue #1.

Ms Kathryn Fournier urged weaving the Just Peace lens through all that was proposed. This was added as a fourth overriding principle

Rev. Shirley DeWolf called for clarity on how to operate from now on for the next 16 months.

Mr Masimba Kuchera proposed to try to do as much work as possible in WGs; a possibility for them to come together would be useful.

Dr Mathews George clarified that there was unfortunately no 2013 budget provision for any more separate meetings of CCIA or Working Groups before Busan.

Thus, it was agreed that commissioners should try to take advantage of their participation in other meetings and their involvement in programmatic activities.

Mr Roel Aalbersberg asked for a time schedule for WGs up to the Assembly, but Rev. Shirley DeWolf explained that this would be difficult to decide if the Commission wanted to take advantage of as yet undefined opportunities. Obviously, the Assembly was the end point, and any impact would have to be prepared several months beforehand. She stated that it would be immensely helpful if it were possible for the four WG moderators to come together before Busan

Mr Masimba Kuchera reflected on how the PIS issues dovetailed well with the WGs, so that each could start the work on their own PIS. This could be circulated to the whole CCIA before submitting it to Central Committee so that everyone on the Commission knew what other commissioners were doing.

The general secretary informed that the Central Committee meeting at the end of August 2012 would deal with the agenda for the Assembly including PISs, and that proposals from CCIA were welcome. If Central Committee decided that the proposals were relevant, a lot of work would be required to prepare these for the Assembly. Rev. Shirley DeWolf exhorted commissioners to act on this in the next months in collaboration with staff.

A recapitulation of the changes made to the document during the course of the session was given by Mr Thomas Kang with the promise to circulate the final version to all commissioners present by e-mail. This was subsequently done, and was included as Appendix IV of this report.

### **Session 16:**

## **Recommendations regarding the Future Direction and Restructuring of the Commission**

Rev. Shirley DeWolf moderated the first part of this session.

Ms Emily Welty presented the recommendations which were prepared by the small group appointed to do so in Session 14; the following comments and amendments were put forward:

- to ensure continuity, one quarter of the new Commission should comprise previously serving members; this should go into the new by-laws;
- add the role that churches play in the nomination process;

- experience of advocacy and practical witness at community level should be incorporated as a criteria for engagement;
- several comments on wording, phraseology, clarity and length were agreed upon.

The final version was agreed upon and would be circulated to all commissioners. It was included as Appendix V of this report.

### **Elections in Zimbabwe**

Mr Masimba Kuchera made a proposal that CCIA recommend to WCC that it support the accompaniment of Zimbabwean churches through the AACC regarding the referendum and the inclusion of mechanisms to facilitate monitoring and observation during forthcoming elections over the next 12 months.

Rev. Shirley DeWolf stated that this was an extension of work started earlier. Dr Nigussu Legesse informed that the AACC had appointed an envoy and that it was important that the Commission endorse this work.

The proposal was unanimously accepted.

### **Report of CCIA to the Central Committee Meeting in August 2012**

A template for reports of all commissions to Central Committee was circulated. The director reflected that answers to most of the questions could be found in the minutes of the present meeting, and asked if commissioners wanted anything specific added.

Mr Roel Aalbersberg urged making mention of the ACT Alliance debate, saying it needed careful attention. The director responded that this should be dealt with at the higher level of the general secretary and Executive Committee.

Rev. Shirley DeWolf asked that particular attention be given to major learnings.

Commissioners felt strongly that mention should be made of the future accompaniment of the Commission of the Churches on Diakonia and Development (CCDD), the Commission on Justice, Peace and Creation (CJPC) and the Office on Interreligious Relations and Dialogue (IRRD).

It was agreed to mandate CCIA staff to fill in the template and circulate it to commissioners, allowing a turn-around time of one week for feedback before delivering it to the office collating CC documentation.

### **Learnings from the China Experience**

Participants shared the following snapshots of their perceptions:

- Instructive presentations: the widening gap between urban and rural populations; ethnic minorities' challenges for rural and remote communities, gaps in services.
- Rapid growth of the economy and the place of China in the world and what that meant for the church and for the WCC standing with them.
- Vibrancy of church life in China and the enormous tasks they saw and could hardly cope with. The new situation in which the church found itself was challenging, thrilling and worrying.
- Eye-witnessing of the situation through various visits.
- Significance of this being the first international meeting to be organized by the WCC in China since the inception of WCC and the founding of the People's Republic of China, and the ramifications of this for the deepening of future CCIA-WCC relations.
- Recognition of the importance of religious groups for the promotion of harmonious society in China.

- The post-denominational character of CCC set a good example for ecumenism.

It was agreed that a message of gratitude be sent to Rev. Bondevik by the vice-moderator, expressing thanks for his role as Commission moderator over the years and regret he could not be present in China.

Ms Noemi Espinoza moderated the remainder of the session.

### **Evaluation**

Commissioners expressed thanks to WCC staff for all their hard work in preparing for and facilitating this meeting and generally for their day-to-day work. They also expressed warm appreciation to the China Christian Council for its tremendous work as well as the efforts of the Amity Foundation and the Nanjing Union Theological Seminary. It had been most enriching and encouraging to witness these at first hand.

There was appreciation for the variety and volume of activities undertaken by commissioners, considering it had been their last meeting. The sessions had gone well, they had been properly moderated and the maximum that could be obtained from commissioners had been achieved. A suggestion for the future could be to consider use of a template covering a wider variety of issues than time had allowed coverage of at this meeting.

Other input included:

- Gratitude to the moderators, especially for having had to step in with little notice.
- The spiritual life had been especially rich, and worship in the churches in Shanghai very meaningful. One person would have liked at least one Chinese hymn to have been included.
- It was suggested that CCIA members should do an individual evaluation of their term.
- There was a call for interpretation to be provided to help enable those who use WCC languages to communicate and express themselves; this could be done by staff members.
- The WG discussions allowed space to interact, share and learn a lot, this methodology should be retained.
- The interactive nature of the meeting was good while yet leaving room for improvement.
- It would have been good to have had a summary of discussions at the end of each day.
- Ms Moukheiber requested the establishment of a CCIA twitter account to enhance communication, this was agreed upon.
- The Commission had made a remarkable contribution to the life of the WCC, had addressed many issues and achieved more clarity.
- A reiterated request was made to submit CCIA's collective learning over the last seven years to the WCC.

### **Closing Actions**

CCIA director Dr Mathews George reflected that the meeting had been a good experience for all involved, which was shown by the Commission's feedback. This had been the first official WCC event in China after long years of mutual engagement. It had only been possible because of support extended to us by the CCC. It had not been easy for CCC to organize the meeting here for participants coming as non-tourists. It was a unique event, and also signalled a new beginning.

The director expressed warm thanks to CCC general secretary Rev. Kan Baoping, who had taken such a keen interest and had organized the event so meticulously, overseeing arrangements, instructing colleagues and staying as our guest throughout the meeting. He thanked all the CCC colleagues for their kind efforts to make the event possible and for their

special negotiating skills with government authorities to get visa clearances, which they had been working on for over a year.

There had been many hurdles to get over which Rev. Kan Baoping had managed successfully despite their difficulties.

CCIA was in a new phase to establish and re-establish a new dimension of our ecumenical journey, and this meeting would strengthen relations between CCC and WCC and its wider fellowship.

He also thanked CCC president Rev. Gao Feng and Elder Ou Enlin, director of the Overseas Department, and asked that the latter convey CCIA's gratitude to his staff. He also thanked WCC staff, particularly those involved in the spiritual life and logistics, for the smooth arrangements. His final thanks were to the commissioners for all their contributions not only at this meeting but over the last seven years. Their cooperation, responsiveness, collaboration and communications had been very much appreciated.

The co-moderator concluded by extending thanks to all commissioners for their passionate contributions and to the CCIA director Dr Mathews George and his staff for setting up the meeting.

The 51th session was concluded with a sending prayer and an exchange of stones and words of peace amongst commissioners and staff.

## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix- I:**

#### **Address of the CCIA Moderator, Rev. Kjell M. Bondevik**

As Christians, we are working in this world, but we are not of the world (Jh. 18.36). To do our job as Christian churches, we have to address changes in the world community. We shall serve in the current world situation and also influence the world's development based on Christian ethical values like human dignity, sound stewardship, the commandment of love, justice, peace.

#### **Changes in the geopolitical landscape**

We witnessed an important change in the geopolitical landscape during the revolution in the former communist world over 20 years ago. There was a repressed desire for freedom that literally burst out. I recall

- DDR ca. 1985, Margot Honnecker, Lutheran church: the only place for the opposition. Almost only priests in the transitional government.
- Hungary 1989 Liberal economic policies. Prime Minister Menet.
- Poland: Solidarity and the Catholic Church (Lech Walesa)
- Czechoslovakia: Intellectuals (Vaclav Havel).
- Most former communist countries integrated in the EU. New markets.

As Christian churches, we have to work in solidarity with our Christian brothers and sisters to promote democracy and human rights in general, freedom of religion in particular.

#### **The emergence of the BRICS**

Launched 10 years ago (BRIC) Brazil, Russia, India and China.  
2010: Also South Africa (BRICS)

A total of nearly 3 billion people. The core of what is called 'The World without the West'. China is the central country: China's trade with the other four is large and rapidly increasing, the remaining four have far less mutual trade amongst themselves.

Five different countries on different continents, but they are all characterized by optimism and growing confidence. BRIC is the counterpart of the G7 (G8 with Russia). Mainly economic cooperation, but also some common positions in security policy, food and energy security. BRIC is characterized by collective traditions and state control of the economy. In 2008 we got the cooperation forum G20. Important during the financial crisis. Expression of shift in the global economy. The West realized that they might/must include/co-operate with leading countries in the East and South.

