

Fra generalsekretær Stig Utnem, MKR

MKR-sak 14/00 h)

Rapporteringen

I tillegg til generalsekretæren har også Kjell Nordstokke skrevet rapport fra Rådsmøtet. Et utvalg av rådsmøtepapirene er vedlagt. Alle MKRs medlemmer får de viktigste papirene, mens medlemmene av "LVF-gruppen" (jfr. Geneve-turen) får et større utvalg papirer.

Forberedelser

En del av de planlagte forberedelsene til Rådsmøtet ble det denne gang umulig å gjennomføre pga. sykdom i MKRs sekretariat. Dette medførte bl.a. at møtet i Nasjonalkomiteén for LVF i mai måtte avlyses. Dermed ble det heller ikke mulig å skrive den rapporten fra Nasjonalkomiteéns arbeid som LVFs generalsekretær hadde bedt oss om å forberede til fremleggelse på Rådsmøtet. Terje Solberg og undertegnede laget likevel - på meget kort varsel - en rapport som vi presenterte i fellesskap. Rapporten ble godt mottatt og bl.a. karakterisert som "et ærlig vitnesbyrd om to kirker som er 'united and still divided'". Rapporten ligger vedlagt til orientering.

En overraskende mulighet for forberedelse til møtet dukket opp da kirkepresident Kirchheim fra Den lutherske kirke i Brasil mellomlandet i Oslo på vei til Rådsmøtet. Dette ga oss anledning til drøftelse av bilaterale spørsmål, samt muligheten til å se på noen av sakene på Rådsmøtets dagsorden. Kirchheim og hans medarbeider deltok i det norske forberedelsesmøtet som fant sted dagen før avreise til Finland.

Norsk deltakelse

Fra Frikirken deltok synodese­kretær Terje Solberg. Fra Den norske kirke deltok vårt nyvalgte rådsmedlem Inger Johanne Wremer på mesteparten av møtet og Kjell Nordstokke som rådgiver for Programkomiteén for misjon og utvikling (DMD). Kirkens Nødhjelps generalsekretær deltok på møtets første del, og undertegnede deltok på hele møtet. Kjersti Østland Tveit deltok som steward på Rådsmøtet.

Statssekretær Sigrun Møgedal deltok som gjest to av de siste dagene av Rådsmøtet. Treasurer's rapport som hun hadde skrevet, var allerede presentert, men Finanskomiteens rapport ble presentert i plenum mens Sigrun var til stede. Hun ble takket hjertelig for sin innsats, som åpenbart er blitt satt meget stor pris på av de aller fleste. Selv holdt hun en kort tale hvor hun bl.a. kunne bekrefte at den norske regjering står ved løftet som er gitt om å bevilge USD 3 mill. til LVF via Stiftelsen Oljeberget, og at regjeringen nå er innstilt på en rask avtaleinngåelse i saken.

Inger Johanne Wremer – nye Treasurer i LVF

Den norske kirkes kandidat til å etterfølge Sigrun Møgedal som Treasurer i LVF var Inger Johanne Wremer. Overfor møtets nominasjonskomité ble hun innstilt som den nordiske regionens kandidat. Det ble aldri lansert andre kandidater. Valget av Inger Johanne skjedde nesten enstemmig og betyr at Norge fortsetter å ha visepresidentplassen fra Norden i Executivkomiteén resten av generalforsamlingsperioden. Dermed har vi muligheten til å føre

videre det arbeidet Sigrun Møgedal startet, både av organisatorisk og også av politisk art når det gjelder å få LVF mer fokusert på sin spesifikke rolle innen den økumeniske bevegelse.

Presidentens rolle

President Christian Krause ga i sin tale uttrykk for at han mente tiden var inne til å gi presidenten i LVF en sterkere rolle som organisasjonens fremste representant. Han var nøye med å understreke at han selvsagt ikke snakket om sin egen person, men om "the office which represents the Communion in contact with the secular/political and ecclesiastical/religious world on the national and international level". Utspillet fikk helt klart en svært blandet mottakelse uten at dette kom klart fram i debatten etter hans tale. Dette er en svakhet i "LVF-kulturen", man taler sjeldent åpent ut om uenighet og spenninger. Skeptikerne argumenterte på litt ulike måter. Noen var skuffet over at hans rapport manglet rapportering om og refleksjon over hvorfor reisevirksomhet av denne type er så viktig for LVF. Andre savnet argumentasjon for hvorfor formelle besøk hos statsledere er så viktig, mens andre igjen konstaterte at LVFs lover og regler faktisk gir generalsekretæren disse representative oppgavene som presidenten nå ønsker lagt til sitt eget "office". I realiteten er både generalsekretær og president tillagt representative oppgaver. LVF er faktisk en organisasjon som i stor grad er satt opp med generalsekretæren som nøkkelperson. Generalsekretæren er direkte valgt av medlemmene av Council og ansvarlig overfor dem, mens presidenten jo har sitt mandat fra generalforsamlingen som møtes hvert 6. år.

Følgende dokumenter vil kort bli presentert og vedlagt rapportene til oppfølging i ulike sammenhenger i vår organisasjon:

1. Treasurer's rapport

Rapporten reiser flere av de spørsmål som LVF så langt synes å nøle med å ta fatt i:

- Grunnlagsdebatten om hva som skal være fokus, profil og egenart i organisasjonen. Her tok rapporten opp tråden fra den nordiske konsultasjonen i Nya Valamo i Finland i mars i år og brukte flere av formuleringene derfra. Dette spørsmålet ble dessverre ikke fanget opp eksplisitt i Finanskomiteéns rapport.
- Behov for annerledes budsjettstruktur. Dette er nå fanget opp som en anbefaling fra Finanskomiteén, og som Rådet sluttet seg til.
- Forholdet mellom sekretariat, komitéer og Rådet når det gjelder å gjøre prioriteringer og når det gjelder samspill. På dette feltet er det en voksende spenning (jfr. fjorårets rapporter) som også denne gang bl.a. kom til uttrykk ved at rådsmedlemmer reagerer når rapporter kommer tilbake til Council fra komitéene, og det viste seg at sekretariatet har vært inne og sørget for at innholdet passer inn i deres forståelse av hva som skal gjøres.

2. Rapporten om samarbeid mellom KV og LVF rundt generalforsamlinger

Dokumentet viser at det er gjort et grundig arbeid med dette i en felles arbeidsgruppe. KVs observatør på Rådsmøtet var aktivt til stede under hele møtet og i kontakt med bl.a. de nordiske kirkene og noen andre som også er medlemmer i KV og er representert i Sentralkomiteén der. Rådsmøtet sa: "Vi ser ikke at det er grunnlag for felles generalforsamlinger mellom KV og LVF (evt. andre konfesjonsfamilier) i dette tiåret." Men man ser for seg flere konkrete samarbeidsprosjekt og nødvendigheten for koordinering allerede i forbindelse med neste LVF Assembly 2003. KV inviteres også til å være observatør i LVFs Assembly Planning Committee.

Neste sted for avholdelse av generalforsamlingen blir Winnipeg i Canada, trolig sommeren 2003.

Som motkandidat til den kanadiske kirken, sto den Nord-Elbiske kirken i Tyskland. Problemet med det tyske kandidaturet var at det ikke hadde støtte i den tyske Nasjonalkomitéen, og at verken denne komitéen eller den Nord-Elbiske kirke skjønnte at Council mente det hadde vært nok generalforsamlinger i Tyskland, og at Canada nå sto for tur. Dette resulterte i en overlegen seier for kanadierne. Island hadde en invitasjon under planlegging tidligere, men avsto fra å fremme den.

Militær intervensjon utfra humanitære hensyn

Dokumentet trekker veksler på det tidligere arbeidet i LVF, bl.a. i Kristiansand 1993 etter Golf-krigen og på KV-konsultasjonen om samme tema i april i år. Spørsmålet er nå selvsagt aktualisert av krigen mot Serbia/Kosovo. Den norske kirke var for øvrig representert på konsultasjonen i KV i april v/ Raag Rolfsen, som arbeider på feltprestens kontor i Oslo. LVF har gitt uttrykk for at hans bakgrunn og kompetanse er svært interessant for dem. En relativ tam samtale i en felles sesjon mellom Komitéen for internasjonale spørsmål og menneskerettigheter og World Service la premissene for at Rådet ikke tok saken eksplisitt opp denne gang, mens studiepapiret er meget nyttig, og bør gjøres kjent i Norge. KISP har ansvar for å følge denne debatten. KISP bør vurdere hvilke konsekvenser dokumentet bør få for sitt eget arbeid med et dokument hvor dette temaet er en del av saksfeltet.

World Service

Rådsmøtet ga grunnlag for at problemene i World Service nå vil bli adressert på en skikkelig måte. Dette var meget gledelig og nødvendig. Opprettelsen av den såkalte "Standing Committee for World Service" var generalsekretærens forslag og svar på den kraftige advarsel som var kommet fra det såkalte "Annual Forum of Agencies" som samarbeider med og gjennom World Service. Deres budskap var tindrende klart: World Service fungerer ikke lenger tilfredsstillende. Tapio Saranevas "paper" som ligger vedlagt, illustrerer dette. Denne saken viser viktigheten av et løpende samarbeid mellom Mellomkirkelig råd og Kirkens Nødhjelp om deltakelsen i internasjonale økumeniske organisasjoner (jfr. dette punktet i samarbeidsavtalen mellom Den norske kirke og Kirkens Nødhjelp). På denne måten kunne man i denne saken være med og få fram et konstruktivt forslag fra sekretariatet i Geneve før møtet startet. Det er Finnchurchaid og Danchurchaid som fra nordisk side skal delta i den nyopprettede Standing Committee.

Budskapet

Budskapet fra Rådsmøtet er tenkt som en hilsen fra Rådsmøtet til vertskirken, dvs. i første rekke Den evangelisk lutherske kirke i Finland. Det er dessverre sjelden budskapet fra slike møter er av en slik art at MKR velger å oversette det og sende det ut til menighetene. Det bør imidlertid drøftes på en mer prinsipiell basis hvilke dokumenter fra internasjonale økumeniske møter som bør legges på Den norske kirkes hjemmeside.

Oppfølgingen av Joint Declaration

Dette spørsmålet var ett av dem som vakte mest diskusjon på dette Rådsmøtet. Som uttrykk for de ulike interessene i denne saken ble stabens planforslag lagt til side av the Committee for Ecumenical Affairs som også utpekte en egen gruppe til å lage et nytt dokument. I denne redaksjonsgruppen ble ikke Geneve-stabens sekretær invitert til å delta.

Den vedtatte plan er resultat av mye tautrekking mellom Geneve, Strasbourg og sterke personer i Council og blant rådgiverne i Komitéen for økumeniske spørsmål. Planen er oversiktlig og grei å styre etter. Det er imidlertid ikke mulig å unngå å registrere at Joint Declaration er blitt et prestisjefelt hvor ulike teologiske tradisjoner og miljøer sloss om å få innflytelse over det lutherske oppfølgingsarbeidet. Det ble for eksempel brukt som eksplisitt argument da planen ble introdusert i plenum at den var laget under hensyntagen til at "Det er mange lutheranere som er imot Joint Declaration, og at vi har villet legge fram en balansert rapport". Det er et viktig element i planen at lokale og regionale initiativ blir hilst velkommen, for eksempel slike som det brasilianske katolsk-lutherske samarbeidet rundt "eucharistic hospitality". Dette uttrykket kan en for øvrig høre mange snakke om for tiden. Det ville være naturlig at dokumentet presenteres av Den norske kirke i kontaktgruppen med Den katolske kirke i Norge (Katlusa) for en mulig norsk oppfølging.

Religionsfrihet

Blant annet på bakgrunn av Den norske kirkes økende engasjement i religionsfrihetsspørsmål de siste årene ba LVFs rådsmøte i 1999 at det ble tatt et initiativ til at kirkene rapporterer hva de selv erfarer, og hvordan de evt. engasjerer seg på dette feltet. En slik tilbakemeldingsrapport ble gitt fra sekretariatet til dette rådsmøtet. Den viser at det er kommet inn ca. 25 rapporter, altså ikke svært mange, men til gjengjeld er flere av dem svært interessante. I fellesmøtet mellom Komitéen for internasjonale spørsmål og menneskerettigheter og Programkomitéen for misjon og utvikling (DMD) kunne en merke en positiv utvikling i forståelsen av at dette ikke bare dreier seg om beskyttelse av egen religionsutøvelse eller forsvar for kristne trossøsken andre steder i verden, men er en mer prinsipiell holdning basert på allmenne rettigheter, og hvor FN og dens instrumenter og konvensjoner også kommer inn i bildet. Derfor er det svært viktig at LVF fortsetter å oppmuntre medlemskirkene til å rapportere slik at grunnlaget blir så bredt som mulig før en begynner å lage strategier. Denne utviklingen i LVF er svært gledelig sett med våre øyne. Det viser også at det nytter å reise saker. Oslo-koalisjonens samarbeid med LVF om å arrangere såkalte "sidemøter" under FNs Menneskerettighetskommisjons sesjon i Geneve i mars/april i år ble også gjenstand for en viss oppmerksomhet under møtet. Dette er et uttrykk for at Den norske kirke har en rolle å spille i spørsmålet om styrking av menneskerettighetsengasjementet innover i den lutherske kirkefamilie.

J:SU

Rapport nr. 25/00

tema EJP/SB/JOS/OST/GKK

RÅDET	
MEMBER	BEREDELSE
SØNDAGSKIRKESAMFUNN	
26 JUNI 2000	
Til	SU
S	00/96-8
A	77/05

RAPPORT FRA LWF'S RÅDSMØTE TURKU, FINLAND - 14-21. JUNI 2000

Rammene for møtet:

De ytre rammene ble preget av den finske kirken samtidig markerte Jubileum 2000 og at Åbo domkirke var 700 år. Markering gav uttrykk for hvordan den finske kirken ønsker å se sin identitet og gjerning i folk og historie, og i dette ble den økumeniske profilen framtrædende. Det er tydelig at den finske kirken fortsatt har en sterk posisjon som folkekirke.

De mer interne rammene ble i for stor grad preget av spenningen mellom president og generalsekretær med stab. Begge parter kommer svekket ut av denne spenningen. Presidenten mister troverdighet ved distansen han har til den normale virksomhet i organisasjonen, ikke minst når han i sin rapport for det meste blir kretsende om sin reisevirksomhet og sine relativt personlige oppfatninger. Samtidig svekkes generalsekretærens administrative grep fordi det mangler den nødvendige ryggdekningen fra presidenten.

Rådsmøtet:

Rådet er avhengig av god saksforberedelse fra sekretariatet og tilsvarende solid forarbeid i kommisjonene. Dette fungerer ikke alltid like godt. Debatten om tid og sted for neste generalforsamling ble preget av slike mangler, selv om resultatet var godt: Winnipeg i 2003.

Minst like viktig var valget av ny treasurer. Igjen var valget godt, men det var flere punkter underveis da dette kunne ha skåret seg. Stig gjorde en utmerket jobb ved å få den nordiske delegasjonen på plass i denne prosessen.

Mission and Development:

Fordi min plass er i DMD, vil jeg bruke resten av rapporten på saker herfra. La det innledningsvis være sagt at kommisjonen fungerer godt. Medlemmene er nå blitt kjent med hverandre, vi har kommet godt inn i sakene og den rollen vi har, og det er godt forhold mellom medlemmer, observatører og stab.

Kommisjonen ferdigbehandlet "*Guidelines for Visitation Teams / Pastoral Delegations*" og la disse fram for Rådet for vedtak. Vi hadde også til behandling "*Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development*" og "*Revised LWF Goals*". Når det gjeldt det siste, kom det fram synspunkter på at dette tar tid og at det var vanskelig å se hva slags prioriteringer det har konkretisert.

Andre saker som ble drøftet var:

1. "*Churches say NO to violence against women*". På fjorårets møte ble stabens gjennom kvinne-desken bedt om å lage et dokument til dette temaet. Dokumentet forelå og det fikk sin første behandling i DMD. Reaksjonen var positiv, også fra afrikanske kirkeledere som året før hadde vist en heller skeptisk holdning. Det kom signaler om at også andre kommisjoner, særlig DTS, også gjerne ville behandle dokumentet. Men siden de ikke hadde fått den tilsendt på forhånd og fordi vi var redde for at prosessen med å få rapporten videre ut til medlemskirkene kunne forsinkes, foreslo vi overfor rådet at rapporten skulle gis en rask

revisjon før den så snart som mulig skulle sendes ut til medlemskirkene med sikte på respons og ny behandling på rådsmøtet i 2001. Det er viktig at det også kommer norske innspill i denne prosessen.

I DMD ble det understreket at denne rapporten ikke bare adresseres til kvinner, men til hele kirken og er et anliggende for hele kirken. Rapporten er bredt anlagt, kanskje for bredt. Men den skal møte mange ulike kontekster og erfaringer.

2. *Misjonsdokumentet*. Som oppfølging av misjonskonferansen i Nairobi 1998 er det satt ned en gruppe som arbeider med en revisjon av misjonsdokumentet. Sverige og Finland har nordiske representanter i denne gruppen. Det er viktig at det skjer en oppfølging også i Norge, kanskje innenfor rammen av NØM og SMM, og at dette skjer i kommunikasjon med arbeidsgruppen. I DMD's samtale ble begrepet "missional church" løftet fram som et nytt og kreativt begrep for å fastholde sammenhengen mellom menighet og misjon.

3. *DMD's økonomi*. Det kom fram at de nordiske kirkene bare finansierer 20 % av DMD, mens tyskerne har ansvar for hele 60 %. Her handler det om et misforhold som har flere årsaker, helt fra spenningsforhold mellom Danmark og Geneve, til strukturelle særegenheter ved at tysk misjon er integrert til kirkene på en annen måte enn i Norden. Dette bør det arbeidet mer ved. Løsningen må ikke være at organisasjoner som KN får eneansvar for å holde oppe vår andel i finansieringen av DMD, men at våre misjonsorganisasjoner langt mer aktivt inviteres med til å ta et slikt medansvar. Det bør også komme i gang en åpen dialog med Geneve om de faktorer som gjør denne relasjonen komplisert noen ganger.

4. *Budskap fra de unge*. De unge la fram et "message" som DMD formidlet videre til Rådet. Nordiske stewarder spilte en positiv rolle i dette. De etterlyste en kirke som var åpen for de unges egne erfaringer, en "walking church" som inkluderte deres livsrom. En ung delegat fra Kenya rapporterte om hvordan hans kirke hadde inkludert unge på alle nivå i kirkelig planleggings- og beslutningsarbeid, og hvordan dette hadde vitalisert kirken og gjort at den vokste.

5. *Luthersk identitet*. For å styrke refleksjonsnivået i kommisjonen, har vi satt i gang en drøfting av forholdet mellom luthersk identitet og utfordringene til misjon og utvikling i vår tid. Jeg hadde et skriftlig innlegg som respons på en forelesning direktøren i DMD, Peri Rasolondraibe hadde holdt på et misjonssymposium i Finland. Denne drøftingen kommer vi til å fortsette på neste kommisjonsmøte.

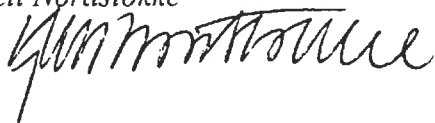
6. *Forholdet til World Service*. Diskusjonen i DWS om å opprette en Standing Committee nådde også DMD uten at vi hadde noen egen drøfting av saken. Jeg tror det er forståelse for DWS's behov for en mer hensiktsmessig struktur. Men det er viktig å begrunne dette positivt, og ikke som et ønske om å fristille WS fra LWF for øvrig. Derfor kan det være nyttig om det i Standing Committee også sikres en kontakt med DMD. Planen om en konsultasjon om diakoni i regi av WS er et annet og viktig innspill i denne sammenhengen.

Til slutt:

Det er både trivelig og interessant i være på rådsmøte i LWF. Forhåpentligvis er det også til nytte.

Diakonhjemmet, 23. juni 2000

Kjell Nordstokke



Message (Draft)
LWF Council
Turku, Finland, 14-21 June 2000

God's promise: "I give you a future with hope"

At the brink of the third millennium of the Christian Era, the Council of the Lutheran World Federation is meeting in Turku, Finland, whose Cathedral has for 700 years been the spiritual centre of this land. We thank the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, who have so graciously hosted us during these days. We have been inspired through our participation together in worship, prayer and celebrations of the new millennium. We greet the sixty million Lutherans throughout the world who are part of this Lutheran communion, with the word of God: "For surely I know the plans I have for you, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." (Jer. 29:11)

At the heart of our Christian faith and hope is the incarnation of the Son of God, and churches around the world celebrate the Jubilee year in the memory of the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ. In Christ, God came in our likeness so that we might have living communion with our Creator and with each other, and Christ's life, death and resurrection give new life and hope to humankind and all creation.

A pivotal ecumenical breakthrough during the past year, and an expression of our hope in Christ, has been the signing of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification by the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation: "By grace alone, in faith in Christ's saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts while equipping and calling us to good works." We have been encouraged by how our member churches are experiencing ever stronger relationships with Roman Catholics, and recognize the urgency to press for more visible signs of unity through mutual eucharistic hospitality.

At this meeting of the Council, a plan of action for further follow up on this agreement was considered, based on the Joint Declaration's commitment: "The Lutheran churches and the Roman Catholic Church will continue to strive together to deepen this common understanding of justification and to make it bear fruit in the life and teaching of the churches." At the same time we continue to pursue relationships with many other ecumenical partners, some of whom brought greetings to our meeting.

The same faith in Christ that inspires our ecumenical endeavors and commitments, also inspires the Christian love that leads us to witness and service in the world. The reconciling work of Christ calls us to reconciliation with each other. The free gift of justification given by God makes us partakers of God's mission in the world and obliges us to mutual forgiveness and to confronting the injustices that hold us and the rest of the world captive. The changing contexts of the world today challenge us to begin now to take a new look at how we carry out mission.

Many issues reflecting the brokenness of the world have been before the Council in these past few days, including religious intolerance, violence against women, the alarming and increasing gap between rich and poor, armed conflict and the ethical dilemmas of armed intervention to defend human rights. Effects of economic globalization will be addressed through a new theological study process.

We work to strengthen the role of women and youth in church and society, but we know how much there is still to be done in these areas. In addressing these critical questions, we are nevertheless full of a sense of hope, drawn from Christ's message of salvation and justice.

With that sense of hope, in this Jubilee year we call again for the liberation of the heavily indebted developing countries of the world from the tyranny of unsustainable debt. Political commitments have been made to reduce this crushing burden upon the poorest of the poor, but we call for genuine implementation of these commitments and for a renewed effort on the part of the international community to provide a lasting and just solution to the continuing human tragedy caused by debt. We also call upon governments of both debtor and creditor countries to take measures to prevent debts from being undemocratically, unproductively and corruptly incurred.

In all our diversity of cultures, nationalities and languages, our meeting and fellowship during these days has been a visible sign of the communion among the member churches of the Lutheran World Federation, and has enabled us to know ourselves better as a communion of Lutheran churches within the worldwide Christian *communio*. In a world which is becoming at the same time both more 'globalized', and more fragmented, our experience of that global communion gives us hope and strength for our ministry as churches and our witness in society.

May the almighty and merciful God bless us all now and forever.

In Turku, Finland, June 2000

The Council of the Lutheran World Federation

Draft 20 June 2000

Address of the President

Bishop Dr Christian Krause

“Half-time” – Looking back to Hong Kong and forward from Turku

(1) Today we are about half way between the assembly in Hong Kong in 1997 and the next assembly in three or four years. In Turku in June 2000 it is “half-time”, time to take stock. What has happened? What has changed? Where do we stand? And also: How will things and how shall we continue? Where do we see immobility or obstacles? What are our prospects for the next three or four years?

Augsburg 1999 – a new quality in mutual relations

(2) The outstanding event in the first half-time was the signing of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JD) on Reformation Day 1999. Augsburg attracted greater national and international media attention than any other church event in recent decades. Local congregations throughout the world participated in ecumenical celebrations and services of worship and now they are justifiably pressing for consequences in the practical life of their churches.

(3) On the threshold of the new millennium Augsburg was an important sign. Old lines of conflict are losing their significance and a new quality of mutual relationships is possible and will be developing in many different ways. This could be sensed clearly in the encounters at the Vatican, firstly on December 9th last year and then on January 18th with Pope John Paul II, and with Cardinal Cassidy and Bishop Kasper. It was good to share in the ecumenical service which launched the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on January 18th in Rome and thus to demonstrate that the new common ties are important to us.

(4) The JD stands for a new form of ecumenical relationships in a double way. Firstly, the bilateral and multilateral documents such as Leuenberg, Meissen and Porvoo and the agreements the ELCA has reached with three Reformed churches and with the Episcopal Church in the USA have concentrated exclusively on the North Atlantic context. The JD, on the other hand, is the first global agreement in which the South has also played a major part. Secondly, up to this point mutual ecumenical commitment has rarely been an important issue between the historical churches of the South. The JD has changed this. Many churches of the South therefore identify strongly with this consensus and see it as a platform for common endeavours in proclamation, mission and development.

(5) So, in a sense, the JD is a prototype for a new ecumenism in which the basic understanding of reconciled diversity is becoming increasingly convincing worldwide. The JD is the beginning of a global network between the historical churches extending beyond the existing regional agreements. As far as our Lutheran side is concerned, the process was able to succeed only because we used the available instruments in a cooperative way. The cooperation between our Ecumenical Institute in Strasbourg, the

LWF Department for Theology and Studies in Geneva and the LWF committees, especially the Standing Committee for Ecumenical Affairs, has provided a line which was both convincing for our member churches and recognisable for our partners on the Catholic side. However, if we wish to expand this global network, we shall need to continue and further develop this cooperative style of working more strongly than in the past, both with the institutions we share within the Federation and in relation to our worldwide partners.

(6) The JD process must now go further. Initially it is a question of further developing the Lutheran-Catholic relationship. Here three consequences must be kept in mind and rapid progress made on them:

(7) Firstly, the scholarly theological work on the unanswered and far-reaching questions must be continued, especially on the different understandings of the ministry and ecclesiology. At the beginning of February I participated in an academic symposium at Yale University in the USA. The composition of the conference was inter-denominational. In our discussions we identified the central task for the future very clearly. We need a new ecumenical theology which can tackle the changed situation in international Christianity, including the facts already mentioned of departing from a concentration on the North Atlantic and of growing cooperation and participation by the historical churches in the South. Could the JD serve as a model approach to developing an ecumenical theology with universal validity? For this we need scholarly experts who can play a leading role in ecumenical theology in the university context.

(8) Secondly, the pastoral consequences of the JD are the focus of the interest and attention of our congregations – above all, naturally, to improve the situation of inter-church marriages and families, but also fundamentally in connection with the good-neighbourly relations between Protestant and Catholic parishes in many places. For this reason, in my view, occasional eucharistic hospitality with the aim of full eucharistic fellowship is therefore one of the most urgent pastoral tasks. And finally, thirdly, we must also cooperate more closely and pool our energies in the realm of ethical responsibility.

(9) The JD process must continue. We are faced with the challenge of an ecumenical theology recognising that the future of theology depends on ecumenism. Do we have the right strategies and the necessary instruments for this?

(10) The way in which we as member churches participated in the JD process had a very positive effect on our sense of belonging and seeing ourselves as a worldwide communion (*communio*). As far as I know, at no other point in the history of the LWF have all the synods and church authorities of the member churches been so actively involved in a theological document and – despite all the nuances – reached so united a consensus on it. This can serve as a point of contact. We must present the Federation more clearly than in the past as a communion which is more than a loose federation of territorial churches. This unitedness and commitment can provide the strength and energy with which we can make our contribution to further developing an ecumenical theology among the historical churches. What does this mean in concrete terms?

(11) We need to increase the external influence of the LWF through its various organs, including the office of president. You will understand readily enough that I am not talking about my own person but about the office which represents the communion in contacts with the secular/political and ecclesiastical/religious world on the national and international level. During all my visits to the member churches, and especially during the two major continental visits in Central and Latin America and in East Africa, it has become clear to me that the Lutheran World Federation is a respected and esteemed partner worldwide for whom, through its representatives, the doors to all the high and highest offices in state, society and the churches are open. *Quite often the member churches have benefited directly from becoming the object of public interest at the national level. I was also hoping that the visit already planned to our Indonesian partners would have a similar effect because, as we know, they are in a very tense situation and need all possible forms of international attention.*

clinical issues, since possible

(12) I am also referring to strengthening this public function because, in my opinion, we could make more of these visits, e.g. by intensifying the planning, in the accompanying media work, through evaluation and documentation and by a broader policy of information for the member churches.

(13) We need a communication strategy that takes account of the increasing bilateral and multilateral situation and of the new challenges to ecumenical theology. Despite all the merit of the institutions and bodies we have in the LWF, I believe we shall need stronger instruments in the future. But a stronger community can only be a reality if there is more participation by all those who belong to this communion. Therefore it would be counter-productive for the LWF if it were to withdraw into the Geneva headquarters. The executive must remain in contact with the legislative and with the churches where ecumenism is practised. Only if there is continuing discussion with the member churches and their representatives in the LWF bodies will the idea of a new ecumenical theology make any progress. But if we see this as a priority, and I emphasise this again, we need stronger instruments for close cooperation and a common communication strategy as a basis. To this end it is important to intensify the participation and cooperation of the Department for Theology and Studies, the Strasbourg Ecumenical Institute and the corresponding bodies within the LWF.

(14) This applies equally to World Service. Here too there should be more communication between the executive and the legislative. Otherwise the churches will cut themselves off and increasingly go their own, bilateral ways. The churches should also be providing the young people for field service in the future. When they return to their home churches with years of ecumenical experience, they are the best ambassadors there for our cause. The only lobby that we have as a LWF are the churches. We have to ensure that they continue to be together.

(15) Each of my journeys since I was elected President of the LWF has further convinced me that the worldwide Lutheran communion is a treasure. Indeed, this is not only recognised by the churches themselves but also by political representatives of the countries I visited and by their governments. So, during my visit to the Near East in August last year, I was one of the first foreign visitors to be received by the recently crowned King Abdullah of Jordan, and I subsequently met President Arafat and the

former prime minister of the State of Israel, Shimon Peres. From all sides I heard confirmation of the important mediatory role of Lutherans and the LWF in the Near East. For this reason our commitment to the Augusta-Victoria Hospital on the Mount of Olives is of decisive significance for the presence of Christians in a future Palestinian state.

*shrinking
number of
Lutherans*

(16) From the political side and in the ecumenical context similar attention was given to my visits to Poland in April and to Hungary and Romania in May this year. At receptions with the Polish head of state, the prime minister and the president of the parliament I was privileged to receive congratulations for the LWF on the JD. In conversations with the Cardinal-Primate and the Apostolic Nuncio we identified common tasks in the new Europe. The same happened in encounters with the Hungarian prime minister and the secretary of state for church affairs and with the Roman Catholic bishop of Budapest. It is becoming increasingly clear that, where frontiers have disappeared, things can be seen differently. In Poland behind the iron curtain the Lutherans were a diaspora church under attack. Since the political changes it has suddenly been discovered that the majority of people around the Baltic Sea are Lutherans and that the Lutheran Church in Poland forms an indispensable bridge to Europe.

(17) Here, as in Hungary and Romania, but also on earlier visits to the Czech Republic and Slovakia, I observed a fundamental change in approach: East/West partnership is a key question for Europe. "One cannot be a European without knowing the Bible," said a leading politician during my visit to the Lutheran Church in Hungary. There and everywhere in Central Europe a new interest has arisen in the bridge function of the churches. Because the churches embody a common European history. We are in the midst of a discussion about a European cultural identity linking the East and the West. After the spiritual deprivation and oppression in the East, I can see many new bridges of hope and culture between the churches in Europe. The decades of separation from the Eastern bloc had obscured the fact that we belong to a common cultural context marked by Christianity. Europe is more than an economic or defence community. Europe is also a community of values which – whether one acknowledges it or not – has and will continue to have Christian roots.

(18) We are grateful to our sisters and brothers that they have steadfastly kept their faith and defended the gospel against contradiction and all the currents of ideology and the spirit of the times. "In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them" (Psalm 22,4). That is the soil in which a new Christian education and Christian values can take root today. Not long ago there were celebrations in Russia of one thousand years of Christianity and the same has just taken place in Poland. In Hungary this year people are also looking back on the 1000 year history of Christian baptism. And now here we commemorate a long, living Christian tradition: 700 years of the bishop's see of Turku in Finland. – To begin with, these are merely abstract periods of time, but behind them we have to imagine innumerable people who passed on their Christian faith and their Christian hope in faithfulness to the words of Hebrews 10,23: "Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful."

(19) It is important for us as churches to share in the bridge building and in European integration. Much has already been done over the past 10 years. The opening up of the borders has made new partnerships possible. But they could be supplemented by more

new initiatives. As we have been engaged in dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church, we should also deepen our relationships with the Orthodox Churches. European theology needs both traditions, that of the West and that of the East.

The millennium

The world calendar of the Christian West and other forms of reckoning

(20) This brings me to another issue which is also of great significance for us as a World Federation and for our member churches. A large amount of attention and energy was devoted last year to preparing for the millennium. It would appear that the fascination of the figure 2000 has indeed made its mark all around the world. So it is not helpful to make a fuss about the fact that – calculated and considered rightly – the new millennium really only begins during the night before the year 2001. The step over the threshold, the visual turn of an era, is called 2000. It is the fascination of this number which gave rise to innumerable, vast fireworks shows every hour, like in a chain reaction right around the globe, starting in Fiji and extending to Hawaii and Samoa. Not long before this spark also reached Germany on New Year's Eve, the friendly commentator on television said, "And now we shall switch over to Jerusalem where everything started."

(21) However, precisely when recalling the birth of Christ in the midst of the spectacle for the year two thousand, the worldwide dominance of the Western Christian calendar can give us food for thought. Whereas the Europeans were once the rulers of the oceans, today together with North America they determine the international economy and technological development. It may look like an international agreement on an industrial norm for time, but it is the product of this dominance. Delivery dates, air and rail timetables, production sequences, international conference dates and, within all that, electronic programming at all conceivable levels are guided everywhere in the world by the birth of Christ. And yet only about one third of the world's population is able to relate this A.D. era to themselves and to what directs their lives, namely the Christians of the world. Other people count the years differently for themselves. Thus, for example, the Jewish calendar indicates the year 5760 since creation. According to the Islamic calendar we are now in the year 1378 since the Hijrah, the time when Muhammad moved from Mecca to Medina. And one billion Chinese have just taken leave of the propitious Year of the Dragon.

We need mutual tolerance between religions and cultures

(22) One thing is clear. As the world shrinks, we also come closer together with our various conceptions of time. Mobility, migration and electronic communication provide for that. A process of globalisation dominated by technology and economics seems to weave all the places and spheres of the world into one global pattern. Globalisation puts us all in the same time and the same place. The opportunities for the non-simultaneous are becoming increasingly small. Where there is a threat of marginalisation, there is the danger of new lines of conflict. The points of orientation which we use e.g. to interpret our time and number our years are indeed a part of culture and thus part of the identity of nations. For this reason there is great sensitivity about any foreign domination or cultural oppression.

(23) Precisely because our way of reckoning time has again demonstrated at the turn of the millennium how monstrously global it is for the reasons described, we need to heed the exhortation to greater sensitivity. Since we count our years from Christ's birth, we have the duty to deal peacefully and tolerantly with the way other cultures and religions understand time and themselves. We must recognise that we are only part of the whole, even if we interpret the whole from our point of view, namely starting with Christ. Life and coexistence on this planet will depend to a large extent on whether we can learn to see ourselves as participants in, but not the rulers of, the one world. So, in the midst of the global jubilation about the year of jubilee, may the call for dialogue for the sake of peace and for mutual agreement about how life should be led in future not be unheard among us Christians.

As need grows, so does hope

(24) The year 1989 was a turning point in world history. The West celebrated the end of a conflict between systems as a triumph. Since everything changed in the East, many people were convinced that everything in the West would remain as it was. Today, people are no longer unconditionally happy about the double victory over the competing socialist model, on the one hand, and the global breakthrough of the western economic and social model, on the other. There are signs of uncertainty and doubt. Is globalisation consuming its own children? Will the world be divided into winners and losers? And then what will happen?

(25) The pictures that reached us in December from that global player, the American continent, were unusual: militant crowds forced hundred strong police contingents into the defensive, destroying part of the city centre of Seattle in protest against the plans of the international trade conference meeting there to liberalise world trade still further. There were calls for protectionism. Was that the beginning of a worldwide protest by the losers in so-called free trade and globalisation?

(26) The example demonstrates that the dividing lines between rich and poor will no longer run only between the North and the South. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that most countries of the southern hemisphere constitute the main losers in what we call globalisation. They experience the same time and the same place as disadvantages because they participate only to a very limited extent in the information and mobility of the worldwide networks: "information rich" versus "information poor" – and this is not the only way in which the world is divided¹.

