

GCF NEWS 7 – JUNE 2008

Follow-up of the Limuru Global Forum

From the information gathered by the Secretariat it is clear that a lot of reporting has been done on the event that took place on 6 – 9 November 2007 in Limuru, near Nairobi, Kenya. Besides the formal reports to governing bodies of churches and organizations, many articles have been published in church magazines, on websites etc. *L'Osservatore Romano*, the official journal of the Vatican carried an article and so did *Sojourners* magazine, *Wiadomosci* the magazine of the Orthodox Church in Poland, *Working Together* of the Australian Evangelical Alliance, *Adventist World*, *Unité des Chrétiens* a French publication, and many others. The French Protestant Federation held a day-long meeting on the Forum with protestant, catholic, orthodox, evangelical and pentecostal members of its network of ecumenical and inter-church relations.

Last May, six months after the Limuru Global Forum, all the participants in the event have been asked to reflect on the commitment expressed in the Message of the meeting: *our commitment is to press on in promoting ever greater understanding and cooperation among Christians the process of the Global Christian Forum now must continue we will work to convene local and regional events in order to deepen this journey toward the goal of reconciliation we invite all brothers and sisters in the Lord to engage within their own setting the rich resources of the Global Christian Forum in journeying together with Jesus Christ* As responses come in they will be shared through GCF NEWS.

The Local Committee in Kenya that hosted the Limuru Global Forum has decided to set up a Kenyan Forum. A small group representative of the Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church, the Evangelicals, the member churches of the National Council of Churches of Kenya and the African Instituted Churches has been formed for this purpose. The initiators hope that the Forum in Kenya could serve as a model for other African countries.

Another aspect of the follow-up is the evaluation of the Forum process which is now underway. The Oxford Centre for Mission Studies has sent its questionnaire to the participants in the Limuru Global Forum and is collecting responses. The Centre for Intercultural Theology, Mission and Oecumenics of the University of Utrecht is conducting its interviews. The Theological Institute FIET in Buenos Aires has started the evaluation in Latin America. The evaluation results will be made public in October.

Consultation on Three – Year Programme

The preparations for the consultation that will take place on 8 – 11 November in New Delhi, India, are progressing well. Coming exactly a year after the Limuru Global Forum, the purpose of this meeting will be to plan a 3 – year programme of the GCF for 2009 – 2011. The dates were chosen so as to make sure that the reports of the evaluation would be available for this planning exercise.

New Initiative in Latin America

In follow-up of the Latin America Consultation on the Global Christian Forum in Santiago, Chile, in June 2007 and of the Limuru Global Forum a new process called *Forum for Unity* has been initiated in Latin America. At a first meeting held in Quito on 3 – 4 April several representatives of organizations that took part in the GCF meetings came together. They will meet again with others early July in Lima, Peru.

Middle East Consultation

The plans for holding a regional meeting in the Middle East have been postponed because

more consultation with church leaders is needed. As was done with previous regional consultations the GCF Committee contacted various ecclesial bodies in the region, including the Middle East Council of Churches, to seek their cooperation. However the Presidents of the MECC have advised the committee that they believe there is no need for such a consultation in the Middle East. The GCF Committee will continue to explore possibilities of discussing the relevance of the Global Christian Forum for the Middle East region with church leaders concerned.

Pentecost Ecumenical Forum

A Pentecost Ecumenical Forum has come into being in Spain, bringing together members of Orthodox, Protestant and Anglican churches, of the Federation of Evangelical Entities in Spain and of various organisations of the Catholic Church. The group has taken as its basis the Guiding Purpose Statement of the Global Christian Forum. On the occasion of Pentecost it called on all the Christians in Spain to unite in prayer. A vigil was held in Madrid on May 10, preceded by a series of workshops and an agapé. The event was hosted by the Spanish Evangelical Church. The members of the Pentecost Ecumenical Forum are committed to strengthen the spirit of unity in mutual respect of one another's differences, to engage together in theological reflection, to promote what unites them and to participate in meetings and celebrations of each other's communities.

Retirement

Mgr. John Radano who has represented the Catholic Church on the GCF Committee since 1999 has retired from the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. Mgr. Radano has contributed immensely to the development of the Forum, in the early days to find the right directions and more recently in consolidating the Catholic commitment to and participation in the Forum process. The PCPCU has appointed the Rev. Fr. Gosbert Byamungu to replace him on the Committee.

If you wish to have more information on these or other aspects of the Global Christian Forum, please visit the website www.globalchristianforum.org or contact the Secretariat at gcforum@freesurf.ch .

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