The G7 countries' share of the global GDP has dropped from 70 to 50% in the last 20 years. On this basis, it is not unnatural that the BRIC countries require greater voting powers in the Bretton Woods institutions (the World Bank and IMF). Also, the Western countries will give the BRIC countries greater voting rights in order to make them more accountable. However, this means reducing someone's voting power, namely the US or the EU's. Moreover, since the inception, the head of the World Bank has been American, and head of the Monetary Fund has been European.

Generally, the BRIC countries have far less influence than their size suggests. It is not certain that integration into a Western-dominated economic order is the only option for them. The trade



between the 20 largest and richest countries in east and south is increasing more rapidly than the world economy. They make themselves less dependent on the West, but do not cut the ties. The world without the West is increasingly creating its own understanding of reality, reducing the West's power of definition. As Christian churches, we must against this background raise our voice for more just system of global institutions.

### **The financial crisis**

In 2008, the US investment bank Lehman Brothers went bankrupt and a global recession – the financial crisis – was initiated. Major industrial countries are still struggling with the effects. Several Asian and Latin American countries managed surprisingly well. New economic powers like China and India are moving up. After signs of optimism and economic growth in late 2009 and early 2010, the arrows began to point down again in 2011 in most western industrialized countries. The turmoil in the financial markets flared up again, and in the euro zone it has - as we know – developed into a serious state debt crisis.

While the West is experiencing tough economic times, the development in the emerging economies is more encouraging. They took a responsible fiscal and monetary approach prior to the crisis. This situation has reinforced the shift of power that was already in progress. Many believe it is just a matter of time before China establishes itself as the world's largest economy passing the USA (passed Japan as No. 2 in 2010) India has also experienced a strong growth in the last 15-20 years. China - India account for nearly 40% of the world's population. Two new economic powers that will do something about the power balance in the world economy. It is natural that the changes in the world community should also lead to changes in global political governance structures, and the UN Security Council, where we have the veto states; the US, UK, France, Russia and China. What about India? Brazil? South Africa? US-EU-AU-Asia?

### **Democratization**

Another issue of great importance over the last 20-25 years: comprehensive democratization.

- In the former communist countries from 1989 to 1990
- Also in countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the number of (more or less) democratic countries has approximately doubled (from 40-50 to approx. 100).

Now we may have a new wave of democratization after the 'Arab spring.' It all started in Tunis. Only 10 days after the rebellion began, the dictator Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali had to resign and leave the country. Elections have subsequently been held, an Islamist party was the biggest, but it does not have absolute majority. In Egypt, the most influential of the relevant countries, a military council has been in power since President Mubarak was forced to resign. The Islamist Muslim Brotherhood has formed a party, which seems to be the biggest, but do not get absolute majority in the ongoing elections. What this implies is too early to say. In Libya, a bloody conflict ensued, international forces intervened, and the dictator Al Gadhafi was killed.

In Yemen, there have also been violent conflicts. The previous government and the political opposition have signed an agreement, the new president and a coalition government is constituted.

In Syria, as we know, there is an ongoing uprising/conflict/bloodshed. In countries like Morocco, Algeria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Oman, public dissatisfaction with the situation has come to view, but the governments have in various ways avoided political upheaval. The revolutions in all Arab countries have different causes, and consist of different groups: Political opposition parties, human rights groups, religious groups, unemployed youth, etc.

The outcome is uncertain. Many fear that the Islamist parties with connections to the Muslim Brotherhood will have increased power as a result of the upheavals. It may well be. On the other hand, we must accept the outcome if democratic elections have been held. We must also

be aware that the Muslim Brotherhood is a diverse group. I have met several of their representatives. Some are so tired of authoritarian regimes that they have become genuine democrats. Others can be extreme. But they will hardly gain a majority in democratic elections. Coalitions may in such cases be healthy and moderating. Turkey is viewed by many countries as a model for how to combine Islam with democracy, which is promising. As Christian churches, we must act in solidarity with Christians in the region and together promote democracy, human rights in general and freedom of religion in particular.

### **Emerging markets in Africa**

Africa is often regarded as a hopeless continent which is always going to be left behind with regard to economic and social development. This is a far too one-sided, even directly wrong picture.

- Many developed countries are struggling with high debt, deficits and low economic growth, while a growing number of developing countries have strong government finances, increasing foreign investments and strong growth.
- Less known is the fact that growth in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa is very high. Sub-Saharan Africa has had six of the ten fastest-growing economies over the past decade and is expected to have seven out of ten in the next five years with an average annual growth of 7-8 percent.
- A main message is that this is not a question of either aid or corporate contributions. We need both, a balance between more traditional aid and investment that can contribute to economic growth.
- The traditional aid to developing countries is still important. It must contribute to develop health care and education services. Without health, you cannot contribute to a society's development, without education, there is little one can do. The markets are not serving these needs; here, we continue to need assistance.
- However it is becoming increasingly clear that traditional development policy alone will not solve the challenges facing developing countries with regard to creating profitable businesses, jobs and the growth that is necessary for long-term poverty reduction. One of the challenges will be to provide a better basis for economic growth.
- The absence of a strong and profitable private sector is an obstacle for traditional development aid to succeed in creating long-term sustainability. In the area of education, great progress has been made, but a weak corporate sector means that job opportunities in many places do not exist. Developing countries have also gained increased market access, but have neither the capacity nor a business sector strong enough to take advantage of these opportunities.
- We need better cooperation - Government - NGOs - business.
- Significantly more capital and expertise is needed in poor countries to build a profitable and sustainable corporate sector allowing them to create their own revenues and reduce their aid dependency.

As Christian churches, we are in a position to contribute to stronger civil societies in developing countries in Africa, and to advocate for both development assistance and for business cooperation and investments.

## **Report of the Director of CCIA**

### **I**

It is after a gap of 20 months that we are meeting here in the People's Republic of China (PRC), for the 51<sup>st</sup> meeting of the CCIA. This is going to be the last full session of the CCIA before the next WCC assembly in 2013. Our coming together here, in the People's Republic of China as members of CCIA, is in fact, historic. During my last visit to China in March this year, both the leaders of the China Christian Council (CCC) as well as the high-ranking government officials of the State Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA) told me that this is the first time since 1948 that an international ecumenical or ecclesiastical event in People's Republic of China (PRC) is hosted by a Chinese Church which is officially permitted by the authorities.

### **CCIA meeting in China: Recollecting the past to look at the future**

Our meeting in China today is historic in many senses. The history of the Churches in China and the history of today's post denominational Church, the China Christian Council (CCC) is very much linked to the history of political developments in China.

The history of Christianity in China is as old as the arrival of the Nestorian missionaries in China as early as in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, during the early period in the T'ang Dynasty. The earliest physical evidence of this mission is the famous Nestorian Monument discovered in the northern city of Hsingan-fu around 1625. Inscriptions written on the black marble monument speak of the Syrian bishop Olopun (Abraham?) arriving from Persia in 635. Syrian monks produced a book for the Chinese mission, *The Sutra of Jesus the Messiah*, which was an adaptation of the scriptures.

Protestant Christianity began to exist in China with the arrival of the Western missionaries in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Probably many of us do not know the history of the role of the Chinese churches in the formation of the WCC. Four Chinese denominations were founding members of the WCC (Anglican Church in China, China Baptist Council, Church of Christ in China and North China Congregational Church), whose representatives were present at Amsterdam in 1948. The Methodist Church was also invited to the Assembly, although not as an official member and the church was represented at the Assembly. One of the presidents of WCC who was elected in Amsterdam assembly was Rev. T.C. Chao, a prominent Chinese church leader. But subsequently, Chinese churches became estranged from the WCC. Rev. T.C. Chao resigned from the presidium as a protest against the decision of the WCC Central Committee meeting in Toronto in July 1950 adopting a statement on the "Korean Situation and the World Order" which was support2w the UN's "police action" against North Korea through its statement.

I mentioned earlier that this CCIA meeting is historic, and in this context, I want to draw your attention to the historical context of CCIA's involvement in or responsibility for the reasons which led to the resignation of Rev. T.C. Chao and the cessation of the relation of Chinese Churches to the WCC. This will also help us to understand the role of the CCIA in a certain historic context, and how our perceptions and decisions often boomeranged. The post-denominational CCC became a member of the WCC in 1991 at the Canberra assembly. The WCC started seriously considering the possibility of bringing back the church in China to the WCC since the beginning of the 1980s. This prompted a close examination of the circumstances that led to the cessation of participation by the Chinese churches in the WCC and the resignation of one of its presidents, Rev. Chao from the WCC's presidium.

The third Director of the CCIA, Dr Ninan Koshy, in a presentation on the Third World Perspective with Special Reference to Asia at an international consultation on Christian World Community and the Cold War held in Slovakia last year mentioned the rereading of Korean War history today. He mentioned how CCIA's advice was not followed, and how the WCC was swayed by Western political power influences which ultimately resulted in withdrawal from the WCC of its member churches in China and the resignation of its president. He recalled that it had been taken for granted as truth that North Korea was the aggressor in the Korean War. The UN Commission on Korea (UNCK) had reported: "The invasion of the territory of the Republic of Korea by the armed forces of the North Korean authorities which began on June 25, 1950 was an act of aggression initiated without warning and without provocation, in execution of a carefully prepared plan." Koshy quotes historians like Bruce Cummings who challenged and raised questions about the impartiality of the Commission and the manner in which it was investigated. There is evidence to suggest that South Korea struck and North Korea's invasion was an act of self-defence. Basically the Korean War was a civil war and in such a situation, it is difficult to decide who provoked first or who carried out the first attack.