¹ The gap between rich and poor is growing. The number of people living below the poverty line has increased to 1.2 billion over the past decade although the gross international product has continued to grow. This observation is all the more dramatic because the problems in the South have escalated in any case. The world population nearly doubled between 1950 and 1997. By 2025 it will rise to about 8.2 billion. The reason for this lies in the age structure of the developing countries. Almost half of their population is under 16 years old. About 90 of every 100 children are born in the South, where 4.6 billion people or about 80 per cent of the world population live. On the other hand, the population of the North has to face the consequences of too high a percentage of elderly people which creates a crisis in the economic balance between the generations. The battle over the distribution of the basic necessities of life is becoming more acute. In 25 years about 1 billion people will be suffering from a chronic shortage of water. By the same time 60 per cent of the world population will be living in cities. Of the 10 largest mega-

India
Indonesia
Jepang
Australia

(27) Faced with this multiplication of the problems, there is total perplexity about the development aid that has been going on since the seventies. The dynamics of the negative scenarios seem to overwhelm every positive beginning. Are there any hopeful approaches at all to cope with the global challenges? Because if one allows hopelessness to grow, one gives new nourishment to fundamentalism.

(28) It is a task for the future to find a new stand in these global processes, as the Federation did just after it was founded in 1947 when every seventh refugee worldwide was a Lutheran and the hour struck for the birth of World Service. This instrument of our international communion has come to the help of innumerable victims of suffering, hunger, poverty, persecution and displacement and is still doing so today. With great respect for the achievements of our staff in the field service and with thanks to the member churches which support us in this, we remember the humanitarian work in Kosovo, Mozambique, Ethiopia, in Hungary and Romania during the flood disaster and in all the other areas where World Service is working.

(29) At the same time constructive development work continues. But in that case I sometimes have the impression that the work vanishes like a drop in the ocean. The erosion caused by the liberalisation of the markets seems to cancel out the successes achieved with great effort over the past decades. So we need to evolve a new understanding of development in connection with mission and the church and also a cooperative strategy. In many places the World Service programmes are already working closely with the local and regional churches. In the future these inter-relationships will become still stronger.

(30) I believe that one resource human beings have is often underestimated, namely their ability to hope. Hope is an incredibly strong potential for strength. Even in extreme poverty and under-development, it can mobilise initiatives for self-help. And, to be honest, I cannot imagine how things would otherwise continue if the people affected did not make themselves into participants by their hope. This is already happening and, despite all the negative news, it is a hopeful prospect.

The main centers of Christianity are shifting

(31) Thirty years ago my regional church of Brunswick had about 600,000 members. That was almost exactly the same number as the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus which I visited frequently at that time. Today our regional church has only about

cities probably 8 will then be in the South. One of the priority tasks for the future will thus consist of guaranteeing the food supply for a rapidly growing world population. But there is hardly any leeway left for sustainable development strategies to overcome the causes. The foreign debts of the developing countries have grown further in the nineties; they amount to more than 2 billion US dollars and compel restrictions in expenditure on investments in infrastructure and the social realm. On the other side of the globe one single man like Bill Gates can amass for himself a fortune which corresponds approximately to the gross national product of the 48 poorest states. Money and capital have become autonomous in the form of shareholder value and can undermine the ability of states to act. (Information from: Global Trends 1998. Facts, Analyses, Prospects. Stiftung Frieden und Entwicklung, Bonn 1997)

450,000 members whereas the Mekane Yesus Church, despite many years of persecution, is nearing the 3 million mark – and the growth is continuing. This example points to a shift

which is taking place everywhere in Christianity. Whereas the churches in the North are shrinking, Christianity is growing in the South. This applies to the historical churches, such as the Catholic Church on the world level and to the Anglican Communion. But the increase is still more marked in the so-called independent churches, the charismatic and neo-pentecostal churches, which evidence striking growth in Africa and Latin America especially among the poorest of the poor, but are also increasingly making their mark in the post-communist, religious vacuum of the East.

(32) The church is growing in the midst of poverty, and in poverty and suffering it can preserve its views of human beings' dignity before God. *Theologia crucis* – the theology of the cross is alive among the poorest of the poor: God came to human beings in their poverty. There in the stall of those who had no roof, the message was, "Today the Saviour is born to you." The Christians count their years accordingly. That is the hope of the poor.

(33) The strength of Christianity has not faded away. I see that as a sign of hope that "God's cause" will go on and that this cause will awaken the energies in people which are needed to find ways out of poverty, hunger and under-development. It is marvellous to see the conviction and seriousness with which young people in particular become Christians and live as Christians in the churches of the South. Does the future of Christianity lie there?

(34) Christians have their own term to define this worldwide dimension of their witness and service. They do not speak of global but of universal. The roots of Christian universality are found in Christ himself who – as we know from his mission command – calls all people to be his disciples – beyond all borders. Christians continue to need their sisters and brothers in other cultures and contexts of the world. This Christian solidarity should prove to be a ferment of peace so that the whole human organism can remain united in the world.

(35) Each one of us is also personally linked with this network of expression of Christian life. Here we can all find our own places and our own tasks in the present time *anno domini* (in the year of the Lord) 2000. I find it encouraging to know that this bond of common trust in God's saving action and in the communion in Christ exists. Christians have experienced this for 2000 years. And as the world comes closer together we sense that we need the bridges of ecumenical experience and should make active use of them. To preserve them requires perseverance and trust, like everything in the ecumenical sphere. It is much easier to produce new condemnations! Those belong to the things we should leave behind us in the old millennium. We set our hope on that because we receive it from God. The theme for this year's Council meeting – half way along the path, as it were – expresses what we should continue to hold on to: "Surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope" (Jeremiah 29,11). This is my heartfelt wish for us all!

Report of the Treasurer

This report refers to 1999 and the first three months of 2000, and presents a summary of concerns and challenges at the time of handing over responsibility as Treasurer of LWF.

First of all I want to express my appreciation for the constructive collaboration, the fellowship and the trust I have experienced in my time as Treasurer. It has been a privilege to serve and share together and a blessing to discover what it means to be part of the Lutheran family in this way. Through the three years since Hong Kong there have been highlights of achievement and moments of pain and hard work. All of it has demonstrated the value of growing together, acting together and reaching out together.

Building identity and broadening partnerships

Complex realities and complex needs

In my reports to the Council I have sought to demonstrate that finding and managing resources for LWF depends a lot on how we define who we are, what we do and with whom we do what we do. We act in a context of complex and diverse structures, needs and relationships. Income is at the bottom line of what we can do. At the same time, what we do can generate additional income - and how we do it can make more or less efficient use of the resources available.

The realities of the member churches within our communion differ greatly. Lutheranism has today increasingly a global flavor. At the same time, each member church is distinctly different from the other characterized by different combinations of features, such as majority/minority; state/independent; ecumenically open/closed; high/low; episcopal/synodal etc.

May be even more importantly, the context in which the member churches live and witness vary greatly. For some churches, the LWF is the main link to the "global church" and may be the only ecumenical bridge. For others there are a wealth of opportunities, where relating and acting within a confessional family becomes one ecumenical option among many. Our life together has made the diverse needs and contributions of each member of the global Lutheran family more and more evident.

This diversity within the family has implications for how partnerships in resource sharing are constructed and for funding behaviour of member churches. It also has important implications for what is regarded as the highest overall priorities for LWF, and may explain why it is so hard for us to establish clear priorities. Whose reality counts? How is power over these decisions or lack of decisions exercised? The challenge for LWF as a whole is to discuss this openly and build a shared reality, where all the realities count, learning to express and affirm a shared identity through the puzzle of diversity.

Shared identity and capacity for each church to respond to our common call to discipleship in the local context is therefore a key challenge that we face. The fellowship needs empowered member churches that know who they are and know how to act responsibly and predictably in partnership with each other – within the family and beyond, according to their vision, context and capabilities.

Last year's signing of the Joint Declaration saw the conclusion of many years of work, where the unique opportunity of LWF as a communion was demonstrated fully. Some of the challenges we face have this nature. There will continue to be imperatives and challenges which in similar ways will require action or intervention on behalf of the whole fellowship, effective coordination and representative global mechanisms for consultation with the membership. Here the Geneva Secretariat is well placed to serve this function.

Other challenges that we are faced with require more tailored responses. Centralized responses in a complex environment are heavy to manage, have limited sensitivity to the diverse settings and often create too big distance between the resource provider and the resource user. Matching the type of challenge and need with the appropriate type and level of ecumenical response is therefore one of the important challenges we need to discuss further. Here answers are likely to be different from different regions and countries. We need to actively explore these differences and see how we better can allow for a range of different responses, including also opening up for more decentralized or net work type partnerships.

Focus and profile

In facing these challenges, LWF needs to participate actively and strategically in efforts to rationalize the approaches to international ecumenical work. It is necessary because of the overall resource constraints for the big international ecumenical and confessional organizations. And it is necessary for a credible witness. There is an obvious need to identify the kind of work that at any given period of time can best be done within a confessional body, such as LWF.

It may for instance be seen as a main task for the LWF to stimulate and facilitate partnerships in studies, and to build dialogue among its members to strengthen identity, compatibility and necessary confessional coherence. Ecclesial self awareness and differences in use of scripture are important challenges we must face together, as are the implications of bilateral or multilateral ecumenical agreements. They need to be followed, interpreted and further built upon as a shared activity, to strengthen the fellowship and to serve the entire ecumenical movement.

The work of Mission and Development is a special responsibility within the family, with a focus on equipping, enabling and empowering member churches to respond to our common calling in its own context. Effective Lutheran participation in mission and proclamation is a central shared task which should be given particular attention as a “within the family concern”, providing also the necessary bridging and commitment to common witness with other churches and movements, as well as to an ecumenical discipline in mission.

The way we respond to human need and social ethical challenges may on the other side benefit from a broader ecumenical partnership. Particular attention should be given to how the WS can act effectively within a broad ecumenical response in the current global context, and develop its structure and capacity to become the kind of operational partner which is now required. There is a need to continue to adapt the World Service structure to further develop its current role as a reliable and active partner in ACT. In the area of humanitarian need, the need is unlimited, it arises from developments beyond member churches control and go beyond their ability and often require technical proficiency and professional staff. The ability of LWF will here be determined both by funds, access to expertise and ability to work in partnership.

In global advocacy and human rights issues, there is both a need for a visible LWF voice and for active ecumenical partnering. Recent developments in several countries have again demonstrated how hard it is for individual churches to stand up with a clear voice in situations of war and human rights violations. Acting together, and combining local and global responses makes the voices of the churches stronger and more credible.

May be most important, it must be expected of LWF an ability to represent, relate, bridge and link, to coordinate responses and to provide an arena for consultation. This work needs an effective secretariat function and accountability and trust between the member churches and the secretariat, the member church representatives and office bearers and the executive staff. This is the basis for doing other things well, and should be affirmed as the highest priority in terms of funding.

Ecumenical bridging

The General Secretary will report to you in more detail on the outcome and recommendations of the LWF-WCC staff working group. It is encouraging to hear that in response to the votes of the governing bodies of LWF and WCC a new process has been initiated to explore new ways and means for a closer and increased cooperation between LWF and WCC. It is likewise important to register and acknowledge the various areas of relationship and cooperation already existing between LWF and WCC and other Christian World Communions.

The exploration of innovative ways to deal with questions of membership fees, financial contributions, joint/coordinated assemblies and its evaluation and assessment in regard to output and input of resources are challenging tasks ahead.

The cooperation between ecumenical partners in the emergency coordination through *Actions by Churches Together (ACT)*, where WCC and LWF are the "parent"-organizations, has proven to be an excellent example of effective ecumenical coordination. In the light of best use of available resources for international church work, LWF should continue to cooperate with other ecumenical organizations as it is outlined in a report of WC/LWF working group.

Stewardship

Financial flows

The Federation has historically relied in its funding upon the member churches and related agencies as the major financial supporters. Four categories of funding are prevailing, and should be understood, both in terms of potential and limitations:

Membership contributions: Member churches are asked to make yearly contribution that used to help meet administrative costs of the Secretariat and the Governing Bodies of LWF (Council and Executive Committee).

Contributions from Churches for Geneva Co-ordination Budget and Programs/Projects: Member churches provide additional financial support from their budgets for the Coordination Budget, programs/projects and responses to appeals for special projects.

Contributions from Church-Related Organizations: Substantial financial support is provided by agencies related to member churches. The majority of these funds are earmarked mainly for development purposes, relief and emergency assistance, but in a few cases support is given to peace-making and human rights efforts, ecumenical and theological programs and for the Geneva Coordination Budget.

Contributions from Governmental Organizations: In connection with service programs operated by the Department for World Service, financial support to specific programs are provided by governmental organizations such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), European Union and United Nations Relief and Works Agency. These programs include services for refugees and displaced persons, disaster responses, and for meeting endemic needs through multi-sectoral development programs. The governmental organizations providing service fees for the Geneva Coordination Budget.

The Geneva Co-ordination Budget is financed through membership fees, direct allocations to the Co-ordination cost, through "service fees", which are related to project and program funding and financial income.

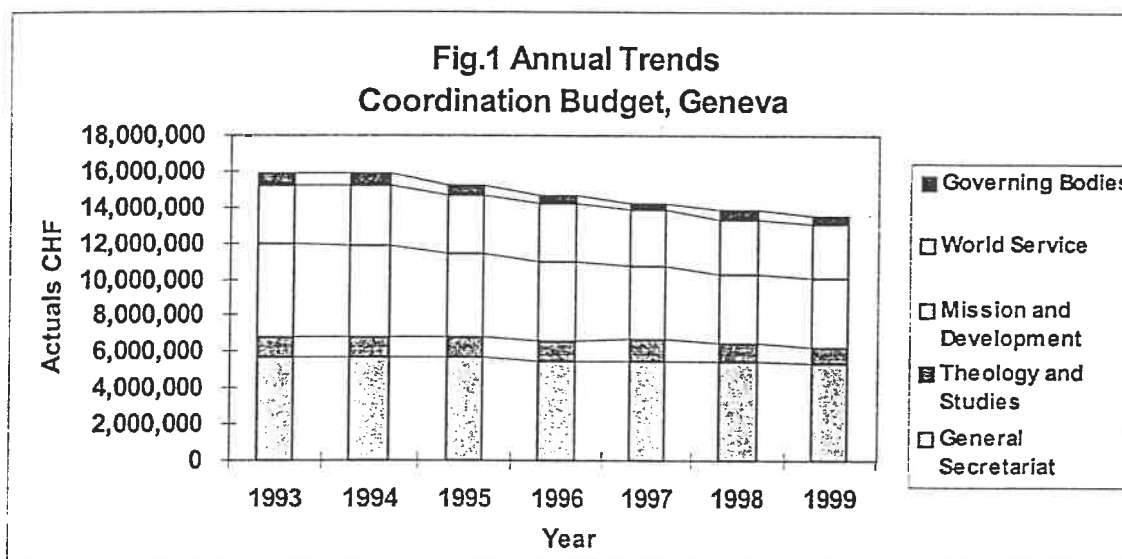
The governing bodies, the non-project related tasks of the General Secretariat, Ecumenical Dialogues, Communication Services programs to a great extent, and to a certain extent also the co-ordination cost of the Department for Theology and Studies, are financed by membership fees. The costs of the Departments for Mission and Development and World Service are mainly financed by projected –related service fees. The LWF is planning to refine project and program-related work further allowing agencies to provide more funds for the co-ordination costs of the Geneva Secretariat and clarifying options and mechanisms for making optimal use of a variety of resources

Managing income and expenditure

The year has again demonstrated the need for strong measures to control expenditure, in order for the Federation to live within its means. The main parameters setting out the financial and economic climate are largely the same as for last year, as reflected in the report of the General Secretary. Contributions from member churches and agencies for the Co-ordination budget remained on a similar level like the previous year. The Swiss franc remained strong against the

currencies from the member churches in the EURO region the income in Swiss francs was reduced, while income in dollars produced higher receipts in Swiss francs. Exchange rate related plus and minus income is balancing out. While the number of member churches grow, it is obvious that the new churches, very often small and newly constituted churches, will not provide the Federation with a substantial higher income.

An overview of trends for the Geneva Co-ordination Budget shows that measures have been taken to reduce the actual expenditures to match the income; the actual expenditures of 1999 (CHF 13'511'102) are reduced by 2.4% (fig.1). Despite the constraints we are thankful, that the Secretariat has been able to balance the Geneva Co-ordination Budget, provide necessary funds for programs in the area of Ecumenical dialogues and Communication services, assuring a positive cash flow and increase slightly the General Reserves.

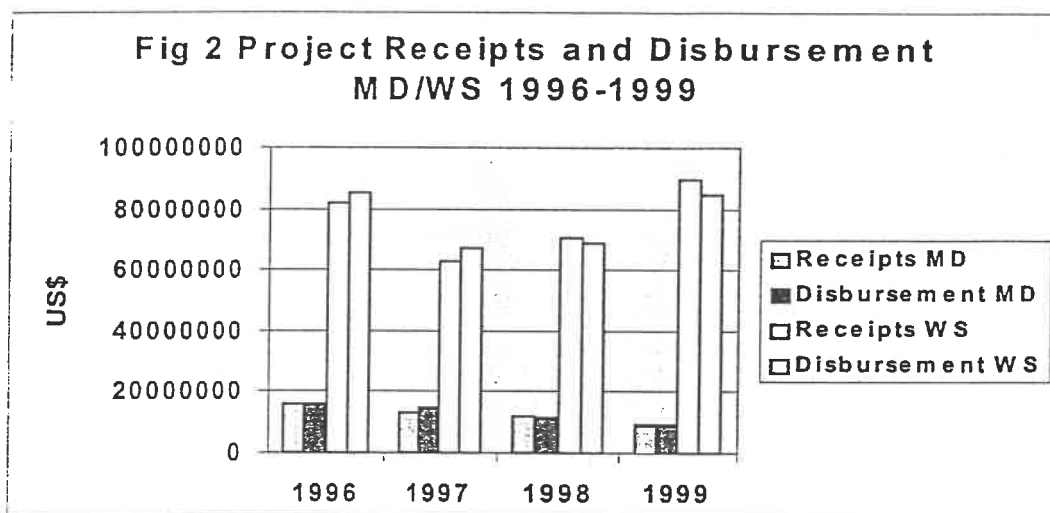


It is, however, very clear that we have not been able to break new ground in terms of financing the Geneva Secretariat. Given that the resource envelope for the Co-ordinating budget is not expanding from year to year, we need to look more carefully at what is financed by this resource envelope. Additionally we need to explore how the activities included here can be presented in such a way that it is possible to identify and protect essential activities and so that a higher level of funding for priority activities can be generated.

Looking at receipts and disbursement for programmes and projects (fig 2), a main feature is that receipts and disbursement for World Service programs continues to rise from a low in 1997, through 1998 and to a level for 1999 which is higher than the previous peak from 1996. For Mission and Development the trend continues on a slight decrease.

Looking at the trends for Geneva Co-ordination Budget and Project funds together, the Department for World Service is able to generate major support from member churches, agencies and international organisations, like EU and UNHCR for emergency and rehabilitation work.

The World Service field capacities are very much needed and recognised as an efficient tool, knowing that improvements are still needed.



The decline of the project and program support for the Department for Mission and Development over the last two years is largely due to an exchange rate problem as mentioned earlier. A substantial support for DMD programs and projects came from member churches and agencies from countries in the EURO- zone, which lost substantially value against the USDollar. The limited resources for the Department for Theology and Studies force the department to focus on a limited, but most relevant new initiatives.

Priority setting and the budget structure

Good stewardship has to do with careful management of resources and careful priority setting. The limited resources and the balance that is now created between the different activities due to income earmarked by donors, should urge the Council to push ahead to get the necessary groundwork in place for making informed choices of priorities. Such priorities cannot be abstract, but should be reflected in the profile of the LWF budgets approved by the Council year by year. Currently there is no good mechanism in place for the Council to do this work, as each programme committee only deals with its own stream of activity . This is also why the Programme Committee for Finance and Administration last year suggested that more time is required in the Council meeting for addressing overriding strategic and budgetary issues for LWF as a whole.

In this context, I believe that the Council will need to address the whole budget structure, as the Co-ordinating budget cannot be well understood and managed in isolation from programme budgets. I propose that the structure of the budget, including the relationship between the Co-ordinating budget and the programme budgets, should be a main focus for the Council's Programme Committee on Finance and Administration this year, with the view to give guidance to the Secretariat. There is a need for a structure and procedure that better allows the Council to

engage in matching expressed priorities with resources. In this context I believe it is advisable to continue to explore ways to distinguish between core secretariat functions and other more programme dependent secretariat functions.

The Council should address the balance among the various programmatic activities and contribute insights from the churches in terms of broad priorities as well as funding and partnership options. In this, World Service is very different from the rest of the LWF programmatic work, both in terms of resources, operational set up and partnerships. It would therefore be particularly important to take the necessary time for a discussion in the full Council of the types of challenges ahead for LWS and the implications for the rest of the LWF, based on the work of the World Service Programme Committee.

It is expected that the financial framework, in which LWF operates, will not change dramatically in the next years, and will still be tight. The big challenge is to maintain the current level of funding and avoid a further decrease, assuring a continuous process of fiscal consolidation and further prioritising of the work according to the needs of its members. An obvious part of this is getting an overview of all possible kinds of resources and checking this map against our shared goals. In addition, all programmes should be examined as to whether each activity has to be done by LWF alone or in an ecumenical partnership.

Special efforts

Resource Consultation

The resource consultation that took place in Geneva in November 1999 was an important step in the process of prioritisation and optimal use of resources available.

The consultation provided a forum for discussions on new ways of thinking and acting together to fulfil the mission of the Federation, as outlined in the LWF constitution, Council decisions and in the aims and goals recommended by the Assembly in Hong Kong and refined by the Council.

The departing point of the consultation was the conviction that the large Lutheran Communion has a myriad of resources, which we are not aware of and where systems are not in place to provide and to share the resources and capacities. In view of the aims and goals of the different areas of LWF it became obvious that systems have to be designed that empower member churches and other partners to contribute their capacity as part of the common resources of the communion.

For this reason it is important that we agree on the strategic vision of the Federation and that the agreement on the aims and goals will provide sources of energy and coherence and the basis to operate and innovate. This can result in new ways of resourcing the Federation and giving access to common resources for the members.

Under the aim to "Ensure responsible stewardship of resources" the ambitious, but necessary goals are set to establish an integrated resource plan for the Geneva Coordination and departmental resource plans for projects and programs as well as an effective networking for resource sharing.

Membership fees and Endowment Fund

The consultation on fair and effective criteria for the calculation of membership and assembly fees held in Geneva February 1999 was followed up. While noting the possibility of refining calculations based on some measurement of welfare in the countries, it was still seen important to consider the real financial situation of individual churches and their members.

In this respect a letter was sent out to member churches explaining the results of the consultation and asking for consideration to adjust the respective membership fees to the targeted amount. It is encouraging to learn, that a number of member churches accepted the challenge and pursuing for ways and means to consider the request, others asked for a grace period and a smaller number explained, why they are not in a position to raise their membership fees. We want to thank the member churches, which consider the increase of their membership fees, and want to acknowledge the reasons of others of not being able for the time being to adjust their fees.

The LWF Foundation was registered in April 1999. The Board met for the second time in April this year. The report of the Board is made available to the Council as Exhibit 15.7 and describes the main activities and achievements. Board members were very active in the previous year to visit and discuss with member churches the aim of the LWF Endowment Fund and possible strategies to encourage participation.

The Board noted with gratitude that a number of churches have already responded positively to the endowment fund. The Board has asked two communication experts from Germany and the USA, both familiar with the work of LWF, to develop fundraising strategies for different contexts and design promotion leaflets to be used by member churches.

For the relatively short time of existence, the Endowment Fund has proven to be a promising instrument available to the Federation to supplement the income to cover the cost for essential functions of LWF Geneva. It will still likely need quite a number of years to build up the set goal of USD 10 million by 2004. This amount would provide the Federation with a substantial amount of earnings to assure the Federation's work.

Concluding remarks

Opting for togetherness, and trusting each other enough to open up for a range of broader partnerships at the same time, should be the quality of LWF in the years to come. We need to address the questions of power relationships and power structures, as well as the questions of resource sharing in this perspective.

We do have a strong communion. Its strength is its global nature, its growth in membership, its ability to cope with diversity while maintaining unity and identity, its history, ownership and vision. It is a treasure, but a treasure in a clay pot, both beautiful and breakable. It is not finance that holds it together, and likely not finance that can break it. Both the pot and the treasure is constituted by faith. It is the work of the Holy Spirit that nurtures commitment to discipleship in witness and life together.

Our power and our treasure has to do with risking to be both weak and strong. It has to do with unmasking powers that oppress, undermine and overshadow. It has to do with healing and restoring broken relationships and with affirming the value and identity of each part in our diverse communion. The clay pot is just as strong as our communion.

Building a shared reality by listening, holding together and reaching out is hard work. The clay pot is breakable. But it also has the potential for letting in water and light and air that nurture hope. The treasure in our clay pot is just that: hope. Stewardship over this treasure goes beyond the responsibility and possibility of a Treasurer. It is the task given to all of us.

A paragraph expressing gratefulness to staff (from Ishmael)

Rapport til LWF Rådsmøte i Finland Juni 2000

Fra Nasjonalkomiteen for LVF i Norge

Omorganiseringen

18 desember 1998 holdt Nasjonalkomiteen for LVF i Norge sitt konstituerende møte og vedtok noen korte og enkle statutter. En ny epoke i Nasjonalkomiteens liv i Norge var innledet. Til nå hadde Den norske kirke ved sitt Mellomkirkelige råd håndtert LVF-sakene løpende og suverent. 18 desember fikk Nasjonalkomiteen 2 medlemskirker (Den norske kirke og Den evangelisk lutherske frikirke) samt 8 observatører (lutherske organisasjoner for misjon samt den økumenisk baserte Kirkens Nødhjelp).

Man var uten videre enige om å at det var naturlig å arbeide med de saker som LVF setter på dagorden, og bekreftet at LVFs Bylaws 9.1 er tilstrekkelig tydelig og omfattende til at Nasjonalkomiteen kan finne gode retningslinjer for sitt arbeid.

Samtidig ønsket man å ha en bredere perspektiv på Nasjonalkomiteens funksjon som tok utgangspunkt i den særnorske situasjonen. Dette ville-mente man-bety at komiteens dagsorden ikke var begrenset av de saker som LVFs Bylaws definerer som tilhørende en Nasjonalkomite. Videre var det enighet om at Nasjonalkomiteen skulle bidra til å gjøre den organisatoriske sammenheng mellom lutherske kirker og lutherske organisasjoner i Norge tydeligere for LVF og for våre søsterkirker. Og fra enkelte, blant annet Den norske kirke, var det et uttalt ønske at deltakelse i Nasjonalkomiteen skulle ha som mål å trekke flere av organisasjonene nærmere et forpliktende arbeidsfellesskap med LVF og særlig med avdelingen for misjon og utvikling.

Den ny-organiseringen av Nasjonalkomiteen som fant sted skjedde ikke-som denne korte oversikten viser- nødvendigvis utfra en klar visjon av hva vi ville. Kanskje har vi ennå ikke noen slik visjon å presentere. Men målbevisst arbeid over noe tid i dette nye lutherske fellesskapet i Norge kan kanskje bidra til at en slik visjon blir funnet og formulert - i rammen av den store visjon om kirkens enhet.

Den konkrete forutsetning for ny-organsering av LVFs Nasjonalkomite var Den Evangelisk Lutherske Frikirkes (DELFF) søknad til LWF, og de forpliktelser dette i følge bylaws medførte for de etter dette to norske medlemskirker. Nasjonalkomiteen i sin nåværende form må vel derfor sies å være mer et indirekte "nødvendig" resultat av DELFFs medlemskap enn av en sterk og glødende visjon for dette arbeidet. Mer enn en visjonær økumenisk størrelse framstår nok fortsatt komiteen som et praktisk arbeidsredskap.

Det kan imidlertid fastslås at nasjonalkomiteen har gitt en formell møteplass der disse to kirker for første gang i norsk sammenheng møtes som likeverdige samtalepartnere innefor en luthersk ramme. Dette gir nye muligheter til å drøfte spørsmål vedrørende forholdet mellom kirkene i en ramme der det gjennom Nasjonalkomiteen er etablert gode kommunikasjonskanaler.

Luthersk fellesskap i Norge

I en nasjonal sammenheng hvor Den norske kirke som en statskirke med overveldende majoritetsposisjon og konstitusjonelle særrettigheter møter en minoritetskirke (DELFF) som har brutt ut primært på bakgrunn av kirkeordningsspørsmål, gir en del spesielle utfordringer. For majoriteten av det norske folk er begrepet kirken synonymt med »Den norske kirke». En av våre utfordringer er å bevisstgjøre oss selv og våre omgivelser på at kirken i Norge er en adskillig mer sammansatt størrelse, og at selv når vi snakker om den lutherske kirke i Norge er ikke dette synonymt med ett særskilt kirkesamfunn. Det finnes også flere mindre lutherske

kirker i Norge som har avslått invitasjon til deltakelse i Nasjonalkomiteen.

Så lenge et av de grunnleggende premisser for dannelsen av DELF, nemlig statskirkesystemet, fortsatt er en realitet som faktisk har vært kirkesplittende, er det en utfordring for både Dnk og DELF å forholde seg til hverandre med respekt og forståelse for hverandres egenart, også der den faktiske tilstedeværelse av begge kirker i seg selv innebærer en kritikk av den annen kirke og dens ordninger. DELF betoner sterkt at de ved kirkedannelsen i 1877 ikke forlot den lutherske kirke i Norge, men Den norske kirke som statskirke. Dette medførte at spenningene i starten var svært små. Rundt århundreskiftet var DELF svært isolert, blant annet som konsekvens av en sterkere reformert impuls fra grojord i DELF. Den kirkeordning man hadde valgt ble fremstilt som den bibelske ordning som ga seg av de nytestamentlige anvisningene. I 1968 kom et omslag i og med erklæringen om at kirkeordningen var en mulig ordning som ivaretar de prinsipper som kirken holder som vesentlig. Dermed startet også en periode med begynnende, forsiktig økumenisk åpenhet innen DELF, en utvikling som de senere år blant annet har resultert i medlemskap i Norges kristne råd (NKR) og fra 1997 assosiert medlemskap i LVF.

En annen utfordring i vår nasjonale kirkelige kontekst er forholdet mellom de lutherske kirker og de mange lutherske organisasjoner, som i større eller mindre grad definerer seg selv som Den norske kirkes arbeidsredskaper (special ministries) på sine ulike områder. En av den omorganiserte Nasjonalkomiteens første saker var å forsøke å legge til rette for en bredere kontaktflate mellom den/de offisielle kirkelige rådsstrukturer og det mangfold av frivillig arbeid utenfor disse strukturer som er et særpreg i norsk kirkeliv. Mange av disse organisasjoner har sin bakgrunn i folkelige bevegelse fra slutten av 1800-tallet som ved siden av å være båret fram av engasjement særlig for kirkens misjonerende, evangeliserende og diakonale arbeid, også hadde klare elementer av kritikk mot den prestestyrt kirke Den norske kirke framsto som. Dette har ført til at de fleste av disse organisasjoner ved siden av sin betoning av å være innenfor kirken også har markert en relativt sterk selvstendighet i forhold til kirkens beslutende strukturer. DELF var en del av den samme bevegelse, men trakk –til forskjell fra andre - de sterkeste konsekvenser på spørsmål av kirkeordningsmessig art. Samtidig har det tradisjonelt vært sterke bånd mellom organisasjonene og DELF, både i teologiske spørsmål og i fromhetstradisjon

I lys av denne historien ser vi på Nasjonalkomiteen også som et sted å øve oss i å forholde oss til hverandre i situasjoner der vi står overfor uenighet i kirkepolitiske eller teologiske spørsmål, men der det bør

være et mål å holde fast på respekten for hverandre. Dette blir ikke minst viktig i saker der uenigheten er av en såpass dyptgående karakter at den kan problematisere enkelte former for samarbeid. Et aktuelt eksempel i norsk sammenheng er debatten om samboende homofiles rettigheter i kirken.

Nasjonalkomiteen har ved flere anledninger vært arena for drøfting av de utfordringene som LVF står overfor som en Christian World Communion som leter etter en plass og funksjon innenfor den økumeniske bevegelse som er bærekraftig inn i nye tider. Det er tilstrekkelig å henvise til diskusjonen rundt rapporten fra LVFs Treasurer under Rådsmøtet i Bratislava 1999 hvor spørsmålet om bærekraft knyttes opp til vår evne og vilje til "deal with conflicting interests" innen LVFs medlemskirker og dens partnere for misjon og internasjonal diakoni og innen LVF selv. Komiteens drøftinger av LVFs rolle innen feltene misjon, development og World Service var da svært viktige og nyttige for Den norske kirkes deltakelse i de nylig avholdte nordiske samtaler omkring samhandling og arbeidsdeling mellom de internasjonale organisasjonene KV, KEK og LVF, organisasjoner hvor Den norske kirke ønsker å være et aktivt medlem.

Misjon i vår tid

Den sak som oftest har vært drøftet i Nasjonalkomiteen har trolig vært misjonsforståelsen. De siste 4 årene har lutherske organisasjoner for ytre misjon og Den norske kirke via dets Kirkemøte samarbeidet offisielt innen rammen av et Samarbeidsråd for menighet og misjon. Det er det mest organiserte uttrykk for selvstendige misjonsorganisasjoners samarbeid og forpliktelse overfor Den norske kirkes offisielle struktur som p.t. finnes i Norge. Samarbeidsrådets arbeid er basert på frivillighet og konsensus rundt ulike initiativ og tiltak med sikte på å "bygge misjonerende menigheter". Det er således et "tegn i tiden" ettersom det også innen vårt norske lutherske fellesskap er en økende bevissthet om nødvendigheten av å fornye misjonens plass i de troendes og i menighetenes liv.

Her kommer da Nasjonalkomiteen for LVF inn og tilbyr plattform for refleksjon, erfaringsutveksling og fornyelsesmuligheter ettersom komiteen er en inntakskanal for impulser fra det verdensvide lutherske fellesskap og –videre- fra hele den økumeniske bevegelse og dermed knytter an til hele spørsmålet om kirkens enhet og kirkens misjon. Ikke minst gir Kirkens Nødhjelps deltakelse i Nasjonalkomiteen en stor mulighet til en helhetlig gjennomtenking av hvordan vi bør forstå "misjon i vår tid". I Norge er det ikke vanlig å reflektere dynamisk og inkluderende omkring Guds kall til å drive internasjonal diakoni, fred og forsoningsarbeid og menneskerettighetsarbeid i rammen av begrepet misjon .

Nasjonalkomiteen og LVF

Omorganiseringen av Nasjonalkomiteen for LVF i Norge har gitt LVF en plattform for at det kan arbeides med saker og problemstillinger som det verdensvide lutherske kirkefellesskap ønsker å plassere på bordet til velstående søsterkirker i den rike del av verden. Hvordan forvaltes denne mulighet?

Nasjonalkomiteen er dernest et forum som kan hjelpe medlemskirker å forberede seg til deltakelse i møter og konferanser innen LVF. Likeledes det sted hvor rådsmedlem og andre i valgte posisjoner i LVF rapporterer tilbake til kirkene og dens partnere slik at nødvendige oppfølgingsinitiativ kan tas. Og likeledes et forum hvor disse på sin side kan gi synspunkter og oppdrag til sine representanter.

I mindre grad har Nasjonalkomiteen klart å håndtere løpende saker og henvendelser fra LVF-f.eks invitasjoner til å gi respons til LVF. Å regne med at Nasjonalkomiteen vil bli noen trofast høringsinstans er neppe realistisk. Denne vil mer realistisk bli ivaretatt løpende av sekretariatene i de to medlemskirkene etter den kapasitet som finnes til enhver tid.

Nasjonalkomiteen spilte f.eks ingen rolle under Joint Declaration - prosessen i Norge i og med at DELF ikke hadde offisiell holdning til erklæringen. Kanskje kan LVFs henvendelse om luthersk-reformerte relasjoner bli en sak Nasjonalkomiteen kan arbeide med ?

Nasjonalkomiteen har i løpet av sin 18 måneder lange levetid i ny skikkelse vist seg levedyktig . Sammen vurderer vi det grepet vi gjorde som "timely" og egnet til å fornye en Nasjonalkomitee som mye var et pliktløp og gikk mye på tomgang.

Det gjenstår å gå en lang veg . Og det gjenstår å formulere en dristig og stor nok visjon for luthersk tro, identitet og tjeneste som har røtter i norsk jord ,men som har et verdensvidt sikte; " at de alle må være ett slik at verden kan tro".

Terje Solberg
DELF

Stig Utne
Den norske kirke

REPORT OF THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE FOR WORLD SERVICE

I. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION BY THE COUNCIL

1. Annual Forum

- a) The Program Committee received the report from the Annual Forum 2000 regarding the preparation of an LWF Global Consultation on Diaconia in 2002 and

RECOMMENDED:

- **To arrange a Global Consultation on Diaconia in 2002 with the following aims:**

1. To clarify and deepen a common understanding of Diaconia as belonging to the core identity of the Church (Church as servant, witness through service, church going beyond its boundaries, trinitarian concept of mission, proclamation and service, etc.).
2. To analyze present and future perspectives, problems and challenges to Diaconia for the new century.
3. To explore diverse and contextualized expressions of Diaconia. Explore possibilities for ecumenical cooperation on Diaconia as an expression of common Christian witness.

- b) The Program Committee for World Service agrees, in principle, with the recommendations of the World Service Annual Forum concerning the flexibility of DWS within the LWF in order to carry out its mandate effectively. The Program Committee welcomes the proposal of the General Secretary, affirmed by the Executive Committee of the LWF Council, to establish a Standing Committee for World Service.

