

**THE GLOBAL CHRISTIAN FORUM**  
**P.O. Box 306, CH – 1290 Versoix, Switzerland**  
**Tel +41 22 755 4546 – Fax +41 22 755 0108 – Email:**  
**[gcforum@sunrise.ch](mailto:gcforum@sunrise.ch)**  
**Website: [www.globalchristianforum.org](http://www.globalchristianforum.org)**

## **GCF NEWS 8 – OCTOBER 2008**

### **3-Year GCF Programme**

Some fifty representatives of all the different church families, traditions and movements participating in the Global Christian Forum will meet in New Delhi, India from 8 – 11 November to work out a 3 – year programme of the GCF for the period 2009 – 2011. The programme will be based on the recommendations of the 2007 Limuru Global Forum and the reports of the evaluation of the process from 1998 to 2007. The New Delhi meeting will also reflect on how the 3 – year programme could culminate in a major Forum event in late 2011 or early 2012, and what shape such an event might take. In addition, it will be the occasion to finalize the formation of an enlarged and partially renewed GCF Committee that will assume its responsibilities as of 2009. The new committee will consist of members appointed by the various global bodies and churches representing the Christian traditions that participate in the Forum.

In the last couple of months violence against Christians, churches and Christian institutions has escalated in India. The GCF meeting will be an opportunity to learn about the situation and to express the concern and solidarity of the church worldwide with the Christians and the churches and the people of India.

### **New dialogue in the Netherlands**

The Protestant Church in the Netherlands (PKN) and the United Pentecostal and Evangelical Churches (VPE, name of the Assemblies of God in the Netherlands) have formed a commission for dialogue in which the National Platform of Pentecostal and Full Gospel Movements also participates. The initiative is the result of the need for an open dialogue that was felt on both sides. At a first meeting of the commission on 30<sup>th</sup> September it was stated that *the churches are confronted with common challenges in a secularized world. It is therefore necessary to get to know each other better, to build trust and to deal also with difficult issues on which opinions differ and which have sometimes led to prejudices*. The commission will meet five times a year and do a provisional evaluation of its work in two years. It is expected that the constituencies of the participating bodies will be kept informed of the progress of the dialogue.

At the centennial celebrations of the Pentecostal Movement in the Netherlands in the Olympic Stadion of Amsterdam last year, the then General Secretary of the PKN, the Rev. Bas Plaisier, offered apologies for the contempt with which in the past the pentecostal movement was sometimes treated in the 'historic' churches. At a subsequent meeting of the Synod of the PKN the president of the VPE, the Rev. Peter Sleebos spoke words of repentance on the side of the pentecostal movement.

Although the new dialogue in the Netherlands is not a direct result of the Global Christian Forum it should be noted that both the VPE and the PKN have been involved in several Forum meetings, e.g. the Europe Consultation in 2006 and the Limuru Global Forum in November 2007.

## **Joint efforts in the Philippines**

Since more than a year the bishops of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines and the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches have been meeting monthly to address the common concern of extra judicial killings in the Philippines. They have met jointly with the Officers of the National Police and the Military. The cooperation and the meetings have contributed to building confidence between the two councils and their leadership. It is planned to invite the Roman Catholic bishops to this forum as well.

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

The Oxford Centre for Mission Studies (OCMS), the Centre IIMO of the University of Utrecht and the Theological Institute FIET (Argentina) have completed their evaluation of the Global Christian Forum over the period from 1998 until the Limuru Global Forum of November 2007. The reports are being reviewed by the GCF Committee. These reports, and especially their recommendations will provide basic material for the elaboration of the 3 – year programme of the GCF at the meeting in New Delhi next month.