

**THE GLOBAL CHRISTIAN FORUM**  
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## **GCF NEWS 9 – DECEMBER 2008**

### **3 – Year GCF Programme**

The group of about fifty representatives of churches, church families and organisations participating in the Global Christian Forum that met in New Delhi on 8 – 11 November has formulated the objectives and identified the main GCF activities for the period 2009 to 2011. The group affirmed the unique calling of the Forum and emphasized that it should continue its efforts centred on its core vocation of deepening and broadening relationships of trust and mutual respect. At the same time, the group affirmed that « we should not be afraid to face more deeply the issues that impede our relationships .... and rejoice at the gift that the Forum process can be for addressing difficult questions ». Strategic goals for the coming three years include upholding the distinctive nature of the Forum, synergy between activities at the global, regional, and national/local level, upgrading communication, establishing a support network and strengthening the operational base of the GCF. Among the activities outlined for the coming three years are regional consultations (specifically in Africa and Asia, possibly also in the Caribbean and the Pacific), a leaders meeting in Latin America, sub-regional meetings in Europe, team visits (possibly to the Middle East), national meetings (countries to be identified), the gathering and sharing of case studies, and applying the faith-sharing approach of the Forum to difficult issues on which opinions differ, taking into account the advances of many other conversations and dialogues between Christian traditions. The three-year programme will lead up to a Global Forum Meeting that will take place in 2011. The group that met in New Delhi recognized that the global level has a special claim on the GCF as there is no comparable actor globally. The group also highlighted the autonomy of the GCF process within the wider search for Christian unity and warmly invited others who have not yet been part of the journey to join, « as brothers and sisters in Christ around this open table of meeting ».

The full text of the document approved at the New Delhi meeting is available on the GCF website [www.globalchristianforum.org](http://www.globalchristianforum.org) . The GCF Committee will meet in February 2009 to draw up a plan of implementation of the 3 year programme and a budget. The plan will include an evaluation at the end of the three year period.

The participants at the New Delhi meeting were briefed by representatives of the National United Christian Forum about the outbursts of anti-Christian violence in India in recent months. They addressed a letter to the Christians and churches in India expressing their solidarity and pledging their continuing prayers and support.

### **GCF General Secretary**

The GCF Committee has initiated the search process for a full-time general secretary of the GCF as part of the resolve to strengthen the operational capacity. The position is advertised on the GCF website. Inquiries and applications can be addressed to the Secretary of the Search Committee the Rev. Richard Howell, email [efi@swissmail.org](mailto:efi@swissmail.org)

### **Evaluation of the GCF process 1998 – 2007**

After having served the purpose of providing basic material for the New Delhi consultation on the 3 – year programme, the reports of the evaluations carried out by the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, the Centre IIMO of the University of Utrecht and the FIET Theological Institute are now available to interested GCF participants and others. Excerpts of the reports will be posted on the GCF website. Copies of the full reports in pdf format can be ordered free of charge from the GCF Secretariat and printed copies against payment of US\$ 10.- plus postage. Contact [gcforum@sunrise.ch](mailto:gcforum@sunrise.ch) The reports which will continue to serve and guide the GCF Committee as it moves ahead with consolidating the strategic goals of the Forum and implementing the activities in the years to come.

### **Christian unity and common witness in Ghana**

GCF participant and administrator of the Ghana Pentecostal Council Michael Tawia-Ransford reports that all the nation-wide Christian bodies in Ghana jointly organised and observed last October a Week of Prayer and Fasting for transparent, peaceful and progressive general elections scheduled for 7<sup>th</sup> December 2008. It was the first time that the Christian Council of Ghana, the Ghana Pentecostal Council, the Catholic Bishop's Conference, the National Charismatic Council and the Independent African Churches came together to pray and fast. The climax of the historic event was a national gathering with the leaders of all political parties and the President of the nation. This was followed by a Forum organised by the joint committee of the five bodies on 20<sup>th</sup> November with the Presidential Aspirants on the theme of Corruption and Morality and a discussion on their electoral manifestos.