The Program Committee for World Service

RECOMMENDED:

- **That a Standing Committee for World Service be established with the following mandate:**

1. Preamble

- 1.1 In accordance with the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Constitution and Bylaws, there shall be a Standing Committee for World Service, appointed by and responsible to the Council. The Standing Committee shall consist of ten

members representing the seven geographical regions of the LWF. The members of the Standing Committee shall be drawn from persons with relevant expertise from agencies and/or specialized development arms of member churches. The chairperson of the Standing Committee shall be appointed by the Council from within its members.

- 1.2 The Standing Committee shall meet at least twice a year and serve from Assembly to Assembly.
- 1.3 The Standing Committee shall be accountable to the Council and report to the Council through the Program Committee for World Service.
- 1.4 The Standing Committee may request the assistance of consultants/experts in various areas essential to its work.

2. Major Functions and Duties

The Standing Committee shall work and make decisions in accordance with the policies, aims and goals of the LWF.

The Standing Committee shall:

- 2.1 submit for the approval of the Program Committee and the Council the periodic Statement of Needs
- 2.2 submit for the approval of the Program Committee and the Council major changes in general policy of the DWS before implementation
- 2.3 approve strategic plans for World Service programs/projects and program guidelines
- 2.4 approve strategies and timetables of the phasing out and transfer of existing programs
- 2.5 approve new country programs
- 2.6 approve supplementary requests between Council meetings
- 2.7 monitor fundraising by the Department for World Service
- 2.8 monitor personnel resources, training and management of the department for World Service
- 2.9 develop and review guidelines for country programs and evaluation implementation
- 2.10 provide an annual report to the Council via the Program Committee for World Service
- 2.11 attend to any other issues relevant to its mandate.

2. Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development

The Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development have been further developed taking into consideration the comments from Program and Standing Committees

last year. The Program Committee affirmed the positive inter-departmental process and:

RECOMMENDED that the Guiding Principles:

- a) be received by the Council as a document guiding the programs and projects of LWF;
- b) be referred to churches, agencies, and field programs throughout the LWF network as an impulse for discussion and use within different contexts;
- c) for a future revision it should have the additional dimensions on Diaconia and Civil Society. These would be informed by the proposed LWF Global Consultation on Diaconia in 2002 and the proposed DWS program on civil society;
- d) in addition, a shortened version should be published in a format, which makes the content widely accessible and understandable;

III. ISSUES DISCUSSED BY THE COMMITTEE - for information to the Council

President Address – “Half-time” – Looking back to Hong Kong and forward from Turku

The Committee received the address by the President with appreciation.

Referring to the issue of Church in Solidarity with the Poor the Program Committee underlined the necessity for LWF and ACT Member Churches to become more consistent in their commitment and to understand and work with and for the poor and marginalized. The Program Committee made reference to the upcoming Consultation on Diaconia as an opportunity for theological reflection on the issue of serving the poor.

Report of the General Secretary

The Program Committee received the report of the General Secretary with appreciation.

The Program Committee noted with appreciation the attention given to the so-called “forgotten” emergencies. The Committee underlined the continued problem of visibility and funding for these emergencies (e.g. Angola and Sierra Leone) and asked that attention be given to this problem, in consultation with other ACT partners, and brought back to the Program Committee next year.

Report of the Treasurer

The Program Committee received the report of the Treasurer with appreciation, especially the analysis concerning priority setting and the budget structure relating to the work of the Department for World Service and its partners.

The Program Committee therefore proposed that its content be taken into consideration in the ongoing discussion on priority setting, the elaboration of a strategic plan and the capacity assessment for World Service.

Regional Matters

The Program Committee received reports on the DWS regional meetings in Ethiopia and Haiti and heard a report on capacity building through empowerment from Ms Shanta Shrestha, Senior Deputy Representative of the DWS Nepal Program.

The Committee agreed:

- that the Department for World Service continue its focus on program rather than project based projects with priority given to capacity building through empowerment and support for civil society;
- that the Department for World Service affirm the principle recommendations of the DWS Regional Meeting of Latin America and the Caribbean with the goal of integrating a civil society program system-wide throughout the DWS network.

ACT

The Program Committee received the report on "Action by Churches Together" (ACT) by the Director, Thor-Arne Prois. Particular attention was given to two important matters:

1. the continued difficulty of securing funding for "forgotten" emergencies; and
2. the problem of uneven funding support where funds are typically available for the emergency crisis phase, but lack of support for rehabilitation and reconstruction.

IV. **RECOMMENDATIONS REFERRED TO THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE
FOR FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

(to be acted upon by the Council in connection with the overall LWF Summary of Needs to be presented by the Program Committee for Finance and Administration)

The Committee discussed programs and funds and recommended that the following Supplementary Requests be approved and included in the Summary of Needs:

Zimbabwe Program

2000	-	USD 365,000
2001	-	USD 568,000
2002	-	USD 631,000

Tanzania Program

2000	-	USD 600,000
2001	-	USD 900,000
2002	-	USD 980,000

Central Funds

2000	-	USD 5,000
2001	-	USD 10,000

LWF World Service
Annual Forum
Montreux, 4-7 May, 2000



Tapio Saraneva, FCA

The Nature and Role of the Department for World Service – an Agency Point of View

Opening remarks

The discussion on the role of World Service has been quite heated during recent years. It is difficult to get a comprehensive picture of what this discussion is all about. Single practical problems, organisational issues and basic visions are mixed in such a way that the arguing often seems quite chaotic. In the steering committee of the Annual Forum last January we agreed, as far as my memory serves me correctly, to deal with the problems of WS under four headings in order to get a grasp of some basic problems.

Those four headings are the main subsections of this presentation. The list of problems under the four headings are not exhaustive and the problems could be analysed more thoroughly. My intention here is only to point out where the main problems are and of what nature they are.

Finnchurchaid in its diaconic work relies very much on the DWS (Department of World Service). We are operational only on a very small scale, because we regard World Service as our main operational instrument. Therefore, an agency point of view in this paper reflects the viewpoint of that kind of an agency. Our own future and strategies are at stake depending on what kind of operational partner we have in the DWS. By this I want to stress the seriousness of our discussion. I know that all agencies are not that much dependent on WS, but I believe that our views of the problems are shared by many other agencies, although there are differences in the emphases.

World Service as an International, Operational and Professional Emergency and Development Non-Governmental Organisation

The first, and for me the most important question, is whether or not our vision of the DWS is that of an international, operational and professional emergency and development NGO and whether or not we take these characteristics seriously and not just pay lip service to them. I will elaborate on each one a little so that we are able to see the consequences.

An International NGO

If WS is an international NGO, wanting to continue being one of the major players in the development and emergency aid circles, it must plan its strategies internationally, too. It is not enough that WS plans its activities within the framework of and according to the general "aims and goals" of the LWF. When you plan a strategy, you have to define where you are, where you want to go and how to get there. Consequently, when you plan a strategy for World Service, you have to analyse the present development aid situation, the increasing competition of international development and emergency NGOs, changes of policies in the UN system, etc. The role of NGOs has also been generally challenged in many ways recently. What is the vision of WS in this context? How is it going to survive? Is its aim to continue being one of the leading NGOs, or will it be in the long run one to disappear from the group of major development and emergency agencies?

An operational NGO

Being an operational organisation presupposes special measures in running the organisation. Although I do not like military comparisons, they are useful in describing what it means to be an operational organisation. Especially in emergency situations, but also in development activities, you have an ongoing war-like process and ongoing activities where human life is at stake. If your operations are effective, human life and livelihoods will be saved; if not, they will be lost, and human suffering will continue.

If you have operations going on, you must have clear decision making structures and quick decision making procedures in place. It is disastrous in an operational organisation if vacant positions are not filled quickly both in the field and in the headquarters. In non-operational organisations a policy of not filling vacancies might be more acceptable because there is not such urgency as in operational organisations. It becomes more and more difficult to entrust your money to such an operational organisation in which vital positions can be vacant for several months if not a year or more. E.g., it is very worrisome that the position of the secretary for planning and evaluation has been vacant for more than one year and that the service of the deputy director ended without any knowledge of who will be the successor.

In an operational organisation, it is also vital that there is trust and a good contact between the field and the headquarters. The field programs need continuous support and guidance from the headquarters. The headquarters must also be very sensitive to the messages and concerns coming from the field. Otherwise, it may lose touch with what is really going on in the field. If there is not enough time or if there are not adequate resources in the headquarters for keeping up the field contacts, the consequences are disastrous. If you have vacant positions in the headquarters, or if the director is very much involved in the tasks of a desk officer, you do not need a capacity assessment to realise that contacts between the field and the headquarters do not work properly. And these contacts are not the only contact needs there are in the network!

A professional NGO

Development work and work in emergency situations are not easy tasks. Earlier we have been proud of WS for being at the forefront as a professional organisation. To some extent we still are. But there are worrying signs that professionalism is no longer a top priority of the DWS.

There are many issues connected with professionalism. One of the most important things concerns leadership training. I cannot understand how any organisation in a competitive situation in the modern world is able to survive without continuous leadership training. The higher you are in the organisation, the more urgent this need is. In an international organisation with employees from different cultural backgrounds, the leadership problems which exist in all organisations are easily doubled. I have been repeating this constantly during many years without any serious hearing. Prove me that I am wrong, that I am biased with my Finnish cultural background, and I will stop preaching on this.

Further, a professional NGO must be able to employ the professionally most qualified people. Of course, a Christian organisation – I omit on purpose the expression ‘Lutheran organisation’ - has some boundary conditions, but this does not change the main objective.

There are many ways to drive away the professionally most qualified people from any organisation. Employment conditions and salary scales are not the most important hindrance, if some minimum standards are met. But if, e.g., the procedures for filling personnel vacancies are long and drawn out, it is very likely that professional people will not be attracted. They will decide to look elsewhere, rather than waiting for half a year for a decision to be made. Furthermore, an organisation’s vision, spirit, leadership and quality of work management are very important when qualified people seek employment. One has to bear in mind that it is no longer one-sidedly so that organisations choose the people; it is also the other way round: people choose the organisations. Most qualified men and women do not go only after a good salary, but they also look at what chances an organisation gives to their personal development. If your organisation does not have a good reputation as an organisation, you will never attract qualified people. One indication of this is the satisfaction of the organisation’s employees. Are they proud of their organisation? Do they speak well of their organisation in confidential discussions? It has been said that the most important communicators of an organisation are its employees.

Professionalism in a development organisation includes, of course, continuous improvement and quality control about what is sustainable development. Do our aims, goals and methods meet the present standards of development? Do we have, e.g., due emphasis on civil society in our country programmes? I know that a lot of valuable work has been done in WS. But there are also voices saying that in some country programmes the DWS fosters an outdated model of development or does not live up to its standards. This, unfortunately, is an area with which I am not personally very well acquainted.

World Service as a Network Organisation

There is a lot of talk of WS as a network organisation. In Rudolph’s paper you will find an exhaustive list of networks to which DWS belongs or with which it works, starting from Lutheran member churches and their related agencies and ending with the UN and other secular partners. According to Rudolph, the key challenge ahead is certainly to strengthen the network character of the DWS, especially with regard to its role in the ecumenical family.

I do not disagree with Rudolph’s description or with the mentioned challenge. But I think that we have to clarify the concept of WS as a network organisation, so that it is not only a description of how we work in different settings and networks, but that it also gives us clearer guidance about the future direction of World Service.

For every organisation it is important to define its borders. An organisation with vague borders is a mess, and this is especially the case with a network organisation. If organisational borders are not clear, an organisation can easily take up tasks and concerns that do not belong to it. It does not know which are the primary voices to which it should listen or which are the primary partners with whom it should negotiate when making decisions.

I would propose that we speak of WS as a network organisation in three different circles. In the strictest sense WS is a network organisation of the LWF Geneva Headquarters and the LWF decision-making bodies, of field offices and of related agencies. This understanding of the basic network of WS comes from the mandate of the DWS being a tool of the LWF member churches. Organisationally, member churches are represented in the network by the council and by the related agencies, which for their part represent their member churches as specialised ministries. The borderlines of WS as a network organisation in the strict sense go along these lines.

The second circle of network is the worldwide ecumenical family. In this network WS cooperates, makes alliances etc., but this is not the network where the basic decisions of WS are made.

The third circle comprises the UN system, EU and other state and secular organisations, etc. Of course, when making strategies and taking decisions, WS has to take into consideration what is going on in these networks. But a different meaning is again taken on when we say that they, too, are partners of the WS network.

As to the future of World Service the first and the second circle are the most important ones. First I will say something about what it means that WS is a network organisation of the Geneva headquarters and governing bodies of the LWF, of field offices and of the related agencies. The role of WS in the ecumenical family and its place in the LWF will be dealt with separately later.

World Service as a Network of Related Agencies, Field Offices, Department of WS and Governing Bodies of the LWF

The network character of WS in a strict sense should be borne in mind in planning, monitoring and evaluating programmes, in utilising the resources of the network in implementation, in personnel policies and decision making. I think that there has been a sincere effort to improve modes of working in many of the areas mentioned during recent years. Agencies are involved in planning and evaluating programmes. The principles of the Frame Agreement presume that agencies are involved in area consultations that feed proposals through the Annual Forum to the decision-making bodies of the LWF. The capacity assessment also examines the agencies' resources so that operations can be implemented jointly. Yes, there has been improvement, although the pace has been slow in many cases.

There are also a lot of ways in which the networking could still be improved. When filling positions, agency staff should receive preference, provided that they are competent, or at least the voices of agencies should be listened to. Thus, the agencies could get more field experience, which they need in their monitoring work and fundraising. Again, one should remember that a person coming from outside the network usually makes it more difficult for agencies to keep contact with the field. It seems that sometimes agency staff is preferred and sometimes not, but the reasons behind the decisions are not clear.

The personnel capacity and positive working environment at the Geneva headquarters are crucial when developing WS as a network organisation. If positions are not filled or if there is not enough staff, it is impossible to take care of the needs of the network. It is, e.g., very frustrating for the agencies if we do not get the necessary reports and other information from Geneva.

World Service as an Instrument of the Ecumenical Movement

Many times one hears the question whether the existence of a special Lutheran operational development and emergency agency is even necessary?

My first answer to this question is a practical one. Finnchurchaid does not want to be operational, so we need an operational international agency. If there were no WS, we should become operational or find other operational partners. Of course, one presupposition of this logic is that there is not adequate local capacity available in the field in different parts of the world. And even if there were, a coordinating agency would be needed. As Finnchurchaid we need WS, on the condition that it is able to provide high quality development and emergency services.

At the same time, though, we would like to see WS as an operational tool of the whole ecumenical family. Lutheran identity and ecumenical identity do not, as has often been said, contradict each other. Although being part of WS, most related agencies cooperate with the World Council of Churches and other ecumenical partners in many ways. It is quite natural, therefore, that we expect WS to work ecumenically as well.

I think that there is no disagreement on this in principle, but our views often differ as to how this should be realised in practice. Sometimes I have the feeling that for some agencies being ecumenical means a weakened WS. If there is such a view, we in Finnchurchaid do not share it. Our view is that a strong WS is the best way to serve the ecumenical family. The only ways to convince other ecumenical partners of the importance of WS are the high quality diaconic work WS is able to deliver and maintaining its diaconic mandate as a priority. If, instead of maintaining its priority to serve those in need, Lutheran church political interests or the interests of the LWF as an organisation lurk behind the decisions and the work of WS, it is quite understandable if many of our ecumenical partners look at us with suspicion.

World Service as a Department within the LWF with a Special Diaconic Mandate

After several years of observation, discussion and thinking I have come to the conclusion that many problems arise from the present organisational structure of the LWF, in which the DWS is an organic part of the management and decision making of the Federation. Earlier the commissions of the LWF Council (earlier the executive committee) had greater independence, and that was favourable for WS, although there were other problems involved concerning the whole Federation.

The hardships that the present structure causes for the leadership and management of the DWS are at least the following:

1. The decision-making procedures in the present structure are slow as can be seen, e.g., in the hiring of staff.

2. Lines of leadership and responsibilities are not clear and transparent. Of course, they are on paper, but in practice it is often difficult to know who is at the origin of a decision, the General Secretary, the Director of Personnel or the Director of WS.
3. The special needs of WS cannot be adequately taken care of, because they have to match with the needs of the whole Federation, both in timing and in content. One cannot have, e.g., a special leadership training programme for the DWS staff in Geneva because all staff of the LWF need leadership training, and employees of DWS cannot have privileges. Further, LWF wants to harmonize employment contracts with Geneva headquarters and in the field, like in Rwanda, Cambodia, and Mauritania, etc, although working conditions differ remarkably.
4. Financial resources of WS are mixed with the general finances of the Federation. The needs of the whole Federation are preferred to those special needs of the DWS. Financing the crisis of Augusta Victoria Hospital has depleted the reserves of the LWF. Consequently, the capacity for flexibility in WS operations has been considerably reduced. I also suspect that keeping WS positions vacant brings savings to the LWF administration costs. If this suspicion is correct, it might lead agencies to cut contributions to the LWF administration because it does not deliver services they are paying for.
5. Also at the board level, the decision making procedures are inadequate. Most council members in the Committee for World Service do not know much about the specialised work of WS. Council members are automatically more equipped and interested in discussing issues of DMD, Studies, Ecumenical Relations, etc. The Executive Committee does not have expertise for taking into consideration the special needs of WS in personnel policies and personnel decisions. The sheer amount of business prevents the ExCom from delving deeply into the special problems of WS. In this kind of decision-making structure different special interests of the LWF and of member churches easily overrule the specific diaconic and professional needs of WS.

When discussing the problems of WS, one often hears that "World Service is a tool of the Lutheran member churches". This phrase is used as an argument as well as for defending the present structure as in individual decisions.

But how should we understand exactly the meaning of WS being a tool of Lutheran member churches? What is the special role of the Department of World Service when DMD also serves as a tool in delivering services to the member churches? The interpretation heard more often recently implies that WS is primarily a tool of the Lutheran member churches in developing countries, and that it is those member churches' voices that decide how WS should act. Of course, WS is also their tool, but basically it is the operational tool of all Lutheran member churches to carry out their common diaconic witness where it is most acutely needed in the present world. The special and primary task of WS is not helping the member churches – which often are very small in countries of afflicted populations– to carry out their task, but to help the poorest and those most in need of help, be they in a country where there is a Lutheran member church or not.

Of course, WS must have good relations with local Lutheran churches, be they big or small. But the basic feature of WS is that it has its own operational role that is not dependent or intimately bound to the local Lutheran church. Of course, it is the task of the WS always to strengthen local capacities in development or in emergencies, but this does not automatically mean capacities of the Lutheran church. Capacity building of the member churches is the task of the DMD. WS might also build capacities of the Lutheran churches, but many times it might be more important to build the capacities of ecumenical organisations or secular partners, depending on the situation in the country. In order for small Lutheran churches not to feel neglected, we have to strengthen DMD, not to make WS another DMD.

A more independent status for DWS?

I am more and more inclined to think that in order to solve the problems of WS, World Service must get a more independent status within the LWF. At present, there is a danger of it becoming step by step another DMD and losing its special strengths. **You cannot have operational management and conciliatory management at the same time.** You cannot run an operational organisation, make quick and adequate operational decisions and, at the same time, take all kinds of church political and wider organisational interests into consideration nor try to have consensus on all major decisions etc.

I am more and more convinced that WS needs its own decision-making body where the LWF council, agencies and perhaps some ecumenical partners are represented. WS needs its own personnel department. The personnel department of the whole LWF cannot deal quickly enough and adequately with the personnel matters of WS such as, e.g., filling vacancies, arranging various kinds of training, getting acquainted with the special problems in the field, etc.

If this basic organisational issue is not solved, new problems will come up continuously, and many of the old problems will remain. Even when it could be reasonably argued that it is possible to solve these problems in the present structure, the last five years have shown that solving problems in many issues takes too long. Can we really afford that?

Tapio:

Respons:

- sterk støtte til Tapio fra OCA, Canada, Australia - også fra Sverige men
USA, noe modifisert.

Tapio:

Ego: How can we increase the use of LWS?

- ACT
- non-operational ^{in long-term development} where the ecumenical divide is sufficiently strong
- operational ^{in a narrow sense} where the ecumenical church structure is weak

- UN instrument fundaments.

→ Comtha-devisering / structure / Treasurer.

(Original)

**THE INVOLVEMENT OF LWF MEMBER CHURCHES
IN PROMOTING AND DEFENDING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

Contents	Page
I. Introduction	1
II. Assembly Mandate	1
III. Methodology	2
IV. Religious Freedom as a Human Right	3
V. The Ecumenical Perspective	6
VI. Member Church Reports	7
VII. Conclusions and Proposals	27

* * *

I. INTRODUCTION

- (1) Reports from around the world show that religious differences continue to be a major and perhaps increasing point of conflict between communities. Many countries are beset by various manifestations of religious intolerance, and all too frequently by violence in which perpetrators and victims are identified by religious differences. This problem is of critical and direct importance to the Lutheran World Federation, because many of its member churches are confronted by the effects of religious intolerance in their daily and local contexts.
- (2) As much as this issue has a direct impact upon many in our constituency, there is also the over-arching concern for the promotion of freedom of religion for all as a fundamental human right.

II. ASSEMBLY MANDATE

- (3) The Ninth Assembly in Hong Kong, July 1997, issued the following statement on freedom of religion:

No modern state that aspires to be respected as a democratic nation can ignore the issues of religious freedom and tolerance or continue to violate these fundamental human rights, which are enshrined in Article 18 of the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. No religion or institution can propagate its own faith at the expense of the innate freedom of every human being to accept or to reject any religion. "Fundamentalism", whether political or religious, is contrary to the basic values of human dignity and freedom and often violates fundamental human rights.

We confess that religious people are often the worst violators of this noble principle.

Many nations have excellent laws to protect all aspects of religious freedom, but their implementation is impeded by ideological or fundamentalist principles.

As incidents of religious discrimination and intolerance appear to be increasing in all parts of the world, even in countries with a strong human rights tradition, the Ninth Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation recognizes the need to call all the member churches and the ecumenical community to redouble their efforts and to cooperate widely in promoting and defending religious freedom in their own societies and internationally.

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1998, the member churches are requested to focus on religious freedom in the context of other economic, social, cultural, civil and political human rights:

- through prayers and intercessions, Bible studies and worship;
- through educational materials, seminars and public manifestations;
- by participating in programs of cooperation with people of other faiths; and
- by interceding with state authorities and religious authorities wherever necessary in defence of individuals or groups whose rightful religious freedoms are being curtailed or denied.

The Assembly asks the General Secretary to present a comprehensive report to the Council in the year 2000 on the involvement of the member churches in promoting and defending religious freedom. (emphasis added)

III. METHODOLOGY

- (4) Pursuant to the mandate from the Ninth Assembly, the General Secretary wrote to member churches in November 1999 to ask for a detailed report of their involvement in the promotion and defence of religious freedom. To assist them in their response, the following questions were raised:
- a) To what extent and in what form is religious intolerance a challenge to the life and work of your church?

- b) What programmes, mechanisms or other responses has your church formulated in relation to this issue?
- c) What consultations or other events has your church participated in on the topic of freedom of religion?
- d) To what extent has the topic of freedom of religion been addressed in inter-faith settings in your local, national or regional context?
- e) What general programmes of inter-faith dialogue and cooperation does your church participate in, which could be seen in the context of promoting religious tolerance?
- f) What plans has your church formulated for its future response to promote freedom of religion?
- (5) An edited compilation of responses received from member churches follows in chapter VI of this report.

IV. RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AS A HUMAN RIGHT

- (6) Article 18 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* provides that everyone
- has 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.
- (7) Similar wording is contained in Article 18 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, which carries legally binding effect for those States which ratified it. In addition, the ICCPR provides that:
- No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice;
 - Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others;
 - The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.
- (8) Broadly analogous provisions are also found in the major regional human rights treaties: the *American Convention on Human Rights* (Article 12), the *European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms* (Article 9) and the *African Charter on Human and People's Rights* (Article 8).

- (9) The UN General Assembly has also adopted, on 25 November 1981, a *Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief*. Although this Declaration has no legally-binding effect, it elaborates upon the content and means of implementing the right to freedom of religion. For example, it declares that “the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief shall include, *inter alia*, the following freedoms:
- a) To worship or assembly in connection with a religion or belief, and to establish and maintain places for these purposes;
 - b) To establish and maintain appropriate charitable or humanitarian institutions,
 - c) To make, acquire and use to an adequate extent the necessary articles and materials related to the rites or customs of a religion or belief;
 - d) To write, issue and disseminate relevant publications in these areas;
 - e) To teach a religion or belief in places suitable for these purposes;
 - f) To solicit and receive voluntary financial or other contributions from individuals and institutions;
 - g) To train, appoint, elect or designate by succession appropriate leaders called for by the requirements and standards of any religion or belief;
 - h) To observe days of rest and to celebrate holidays and ceremonies in accordance with the precepts of one’s religion or belief;
 - i) To establish and maintain communications with individuals and communities in matters of religion and belief at the national and international levels.
- (10) In 1993, the 171 States participating in the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna called upon all Governments “to take all appropriate measures... to counter intolerance and related violence based on religion or belief, including practices of discrimination against women and including the desecration of religious sites...”
- (11) The UN Commission on Human Rights has appointed, since 1986, a Special Rapporteur on the elimination of all forms of religious intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief. This mandate is currently held by Mr Abdelfattah Amor of Tunisia. In his report to the Commission on Human Rights in 1999, the Special Rapporteur noted “the persistence of manifestations of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief in countries at different stages of development and with different political, social and religious systems.” He highlighted the following developments:
- a) A decline in anti-religious State policies and the manipulation of religion in the interest of a political ideology; and yet

- b) The persistence of such policies in several countries, and even the emergence of problems they have brought about, such as those connected with the restitution of confiscated religious property;
 - c) An upsurge of State policies directed against minorities in matters of religion and belief, and particularly against unrecognized communities, in other words "sects or new religious movements";
 - d) A growing number of policies and practices of intolerance and discrimination on the part of non-State entities, including both religious and denominational bodies responsible mainly for inter- and intra-community violations, and politico-religious parties or movements like the Taliban. As the Special Rapporteur comments, these two categories raise the issue of the links between politics and religion and their manipulation;
 - e) An increase in the number of policies and practices of intolerance and discrimination against women as such, deriving from interpretations and traditions attributed by men to religion.
- (12) The Special Rapporteur concluded that major challenges are therefore posed "in particular the proliferation of manifestations of hatred, intolerance and violence based on sectarianism and extremism, and it is no easy task to make a clear distinction between religious conflicts and those of other kinds, particularly political and ethnic."
- (13) Amongst other factors of importance in combating and preventing intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief, the Special Rapporteur especially emphasized the need for prevention through education strategies designed to inculcate values based on human rights and tolerance. He also noted that action to promote freedom of religion or belief is inextricably linked to action to promote democracy and development. "Extreme poverty, in particular, is likely to render human rights illusory and favour extremism."
- (14) The Special Rapporteur also reiterated an earlier proposal for the development of a "compendium of national enactments on or relating to freedom of religion and belief." This proposal was based on the acknowledged need to clarify how laws and administrative practices have increased or reduced the scope of freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
- (15) In his report to the Commission on Human Rights in the year 2000, the Special Rapporteur explored similar themes, but gave additional emphasis to the preventative role of inter-religious dialogue, to his involvement in the preparation of the World Conference Against Racism, and to his visit to the Holy See as the first in a series of consultations with representatives of the main religions.

V. THE ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVE

- (16) The World Council of Churches has had a long and direct focus on issues of religious freedom. Already in the late 1970s, the Executive Committee of the WCC warned of an increase in the trend towards religious intolerance, noting that "In an increasing number of countries, communal and national aspirations are framed not in secular but religious terms, creating a climate for religious revival of a type which causes friction between dominant religious forces and minority religions." The WCC has commented upon the deterioration in the situation over the intervening 20 years, noting an increase in incidents of religious intolerance in many countries.
- (17) The Eighth Assembly of the WCC, held in Harare in December 1998, issued a statement on human rights in which it reiterated its concern at the growing incidence of religious intolerance and its impact upon peoples' basic human rights: "Religion in our contemporary world increasingly influences socio-political processes..., bringing a moral dimension to politics. Yet, religion has become a major contributor to repression and human rights violations, both within and between nations. Religious symbols and idioms have been manipulated to promote narrow nationalist and sectarian interests and objectives, creating division and polarizing societies. Powers increasingly tend to appeal to churches and other religious groups to support narrow national, racial and ethnic aims, and to support discriminatory legislation which formalizes intolerance. We urge the churches once again to give evidence of the universality of the gospel and to provide a model of tolerance to their societies and to the world. Religion can and must be a positive force for justice, harmony, peace and reconciliation in human society."
- (18) In a statement to the 56th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights (March/April 2000), the WCC declared that "Religious intolerance promotes violence and destruction, giving rise to fear and insecurity which negates the gift of life, the sanctity and dignity of all creation."
- (19) Referring to a universal growth in restrictions of religious freedom, the WCC suggested that the "pluralist base of the State is under widespread attack". The WCC expressed its concern "at the increase in incidents of conflicts between religious minorities and majorities; at attempts by Governments to control and regulate religions and religious organizations; at the use of political institutions by one religion to discriminate against another; at the lack of political will on the part of Governments to check religious extremism and to promote intercommunal harmony."
- (20) Finally, the WCC endorsed the work undertaken by the UN Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance, particularly his efforts to promote religious tolerance through engagement and dialogue. "It is essential that such dialogue becomes a vehicle in the mutual search for better understanding of each other's perspective, of a better understanding of human life and a just and merciful society."
- (21) Regional ecumenical organizations also frequently address the issue of religious freedom, in various ways and with various levels of focus.

VI. MEMBER CHURCH REPORTS (edited extracts of reports provided by member churches)

AFRICA

Liberia

Lutheran Church in Liberia (20 December 1999)

- (22) Lutheran Church in Liberia has never experienced religious intolerance or been greatly challenged in its life and work by any organized religious body. Instead of opposing missionaries in evangelistic works, tribal people asked them to pay indenture as a guarantee to have their children attend formal school and be evangelists to them.
- (23) Some factional leaders tried to turn the civil war into a religious war. The Lutheran Church and other churches together formed the Interfaith Mediation Committee, with the aim of living together side by side without interference.
- (24) The Lutheran Church has participated in several consultations and seminars on the theme under reference. In 1998 and 1999 it organized a series of inter-religious seminars to discuss religious tolerance, freedom and mutual co-existence, even though it is not a problem in Liberia. As the saying goes, "prevention is better than cure".
- (25) The Interfaith Council of Liberia [in which the Lutheran Church in Liberia participates] has been very vocal and active in holding seminars on freedom of religion and inter-religious tolerance. It has helped to organize inter-religious councils in Sierra Leone and Guinea. The three inter-religious councils have agreed to work together to promote religious peace, tolerance and peaceful co-existence among people of the three countries. Frequent visits have taken place between the Interfaith Council of Liberia and the Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone. Issues of peace and stability in the region are always discussed with the Heads of State of the three countries, and religious persecution is unknown in these countries.
- (26) The Lutheran church's trauma healing, conciliation and peace-building unit has been very active in bringing together leaders and religious workers from the Christian and Muslim communities in Liberia to work together to promote peace and reconciliation and religious co-existence. Joint seminars have been held on peace and reconciliation in both open places and in churches.
- (27) Although there has been no experience of the suppression of the freedom of worship, the civil war created the opportunity for the Lutheran church to look at these issues critically. It is planning to introduce in its school system teaching about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Liberian Constitution which guarantees freedom of religion and worship. It also plans to conduct seminars on the subject.

South Africa

Moravian Church in South Africa (14 December 1999)

- (28) Religious intolerance is indeed a challenge to the life and work of our church, especially with regard to the Islamic faith. On congregational level, educational programmes include promotion of tolerance, dignity and freedom of religion.
- (29) As a member of the national council of churches, the Moravian Church participates in an inter-religious dialogue programme which is an attempt to promote religious tolerance.
- (30) The religious communities cooperated wonderfully to eradicate apartheid. This has helped in growing together and practising tolerance. It is even more necessary at present to affirm our acceptance of one another through continuous programmes locally and nationally.
- (31) The Moravian Church is challenged once more by the General Secretary's letter to give serious attention to this delicate and often very sensitive issue with regard to its ministry.

ASIA

India

Jeypore Evangelical Lutheran Church (11 April 2000)

- (32) India being a multi-lingual and multi-religious country has provided in its Constitution for the preaching, propagating and practice of one's religion, but still Christians feel difficulty and obstacles to implement these provisions. Since the formation of ministry at the national level, the activities of Hindu fundamentalists against Christians and Christianity have been encouraged. Atrocities and persecution against Christians and their programmes continue in different states. Christians are a minority in India, and that is why churches and Christian houses are burnt. There are objections to the construction of new churches. Christians are beaten, and there are restrictions on new conversions. In Orissa, an Australian missionary and his two sons were burnt to death. In spite of this, we think that it is a challenge to the life and work of our church because many people of other faiths continue to come to the feet of the Lord and accept Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour.
- (33) According to well-planned programmes, Hindu fundamentalists continuously try to destroy the Christian church, its people and programmes. The leaders and members of the churches/congregations submit memoranda to the local and district administrators protesting against such brutal actions.

- (34) Following the atrocities and persecution against Christians, churches in different states held demonstrations and silent protests, and wrote appeal letters to government authorities.
- (35) In the undivided Koraput district of Orissa State, Christians of all denominations formed a committee which is responsible for protesting the anti-Christian activities in the district. Under the guidance of this committee, all Christians in the district walked 22 kms from Jeypore to Koraput, climbing up to the mountains, and submitted a memorandum to the government authorities protesting against the atrocities.
- (36) The topic of freedom of religion has been addressed in local, regional and national contexts. At the national level, the churches resolved to observe 21 February 1999 as a National Day of Prayer for Peace, Unity and Communal Harmony in India. All churches also agreed to celebrate 20 centuries of the church in India by observing 1999-2000 as the year of Christ with the cooperation of all people of all faiths, and to call upon all secular, democratic forces to unite in the common struggle against forces of fundamentalism, oppression and subjugation.
- (37) Every year on 2 October, the anniversary of the birth of our national leader Mahatma Gandhi, and on 25 December, Christmas Day, we participate in inter-faith dialogue with the people of other faiths in our places.
- (38) A "Freedom of Religions Act" has been passed by the Government of Orissa restricting conversions from one religion to another unless the person concerned wants to be converted from their own will and belief and without having any pecuniary or other such temptation. The church has followed the Act and converted people only after they take an oath before a magistrate that they are going to accept Christianity without any temptation, but with belief in God.
- (39) Due to this Act the church plans to publish more Christian literature, establish educational institutions, social service projects, self-employment and health programmes, etc., to witness Christ through our actions.

Indonesia

Simalungun Protestant Christian Church (13 March 2000)

- (40) Based on the experiences of our church members, we record two challenges and problems.
- (41) First of all, in many areas in Indonesia where our church members live it is difficult to have the opportunity to be a leader, or chief, or to hold another strategic position, even though their experiences and skills are good, and some are better than others.
- (42) Secondly, in many areas the Muslim community hampered efforts to build churches as it is difficult to receive the "letter of permission". In addition, it is claimed that some of the churches are not legal. In cases where the state official is on the side of the Muslims

(commonly they are), our church cannot do much to defend or to undertake activities relating to tolerance and freedom.

- (43) In the last ten years our church has never conducted or been involved in consultations on religious freedom and tolerance. This issue has become an idealistic theme for the government and the people, but has not been applied at the local or national levels.
- (44) With regard to inter-faith cooperation, the Simalungun Protestant Christian Church (GKPS) has decided to undertake a programme on religious tolerance during the period 2000-2005 as follows: "In order to spread the gospel to all of creation we need to increase the understanding of religious tolerance and freedom as it is mentioned in Indonesia's law UUD 1945 chapter 29, verse 2: 'The Nation will guarantee the people to choose and to believe in their religion and to worship according to their faith.'"
- (45) Through this programme, the GKPS will prepare members to be active in developing and increasing relationships to people of other religions in a positive, active, critical and realistic way.

EUROPE

Austria

Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Austria (10 April 2000)

- (46) Religious intolerance in Austria takes the form of racism and hostility towards foreigners. Political and societal developments in recent months have occasioned much concern about this. For this reason, last autumn the Synod of our church issued a statement on racism and hostility towards foreigners. Unfortunately, we again observed increased anti-Semitism which, in view of Austria's past history, is especially to be condemned. We are grateful that in 1998 already, our church condemned anti-Semitism in a statement by the Synod and recognized the church's guilt regarding the Holocaust.
- (47) In addition to internal church awareness building through corresponding statements and pioneering Synod declarations, the church is particularly involved in the field of education, as well as cooperation with Christian churches and communities in the framework of the Ecumenical Council of Austria, and in strengthened contacts with other religious communities. We are pleased about the statement of the Ecumenical Council of Austria "Against the poison of racism", and especially that on 17 January 2000 a "Day of Judaism" took place for the first time.
- (48) We also wish to note the participation of the president of the Synod, Dr Peter Krömer, in the Working Group on Human Rights and Religious Freedom of the Church and Society Commission of the Conference of European Churches.
- (49) The theme of religious freedom also concerns us in Austria in connection with the question of the legal position of churches and religious communities. On the basis of the

growing tradition and special interpretation of the law in Austria, 12 churches and religious communities are recognized by the state. It was the intention of the state law makers to also enable other religious communities to organize themselves in a legal form. Since 1998 this takes place through the federal law on the legal personality of religious confessional communities. Some critical voices perceive in these regulations an inadmissible differentiation which calls religious freedom into question. The Evangelical Church is well aware of the associated problems and is working with the concerned churches, for example the Baptists, in the framework of the Ecumenical Council. At the same time, however, we see in this legal situation no interference with the right to religious freedom, which, through the [European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms], is even incorporated in the constitution in our country.