The post-war division of Korea at the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel was the culmination of the conflagration of Cold War politics for which both the Soviet Union and the US deserve blame. Korean people became victims of the Cold War politics of major powers. The UN Commission on Korea (UNCK) report on which the UN based its decision was totally biased against the North, declaring it as the aggressor in the Korean War. According to Koshy, "records show that it was John Foster Dulles, at the time special adviser to the US president and deeply involved with the Korean issues, who was instrumental in changing the WCC position on Korea from 'negotiations' to support for 'police action'". Just ten days earlier, the CCIA had asked the UN to pursue the path of negotiations. He further observes: "There is reason to assume that Dulles wanted to use WCC support as a moral weapon in the propaganda war. The WCC had ignored the voices from China, North Korea and Eastern Europe. This led to a major controversy in the WCC. It also led to a fresh assessment of the WCC by communist governments. China and North Korea especially blamed the WCC as an organization following the political policies of the West, especially the USA". Subsequently, the WCC was openly blamed and criticised by Li Tung Yi, chairman of the Administrative Yuan Committee on Culture and Education of China at the opening session of a conference of church leaders in China, (April 16-21, 1951) called by Premier Zhou en Lai. Behind the "so-called Christian slogans, ecumenical and worldwide" he saw the "demonic hand of American imperialism" Chao wrote his resignation letter on 28 April addressed to the co-presidents of the WCC through the WCC General Secretary Dr Visser 't Hooft. While sending his resignation, he also had serious objections to the Toronto statement and wrote: "...It placed me in a very strange position, for I am one of the presidents of the World Council on the one side and a loyal citizen of the Republic of the Chinese people on the other. Only recently, I came to realise how impossible this position was. As a patriotic Chinese, I must protest against the Toronto message, which sounds so much like the voice of Wall Street..."

When all these things happened, the CCIA was less than five years old and the WCC was less than three years old. The world has changed a lot since 1951. During the past 60 years, China has changed and Chinese churches have passed through various experiences and transformations during the past six decades. Now we as members of the WCC/CCIA are back to China through the invitation of the WCC's member church in China. This is a very unique opportunity for us to reflect about some of our historical involvement of public policy actions related to China in the context of political developments in East Asia about six decades ago. It also helps us to reflect on a historical blunder in which CCIA and the WCC were part of or became responsible. This is a coincidence that the first historical event of holding an international ecumenical event of WCC is now being organized by the WCC/CCIA. This also shows the unique role of CCIA as an instrument to deal with international affairs in order to maintain and strengthen the unity of the fellowship.

### **CCIA /WCC advocacy on China's claim for UN seat**

It is also important now for us to recollect the WCC's role through the CCIA in advocating for China's claim for its UN seat. The People's Republic of China finally started occupying the seat in the UN only in 1971. Prior to that, the Government of the Republic of China (Nationalist China) based in Taiwan had held the seat of China in the UN and at the UN Security Council since the founding of the United Nations in October 1945. The People's Republic of China (Communist China) had subsequently enhanced its claim to participation at the UN. During the Chinese Civil War; the Communist Party of China kept the government of the ROC away from Mainland China to Taiwan in 1949. On October 1, 1949, Mao Zedong proclaimed the People's Republic of China (PRC). The representatives of the PRC first attended the United Nations, including the United Nations Security Council, as China's representatives on November 25, 1971, replacing the ROC delegates.

The WCC, through its Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA) was one of the first international organisations to lobby for the admission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations. The CCIA and the WCC had taken a position in this direction as early as in 1956; they had at least started discussions openly about the need for advocacy in the international arena about the admission of China as a member of the UN. This discussion was initiated in the context of the work CCIA was engaged in in the area of disarmament and peace. In a discussion held at a meeting of the CCIA in October 1958, it was observed:

"Recent events have drawn attention again to the obstacles in the way of submitting any conflict with the People's Republic of China to these processes of peaceful settlement. Many states do not recognise the government of the Peoples' Republic of China, so that diplomatic contacts are necessarily oblique and awkward; and a dispute in which that government is involved cannot be submitted to the judgement of the U.N in the ordinary way because that government is not a member of U.N. Thus the question is raised whether the churches' concern for establishing machinery of Peaceful Settlement and Peaceful Change may not require them to take up new positions on the recognition of the Government of the People's Republic of China and its seating in the U.N". ( *CCIA Memorandum, 'People's Republic of China and the U.N', October 6, 1958* )

The CCIA argued the case of the admission of the PRC to the UN with a view that the entry of the PRC would involve its open acceptance of obligations under the Charter of the UN and in that way, it would be possible to draw the PRC into a position of public responsibility and it would respond by a "new policy of international behaviour". People like Josef Hromadka spoke with feeling in the WCC Central Committee at St. Andrews, Scotland in August 1960 on the dangers of the continued isolation of the PRC – "no step forward may be possible unless we help statesmen to bring China into the UN". In subsequent years, again in the context of discussions on WCC policies on disarmament and on nuclear weapons testing, the developments relating to the Test Ban Treaty which inevitably isolated China from rest of the world and the disadvantage of PRC's absence at a time when the UN was discussing on Vietnam, etc., were the major concerns of the WCC. Based on these principles, the WCC Central Committee meeting in Geneva in February 1966 stated:

"...as one of the measures we believe should be undertaken as promptly as possible; "that every effort be made to bring the 700 million people of China through the government in power, the People's Republic of China, into the world community of nations in order that they may assume their reasonable responsibility and avail themselves of legitimate opportunity to provide an essential ingredient for peace and security not only in Southeast Asia, but throughout the entire world." ( *WCC Central Committee, Geneva, February, 1966, Minutes, pp 65-66* ).

The Uppsala Assembly of the WCC in 1968, in a report "Towards Justice and Peace in International Affairs" approved in substance by the Assembly, stated: "...Bringing the People's Republic of China into the international community is a matter of great significance for the future

of mankind, requires urgent study, and the way to achieve it with justice to all parties must be found". A Statement on the United Nations adopted by the executive committee of the CCIA in June 1970 stated: "The United Nations, as has long been argued, cannot function adequately unless all nations are represented, the absence of China being the most glaring example".

Considering all these efforts made consistently by the WCC over the years, the-then WCC general secretary Dr Emilio Castro mentioned in his letter to Bishop K.H.Ting, president of the China Christian Council after the CCC was welcomed into the membership of the WCC again in 1991, that:

"...over all these years the WCC has maintained a one-China policy in its actions and statements. The WCC, through its Commission of the Churches in International Affairs, was one of the first international organisations to press for the admission of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations". (*Letter dated 20 February 1991*)

Here, we see the role played by the WCC and its Commission on International Affairs in advocating for China's seat in the UN.

China today plays a leading role in the international arena. Our meeting in China is yet another opportunity for the new generation of members of the CCIA like all of us to understand more about China and the Church in China today through a closer look. We are here now for a closer look from within China rather than from a distance. We may not agree with all that China does or others do with China in their respective policies. At the same time, this is also an opportunity to reflect further about the ecumenical responses to some of the pertinent issues the world is facing today in which China is a key player at the political, economic and diplomatic levels. The role of China in the emerging global context as well as in the geo-political context of Asia poses significant challenges within and beyond Asia. It is in this context that we need to reflect on the emerging global context too.

## II

### **Emerging geo-political trends in Asia and their impacts on international relations**

As was suggested by the moderator, the report of the CCIA director to this meeting of the CCIA should reflect a focus on emerging trends in international affairs with specific reference to emerging trends in the geo-politics in Asia. As we know, it is not possible to reflect on Asia's geopolitics without relating it with the current global trends, or understand the current international trends without taking into consideration the emerging Asian trends. The regional players of today's Asia are prominent players in the international arena too. So one cannot analyse or reflect on anything about the emerging geo-political, geo-economic or geo-strategic trends in the international arena without taking into account the Asian context and emerging trends in Asia's geo-politics.

The world today gives more attention to this part of the globe – Asia. As a matter of fact, geo-politics and geo-economics of the emerging World Order have their underpinnings in today's Asia. When we say that a new architecture is emerging in the world, or the emergence of new power centres continue to play different roles in the world, or new economic power houses are emerging, or new strategic alliances that can counterweight to traditional dominant powers are emerging, etc., we cannot ignore Asia or Asian situations related to any of these areas. Asia is involved in all these areas of global issues. At the same time, Asia is a region the world is constantly paying attention to due to longstanding political stalemate – the divided Korean peninsula, the cross- strait tensions and foreign military presence and shadows of the arms race, politicization of religion and the role of religion in international affairs, etc. As this region is

contributing to the developments related to all these fields, it is also having wider repercussions in many other situations in the world.

Asia is not the only region which experiences changes or political turmoil. Since we met last time in Albania in October 2010 and in Kingston, Jamaica in May 2011, the world has been witnessing many dramatic or cataclysmal changes. We have seen that millions of people in different parts of the world took to the streets in mass outpourings of hope for freedom and justice. All brutal measures to suppress people's resistance have not been able to silence the increasing cry and determination of people for freedom, human rights and peace with justice. People, those who have been suffocating under tyrannical contexts, have proved in several countries that they were no longer able to tolerate authoritarian and repressive measures. Countries in the Middle East and also the North African (MENA) region are examples of such struggles.

While the situations in several countries have been changing dramatically, the world is faced with constant challenges to find solutions to problems. The crisis in Syria that erupted a year ago is an example of the global crisis in finding solutions to such grave situations. The solution to the problems and roadmaps are mostly directed and dominated by the West, and this is what Russia and China are disputing now. The immediate approach and solutions often recommended are adopting the old routine of military or economic sanctions.

Facts have proven that such routine actions will not only punish the poor and hurt civilians seriously but also deepen the crisis and prolong the turmoil in a given context. The ability to maintain the old and routine practices is directly related to the dominant position of the West in the existing or ongoing order in international relations. The popular movements across North Africa led to political leadership in some of these countries. People took to the streets because of their political aspirations, the quest for more freedom, and a deep frustration with a life they live in poverty. Many of the underlying factors which led to the uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East also exist in other parts of the world, especially on the African continent. Probably, the events in the MENA region have already influenced several other countries in the world. Often, we see in the media how people protesting on the street against the governments are being resisted by military and security forces.

