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## **‘AND NOW WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?’ CEC’S STRATEGIC ROADMAP 2013-2017**

This ‘Roadmap’ is taken from the Uppsala Report as received by the Budapest 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly and is to be read alongside the Constitution to inform the future renewal and direction of CEC.

### **Our Common Faith (2.2)**

The Conference of European Churches is an ecumenical fellowship of Churches in Europe which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seeks to fulfil their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Member Churches of the Conference seek, by the grace of the Triune God, to pursue together the path of growing conciliar understanding on which they have set out. In the faithfulness to the Gospel, as witnessed in the Holy Scripture and transmitted in and through the Church by the power of the Holy Spirit, they seek to continue to grow in fellowship (koinonia) of faith, hope and love. Faithful to this Gospel, they also seek to make a common contribution to the mission of the Church, to the safeguarding of life and the well-being of all humankind. In its commitment to Europe as whole the Conference seeks to help the European Churches to renew their spiritual life, to strengthen their common witness and service and to promote the unity of the Church and the peace in the world. As recognised by the Charta Oecumenica (2001) European Churches have a responsibility to call each other to a life of reconciliation as an expression of Christian unity and for the sake of the well-being of our continent and world.

### **Our Common History (2.4)**

CEC was founded in Nyborg Denmark in 1959 as a bridge building organisation between Churches living in isolation from each other as a result of the post Second World War division of Europe into two different political and ideological blocks. Since then the number of member churches has increased and the fellowship between them has deepened, as has cooperation with the Council of European Roman Catholic Bishops’ Conferences. CEC has always held firm to the conviction that the growing unity between Churches provides the foundation for the Churches’ common witness in society. As set out in the Charta Oecumenica (2001), Churches support the closer integration of the European continent, but they believe that without common values, unity cannot endure. Central to our common witness is the conviction that the spiritual heritage of Christianity constitutes an empowering source of inspiration and enrichment for Europe.

## **Our Common Vision (2.9)**

In faithfulness to the Gospel, CEC seeks the reconciliation and common witness of the Churches to help build a humane, socially conscious and sustainable Europe at peace with itself and its neighbours, in which human rights and the basic values of peace, justice, freedom, participation and solidarity prevail.

## **Our Common Mission (2.14)**

Through programmatic development and research CEC works to strengthen the bonds of Christian fellowship (koinonia) between all its members so that they might be better equipped and empowered to work together and with others in advocating an authentic and credible Christian witness to European society, and to European and international institutions.

## **Organisational Values (2.18)**

For CEC to accomplish its future mission it needs to base its decisions and actions on the core values set out in the values statement below.

- **Mutual Trust and Respect:** As a fellowship of Churches we are called to trust and respect one another. We depend on each other to achieve our common objective, the visible unity of the Church. As such we honour and value the contribution of all. Our diversity is a gift that enriches us. We recognise the unique identity of every human being as having been made in the image of God. We recognise the innate worth of all people and the value of diversity. In our work we will ensure equal opportunity to everyone irrespective of age, gender, colour, class, ethnicity, location and religion. We also respect the rights and values of communities and people. Our commitment to trust and respect one another will help CEC to grow as an inclusive and open fellowship of churches able and willing to both give and receive.
- **Courage:** Working towards a humane and socially conscious Europe requires us to be creative and radical, bold and innovative – without fear of failure. We take courage from the Gospel message that providing for human dignity is an imperative from God, not a mere dream. This gives us faith to turn our hope into action through practical work that challenges both the causes and consequences of human impoverishment.
- **Hospitality:** As a fellowship of Churches we are called to love one another with sisterly affection and to do so without grumbling. We understand hospitality to be more than administering to practical needs and welcoming the stranger, important as these matters are. It is a fundamental expression of the gospel and an outworking of

what it means to be members of the one 'body of Christ'. As a fellowship of Churches we will always be ready to show generous and loving hospitality to one another and to others, and we will do so with zeal and cheerfulness. As a fellowship of churches we are ready both to give and to receive.