- (50) In 2003, Graz, the capital city of Steiermark, will be the European culture capital. In connection with this, an inter-religious conference is being prepared under the responsibility of Superintendent Hermann Miklas.
- (51) A second point to be mentioned is that of religious instruction. Here, there is good and growing cooperation not only with the Protestant and Catholic churches, but also with Islam and Judaism. For example, questions about the training of religious teachers are taken up. Religious instruction in Austria can be an outstanding example for the practice of religious freedom. Not only is Islamic religious instruction also financed by the state, as is that of Protestant and all other state-recognized churches and religious communities, but Muslim girls are expressly permitted to wear head scarves in school as an expression of personal confessional freedom.
- (52) The church understands education and training work as a contribution to tolerance and respect of the convictions of others. Through cooperation in this field religious freedom is fostered. In addition, there is a commitment to religious freedom in the sense of freedom of churches in the framework of the process that will lead to the basic rights charter of the European Union, and the preference for such state-church regulations which correspond to the right to religious freedom in the countries which are seeking membership of the European Union, in the framework of the so-called "Danube churches' conference".

Finland

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (16 February 2000)

- (53) As the number of foreigners in Finland was very small until the 1990s, the Finnish people are not used to the presence of other cultures and religions in our country. Of the religions, Islam is the major challenge for our church. The Jewish community is very small, as are the communities of other religions. The number of Muslims is now increasing, and even if it is still small compared to many other countries, their presence causes some uncertainty among the Finns, as they do not know how to relate their own world views to Islam and Muslims. This does not necessarily lead to intolerance. Often the religion of Muslims is taken into account to a much higher degree than the religion

of the majority. However, there is also intolerance towards Muslims. This has partly to do with the fact that many of them are refugees. Xenophobia and racism are expressed in opinions such as that refugees are treated far too well in Finland, whereas some marginalized Finns feel that they have been abandoned by the social welfare state.

- (54) A permanent challenge to our church is what could be called secular intolerance towards any religion, especially Christianity and the majority church (e.g. by the small group of Freethinkers). This is expressed in many ways, but the position of the church in Finland is so good and stable in Finnish society that we cannot regard this as a threat to religious freedom. The same must be said about some expressions of aggression by marginal groups such as Satanists, which occasionally cause fear among Christians.
- (55) The Church Research Institute has undertaken enquiries about the attitudes among Finns towards different religions. The most negative attitudes are felt towards Muslims, Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons.
- (56) Two committees in the church have a dialogue with representatives of other religions: one with Jews, the other with Muslims. One aim of the committees is to promote religious tolerance, for instance, by publishing accurate information about these religions. The dialogues between our church and the Muslim communities in Finland gather Muslims from different ethnic and Islamic groups around one table [with Lutherans], which hopefully contributes to good relations between these groups.
- (57) In many towns the church is working among immigrants. The issues of religious intolerance are also confronted in this work.
- (58) We have not recently organized any large consultations or other events in this area. There is, of course, continuous discussion on this topic between our church, and state and government representatives on the one hand, and our church and other churches (and religious communities) on the other hand.
- (59) Our dialogue with Muslims has so far concentrated on theological issues. Freedom of religion has not been taken up as a subject but has only been touched on in the discussions. The legislation on religious freedom is being reformed, and a proposal for reform will be presented to Parliament in autumn 2000. The ideas for the reform that have been presented by the governmental committee have naturally been discussed in the church, but there has not been any notable inter-faith discussion on the issue.
- (60) There are so far no general programmes in the area of inter-faith dialogue in our country. We try to participate as far as possible in such programmes undertaken by LWF, WCC and CEC.
- (61) In autumn 1999, the church and several secular organizations arranged a conference about religions in social, therapeutic, educational and pastoral work. The aim of the conference was to discuss what is good and what is bad in religions and religious communities for people who are in different kinds of trouble. The conference also dealt with freedom of religion and religious tolerance from this specific perspective.

Participants included representatives of minority churches and non-Christian communities. A book is under preparation and a network is taking form as a result of the conference.

- (62) We have not formulated any plans for promoting religious freedom. In our estimation, the situation in Finland is quite good in general, even though there are some smaller extremist intolerant groups.
- (63) Regarding questions of religious freedom in other countries, we will follow developments with interest and contribute to the improvement of religious freedom as one of the fundamental human rights all over the world in cooperation with the state, with the United Nations, and with ecumenical organizations.

France

Church of the Augsburg Confession of Alsace and Lorraine (14 April 2000)

- (64) In 1998 our church took part in numerous activities (symposia, meetings, exhibitions) relating to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. These activities were also an occasion to reflect on the current situation of religious freedom, including in our country.
- (65) In 1998 we also, together with the [Roman Catholic] Archbishop of Strasbourg and the Chief Rabbi, took a position in favour of the construction of a big mosque in Strasbourg. This is currently underway.
- (66) Around Christmas 1999 we launched a wide series of meetings with Muslims under the theme "Operation invite your neighbour".
- (67) In the framework of the annual meeting of the Joint Assembly of Lutheran and Reformed Churches of Alsace and Lorraine, in 1999 we took up the theme of secularism, which was also an occasion to reflect on religious freedom.

Malagasy Protestant Church in France (18 April 2000)

- (68) The Malagasy Protestant Church in France (FPMA) is established in a country where the law of separation between church and state does not permit any religion – even if it is the majority religion: in this case Catholic – to impose its beliefs, at the risk of lapsing into intolerance. It is important to note that 2 per cent of the population of France is Protestant (in Europe Protestants number 30 per cent); that 900,000 Protestants, representing 80 per cent of the Protestants in France belong to the Protestant Federation of France; and that the FPMA has about 8,000 members and has been an associate member of the Protestant Federation since 1979.
- (69) As far as religion is concerned, the risk of intolerance is insignificant in a society which is deeply marked by secularization and de-Christianization. The dominant secularization favours the elimination of all reference to religious principles which have less and less importance in a mature world. That is why the issue of intolerance is no longer a major

- concern for French society as a whole, because the Catholic Church no longer has any claims to hegemony.
- (70) The spirit of intolerance is now only to be found in small groups, or marginalized sectors, or closed circles which live in seclusion to preserve the integrity and purity of their faith and can tolerate no other truth than theirs.
- (71) The FPMA has not yet dealt concretely with the question of intolerance inasmuch as there is total freedom of religion in France. This has led to a relative increase in religious groups, some of which have subversive activities and carry out actions which have been compared to "mental manipulation" harmful to one's personality.
- (72) Consequently, the FPMA warns its members against such groups, but at the same time draws their attention to the threat to religious freedom which is the facile idea of seeing every religious minority which has unusual beliefs and practices as a sect to be condemned or even forbidden.
- (73) As a defender of religious minorities, the Protestant Federation of France calls instead for perspicacity and understanding, and refuses to systematically follow suit to those who too hastily anathematize the new ultra-minority religious groups by calling them "sects", because their beliefs and practices differ from the traditional model.
- (74) According to the most recent statistics, Roman Catholicism is the first religion in France. It is followed by Islam. Protestantism is in third place, preceding Judaism, Orthodoxy, Buddhism and numerous assorted small groups which are excluded from symposia and other events where the great world religions come together in order to get to know each other and to co-exist peacefully.
- (75) The theme of religious freedom is, of course, taken up more and more frequently in meetings, but is not the focus of such meetings.
- (76) Up to the present, the activities of the FPMA have mainly been directed towards its internal, domestic life. It is not threatened by the effects of religious intolerance which is not at all dominant in France.
- (77) If there is intolerance, it is to be found in marginalized religious groups which try to expand, as everywhere else in the world, where difficulties of a social, economic and moral order create situations of despair.
- (78) In France, the multi-religious situation is lived in serenity. This is largely due to the law of separation between church and state. There is no official church. No matter its numerical size or ideological weight or cultural influence, no church enjoys special advantages or privileges. In the eyes of the law, all churches are on an equal footing. This egalitarian treatment is reinforced by the secular spirit induced by the law of separation.

- (79) Would this multi-religious situation favouring co-existence be different if France, for a long time called "the daughter of the church", had not been marked, in spite of itself, through the ages by Christian values such as love which rules out all intolerance... and which the period of the Inquisition unfortunately completely forgot?
- (80) Dialogue and cooperation among the main Christian churches has not ceased to develop, in spite of setbacks which are becoming rarer and rarer. Since the end of the last war, the ecumenical movement has made immeasurable progress. This was possible because of a common faith in the person of Jesus. This is not the case between Christian religions and all the other religions, and is already a major obstacle for real dialogue and fruitful cooperation.
- (81) Therefore, there can only be general programmes of a practical nature, dealing with problems of war and peace, justice and freedom, which might perhaps lead to taking up basic questions (confrontation of theological and ethical bases) and from there promote religious tolerance which for us Christians is not latitudinarianism, but the fruit of love - Agape - which is made of patience and self-control.
- (82) The promotion of religious freedom cannot be separated from the promotion of freedom: the freedom of humankind in its entirety. To promote religious freedom alone in a situation of oppression, injustice, corruption and misery is contrary to the gospel, for which freedom is indivisible.
- (83) Some Protestant circles which call themselves "evangelical" content themselves with being able to freely celebrate worship; for them, this is the main thing, the rest is not important as long as one can "evangelize", "convert", proselytize, have new disciples, form confessing Christians who are personally convinced of the truth of the faith received.
- (84) It is this conviction of having the truth, accompanied by the sincere fervour to share it with others for their good which can lead to intolerance if one is not careful.
- (85) Of course, a Christian whose faith is lukewarm ceases to be. It is because Christians often lack conviction that no significant change happens in the world through their action. But the conviction which is based on firm assurance never grows in the arrogance of the person who knows all and everything, whereas our learning is partial and our knowledge limited. (1 Cor. 13:9). Knowledge without love is nothing. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up (1 Cor. 8:1).
- (86) Love prevails over knowledge and governs at all planes in favour of the promotion of religious freedom.

Germany

The German National Committee of the LWF (17 January/22 March 2000)

- (87) The German National Committee advises that the Human Rights Office of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) acts on the issue of religious freedom on behalf of all Protestant churches in Germany, including the member churches of the LWF.
- (88) In February 1999 the Central Office of the EKD published a position paper on religious instruction for Muslim students.
- (89) [Several other documents were provided to the LWF Secretariat. References to religious freedom in these documents relate exclusively to religious freedom in other parts of the world.]

North Elbian Evangelical Lutheran Church (4 April 2000)

- (90) We can confirm that in our country and region freedom of the exercise of religion is guaranteed and practised. As a majority church, our church is recognized as a corporate entity under the law applying to public bodies. A state-church agreement regulates the relationship between church and state. Religion classes in public schools are mentioned in this agreement.
- (91) Through our cooperation in the Council of Christian Churches, we endeavour to have a relationship of partnership with other Christian churches.
- (92) For these reasons, religious intolerance is not a challenge for the life and work of our church.
- (93) This issue plays a certain role with regard to inter-religious conversations, especially between our church and Islamic communities in towns. Our church has a central person responsible for relations with Islam, and there are also several persons in various church districts. Through this ministry, understanding for the interests of other religions in our country is awakened and religious tolerance strengthened.
- (94) Our church supports the work of Amnesty International and organizes special programmes on the occasion of Human Rights Day.

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony (29 December 1999)

- (95) Since the political change of 1989/90, matters of religious freedom and religious tolerance have a legal basis in the basic law of the Federal Republic of Germany. Since 3 October 1990, this is also the case for the Lutheran Church of Saxony.
- (96) The constitutionally-guaranteed ideological neutrality of the State touches on the power of Christianity for Germany from its origin to its shaping. In addition to an increasing religious indifference (be it atheism or a "roving" religiosity), there is an increasing anti-

church current in the media and the public. According to our information, this tendency has existed in the old FRG since 1990. However, it is very different from the deliberate atheistic propaganda of the GDR and the endeavour to produce a totally secular, non-church or even anti-church public. Before 1989 our church rejected the state's attempts to intervene in church matters. Today there are no obstructions by the state in religious expressions of individual Christians or churches.

- (97) If previously in Germany the majority of politicians were well disposed towards the churches, now there is partly indifference.
- (98) The accusation of religious intolerance does not come from the state, but from the media and individual persons and groups and is more raised against the churches because of their statements about sects and new religious or new pagan groups and sects.
- (99) Similar is valid for discussions as to whether in Germany Muslim prayers can be sounded by loudspeaker from a minaret. Up to now there have not been any such debates in our church.
- (100) The issue of religious intolerance concerns us from the point of view of the partner churches with which we are linked through the Lutheran Mission Society of Leipzig (India, Papua New Guinea, Tanzania) and the partnerships and parish contacts in eastern Europe.
- (101) Currently, our church has no special programmes or measures on this issue.
- (102) Our church was represented at discussions in 1989 on a European level regarding human rights, including freedom of religion, faith and conscience.
- (103) So far there have been no inter-religious conversations on the issue of religious freedom.
- (104) So far there has been no inter-religious dialogue or cooperation (we do not consider the significant activities of the renewal of relations between Christians and Jews as inter-religious dialogue in the narrow sense).
- (105) There are no special programmes and plans. In view of the changing structure of the population (asylum seekers, influx of Muslims from the old federal states to the new federal states) and the starting up of activities of other religions in our part of Germany (in particular Islam), in future the discussion about the relationship of Christianity to other religions will take on importance both in our parishes (in particular the urban ones), as in the regional church.

Latvia

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia (14 February 2000)

- (106) [Due to the lack of significant Muslim communities or other faith communities in Latvia, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia responds to the questions regarding religious

freedom from a primarily ecumenical perspective.]

- (107) Religious discrimination and intolerance are not a pressing problem in Latvia. The so-called traditional confessions have equal rights and co-exist peacefully. There are programmes of cooperation between the major communities of faith, among them a programme to elaborate a plan of instruction for inter-faith religious instruction. Together, joint instruction materials for this are being worked out.
- (108) At present, an advisory committee on religious affairs of the Ministry of Justice, consisting of leaders of the major confessions, is advising on a project of law which will lay down the relationship between state and church.
- (109) On legal holidays there are ecumenical worship services.
- (110) Representatives of all major communities of faith are working on a new translation of the Bible into Latvian.
- (111) The "law on religious organizations" is being discussed with representatives of the state authorities.
- (112) In summary, one can say that at present religious intolerance does not present a challenge to the life and work of our church.

Norway

Church of Norway (3 December 1999)

- (113) The Church of Norway's Council on Ecumenical and International Relations reports that work on freedom of religion or belief is included in many aspects of the activities of the church.
- (114) Traditionally the Church of Norway has been the majority church in a community with a perceived ethnic and religious homogenous population. For many years, this context has been a filter for an understanding of the challenges of multi-ethnicity and religious pluralism. However, today there is an increased awareness of the particular responsibility of being a majority church.
- (115) There are still segments of the population that keep sceptical attitudes and stigmatize the believers of other religions. There are no clear patterns when measuring whether such attitudes are stronger among those who define themselves as Christians than among the population in general.
- (116) A letter from the Bishop's Synod to all congregations in March 1999 emphasized the Christian call of hospitality towards immigrants to Norway. Before the parliamentary elections in 1997, 25 leaders from all churches signed a joint letter "Our attitudes towards asylum seekers and immigrants" which stated the paradox that Norway, as a country with a strong missionary tradition, seemingly is not prepared when the people

we used to meet in other countries now come to Norway. The ecumenical committee for immigration matters had prepared this letter which was given to selected imams in one of the Oslo mosques. No such letter was issued before local elections in 1999, but church leaders strongly warned against the xenophobic attitudes of some of the candidates.

- (117) The church's leaders also contribute in discussions about equal treatment of immigrants in Norway, and the existence of church asylums is clearly a reflection of the hospitality that many congregations practise.
- (118) In August 1998, the Church of Norway - as the leading actor in the Co-operation Council of Faith and Lifestance Societies - convened the large international "Oslo Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief". The UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief presided over the meeting together with Bishop Gunnar Staalsett and Chung Ook-Lee, representing the Buddhists. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights also attended the meeting.
- (119) In relation to this there have been a number of small discussions, seminars and other processes. In November 1998 the Synod endorsed the Oslo Conference and its Declaration, asking that there must be a continuation of this work. Other aspects include participation in the 1998 OSCE meeting, the 1999 meeting of the UN Commission on Human Rights, as well as Norwegian and international preparations for these meetings.
- (120) The long-standing dialogue with the Moslems has produced various outcomes. The need for local dialogues was pointed out in a joint letter from the Islamic Council and the Council on Ecumenical and International Relations in 1997. In that same year a joint letter signed by all Christian churches in Norway was given to the Moslems. This letter underlined the need to practise one's own religion, and that Norway with a missionary tradition should have a population well prepared for meeting other faiths.
- (121) The need for more information on other religions has also been reflected in a new subject called "Christianity, with orientation on other religions and belief systems". A significant number of teachers and pupils have gained a new understanding of other religions. However, this subject has also been considered as a violation of the religious rights of religious minorities, as there are limited opportunities for exemptions. Their criticism has been mainly directed against the government and parliament. As the majority church, the Church of Norway has also been criticised for not understanding the problems connected with this new subject, but attitudes also differ much within the church. Recently, there has also been an emerging discussion on the wording of the explicit Christian object clause of primary schools.
- (122) The Church of Norway has been involved in two bilateral dialogues and one multilateral dialogue. In 1992 dialogue started between the Islamic Council and the Council on Ecumenical and International Relations. The Christian Council of Norway is now also part of this dialogue. Issues which have been discussed relate to the education system, and recently human rights in other countries have also been on the agenda

- (123) In 1997 dialogue was initiated with the Jewish communities in Norway. This has developed in a very positive manner, and has proved to be an important forum during the process of establishing procedures of compensation for property stolen from Norwegian Jews in the Second World War, and founding of a Holocaust and Genocide Centre in Oslo.
- (124) In 1996 the Co-operation Council of Faith and Lifestance Societies was established, with the Church of Norway as a member from the start. This Council has now been granted support by the government. A Humanist is working as Secretary, while a Buddhist is the President. This Council is also centrally involved in the newly-initiated "Dialogue on faith and values", which brings all religions together in a one-year dialogue (1999-2000) in close cooperation with the "Commission on Human Values", a cross-sectoral 'think tank' set by the government in early 1998 to elaborate on measures to strengthen a value-based approach in all segments and sectors of society.
- (125) The Council on Ecumenical and International Relations will take the opportunity of its visit to Geneva in mid February 2000 to discuss plans for the church's future response to promote freedom of religion. This will lead to an extended discussion in the Council. Participation in the [WCC] Decade to Overcome Violence will also include the aspects of religious coexistence.
- (126) The Oslo Coalition will be an important instrument for promoting freedom of religion or Belief. [The Oslo Coalition on Freedom of Religion or Belief is an international NGO founded by the Oslo Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief, August 1998. Its purpose is to carry out programmes and projects in support of freedom of religion or belief worldwide, as mandated by the Oslo Declaration on Freedom of Religion or Belief.] There is also constructive dialogue with Chinese, Cuban and Turkish authorities within the framework of a Norwegian official human rights dialogue with certain countries.
- (127) We also have high expectations of the participation of our new members in the various ecumenical commissions and working groups [of WCC and CEC].
- (128) A concrete plan will be discussed at the Church of Norway Council meeting in June 2000 and the main elements from this discussion will be brought to the LWF Council meeting.
- (129) The initiative taken by the LWF is a very timely one, coinciding with a positive process in the Church of Norway. The Church of Norway endorses this LWF initiative, and encourages the LWF Council to express its support for the Oslo Coalition, to disseminate the thinking behind the Oslo Coalition, and to cooperate with it.
- (130) The Norwegian government is now addressing issues of freedom of religion or belief in a comprehensive manner. Part of the explanation for this can be found in the work done by the Church of Norway.

Poland

Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland (16 December 1999)

- (131) The statement on freedom of religion issued by the LWF Ninth Assembly in Hong Kong in July 1997 was received with interest in Poland.
- (132) Political changes in the country have facilitated the discussion of such topics. However, it will take time to interest church members in human rights issues, and in particular that of freedom of religion.
- (133) That is not to say that we have no experience in such issues. In recent years, the church has worked together with the Ecumenical Council of Poland to organize national and international seminars to discuss these issues.
- (134) Apart from the Roman Catholic Church, all Christian churches in Poland are diaspora churches. Jews are dispersed throughout the country. There is no religious intolerance as such. However, there are some political groups of a very nationalistic nature which now and then criticize any form of belief or confession which is different from that of the majority in Poland. Generally speaking the Evangelical Church does not suffer any religious intolerance.
- (135) Despite this, the church believes that it has much to do in this field. The parishes need to be encouraged to have an open attitude towards those of other faiths and other political persuasions. This is already taking place in various forms and at various levels. It will be important to train the younger generation of theologians in the spirit of openness and protection of religious freedom and tolerance.
- (136) The church was represented at the [human rights training] seminar held in Sibiu, Romania, in May 1999 [under the theme "Justice for national, ethnic and religious minorities"].
- (137) Freedom of religion plays a special role in a country where there is a great imbalance between the confessions and religions. All diaspora churches understand each other better and are more open to inter-religious cooperation. Much still needs to be done in this field in Poland, including in the Evangelical Church.
- (138) The Evangelical Church and the Polish Ecumenical Council enjoy good relationships with the Association of Communities of the Jewish faith, which they will shortly engage in dialogue in the hope that this will strengthen the work of promoting religious tolerance.
- (139) It would be desirable that national plans and activities for promoting religious tolerance be coordinated with the LWF. The Evangelical Church hopes for the assistance and cooperation of the Geneva office of the LWF in this regard. It is conscious that more work needs to be done with regard to the points in the statement on freedom of

religion. It is in a process, and hopes for visible steps. Cooperation between the local churches and the Geneva office of the LWF is necessary.

LATIN AMERICA

Brazil

Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil (23 December 1999)

- (140) Religious intolerance is a sign of all times, especially the present time, when despite or precisely because of the movement to globalization, a strong fundamentalist reaction is to be registered. This has the following forms in Brazil: though world-wide information and internet, though economic emigration and immigration, people of different religious backgrounds have come together and experienced their difference not as an enrichment but as a threat and analysis. Frequently the reaction is one of rejection and exclusion of the stranger. This can be seen with regard to people who practise Afro-Indian or even Asian and Arab cults. In recent times white-skinned persons are seen at such cults. Whereas until recently there were rarely mixed marriages between persons of different religions, today it is frequently the case, not only in industrial centres but also in the countryside. This is widely criticized by the older generation.
- (141) Until 1997 IELCB gave confessional and inter-confessional religious lessons in primary schools. Some of its staff contributed to the political process of the revision of religious teaching. The State law now provides for inter-faith teaching which does not permit indoctrination but merely the provision of information about the different religions. At present, teachers are being trained to provide in special courses for the inter-faith lessons and IELCB is involved in this. In more and more towns there is an ecumenical commission (soon it will have to be inter-faith!) for religious classes. Its task is to orientate, motivate and accompany the teachers of the inter-faith classes.
- (142) From 28 November to 3 December 1999 an LWF consultation on inter-religious dialogue took place in Sao Leopoldo with representatives from Africa, Canada, USA, Central and South America and Malaysia. Five persons from IELCB attended this meeting.
- (143) At the local level the theme of religious freedom on the conclusion of a marriage is taken up in school and in the work place. The times when people of other religious backgrounds could live in their own geographical space are now at an end, not because of the lack of space, but for reasons of societal integration.
- (144) As representatives of the lay priesthood of all believers, we are called to assist in marriage counselling, and the fostering of relationships in the work place and at school. We maintain a working team with people of other coloured skins and cultures, in particular at the theological college and the ecumenical post-graduate institute.

- (145) From 29 May to 1 June 2000 the IELCB will hold a forum on mission. On that occasion the issue of tolerance will surely come up.

Chile

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile (28 February 2000)

- (146) The issue of religious diversity does not have the same profile in Chile as it might have in other regions, e.g. Africa or Asia, or even in other Latin American countries. This is due to the fact that the religion of the indigenous peoples was practically absorbed by the Christian faith (Roman Catholic) or, even worse, that the indigenous peoples were totally destroyed by the Spanish conquest.
- (147) Statistics reveal that "other religions" do not even amount to 1 per cent of the total population.
- (148) However, in the last decade, the issue of the equality of all Christian confessions before the law has become particularly important among the Christian churches. The corresponding legislation brought about by the efforts of the evangelicals in Chile declares specifically that in Chile all churches and religions are equal before the law. This law was passed in 1999.
- (149) The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile (IELCH) was actively involved in these efforts through the Committee of Evangelical Organizations. This organization always underlined the need for the so-called "Law of Cult" to also include freedom of worship for other religions and their respective organizations.
- (150) In a parallel way, and for more than 25 years, the IELCH has been part of the Jewish-Christian Fraternity. We should not forget that in 1973, when a number of churches united to defend human rights under the Pinochet military regime, the Jewish community joined these efforts. Since then, we hold regular meetings with Jewish representatives, participate in inter-religious activities and ceremonies, and maintain an intensive dialogue on theological themes.
- (151) The Muslim presence in Chile is extremely feeble. Notwithstanding, there have been sporadic meetings with the Muslim community in inter-religious events.

NORTH AMERICA

United States of America

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (11 March 2000)

- (152) The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is involved in several ways in the promotion and defence of religious freedom. However, the ELCA's Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs (LOGA) is the primary advocate on these issues.

Domestic Issues - Background

- (153) From a domestic perspective, most of the work is based on a Lutheran perspective with regard to constitutional guarantees. The Constitution of the United States, in the First Amendment in the Bill of Rights, guarantees that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..." For well over two centuries those sibling guarantees have formed the foundation upon which religious and governmental entities in the US have built a relationship in which there is a great deal of interaction, but mutually distinct institutional viability. In one instance after another the Supreme Court has defined and refined the United States' understanding of how this relationship takes shape and evolves while always preserving the integrity of the two.
- (154) The ELCA, and its predecessor church bodies and agencies, have adopted several policy statements and resolutions on religious freedom and religious liberty:
- (155) Religious liberty for all is thus not only a demand of civil justice but also an aid to our response to the Christian gospel... Religious liberty includes the right of a person, whether a believer in God or a nonbeliever, ...to worship in accordance with the faith and ritual of one's group, even in ways which appear curious or offensive to others, so long as the methods used are not legally defined as dangerous to the individual or the community; or not to worship if that is the choice.
The Nature of the Church and Its Relationship with Government (Lutheran Council in the USA, 1979)
- (156) The maintenance of religious diversity requires a general public recognition, not that all religions are equally valid, but that all enjoy equal status before the law... The religious liberty of a person or a group may be limited by government only on the basis of an important and compelling public interest.
Religious Liberty in the United States (Lutheran Church in America, 1968)
- (157) The state... relates to the interest of the church in such ways as...1) guaranteeing religious liberty for all... [and] 3) maintaining an attitude of 'wholesome neutrality' toward church bodies in the context of the religious pluralism of our culture...
Church and State, A Lutheran Perspective (Lutheran Church in America, 1966)
- (158) Government should steer a course of benevolent neutrality. ...the state, while not directly supporting or compelling religious teachings or practices, should be free to condition the exercise of its coercive powers and be ready to adjust its programs in deference to the religious freedom and the religious expression of the people.
Church-State Relations in the USA (The American Lutheran Church, 1966)
- (159) The board.... recognizes the First Amendment provisions on religion as necessary and adequate constitutional arrangement to guarantee religious freedom for all people in this religiously-diverse nation. [It] opposes any proposed constitutional amendment that would alter this constitutional arrangement to allow, for example, governments to sponsor organized prayer in public schools or in local government and school board meetings or sanction displays that promote a religion on public grounds.

Resolution on Religious Liberty (Board of the Division for Church in Society, ELCA, 1995)

Specific domestic issues

- (160) In the past several years (as did its predecessors before – stretching back to the 1940s), LOGA has been both vigilant and visible on a variety of “church-state” issues. During the 105th Congress (1997-1998) an amendment to the US Constitution was proposed – the Religious Freedom Amendment – which had the stated purpose of guaranteeing to all the right to practice their religion as they see fit. In reality it would have vitiated the First Amendment, voiding the last two centuries of court decisions outlining the parameters of the First Amendment and opening the way to a flood of litigation extending far into the future. Constitutional scholars from a broad spectrum of views opined that the amendment as offered could have, for example, allowed direct subsidies to private, sectarian institutions, prescribed prayer in public schools, and allowed judges to lead prayers acceptable to the majority in their courtrooms. The Religious Freedom Amendment received a majority vote in the House of Representatives, but fell far short of the two-thirds needed to send a Constitutional Amendment forward. A similar measure has been introduced in the 106th Congress.
- (161) The staff of LOGA provided leadership in coalitions working on the issue, made visits to decision-makers, provided articles and other information to related networks, and gave prominent attention to the matter in newsletters and presentations.
- (162) In 1990 the US Supreme Court, in *Smith v. Employment Division*, overturned long years of protection for religious entities. Until that decision, when a jurisdiction passed a law of general application which impinged on the liberty of a religious body, it could be stopped from that impingement or restriction unless it could be shown that the governmental entity had a compelling state interest in its enforcement against the faith community. Even if that could be demonstrated, the state still was constrained to use the least restrictive means possible to achieve its ends. After *Smith*, the government no longer had to meet that standard of strict scrutiny; there was no protection for religious liberty if the law applied to the population generally. In 1993, a broad coalition of religious groups with a common interest and concern in religious liberty issues (including LOGA) led a strong effort in the Congress which led to the passage and signing into law of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA). RFRA restored the compelling state interest test to those cases where a law of general application infringed on group or individual religious liberty.
- (163) In 1997 the Supreme Court overturned RFRA in a case where the city of Boerne, Texas had denied the building expansion permit application of a growing Roman Catholic parish. The city based its denial on local laws regarding buildings in the city’s historic district. The parish appealed, citing RFRA as the foundation for its exemption from the zoning laws. The Supreme Court found for the city, holding that RFRA was unconstitutional in that it violated the separation of powers of the US Constitution.
- (164) In response to the decision the same broad-based coalition from the earlier RFRA effort began work to craft new solutions to the church/state dilemma posed by the *Smith* case.

The ELCA, through the LOGA office, has been a part of that coalition. Two directions continued into the 106th Congress (1999-2000): 1) an effort to craft what was introduced in the 105th Congress as the Religious Liberty Protection Act (RLPA). This bill had the same intent and purpose as RFRA, but was based on, among other things, the spending and commerce powers enumerated in the Constitution; 2) a two-way relationship with similar coalitions in the various states trying to get RLPA-like statutes enacted in their respective states. At both the state and federal levels one of the most difficult questions has had to do with how such laws will apply to incarcerated persons. Many, including large numbers of people in the criminal justice systems, believe that all prisoners may be excluded from the provisions of these laws if there is any reason at all to do so. Proponents of strong protections for religious liberty, including the ELCA and most other US religious bodies, argue forcefully that a denial of religious liberty to one individual diminishes religious liberty for all. Thus it is argued that any denial should be based on that which rises to the level of a "compelling state interest".

- (165) In 1999 the RLPA passed the US House of Representatives overwhelmingly but has thus far failed to be considered in the US Senate. That failure is largely due to an impasse between RLPA supporters and others in the civil rights community over the potential of unintended consequences arising from an RLPA-type law.

International Issues - Background

- (166) On the international front, perhaps the most significant development has been US efforts to address religious persecution abroad.
- (167) The 1997 ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted a resolution directing the Division for Church in Society to continue its work with other churchwide units to study the matter of religious persecution, to assist the ELCA to respond to violations of the human right of freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, and to communicate to US government officials ELCA concern for victims of religious persecution.

Specific international issue

- (168) In 1998 the US Congress enacted – and President Clinton signed into law – the ‘International Religious Freedom Act’, a bill to strengthen US advocacy on behalf of individuals persecuted in foreign countries on account of religion, and to authorize US actions in response to violations of religious freedom. The original version of the bill, as passed in the House, would have imposed several economic sanctions on countries that engage in severe forms of religious persecution and took a “one-size-fits-all” approach that was not sensitive to the particular situations in which religious minorities find themselves. The Senate-passed bill, “Nickles-Lieberman,” to which the House finally agreed, reflected the comments and concerns raised from across the political spectrum. The bill serves as a bipartisan alternative to automatic economic sanctions. The ELCA supported this bill for its creation of a meaningful structure for reporting religious persecution worldwide; its use of a broad, internationally accepted definition of religious persecution; its mechanism for required action with appropriate Presidential waivers; and its recognition that the President must be permitted to tailor, on a case-by-case basis,

our government's response to countries engaging in religious persecution. The bill provides the President a menu of options, ranging from a private diplomatic protest to limited and targeted economic sanctions.

- (169) LOGA worked with various faith groups in supporting the 'International Religious Freedom Act', the version of religious persecution legislation that eventually passed in the U.S. Congress. The task ahead is to monitor US implementation of the bill and to advocate for appropriate application of its provisions as cases arise.

Other activities

- (170) In addition to these efforts in the legislative sphere, the Lutheran Office for World Community (LOWC), which represents the ELCA and the Lutheran World Federation at United Nations headquarters in New York, has been involved in several related activities.
- (171) At the request of the Department for Ecumenical Affairs, staff of LOWC represent the ELCA on the Executive Council for the US Chapter of the World Conference on Religion and Peace. This organization seeks to build peace and reconciliation on an inter-faith basis and thus, in the course of its work, is concerned with the preservation of freedom of religion or belief, as outlined in several UN declarations and treaties.
- (172) LOWC has also been a member of the Conference of Non-governmental Organizations' (CONGO) Committees on Human Rights and Freedom of Religion or Belief. These two bodies provide a forum for NGOs which seek to affirm and extend the fundamental freedoms related to religious belief which are set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief by holding briefings and discussions with experts, government representatives and UN officials, such the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the question of religious intolerance.

VII. CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

- (173) Religious intolerance has been a source of untold violence and immeasurable human suffering over the ages, up to this very day. It is, in one form or another, a feature of the day-to-day experience of many member churches of the LWF. The right to religious freedom, on the other hand, provides a source and basis for peaceful co-existence. It also mirrors a respect for the dignity of every human person, which the churches are committed to promote.
- (174) The reports received from member churches and compiled in chapter VI above represent only a relatively small sample of the total membership of the LWF. Seventeen reports were received, of which sixteen are from individual member churches. This represents approximately 13 per cent of the 128 member churches of the LWF. 17

- (175) Analyzing the reports regionally, it is noteworthy that the African, Asian and Latin American regions produced only two reports each, whilst the European region produced ten reports. Within the European region, six reports came from western Europe and two from the Nordic region, whilst two came from eastern Europe.
- (176) The relative lack of response may be seen as surprising, given that the issue of religious freedom must presumably be a central concern of all member churches, whether majority or minority churches. On the other hand, the lack of a response from the remaining member churches cannot be interpreted as an indication that these churches do not consider the issue of religious freedom to be a central issue, or that they are not active in this area. Many member churches which have not provided a response are nonetheless known to be very active in the promotion of religious freedom.
- (177) In any event, the reports received are a small sample on which to make any firm conclusions or on which to base any concrete recommendations. However, some key trends and pointers can be drawn from the responses received which, supplemented by anecdotal evidence, permit some tentative remarks to be hazarded.
- (178) Firstly, almost all the reports refer in some way to the role of the churches in **awareness-raising and education for religious tolerance**. This role may be inward-oriented, involving awareness-raising and education activities among the congregations and members of the church itself, or outward-oriented, focussing on other denominations or faiths or on the wider society as a whole. Some of the methodologies referred to include:
- educational programmes in schools concerning human rights and applicable constitutional or other legislative guarantees relating to religious freedom;
 - general educational and training programmes within the churches, at the congregational level and/or at the leadership/clergy level, incorporating the promotion of tolerance, dignity and freedom of religion;
 - the organization of or participation in seminars focussing on the topic of religious freedom;
 - the publication and dissemination of information and materials relating to religious freedom and tolerance generally, and/or to other faiths specifically;
 - the establishment of educational institutions;
 - marriage counselling;
 - the promotion of contacts and cooperation with communities of other faiths; and
 - forms of religious instruction which incorporate information on, or are even planned and implemented jointly with, communities of other faiths.
- (179) These references indicate an awareness on the part of the respondent churches that, just as religious intolerance is a learned behaviour, education can play a critical role in promoting religious tolerance and freedom. The capacities and expertise of the churches in the area of education, both religious and general, are powerful instruments in this regard.
- (180) Many of the replies also indicate an understanding that such awareness-raising and education is not a purely objective, scientific process, but a necessarily subjective,

experiential one. Hence, there is appropriate emphasis on the desirability of ecumenical and inter-faith engagement in educational activities, and on the need to foster contact and cooperation with communities of other faiths as a means of building awareness and mutual understanding.