Despite many political changes that are happening in the world, especially in the MENA region, there are certain worrying aspects that also need to be taken into account. Even if the change of dictatorial regimes or political changes in some countries were achieved, the kind of governments coming to power in these countries is the ultimate question we now face. We have seen and experienced that democracy can also produce more dangerous rulers and governments. The political transitions that are happening in some of these MENA countries may not be conducive to or convinced of curbing terrorism, advancing the peace process, maintaining the security in the Persian Gulf. No one can predict the course a new democracy will take in these countries. However, based on early symptoms, it is clear that the advent of democracy in these countries is likely to produce new Islamic governments that will create more spaces for religious fundamentalists to grow and take power in their hands. On the one hand, we are happy that the democratization process has advanced in several contexts, but the danger is that such political changes give way to strengthening fundamentalism and ultimately religious extremism and terrorism.

### **Emerging geo-political and geo-economic global order: Role of Asian Powers**

In an emerging geo-political and geo-economic global order, China and India are seen as emerging powers. Today, China is not only the second-largest economy of the world, but also the most dominant power in Asia's political and strategic arena. China's rise also represents the key driver in the evolving security landscape in Asia and beyond Asia too. Kishore Mahbubani, former ambassador of Singapore to the US, commented: "China today is like a dragon, waking

up after centuries of slumber, and suddenly realising that many nations have been trampling on its tail”.

China is now offering a competing vision to the US-centric “hub and spoke” system of alliances that was largely initiated in the post WW II era. In essence, China’s increasing economic, diplomatic, and military strength is attracting and convincing countries to rethink existing security arrangements. The growing influence of China in regional Forums like BRICS, APEC and the ASEAN Forum, and the leading role China is playing now in Shanghai Cooperation countries are examples of growing influence and an increasing leadership role of China which boosts China’s international and diplomatic image. China’s new role is largely being constructed around trade relationships and diplomatic initiatives manifest in the East Asia Summit, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) + 3 Forum, and various Chinese bilateral free trade initiatives. China’s more active involvement in the BRICS and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) shows its leadership role beyond Asia. Today’s China enjoys a very different position on the world stage than before, and this is mainly because of the political clout it has gained through its economic strength.

China’s diplomacy is very active in the international arena in recent times. Some say that China’s action shows an indication of “turning from the defensive to the offensive”. China’s move to use “offensive” and “defensive” to describe its diplomacy means that what they see are just changes in trend. At the same time, China claims its policy is based on the principle of political solutions to similar problems and that it is trying to find a roadmap of solving similar problems through a political approach.

Asia now observes from afar the developments of the global economic crisis. The rapid and spectacular rise of several Asian countries, particularly, the Chinese economy, could delude many to think that Asian economies are out of the danger zone. However, the fact is that Europe and also the embattled Euro still matter a great deal to the global economy. Following two years of feeble and uneven recovery from the global financial crisis, the world economy is swaying on the brink of another major downturn. A serious, renewed global downturn is predicted as persistent weaknesses continue to loom in the major developed economies. Some of the most pressing impacts of this trend are the continued crises in jobs and unemployment due to the declining prospects for economic growth, especially in the developed countries. The prospect of a country withdrawing from the Euro zone was unthinkable at one time for the EU countries, but now such a possibility of a Greek withdrawal from the economic monetary union has become a focus of the EU debt crisis. This will have wider impact beyond Europe or the Euro zone, but it will have implications in Asia too.

The impact of the economic crisis on Asia has been limited since Asian banks were not much engaged in subprime loans like the European and US banks. But this was mainly because of the fact that with the exception of South Korea, Asian countries did not rely on short-term capital and bank loans for financing their economies. And here, they were able to avoid or escape the debt trap, unlike Eastern Europe or Greece. Asia, especially China, has accumulated a huge amount of currency reserves. India’s economy has been growing for the past several years at an average of 6 percent, making it one of the best-performing economies in the world. However, Asian countries are hit by the fall of their exports because of the slump in demand from North America and Europe. China is the biggest trade partner of many Asian countries and the central hub of international and regional production networks. The global financial crisis has already impacted India significantly, notwithstanding the sound banking system and relatively well-functioning financial markets in India. Inflation risks emanate from suppressed domestic energy prices, steep depreciation of the rupee against the U.S. dollar and slippage in fiscal deficit. The short-term impact is already visible in recent times, but it is expected that such difficulties will not last too long and India can overcome it in the near future. This may not be the case with several other Asian economies where export-oriented economic bases depend heavily on economic growth and more job opportunities in the private sectors.



Asian economies are not totally independent nor have they yet delinked themselves from the West, especially the EU and the US. In this situation, the strength and weakness of the European economy will have considerable impact on the prospects of Asian economies. While India and China have emerged as new “global powers”, their leadership roles are visible at different levels including economic spheres, and this trend is more evident in recent actions by the leaders of regional groupings such as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and Shanghai Co-operation (SCO), another regional grouping in which China, Russia and four other Central Asian republics are members and several other countries are observers and dialogue partners.

### **Growing role and influence of BRICS**

The growing trend related to BRICS is that it started posing a counterweight to other dominant powers, and this was most evident when the global financial crisis drained the US treasury further in recent times. The rise of BRICS as “emerging powers” is now capable of contributing to reshaping the global economy and, more gradually, posing challenges to international relations. As the economies of these countries are growing much faster than those of the rest of the world, they are now in a position to change the structure of international production and trade, the nature and direction of capital flows, and the patterns of natural resource consumption. The rapid economic growth of these countries has begun to shift the global distribution of power, forcing the great powers to come to terms with the reality that they will need to share the management of international rules and systems in the coming decades. The consolidation of the strength of some of these emerging powers was demonstrated during the global climate negotiations in Copenhagen, which proved that the era of Western global hegemony is fading away.

This relatively young mechanism, BRICS has shown the strength of its rising economic clout with prominent contributions to world economic growth since the outburst of the financial crisis, laying solid foundations for future global economic recovery. The role of BRICS countries is generally recognized for having made a significant contribution to the world economy by increasing employment and reducing poverty. The IMF considered that BRICS, the cooperative quintuplet, with roughly over 40 per cent of the world's total population and more than a quarter of the world's land area, was estimated to have a combined nominal GDP of 13.6 trillion US dollars in 2011, accounting for 19.5 per cent of the world's total.

BRICS has already shown relatively good economic performance, which is quite sufficient to cope with certain global political issues in the international arena. If it is properly fine-tuned, BRICS might be able to exert more political influence in international affairs in the coming years. The direction of BRICS is more evident by comparing the outcome of this year's BRICS and G8 Summits. It has been reported that, “while BRICS ended on a note of ‘tangible optimism’, G8 ended with ‘artificial hopetism’”.

The Delhi summit of BRICS was clear in its directions and the way forward. The leaders stated: “BRICS recognizes the importance of the global financial architecture in maintaining the stability and integrity of the global monetary and financial system”. They also called for “a more representative international financial architecture, with an increase in the voice and representation of developing countries and the establishment and improvement of a just international monetary system that can serve the interests of all countries and support the development of emerging and developing economies”. As the economies of BRICS has experienced broad-based growth, they are now significant contributors to global recovery and this is the basis for their challenge to other Western-dominated international monetary mechanisms.

The shift of BRICS from an economic to a political grouping in 2009 has had an innovative effect on the shake-up of international relations. The Delhi summit proposed starting a development bank. This move not only challenged the World Bank regime, but it was also a

strategic move aimed at challenging the influences and politics surrounding the structures and mechanisms of the World Bank. While the global economic crisis and reforming of the international financial institutions have been topics of focus during BRICS meetings in the past, the bloc's leaders have also been focussing on food, energy and climate change issues, which have assumed many political tints. They have also called for the need for a greater say in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). It is also an added value that two members of BRICS are permanent members of the UN Security Council; all are members of the G20, NAM and G77; and each is a key member of their respective regional groupings.

In 2009, BRICS leaders started challenging the Western-dominated systems and during the summit in 2009, the group's leaders urged a "multipolar world order", and creation of "conditions for a fairer world order". Those assertions were construed as "a diplomatic code for a rejection of the position of the US as the sole superpower". The performance of BRICS, starting from its first summit in 2009, has proved that efforts to reform the United Nations needed more political involvement in the international arena. This could be the only way that rising economic powers can be transformed into influential political actors and meet the resistance from the powers controlling the global systems.

It is in this context that we need to reflect upon the relevance of certain other groupings such as G-8. The G-8 leaders recently met in Camp David and adopted a declaration that affirmed the importance of a strong and cohesive Euro zone for global stability and recovery and the need for Greece remain in the Euro zone. However, the fact remains that the G-8 is no longer the club of economic power houses which can control the global economy that it once was. With the emergence of the G-20 as the preferred and more inclusive forum for economic governance, the G-8 is now considered as a relic from a bygone era. As the centre of gravity of the global economy has shifted to Asia, and the financial problems of Western countries have been accentuated now by the deepening financial crisis, the monopoly of Western economies has also become untenable. This points to the question of the relevance and effectiveness of the G8.

### **Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO): "Fortress of security and stability"**

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which groups China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, held its leadership summit in Beijing on 6-7 June 2012. Started as the Shanghai Five — named after the city where Russia, China (the chief sponsors), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan first met in 1996, it is now called the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, with Uzbekistan also a member. When it was formed, it had a modest agenda: to settle border-related issues, of which China was a prime mover since it has 7,500 km of border with other member nations. With the Beijing summit last week, the SCO has become an alliance of not only the original members, but also of India, Pakistan, Mongolia, Iran and most recently Afghanistan as observers; and Belarus, Sri Lanka and most recently Turkey as dialogue partners.

The significance of the Beijing summit was that the SCO welcomed Afghanistan to its club: a NATO battlefield has been admitted as an observer and Turkey, a member of the NATO has been admitted as a dialogue partner. The participation of Afghanistan and Turkey in SCO enlarges the region that the grouping covers geographically, and increases its influence beyond the current geographical settings of SCO members. This is also considered as a significant strategic change, as Afghanistan and Turkey are often seen as countries that have close interactions with the West, particularly with the US. Now that both countries have become allies of the SCO, this represents a major geo-political and geo-strategic shift in international politics.