- **Humility:** We will be humble in our presentation and behaviour recognising that we are part of a wider ecumenical movement and that only by working in partnership and in cooperation with others will we be able to provide for the flourishing of human relationships in all its fullness as mandated by the Gospel.
- **Accountability:** We are committed to monitoring and assessing the work of our staff and the organisation and how we receive that work. We will provide regular and timely accounts of its activities to our Member Churches and modify its practices in light of the feedback that it receives from them. Our Member Churches will account for how they have received the work and why have acted in a certain way. Together we will ensure that our structures avoid duplication and confusion and are themselves evaluated against their ability to help the organisation realise its full potential.
- **Transparency:** We believe that timely, free-flowing information in accessible language, form and format is essential for ensuring mutual accountability, learning, trust and good performance. Transparency opens up channels of communication and builds trust with those we are called to serve. Transparency leads to a more effective allocation of scarce resources and better alignment of expenditure and needs.
- **Good Stewardship:** We are accountable to God and to one another for the responsible care and use of those possessions and resources that have been entrusted to us. We are committed to properly utilising and developing our resources in a way that is sustainable and responsible. We will ensure that our current spending programs are affordable and sustainable over time. We will provide training and development opportunities for our staff to enable them to meet the changing needs of the organisation.
- **Subsidiarity:** Our common witness is enhanced by harvesting the expertise of our Member Churches and related organisations and in awareness of the gifts of others. In setting our work programmes, we will consider whether there are others who are better placed to do that work or who have a gift to offer. We will only perform those functions that our Member Churches cannot fulfil themselves or where the work brings added value over and above that which could be achieved by Member Churches working alone.

## **Strategic Objectives (2.23-2.24, 2.26)**

The following strategic objectives should serve to channel the energies and resources of CEC to achieve common goals until the next Assembly.

- **Implementing the organisational changes:** Any reforms agreed by the Constitutional General Assembly in 2013 will not happen overnight. There will necessarily be a transition period between the old structures and the new. Managing this change will take time and energy and needs to be seen as a strategic priority in itself. Beyond any structural and physical reorganisation of CEC, consideration will be given to changing the organisational culture of CEC in such a way that it mirrors the new vision, mission and values statements. In this process the results of the reconfiguration of the wider ecumenical movement will be considered. Attention will be given to retraining existing personnel and where necessary recruiting new personnel to enable the organisation to fulfil its strategic objectives. By the time of the next ordinary meeting of the General Assembly, the proposals agreed by the Constitutional General Assembly for the reconfiguration of CEC will have been implemented and CEC will be fully working as one body.
- **Securing the financial sustainability of the organisation:** CEC is operating through a period of economic recession and financial crisis which challenges the way it currently uses its resources. CEC's Member Churches entrust it with their money and need to have complete assurance that their funds are being used efficiently and effectively to maximise CEC's impact. By the time of the next ordinary meeting of the General Assembly the declining membership fees from CEC Member Churches will have been reversed or at the very least halted and a robust budgetary system installed. CEC is alert to the possibility that long term the contribution from Member Churches is unlikely to increase and alternative funding streams need to be found. By the time of the next ordinary meeting of the General Assembly, CEC will have put in place fundraising strategies and have developed its own capacity to deliver on these strategies by securing project funding from a range of European organisations and institutions. Proposals/protocols will also have been developed to enable those Member Churches that are experiencing genuine financial difficulties to make alternative contributions to CEC through suitable 'gifts in kind'. Taken together these measures will help to secure the financial stability of the organisation.
- **Strengthening the CEC fellowship through dialogue and learning:** CEC will better enable Member Churches to interact with one another in order to develop the necessary social and theological capital and knowledge to resolve common problems that impact on their shared future. This bridge building measure is necessary in order to ensure that all Member Churches feel that they have a stake in CEC and that their voice is being heard. The acceptance of diversity should be seen as an indicator of