- (181) Secondly, there is an almost unanimous endorsement of **ecumenical and inter-faith dialogue** as a means of removing enemy images, creating mutual understanding, promoting religious freedom, and addressing issues of common or universal concern. Reference is made in many cases to specific dialogues, formalized or *ad hoc*, in which the respondent churches are engaged.
- (182) Whilst it is clearly valuable in its own right in order to promote mutual understanding and tolerance, dialogue with other denominations and faiths is most frequently referred to in the context of joint activities to address social issues of common concern. Ecumenical and inter-faith dialogue and cooperation is often seen as most valuable when it addresses itself to a particular pressing social need, such as conflict resolution, trauma-healing and reconciliation, reducing violence, a culture of peace, human rights, the eradication of apartheid, education, health services, and other social challenges. The deeper experience of cooperation which comes from addressing common or universal problems jointly is also accompanied by the greater likelihood of positive outcomes which comes from such cooperation.
- (183) Thirdly, much attention is paid in the reports to **national constitutional provisions concerning religious freedom, and the legislative schema regulating the life of churches and religious communities**. Sometimes, the reports note an inconsistency between constitutional guarantees of religious freedom and a practical situation in which religious intolerance and conflict is nevertheless frequently experienced. The legal position of the churches and religious communities is obviously of great practical significance to the freedom which they and their adherents enjoy. This is becoming a particular challenge in certain countries in eastern Europe. Many countries, in the eastern European region and elsewhere, appear to be in the process of revising their laws governing religious freedom.
- (184) By and large, however, the respondent churches reported conducive legal frameworks for the free conduct of religious life, and in some cases remarked favourably upon legal frameworks which protect against any particular religion or denomination being too closely identified with the State. In some cases, member churches have clearly been very proactive in their efforts to influence the legal frameworks for the exercise of religious freedom. Some reports actually noted more of a challenge from indifference to religion generally, or from secular intolerance towards any religion, than from religious preferences expressed politically.
- (185) A number of reports highlighted the **connection between latent racism and xenophobia and expressions of religious intolerance**, especially against immigrants and refugees. This was particularly a feature of the responses from the western European and Nordic regions, but also in one response from Latin America. In such

circumstances, it may be difficult to separate religious intolerance from racism or xenophobia, and to determine which is the predominant or principal issue.

- (186) It is also clear from the responses that although the experiences and challenges faced by majority or 'State' churches on the one hand and minority churches on the other hand are very different, the **commitment to religious freedom for all** seems broadly accepted. Some replies raised the issue of '**sects**' and **new religious movements**, but the overall consensus seems well reflected in the report from the Malagasy Protestant Church in France, which describes its approach as being to warn against both the negative aspects of the activities of some groups claiming a religious conviction, and against the "facile idea" that every religious minority which has unusual beliefs and practices should be condemned or even forbidden.
- (187) At least one of the reports referred to **religious fundamentalism or extremism**, reflected in violent persecution of Christians. Religious extremism, often resulting in violence, is unfortunately an increasingly obvious feature in several countries. Typically in these situations, the complex inter-relationships between religious differences, political agendas, racial and ethnic discrimination, and economic injustice are hard to untangle. It must be noted, however, that the spread of religious extremism is affecting most religions, including Islam, Hinduism and Judaism, and that Christianity is itself not immune from this "disease".
- (188) There is a very strong correlation between the focuses raised in the replies received from member churches, and the key issues identified by the UN Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance in his recent reports. The issues of educational strategies for promoting religious tolerance, national legislative frameworks for religious freedom, inter-religious dialogue, the connection between religious intolerance and racism, and 'sects' and new religious movements are concerns which the membership of the Lutheran World Federation clearly share with the Special Rapporteur.
- (189) In the light of the above remarks, the following proposals are offered:-
1. That the Council should remain seized of this issue for a further year, to enable additional information to be received from a wider spectrum of the LWF membership, for presentation to the Council in 2001 in an updated report;
 2. That each member church should continue and deepen its efforts to promote mutual understanding and religious freedom for all, through:
 - a) Active engagement in ecumenical and inter-faith dialogue and cooperation;
 - b) Promoting the establishment of permanent ecumenical and inter-faith dialogue platforms where appropriate and where such platforms do not already exist;
 - c) Educational initiatives, both inward-oriented and outward-oriented, to reduce enemy images and misunderstandings which lead to intolerance and conflict; and
 - d) Familiarization with the relevant constitutional and legislative provisions affecting religious freedom and religious life, and through engagement with government on

points of concern in current constitutional and legislative frameworks and practices regarding religious freedom;

3. That each member church should acquaint itself with the work of the UN Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance (whose various reports can be accessed on-line from www.unhchr.ch/mandlist.htm, or can be provided on request by the Office for International Affairs and Human Rights).
 4. That where racism and xenophobia, or poverty, or political manipulation, constitute underlying causes of religious intolerance, a comprehensive response to the situation should not fail to address those underlying causes.
- (190) As Professor Theo van Boven, a leading human rights scholar, has explained, "What is at stake in the promotion and protection of religious liberty is not the search for objective truth but the enhancement of respect for the subjective rights of individuals or groups of individuals and communities." ("Religious Freedom in International Perspective: Existing and Future Standards", 1989)
- (191) Freedom of religion must mean, both in theory and in practice, that everyone should be free from coercion by anyone else so that, subject to the just requirements of public order, nobody is forced to act against his or her convictions nor restrained from acting in accordance with his or her convictions in religious matters, in private or in public, alone or in association with others. The churches have a critical role to play in defending and promoting this principle, while at the same time and also thereby witnessing to the love of Christ.

Supplementary Report on

**THE INVOLVEMENT OF LWF MEMBER CHURCHES
IN PROMOTING AND DEFENDING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

Note: The responses in this report were received after the deadline for processing Exhibit 17.2.

VI. MEMBER CHURCH REPORTS cont'd (edited extracts of reports provided by member churches)

AFRICA

Senegal

The Lutheran Church of Senègal (26 April 2000)

- (1) Although almost 90 per cent of the population of Senegal is Muslim, the church does not presently experience any measure of religious intolerance. We have co-habitation and good relationships in religious diversity.
- (2) As we do not experience any intolerance, we do not have any mechanism at present for such challenges.
- (3) Our church has not yet had the opportunity to participate in any consultation or similar dealing with the topic of religious freedom.
- (4) This issue is experienced in our society as one of the religious priorities to embody or teach from a very young age, be it on the local, national or regional level. It is a sought-after quality which is facilitated by the relationships of the extended family as well as blood relationships.
- (5) Our church participates in general programmes of dialogue and cooperation which deal with the themes of uniqueness, understanding, relationships. It has a committee dealing with cooperation and understanding among workers, and another dealing with African Muslim-Christian relationships, and has held consultations dealing with cultural and theological issues, etc.
- (6) There are currently no plans for future work on this issue.
- (7) We thank the LWF for opening this window for us and will devote more attention to the issue in future. We regret the delay in responding, due to the need for a group to come together to reply to the questions. We renew our interest in the issue and are open and ready to participate in events dealing with it.

ASIA

Jordan

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan (22 May 2000)

- (8) Historically the relationships between the three religions [Christianity, Islam, Judaism] in this area have been characterized by moderation and tolerance. Still today the relatively moderate forces in the respective religious communities are ruling. However, during the last decade this traditional situation is being challenged by fundamentalistically inclined minorities of all three religions.
- (9) The issue of religious tolerance is an important dimension in the ongoing discussions and negotiations on the future status of Jerusalem.
- (10) Promoting religious tolerance and understanding is one of the most important objectives of the ELCJ Educational Programme. In the five schools run by ELCJ around one third of all the students belong to the Muslim community. (In one school about 60 per cent of the students are Muslim.) This situation gives a very good opportunity to educate the younger generation for peace and coexistence. Through an ambitious development of the curriculum for the ELCJ schools this aspect of the educational programme has been strengthened and new methods have been put into use. In the present Christian minority situation in the Holy Land – where all Christians constitute some 2 per cent of the population in Palestine and Israel – we hold this educational effort as one of our most important contributions for religious freedom, tolerance and coexistence.
- (11) Together with the other churches ELCJ is taking active part in several discussions with the Palestinian Authority (PA) where freedom of religion is one of the main issues. Cases in point are meetings with the Ministry of Education concerning Christian education in the national curriculum, as well as discussions with the PA on the Constitution of Palestine highlighting freedom of religion, and protection of minority rights as matters that have to become part of the basic law of the emerging state.
- (12) Since a number of years ELCJ has been involved in various inter-faith dialogues both with Islam and Judaism. In the highly charged political situation in the Holy Land it is obvious that the mere fact that these meetings take place is a statement on the topic of freedom of religion.
- (13) One example: Since 1991 the ELCJ has been involved in a Jewish/Christian dialogue aiming at promoting religious tolerance in the Holy Land. This dialogue takes place in regular meetings every two months. The present ELCJ bishop was one of the initiators of these dialogue meetings, which usually consist of joint studies of Holy Scripture focussing on an agreed topic per meeting. Among the topics dealt with during recent meetings are Abraham, Election, Forgiveness, Millennium, Justice, Unity, Peace and other contemporary issues. The participants are rabbis of different Jewish traditions, Lutheran, Anglican and Catholic clergy, and some interested lay people. Both men and

women take part. The dialogue meetings are informal in character and each participant only represents him/herself.

- (14) ELCJ will continue to build awareness among the local Christians that the church here has a role of being a catalyst for tolerance and moderation between the people of the three religions. This task is gradually becoming an important dimension in all our activities as a church, as well as in our congregations and schools.
- (15) The issue of how we as a local Lutheran church relate to the Agreement between the Vatican and the PLO (as well as to the Agreement between the Vatican and Israel) is also of importance here. In our opinion a great step to secure the freedom of religion for the Christian minority will be taken if these agreements could formally be endorsed also by other churches in the Holy Land. How this is to be done needs to be further explored. We trust LWF will be willing to look into this matter together with the ELCJ.

EUROPE

Iceland

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Iceland (26 April 2000)

- (16) Some remarks about the special situation prevailing in Iceland: the national church is evangelical-lutheran, like sister churches in the Nordic countries. However, unlike other Nordic nations, close to 90 per cent of Icelanders, including immigrants, are members of the church. Close to 80 per cent of children aged 13-14 are confirmed.
- (17) Iceland has a population of 275,000 Icelanders (excluding immigrants) have a strong spiritual attachment to their own culture and traditions, and a strong desire to preserve them. There is also a certain fear of losing their identity if Icelandic culture is mingled with other cultures and diluted.
- (18) Christianity, or the church, is a part of this culture. As a consequence, the issue which concerns freedom of religion in Iceland is how the church can show tolerance towards other religions, which are absolute minority groups for the time being. And there are always the passions and fears of being Icelandic behind this issue.
- (19) The Icelandic church and its members recognize the importance of promoting and protecting human rights in society. At the same time, however, the church has had a very important role in forming and preserving Icelandic culture. It now faces another dilemma. On one hand we want to talk about the freedom of religion, but on the other hand the existence of other religions can be threatening to the Icelandic culture.
- (20) The church has no programmes in this regard. However, one pastor recently started to work with immigrants in Iceland. This 'work' is not limited to the Christian faith, but is both religious and humanitarian in broad terms. In addition, some pastors have taken an initiative to review religious education offered in primary schools. General education

about religions which includes other religions than Christianity is rather new in Iceland, but now is covered in all years of the official school system.

- (21) The church sent speakers to a convention on freedom of religion organized by the Bahai community.
- (22) In the lay school curriculum, one class deals with the promotion of dialogue among different religions. Furthermore some interested ministers to make use of opportunities in their parishes, at high schools, or in general meetings to speak about dialogue. The church has a committee working on ecumenical issues. The leaders of the national church are active in ecumenical work.
- (23) The church currently has no special plans to promote freedom of religion. However, the pastor working with immigrants is planning to open up discussion on the issue of the church's stand, both inside the church and outside.

Italy

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Italy (21 April 2000)

- (24) Our church has not itself been affected by this question. There is hardly any religious intolerance in Italy. If forms of intolerance crop up, they are not based on legal grounds. The Evangelical Lutheran Church is fully recognized as a church by the state. To a certain extent, as a minority church we are treated in a privileged way, for example in the procedures for collecting social taxes, which favour the eligible minorities. As far as we know, Italy is the first nation of Christian tradition which also gives equal rights to Buddhists in this respect.
- (25) Intolerance happens when ignorance on the part of the bulk of the population leads to strange manifestations. However, as a rule, usually this can be easily settled.
- (26) Every minority has to struggle with particular problems. Currently, the issue of religious instruction is a concern for Italian society. The issues of prison or military chaplains, presence in the media, etc., tend to discriminate against the minority for organizational-technical reasons.
- (27) The most difficult question in this connection is that of self-identity when the enormous majority (in our case Roman Catholic) is practically the only one seen in the official media. The minority feel ignored. However, in view of current numbers, the situation is not likely to change in the foreseeable future.
- (28) The Evangelical Lutheran Church belongs to the Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy which is carrying out good work with refugees through its migration and refugee service. It also takes positions on administrative-technical or legal questions. The Federation acts on behalf of its member churches in these matters.

- (29) The Evangelical Lutheran Church does not have any programmes itself on the theme of religious freedom and tolerance.
- (30) Representatives of our church work sporadically at the level of the Secretariat for Ecumenical Activities which is financed by the Roman Catholic Church. Inter-faith dialogue is presently one of the main points of emphasis. Some of our parishes have limited inter-faith contacts, in particular with Jewish fellow citizens. We do not have the possibility for further, regular contacts.
- (31) The Church has no concrete plans on this theme at present for we do not see the necessity in our situation.

Russian Federation

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia and Other States (15 May 2000)

- (32) The Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELKRAS) is represented in almost all states of the "Commonwealth of Independent States" (CIS). According to our information, the principle of religious freedom, i.e. freedom of belief and conscience, has been enshrined in their Constitutions.

Russian Federation

- (33) The hostile-to-religion legislation of the era of Stalin and his successors was superceded before the fall of the Soviet Union by a "Law on freedom of conscience and religious organizations" on 1 October 1990. It carries the signature of Mikhail Gorbachev and follows the North American concept of religious freedom, in that it makes no distinction between long-established historical religious communities and new foreign mission communities. This contradicted the self-understanding of the Russian Orthodox Church – and naturally also the Muslims – and especially their new interpretation of the canonical principle of "canonical territory". This principle originally established that other Orthodox churches could not expand in the region of the Moscow Patriarchate – which was to some extent analogous for Lutheran territorial churches which are in communion with each other. Today, it means that basically only the Russian Orthodox Church has the right to exist on Russian ground, and has a claim on every person of Russian origin – except, of course, Muslims and Buddhists. But both the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutherans had an interest in seeing that, as in other European countries, a difference be made between historic religious communities and new groups. We were not pleased when our old, desecrated church buildings were handed over to other Christian churches or communities without any consultation with us under the banner of the new religious freedom.
- (34) The internal negotiations about new religious legislation dragged on for years. The "Federation Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations" which was finally signed into law by President Yeltsin on 26 September 1997, contains a preamble which states:

The Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation passes the Federal law that is before the house

... recognizing the special contribution of Orthodoxy to the history of Russia and to the development of Russia's spirituality and culture;

respecting Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism and other religions which constitute an inseparable part of the historical heritage of Russia's peoples...

Note the fine distinction in the evaluation of the religions.

- (35) In principle, the law provides for the setting-up of religious groups or organizations. But, legally, a religious organization requires state registration. The conditions for this are meticulous: only a centralized religious organization which has been active in Russia for at least 50 years can call itself "Russian". Full registration requires proof that the applying community has already existed for 15 years (registered by the authorities) or can prove its affiliation to a recognized centralized organization, i.e. a church. Otherwise, it has fewer rights, for example, it cannot invite foreign guests or publish, etc.
- (36) It is understandable that from the beginning, opinions about this legislation were varied. Mission communities of American or Korean background judged it as a serious violation of religious freedom. In general, the various Christian confessions, and also the various branches of Islam had different experiences. The experiences of the Roman Catholic Church, for example, were worse than those of the Lutherans.
- (37) Together with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia, ELKRAS submitted proposals for improvements, none of which were taken into consideration. But on the whole we can live with the law. Where there are juridical problems, for example, concerning the activity of foreigners in our church – you cannot speak of restrictions of religious freedom. On the contrary, the law has contributed to limiting the splitting up of Lutherans in the Russian Federation. One cannot blame it on the law that despite the strict separation of state and church, one group in an intra-Lutheran conflict tries to blacken the other group vis-a-vis the political authorities and have them eliminated. That was already the practice under Stalin.
- (38) On the whole, we can say that ELKRAS experiences on the part of the state organs of the Russian Federation no interference in its freedoms and rights. In serious cases now and then it has even been supported.

Relations with the majority Russian Orthodox Church .

- (39) We have experienced an evolution in our relations with the Russian Orthodox Church. Right from the start of building up our church we tried to have close contacts, and at the beginning we received close support. Meanwhile, relations have become considerably complicated as a result of the activity in rural areas of mission groups from the West and Korea. However, in large cities such as Moscow or St Petersburg there are no tensions;

there are even committees for inter-religious dialogue and diaconal cooperation. During the time of the repressions, Lutheran Christians attended Orthodox worship services and individual Lutherans were baptized Orthodox if no Lutheran pastors were available. No tensions arose from this.

- (40) The situation is somewhat more complicated across the country. The conviction that each Russian by birth must be a member of the Orthodox Church and the emphasis given in the religious law to the special position of the Orthodox Church enables a self-understanding to grow that is not always conducive to an ecumenical community.
- (41) The Lutheran Church has refrained from all public mission attempts in past centuries. In the time of the tsars this was anyway forbidden. On the contrary, the occasional defection of Lutherans to the Orthodox Church was not only tolerated but even encouraged. In the time of the persecutions this was not an issue, but today the accusation of proselytism is quickly raised. Nobody disputes that there is need to care for parish members coming from Lutheran traditions, who are mostly originally of German-Russian background. But our churches are open, and one can assume that one third to one half of the population are still atheist. In this situation there are varying concepts of mission here. It was planned to hold a seminar in August on understanding and opinion forming, but it is likely that it will need to be delayed. But our principle will continue to always be that we never engage in deliberate mission to people who are firmly anchored in their church, especially the Russian Orthodox Church. We are not a proselytizing church, but we must and should keep the doors of our church wide open.
- (42) That there are open questions here does not mean that we have no reason to speak about a form of "religious intolerance" facing our parishes on the territory of the Russian Federation.

Central Asia

- (43) After the fall of the Soviet Union almost all the Central Asian CIS states passed their own laws on religion which are based on the "Law on freedom of conscience and religious organizations" signed by Mikhail Gorbachev on 1 October 1990. These laws provided for the greatest possible equality of all religious communities as well as for the new mission communities and sects which have streamed in from abroad.
- (44) With these new religious laws the state organs (Committees for religious affairs, etc.) whose task hitherto was to control religious communities were either fully abolished or at least their powers were considerably reduced.
- (45) In principle until then the division was: the indigenous people (Kazak, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Tadjik, Turkmen) are Muslim, the Russians living there are Orthodox, the Germans Lutheran, the Poles Catholic.
- (46) In the first years of independence especially foreign Christian and Muslim religious communities and sects took advantage of the new possibilities to gain members either for Christianity or for special branches of Islam. These efforts led to a series of successes

- which gave rise to increasing unrest in the population. From the side of the state one perceived in the foreign Muslim movements particularly a danger for the state system as a whole. And in fact this was one of the fundamental reasons why there was a civil war in Tadjikistan.
- (47) Against this background, the Central Asian states began to pass new religious laws which, on the one hand considerably reduced religious freedom, and on the other hand subjected the activities of religious communities to massive state control. Foreign Christian and Muslim religious communities especially which arrived in the Central Asian states after 1991 have considerable difficulties to get registered and obtain a legal status.
- (48) In principle one cannot say that the regional churches of ELKRAS in the Central Asian states are restricted in their freedoms and rights. However, it must be said that the new religion laws do present considerable problems for them to obtain legal status. (Uzbekistan requires that a parish have at least 100 members in order to get registered, in Turkmenistan 500 are needed.) Also the sending of pastors from abroad (including other states of the CIS) to Lutheran parishes in Central Asia is only possible under considerable difficulties. Furthermore, the activity of our regional churches is subjected to a noticeable control by the state control organs which have either been newly created or given renewed far-reaching powers.
- (49) Nevertheless, as long as our regional churches do not display any intentions of proselytism among the Muslim population, they can work normally and count on the goodwill of the state organs.
- (50) This corresponds to the traditional practice of our parishes, but now evangelical groups (e.g. Light in the East) are coming from Germany to support the work of our church with other ideas in mind – the same is true for American missionaries (LCMS) who wish to work within the framework of our church in Kyrgyzstan. Finally, there is also the theological question of what the universal commission of our Lord means for us today. Of course it is binding. But does it call for mission methods as practised by the groups referred to? And does the principle of freedom of religion cover all forms of proselytism? These are theological decisions which need to be taken.

Slovak Republic

Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in the Slovak Republic (19 May 2000)

- (51) Historically, the Evangelical (Lutheran) Church in Slovakia (ECAC), which began to develop in the early 16th century with the spread of the Reformation across Europe and had its first organizing synod in Zilina in 1610, experienced oppression since its very beginnings. Because it had to fight for its right to exist, the church today places high value on the ideal of religious freedom. During the totalitarian regime in Slovakia, religious freedom was an official policy, but in reality was aggressively discouraged. The official line was a confrontation of materialistic ideology with the Christian perception of the world, presented by the Communists as a struggle between science and faith,

progress and religious tradition, healthy development and "addiction/ dependency"
(Lenin: "Religion is the 'opium' of the people").

- (52) Some leaders believe that the theme of religious freedom was a concern to our church up until the revolution of 1989, and that the present society gives the individual unlimited possibilities to work in and serve the church. Others feel that religious intolerance is a challenge especially because of the many years of oppression the church experienced, both under the Communists and with the earlier, open aggression by other denominations. This is one explanation why members are very sensitive to any indications of intolerance expressed by other people, institution, or organizations. This sensitivity is not only connected to the subject of religion (especially the relations between the majority Roman Catholic Church and the minority churches, which seem to be improving), but in the social, cultural, and political spheres as well.
- (53) Today religious freedom in the Slovak Republic is guaranteed by the Constitution. Some have observed intolerance bordering on aggression on the part of Jehovah's Witnesses who do not respect the privacy of people's homes.
- (54) At the same time, the "Western" concept of freedom of confession and mission activities open for anybody to come and begin proselytizing, in the form of new groups which can subversively destroy the family structure of a predominantly Christian society, represents a challenge for us.
- (55) Is there a method of guarding or preserving the Christian nature of our country and at the same time respecting freedom of religion? For a religion to be officially registered in Slovakia, there is a requirement that it must have a relatively high number of members (20,000). Some neighbouring states have lowered this number drastically and, correspondingly, many new (for those countries) religious organizations have been registered.
- (56) The ECAC is a major participant in the Ecumenical Council of Churches in Slovakia. The Evangelical Schools accept a percentage of students from other faiths. There are pulpit exchanges with other denominations. Some members also participate in the "Jesus for Everyone" programme.
- (57) The church periodically makes statements about current societal issues or problems. Most recently this includes the preparation of the contract between the Vatican and the Slovak Republic, whereby the Evangelical Church is proposing to parliament that a law first be passed guaranteeing all churches an equal standing in relationship to the state, and then individual contracts could be signed. As far as special plans or programmes in regard to religious tolerance, the church has none in particular, possibly because at the present time it does not seem to be a priority.
- (58) The church was represented at an LWF/CEC [human rights training workshop] in Sibiu, Romania, in 1999 [under the theme "Justice for national, ethnic and religious minorities"].

- (59) During the Communist regime, religious oppression paradoxically created a closer relationship between the majority and minority Christian churches (united against a common enemy). Today this phenomenon has all but disappeared and at times the majority church has pushed its authority, creating a less-than-equitable atmosphere among the churches. Nevertheless, the Evangelical church is a major participant in the Ecumenical Council of Churches of Slovakia, where the Roman Catholic Church is an observer. This is basically inter-confessional dialogue.
- (60) In regard to inter-religious dialogue, the only other official religion in Slovakia besides the Christian denominations is Judaism. Other religions are practically not represented. The few occasions during which the leaders of our church meet with representatives of the Jewish community cannot be considered as inter-religious dialogue. (In the early 1990s there was a proposal to build a mosque in Bratislava, but the Christian churches, especially the Roman Catholic Church, fought against the idea and subsequently, it was built in Brno, Czech Republic.)
- (61) Most of the church's engagement is in the context of inter-confessional dialogue, since other religions than Christianity and Judaism are not represented in Slovakia. However, much work remains to be done in order to promote general tolerance and respect among the Christian denominations, and mainly between the Protestant and Roman Catholic denominations. In this connection, yearly ecumenical church services are held. And on 15 February 2000, an historic event in the history of Slovakia's churches took place. At the invitation of the President of Slovakia and the Roman Catholics, the members of the Ecumenical Council of Churches travelled to Rome with the President in a show of support for the concept of national reconciliation. Representatives of the Slovak churches, including Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Evangelical Lutheran, Reformed, Baptist, Brethren, Apostolic, Methodist, Czechoslovak-Hussite, and Old Catholic Churches met with the Pope during the Roman Catholics' celebration of their national pilgrimage to Rome, attended a Greek Catholic mass, and met for brief worship at the German Lutheran church in Rome.
- (62) There has been little occasion for inter-religious dialogue to date. But recently a young pastor expressed interest in studying this question and that of human rights on behalf of the church. His plan is to become familiar with this subject, and with technical assistance from LWF and CEC, to hold a seminar. Ecumenical collaboration must be developed further to promote tolerance and respect among the religions already represented in Slovakia. To this end, an ecumenical meeting of Czech and Slovak Christians is planned for September 2000 in Trencin, Slovakia.

(Original)

**ARMED INTERVENTION TO DEFEND HUMAN RIGHTS:
A Discussion Paper**

Contents	Page
I. Introduction	1
II. Theological Bases	4
III. LWF Studies and Stances	5
IV. Ethical Considerations Related to Armed Intervention for Humanitarian Purposes	9
V. Some Observations and Implications	14
Appendix: Sovereignty and Non-Intervention vs. 'Humanitarian Intervention?': History and Legal Framework	16

* * *

I. INTRODUCTION

Background

- (1) At the time of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Council meeting in Bratislava (22-29 June 1999), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) intervention in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) had recently come to an end. On 10 June 1999, following the start of the withdrawal of the armed forces of the FRY from Kosovo, NATO concluded its 11-week bombing campaign.
- (2) The NATO campaign drew its claim to moral legitimacy from the international outcry against the brutal ethnic cleansing of Kosovo carried out by Serbian forces, and against the atrocities and abuses perpetrated upon ethnic Albanian Kosovars.¹

¹ Documented, for example, in the the Human Rights Watch report *A Week of Terror in Drenica: Humanitarian Law Violations in Kosovo* (February 1999), and in the Amnesty International reports *Background: A Crisis Waiting to Happen*, June 1998 (EUR 70/32/98); *Drenica, February-April 1998: Unlawful killings, extrajudicial executions and armed opposition abuses*, June 1998 (EUR 70/33/98); *Deaths in Custody, Torture and Ill-Treatment*, June 1998 (EUR 70/34/98); *Unfair Trials and Abuses of Due Process*, June 1998 (EUR 70/35/98); *A Pattern Repeated. Ljubenic and Poklek: Extrajudicial Executions, Excessive Use of Force and 'Disappearances'*, July 1998 (EUR 70/46/98); *Human Rights Violations Against Women in Kosovo Province*, August 1998 (EUR 70/54/98); and *'Disappeared' and 'Missing' Persons: The hidden victims of conflict*, 25 August 1998 (EUR 70/57/98).

- (3) However, civilians - Serb, ethnic Albanian and others - suffered considerably during the NATO campaign, both as direct casualties of the high-altitude bombing and as a result of the destruction of infrastructure throughout the FRY. The economic and social impacts upon neighbouring communities and nations also proved to be very serious.
- (4) Consequently, there was intensive discussion at the LWF Council meeting of the impact of these events upon the churches and people of the whole FRY and neighbouring countries, as well as of the ethical issues surrounding the notion of armed intervention to defend human rights. This discussion was also framed in a broader global context, including situations of equally serious humanitarian and human rights emergency which had not attracted the same level of international concern and engagement as that in Kosovo.

Mandate

- (5) Following this discussion, the LWF Council asked the General Secretary to "*institute a process of inter-departmental reflection on the theological and ethical implications of the concept of armed intervention to defend human rights, for example as practised by NATO in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, with a view to further discussion of this issue by the LWF Council at its next meeting*".
- (6) This discussion paper is presented in response to this request.

Methodology

- (7) The responsibility for undertaking the inter-departmental reflection process was delegated to the Staff Working Team on International Affairs and Human Rights, comprising representatives of the Department of Mission and Development (all area desk officers and the Women in Church and Society and the Youth in Church and Society desks), the Department for World Service (Development Education Officer and Programme Secretary/Refugees), the Department for Theology and Studies, and chaired by the Assistant to the General Secretary for International Affairs and Human Rights.
- (8) The paper is based upon a review of previous studies and stances by the LWF on this and related topics; of a review of recent writings and commentaries by legal scholars, ethicists and theologians; and of interdepartmental discussions within the LWF's Staff Working Team on International Affairs and Human Rights.
- (9) Much of the core content of this paper also reflects detailed discussion which took place in the context of a consultation convened by the World Council of Churches on 6-8 April 2000 with a panel of invited experts, a number of them from member churches of the LWF. In this consultation, perspectives from a range of different national and regional contexts were introduced (including from Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Germany, Haiti, Iceland, Japan, Kenya, Kosovo (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), Norway, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Sierra Leone, South Africa, the South Pacific, and the United States), as well as from a range of different fields of expertise (including theology, ethics, sociology, political science, human rights and military chaplaincy).

Terminology and Definition

- (10) The mandate given by the LWF Council refers specifically to "armed intervention to defend human rights". Therefore, other forms of intervention such as economic sanctions or diplomatic measures are not covered in detail in this paper.
- (11) The idea of "armed intervention to defend human rights" is commonly referred to in the relevant literature by the expression humanitarian intervention. An authoritative definition of this term is given by Professor Wil D. Verwey: "the protection by a state or group of states of fundamental human rights, in particular the right to life, of nationals of, and residing in, the territory of other states, involving the use or threat of force, such protection taking place neither upon the authorization by the relevant organs of the [United Nations] nor upon invitation by the legitimate government of the target state."²
- (12) However, many other commentators do not limit 'humanitarian intervention' to interventions taking place outside of a UN mandate. Without presuming to determine the correct legal definition of the term 'humanitarian intervention', this paper treats the topic from the broader perspective (i.e. including interventions for humanitarian purposes whether with or without a UN Security Council mandate, but in either event without the consent of the government of the subject state).
- (13) In view of the specific terms of the mandate from the Council, the discussion undertaken in this paper is also primarily in relation to interventions intended to respond to gross violations of human rights and to change the political environment which allowed those violations to take place. Military-supported delivery of humanitarian assistance in the form of food and non-food items is a related but discrete topic, although the area of overlap is considerable (as is apparent in such examples as the enforcement of the no-fly zone in northern Iraq to enable delivery of humanitarian assistance to the Kurdish population).
- (14) In any event, the term 'humanitarian intervention' is itself open to question as an ethical oxymoron. To apply the adjective 'humanitarian' to the practice of military intervention (which must always contemplate resulting in the loss of human life) is considered to be deeply problematic from a theological and ethical point of view. Hence the term 'armed intervention for humanitarian purposes' is generally to be preferred.

² Verwey, Professor Wil D., *Humanitarian Intervention*, in *The Current Legal Regulation of the Use of Force* (Cassese, A., ed., 1986) 57, 59. Dino Kritsiotis also places similar restrictions upon the definition of 'humanitarian intervention': "Where the UN has authorized force... the intervention may be classified as a precedent under the enforcement powers of the Security Council under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter. They are not precedents under 'humanitarian intervention' as it has traditionally been understood. Nor do instances of the use of force by states to protect their own nationals fall to be considered under 'humanitarian intervention'. These are either an element of the right of self-defence or a separate conceptual head for intervention altogether..."; "...intervention to protect human rights is a much broader conceptual configuration than humanitarian intervention and may more properly be equated with what is known as political - or ideological - intervention." (Kritsiotis, Dino, *Reappraising Policy Objections to Humanitarian Intervention* 19 Michigan Journal of International Law 1005 (Summer 1998))

II. THEOLOGICAL BASES

- (15) The humanitarian purposes that provoke the need for armed intervention are theologically grounded. All human beings are created in the image of God, with sacred dignity and equal worth. This fundamental theological affirmation is expressed through advocacy for the human rights of all people, especially when these are threatened. When human dignity or worth is being violated, out of compassion and neighbour-love we are moved to respond in human solidarity with those who suffer.
- (16) Human rights are established and realized in community with others. The long-term, ongoing work of protecting and enabling such communities to flourish is what working for peace and justice entails. The challenge is to maintain a healthy balance between the community's interests and security and the rights of individuals - especially of those who may be of a minority or otherwise vulnerable or marginalized.
- (17) In the Augsburg Confession, government is viewed as "instituted and ordained by God for the sake of good order" (CA 16). Government is possible because human beings have the God-given capacity to order their common life in relative justice (civil righteousness); it is necessary because of the destructive tendencies of sin in society. Sin and human limitations make government necessary, but they also can corrupt those with the responsibility of governing. Government is to provide the conditions by which human life in community with others and the rest of creation can be preserved and furthered. When it does not do so, it loses its God-given legitimacy. If it blatantly ignores or violates these responsibilities, the sovereignty of its rule can no longer be assumed.
- (18) Sin, as a violation of what God intends, is an ever-present reality. Structures, policies, and practices in all kinds of contexts and situations compromise and violate human rights. Power is used to advance interests that do not serve the welfare of human beings, of communities, of the rest of creation. In some extreme situations, power is misused in blatant ways that lead to massive violations of human rights and devastating destruction of communities. Such violations are either generated by the ruling authorities or are violations that these authorities lack the capacity to counter. It is to such blatant, systemic manifestations of sin - which becomes evil - that our focus is drawn when the question of armed intervention to defend human rights is considered.
- (19) The ethical dilemma of armed intervention is that it is a violent means for seeking to redress such violations. Some are opposed in principle to any use of violence for the purpose of ending or lessening violence; violence begets more violence. Others contend that decisive actions are needed to stop what is likely to be even greater violence.
- (20) How shall we as a communion of churches respond to this difficult ethical dilemma as it manifests itself in different kinds of situations around the world?

