

**MKR-SAK 17/03: SAMARBEIDSAVTALE MED EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF JORDAN (ELCJ)****Saksbehandler:** Generalsekretæren**Dokumenter:** Utkast til Constitution for the Coordination Committee for Co-operation between ELCJ & COCOP (*tidl. utsendt*)**Saksframlegg:**

Den norske kyrkja har gjennom mange år hatt nære kontaktar med den lutherske kyrkja i Jordan (og Palestina); The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan (ELCJ). Dette har vorte intensivert under dei siste års konfliktfylte situasjon i Midt-Austen. Samarbeidsorganet COCOP er etablert for å koordinere hjelpa til denne kyrkja og for å ha eit permanent møte for dette. No har det vore ynskje å formalisere dette noko meir, og eit forslag til konstitusjon som partane er bedne om ratifisere og skrive under på, er lagt fram.

Den norske kyrkja er så involvert i kontakten med ELCJ at det er naturleg å delta i eit formalisert samarbeid. I dag deltek sokneprest Svein Helge Rødahl frå Kråkerøy i Borg på desse årlege samlingane, sidan Borg bispedømme har fått eit serskilt ansvar for kontakten med ELCJ. Det er derimot ikkje mogeleg for MKR å gå inn på langsiktige finansielle forplikingar i denne relasjonen, gitt dei budsjetta vi rår over. Men frå tid til tid kan vi støtte deira prosjekt over OVF-budsjettet. Kirkens Nødhjelp har hatt og har eit stort engasjement mot denne kyrkja sitt arbeid, m.a. oppbygging av nye skular.

Då biskop Munib Younan var i Oslo i januar, drøfta generalsekretæren desse spørsmåla med han og med Svein Helge Rødahl. Younan er innforstått med vår stilling når det gjeld økonomiske midlar, og at KN må ta seg av den sida av kontakten her i Noreg. Han meinte at vi likevel kunne skrive under på konstitusjonen for COCOP slik han er framlagt, med dei atterhald vi har med omsyn til økonomiske forplikingar.

Spørsmålet er om vi skal skrive under (med nokre atterhald) for å vise at vi er seriøse medlemmer i dette COCOP-samarbeidet, eller om vi skal gje ei erklæring om vår tilslutning og forpliking til samarbeid utan å skrive under. Det er grunn til å vere forsiktig med å love noko ein ikkje kan halde. Det er betre å stå ved det ein kan oppfylle med dei rammer ein har. Difor er det mykje som talar for å lage ei erklæring som seier at vi stør intensjonane og premissane i konstitusjonen, men at vi kan ikkje skrive under sidan vi ikkje rår over midlar som vi kan love skal brukast på dette samarbeidet.

**Framlegg til vedtak:**

1. *Mellomkyrkjeleg råd er glad for å delta i samarbeidet i COCOP om støtte til den evangelisk-lutherske kyrkja i Jorda , og vil at Den norske kyrkja held fram som part i dette samarbeidet.*
2. *Sidan MKR ikkje kan love pengar på framtidige budsjett, kan ein ikkje inngå avtalar om økonomiske forplikingar. Difor kan ikkje MKR skrive under på den tekst til konstitusjon som er lagt fram, men ein vil erklære sin vilje til vidare samarbeid.*



**CONSTITUTION**  
**for**  
**THE COORDINATION COMMITTEE FOR CO-OPERATION**  
**between**  
**THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN JORDAN (ELCJ)**  
**&**  
**HER OVERSEAS PARTNERS (COCOP)**

## **1. Preface**

### **1.1. History of ELCJ**

Together with the other Churches in the Holy Land the ELCJ traces its roots back into the two thousand years of Palestine Christian presence and witness in the region. At the same time the Church is also the outcome of mission work from the North, which began with efforts to establish the joint Prussian-Anglican bishopric in Jerusalem in 1841.

Educational, missionary and diaconical work from Germany, was undertaken by Jerusalemverein, Kaiserswert and 'Syrisches Waisenhaus' (Schneller). This led to the gradual establishing of a Palestinian Lutheran community, which in 1959 became the recognized, established Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan (ELCJ). Since gaining membership in the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in 1974, the ELCJ is the local expression of the Lutheran world communion. ELCJ is a member of the Middle East Council of Churches since 1974, and a founding member of the Fellowship of the Middle East Evangelical Churches (FMEEC).

### **1.2. History of COCOP**

COCOP was founded in 1977 "in order to secure the possibility for a responsible, continuous, and constructive joint relationship with the ELCJ."

In line with the practice of that time the efforts aimed at streamlining the coordination among the overseas partners rather than the cooperation of overseas partners with the ELCJ.

After more than twenty years of growing together the COCOP and the ELCJ have come to realize the need to rethink the forms for their relationship and develop a new formal structure.

## **2. Name**

**THE COORDINATION COMMITTEE FOR CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN JORDAN AND HER OVERSEAS  
PARTNERS (COCOP)**

## **3. Theological Foundation**

### **3.1. A Communion in Mission**

*COCOP* is an expression of our commitment to be together in Mission, acknowledging this as being our joint response to God's mission in this world.

### **3.2. Basis of Cooperation**

The basis of our cooperation is to be found in our affirmation of the gracious acts of the Triune God to save humankind and restore His creation.