The Beijing summit also witnessed the signing of agreements covering security, politics and the economies of the members; the bloc's aim was to become a "fortress of regional security and stability and a driving force of regional economic development". Though both China and Russia are leading figures of the SCO, it is the leading role of China that has been the SCO's main

highlight. The SCO's growth as a regional body is a success statement not only in the post-Cold War Chinese foreign policy stratagem, but also a successful story of Beijing's multilateral practice and regional design in reaching out to its neighbours.

The SCO is one of the first multilateral, regional initiatives of Chinese foreign policy in the current century that has been a key factor in facilitating Beijing's political, economic and security interests in both the Central Asian and adjacent regions. The SCO has not only facilitated China's security interests in checking the "three evils" of terrorism, separatism and extremism in Xinjiang and the adjacent Central Asian region through various military "joint exercises" and "counter-terrorism" drills and actions, but it has also pushed the Chinese economy ahead through strong trade and economic measures between China and the four Central Asian countries along with Russia. The SCO has also been beneficial for China's broader energy diplomacy in the Central Asian and Eurasian regions. China's leadership role in the SCO has been evident in various ways since its inception. The SCO has conducted substantial military exercises in recent years, and often this was seen as China's attempt to develop an alternative security group to US security partnerships in the region. This is the reason that the SCO is described as an "Asian NATO in the making".

Though Afghanistan is still politically close to the US, China does not want to lose out on the opportunity of building strong relations with that country, particularly in the post-US troop withdrawal phase. The SCO is an appropriate medium to facilitate broader Chinese interests in Afghanistan multilaterally.

Both the SCO and China have shown a keen interest in Afghanistan, both in terms of reconstructing that country and bringing stability to the region. While expanding the SCO mandate and reviewing the membership criteria are some of the issues that made the Beijing summit a vital one, contentious global issues like Iran and the Iranian president's attendance at the summit also gave the summit greater importance. Ahmadenejad's attendance at the summit was in itself an indicator of the weight that China holds in the SCO. China has strongly resisted US sanctions against Iran. Iran still exports most of its oil to China in Asia. Defying the US sanctions over Iran, the Chinese leadership has constantly asked for a "negotiated solution" to Iran's nuclear activities, and has strongly opposed "unilateral moves" made by the US.

### **Arms race, geo-strategic issues and security concerns**

The arms race, increased defence budgets and development of new strategic alliances in Asia are major concerns in Asia. However, the arms race and shifts within security alliances also need to be seen as a matter of concern in the emerging geo-political global contexts. About ten days before the NATO summit in Chicago at the end of May this year, the US expressed its concern over a billion-dollar arms sale to Russia by France, Germany and Italy, which was unprecedented in NATO members' history. A report by the US Congressional Research Service (CRS) recently shared details on the sales to Russia by France of four Mistral-class Amphibious Assault Vessels. The CRS described it as "the first-ever sale of a significant offensive military capability by a NATO member to Russia. The European security architecture envisioned by NATO is in peril due to tensions between NATO and Russia.

While Asia witnesses all kinds of strategic and security challenges and threats, from 19th century style territorial disputes to economic rivalry and potential new nuclear weapons states, several Asian countries have witnessed new waves of arms race and defence budget increases. For the first time in modern history, Asia's defence spending will exceed Europe's this year, according to the "Military Balance 2012" report. While Asia's defence spending has increased by 3.15 per cent overall, according to the report, defence spending in at least 16 European NATO member states has decreased since the onset of the global financial crisis, and for "a significant proportion" of these, the real-terms declines have exceeded 10 per cent. This year in 2012, Asian military spending will top that of Europe for the first time in centuries, a global defence survey said on March 7, pointing to high regional economic growth and an

increasingly ambitious China. With the Pentagon explicitly refocusing its strategic attention on Asia, it is expected that a major historical shift is underway. With China's published military budget for 2012 at about US\$106.4 billion, this is the second largest in the world and up about 11.2 % from 2011 spending.

The ten-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has shrugged off the negative impact of the global financial crisis and struggled to update their military procurement plans. Vietnam will become a large purchaser of Russian-made submarines and Malaysia has acquired advanced jet fighters. Singapore has decided to buy F-35 fighter jets. South Korea is developing its cruise missiles, planning a high-speed military communications network, building bigger warships, and boosting its space exploration programme. Australia vows to spend more than \$70 billion over the next twenty years to renew its military. Japan is now rated among the top military spenders in Asia, and the Japanese defence budget is now the fifth-largest in the world. Its defence spending recorded an increase of 10.04% in the years 2007-2011. The Bangladeshi government increased the country's defence budget by over 11 per cent for the fiscal year July 2011-June 2012. Pakistan's defence budget hiked ten per cent for the fiscal year 2012-2013. The Union Budget of India for 2012-13, presented to the Parliament in March this year, allowed the hike of its defence, which spends US\$ 40.44 billion. This represents a growth of 17.63 per cent over the previous years – one of the highest increases in recent years. India successfully tested another Intercontinental Ballistic Missile, Agni V, on 20 April, which has a capacity of blowing up targets at a distance of 5, 500 kilometres and beyond and is generally perceived to put China in its place. Now Pakistan, on 5 June, tested a fifth nuclear-capable missile, Hatf VII. The Hatf VII cruise missile has a range of 700 kilometres (440 miles), can carry conventional warheads and has stealth capabilities. In another significant move, China and Pakistan last Thursday 7 June outlined their space cooperation plan for the next eight years. China has been assisting Pakistan in its know-how in space science. In August last year, China assisted Pakistan in successfully launching Pakistan's communication satellite, Paksat-1R, into space from its Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in Sichuan province.

The US has been keen to sell arms to countries and regions that have security ties with it, such as Australia, Indonesia, Japan and South Korea. India has been keen to buy the US-made F-18 and F-35 jet fighters and other offensive strike capabilities and is expected to spend \$14 billion to acquire advanced American weaponry. In addition, some countries in the region have seen considerable growth in arms manufacturing. These trends suggest that the region is sliding into an arms race. Actually, this is not a new fear. Fears of a revival of an arms race in East Asia emerged shortly after the demise of the Soviet Union. They returned, sporadically during the post-September 2011 era and with North Korea's nuclear brinksmanship policy. The surge of military expenditures in the region, by its very nature, reflects the vulnerability of peace and security in Asia.

A variety of factors explains the new wave of increased military budgets in Asian countries. China's rising clout in the region, the "return to Asia" strategy of the US, growing tensions and conflicts, etc., are reasons for this. There are certain other obvious reasons for some ASEAN countries such as Vietnam, Malaysia, and the Philippines to strengthen their naval combat and patrol capabilities in defiance of China's claims over disputed territory in the South China Sea and in response to any potential military contingency around the Spratly and Parcel Islands. The announcement last week that the US is doubling its foreign aid to the Philippines came as the US ally remains locked in a maritime standoff over a territorial dispute in the South China Sea. South Korea's military increase combines both "flash-point-driven" and "hedging-strategy-driven" factors. The South Korean government led by Lee Myung-bak, which took office in early 2008, has been in closer alliance with the US. Under the reign of the Korean conservative government, Seoul has completely abandoned its "sunshine policy" toward the reclusive North. The government is pushing instead for a settlement based on "pressure and isolation tactics" to force regime change or the transformation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

NATO's withdrawal from Afghanistan is going to be another major security concern regionally and globally, and this is a major concern beyond its participating countries. The US has given the signal that it will withdraw 23,000 troops from Afghanistan this year and a total exit from this battlefield before the end of 2014. However, it is not an easy way for the US and its allies or for Afghanistan. The US is now looking into different options, and the recent move by Pentagon Chief Leo Panetta to expand the ties between the US and India needs to be seen in this context. Last year, an agreement was reached between Indian and Afghan officials as India was to train members of the Afghan national army, which was widely seen as the US strategy to be closer to India. It was also viewed as US encouragement of India as designed to deliberately annoy Pakistan, a long-time US ally in the region. This is what Robert Farley, professor at the Patterson School of Diplomacy at the University of Kentucky, says: "Afghanistan is part of the US' project to approach India". The relation between the US and Pakistan has been estranged in the context of increased drone attacks against Al Qaeda in Pakistan despite complaints from Islamabad that the strikes violate its sovereignty, and it has branded US actions as "unlawful against international law and a violation of Pakistan's sovereignty". Although India reportedly favours improved military ties with the US, it might not become a fully-fledged ally of the US due to several other obvious reasons, especially its close ties with the BRICS and SCO.

### **Nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament in the Asian context**

The global nuclear non-proliferation scenario is currently in a state of flux with positive and negative dynamics. The positive aspect is the change in attitudes of both the US and Russia with regard to arms control and non-proliferation. This was mostly evident since the US and Russia agreed to a new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START). This development has also been bolstered by the nuclear disarmament initiative of key allies, Australia and Japan, in the form of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ICNND). These positive steps have taken place in a context in which nuclear proliferation remains a major security concern in vital regions such as the Middle East, South Asia and North-East Asia. However, the strength and effectiveness of the international non-proliferation regime, based on the NPT, is still under question. This being the situation, nuclear proliferation remains a key challenge for international security.

Three major prevailing dynamics are the state of instability in the global and regional strategic nuclear environment; the stability of the international non-proliferation establishment exemplified in the NPT; and increasing regional demand for nuclear energy. The tensions and contradictions within and between these three realms are especially prevalent in the Asia-Pacific context. In the strategic realm, the Asia region is increasingly defined by multiplayer asymmetries between the nuclear weapons states. Nuclear weapons states active in the Asia region – the US, Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Iran and North Korea – not only have vastly different nuclear capabilities but also operate within varied regional security environments and specific interests. International diplomacy has not been successful in negotiations with Iran or North Korea over the nuclear programmes of these countries. The most recent negotiations, which concluded in Baghdad last week, failed to yield a substantive agreement between Tehran and the West concerning Iran's persistent nuclear ambitions. For some, this reinforced the folly of dialogue with the Iranian regime — and confirmed suspicions that Tehran has no interest in "getting to yes" with the international community. The same is the case with the failed negotiations with North Korea, especially the failure of the six-party talks after several rounds.