III. LWF STUDIES AND STANCES

- (21) From 1991 to 1993, the LWF Department of Theology and Studies was actively engaged in study and discussion of Article 16 of the Augsburg Confession within an overall study process on the topic of peace and justice. The LWF Council decided in 1991 "that a process of international consultations about the subject of the 'Just War' leading to a conciliar process considering particular approaches to the confessional heritage (CA 16) together with experiences of violence in different contexts be planned and carried out through the Department of Theology and Studies."
- (22) This process continued until the publication in 1993 of "War, Confession and Conciliarity: What does 'just war' in the Augsburg Confession mean today?".³ This publication highlighted the extent to which just war doctrine had been called into question "as a consequence of the scientific-technical age and the historical as well as social developments of the twentieth century, not least of which are the experiences of the world wars."⁴ In the light of developments in military technology and strategy, "It is fundamentally questioned whether war may still be conducted as the continuation of politics by other means."⁵
- (23) Amongst other critical questions raised by this study were that:
- In most cases the *causa iusta* (just cause) can hardly still be identified because the background for a war lies above all in social and economic injustices, in historically developed enemy images, and in notions of threat.
 - The proportionality of means is no longer a given due to the development of military technology, global strategies, and the extension of war to the civil population.
 - The *recta intentio* (right intention) is no longer possible under the conditions of modern technology because what should be protected will be destroyed.
- (24) While most of the general critical questions raised in the study were framed against a background of the threat of global nuclear war, it also noted that:

An analysis of local and limited wars (e.g. the Gulf War, war in Yugoslavia) shows that in these cases one cannot speak of 'just war' in a way that corresponds to the criteria of the Lutheran tradition. It is disputed whether a *causa iusta* is present, the proportionality of means is given, and war in fact represents the *ultima ratio* [last resort]. Nevertheless, it is (still) not to be excluded that situations arise in which military intervention and armed conflict appear inevitable or disastrously necessary in order to prevent a still greater evil and to protect minimum human rights. However, in view of an all too quick agreement with the 'inevitability' of a war, it is essential to recognize and consider that such situations have long-term causes and 'inevitable military interventions or inevitable wars' are to be limited as far as possible and likewise to be overcome as a means of policy. Therefore other ways for solving conflict should be striven for and a more comprehensive effort for justice and peace is necessary.⁶

3 Mortensen, Viggo, ed., War, Confession and Conciliarity: What does 'just war' in the Augsburg Confession mean today? (Vorlagen, Neue Folge, Heft 18) Lutherisches Verlagshaus, Hannover, 1993

4 *ibid.*, p. 51

5 *ibid.*, p. 52

6 *ibid.*, p. 53

- (25) The study goes on to emphasize the limiting role of 'just war' doctrine in relation to contemporary military conflicts, and to call for the development of a "doctrine of just peace":

To be sure, in the fallen world the threat and the application of force cannot be renounced, but these must be transformed within nations as well as between nations into a legally regulated use. At the same time, it is necessary to integrate the relative importance of the threat and use of force into a system of more just structures and human relationships. Peace can be preserved by force only in a provisional way; peace can only be maintained by the consent of the parties concerned, by reasonable regulation of conflict and more just circumstances. This necessitates the prevention of war by fighting the causes of war (injustice, enemy images, the arms race) and the development of new mechanisms for the regulation of conflicts also in the international arena (measures for securing peace as a political task, cooperation and communication, the strengthening of the UN, and international legal order etc.).⁷

- (26) The LWF Council has addressed this or related issues on a series of occasions during the last decade. In its 1991 statement on "Peaceful Resolution of Conflicts", the Council expressed deep concern about "the proliferation and intensification of violent conflicts between ethnic and other groups within the borders of sovereign states and a tendency to justify resolution of conflicts through violent means. Justification of the use of violence for the achievement of what may be understood as a moral cause is often done without regard for tragic consequences and with an accompanying tendency to dehumanize the opponent."
- (27) The Council further noted that the allied military response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait before the possible effect of UN-imposed sanctions could be realized was an example of the tendency to seek to resolve conflict by violent means. It noted the long-term effects on the people and environment in both Kuwait and Iraq, and the related suffering of the Kurds and others. The Council commented that "On the other hand, we have seen that sanctions, as a peaceful means, have contributed to the changes which are currently taking place in South Africa."
- (28) The Council's statement called on LWF member churches "to be peacemakers in situations of conflict or potential conflict" and asked the LWF to "facilitate the sharing and utilization of resources of its member churches in dealing with peaceful resolution of conflicts, the dissemination of information about potential violent conflicts and training in peaceful settlement of conflicts; and [to] continue to act as a peacemaker in situations of violent conflict."
- (29) In 1992, the LWF Council specifically considered the matter of humanitarian intervention, in view of "the grave human suffering caused by war, in which thousands of innocent people are driven from their homes, denied basic nourishment, injured or killed...". It took note of the recommendations in the UN Secretary-General's report *An Agenda for Peace* with regard to "(i) preventive deployment of UN military, police or civilian personnel (to discourage hostilities, to alleviate suffering or to limit or control violence), (ii) the creation

⁷ *ibid*, p. 54

of a permanent UN standing force to act as a deterrent to acts of aggression, and (iii) the creation of UN peace enforcement units, available on call, to reinforce and strengthen peace-keeping operations." The Council appealed to the UN and its member states to pursue discussions of such international mechanisms for humanitarian intervention and appealed to the member churches and their agencies to urge their governments to participate actively in these discussions.

- (30) The LWF discussions about humanitarian intervention intensified at its Council meeting in 1993 when the Council considered the situations in Liberia as well as the former Yugoslavia. In the context of the latter, the Council acknowledged the deep-seated nature of the many causal factors, but concluded that "before these causal factors can be adequately addressed, the international community must participate in decisive action to end the hostilities."

- (31) With regard to the prospect of military intervention, the Council said:

In the conciliar process Christian churches have come to the common conviction that war can no longer be accepted as a means to resolve conflicts. War is not inevitable and war, as a continuation of politics by other means, must be overcome. We are convinced that new ways have to be found to arrive at solutions to conflicts. In order to avoid the greater evil, Lutheran churches have maintained that, under certain circumstances, military action cannot be completely ruled out. While our common confession (Augsburg Confession 16) related this to the use of force between nations, we are now facing the question whether the international community can responsibly engage in specific, limited military action in situations of anarchy and genocide.

Threats of force and the use of military action can protect life and secure peace only for the short term. In the long run, peace can only be secured when fundamental human rights are respected and just conditions established. Therefore it is the task and primary responsibility of all parties to seek to solve violent conflicts or potentially violent conflicts through negotiations and peaceful means. Even so, in this sinful world the threat of the use of military action seems unavoidable, in order to protect human life, to limit killing, and to avoid even greater suffering.

The conviction of those of us who exclude military action as a matter of principle has to be respected. The conviction of those who consider military action necessary in certain cases must also be respected. Both views are advocated by those who wish to avoid more suffering and achieve peace. However, advocates of each position must acknowledge that in questions of the use of military action there can be no unambiguous decision; there can only be a choice between lesser and greater evils. The advocates of each position must assume responsibility for the consequences of their decisions.

- (32) The Council then recalled the key ethical criteria for military action, as expounded by the churches. In particular, it identified the following insights as fundamental:
- Military force can only be the last resort after all other means have been exhausted.
 - The decision to take military action on humanitarian grounds can only be made by the

international community through a commonly-accepted international authority. The decision-making process must be transparent and open.

- The use of military action must be limited, proportionate and defined in relation to the goal of the action, which can only be to protect lives, establish peace with justice and restore respect for human rights.
- Military action must have a reasonable chance of achieving its stated aims, so that it does not result in an intensification of hostilities.
- Military action cannot be a substitute for other means. It can only be part of a larger effort of humanitarian aid, economic support and the promotion of democratic structures following the conflict.

(33) In the context of its 1994 discussion of the situation Rwanda, but also citing the situations in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia, the LWF Council called for "the creation of a United Nations standing peace-keeping force which will be capable of reacting swiftly to stem conflict as it is developing. Regional forces should also be considered under the auspices of regional bodies, such as the Organization of African Unity. A major purpose of these forces should be to prevent future disputes from reaching catastrophic proportions. These forces should also carry out other specifically humanitarian missions. These forces should only be deployed on the basis of clear criteria and international consensus".

(34) Subsequent public statements made by the LWF in the latter part of the last decade and more recently on issues related to conflict and peace have emphasized more and more the essential role of dialogue and mutual understanding in the resolution and prevention of violent conflict and the role of the churches and faith communities in contributing to the establishment of a 'culture of peace' (see, for example, the LWF General Secretary's New Year message, dated 17 January 2000).

(35) The practice and effect of military intervention have increasingly been called into question by the LWF. For example, a statement delivered by the LWF General Secretary on 26 March 1999 on the NATO military intervention in Kosovo, reference was made to the tendency of violence to beget violence, and to the risk of injuries and deaths among the innocent civilian population of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The NATO attacks were described as:

the latest expression of a culture which still sees violence as the ultimate and most effective tool in international relations. In such a culture, diplomacy and negotiation are seen as a prelude to the use of deadly force, and there is no effective strategy for addressing international concerns should force prove ineffective. A strategy which pins its last and only hopes for securing peace and justice upon the threat and use of force is a bankrupt strategy.

(36) Violence, the statement declared, is not the answer to violence:

Almost invariably, recent armed interventions have been ineffective in promoting peace and justice, and instead have helped to perpetuate a vicious cycle of violence. An international culture must be developed in which armed intervention is no longer seen as the ultimate tool for resolving disputes and addressing oppression:

IV. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO ARMED INTERVENTION FOR HUMANITARIAN PURPOSES

- (37) The discussion of armed intervention for humanitarian purposes involves multiple ethical dilemmas at many different levels. Foremost among these is the conflict between the desire to respond to situations of humanitarian emergency and gross violation of human rights, and respect for the fundamental principles of sovereignty and non-intervention. Given that the Security Council holds the sole and exclusive mandate for authorizing the use of force internationally, this dilemma is exacerbated when, due to geo-political considerations, the Security Council finds itself unable to act. However, bypassing the Security Council and acting unilaterally or in some other grouping risks undermining the collective security regime established over the last 50 years. (See Appendix: "Sovereignty and Non-Intervention vs. 'Humanitarian Intervention': History and Legal Framework".)

- (38) Highlighting this dilemma in his address to the UN General Assembly in September 1999, the Secretary-General Kofi Annan posed two rhetorical questions:

To those for whom the greatest threat to the future of international order is the use of force in the absence of a Security Council mandate, one might ask -- not in the context of Kosovo -- but in the context of Rwanda: If, in those dark days and hours leading up to the genocide, a coalition of States had been prepared to act in defence of the Tutsi population, but did not receive prompt Council authorization, should such a coalition have stood aside and allowed the horror to unfold?

To those for whom the Kosovo action heralded a new era when States and groups of States can take military action outside the established mechanisms for enforcing international law, one might ask: Is there not a danger of such interventions undermining the imperfect, yet resilient, security system created after the Second World War, and of setting dangerous precedents for future interventions without a clear criterion to decide who might invoke these precedents, and in what circumstances?⁸

- (39) And in his 'Millennium Report' delivered in April 2000, the Secretary-General asked: "if humanitarian intervention is, indeed, an unacceptable assault on sovereignty, how should we respond to a Rwanda, to a Srebrenica - to gross and systematic violations of human rights that offend every precept of our common humanity?"⁹
- (40) The experience in Kosovo in fact throws many of these ethical dilemmas into sharp relief. It also exemplifies the deeply morally ambiguous outcome of an intervention to secure the human rights of an oppressed population, which, however, resulted in significant numbers of civilian casualties, caused economic hardship for many others throughout the region, and ultimately has facilitated a kind of reverse ethnic cleansing. As described by the Foreign Minister of Poland in the General Assembly in September 1999: "Rwanda demonstrates what Kosovo might have become, had we not intervened in 1999 and Kosovo demonstrates

⁸ UN Press Release SG/SM/7136 GA/9596, 20 September 1999

⁹ Millennium Report, 48

what Rwanda might have been, had we intervened in 1994."¹⁰

- (41) Any decision to intervene with armed force into the territory of a sovereign state is fraught with legal, as well as moral and ethical complexities. Nonetheless it is of paramount importance that churches provide both a framework and the space for consideration of these complexities to take place, drawing on the heritage of churches' ethical thinking on these and related topics, and taking into consideration the specific historical context which gives rise to this discussion.
- (42) The primary ethical consideration has to be the responsibility of the international community for the protection of human life. Under international law the international community may not interfere in the domestic affairs of any state. But what happens when the state is unable, or unwilling to offer that protection, or if the state itself is the aggressor against its own people? What are the ethical and legal means by which the international community can call a state to accountability, or intervene to protect human life?
- (43) Since the time of the formation of the United Nations, the concept of state sovereignty has been the keystone of the international legal system. However, within the United Nations framework, place has also been provided for checks and balances upon the abuse of state sovereignty, specifically in the area of human rights. Over the years, norms have begun to be established which link the role and responsibility of the state to assure peace, justice and the welfare of its citizens, to accountability to the international community.
- (44) The tension between the principle of non-intervention in the affairs of a sovereign state versus the responsibility of the international community to ensure respect for the human rights and the physical integrity of persons has revealed two things. One is that the concept of sovereignty is in transition and that transition is linked to international accountability. The second is that international law or agreed upon norms have not yet been developed to reflect these changes. In such a situation, the ethical challenge is to balance the legal principle of state sovereignty with the ethical imperative of protecting human life.
- (45) Armed intervention for humanitarian purposes can only be contemplated when all attempts at preventative diplomacy have failed. These preventative initiatives, and their priority, must always form the context of discussions within which any decision regarding armed intervention for humanitarian purposes is considered or undertaken. Such intervention must be considered strictly as a last resort for the protection of human life which is threatened by gross and egregious violations of human rights, and only under clearly defined and restricted criteria.
- (46) Who makes the decision for intervention, and with what authority? The current limited membership of the Security Council, the veto powers of the five permanent members, its relatively undemocratic character and its highly politicized climate suggest that, in its current form, the Security Council is an unwieldy instrument for formulating timely and effective responses to gross violations of human rights. This implies the longer term need for reform of the Security Council. In the meantime, however, what forum or power should

be in a position to authorize intervention for humanitarian purposes if not the Security Council? The risk of misuse of intervention for political purposes looms larger the more the responsibility is removed from a multilateral setting. In a situation in which the legal framework is inadequate to provide guidance for action it is necessary to seek criteria which do not in themselves undermine the integrity of the international legal system, while at the same time recognizing the limitations of that system to address critical and immediate issues of human suffering.

- (47) What type and level of violations of human rights would justify armed intervention? Whilst proponents of armed intervention for humanitarian purposes are clear that widespread killing and maiming of innocent civilians would warrant armed intervention for the sake of protecting the victims, they are less clear about where the threshold for considering armed intervention would lie. Would it also be an option, for example, in relation to systematic violation of key economic, social and cultural rights, such as the right to food, the right to education, or the right to work - which may have equally severe, if less immediate, humanitarian consequences. If not, why not?
- (48) What is the relationship between state or national security and 'human security'? National security is a concept founded on Westphalian notions of sovereignty and non-intervention, which effectively equates the security of the state with the well-being of its peoples. The emerging concept of human security, by contrast, is primarily humanitarian in orientation, focussing directly on the well-being of the people themselves, and relating the sovereignty of the state and the legitimacy of the government to its treatment of those under its jurisdiction. Decisions related to intervention should give priority to human security and seek humanitarian objectives, rather than being based upon concepts of national security linked closely to political interests rather than humanitarian ones.
- (49) What constitutes a humanitarian objective? Humanitarian action is generally understood as being undertaken according to strictly defined principles: humanity, neutrality, impartiality and universality. In defining the objectives for armed intervention for humanitarian purposes, it is important to define objectives which are linked to the protection of all human life. Implied in such objectives would be willingness on the part of the interveners to engage with the people who are being protected, and to be present on the ground in the situation. Particular attention has to be given to assuring that the intervention is truly humanitarian, and not pursuant to political objectives under a humanitarian guise.
- (50) The nature and method of the armed intervention must also be considered. The "just war" theory has been developed to assist in ethical thinking in relation to war. Although these criteria are difficult to apply directly to armed intervention for humanitarian purposes, they can help to identify ethically appropriate means for undertaking armed intervention for humanitarian purposes, once such a decision has been taken. The principle of proportionality is of particular relevance in this regard.
- (51) It is also necessary to ask what function the armed intervention is to perform, and whether the military is the best actor for carrying out that function. Military personnel are, by definition, national actors and linked to the national security interests of their countries. Their task is the waging of war, within a certain code of behaviour. Their training is highly

technical. Is the military the best vehicle for assuring the protection of human lives, a task which requires quite another legal framework and different code of behaviour? Is it not possible to think of other options, such as civilian cadres serving more of a policing than a military function to carry out this task on behalf of the international community? Is there not a need for a legal framework which would shape a policing function for humanitarian protection?

- (52) These and the many other considerations together point to the critical need for criteria for determining when and how the international community ought to intervene in order to protect human life in a sovereign state, without that state's consent.
- (53) The effort to establish ethical criteria for armed intervention for humanitarian purposes has a two-fold purpose. On the one hand, it seeks to limit the use of military force to extraordinarily grave circumstances and thus to prevent the abuse of intervention by states who want to use such to advance their own national interests under the guise of humanitarian objectives. On the other hand, it seeks to reduce the selectivity and inconsistency in the international community's response to people in extreme crisis and to encourage the development of standards and principles that require the international community to rescue and protect people in grave peril.
- (54) By considering the ethically relevant motive, method, and consequences, some possible criteria may begin to emerge:

Motive

- (55) The primary motive for considering armed intervention arises out of a sense of duty or obligation to do something in response to massive violations of human rights and the actual or threatened loss of lives. This sense of duty or obligation is based on a fundamental sense of moral outrage, such that to do nothing becomes morally unacceptable. Dramatic media portrayals of atrocities tend to accentuate this. No matter how egregious the situation, however, revenge is never an acceptable motive for intervention.
- (56) Human rights violations or 'crimes against humanity' which may be similar in scale and severity do not, in practice, equally move the international community to respond. And where the international community does act, it is invariably more than simple altruism that is involved. Moral outrage and a sense of ethical obligation is likely to be mixed with motives of self-interest that are also economic, political, territorial, or based on ethnic or racial identification. Humanitarian motives may often be a cover for the pursuit of other purposes. These mixed motives may result in inconsistencies favouring intervention by powerful countries in some geographical situations (such as in Europe) over others (such as in Africa). Furthermore, some countries have a history of being subjected to intervention by external powers (through military, economic, and other means), particularly during the era of colonization and in the current context of economic globalization. Intervention invariably is an option of the strong rather than of the weak.
- (57) An ethic of armed intervention for humanitarian purposes should therefore, in principle, be consistently applied - based on the equal worth and dignity of persons regardless of where

they live or who they are. While other motives are also likely to be involved (at least implicitly), these must be held accountable to this primary motive.

Method

- (58) Ethical consideration must also be given to the timing, warrant, decision-making process, actors and means in any potential intervention. Current concepts and mechanisms of international law can both facilitate and complicate these considerations.
- (59) Armed intervention should be considered only in situations in which a government is demonstrably unable or unwilling to protect the people who live under its jurisdiction, such that it has essentially abdicated its God-given responsibility; international appeals and other processes have consistently failed to bring change; all peaceful means for bringing an end to atrocities have been exhausted; and the continuation of such processes is likely to prolong massive suffering and loss of lives. Military action would not be warranted in the case of a crisis which is slowly unfolding and still has possibilities for diplomatic resolution.
- (60) Because of the likelihood of mixed motives for intervention that are not purely humanitarian, the decision to intervene should not lie with a single state, or with a hegemonic power in league with (other) states. There is a moral, if not legal, obligation to come to the rescue of those in grave peril, but such action should normally be sanctioned through the United Nations Security Council. Reforms may be necessary to ensure responsible and effective decision-making through this body. When a Security Council mandate to respond to an egregious situation is not possible, it may be morally defensible for a group of states (the largest possible group) to act without such a mandate. Unilateral invention is deeply problematic.
- (61) The means of armed intervention that are used should be specifically targeted and limited to rescuing and protecting civilians. In this sense, it approximates a policing function. For armed force to protect people, it must operate on the ground and in the midst of the people whose protection is the object of the intervention. The use of force should be proportionate to the scale of the crisis and the goals of the intervention, and collateral damage should be minimized or, if possible avoided altogether. In addition to complying with humanitarian law, there is a moral obligation to ensure that the means used will make it possible for those rescued and protected to be sustained, recover, and rebuild afterwards.
- (62) It is important that, so far as possible, civil society (including the churches) be consulted prior to as well as during any such intervention. Intervening powers have an obligation to understand the culture and religion of the people in peril, and to relate to local cultural sensitivities in respectful ways.

Consequences

- (63) The best humanitarian motives for intervening cannot prevent the possibility of armed intervention exacerbating the situation it was intended to alleviate. Suffering inflicted through intervention may exceed the suffering that prompted it. Actions taken for humanitarian reasons, once they begin, can turn into military actions that exceed the

humanitarian goals. Although the decision to intervene must be made in anticipation of what may transpire later, many consequences cannot be known in advance.

- (64) For these reasons, it is essential that the effects of any intervention be continually monitored and assessed, and when appropriate, the intervention ceased. Questions need to be asked as to when intervention has ceased being effective in serving the intended goals, or has gone beyond them. Who are the beneficiaries of the intervention process at different stages? Is the intervention itself in danger of becoming a new means of foreign policy? Regardless of the original motives, once the intervention has begun, the primary ethical focus must be on its consequences. No matter how well-intentioned the motives, if the action results in increasing loss of human life or instability, it must be challenged morally.
- (65) Armed intervention for humanitarian purposes should occur only within the context of a full-scale international commitment to follow up the intervention with adequately funded reconstruction and peace-building efforts. In the absence of such a commitment, military force will not be able to meet sustainable humanitarian objectives and thus should not be sanctioned in the first place.
- (66) Local government, as well as local and international civil society, carries important responsibilities for creating conditions conducive to a sustainable peace. Civilian policing after a time of intervention needs to be impartial and effective. Local community protection networks and structures should be strengthened for the sake of the security of all affected.
- (67) Because massive violations of human rights are part of a long, complicated development, effective attempts to redress the situation must be long-term and multi-faceted. In addition to restoring or creating responsible governance, relationships among the people must be restored. Effective reconciliation processes are needed so that different factions and sectors might be brought back together in society.

V. SOME OBSERVATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

- (68) The purpose of this paper is not to come to firm conclusions, but some observations can be made and some implications identified for further discussion.
- (69) Firstly, a strict reading of the existing law under the UN Charter framework indicates that there is no right of intervention for humanitarian purposes, without Security Council authorization.
- (70) However, there is an extreme tension between the peremptory rule of international law prohibiting the use of force in international relations, and the widespread popular sense of moral and ethical obligation to act in response to large-scale egregious violations of human rights in another state - if necessary by military means.
- (71) This moral and ethical imperative is also reflected in the developing norms of universal, inalienable human rights, and the concept of 'human security'.

- (72) Although the Security Council holds the exclusive mandate, as matter of law, for authorizing the use of force internationally, the tension between the existing international legal order and the moral/ethical imperative is raised to intolerable levels when the Security Council is 'blocked' (as a result of a failure to achieve consensus or the exercise of a veto by one of the permanent members of the Security Council) from acting in response to clear and grave violations of human rights.
- (73) On the other hand, armed interventions outside of a Security Council mandate may undermine one of the basic tenets of the existing international legal order (the prohibition against the use of force) and put the whole fragile (and still developing) collective security system in jeopardy.
- (74) In any event, military force has been seen to be generally a very ineffective tool for securing human rights for all. (In Kosovo, for example, while the human rights of one part of the population may be said to have been ultimately secured, the NATO intervention and its aftermath has facilitated, in practical terms, a reverse ethnic cleansing.) The nature of military activity is such that it can only exacerbate the root causes of human rights violations. Hence, armed intervention must be seen as an instrument of last resort. Its inherent limitations and inevitably negative outcomes must be recognized and addressed in a more comprehensive international response which effectively deals with the root causes of the situation and seeks to repair the additional damage done by the military intervention.
- (75) As has frequently been stated in the past, much greater attention needs to be given to measures other than armed intervention, and to the early and effective application of those measures. Measures which promote dialogue and foster mutual understanding before the 'point of no return' is reached must be particularly emphasized, given the equally ambiguous effects of economic sanctions and the difficulties involved in targeting and applying them.
- (76) The extremely complex ethical considerations raised in any discussion of this issue highlight the need for the development of detailed criteria and guidelines, based firmly upon ethical foundations, in order to assist decision-making in relation to whether and when armed intervention for humanitarian purposes should be undertaken, and how any such intervention should be carried out.
- (77) The role of the churches in witnessing to the love and compassion of Christ requires us to continue and deepen this discussion, always from the perspective of the victims of violence and abuse, and to speak the truths we discern to the powers of the world who would use violent means to achieve humanitarian ends.

APPENDIX

SOVEREIGNTY AND NON-INTERVENTION VS. 'HUMANITARIAN
INTERVENTION': HISTORY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Historical Overview

- (78) The Treaty of Westphalia, the agreement which brought the Thirty Years' War to an end in 1648, formally recognized the sovereignty and independence of each state of the Holy Roman Empire. The Westphalian principles of sovereignty and independence, and the concomitant principle of non-intervention in the affairs of sovereign nations, have formed the basic foundations of international relations ever since. Nevertheless, the level of international support for and compliance with the prohibition against interference in the internal affairs of another state has varied over the years.
- (79) The 'Concert' system created after the 1815 Congress of Vienna modified the Westphalian concept of sovereignty by legitimating intervention to protect the kind of domestic rule that was accepted by the powerful as being legitimate and conducive to international order. Intervention was seen as a remedy for the threat to the existing international order posed by revolutionary regimes and the principle of self-government.
- (80) The norms governing military intervention underwent significant changes after World War I when the League of Nations sought to institutionalize a collective security regime under the rule of law and to extend its scope globally. Under this regime, the non-intervention norm was reaffirmed and strengthened.
- (81) This trend toward the prohibition of intervention crystallized in the Charter of the United Nations in 1945. In the aftermath of the Second World War, the primary challenge for the maintenance of international peace and security was seen to be controlling and preventing aggression by one state against another. Accordingly, the UN Charter embodies among its fundamental principles the prohibition against the threat or use of force against another state, and the prohibition against UN intervention in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of any state. Nevertheless, the Charter provides for a right of self-defence,¹¹ and for 'enforcement' measures to taken under a Security Council mandate in order to respond to any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression.¹²
- (82) The principle of non-intervention was further reaffirmed and strengthened in later conventions, such as the 1970 Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation Among States, and the 1975 Final Act of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

11 Under Article 51 of the UN Charter

12 Under Chapter VII, especially Articles 39 to 42, of the UN Charter

- (83) The security regime that materialized after World War II therefore placed the sanctity of borders at the top of the global agenda and sought to protect states from intervention. The non-intervention norm, though widely viewed as legitimate by the international community, was nonetheless violated on repeated occasions during the Cold War. The two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, frequently used intervention as an instrument to influence the authority structures of governments within their spheres of influence and throughout the globe. The US interventions in Guatemala (1954), the Dominican Republic (1965), and Vietnam (1967), and the Soviet Union's interventions in Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968) illustrate this point. International law throughout the 1960s nonetheless continued to voice its traditional prohibition against such practices.
- (84) However, since the 1970s, support for the non-intervention norm has steadily fallen, as "new exceptions which might legitimate the use of [military intervention] have been claimed."¹³ The inclusion in the UN Charter of Chapter VII (permitting intervention for peacemaking) allows for the expansion of admissibility of forcible intervention,¹⁴ and "the belief that governments have a right, even obligation, to intervene in the affairs of other states seems to have gained great currency in recent years."¹⁵
- (85) This belief has been founded upon a growing awareness and international acceptance of the principles of universal, inalienable human rights. In particular, there has been a growing recognition of the idea that the human rights situation in a given country is not merely a matter for domestic policy, but also a legitimate issue for the international community as a whole. It is now frequently stated that gross violations of human rights cannot be regarded as an internal matter.
- (86) The end of the Cold War created, in many respects, a more conducive environment for consensus-building in the Security Council. Between 1991 and 1994, a series of military interventions which might be described as being primarily for humanitarian purposes were authorized by the Security Council, including the interventions in Iraq, Yugoslavia, Somalia and Haiti. This activism on the part of the Security Council was supported and endorsed by the pronouncements of successive Secretaries-General of the UN. For example, Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuellar declared in 1991 that:

It is now increasingly felt that the principle of non-interference with the essential domestic jurisdiction of states cannot be regarded as a protective barrier behind which human rights can be massively or systematically violated with impunity ... The case for not impinging on the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of states is by itself indubitably strong. But it would only be weakened if it were to carry the implication that sovereignty, even in this day and age, includes the right of mass

13 Luard, Evan, *Conflict and Peace in the Modern International System*, 2nd ed. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988) 49

14 Johnson, James Turner, *Humanitarian Intervention, Christian Ethical Reasoning, and the Just-War Idea*, in Lugo, Luis E. (ed.), *Sovereignty at the Crossroads?* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 1996), 127-143

15 Blechman, Barry M., *The Intervention Dilemma*, *The Washington Quarterly* 18 (Summer 1995), 63

slaughter or of launching systematic campaigns of decimation or forced exodus of civilian populations in the name of controlling civil strife or insurrection.¹⁶

- (87) And in his 1992 report, *An Agenda for Peace*,¹⁷ Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali supported the expansionist trend in the Security Council's interpretation of the Charter. His report called for enforcement action to respond to human rights abuse and for nation-building.
- (88) However, after this brief period of activism, the Security Council again appeared to enter a more conservative phase. An increasing disinclination on the part of the United States and other military powers to commit troops to such hazardous undertakings conspired with, on the part of many countries in the South, a growing distrust of the motives of such intervention and a perception of selectivity in the interventions undertaken, to ensure that this activism was not repeated.
- (89) Whilst the Security Council lapsed into quiescence, western countries found NATO to be a much more tractable instrument for reacting to the situation which emerged in Kosovo/FRY during 1998 and early 1999. Proceeding without a formal mandate from the UN Security Council, the NATO powers launched an intensive, 11-week, high altitude bombing campaign against the FRY's armed forces and Serb militias in Kosovo, with consequences, positive and negative, which are still being assessed to this day.

The Existing Legal Framework

- (90) Under the international legal framework established by the Charter of the United Nations¹⁸ in 1945, the "sovereign equality" of all member states is sacrosanct,¹⁹ and the use of force by states to settle international disputes is prohibited. Article 2(4) of the Charter provides that all UN member states must "refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State".
- (91) According to Louis Henkin, "Article 2(4) is the most important norm of international law, the distillation and embodiment of the primary value of the inter-State system, the defence of State independence and State autonomy. The Charter contemplated no exceptions. It prohibits the use of force for selfish State interests... as well as for benign purposes, human values. It declares peace as the supreme value, to secure not merely State autonomy, but fundamental order for all. It declares peace to be more compelling than inter-State justice, more compelling even than human rights or other human values."²⁰
- (92) For individual States, the only exception to the prohibition against the use of force is self-defence against an actual armed attack.²¹ Even this exception only continues to be

¹⁶ *Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization*, UN Doc. A/46/1 (1991)

¹⁷ UN Doc. A/47/277-S/24111

¹⁸ The Charter is paramount in international law, and, according to the provisions of article 103, prevails over any other international agreement.

¹⁹ UN Charter, Article 2(1): "The Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members."

²⁰ Henkin, Louis, *International Law: Politics, Values and Functions* (1990) 146

²¹ UN Charter, Article 51: "Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-

available until the Security Council has taken action in relation to the matter. So regardless of a State's violations of international law, it cannot be attacked by another State unless the violator State has attacked first.

- (93) However, within the UN system, the Security Council was given wider authority to use force in response to threats of aggression as well as to breaches of international peace. Article 24(1) of the Charter outlines the Security Council's mandate:

In order to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, its Members confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and agree that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf.

- (94) Under Article 39, the Security Council is given authority to "determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression and shall make recommendations, or decide what measures shall be taken in accordance with Articles 41 and 42, to maintain or restore international peace and security."
- (95) Article 41 refers to the application of measures not involving armed force (including "complete or partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other means of communication, and the severance of diplomatic relations"). Article 42, on the other hand, provides that if the measures referred to in article 41 would be or have proved to be inadequate, then the Security Council "may take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security."
- (96) It should be noted that although the Security Council has been given the authority, under Article 42, to employ armed force as a last resort, the plain words of the Charter indicate that this authority to use force in response to threats to or actual breaches of "international peace" would not cover intervention in civil conflicts.
- (97) Whilst the Charter does not preclude "the existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action",²² it categorically asserts that "no enforcement action shall be taken under regional arrangements or by regional agencies without the authorization of the Security Council."²³ NATO held no such authorization from the Security Council at the time of the Kosovo intervention.²⁴

defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security."

²² UN Charter, Article 52(1)

²³ UN Charter, Article 53(1)

²⁴ It should be noted that a legal challenge to the legality of the actions of the NATO powers was mounted by the FRY in the International Court of Justice. These proceedings failed on technical grounds (including the fact that the USA declined to consent to the jurisdiction of the Court to hear the case), but the members of the Court took the opportunity to emphasize that "whether or not States accept the jurisdiction of the Court, they remain in any event responsible for acts attributable to them that violate international law, including humanitarian law" and that "any disputes relating to the legality of such acts are required to be resolved by peaceful means". The Court also reaffirmed that "when such a dispute gives rise to a threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression, the Security Council has special

- (98) On the other hand, the Charter also lists among the purposes and principles of the United Nations "promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all".²⁵ The United Nations Organization is the custodian of a wide network of international human rights instruments which have been developed in the meantime, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.
- (99) Furthermore, Article 55 of the Charter links respect for and observance of human rights to the maintenance of international peace and security:

With a view to the creation of conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, the United Nations shall promote:...

c. universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.

- (100) Nevertheless, the Charter does not explicitly mandate the use of armed force to defend human rights, and the prohibition against the use of armed force contained in Article 2(4) and the exclusive responsibility of the Security Council in relation to matters of international peace and security remain categorical under the Charter framework.

The Current Debate in the UN

- (101) In September 1999, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan attempted to refocus the debate on sovereignty and 'humanitarian intervention' in his report and address to the General Assembly. Referring to a "developing international norm in favour of intervention to protect civilians from wholesale slaughter", he noted that:

The State is now widely understood to be the servant of its people, and not vice versa. At the same time, individual sovereignty -- and by this I mean the human rights and fundamental freedoms of each and every individual as enshrined in our Charter -- has been enhanced by a renewed consciousness of the right of every individual to control his or her own destiny.²⁶

- (102) However, the debate in the General Assembly and, subsequently, in the Security Council revealed continuing deep divisions on this issue. Some governments welcomed the attempt to relativize the concept of sovereignty, declaring that the important principle of national sovereignty must not be used as a curtain behind which human rights violations were

responsibilities under Chapter VII of the Charter". (International Court of Justice Press Communiqué 99/33, 2 June 1999)

²⁵ UN Charter, Article 1(3)

²⁶ UN Press Release SG/SM/7136 GA/9596. See also UN Doc. A/54/1, *Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization*, 31 August 1999

carried out with impunity (the representative of Sweden, speaking in the General Assembly in October 1999)²⁷, and that for a State to massacre its own people could under no pretence be considered an 'internal affair' (Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Belgium, speaking in the General Assembly in September 1999).²⁸ Such States concluded that there was an implicit obligation to act wherever the security of individuals was imperiled.

- (103) On the other hand, the majority of States expressed grave reservations about the notion of 'humanitarian intervention', and affirmed the sanctity of sovereignty. For example:
- the President of Algeria, and the then Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), said that the OAU member states were extremely sensitive to any undermining of their sovereignty - not only because it was their final defence against the rules of an unequal world, but also because they were not a part of either the decision-making process of the Security Council, or the monitoring of the implementation of that process. (General Assembly, September 1999)²⁹
 - The representative of Jordan (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement) referred to the Final Communiqué adopted by the NAM ministerial meeting in September 1999 which had rejected the "so-called right of humanitarian intervention" as having no legal basis in the United Nations Charter or in the general principles of international law. (General Assembly, Fourth Committee, October 1999)³⁰
 - The Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Belarus said that it would be dangerously misleading to assume that human rights could be protected by means that ignored the principle of the sovereign equality of States. Disregarding State interests in the pursuit of individual values could, he said, cause unpredictable consequences. (General Assembly, September 1999)³¹
- (104) Summarizing the general debate in the General Assembly on this topic in September/October 1999, the President of the General Assembly outlined at least three different views of the concept of 'humanitarian intervention':

... there were those speakers who observed that respect for human rights has become more important than the sovereignty of States. Against this background, it was argued that the international community should intervene in the face of gross and systematic violations of human rights, with or without prior approval of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council.

Other Member States expressed the view that the new notion of humanitarian intervention has the potential for destroying the Charter, undermining the sovereignty of States and overthrowing legitimate governments. They stressed that the protection of human rights is an obligation incumbent upon all governments within the context of the exercise of their sovereignty and constitutional order.

27 UN Press Release GA/9633, 8 October 1999

28 UN Press Release GA/9608, 25 September 1999

29 UN Press Release GA/9595, 20 September 1999

30 UN Press Release GA/SPD/164, 18 October 1999

31 UN Press Release GA/9608, 25 September 1999

Still, other delegations ... emphasized that nations could not intervene in the internal affairs of others without a Security Council mandate. They observed that any massive violation of human rights leading to humanitarian emergencies required the coordinated action of the international community through the United Nations, and not by the fiat of unilateral action and creation of faits accomplis that would set bad precedents.³²

- (105) The Secretary-General reflected on these discussions in his 'Millennium Report', issued in early April 2000. Whilst recalling that he had emphasized that "intervention embraced a wide continuum of responses, from diplomacy to armed action," he noted that "it was the latter option that generated the most controversy in the debate that followed."
- (106) "Some critics", he said, "were concerned that the concept of 'humanitarian intervention' could become a cover for gratuitous interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states. Others felt that it might encourage secessionist movements deliberately to provoke governments into committing gross violations of human rights in order to trigger external interventions that would aid their cause. Still others noted that there is little consistency in the practice of intervention, owing to its inherent difficulties and costs as well as perceived national interests - except that weak states are far more likely to be subjected to it than strong ones."
- (107) Nevertheless, the Secretary-General declared that, whilst armed intervention must always remain the option of last resort, "in the face of mass murder it is an option which cannot be relinquished."³³
- (108) He pressed this point further in his address to the 56th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights on 4 April 2000, noting that the defence of human rights was universal in nature, and that violations of human rights were no longer considered an internal matter. He contended that international law was emphatic that when human rights were being violated "the international community had a right and a duty to respond, and to come to the assistance of the victims."³⁴

- damage done to clusters and parades in Europe.
Kuhens tells genuine dialogue in times of degradation
and historical higher objectives - is syllabus for reg. in
higher order

Kuhens in Europe has a special role - as from last / past.
human net in last -

Men have been summed up (has g un h ed . with -

da was KEK un de g er er

32 UN Press Release GA/SM/105, 2 October 1999

33 Millennium Report, 47-48

34 UN Press Release, Commission on Human Rights, 56th session, 4 April 2000, Morning

**REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
FOR ECUMENICAL AFFAIRS**

I. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION BY THE COUNCIL

1. Plan of Action for the Follow-up of the Joint Declaration

The LWF Standing Committee for Ecumenical Affairs has received the report from the General Secretary on the Follow-up of the Joint Declaration. The Standing Committee has studied the report both on its own and in joint session with the Program Committee for Theology and Studies, with the participation of an observer from the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Lutheran co-moderator of the Lutheran - Roman Catholic Commission on Unity. The report has been studied along with the annual Report of the General Secretary to the Council and the Address of the President. In the following, the Standing Committee presents an overview on the process and recommendations for action.