We therefore

- identify with people as God identified with us in Jesus, who was born in Bethlehem, found refuge in Egypt, grew up in Nazareth, and who made God's reign known in His ministry to the people of this land.
- proclaim the good news of salvation by Jesus' death on the cross and His resurrection, that took place in Jerusalem. This saving and redeeming action is the basis for the realization of the Kingdom of God in Jerusalem and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).
- are inspired by the Holy Spirit, poured out on the first Church in Jerusalem as a gift, empowering for mission to all nations until the very end of the age.

### **3.3. Relationships**

Our relationships should be modelled on the image of the Church as the Body of Christ, where all members of the body - the smaller as well as the bigger - share the same dignity. God calls us to mutual interdependency, which will be at the heart of our Communion in Mission. The scope of work will therefore naturally involve mission in both the South and the North. This principle of interdependence calls us to be responsible and involved in God's mission wherever God calls us to serve. We all need the good advice and faithful support of one another in our responsibility of taking the lead in responding to God's call in our respective countries.

### **3.4. Outcomes**

As a Communion in Mission *COCOP* is commissioned to promote:

1. the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments
2. education, edification and formation of the community of God
3. unity among the churches
4. involvement in inter-religious dialogue
5. work for justice, peace and reconciliation
6. advocacy for just peace and human rights
7. service to the poor, the needy and the marginalized in society
8. care for the integrity of God's creation
9. strengthening the continuity of local Christian presence and witness

## **4. Aims and Objectives**

4.1 To share the joys and hardships of discipleship in our respective contexts.

4.2 To encourage and strengthen each other in witnessing to Jesus Christ in our respective situations.

4.3 To exchange insights and experiences in edifying our congregations and churches.

4.4 To mutually discover and identify challenges of our common mission

4.5 To strengthen each other by sharing personnel, financial and other needed resources in our common mission.

4.6 To provide a forum for all partners to share statements of needs, and to present the financial situation and the possibilities for mutual support.

4.7 To provide a reliable platform in the spirit of full commitment for mutually growing trust, reliability and advocacy.

## **5. Membership**

5.1 Membership of *COCOP* is open for churches, church-related organizations, and agencies, sharing its aims and objectives.

5.2 Applications for membership shall be received by the chairperson and endorsed by the ELCJ prior to being submitted three months in advance to the annual meeting of *COCOP* for acceptance.

5.3 New members of *COCOP* can be accepted in their appropriate membership status at the next *COCOP* meeting after their application for membership is approved by ELCJ and confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the *COCOP* members.

## **6. Structure and Proceedings**

6.1. *COCOP* shall consist of an equal number of representatives from ELCJ (elected by the Church Council of ELCJ) and the Overseas Partners (nominated by the church or organisation represented) with full right to voice and vote.

6.2. There shall be an annual meeting of the *COCOP*. The chair and co-chair may together call additional meetings as needed. A majority of the members of *COCOP* shall be required for the quorum to hold the meeting and take decisions.

6.3. The meeting shall be called and chaired by the Bishop of ELCJ.

6.4. A co-chairperson from the overseas partners shall be elected by *COCOP* for a period of two years, with the possibility of renewal.

6.5. At the annual meeting of *COCOP* two secretaries, one from the ELCJ and one from the overseas partners shall be elected for a period of two years who will be responsible for the minutes of the meeting.

6.6. In the spirit of stewardship and in the discipline of sharing, the ELCJ shall be free to present a statement of her needs of support in form of a budget at the annual meeting of *COCOP*. The budget shall be comprehensive and indicate priorities of the church. The overseas partners also shall be free to present needs for special joint mission programs for mutual support at the annual meeting.

6.7. In the spirit of transparency each *COCOP* partner shall fully and openly account for joint funds used and openly present the financial situation and possibilities for mutual support of the church or organization represented.

Generally accepted accounting practices shall be followed in administering and auditing joint funds. Procedures may be agreed to in more details both by COCOP and by partners.

- 6.8. At each annual meeting it should be decided who of the partners reports about relevant developments in the churches and organisations represented at the next annual meeting. In the same way issues of common interest for all COCOP-partners could be identified for a joint study day at the following annual meeting.
- 6.9. Each partner shall be free to present at the annual meetings requests for personnel assistance through other partners. Details of job descriptions and conditions of employment shall be agreed upon mutually by the partners.
- 6.10. In each annual meeting possibilities and challenges of joint mission endeavours should be explored including personnel needs and financial assistance.
- 6.11. Whenever partner representation is requested in joint committees these persons shall be appointed by COCOP.
- 6.12. The present members of the old COCOP - Berlin Mission Work (BMW), Church of Sweden (CoS), Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM), Northelbian Evangelical Lutheran Church (NEK/NMZ), United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany (VELKD), Church of Norway will remain members of the new COCOP. The related agencies – Association of Protestant Churches and Missions in Germany (EMW), Lutheran World Federation (LWF) of the old COCOP will keep the same status in the new COCOP.
- 6.13. This constitution may be amended at any regular meeting by a two thirds affirmative vote of the voting members present. Such proposed amendments shall be in the hand of all members at least three months prior to the meeting at which they are to be considered.

Jerusalem on 27.09.2002

Fredrikstad on-----

On behalf of the ELCJ

On behalf of Church of Norway

+ M. A. Y.  
**Bishop Dr. Munib A. Younan**  
 The Bishop of the ELCJ

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 Name:  
 Title:

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