CEC's willingness to entertain new ideas and accept change, both of which are prerequisites for learning and development. By the time of the next ordinary meeting of the General Assembly new and more inclusive opportunities for dialogue and learning between Member Churches will be provided to strengthen the cohesion, regeneration and further development of CEC as a whole. Creating and nurturing specific communities of learning within the context of CEC, whether on-line, through face to face encounter, or on specific issues such as theological education, bioethics, migration, or other pressing socio-economic challenges that Churches in Europe struggle with today. This will provide the opportunity for individual learning and collaborative empowerment. Such opportunities for intensive and continuous dialogue and learning will provide an important mechanism by which churches hold each other to account. This will benefit not just CEC, but the wider community that CEC is called to serve.

- **Developing CEC's capacity to be an effective partner in dialogue:** CEC is the bridge building instrument by which Protestant, Anglican, Old Catholic and Orthodox churches in Europe engage with European and pan-European institutions on matters of common concern. New opportunities for dialogue and consultation are emerging the whole time which place considerable strain upon the resources of CEC to respond effectively. Over the next few years CEC will respond to these challenges by further developing its capacity to engage in dialogue with European, pan-European and international institutions in such a way that the diversity of positions held by its Member Churches on any given issue is seen as a strength rather than a weakness. CEC will have the confidence to set the terms of the debate by structuring its dialogue with European and pan-European institutions around the communities of learning that it initiates. CEC will strengthen its ability to be an effective partner in dialogue by intensifying the internal dialogue between its Member Churches. By the next ordinary meeting of the General Assembly CEC will have further enhanced its reputation as a reliable and constructive dialogue partner.
- **Developing CEC's capacity to partner others:** CEC will only be able to achieve its objectives and realise the vision it has for itself and for Europe in the world if it works in partnership with others. CEC has a unique role to play by acting as a bridge builder between its Member Churches and others. To be open to collaborative ways of working is to recognise that it is not possible for any one organisation to understand all the complexities of this modern age without drawing on and accepting the contributions of others. Considerable synergies will be gained by strengthening the bridges of cooperation with other ecumenical bodies (e.g. WCC, MECC, AACC, WSCF and EYCE). CEC has good working relationships with CCEE and COMECE which it needs to build on, but over the coming years it will develop suitable working relationships with other religious communities and organisations that are sympathetic

to its mission and vision. CEC will develop structured cooperation with other ecumenical arrangements and Church bodies, offices and associations (CPCE, Porvoo, Church Offices in Brussels etc) so as to enable a more faithful witness in Europe. Similar bridges will be developed and maintained with the WCC in order to avoid duplication of resources and energy. CEC will actively seek new bridging partnerships with others to enable their insights to assist its own thinking and to show European and pan-European institutions that CEC is part of wider civil society movement.

- **Exciting and engaging others through more creative communication:** Developing new channels and instruments of communication is crucial for CEC. By the time of the next ordinary meeting of the General Assembly CEC will have developed and implemented a strategy of communicating with others the changes that it is going through. This strategy will also extend to supporting, capturing and sharing the learning that emerges from the interactions of its Member Churches, while at the same time making more transparent CEC's decision making processes. The strategy will embrace new ways of communicating such as blogs and podcasts that might help to excite and engage a wider audience. This new communication strategy is necessary to help sustain CEC as a network organisation and to help it reach out and involve more young people in its activities and deliberations.

These six strategic objectives should not be seen as separate channels of activity but part of an integrated approach for the next chapter in CEC's life. CEC's governing bodies should give priority, energy and resources to achieving whatever enabling goals are necessary to deliver these objectives through the work programme to be agreed following the Assembly.

In between Assemblies CEC will produce an Annual Report documenting its progress in delivering its strategic objectives. This Annual Report will also provide the financial accounts for the year. As part of these efforts CEC will draw up an annual work and financial plan for the coming year setting out the concrete steps that it will take to realise the strategic objectives falling in that particular year. This work plan will be publicly available to CEC's Member Churches and other stakeholders.