Background

In its meeting in Geneva, 8-17 June 1998, the LWF Council affirmed the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification. As part of the resolution, the Council voted to ask the General Secretary to prepare and present to the Council in 1999 a plan of action by which the issues listed in §43 of the Joint Declaration and additional controversial questions that have arisen within the Joint Declaration process can be addressed within the LWF and with the Roman Catholic Church.

By the time of the 1999 Council meeting, the Joint Declaration had not yet been signed. Therefore it was not possible to plan the process of follow-up. In its meeting in Bratislava, 22-29 June 1999, the Council voted to receive the message from the General Secretary that a plan of action concerning the follow-up of the Joint Declaration be presented to the Council in 2000.

The Joint Declaration was confirmed in Augsburg on 31 October 1999. The Official Common Statement (para. 3) suggests three groupings of issues, which require further consideration. Firstly, "the two partners in dialogue are committed to continued and deepened study of the biblical foundations of the doctrine of justification" and "continued dialogue is required specifically on the issues mentioned especially in the Joint Declaration itself (JD 43)".

Secondly, continued dialogue is needed on issues, which relate to the goal of "full church communion, a unity in diversity, in which remaining differences would be 'reconciled' and no longer have a divisive force".

Thirdly, there is a need to interpret the message of justification to the people of today's world: "Lutherans and Catholics will continue their efforts ecumenically in their common witness to interpret the message of justification in language relevant for human beings today, and with reference both to individual and social concerns of our times."

The follow-up was discussed in the Joint Staff Meeting between the LWF and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity in Rome, 8-9 May 2000. A plan of action for the LWF was developed in light of those discussions.

Plan of Action

The LWF General Secretary distributed his report to the Council at the beginning of its meeting in Turku, 14-21 June 2000. The report, entitled Follow-up of the Joint Declaration, consists of a Plan of Action and its summary.

The Plan of Action gives an extensive view of possible issues for the follow-up. It is, however, the understanding of the Standing Committee that all activities cannot be realized as envisaged in the Plan of Action due to time pressures and limited resources. The great variety of issues calls for a concentrated approach and clear priorities. Good coordination is needed in order to maintain the focus of the process and to avoid duplication of work between different partners.

Proposal of the Standing Committee

As the Joint Declaration states itself (para. 43), there remain questions, which need further clarification. Moreover, the historic event of the signing of the Joint Declaration has raised high expectations within the LWF member churches and in the wider ecumenical community. The expectation that is expressed most frequently is that of eucharistic hospitality. There is a deep spiritual desire of many Christians for unity at the Lord's Table. Eucharistic hospitality towards Christians from other churches is possible now from our position and does not require any further agreements. The goal of full church communion including eucharistic communion would, however, require agreements on the issues of apostolicity, ministry and the understanding of church (ecclesiology).

The Standing Committee for Ecumenical Affairs and the Program Committee for Theology and Studies wish to consider the task of the follow-up of the Joint Declaration over against this background. Their intention is to take both perspectives into account with equal emphasis.

The Committees understand that three different approaches are required for the follow-up. Some of the current ecumenical work of the LWF contributes directly to the follow-up of the Joint Declaration. Secondly, a plan is needed with regard to the next steps to be taken in the follow-up. Thirdly, a process of reflection on the ultimate goal of the ecumenical engagement of the LWF needs to be initiated. Therefore, at the present stage, the Standing Committee will propose immediate action only on ad hoc activities for the near future. With regard to the long-term vision, further planning is necessary before we can recommend action to the Council.

Increased cooperation and collaboration between DTS, OEA and Strasbourg are expected in and through the various follow-up activities. Out of this can arise mutual learnings to enhance the ecumenical witness of the whole Lutheran communion.

Activities already in process

The Lutheran - Roman Catholic Commission on Unity (fourth phase since 1995) works under the theme of "Apostolicity of the Church". In this context it also deals with the problem of ministry which is mentioned in JD 43.

The Institute for Ecumenical Research (Strasbourg) held a consultation on the problem of the doctrine of justification as "the article by which the church stands or falls" and the Catholic concept of the "hierarchy of truths" in Klingenthal, France, in April 2000. Anglican, Catholic, Lutheran and Reformed theologians participated in this consultation. After thorough discussion, all the papers presented are now being revised. They will be published as a book in the course of 2001. The question discussed in this conference was one of the problems mentioned in the LWF Council's resolution in 1998.

In 1998 the Department for Theology and Studies organized an international consultation "Justification in the World's Context" with presentations from many theologians from the seminaries of the member churches stimulating a new stage in the discussion on the meaning of justification in different contexts of the world. The papers presented in Wittenberg were published earlier this year (LWF Documentation No. 43).

It is also recognized that important work contributing to the follow-up of the Joint Declaration is already under way in many regions.

Next steps

In the Joint Staff Meeting between the LWF and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity in May 2000 it was agreed to ask the Institute for Ecumenical Research (Strasbourg) and the Roman Catholic Johann-Adam-Möhler-Institut (Paderborn) to make preparations for working groups of Catholic and Lutheran theologians. They will study the issues of sin (*simul iustus et peccator*), cooperation and good works. These issues were highlighted by the LWF Council resolution of 1998 as requiring further clarification. It is intended to establish six or seven regional working groups in e.g. Brazil, USA/Canada, Nordic countries, Germany/France, Central Europe (Slovakia etc.), South Africa, Asia. The groups will work for three or four years, and meet twice a year. Upon the completion of this work a symposium will be organized where the results of the studies will be presented and discussed. It is planned that these papers will be presented as a book.

Moreover, the PCPCU will organize a consultation on the problem of indulgences in early 2001. Some Lutheran and Reformed theologians will be invited to participate.

Another ad hoc symposium will be organized jointly by the PCPCU and the LWF. This will bring together about twenty biblical scholars from different parts of the world to discuss the biblical message of justification in the light of modern exegesis and with regard to hermeneutical insights. This symposium will serve to address the concerns expressed about the biblical section of the Joint Declaration.

In 2002, a broad-based ecumenical symposium will be organized by the Department for Theology and Studies in relation to the Wittenberg symposium. The goal is to deepen and further relevant understandings and implications of justification with reference to the individual and social concerns of our times. This task is requested in the Official Common Statement.

Attention needs to be paid also to the pastoral and spiritual dimensions of the follow-up. Member churches and regions should be encouraged to take this concern up in their own planning and carry it out ecumenically. This might include creative ways of taking the ecumenical agreement about the doctrine of justification into account also in the liturgical life of the churches.

Long-term vision

Since the confirmation of the Joint Declaration, there is a renewed need to raise fundamental questions about the ultimate goal of Lutheran ecumenism. Our common understanding of the doctrine of justification with the Roman Catholic Church also has implications for our work with other ecumenical partners.

These questions require a longer process of reflection. Therefore the Standing Committee recommends that a task force be appointed to prepare a proposal for a comprehensive definition of the unity we seek in the ecumenical engagement of the LWF and to reflect on the ways to achieve it. Another task for this group would be to coordinate the various activities contributing to the follow-up of the Joint Declaration.

Particular attention needs to be paid to regional and national initiatives in this regard. All possible effort needs to be made to encourage this work and to find ways to share its results within the LWF and the wider ecumenical community.

A specific consultation on these questions will need to be arranged. The task force would prepare a plan for such a consultation together with the Office for Ecumenical Affairs. The task force would conclude its work with a report to the Council meeting in 2001.

On the basis of the above considerations,

It is recommended:

- that the report of the General Secretary with the Plan of Action for the follow-up of the Joint Declaration be received with thanks,
- that the ongoing work of the Lutheran - Roman Catholic Commission on Unity and the coordinating role of the Joint Staff Meeting between the LWF and the PCPCU be recognized as foundational for the follow-up of the Joint Declaration,
- that the Institute for Ecumenical Research (Strasbourg) be encouraged to initiate a joint process of theological reflection on topics of sin, cooperation and good works as raised by the Joint Declaration, together with the Johann-Adam-Möhler-Institut (Paderborn), with involvement of regional and local groups of theologians,

- that a joint consultation on the Biblical basis of the doctrine of justification be organized by the LWF and the PCPCU,
- that the plan of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity to organize a joint consultation on the issue of indulgences be acknowledged with gratitude,
- that the plan of the Program Committee for Theology and Studies to continue the work on the present understanding of justification in different contexts be welcomed in the wider process of follow-up of the Joint Declaration,
- that the regional and national work on the follow-up, with attention to the pastoral and liturgical dimensions of the effort, be encouraged and ways be found to share their results within the LWF and the wider ecumenical community,
- that an inner-Lutheran task force on the follow-up of the Joint Declaration be convened to work on the long-term vision of the ecumenical work of the LWF, to prepare a plan for the continued coordination of the various activities contributing to the follow-up of the Joint Declaration, to plan a consultation on these tasks together with the Office for Ecumenical Affairs, and to submit a report to the Council Meeting in 2001, and
- that the General Secretary, with the concurrence of the chairpersons of the Program Committee for Theology and Studies, of the Standing Committee for Ecumenical Affairs, and of the Board of the Institute for Ecumenical Research (Strasbourg), be asked to convene the task force.

2. LWF-WCC Cooperation

LWF assemblies and possible coordination with assemblies of other ecumenical bodies

The 1999 Council Meeting requested that a preliminary discussion be prepared on the various important *functions of the LWF assemblies*. The Standing Committee finds that the outline of the LWF assemblies in Section III of the LWF-WCC Staff Group Report gives a good basis for such a discussion. In this connection, attention should also be paid to the description of the LWF communion in Section I of the Report.

The Standing Committee likewise finds that the LWF-WCC Staff Group Report provides a useful basis for the discussion in the Council of the *coordination of assemblies*. Section III of the LWF-WCC Staff Group Report discusses two main models: joint assemblies and coordinated assemblies. Advantages and difficulties are identified with both models. At present no joint or overlapping LWF-WCC assemblies are anticipated in this decade. The LWF is not in a position to take a decision to hold assemblies together with the WCC

or with WARC before the WCC has made it clear in which direction it plans its assemblies and their possible relation with Christian world communions. Steps may be taken already now, however, to coordinate assemblies better. The coordination should take place both in order to save money for member churches and the LWF, and with the aim of pursuing how a strengthened Lutheran identity might contribute to the ecumenical work and the assemblies of the WCC. It is noted also, by one of the Committees, that a development long range toward one universal ecumenical assembly ought to be encouraged.

- It is recommended:
- that steps be taken already in the planning of the upcoming LWF Assembly to explore possible ways of coordinating the themes, the development of preparatory material, reporting and follow up of the different assemblies,
 - that the General Secretary convey to the WCC a need for better coordination of its assemblies with those of regional ecumenical organizations (REOs),
 - that an evaluation be made of the LWF Hong Kong Assembly in view of what should be learned from ecumenical experience, and
 - that observers/consultants from the WCC be invited to participate in the work of the LWF assembly planning committee.

my
forbudenim
vedkate
fidigone →

3. Conciliar Ecumenism and Lutheran Identity

Lutheran contributions to the ecumenical movement and conciliar organizations have been significant all through the 20th century. This is true for both Faith and Order as well as Life and Work emphases.

Lutheran identity is inseparable from a commitment to the visible unity of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church. The two are not in conflict. This is clearly evident in the 1982 WCC Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry document. In some instances the Lutherans have a unique and distinctive contribution to make; it is also true that the Lutherans have learned much from and received gifts from other ecclesiastical traditions.

The reasons for working as part of the WCC are that our vision of the church is not limited to Lutheranism and that many areas of work can be done more effectively in ecumenical cooperation.

In this regard, the basic question before the LWF in the coming years is this: what must and should the LWF do as an organization as a result of the marks of Lutheran identity and our unique contribution to the ecumenical movement?

Having noted that several studies on Lutheran identity are currently under way in various parts of work of the Federation, in the Secretariat as well as in member churches, the Standing Committee underlined that efforts should be made to achieve communication and, if possible, coordination between these studies.

*ikke alijon,
men onsinus
i supportin.*

It is recommended: - that future reflection on Lutheran identity issues be pursued and coordinated by the LWF, building upon the history of reflection on the self-understanding of the LWF as a communion of churches.

4. Report of the Institute for Ecumenical Research, Strasbourg

The Standing Committee for Ecumenical Affairs received and discussed the Report of the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Institute for Ecumenical Research, Strasbourg.

It is recommended: - that the Report of the Institute for Ecumenical Research, Strasbourg, be received for information by the Council, that the importance of the continued work of the Institute be recognized and emphasized, and - that efforts be continued in view of securing the financial basis in the future for the theological work carried out by the Institute.

*that efforts be contin.
to provide financial
security for the
theol. work of the Inst.*

5. Maintenance of contact with former partners in dialogues and conversations

In 1999 the SCEA decided that prior to its 2000 meeting, a proposal on continued contacts with former dialogue partners would be prepared. This mainly concerns contacts with the Methodist World Council, the Baptist World Alliance and the Seventh-day Adventists, in view of discussing current relations.

The limited resources of the OEA do not allow for substantial expansion of this activity. Nevertheless, maintaining contact/discussions with former dialogue partners, and building on what has already been achieved, is called for, so as to continue contacts on the international level.

It is recommended: - that the General Secretary ask three Council members accompanied by staff to carry out contact meetings within spaces of 18 months with the following former dialogue/ conversation partners respectively: the World Methodist council, the Baptist World Alliance and the Seventh-day Adventists, in view of discussing current relations.

6. Involvement of the Council in making priority choices

In connection with the discussion of the Treasurer's Report, the Standing Committee expressed its concern that the Council should be more involved in decisions of priority setting in times of shortage of funds with specific regard to activities decided upon previously by the Council.

It is recommended: - that the General Secretary consider how the Council can to a greater extent take part in discussions and decisions on priorities when the budget is insufficient to finance activities previously decided upon.

7. Appointment of a New Commission Member (Replacement)

In view of the resignation of Dr. Annie Noblesse-Rocher (France),

It is recommended: - that Rev. Dr. Musawenkosi Dalindlela BIYELA, Rector at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Umphumulo, South Africa, be elected a member of the Lutheran-Orthodox Joint Commission.

II. ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION BY THE COUNCIL

There are no issues for discussion by the Council.

III. ISSUES DISCUSSED BY THE COMMITTEE – for information to the Council

General Secretary's Report

The General Secretary's Report was discussed with reference to ecumenical matters, particularly concerning LWF-WCC relations.

1. Further Development of LWF-WCC Cooperation

In the material submitted by the General Secretary (Exhibits 8.1 and 8.1.1) it is clear that discussion about meaningful cooperation between LWF and WCC has gone on for many years and that the areas of existing cooperation are many. The Standing Committee notes with satisfaction that the collaboration between the LWF and the WCC will continue to be strengthened in all relevant areas. The concerns from different Committees have also been noted and should be emphasized in the continued process of developing LWF-WCC relations.

Such concerns are:

- the importance given by the LWF to the role of women should be maintained
- the place of minority and small churches in the Lutheran communion and thereby in the ecumenical movement should be safeguarded. For example, LWI is significant for these churches whose concerns may not be adequately represented through ENI
- better coordination should be achieved between the OCS and the WCC Media Relations Office in connection with ecumenical team's visits to different places.

2. *Questions related to simultaneous membership in various ecumenical organizations*

The Standing Committee recognizes the various aspects that are highlighted regarding simultaneous membership in various global and regional ecumenical organizations. However, it sees the main difficulties not as related to simultaneous membership as such but to the lack of clarity in the various tasks to be performed by the various organizations. The pressing issue is in which context various types of work can best be done (subsidiarity). Of particular importance is clarification of the ecumenical tasks of the various organizations in the search for Christian unity. The Standing Committee welcomes the General Secretary's recommendation in Council Exhibit 8.1 to continue the discussion initiated by the LWF-WCC Staff Group Report on simultaneous membership and asks that there be strong emphasis on adequate differentiation of tasks and purposes.

President's Address

The President's Address was received with appreciation. Because of time constraints it was not possible to discuss the address as extensively as it deserved.

Revised LWF Goals – First Draft

The Standing Committee discussed the *Revised LWF Goals*. It underlined the need for further work to be done. The Committee forwarded its detailed remarks to the Deputy General Secretary.

Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development

The Committee received with appreciation the *Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development*.

Joint Session with the Program Committee for Theology and Studies

The Joint Session was spent entirely on a discussion on the Plan of Action for the Follow-up of the Joint Declaration.

IV. FINANCE

Program plans and the Statement of Needs (SON) for the Office for Ecumenical Affairs for 2000-2002 were approved by the Council last year. No supplementary requests are presented at this Council meeting. However, a supplementary request will be presented to the Executive Committee in view of financing the follow-up of the Joint Declaration.

REPORT
TO THE GENERAL SECRETARIES OF THE LWF AND THE WCC
FROM THE LWF-WCC STAFF WORKING GROUP¹
APRIL 2000

INTRODUCTION

While relations between the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the World Council of Churches (WCC) have always been close, their working relations have varied over through the years. The WCC in principle considers all Christian World Communions (CWCs) equally as partners in the ecumenical movement. Specific expectations for closer and increased cooperation with the LWF arise from the fact that it shares the same facilities, carries out similar programmatic work in many areas and is to a great extent supported by the same member churches and funding partners as the WCC, as well as being financially and administratively the strongest Christian World Communion.

In a response to these expectations, the WCC and LWF governing bodies appointed a Liaison Group in the 1980s, including both staff and elected representatives; and a WCC-LWF consultation was held at Bossey, May 11-14, 1981. The Liaison Group concluded that although the WCC and the LWF are different in kind and have legitimately different functions, their ecumenical efforts should be complementary. It made several recommendations, most of which were implemented - for example, the cooperation around such WCC documents as "What Unity Requires", "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry" and "The Apostolic Faith Today". Increased cooperation was recommended in a number of programmatic areas, including women, education, political, ethical and social issues, and interfaith dialogue.

Since 1981 there have been several surveys of collaboration and regular requests for closer cooperation made by the respective units and departments. The agenda for joint conversations in 1989, which the general secretaries and senior leadership from both side took part, included LWF and WCC assemblies, JPIC, task forces and regional programmes, worship, the future of the WCC and the restructuring of the LWF, as well as areas for negotiated cooperation (such as travel agency, disabilities programme, library and archives, translation services).

The LWF general secretary shared the results of joint staff discussions in his report to the LWF Council in 1991. The Council asked him to reinforce cooperation with other CWCs and the WCC, to commit the LWF to the establishment of Ecumenical News International (ENI) and to reaffirm the commitment by Lutheran World Service to work ecumenically in humanitarian aid. Subsequently, the WCC general secretary was invited to respond to the

¹ The members of this ad hoc Staff Working Group were for the LWF: Wolfgang Greive, Sven Oppegaard, Péri Rasolondraibe, Agneta Ucko; for the WCC: Alan Falconer, Geneviève Jacques, Georges Lemopoulos, Teny Pirri-Simonian, Hubert van Beek. Jill Schaeffer from WARC has participated in the work of the group as an observer.

resolutions taken by the Council, including those calling for a critical review of the models of assemblies and for exploration of the possibility of a joint secretariat for ecumenical and confessional organizations in Geneva. In reply, the WCC general secretary welcomed the LWF initiative, but said he saw some difficulties with the idea of a joint secretariat.

A new round of staff consultations in 1991-92 produced a survey of cooperation and a proposed classification distinguishing "cooperative", "specialized" and "duplicative" work. The development of Action by Churches Together (ACT) in the area of emergency humanitarian response can be seen as a direct implication of these discussions. However, with assembly preparations taking up most of staff time in the following years, the active pursuit of new ways of cooperation slowed down, although the commitment to coherent and not duplicative engagement in international, regional and national ecumenical organizations has remained, reinforced by recent financial constraints facing both organizations.

Earlier explorations of closer cooperation were usually initiated by the leadership of the two organizations. However, since the LWF assembly in Hong Kong (1997) and the WCC assembly in Harare (1998), member churches have, through the governing bodies, requested closer cooperation. Following recommendations by the LWF Council and the WCC Central Committee in 1999,² the two general secretaries appointed an LWF-WCC staff working group to assess relevant issues in the area of relationships between the two organizations and their contribution to the ecumenical movement as a whole.

The staff working group has taken account of previous stages in the joint exploration of cooperation between the WCC and the LWF, as well as changes in the structures and self-understanding of the two organizations. Recognizing that most of the issues dealt with here

² Here are some of the relevant resolutions with regard to WCC/LWF cooperation:

- a) In 1999 the LWF Council voted: *"to ask the General Secretary to seek to initiate a direct 'dialogue' with the WCC on future relations and patterns of cooperation"*.
- b) The WCC Assembly in Harare stated: *"Co-operation between the WCC and various CWCs has to some degree been the case for many decades, examples being WCC presence at the meeting of Secretaries of CWCs and the mutually sponsored Forum on Bilateral Dialogues. Recent developments include Action of Churches Together (ACT) and Ecumenical News International (ENI). There is, however, a duplication of programmes and projects within the WCC and other CWCs, which cannot be justified. As both are called to ecumenical work, to increase the level of sharing and mutual learning from one another becomes imperative"*.
- c) The WCC Assembly in Harare recommended: *"that a process be initiated to facilitate and strengthen the relationships between the WCC and CWCs as called for in the CUV. The aim of this endeavor is to foster cooperation, effectiveness, and efficiency. The Assembly notes with appreciation the important work already done by the Conference of Secretaries of CWCs, and encourages that this Conference be called upon to contribute to this work in the future"*.
- d) The WCC Central Committee in 1999 stated: *"The Committee discussed some aspects of the relationships and cooperation of the WCC with the Christian World Communions, in light of the action of the Eighth Assembly and the recent decision of the Council of the Lutheran World Federation to seek to initiate a direct dialogue with the WCC on future relations and patterns of cooperation. Regarding the results of bilateral dialogues between CWCs, the question was raised whether ways could be found to receive and celebrate significant agreements and achievements of such dialogues within the wider ecumenical 'family' of the WCC"*.
- e) Furthermore, during its meeting in 1999, having in mind the important role of the CWCs and the need to avoid as much as possible the duplication of programme work and activities, the Central Committee of the WCC: (i) *welcomed the decision of the LWF Council to seek a dialogue with the WCC on relations and cooperation, and to respond positively to this initiative, and (ii) requested the General Secretary that specific plans be developed for close cooperation on programmes and activities, particularly with those CWCs whose membership is largely within the Council's constituency. A report on such plans should be given to the Central Committee at its next meeting.*

might stimulate further cooperation not only between the WCC and the LWF, but also with and among CWCs in general, this document is an attempt:

- to describe the distinctive roles of the WCC and the LWF within the one ecumenical movement and to draw the fundamental consequences of this for the mission of each and for their cooperation;
- to outline the parameters of simultaneous membership in the two organizations;
- to examine how assemblies might be related to each other, identify the specific roles of each, and consider coordinating them for better stewardship of resources and increased cooperation;
- to explore the programmatic relationship between the two organizations and identify and propose new areas and patterns of cooperation.

Recommendations:

The staff group recommends that the general secretaries appoint a permanent LWF-WCC Staff Working Group to

- a) follow up matters arising at the regular meetings of the general secretaries;
- b) continue reflection on issues dealt with in this report;
- c) consider ways to encourage programmatic relationships between the two organizations and identifying new areas of cooperation.

I. THE WCC AND THE LWF:

TWO DISTINCTIVE ROLES WITHIN THE ONE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

The constitutions of the WCC and of the LWF make it clear that the two organizations share the common purpose of serving Christian unity throughout the world. In pursuing this goal they have distinctive roles and work from different bases. The WCC is a fellowship of churches which have come together because of the division of the church and seek to overcome this division through common reflection and action. While WCC member churches may not recognize each other fully as church, the fellowship does exist and reflects a commitment to seek to manifest unity. The LWF, on the other hand, is a communion of churches "united in pulpit and altar fellowship" who see "in the three Ecumenical Creeds and in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, especially in the unaltered Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism of Martin Luther, a pure exposition of the Word of God" (LWF Constitution).

The WCC is constituted by the churches to serve the one ecumenical movement and is an instrument for a fellowship of churches. The WCC does not act on delegated authority from the churches. "The WCC shall offer counsel and provide opportunity for united action in matters of common interest. It may take action on behalf of constituent churches only in

such matters as one or more of them may commit to it and only on behalf of such churches. The World Council shall not legislate for the churches, nor shall it act for them in any manner except as indicated above” (WCC Constitution). The LWF is an expression of and instrument for the communion of its member churches. It acts on delegated authority. The LWF “may take action in matters committed to it by the member churches. It may act on behalf of one or more churches in such specific tasks as they commit to it. It may request individual member churches to assume tasks on behalf of the entire Communion” (LWF Constitution).

The LWF’s doctrinal basis implies its self-understanding as a communion of churches in explicit altar and pulpit fellowship, and therefore implies an accountability of the churches to each other which is served through the LWF. In current thought, the WCC provides a space where the churches can explore the fellowship of organized churches. Both are seeking to understand clearly how the fellowship/communion of churches can most appropriately be expressed at the universal level, and what might be the appropriate enabling structures of these ecumenical organizations. Especially those churches which are members of both the LWF and the WCC are asking for greater clarity about the specific nature of the organizations themselves and the levels of possible collaboration. The WCC and the LWF are deeply connected through their ecumenical concern and are being challenged to seek new forms and expressions of international communion.

The World Council of Churches: a fellowship of churches

The WCC’s 1997 policy statement “Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the World Council of Churches” (CUV) underscores “the essential identity of the WCC as a fellowship of churches” (3.12.1). It “is not a church itself” (3.2), but a fellowship of churches which themselves have different understandings of the church. Although it is in fact primarily a fellowship of nationally organized churches, there are some international churches in the WCC, either because of missionary history (e.g., the United Methodist Church) or because of emigration and diaspora (e.g., the Mar Thoma Church). “Fellowship” implies that the Council “is more than a mere functional association of churches” (CUV 3.2); it is a community of churches on the way to visible unity. According to the WCC constitution, “the primary purpose of the fellowship of churches in the WCC is to call one another to visible unity in one faith and in one eucharistic fellowship, expressed in worship and common life in Christ, through witness and service to the world, and to advance towards that unity in order that the world may believe”. Identity is connected to relevance. In spite of church divisions, Christians must develop relevant ways of engaging in common witness and service. *Communio, koinonia* “is the purpose and aim of the WCC but not yet a given reality” (CUV 3.4). Therefore the WCC is primarily a special space where the different churches can explore and seek to move towards the manifestation of what it means to be in fellowship. The Constitution identifies six main functions which follow from this purpose:

- promote the prayerful search for forgiveness and reconciliation in a spirit of mutual accountability, the development of deeper relationships through theological dialogue, and the sharing of human, spiritual and material resources with one another;
- facilitate common witness in each place and in all places, and support each other in their work for mission and evangelism;
- express their commitment to diakonia in serving need, breaking down barriers between people, promoting one human family in justice and peace, and upholding the integrity of creation, so that all may experience the fullness of life;

- nurture the growth of an ecumenical consciousness through processes of education and a vision of life in community rooted in each particular cultural context;
- assist each other in their relationships to and with people of other faith communities;
- foster renewal and growth in unity, worship, mission and service”.

The Lutheran World Federation: a communion of churches

The LWF is “a communion of churches which confess the triune God, agree in the proclamation of the Word of God and are united in pulpit and altar fellowship” (Constitution). As a confessional community, the LWF has a common and comprehensive confessional basis, but is not itself a church. It represents an ecclesial reality on the universal level, an international community of local churches which understand themselves as mutually committed (compare the Budapest Assembly’s action in relation to the white Southern African churches). Therefore the common decisions in the LWF are expressions of the common understanding of the churches in communion. This implies the interdependence of the autonomous churches. The LWF is an “instrument of its autonomous member churches” (Constitution).

A dual aim shapes the LWF’s efforts:

- to strengthen the communion of the member churches, and
- “to serve Christian unity throughout the world.”

Helping the member churches to deepen their expression of visible unity is itself a contribution towards Christian unity. The LWF “furthers the united witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ and strengthens the member churches in carrying out the missionary command and in their efforts towards Christian unity worldwide” (Constitution). Already the Constitution of 1947 emphasized fostering “Lutheran participation in ecumenical movements”, thus following the lines set out by the Executive Committee of the Lutheran World Convention in 1936, which spoke of “Lutheran world solidarity... in face of contemporary ecumenical movements” and recommended participation in “ecumenical relief programmes”.³ The ecumenical dimension cuts across the entire work of the LWF. The LWF was never a “confessionalistic” federation but an ecumenical partner supporting ecumenical principles. Confessional awareness and ecumenical commitment go together. The LWF has contributed to a theological understanding of the ecumenical commitment - especially of ecumenical methodology and “lived koinonia/communio” - and to interdenominational services (“first bread, then the catechism”).

Two tasks of the LWF relate to its specific Lutheran aspect: it “furthers worldwide among the member churches diakonic action, alleviation of human need, promotion of peace and human rights, social and economic justice, care of God’s creation and sharing of resources”; and it “furthers through cooperative study the self-understanding and the communion of member churches and helps them to act jointly in common tasks” (Constitution).

The LWF accompanies the member churches as they endeavour to develop and strengthen these tasks and actions. It provides services for the alleviation of human needs.

³ Cf. S. Grundmann, *Der Lutherische Weltbund*, 1957, p. 357 ff.

The Department for World Service works with the member churches "in the fulfillment of their individual and corporate responsibilities in the field of Christian service (diakonia)" (Terms of Reference). Through the Department for Mission and Development the LWF strengthens the competence of the churches for mission, which includes service. This department works "jointly with Lutheran churches, agencies and other groups as they endeavour to create, develop and maintain ministries faithful to the fundamental task of the church to participate in God's mission to all creation" (Terms of Reference). The Department for Theology and Studies gives attention to various areas of church life and ecclesiological thinking against the background of specifically Lutheran insights. It reflects the commitment of the Lutheran communion "to being inclusive, contextually particular and ecumenical engaged, as well as to promote renewal of the theological self-understanding of the member churches" (Terms of Reference).

The terms of references of three LWF units mention relationships with the WCC. The mandate of the *Office for Ecumenical Affairs* is to "maintain vital relationships with other Christian World Communions", "to foster an ecumenical approach to all areas of Federation work", and to "maintain close contact with multilateral programmes of the WCC, particularly the work of Faith and Order". The *Department for Theology and Studies*, in its confessional and ecumenical engagement, provides "for the exchange of questions, ideas and information with member churches, research institutes, Christian World Communions and the WCC". The *Office for International Affairs and Human Rights*, maintains "close contact with the WCC, particularly its Commission of the Churches on International Affairs and the Programme to Combat Racism, as well as with other ecumenical organizations".

Growing Together

In order "to strengthen the one ecumenical movement," the WCC will "nurture relations with and among churches," "establish and maintain relations with national councils, regional conferences of churches, organizations of Christian World Communions and other ecumenical bodies," "facilitate the creation of networks among ecumenical organizations," "work towards maintaining the coherence of the one ecumenical movement in its diverse manifestations" (Constitution).

Moving towards unity in diversity requires discovering anew the changing shape of the major ecumenical concerns. In this way, the WCC and the LWF are less an *esse*, a being, than a *fieri*, a becoming.⁴

In concluding this section, the staff group would affirm that while the duplication of activities and its financial consequences have been a major impulse for discussing collaboration and cooperation between the WCC and the LWF, there are more fundamental theological and constitutional reasons for cooperation.

⁴ Cf. P. Brunner.

Recommendations

In the light of the above considerations on the distinctive role of the two organizations within the one ecumenical movement, the staff group:

- a) recommends that in developing their work and relationships, both the LWF and the WCC should consider acting together in all matters except those in which the differing roles of the two organizations require separate action.
- b) recommends an exploration with other CWCs and with REOs of the understanding of the nature of the church and its unity in time and space.

II. MEMBERSHIP IN THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS

Simultaneous membership

Of the member churches of the LWF, 53.1 percent (68 of 128) belong to the WCC. The regional breakdown is: Africa 37% (10 of 27); Asia 42.5% (17 of 40); Europe 76.2% (32 of 42); Latin America and Caribbean 42.8% (6 of 14); Middle East 0% (0 of 1); North America 75% (3 of 4).⁵ These 68 Lutheran churches make up 19.2 percent of the total WCC membership.

Of the 60 LWF member churches which are not WCC members,

- 2 are in the process of applying for WCC membership;
- 11 are large enough to qualify for WCC membership (25,000 members or more);
- 15 would qualify for associate membership with the WCC (between 10,000 and 25,000 members);
- 32 are too small to qualify for associate membership with the WCC.

This means that theoretically 75 percent of the LWF member churches could be members of the WCC. A survey would be needed to identify why the 26 LWF member churches which qualify for full or associate WCC membership have not indicated any wish to join the WCC, though it may be assumed that in at least some cases it is because the church perceives the WCC as theologically too "liberal".

While no Lutheran member churches of the WCC do not also belong to the LWF, one such church is currently applying for WCC membership (the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana). For a church to be a member of the LWF it must accept the LWF Statement of Faith, which includes the Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism of Martin Luther, but it need not have "Lutheran" in its name. An example is the Moravian Church in South Africa (also a member of WCC).

⁵ In India, LWF has 9 member churches, which are collectively a member of the WCC as the UELCI; in Germany, LWF has 13 regional churches as member churches, 5 of which are counted as direct members of the WCC and 8 are members of the WCC through the EKD.

Some considerations regarding membership

Both the LWF and the WCC seek to bring the churches to greater unity and enable them to respond to their common calling; yet they fulfill different functions within the ecumenical movement. This raises the question of how the LWF might encourage its member churches which meet the criteria for WCC membership to seek such membership. In the case of those which are too small to join the WCC, the question is how their LWF membership can become a way in which they are part of the wider ecumenical movement embodied in the WCC.

WCC concerns

The issue of membership (and thus also of churches' simultaneous membership in the WCC and in a CWC) has taken on renewed importance within the WCC. The work of the Special Commission on Orthodox Participation in the WCC has once more highlighted the fact that the gradually increasing number of autonomous Protestant member churches aggravates the minority position in the WCC of the Orthodox member churches, whose numbers do not increase, due to their different ecclesiology. More fundamentally, the principle of admitting individual, autonomous churches into membership is increasingly perceived as contradicting the very purpose of the WCC. To the extent that new member churches or applicants see WCC membership as "legitimizing" their existence as an independent church or denomination, the WCC can be perceived as promoting fragmentation rather than unity.

A first step towards meeting these concerns could be taken by inviting churches of the same denomination or confession in a given country or region to hold membership collectively. The WCC Rules in fact include an explicit provision for this; and the UELC in India and the EKD in Germany are illustrations of existing types of joint or collective membership.

The separate existence of churches is often due to historical factors or to a more or less "progressive" or "conservative" outlook. The LWF encourages its member churches in the same country to establish National Committees and engages them in theological and ecclesiological reflection on unity. The WCC would welcome its assistance of the LWF in helping Lutheran churches in such situations to associate for WCC membership.

Institutional concerns

2 *1. Representation of member churches.* Churches which are members of more than one ecumenical organization (e.g. the WCC and the LWF) tend to appoint different representatives to the governing bodies of each. While understandable in terms of using human resources, this can create problems if a church is heard to say different things in different ecumenical arenas.

2. Membership fees and financial contributions. Churches which are members of both the WCC and the LWF are expected to support both of them financially. To this end, the WCC and the LWF conduct separate negotiations with the same churches. In a time of decreasing resources, the two bodies run the risk of competing with one another for funds - which may then be used for activities carried out separately though often they could be coordinated or done jointly.

3. *Applications for membership.* The WCC seeks the advice of the appropriate world confessional body before admitting a church into membership (Rule I.7). This raises a difficulty for the LWF because of its established policy of respecting the autonomous decision-making authority of its member churches.

4. *Representation of LWF in WCC governing structures.* In implementing the recommendation of the Harare assembly "to facilitate and strengthen the relationships between the WCC and CWCs", the representation of the LWF and other CWCs in the governing structures of the WCC could be reinforced. This would raise the question of how the representatives of the LWF and those of the churches holding simultaneous membership would relate to each other.⁶

Recommendations:

The staff group recommends that the issues identified in this report be addressed through the following steps:

- a) clarification of the understanding of what it means to be a member church of bodies such as the LWF and the WCC;
- b) further exploration of the potential of a new dynamic of simultaneous membership;
- c) exploration of innovative ways to deal with questions of representation;
- d) exploration of innovative ways to deal with the questions of membership fees and financial contributions.

III. COORDINATION OF ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies of ecumenical bodies or communions are occasions for their member churches to affirm and renew their commitment to the one ecumenical vision and to one another. Reflection on closer cooperation between the WCC and the LWF (and eventually other CWCs and REOs) inevitably raises the possibility of holding joint or coordinated assemblies,⁷ and the governing bodies of both the LWF and the WCC adopted resolutions in 1999 calling for further discussion of the role of ecumenical assemblies.⁸

⁶ With regard to two of the above-mentioned issues the policy of WARC is different from that of the LWF: (a) The WARC is working together at bringing separate churches of the Presbyterian/Reformed tradition in the same country, either into full unity or some type of association, and b) the WARC encourages its member churches to join the WCC.