## **III**

### **On-going ecumenical engagement in international affairs and global advocacy**

The 50<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting in Albania suggested several thematic foci for possible ecumenical engagement in advocacy on various issues and themes. Based on such advice, several key areas were prioritized for our ongoing involvement in ecumenical advocacy.

Some of the current programmatic actions are in the following areas and on the following issues: responding to conflict situations and accompanying churches; advocacy on specific country situations such as Sudan, Zimbabwe, Liberia, Madagascar, Nigeria, Ivory coast, Malawi etc., in Africa; peace, security and human rights in Burma; misuse of the Blasphemy law in Pakistan; sustainable peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka; the right to self-determination of people in Palestine and in West Papua; human rights violations in the Philippines; freedom of religion and rights of religious minorities in Indonesia and India; peace and reconciliation and denuclearization of the Korean peninsula; Article 9 of Japanese constitution, etc in Asia; decolonization and the right to self-determination in French Polynesia.

The other areas of our advocacy in the realms of our various working groups are in areas such as freedom of religion, human rights of migrant workers in the Arabian Gulf region and the rights of stateless people, the Arms Trade Treaty, nuclear disarmament, etc. Our advocacy at the UN through the UN Human Rights Council and its special instrument ,and the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) are ongoing advocacy initiatives and actions.

### **CCIA working groups and study processes**

The Albania meeting of the CCIA suggested the need to refocus CCIA emphases with much more specific thematic content. The working groups (WGs) were formed not to oversee the activities, but to provide more thematic content and directions in the programmatic areas and activities in CCIA's sphere. It was with that intention that we decided to form four WGs focussing on Freedom of Religion and Human Rights, Rights of Migrant Workers and Stateless People, Peace and Security, and Peace in the Community with focus on the MDGs. Terms of reference were adopted for the work of these WGs which met in Kingston, Jamaica in May 2011 and made certain proposals for further follow-up. The WGs' suggestions were incorporated in programmatic actions of some projects in 2011 and in 2012. As it was decided, certain study projects were carried out and reports on those studies will be presented in the following sessions of this meeting. In fact, the initiative we have taken with the new WGs and the follow-up process they have undertaken, in which several CCIA members also became part of the process, is a new development since we met last time in Albania.

The outcomes of some of these study processes give us indicators for our future involvement in the area of WCC public policy development and global advocacy. For example, issues such as Freedom of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities in the emerging geo-political context, Human Rights of Migrant Workers in the Arabian Gulf region, and ecumenical responses for developing global advocacy on ratification of the 1990 UN Convention on Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families, the ILO Convention on Migrant workers, the Situation of Stateless people and their fundamental right to citizenship, peace and security in regions such as Africa, Asia and Latin America, etc., are major thematic issues e we need to highlight in the coming years.

### **Priority issues for future ecumenical engagement in international advocacy**

There are several pertinent issues and areas that urgently need our attention for global advocacy. For example, we have been trying to address certain concerns such as the rights of indigenous people, growing religious intolerance and rights of religious minorities, peace and reconciliation in the Korean peninsula, Burma, Sudan, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Iraq, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Honduras; democratization and human rights in Syria, Egypt, Zimbabwe, Eritrea, Fiji; peace and security in Asia, Africa and Latin America, etc. These are some of the major concerns we need to address as part of our global advocacy. The aspiration for the right to self-determination of people in West Papua and French Polynesia has been a constant reminder to us to be in solidarity with them. A most recent request before us for global advocacy in this direction is related to French Polynesia.

## **Advocacy on re-inscription of French Polynesia on the UN list and right to self-determination**

During the visit of the WCC general secretary, Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, to the Pacific in August 2011, the president of Maohi Nui, (French Polynesia) Mr Oscar Manutahi Temaru, appealed to him to support their advocacy on re-inscription of French Polynesia on the UN's list of not yet de-colonized territories. Article 73 of the UN Charter (non-self-governing territories) as well as UN General Assembly Resolution 1514 (on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples) describes the UN's mission to decolonize the remaining non self-governing territories. While expressing the aspirations of the people of French Polynesia that the Maohi people should have their right to self-determination, the president of Maohi Nui voiced other concerns such as ongoing problems due to the effect of nuclear testing by France, suffering by people due to various nuclear-related illnesses, environmental degradation in the islands, destruction of natural resources in sea and land, etc. Deep concern was also expressed on the suppression of pro-independent movements in French Polynesia by France. The city laws and security-related restrictions make the lives of the Maohi people more vulnerable. Re-inscription to the list of territories to be decolonized is a first step to advocate for self-determination, and it will allow the UN to act as a third party to help in the process to independence.

The history of present-day French Polynesia (Maohi Nui) is as complex as many other situations. It became a French protectorate in 1842 and a French colony in 1880, although it was not until 1946 that the indigenous Maohi people were legally authorized to be French citizens. All the islands that now constitute French Polynesia had been Appendixed by France by the end of the 19th century. The islands were governed from France under a decree of 1885. In 1945, when the UN was founded, one of the first initiatives was to engage in a proper decolonization process, hence establishing a list of territories yet to be decolonized. The French colonies of New Caledonia and French Polynesia were on the list of countries to be decolonized. However, in 1947, without consulting the people of Maohi Nui, France managed to get the name to be withdrawn from the list. In 1958, France held a referendum among its colonies in the Pacific islands, but opposition to French colonization was suppressed. Subsequently, Maohi Nui remained as a French colony. Moves towards increased local autonomy began in 1977, and new statutes creating a fully elected local executive were approved in Paris in 1977. In 2003, French Polynesia's status was changed to that of an 'overseas collectivity' and in 2004, it was declared an 'overseas country'. Today, French Polynesia is a semi-autonomous territory of France with its own assembly, president, budget and laws.

The political and church leaders in French Polynesia believe that their struggle for freedom, autonomy and the right to self-determination should be addressed by the UN, and French Polynesia should be decolonized from France. The Maohi Nui government and majority of assembly representatives voted in August 2011 to demand the re-inscription of French Polynesia on the UN list. In order to achieve this goal; the primary work should be done through the UN Committee of 24 (Special Committee on Decolonization). However, they need support from the international community to achieve the goal of getting French Polynesia back on the UN's list of territories to be decolonized. Since this issue was reported at the WCC Executive Committee by the WCC general secretary immediately after his visit to Tahiti, the CCIA has been involved in a process of facilitating discussions on how to assist the Maohi Nui churches and people in their efforts for global advocacy on the right to self-determination and decolonization of French Polynesia. We facilitated a meeting between an expert on UN decolonization processes, a former senior UN Human Rights official, and Rev. John Doom, a WCC president from the Pacific region; discussion with the leaders of the Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC); discussion at the WCC officers' meeting in May this year and the officers' approval to ask the WCC Central Committee Public Issues Committee to consider a proposal to adopt a statement on this issue at its meeting in August/September 2012.

### **Just Peace and the WCC Assembly theme**

Our common journey through the DOV and the culmination of the Decade-long events through the IEPC has been successfully accomplished. However, much effort is needed in follow-up of certain areas. As mandated by the Central Committee, the general secretary has appointed a Reference Group to deal with IEPC follow-up. This group met once and made certain proposals for future follow-up in the area of Just Peace, especially in the context of the next Assembly theme which is: “ God of Life; Lead Us to Justice and Peace”. We have been able to produce a substantial document on Just Peace as well as a Call for Just Peace. However, a mandate given by the Port Alegre Assembly – an Ecumenical Declaration on Just Peace – is still pending, and this needs to be discussed and decided at the appropriate level before the next Assembly. I suggest that it is appropriate for us to discuss this at this meeting.

### **Fragmented advocacy efforts and the role of CCIA**

We have been telling our constituencies and beyond them about the unique role of the WCC in ensuring coherent and coordinated ecumenical approaches in our ecumenical actions. This was evident in the case of ecumenical advocacy through the CCIA, but now we face a situation of fragmented advocacy roles even within our internal mechanisms. This trend has affected the role and function of CCIA in many ways. As we are aiming for a new thrust and emphasis for the CCIA in the post-Assembly period, we will probably be able to overcome such problems and give a new shape to CCIA. Some of these issues will be discussed in later sessions as part of the official agenda of this meeting.

### **Towards a new thrust for CCIA in the post-Busan Assembly period.**

The CCIA has its origin in a distinctive missionary background and traditionally addressed issues that are considered as radical. However, the fact remains that the founders of the CCIA themselves underscored the objective that engagement in socio-political issues is part of the mission of the churches, and that a council of churches needs an instrument to deal with international affairs in an integral way in order to maintain and strengthen its fellowship. The CCIA has undergone structural changes on several occasions. It has become a precedent that the role of the WCC is reflected and redefined in the context of emerging international contexts, and this has been happening in the contexts of assemblies and post-Assembly programme restructuring.

Concerns have been already expressed in certain corners including the WCC Governance Review Committee (GRC) as well as the WCC Executive Committee about the relevance of the CCIA in its current form. The current CCIA has 38 members. They represent a wide variety of constituencies with different expertise and professional backgrounds. Two other commissions and an advisory body were integrated with the CCIA; as a result, the professional expertise needed to carry out the traditional and historical mandates of the CCIA through its commissioners has been lacking as members come from diverse backgrounds.