*NOTE: The General Secretary is responsible for drawing up a proposed work programme, taking due note of the decisions and deliberations of the Assembly. This programme is to be agreed by the Governing Board.*

### **Governing Board (3.20)**

To ensure the good governance of CEC and its accountable leadership and management between Assemblies, CEC's Governing Board will have the following functions and duties:

- Review CEC's vision, mission and values: It is the Board's responsibility to review periodically CEC's strategic statements (Faith, Historical Narrative, Vision, Mission and Values) for accuracy and validity and where necessary propose amendments to the General Assembly;
- Ensure effective organizational and strategic planning: As stewards of CEC, the Board must actively participate with the chief executive in the overall strategic planning process and assist in implementing the strategic objectives as agreed by the Governing Assembly;
- Determine and monitor CEC's programs, services and working groups: The Board's role in this area should be to determine which programmes are the most consistent with CEC's vision, mission and values, and to monitor their effectiveness;
- Ensure adequate resources: One of the Board's foremost responsibilities should be to provide adequate resources for CEC to fulfil its mission. The Board should work in partnership with the chief executive and relevant finance personnel to raise funds from its Member Churches and other potential donors;
- Manage resources effectively: The Board - in order to remain accountable to its Member Churches, donors and the wider public - must assist in developing the annual budget and ensuring that proper financial controls are in place;
- Select the chief executive: The Board must reach consensus on the chief executive's job description and undertake a careful search process to find the most qualified individual for the position;
- Support the chief executive and review his or her performance: The Board should ensure that the chief executive has the moral and professional support he or she needs to further the goals of CEC. The chief executive, in partnership with the entire Board, should decide upon a periodic evaluation of the chief executive's performance;
- Serve as a Court of Appeal: Except in the direst of circumstances, the Board must serve as a Court of Appeal in personnel matters. Solid personnel policies, grievance procedures, and a clear delegation to the chief executive of hiring and managing employees should reduce the risk of conflict;
- Enhance CEC's public image: The Board and its members must lead by example by articulating and advocating CEC's vision, mission and values to the wider community, including CEC's Member Churches, the public, decision makers and the media;
- Authorise official reports and submissions: The Board must be responsible for receiving and approving official CEC reports and submissions prior to their publication. The Board should draw up rules and regulations consistent with the constitution of CEC to determine this process. This is an important quality control mechanism. It is also necessary if the Board is to have ownership of such work and to act as CEC's advocate in public;

- Assess its own performance: By evaluating its performance in fulfilling its responsibilities, the Board can recognize its achievements and reach consensus on which areas need to be improved;
- Adopt its own Standing Orders and that of the Secretariat: The Board should draw up these Standing Orders consistent with the constitution of CEC;
- Reflect on the opportunities for ecumenical encounter: The Board needs to identify ways in which existing forms of ecumenical encounter outside of CEC's governing bodies can be strengthened in the operational life of CEC.

### **General Secretary (3.49)**

To ensure the good management of CEC, the functions of the General Secretary include:

- Implementing the strategic goals and objectives of CEC as agreed by the Assembly;
- Working with the President and Vice Presidents to enable CEC's Board to fulfil its governance functions;
- Giving direction and leadership toward the achievement of the organisation's vision, mission, values, strategy and its annual goals and objectives;
- Overseeing the design, promotion, delivery and quality of programs, products and services;
- Recommending a yearly budget for Board approval and prudently managing the organization's resources within those budget guidelines;
- Managing the human resources of the organization according to authorized personnel policies and procedures;
- Ensuring the organization and its mission, programs, products and services are consistently presented in a strong and positive image to relevant stakeholders;
- Overseeing fundraising planning and implementation, including identifying resource requirements, researching funding sources, establishing strategies to approach funders, submitting proposals and administrating fundraising records and documentation;
- Act as the Secretary to the Governing Board and participate as a non-voting member of CEC's Governing Board;
- Ensure effective communication internally and externally;
- Liaise with stakeholders and strategic partners, including ecumenical partners and organisations, in order to ensure they can contribute significantly to the operational life of CEC;
- Act as a spokesperson of the organisation on operational issues in accordance with the standing orders agreed by the Governing Board.