⁷ *The 1997 WARC General Council in Debrecen, Hungary*, stated that "future meetings of the General Council of WARC should, if possible, be organized jointly and concurrently with the WCC and LWF. However, all WARC administrative business should be conducted separately at the meeting of the General Council" (Regarding the full text of this statement and the rationale given for it, see Attachment 1). For the LWF it has not been possible to respond to this invitation directly, since it was necessary first to clarify further how the

This section of the report describes the role of assemblies in the WCC and the LWF and discusses the advantages and difficulties related to joint or coordinated assemblies. The references and attachments document the extent and depth of discussions which have already taken place.⁹

The role of assemblies in general

The WCC assembly

The following observations on the role of ecumenical assemblies have emerged out of the experience of the WCC:¹⁰

Legislative aspects

- Assemblies are the highest decision-making bodies of all organizations, in which those who work on behalf of the organization give an account of their work from time to time, according to an established frequency. Assemblies are constitutional bodies, which make the organization accountable to other organizations and to the public.
- Assemblies are responsible for adopting, changing or amending the constitution by which an organization is run. Thus they have a significant role in setting its vision, purpose and role.
- Assemblies usually provide guidelines for managing an organization, and to this end make certain appointments and elections. For example, in the WCC only the assembly

LWF and other CWCs would consider their future relations to the assemblies of the WCC and of REOs. Similarly, for the WCC it has been necessary to study and discuss further the ways in which the WCC would develop relations with the CWCs in general. The present process of "dialogue" between the LWF and the WCC, with an observer from WARC, is part of the ongoing study processes in the WCC and the LWF as well as in WARC.

⁸ The 1999 LWF Council in Bratislava, Slovak Republic stated:

The participation of Lutheran churches in the assemblies of the LWF, the WCC and the regional ecumenical councils is becoming a burden both financially and with regard to personnel resources in the churches. The Council voted:

- to ask the General Secretary to seek clarification of the different important functions of our assemblies for our own communion,

- to ask the General Secretary to prepare a preliminary discussion for the Council meeting 2000 for possible coordination in the future of LWF assemblies with assemblies of the WCC and regional ecumenical councils in view of better stewardship of resources as well as increased cooperation.

The WCC Central Committee (Geneva, 1999) adopted the following recommendation after having heard the Report of the General Secretary:

- The Committee heard with interest the decision of the LWF Council to study the possibilities of coordinating future assemblies with the WCC and other Christian World Communions and regional ecumenical organizations.

- The Committee recommends that: the Central Committee request the General Secretary to convey the interest of the WCC to work together with the LWF (as well as other Christian World Communions and Regional Ecumenical Organizations) on the coordination of future assemblies and to explore together the possible areas of coordination for the next assembly.

⁹ References: Document No.4.4. WCC Central Committee, 20-27 September, 1991, Geneva; Document No. 5.6. WCC Central Committee, 21-28 August, 1992, Geneva; Evaluation of the Eighth Assembly, Minutes of the Executive Committee of the WCC, 16-19 March 1999; Proposals Regarding a Forum of Christian Churches and Ecumenical Organization: Paper presented at the Consultation held in Bossey, 26-29 August 1998.

¹⁰ These points are adapted from a working paper by Wesley Ariarajah (former WCC Deputy General Secretary) in an earlier context.

can elect the Central Committee, which governs the Council during the great majority of time when an assembly is not in session.

Deliberative, celebrative and missionary aspects

- Assemblies provide an occasion to celebrate the global fellowship in common study, sharing and worship.
- Assemblies provide an occasion for churches to consult together on significant issues affecting their life and that of the wider community.
- Assemblies provide an occasion for churches to speak out on public issues and other matters on which they wish to address the world at large.
- Assemblies provide an occasion for joint global witness to Christian faith, unity and discipleship.
- Assemblies encourage and strengthen those involved in the ecumenical movement and help to recruit new people committed to the organization and its goals.
- Assemblies are important "communication events", giving high visibility to an organization, its ministry, its achievements and its goals.
- Assemblies help to strengthen the churches in the nation and region in which they meet, bringing them together, increasing their ecumenical commitment and highlighting their particular issues and concerns.

LWF assemblies

Many of these points of course apply to LWF assemblies. Here some of the more specific functions of LWF assemblies are outlined, arising from the ongoing discussion of the function of assemblies within the LWF.

According to its Constitution, the LWF assembly consists of representatives of the member churches of the Federation. The assembly is responsible for the constitution, gives general direction to the work of the Federation, elects the president and the members of the Council and acts on the reports of the president, the general secretary and the treasurer. It receives churches into LWF membership and may terminate or suspend such membership as well as reinstate a suspended church.

Additional purposes of the assembly were defined by the Executive Committee in 1980 as enabling Lutheran churches (a) to witness to the faith together; (b) to confer with one another; (c) to speak together on fundamental concerns of the whole church; and (d) to express their unity as part of the one universal new community in Christ. Furthermore, the assembly should stimulate continuing consideration by member churches of the issues highlighted by its resolutions, commitments, statements and proceedings.

The LWF Council is responsible for implementing the assembly's recommendations concerning the policy and programme of the Federation. The assembly may receive reports and statements and pass them to the member churches for study, with or without expressing its own opinion on the issues involved. The assembly may make statements in its own name on public issues of concern to member churches. These statements are not binding on the churches unless they themselves so decide.

Frequency of assemblies of various church bodies

The following partial survey of the status of assemblies in various churches, communions and church families is intended as background to the subsequent discussion of duplication and possible coordination.

- The *Orthodox churches* do not hold world assemblies, but consultative gatherings of heads of churches take place occasionally.
- The *Roman Catholic Church* does not hold regular world assemblies, but the pope may convoke ecumenical councils, uniting all Roman Catholic bishops (such as the Second Vatican Council). Bishops' synods are held in Rome, according to certain patterns, to deliberate certain themes or represent a particular region of the world.
- The Archbishop of Canterbury invites all bishops of the *Anglican Communion* around the world to the Lambeth Conference every ten years. Other worldwide meetings of the Anglican Communion are the Primates' Meetings (of the archbishops as heads of the provinces) and the Anglican Consultative Council, consisting of clergy and lay persons elected to oversee the ecumenical and internal activities of the communion.
- The *Lutheran World Federation* normally holds an assembly every six years, "with the time, place and programme to be determined by the Council" (Constitution VII, 2). The assembly brings together lay and ordained representatives of member churches in all regions.
- The General Council of the *World Alliance of Reformed Churches*, which brings together lay and ordained representatives of member churches in all regions, "shall meet ordinarily once in five years... The time, place and programme may be determined by the General Council or in the interim by the Executive Committee" (Constitution IV; 1).
- The *World Council of Churches* assembly "shall be the supreme legislative body governing the World Council of Churches and shall ordinarily meet at seven-year intervals" (Constitution V,1,a). The assembly brings together lay and ordained representatives of member churches in all regions.

Many other CWCs and church families also hold world assemblies with varying frequencies and formats. Member churches of global church organizations are often also members of regional ecumenical organizations. The REOs, as well as sub-regional councils and national ecumenical councils, also hold assemblies of varying frequencies and formats.

Assemblies of the LWF, the WARC and the WCC

A resolution by the WARC General Council in Debrecen in 1997 drew attention to the possibility of considering together the assemblies of the LWF, WARC and WCC. While the suggestion of coordinating these particular assemblies is logical because they have many of the same characteristics and more or less the same frequency, it is very important that a model of cooperation on ecumenical assemblies not envisage a "bloc" of certain organizations which would leave other church families out of the picture. The possibility of developing specific (even if limited) forms of coordination with church families whose assemblies are different in character and frequency should also be explored. Moreover, it would be important to see how REOs might participate in a model of cooperation.

Any discussion of the interaction of the LWF, WARC and WCC assemblies should take account of the concerns both of those churches which are members of the LWF or WARC and the WCC and of the many churches belonging to only one of these bodies.

While the LWF and WARC are probably ready to discuss how the WCC assembly could develop further as the most comprehensive expression of the conciliar character of the ecumenical movement, a wider look at churches and communions worldwide indicates a rather differentiated structure of relationships with the WCC. Any such discussion would have to consider the development of many different lines of connection, and the resulting model would hardly be a streamlined one (it would more likely resemble the lunar landing module of 1969!). And it is not possible even to envisage any form of joint accountability in the foreseeable future.

Bringing assemblies in closer contact

The advantages of bringing assemblies into closer contact with each other could include the following:

- reinforcing the *common elements* in the *ecumenical vision* and its application;
- *reducing costs*;
- encouraging *new approaches* to assembly processes;
- questioning certain styles of ecumenical work and *encouraging new ways*.

There are two general means of bringing assemblies in closer contact with each other: holding them *jointly* or *coordinating them*.

Joint assemblies

The role of WCC assemblies was seriously considered during the WCC's Common Understanding and Vision study process; indeed, an earlier draft of the policy document included a proposal to replace membership-based assemblies with alternative models within the context of a "Forum". Legislative and representative functions would be shifted to the Central Committee, which would imply substantial changes in the procedures for electing the Central Committee. The proposed "global forum" would become more inclusive by providing space for Christian communions and ecumenical organizations to take part.¹¹ The WCC Central Committee, however, decided to continue with the assemblies on the existing model, and to continue a separate process of reflection with a wide range of ecumenical partners on the idea of an Ecumenical Christian Forum.

The WARC has proposed a gathering of all Christian communions essential for Christian unity and, during its General Council meeting in Debrecen in 1997, proposed that future General Council meetings be planned jointly with the WCC and the LWF.

¹¹ For further reference see "Towards a Policy Statement on the Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC: A Working Draft for a Policy Statement," November 1996.

Advantages

Among the values of joint assemblies that may be enumerated are:

- It would encourage member churches to find a new way of appointing their delegations and assuring participation in assemblies.
- It would promote a high degree of common planning and establishment of a common administrative, logistical and communication infrastructure which would rationalize the division of labour.
- It would presuppose common preparation, reflection and study at all levels.
- It would encourage joint planning and implementation of pre-assembly events.
- It would entail joint committees.
- It would promote new forms of staff collaboration among the sponsoring bodies.

All bodies have constitutional requirements which must be fulfilled during assemblies; thus business sessions should be separated from common celebration and reflection.

For certain concerns there should be joint committees. For example, Public Issues, Policy Reference, Programme and perhaps even Nominations Committees could meet outside the assemblies and discuss common approaches and specific ways of dividing the tasks which implement ecumenical priorities. This, however, would require a significantly more developed fellowship among (for example) the WCC, LWF and WARC than is the case today.

Difficulties

- Even if legislative issues are handled separately, questions would nevertheless arise regarding the legitimacy of constituent bodies and the credibility of decisions on all levels. A joint assembly requires joint accountability, which is likely to be a complex issue because of the great number of different partners involved in the ecumenical movement.
- A joint assembly would raise questions about the size of the gathering and the feasibility of organizing related events such as pre-assembly youth and women's meetings and visitors' programmes. To be sure, if the delegations of the member churches of the CWCs participating were the same as those who would attend the WCC assembly, the joint assembly would be no larger than a WCC assembly. But this would require a complete redefinition of how the member churches of the CWCs are represented in their own assemblies, since at present that representation is significantly broader than their representation in the WCC assembly.
- While the logic of joining together the assemblies of the LWF, WARC and WCC has been noted above, there is reason to fear that a consolidation of these three organizations in their assemblies might alienate certain other worldwide churches, communions and church families in their relationships to the WCC.
- The WCC, LWF and WARC all have regional and national partners which link to the assemblies of their respective world organizations. What would a consolidation of the assemblies of the WCC, LWF and WARC mean locally and globally?

Coordinated assemblies

Particularly because of the concern expressed in point (c) above, the *coordination* of assemblies may be a preferable alternative to the concrete *joining* together of assemblies.

To some extent, a certain coordination of assemblies already takes place between the WCC and CWCs and REOs. The timing of their various assemblies is discussed in order to achieve the best possible spacing. Further coordination takes place with regard to the presence of seconded and coopted staff, advisors and consultants, and media operations.

Fuller coordination would involve conducting assemblies in a certain order with an intentional communicative process from one to the next. Since the WCC's assembly is the widest and most comprehensive assembly within the worldwide Christian fellowship, one possible model of coordination would consider the assemblies of the various CWCs and REOs as playing some kind of preparatory role towards the WCC assembly while fully safeguarding necessary processes within their respective contexts. In summary, areas of coordination could include not only *scheduling*, but also *related themes*, *cooperative development of preparatory material* and *shared reporting*.

Advantages

A substantial number of values of coordinated assemblies may be enumerated:

- Coordination would lead to new reflection on and interpretation of the common biblical call to unity and to a search for tangible new expressions of this unity.
- The wholeness of the ecumenical movement would be affirmed by bringing together three instruments working toward the same goal.
- Coordinated assemblies would express a global witness by contributing to the churches' reflection on urgent global issues such as religion and globalization.
- Common vision and work towards common priorities would be strengthened by promoting reflection on worship life, praying together and new ways of working together.
- Coordination of assemblies would encourage reflection on election processes, appointments to governing bodies and balances (confessional, regional, etc.).
- The constituent members of the various organizations would be encouraged to look at themselves in a new way and to deepen their identity within the universal church.
- New understandings of the practical implications of bilateral and multilateral agreements would be stimulated.
- Joining forces in the preparatory process would reduce costs. This of course presupposes that common or closely related assembly themes would enable common preparatory materials – which would this reduce costs, but it would also contribute to coherent ecumenical reflection. In the long run, the common assembly preparatory process could increase programmatic cooperation between participating organizations.
- A process of coordination of assemblies can already be envisaged for the forthcoming assemblies.

Difficulties

- Close coordination of the assemblies of one or more CWC with that of the WCC might raise difficulties for other communions and church families in their relationship to the WCC similar to – if perhaps less acute than - the undesirable effect of holding joint assemblies.
- The periods of time between the various assemblies could present particular challenges for programmatic cooperation and thematic preparation for assemblies.

The Forum proposal, church families, CWCs and the WCC assembly

As mentioned above, the discussion “Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC” raised the idea of a new “Forum of Christian Churches and Ecumenical Organizations” as a space for open ecumenical deliberations, without the constraints associated with formal membership commitments in the WCC. The LWF Council adopted a resolution in 1999 supporting continued exploration of this possibility.

Strengthened communication among all church families and organizations committed to Christian unity is important for the ecumenical movement in the years ahead. The consultation which has gone on since 1957 in the annual Conference of Secretaries of Christian World Communions (CS/CWCs) reflects the need for such communication in an open ecumenical space.

Some of the concerns underlying the Forum proposal could possibly be met through a further evolution of the CS/CWCs.

Further development of relations between the WCC and some CWCs and church families with regard to their mission would quite naturally raise the question of whether the latter should be formally represented in WCC assemblies. Besides being an assembly of representatives of individual member churches, the WCC assembly would then in some form contain within itself representation of CWCs – and, perhaps along the same lines, REOs.

At present, the Roman Catholic Church is the only worldwide church body to have a formally defined place in the WCC assembly, even though it is not a member of the WCC as such and there is no connection between the two on the level of their representative bodies. Of course the Roman Catholic Church is in a unique situation because of its size and historical character; and its present representation in the WCC assembly is legitimate and expedient until such time as another and, it is to be hoped, closer connection can be established. Nevertheless, it is worth asking whether the participation of other world communions in WCC assemblies does not represent an unused ecumenical potential.

2 } This does not mean that the WCC should develop into a fellowship of world communions. It still seems most conducive to the furthering of Christian unity that the WCC maintain the basic structure by which it was established, i.e. as a fellowship of individual member churches. World communions should therefore not hold membership at the same level as the churches, nor should their representatives exercise any new authority over their own member churches within the framework of the WCC.

WCC Rules XI–XIV outline models for the participation of various global and regional bodies in the WCC. These and possibly other models should be re-examined with particular reference to the question of participation in the WCC assembly.

Areas for further consideration

- How might greater programmatic cooperation between the organizations follow from cooperation in study projects related to assembly themes?
- Would official, consultative representation in WCC assemblies of the cooperating organizations be more productive if there were some agreed forms of coordination and (programmatic) cooperation?
- What kind of mechanisms for coordination and cooperation among organizations should be in place to ensure continuity in between assemblies?
- What kind of themes would be most appropriate for a process of coordinated assemblies? (For example, would it be more creative to formulate themes which raise questions that call for answers; e.g., "What is the unity we are seeking"?)
- How might themes for coordinated assemblies be related to issues raised by "decades" such as those of the WCC and the UN – and how could such themes be complemented by theological reflection?
- Could the Conference of Secretaries of Christian World Communions evolve into a forum in which CWCs (and possibly also REOs) could communicate about relevant issues (including those raised in preparation for WCC assemblies)? In other words, how could this instrument carry out some of the functions envisaged in the proposal for a Forum of Christian Churches and Ecumenical Organizations?
- To what extent could a Forum for Christian Churches and Ecumenical Organizations be adapted to correspond to the role of assemblies and the constitutional requirements of the WCC, the LWF and WARC?

Recommendations:

To affirm the clear commitment of the LWF and WCC to maximum cooperation on assemblies and their shared vision for holding common assemblies, the staff group recommends as first and yet important steps, that:

- a) the general secretary of the LWF explore the possible value of holding a joint LWF/WARC assembly;
- b) the general secretary of the WCC explore the possible value of a deliberative session on joint/coordinated assemblies during the Central Committee meeting in January 2001;
- c) The two organizations consider carefully a coordinated schedule for assembly preparations (taking into consideration the dates of meetings of their governing bodies,¹² their respective decision-making processes, formation of committees for preparing assembly-related work, possibilities of having observers/consultants in another's assembly preparations, etc.).

IV. AREAS AND PATTERNS OF COOPERATION

Earlier explorations of increased cooperation between the WCC and the LWF have shown that each round of discussions results in closer cooperation in certain specific areas. To a certain extent, the work undertaken by the WCC and the LWF today reflects the harvest from these previous discussions.

Recognizing the existing cooperation, the staff group considered it necessary, in responding to the resolutions of the governing bodies, to prepare an updated listing of LWF-WCC relationships as a background for concrete proposals. Because of structural changes in both the LWF and the WCC since the last update in 1992, the current listing has been prepared by themes and topics rather than desks or departments. The results of this survey are summarized on the enclosed chart (**Attachment 3**). For each area of cooperation, the team,

¹² To give an example of possible coordination of time-tables, first reporting to the respective governing bodies could respectively take place:

- June, 2000: LWF Council (during this meeting, the Council is expected to decide about the venue and dates of the LWF assembly, and to appoint the assembly planning committee);
- September, 2000: WCC Executive Committee
- Second progress report to governing bodies, leading eventually to shared/common decisions:
- January, 2001: WCC Central Committee
- June, 2001: LWF Council (during this meeting, the Council is expected to make decisions about the assembly theme)
- Third progress report:
- June, 2002: LWF Council
- September, 2002: WCC Central Committee (during this meeting the WCC Central Committee is expected to discuss the date and venue of the assembly and appoint the Assembly Planning Committee).

department or office primarily responsible for the programmes or activities mentioned has been identified.

While the chart itself does not indicate the level or the type of cooperation, an analysis using as criteria the regularity and intensity of the cooperation provides another useful reading of WCC-LWF relationships.

Relationships or cooperation of a permanent or regular character

- At the leadership and governance level:
 - regular meetings of the general secretaries
 - attendance as observers at meetings of each other's governing bodies.
- At the level of management and administration:
 - permanent contacts on issues related to the administration of the Ecumenical Centre;
 - computer services;
 - personnel matters.
 - In the area of emergencies:
 - shared responsibilities in the management of the ACT office and in the ACT governing bodies;
 - co-signing of all appeals.
- In the area of communication:
 - shared responsibilities, together with CEC and WARC, in the governing body of ENI;
 - joint financial support of ENI.
- In the area of ecumenical relations:
 - regular consultations within the framework of the Conference of Secretaries of Christian World Communions;
 - the Forum on Bilateral Dialogues.
- Joint participation in the worship committee of the Ecumenical Centre
- Co-organization of visits to the Ecumenical Centre.

Cooperation on specific programmatic areas

Within this category, different levels of cooperation can be identified. Some of these activities are carried out in cooperation with WARC and CEC.

Jointly planned initiatives

- In human rights:
 - participation in the UN Commission and Sub-Commission on Human Rights;

- joint organization of the ecumenical delegation;
- in some cases joint statements;
- joint monitoring of political developments;
- joint publication of worship material for the 50th anniversary of the UN Declaration on Human Rights;
- cooperation in the WARC-led process on theological imperatives for human rights.
- In some crisis situations:
 - publication of joint statements signed by the general secretaries in the Ecumenical Centre
- On peace and reconciliation:
 - long-standing cooperation of the “four Councils” (WCC, LWF, CLAI, NCCCUSA) in accompanying peace processes in Central America and more recently in Colombia;
 - cooperation in election monitoring (El Salvador, South Africa, Haiti);
 - joint efforts to accompany the democratization process in Haiti;
 - joint monitoring of the situation in the Balkans and planning of initiatives through the South East Europe working group of WCC, LWF and CEC staff;
 - cooperation in the land mines campaign, including publication of educational material.
- In the area of church and ecumenical relations:
 - joint monitoring and mediation efforts in some cases of internal church conflicts.
- In the area of women’s programmes:
 - women’s programmes in Bossey.
- In the area of the social development:
 - follow-up to Copenhagen 1995 World Summit for Social Development (“Geneva 2000”).

Consultation and coordination on ongoing programmes

- Scholarships
 - common review of the list of applicants.
- Refugees and uprooted people:
 - coordination and exchange of information (especially in relation to UNHCR);
 - invitation to attend meetings of the Global Ecumenical Network on Uprooted People.
 - consultation and cooperation on humanitarian concerns (as members of the Steering Committee on Humanitarian Relief) and on development issues (as members of APRODEV);

- cooperation on Diakonia programmes in Central and Eastern Europe;
- coordination of activities related to organizing delegations and to lobbying efforts at the UN headquarters in New York;
- cooperation on the Climate Change programme;
- cooperation and exchange of information on issues related to economic concerns and globalization (debt, WTO, MAI)

Information-sharing and collaboration

Most teams or offices in the two organizations have regular or occasional collaboration and exchanges of information, leading to cooperation in such areas of common concern as mission, theological studies, ecumenical officers, women, youth, regional desks, etc. The character of the work or the different foci of the programmes of the two organizations may affect the level of collaboration.

Areas identified for further cooperation

In making the inventory, the staff group identified the following areas where cooperation is already envisaged:

- the study on the ethics of humanitarian intervention;
- global ecumenical advocacy;
- the Africa Peace Initiative;
- ecumenical responses to HIV/AIDS;
- women's perspectives on new ways of being church;
- people with disabilities;
- globalization
- racism/casteism
- guiding principles for sustainable development

There are many other areas of potential cooperation, and the concern for identifying these should be a permanent task for the two organizations.

Recommendations:

To highlight the double concern of continuing ongoing collaboration and identifying new areas for cooperation, the staff group recommends:

- a) that the impact (ecumenical range, value, outcome, etc.) and implications (for financial and human resources) of the various types of cooperation identified in the inventory (inter-team/department, joint venture, organizational) be evaluated and assessed;
- b) that possibilities of closer cooperation be considered in the area of strategic objectives of institutional development (human resources, management, information technology).

Attachment 1:

World Alliance of Reformed Churches RELATIONSHIP OF CWCs WITH THE WCC

Summary: The World Alliance of Reformed Churches, a 1970 union of two earlier Presbyterian and Congregationalist Christian World Communions (CWCs), has always seen itself as a Reformed presence within the wider ecumenical movement. In 1948, when the Presbyterian Alliance moved its office to Geneva, it quite deliberately located the new office on the campus of the World Council of Churches at 17 Route de Malagnou 'so that close contacts could be maintained with the WCC'. Today, the Alliance still sees itself as 'a world confessional body which is at the same time an integral part of the ecumenical movement'.

In the context of the 23rd General Council (Debrecen, 1997), WARC said that discussion of the relationship between the WCC and CWCs 'is long overdue, and from both sides should be pursued vigorously'. It affirmed the paragraph in the then draft WCC report, *Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC*, on this subject. It looked for greater cooperation with both the WCC and other CWCs on a wide front; and recognized the need for greater coordination between the world assemblies of the various organizations, even envisaging a joint assembly with the LWF and the WCC.

MATERIALS FROM THE 23RD GENERAL COUNCIL (DEBRECEN, 1997)

1. From 'The Alliance beyond 1997', in Páraic Réamonn, ed., *From Seoul to Debrecen* (Geneva: WARC, 1997), pp.166-170.

WARC in the Broader Ecumenical Movement

The roots of the ecumenical movement lie in recognition by European and North American missionaries that the inability of their churches to work together in mission was a scandal. This recognition bore fruit in the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910. The International Missionary Council was founded in 1921. The first Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work was held in Stockholm in 1925, and the first World Conference on Faith and Order, in Lausanne in 1927. Life and Work was concerned with Christian service and interchurch cooperation on social issues; Faith and Order, with the differences in doctrine and church order that Edinburgh had avoided. Growing recognition that their two sets of questions belong together led them to unite in the World Council of Churches: the first WCC Assembly met in Amsterdam in 1948. The International Missionary Council merged with the WCC in 1961. In the ecumenical vision, as this outline history indicates, mission, unity and social witness are inseparable.

Today the World Council of Churches numbers 330 member churches, Protestant and Orthodox, in more than 100 countries. In 1948, nearly two-thirds of its member churches came from Europe and North America; today nearly two-thirds come from the South. The Roman Catholic Church works cooperatively with the WCC, and is a full member of the Faith and Order Commission.

WARC is grateful for the gift of the ecumenical movement. It has broken down walls of hostility between Christians of different traditions to an extent which, a century ago, would have seemed almost inconceivable. However imperfectly, it has helped to put flesh on the bones of our Reformed conviction that we are not sectarian but, precisely as Reformed, part of the universal church of Jesus Christ. WARC affirms the ecumenical concern to hold together mission, the search for unity, and social witness. Our continuing role and identity is within this broader ecumenical movement and not outside or in opposition to it. This role, however, must be a critical one. As everyone involved in the movement recognizes, it is time to pause and take stock.

Experience has chastened us. The goal of organic church unity now looks more complex, difficult and distant than our predecessors supposed. Cooperation between churches is not always easy. Also evident is a basic division between those Christians who accept their responsibility for the world (justice, peace, integrity of creation) and those who consider such a preoccupation by the church incompatible with their doctrinal position. In some circles in Central and Eastern Europe, ecumenical organizations are criticized

on the grounds that they did not take a sufficiently clear stance on human rights violations by communist governments. We should not underestimate the impact of the attacks on ecumenical organizations from the conservative right (e.g. articles in the *Reader's Digest*).

Another complicating factor is the proliferation of ecumenical and confessional organizations. For example, a Reformed church in Brazil must participate simultaneously in the WCC, the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI), CLAI/Brazil (an area council of CLAI), the National Council of Churches (CONIC); in its confessional organizations, WARC and AJPRA; not to speak of offshoots such as the Ecumenical Confederation of Service (CESE); the Latin American Evangelical Confederation of Christian Education (CELADEC), etc. In Europe many Reformed churches are expected to relate to WARC and its European Area Council, but at the same time to CEPPE (*Conférence des églises protestantes de pays latins d'Europe*), the Conference of European Churches and to the World Council of Churches. All organizations require moral and financial support. The burden is increasingly unmanageable. Many churches feel that they are suffering an 'ecumenical overdose'.

Discussion of the relationship between the WCC (as well as REOs) and Christian world communions like WARC is long overdue, and from both sides should be pursued vigorously. It is obvious that the ecumenical movement is broader and larger than one particular organization. It would be false if one body claimed to be the exclusive representative of ecumenical ideas. On the other hand, it is justified to accept the WCC as the principal instrument of the ecumenical movement, and God's gift to the churches. There should be a division of labour, and programmes and projects should not be duplicated. WARC initiatives led to a consultation on Christian fundamentalism cosponsored with the Lutheran World Federation and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity in 1993, a consultation on ethnicity and nationalism jointly organized with the LWF and the WCC in 1994, and a consultation on the theological imperatives for human rights in which the LWF and the WCC also participated. WARC, the LWF and the WCC will also work together on a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the UN Declaration on Human Rights. These are good examples of cooperation.

It is an encouraging sign that the WCC is reviewing its relationship to its partners in the ecumenical movement. The draft report, 'Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC', presented to the WCC Central Committee in September 1996, underlines the importance of the relationships between the WCC and the Christian world communions: 'the Council must work for relationships marked by mutual accountability and reciprocity, and should look for ways to share tasks and resources with these ecumenical partners. We believe that a strong relationship with the WCC can be useful for the CWCs as they seek to avoid confessional isolation; just as a strong relationship with the CWCs can be useful for the WCC, reminding this fellowship of churches that ecumenical commitment is by no means incompatible with rootedness in an ecclesial tradition.' (Par.4.3.3.)

WARC has been engaged in bilateral dialogue with other Christian communions since 1970. We organized a consultation in Princeton (April 1992) to evaluate these dialogues. This was an important step. However, it is necessary to examine the possibility of following up certain dialogues in a more concrete way. It would be helpful, for example, to develop a programme which would aim at a common position of the Reformed churches regarding the Roman Catholic Church. A special agreement has been reached with the Disciples of Christ. Can such a step be undertaken with regard to other Christian world communions? Can the Reformed churches take further steps towards a more visible unity among the Protestant churches?

The Executive Committee in 1996 endorsed proposals for a gathering of the Christian world communions in the year 2,000. It emphasized that Reformed participation in the event should be as fully representative as possible, to witness to our profound convictions concerning the nature of the church. It also called for consideration of the effect of a triumphalist celebration of the second Christian millennium on Christians in minority contexts.

WCC General Secretary Konrad Raiser has proposed that the year 2,000 should be used by the main Christian families of churches—Orthodox, Pentecostal, Protestant and Roman Catholic—to begin preparations for a universal Christian council. The Executive Committee agreed that material interpreting this proposal should be prepared for delegates to the 23rd General Council.

In the light of shrinking income, the WARC staff suggested to the General Secretaries of the WCC and the LWF to consider planning the General Assemblies after the year 2000 in one place and at the same time. The conference sessions could be held jointly, while the delegates would attend separate meetings for business sessions. WARC has received letters from member churches in Germany, Switzerland, The Netherlands, and other countries strongly supporting this idea. It is not clear, however, whether the idea

would be welcomed by all member churches that are not members of the WCC. The Executive Committee in 1996 authorized further exploration of the possibility of having such a combined world meeting.

What should be the role of WARC in the ecumenical movement? What is its distinctive contribution? The concept of *ecclesia reformata et semper reformanda* is our Reformed birthright and should not be forfeited. WARC can work towards a renewal of the church, its ministry and its mission, bringing its own agenda and offering its particular perspectives. New dreams and new visions are needed in a world that has become 'globalized' ecumenically and 'fragmented' culturally. In Europe secularization proceeds apace, and churches suffer a loss of membership. In many parts of the world churches need theological reorientation. Being Reformed means being ecumenical and dialogical; WARC should also pay more attention to interreligious dialogue. Characteristic of the Reformed tradition is the effort to establish an organic link between a profound biblical-theological reflection and practical action. WARC should mobilize its member churches to re-energize the ecumenical community, and help its member churches to meet the challenges facing humanity on the threshold of the 21st century.

Attachment 2:

Eighth Assembly of the WCC, HARARE 1998

Together on the Way

4.7. Report of Policy Reference Committee I

VIII. Relationships with Christian world communions (CWCs)

Cooperation between the WCC and various CWCs has to some degree been the case for many decades, examples being WCC presence at the meeting of secretaries of CWCs and the mutually sponsored forum on bilateral dialogues. Recent developments include Action of Churches Together (ACT) and Ecumenical News International (ENI). There is, however, a duplication of programmes and projects within the WCC and other CWCs which cannot be justified. As both are called to ecumenical work, to increase the level of sharing and mutual learning from one another becomes imperative.

It should also be recognized that advances made in the decades-old models of unity debate about conciliar fellowship and unity in reconciled diversity leading to current concepts of visible unity and full communion are the direct result of WCC-CWCs common engagement. Included in this process is the focus upon "ecclesial self-understanding" as manifested by some of the respective CWCs. This fact marks an important characteristic of WCC-CWCs relationships. It is for the reason cited above that the WCC should recognize the historical and ecclesiological uniqueness present in the effort to strengthen the ongoing relationship with the various CWCs.

The CUV document affirms that the WCC's relationship to CWCs is to be marked by mutual accountability and reciprocity. It asks that ways be found to associate such bodies more directly to the organized life of the WCC. The earliest proposal for a forum, for example, strongly supported by a number of CWCs, envisages the possibility of holding assemblies together. Also, the possibility of directly involving CWCs in the decision-making bodies of the WCC was investigated. Both attempts failed because of the present juridical and constitutional framework in which these ecumenical organizations operate. It should be noted here that the proposed constitutional amendment (article III) acknowledges the ecumenical partners of the WCC and sees it as a responsibility of the WCC to move "towards maintaining the coherence of the one ecumenical movement".

The eighth assembly recommended that a process be initiated to facilitate and strengthen the relationships between the WCC and CWCs as called for in the CUV document. The assembly recognizes the unique historical and ecclesiological contribution of CWCs to the one ecumenical movement. The proposed process aims to foster cooperation, effectiveness and efficiency in the quest for visible unity. The assembly noted with appreciation the important work already done by the conference of secretaries of CWCs, and encouraged that this Conference be called upon to contribute to this work in the future.

Areas of Relationship and Cooperation Between LWF and WCC

Topic	Related Team/Department		Areas of Relationship and Cooperation (Concrete examples of recent or ongoing cooperative work)
	In LWF	In WCC	
1. Leadership and Governing Bodies	GS	GS	Regular meetings of General Secretaries WCC/LWF/WARC/CEC Participating as observers in governing bodies meetings
2. Management and Administration	OFA	FS&A	Administration of the Ecumenical Center
	OFA	FS&A	Computer Services
	OP	OP	Personnel matters (training, contracts, flexitime)
	GS	GS	Regular meetings
3. Communication	OCS	COM	ENI
	OCS	COM	Communication ACT network
	IAHR	IR	Joint statements on crisis situations
4. Education and Training	DWS	IR	Educational material on landmines
	DMD	EEF	Scholarship Committees
5. Regional and International Diakonia	DWS	IR	Refugees and uprooted people (Global Ecumenical Network)
	DWS	RRES	Diakonia cooperation in Russia and the Balkans
	DWS	RRES	APRODEV
	DWS	RRES/IR	ACT
6. Emergencies	DWS	IR	Cooperation in SCHR
	DWS	IR	Cochair CEAS
7. Mission and Witness	DMD	M&E	Information sharing on mission concerns
	Inter-teams	Inter-teams	Workshop Committee
8. Theological Studies and Worship	IAHR	IR	Worship material on human rights
	DTS/IAHR	IR/F&O	Cooperation in the WARC-led process on theological imperatives for human rights
	DTS	F&O	Information sharing on theological studies/participation in each other meetings
9. Ecumenical Relations	OEA	F&O	Regular informal meetings
	GS/OEA	GS/CER-	Conference of Secretaries of World Communions (CWCs)
	DMD	F&O	Bilateral forum for CWCs General Secretaries
	DGS	CER	Internal church conflicts
10. Dialogue with other Faiths	DTS	CER	Visits to Ecumenical Center
	DTS	IRRD	Since 1996 no ongoing cooperation

Topic	Team/Department in WFP	Team/Department in WCC	Area of Relationship and Cooperation (concrete examples of recent or ongoing cooperative work)
11. Peace-Conflict Resolutions	IAHR/DTS	IR	Planning joint consultation on ethics of humanitarian intervention
	IAHR	IR	Africa Peace Initiative
	IAHR	IR	Central America – Colombia. Four councils.
	DWS	IR	Democratisation in Haiti/Election monitoring
	DWS/IAHR	IR/RRES	South-East Europe Working Group
12. Human Rights	IAHR	IR	UN Commission and Sub-Commission on Human Rights
	IAHR	IR	Policy development
13. UN Relations	IAHR	CCIA/New York-JPC	UN Headquarters in New York – Geneva
14. Ecology, Economy and Social Ethics	DTS	JPC	Participation in each other meetings on globalisation
	DTS	JPC	Climate change
	DWS/IAHR	JPC	Debt cancellation, WTO
15. Women's Issues	DMD	JPC	Joint ecumenical programmes at Bossey
	DMD	JPC	Joint ecumenical team for UN Commission on the Status of Women
	DMD	JPC	Joint project on women's perspective on "new ways of being church" to be developed
	DMD	JPC	Regular contacts
16. Youth			
17. Other: AIDS People with disabilities	DMD/DWS	M&E	Joint process on AIDS to be developed

Glossary:

GS	General Secretary	OP	Office for Personnel
DGS	Deputy General Secretary	FS&A	Cluster on Finance, Service & Administration
OFA	Office for Finance and Administration	IRRD	Inter-religious Relations Team
OEA	Office for Ecumenical Affairs	CER	Church and Ecumenical Relations Team
OCS	Office for Communication Services	COM	Cluster on Communication
IAHR	International Affairs Human Rights	IR	International Relations Team
DWS	Department for World Service	RRES	Regional Relations and Ecumenical Sharing Team
DMD	Department for Mission and Evangelism	M&E	Mission and Evangelism Team
DTS	Department for Theology and Studies	F&O	Faith and Order Team