Meanwhile, some of the earlier mandates of the two other commissions – the Commission of the Churches on Diakonia and Development (CCDD) and the Commission on Justice, Peace and Creation (CJPC) were dropped from the programmatic agenda of the WCC and hence, the relevance of retaining the current composition of the CCIA diminished to a certain extent. Examples include the creation of the ACT Alliance, the shifting of programmes and projects such as Interreligious Dialogue (that are now part of Mission and Unity), HIV AIDS, Health and Healing (that are part of Diakonia and Justice in P4). None of these programmes and projects really fit in with the aims and objectives of the CCIA. Several other projects which are currently part of the CCIA mandates have been advised by separate Reference Groups, Working Groups, Core Groups, Forums, etc. For example, Reference Groups on AGAPE's Poverty Wealth and Ecology project; the Working Group for Climate Justice project; the Reference Group for the Ecumenical Water Network project; the EHIA Reference Group; the Mental Health Working Group of the Health and Healing of Memories project; the Palestine-Israel Ecumenical Forum and its Core Group of the Middle East Focus project; the EAPPI Reference



Group, etc.). Although some of these groups have consistent and efficient working methodologies to provide advice to respective projects and programmes, these groups and the CCIA have no links. The current structure of CCIA has no provisions to relate with these reference or working groups. They even lack proper information-sharing mechanisms with CCIA as well as among CCIA-related programme staff.

An integrated approach of merging various commissions and advisory groups envisaged in 2006 into the CCIA was expected to ensure more coherence and coordination of the work of the Commission. It was also expected that various activities that would fulfil the mandates of CCIA objectives would ensure better programmatic collaboration and coordination through CCIA. However, it has been proven that this expectation has not been fulfilled for various reasons. It is in this context that the proposal is made to identify new parameters for the work in the area of international affairs as stipulated in the aims, objectives and functions of the CCIA. The WCC Executive Committee in its meeting in February 2012 asked the general secretary to look into some of these issues.

This also implies the need to look into what should be the nature and structure of the CCIA in the post-Busan Assembly era. This is a question that needs to be discussed, and certain changes in the current CCIA by-laws also need to be considered. Some of these changes need to be made in order to be consistent with the overall changes in the Commission's membership and the profile of members who will be nominated by member churches, their ongoing role in contributing to the work of CCIA, and the frequency of its meetings between t assemblies, etc. It is in this context that, as per the suggestion of the general secretary and in consultation with the moderator, it was decided to convene a separate meeting of a small group of CCIA members, the officers and moderators of the four CCIA Working Groups prior to the CCIA meeting in Nanjing, China. This meeting aim at identifying issues and proposals for CCIA's structural changes and look at the need for any changes in the CCIA by-laws.

## **Conclusion**

I have tried to cover several pertinent issues that warrant our attention and reflection in order to evolve our common ecumenical responses. It has been a long reflection from my side on various issues that include geo-politics, geo-economics and geo-strategic trends, issues and concerns in the emerging global and Asian contexts. I am presenting all these issues for your reflection and further analysis which is part of our common task to evolve our common ecumenical strategies to respond to the international affairs. We live in a global situation where crises proliferate across the globe. Whether it is in Syria, Egypt, Yemen, Iraq, Sudan, Nigeria, Philippines, Indonesia, Pakistan, Honduras or any other part of the world, the ecumenical family members from these areas are calling our attention to hear their cries for justice, peace, dignity and human rights. The question before us is how we can be engaged in our prophetic witness and mission on the basis of our Christian faith, Christian values and our commitment to the Cross.

As we continue to be faithful to our call to be partakers of justice and peace for fullness of life of all God's people and their struggle, we are reminded of the values of the prophetic witness as described by Isaiah: "Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings". Are we prepared to accept the challenges to be known as the repairers of the broken walls in a divided world where we dwell?

Mathews George  
*Director, CCIA /WCC*  
Nanjing, China, 11 June 2012

### **Appendix- III**

## **Summary of Proposals on Identifying Issues and priorities for Advocacy / programmatic foci through CCIA:**

Noting the various issues the groups brought together for consideration, the representatives came up with the following observations and feedback:

1. The representatives suggested nine issues for future work and four issues for the public statements.
2. There was emphasis on the need to maintain a link between proposed work and work currently being done to ensure continuity and synchronization.
3. It was noted that the proposed work was an effort to add value, quality and different dimensions to the work currently ongoing in the Council.
4. The CCIA recommends the use of a Just Peace lens throughout the work of the WCC and related to all issues to be presented at the Assembly.

### **Specific proposals for current and future engagement by the CCIA**

1. Freedom of Religion as a matter of Human Rights and Politicization of Religion ( involve as much as possible other world religions and members of World Christian Communions, etc) (c, g)
2. Global Advocacy on ratification of the 1990 UN Convention on Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families (sending, receiving and transit countries – involving WCC constituencies and wider ecumenical movement, etc.) (d)
3. Rights of Stateless People in different global contexts (Middle East, US, Europe, Koreans in Japan, Rohingya, Bhutan, etc.) (d).
4. Post-MDG impact assessment: follow-up advocacy actions (f)
5. Responding to conflict situations and accompanying churches to develop preventive diplomacy (e.g., Middle East and Arab Spring, Armenia-Azerbaijan-Karabagh, Burma) (b)
6. 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Armenian genocide (healing the memoires of conflicts) (c)
7. Global advocacy on the right to self-determination (e.g., French Polynesia, West Papua, calling attention to violence) (h)
8. Advocacy on the rights of Indigenous People (resource extraction, land-grabbing, etc.) (h)
9. 7-Year Ecumenical Campaign for poverty eradication and promoting ecological justice (Just Peace as a lens) (f).
10. Good governance and respect for the rule of Law
11. Security as it relates to disarmament and weapons of mass destruction

### **Public Issues Statements – to be recommended for the consideration at the WCC Assembly**

- Freedom of Religion and Rights of All Religious Communities in the emerging global context and politicization of religion
- Human Rights of Stateless People
- Global Peace and Security (i.e., such as Korean peninsula, nuclear considerations, power shift to East Asia)
- Follow-up: Porto Alegre mandate – An Ecumenical Declaration on Just Peace

#### **Appendix -IV**

### **Recommendations from the 51<sup>st</sup> meeting of the CCIA regarding the future direction and restructuring of the Commission**

- We are in agreement that the future focus of the Commission should specifically concentrate on international affairs (as defined in the bylaws in Aim 2.5 (a-i), when the Commission is reconstituted in the post-Busan period. This is particularly in keeping with our mandate, as we understand it, to speak truth to power in the circumstances of international affairs.
- We are in agreement that consequently the restructuring of the composition should include persons with competence and experience in *both* specialized disciplines and advocacy and community witness.
- We are in agreement that the number of commissioners for the new CCIA should not exceed 30 (thirty) persons. Since the Commission also strongly felt that meetings should occur annually, we understand that the availability of funds could lead to a reduction of the final number of commissioners. It was also agreed that such an annual meeting would facilitate a more efficient and rapid response of the CCIA to pressing issues of importance in international affairs.
- We further recommend that some continuity (a quarter of the Commission) should be maintained in the composition between the current and post-Busan Commissions. We recognize that this is ultimately a matter that is in the hands of the Nominations Committee, but we nonetheless recommend that such continuity would assist the smooth and effective functioning of the Commission.
- We urge that when a new Commission is convened post-Busan, commissioners are given a substantial orientation on the by-laws, regulations, expectations, obligations, powers etc. related to the working of the Commission at the first meeting of the Commission.
- We affirm that there should be a stronger link between the UN Liaison Office and the CCIA; and that this should be reflected in the interface of the UN Liaison Office staff and commissioners both during and between meetings.
- We urge that a framework should be established to aid and ensure communication between WCC staff and commissioners on an ongoing basis.
- We recommend that a basic database be compiled with the profiles of previous and current commissioners. This database could serve as a reference and resource for future commissions and provide additional historical memory.
- In light of these recommendations, we understand that the current by-laws might come up for review after the Busan Assembly.

## **Appendix -V**

# **Report of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA) to the Central Committee**

Date of the most recent meeting of the group: 9 to 16 June 2012

Venue: Shanghai and Nanjing, People's Republic of China

## **1. Specific recommendations to take to the Central Committee:**

### **1. INSTITUTIONAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

*It was decided to recommend that CCIA go back to the original focus solely on International Affairs. The merging of two former commissions and an advisory group into CCIA in the post-Porto Alegre period proved not to have been an effective way of operating the CCIA.*

### **2. PROGRAMME POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

*As the commissions and advisory groups such as CCDD, JPIC, and interreligious dialogue were added to the CCIA, and now that the CCIA will be refocused only on international affairs, there need to be other ways in the form of Working Groups or Reference Groups in the post-Assembly period to guide these other concerns.*

### **3. INTERNATIONAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

*The following Public Issues items were suggested to be considered for the 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly of WCC:*

- *Freedom of Religion and Rights of All Religious Communities in the context of politicization of religion*
- *Human Rights of Stateless People*
- *Global peace and security in the context of the Korean peninsula.*
- *An Ecumenical Declaration on Just Peace (Follow-up: Porto Alegre Assembly mandate )*

### **4. CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS**

*The CCIA Commission has recommended that there is no need for changes in the current by-laws of the CCIA at this point. However, it was recommended to make the following changes in future, beyond the Assembly period:*

- *The Commission be reconstituted with a focus on international affairs as defined in the by-laws in Aim 2.5 (a-i) in the post-Busan period particularly in keeping with its mandate, to speak truth to power in the circumstances of international affairs.*
- *The restructuring of the composition should include persons with competence and experience in both specialized disciplines and advocacy and community witness.*
- *The number of commissioners for the new CCIA should not exceed 30 (thirty) persons. Meetings should occur annually subject to the availability of funds which could lead to a reduction of the final number of commissioners. Such an annual meeting would facilitate a more efficient and rapid response of the CCIA to pressing issues of importance in international affairs.*
- *Some continuity (a quarter of the Commission) should be maintained in the composition between the current and post-Busan Assembly Commission*
- *The current by-laws may come up for review after the Busan Assembly.*