### **CEC Secretariat (3.55, 3.57)**

At an operational level, the Secretariat will deliver the following core functions: 1) programmatic development and research; 2) political engagement.

- **Programmatic development and research:** A core part of the Secretariat's work must be to facilitate the interaction between Member Churches, Church related organisations and other expert ecumenical bodies and associations on specific areas of common concern mandated by CEC's governing bodies. This is an important ingredient in strengthening the bonds of fellowship between Member Churches so that they might be better equipped and empowered to work together and with others. It is a necessary prerequisite in ensuring that CEC is first and foremost a properly resourced theological community. This function requires the Secretariat to provide a mechanism by which Member Churches interact with one another and with others to develop the necessary social knowledge and theological capital to resolve common problems that impact on their shared future. This can help in promoting the cohesion, regeneration and development of CEC as a whole and would be a useful contribution from CEC to the wider ecumenical movement. It is less important that the Secretariat has expertise in specific areas. It is more important that the Secretariat contains staff who are expert generalists able to manage the interactions between Member Churches and other Church related bodies on a range of theological and socio/economic issues. This could be through seminars, conferences, workshops, expert working groups, task forces. The results of the interactions can be captured, harvested and then shared more widely.
- **Political engagement:** A core part of the Secretariat's work must be to engage with and influence a range of individuals, groups, institutions and bodies with an interest in the affairs of CEC or whose activities impact on the life of CEC and/or its Member Churches. The Secretariat needs to be able to explain agreed policies, shape the policies and positions of others, partner others and where necessary undertake advocacy on issues which could impact on the life of CEC and its Member Churches. An essential component of this work is political monitoring and where necessary the development of strategies as to which EU, pan-European or international institutions to engage with, on what issues and at what stage during the legislative or policy process. It requires Secretariat staff to organise and attend suitable events where the views of CEC and its Member Churches can be promoted and explained in a concise, efficient and transparent manner. All of this requires the Secretariat staff to be politically aware and astute, confident at networking and coalition building and persuasive communicators.

These core deliverables necessitates the Secretariat having office support in the following areas: personnel, finance, administration and communications.

### **Participatory Working Mechanisms (3.62-3.63)**

The working mechanisms will enable Member Churches and partner organisations to contribute to the life of CEC. There will be a need for Church leaders' meetings, seminars, ecumenical gatherings, theological conferences, workshops, expert working groups, online-interactive consultations, task forces and dialogue sessions. There might also be a need to establish advisory groups to assist staff and/or groupings of staff to implement particular programmes of work and to advise staff on the most appropriate working mechanism to use. Used properly these working mechanisms can give CEC greater flexibility to respond to emerging shocks and stresses present in Europe and further afield.

Where a fixed group (i.e. expert working group, task force or advisory group) is established for any period of time as opposed to an open and one-off conferences, seminar or dialogue session, then it should be the responsibility of the Governing Board under advice from the General Secretary to determine their remit, composition and balance, budget and time frame.

### **Networking Partnerships (3.4-3.6)**

CEC will create a register of Organisations in Partnership with CEC for specialised Church and ecumenical organisations that have responsibility for particular issues or areas. Those who register under this category will feed into the preparation for the General Assembly and will attend the General Assembly if needed and if invited.

This register will contain the list of those bodies that CEC would actively seek to involve in delivering its work programme and designated projects. It is the responsibility of CEC's Governing Board to draw up the necessary regulations setting out the rights and responsibilities of those organisations that register under this category.

CEC will develop a regular, open and transparent dialogue with national councils of churches both in Europe and further afield so that these national ecumenical bodies can contribute to the operational life of CEC.

### **Location (3.71-3.72)**

CEC's General Secretary and secretariat will be located in Brussels and may have a subsidiary office in Strasbourg.