### **1. Major issues addressed during the most recent meeting of the Commission:**

1. *Future size, structure and focus of CCIA for the post-assembly period in light of the Governance Review Committee report*
2. *Public Issues Statements to be proposed at the Assembly; future programmatic thrusts for CCIA in the post-assembly period.*
3. *Situation in China from a CCIA perspective on China's development and transition from socialism to market economy, freedom of religion and religious policies of Chinese government, Church in China today.*
4. *Reports of Working Groups that dealt with Freedom of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities, Rights of Migrant Workers, Human Rights of Stateless People, Peace and Security and Peace in the Community*

### **2. Major learnings/concerns:**

- a) *Better understanding about China, Church in China and religious freedom in China*
- b) *Working Groups revealed various issues that should be addressed by the ecumenical movement as part of its prophetic witness*
- c) *Emphasized the need to refocus the activities of the CCIA mostly within the framework of international affairs and the original mandate of the CCIA Commission.*

### **3. Specific outcomes from the meeting:**

- a) *Public issues statements to propose to the Assembly; recommendations to the Central Committee to refocus the CCIA beyond Busan Assembly*
- b) *Agendas developed for working groups up to the Assembly*
- c) *Identified future programme thrusts*

### **4. Any particular features of the meeting:**

*This was the first international ecumenical meeting to be organized by the WCC in China since the inception of WCC and the founding of the People's Republic of China. It was an unmitigated success and will have paved the way for the deepening of relations between WCC's largest member church in Asia, the China Christian Council (CCC) and the WCC.*

### **5. Date and venue of the next meeting (if decided):**

*No further full meetings of the Commission are foreseen; meetings of the working groups may take place if it is possible for members to meet in conjunction with some other event at minimal cost.*

## **Appendix- VI**

### **Programme of the meeting**

#### **Saturday 9 June**

Arrivals in Shanghai  
Overnight stay in Shanghai

#### **Sunday 10 June**

07:00-7:30      Breakfast .  
07.30            Checkout from the hotel and assemble at the Hotel lobby to board the special coach  
  
08:00 -10:00    Attend Sunday services in local Chinese congregations  
  
10:30            Leave Shanghai by road (special coach) for Nanjing; en-route exposure visits to Pudong , Suzhou industrial zone, and Rural China in Jiangsu Province  
  
19:00            Arrival in Nanjing

#### **Monday 11 June**

8:00-8:30        Breakfast  
  
9:00-09:45      **Opening Worship**  
  
                     Rev. Bao Jiayuan, Associate General Secretary, China Christian Council ( CCC) & WCC Central Committee member  
  
9.45-10.30      **Opening Session**  
  
                     Call to order,  
                     Roll call  
                     Welcome and greetings  
                     Rev. Kan Baoping, General Secretary, China Christian Council  
                     Orientation to the proposed programme  
                     Orientation to the proposed programme  
                     Approval of the proposed programme  
  
10:30-11:00      Break  
  
11:00-12:30      **Session 1**  
  
                     CCIA Moderator's Address  
                     Discussion  
  
12:30-14:00      Lunch  
  
14:00-15:30      **Session 2**  
  
                     CCIA Director's Report to the Commission  
                     Discussion

15:30-16:00 Break

16:00-17:30 **Session 3**  
CCIA Working Group Reports / Discussion  
Peace and Security  
Peace in the Community

18:30 Dinner

## **Tuesday 12 June**

07:30-8:00 Breakfast

08:15-9:00 Morning prayers and biblical reflections

09:00-10:30 **Session 4**  
*CCIA Working Group Reports / Discussion*  
Freedom of Religion  
Rights of Migrant Workers and Stateless People

10:30-11:00 Break

11.00-12.30 **Session 5**  
*Seminar on "Understanding China"*  
**China's Development Goals; an overview**  
Market-oriented economic reforms in People's Republic of China  
Poverty eradication and environmental sustainability in China  
*Panel presentations (economists/social scientists)*

12.30-14.00 Lunch

14.00-15.30 **Session 6**  
*Seminar on "Understanding China" (continued....)*  
**Religions and Religious Policies in China**  
Role of Religion in building harmonious Society in China  
Religious Policies of People's Republic of China  
*Panel presentations (Religious leaders and SARA Officers)*

15.30-16.00 Break

16.00-17.30 **Session 7**  
*Seminar on "Understanding China" (continued...)*  
**Church in China Today**  
Rev. Gao Feng, President, China Christian Council

18.30. Dinner

## **Wednesday 13 June**

07.30-8.00 Breakfast

08.15-9.00 Morning prayers and biblical reflections

09.00-10.30 **Session 8**

	Discussion on identifying issues and priorities for advocacy and WCC Assembly Public Issues Statements
10:30-11:00	Break
11:00-12:30	<b>Session 9</b> Meetings of Working Groups Commissioners will meet in respective working groups (identifying priorities for global advocacy in the context of WCC Assembly; Discussion on Public Issues Statements at the Assembly and issues to be addressed)
12:30-14:00	Lunch
14:00-16:00	<b>Session 10</b> Plenary Discussion Reports from Working Groups
16.00	Leave for Amity Foundation headquarters
16:00-18.00	<b>Session 11</b> Visit to Amity Foundation headquarters Role of NGOs in development initiatives in a Socialist China <i>Panel presentations</i>
18.30-20.30	Dinner at Confucius Temple Square

#### **Thursday 14 June**

07:30-08:00	Breakfast
08:15-09:00	Morning prayers and biblical reflections
09:00-10:30	<b>Session 12</b> Greetings and sharing on Report of the Continuation Committee on Governance Review and Executive Committee's Proposal on "Reconstituting of CCIA in Post-Busan Assembly 2013" -Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, WCC General Secretary Discussion towards a New Thrust for CCIA and International Affairs programmes in post-Busan Assembly 2013 period - Discussion
10:30-11:00	Break
11:00-12:30	<b>Session 13</b> Plenary Discussions on Reviewing of the CCIA by-laws
12:30-13.15	Lunch
13:30	Leave Hotel, visit to Amity / CCC Bible production centre (with WCC General Secretary)
16.30-18.00	Visit to Nanjing Theological Seminary (with WCC General Secretary)
18:30	Dinner



### **Friday 15 June**

07:30-08:00	Breakfast
08:15-09:00	Morning prayers
09:00-10:30	<b>Session 14</b> Discussion on Reviewing of the CCIA by-laws (in small groups)
10:30-11:00	Break
11:00-12:30	<b>Session 15</b> Plenary discussion on proposed amendments to the CCIA by-laws to be presented at the Central Committee
12:30-13:30	Lunch
13:30-14.30	<b>Session 16</b> Discussion on report to programme committee/Central Committee
14.30-15.30	<b>Closing Session</b> Evaluation Closing worship
18.30	Dinner

### **Saturday 16 June :**

Departure

## **Appendix VII**

### **List of documents**

1. Agenda
2. Provisional List of documents
3. Minutes from 50<sup>th</sup> meeting in Durrës, Albania, October 2010
4. Notes from Working Group meetings in Kingston, Jamaica, May 2011
5. Report of the Moderator
6. Report of the Director
7. Report from IEPC Reference Group
8. Just Peace Companion
9. Ecumenical Declaration on Just Peace
10. Report from Working Group on Peace and Security
11. Report from Working Group on Peace in the Community
12. Report from Working Group on Freedom of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities
13. + a + b Report from Working Group on Rights of Migrant Workers in the Arabian Gulf Region
14. Report from Working Group on Rights of Stateless People
15. Public Issues Statements
16. WCC General Secretary's address
17. CCIA by-laws
- 17a CCIA Post-Assembly
18. Participants list

## **Appendix VIII**

### **List of Participants**

#### **Members of the CCIA Commission**

Ms Noemi Espinoza, Honduras  
Rev. Dr Yawo Senyéebia Kakpo , Togo  
H.G. Bishop Youannes, Egypt  
Mr Roel Aalbersberg, the Netherlands  
Ms Kathryn Fournier, Canada  
Rev. Dr Carlos Intipampa Aliaga , Bolivia  
Ms Justina Yuo Dze Abeng , Cameroon  
Mr Joyanta Adhikari , Bangladesh  
Ms Vanna Kitsinian Der Ohanessian, USA  
Rev. Dick Avi , Papua New Guinea  
Prof. Dr Sooil Chai, Republic of Korea  
Rev. Didier Crouzet , France  
The Rt Rev. Duleep Kamil de Chickera , Sri Lanka  
Rev. Shirley Elaine DeWolf , Zimbabwe  
Rev. Noel Osvaldo Fernández Collot , Cuba  
Ms Tsovinar Ghazaryan, Armenia  
Rev. Dr Yawo Senyéebia Kakpo , Togo  
Mr Thomas Hyeono Kang, Brazil  
Mr Masimba Lovemore Kuchera , Zimbabwe  
Ms Lina S. Moukheiber , Lebanon  
Rev. Dr Tyrone S. Pitts( *proxy of Rev. Dr T. DeWitt Smith, Jr.*), USA  
Dr Audeh Butros Audeh Quawas , Jordan  
Rev. Dr Rev. Dr Tony Richie , USA  
Rev. Dr Dan Sandu , Romania  
Ms Emily Welty , USA

#### **Guests / Consultants**

Rev. Feng Gao, President, China Christian Council,  
Rev. Kan Baoping, General Secretary, China Christian Council  
Rev. Jiayuan Bao, *Associate General Secretary*, China Christian Council  
Mr Ou Enlin, Director, Overseas Relations Department  
Archpriest Dionisy Pozdnyaev, Russian Orthodox Church, Hong Kong

#### **WCC staff**

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit  
Dr Mathews George  
Ms Nan Braunschweiger  
Ms Patricia Bruschweiler  
Ms Christina Papazoglou  
Ms Semegnish Asfaw Grosjean

Dr Nigussu Legesse  
Dr Rogate Mshana  
Rev. Dr. Dong Soeng Kim  
Mr Jonathan Frerich

**CCC co-opted staff; China Christian Council, Shanghai**

Ms Ivy Gu  
Ms Maggie Shi



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