

Report

18th CCME General Assembly Bucharest, Romania 16-19 June 2011



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MINUTES OF THE 18TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCHES' COMMISSION FOR MIGRANTS IN EUROPE (CCME)

17th June 2011 afternoon

Prior to the 18th General Assembly, delegates and observers as well as additional guests participated in the conference **"Migration in Times of Economic Crisis –Policies, Migrants' Rights and the Role of Churches"** at the Coventus Hall of the Patriarchal Palace (see conference programme attached).



WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

H.E. Metropolitan Nifon and Father Mihai Spatarelu led the assembly in opening prayer.

CCME Moderator Rev Arlington Trotman officially opened the meeting, welcoming delegates, guests and staff and extending thanks to AIDRom for hosting the assembly.

MESSAGE BY H.E. METROPOLITAN EMMANUEL OF FRANCE

H.E. Metropolitan Emmanuel of France conveyed the greetings of His Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew as well as His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel of Romania. He also extended his greetings as President of the Conference of European Churches (speech see annex). Rev Trotman thanked



H.E. Emmanuel for his words and proceeded to the roll call.

ROLL CALL

During the roll call delegates were briefly called and introduced. The roll call indicated that all members of CCME were represented and that a quorum was therefore attained. At this point, the total number of votes was 56.

The members of the provisional Commission appointed by CEC present at the assembly were welcomed and appreciation expressed to CCME members who have entrusted them with votes.

Ms Doris Peschke explained the specific provisions of allocation and exercise of votes at the CCME assembly in a "by country" logic.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Rev Trotman went on to introduce the proposed agenda of the assembly, inviting comments and questions. The agenda was then unanimously adopted.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

Rev Trotman explained that membership applications from the Church of Cyprus and AIDRom (Romania) had been received. The ExCom recommended both applicants for membership of CCME. He invited the Very Archimandrite Father Benedict Ioannou to introduce the application of the Church of Cyprus. Father Benedict explained about the long-standing commitment of the Church of Cyprus to the ecumenical movement and its involvement with the work of CCME in previous years. Having invited questions and comments, Rev. Trotman asked the assembly to vote on the membership application of the Church of Cyprus.



The result was: YES: 56 NO: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 0



The membership application was unanimously accepted; Rev. Trotman welcomed the Church of Cyprus among the CCME members. As the Church of Cyprus exercises 3 votes in the CCME assembly, the total number of votes in the assembly increased to 59.

Rev. Trotman invited Ms Elena Timofticiuc to introduce the application of AIDRom. Ms Timofticiuc highlighted the common work of AIDRom and CCME in recent years and AIDRom's work on migration issues.

Having invited questions and comments, Rev. Trotman asked the assembly to vote on the membership application of AIDRom.

The result was: YES: 59 NO: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 0

The membership application was unanimously accepted. Rev. Trotman welcomed AIDROM among the CCME members. As AIDROM would exercise the 3 votes for

Romania in cooperation with ARCA in the CCME assembly, the total number of votes in the assembly remained at 59.

ELECTION GENERAL RAPPOREUR

Rev Trotman then proceeded to the appointment of a general rapporteur. Dr Torsten Moritz was proposed and unanimously accepted as general rapporteur.

ELECTION NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Rev Trotman proceeded by drawing the assembly's attention to the document "CCME assembly proceedings" in which the nomination and election process for the ExCom were explained.



He then invited suggestions for the nominations committee.

Ms Franca di Lecce, Mr Joel Le Billan, Mr Lemma Desta and Rev. Dr Roswitha Golder were nominated and unanimously elected as members of the nomination committee.

ACTIVITY REPORT 2008-10

Rev. Trotman invited the General Secretary Ms Doris Peschke to introduce the activity report. Ms Peschke gave an overview of the activities, following the structure of the written report. She underlined the difficult environment for activities on asylum and limited progress on labour migration, while acknowledging some success in advocating on refugee resettlement. She highlighted cooperation with PICUM on the issue of undocumented migrants and underlined the somewhat difficult concepts connected to discussions on integration. Regarding Roma, some activities had been undertaken while others were still in the stage of initial ideas. She stressed the various activities on the issue of "uniting in diversity" and the reasonable success of the year of European Churches Responding to Migration 2010 with the Conference of European Churches. Projects in various areas had had good results and policy impact.

In the discussion on the activity report, participants expressed thanks and appreciation for the amount and quality of the work undertaken in previous years. Participants also expressed that the amount of information provided was sometimes difficult to keep track of, while others felt more information sharing between members could be provided. Thanks were in particular expressed for reaching out to Eastern European churches. Delegates commented on the issue of integration, expressing that it might be

more suitable to frame discussions around the issue of migrants 'rights. Concern was expressed how work on the return directive could be best continued and how contact with AACC on the question of uniting in diversity could be enhanced.

Ms Peschke highlighted the need to seek ways in which members could be more proactively involved in the implementation of the CCME work programme; regarding AACC some staff changes had had a negative impact on continuity.

FINANCIAL REPORT 2008-10

Rev Trotman invited Mag Michael Bubik to present the financial report. Mag Bubik described the finances of CCME as being sufficient, but not sound. He explained that CCME would need an annual undesignated income of 250.000/300.000 € to maintain the minimum operations in its 3-person-office. However, only 150.000-200.000 could so far be raised annually, making CCME particularly dependant on project funding. He therefore appealed to members to consider an increase in membership fees.

Rev Trotman thanked the treasurer and invited questions and comments. Several delegates raised the question why certain CCME members were not paying any membership fee, others wanted to know about prospects of project funding in the future. Ms Peschke underlined that indeed a commitment from all members was needed in paying membership fees. Mag Bubik expressed careful optimism about future project funding and thanked the staff and in particular the CCME accountant Ms Charlotte Vander Borgh for their diligent work. Rev. Trotman joined these thanks and appealed to all members to help in finding the resources needed for the work of CCME.

ADOPTION OF REPORTS AND DISCHARGE EXCOM

Rev. Trotman asked the assembly to proceed to adopting the reports and discharging of the outgoing ExCom.

VOTE ON ADOPTION OF ACTIVITY REPORT: YES: 59 NO: 0 ABSTENTIONS 0

VOTE ON ADOPTION OF FINANCIAL REPORT: YES 59 NO: 0 ABSTENTIONS 0

Both reports were thus unanimously adopted.

VOTE ON DISCHARGE OF EXCOM: YES: 59 NO: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 0

The ExCom was thus discharged.

INTEGRATION CCME-CEC

Rev Trotman opened the agenda item on CEC-CCME integration explaining the background of the integration process. Ms Peschke explained that the proposed decision was necessary as with its revision decision (taken at the CEC assembly 2009) CEC had put into question the basis of previous agreements. CCME therefore needed to express itself in the current situation. She introduced the draft resolution on CEC-CCME integration (document CCME GA 2011-4).

Participants enquired why the CCME General Secretary was not part of the restructuring group and what scenario the CEC revision group was likely to suggest. Ms Peschke answered that this group was composed outside the ordinary logic of

appointing committees and groups in CEC: even staff of CEC was not part of the group and had so far not received any indications as to the recommendations of that group. It was therefore impossible to make any forecasts on the results. In the following discussion several delegates raised concern about the possibility of current CCME members to remain members after integration. Other delegates enquired what CCME had to gain from integration. Rev Trotman and Ms Peschke underlined that the intention of the integration process had been to strengthen the witness of churches on migration issues.

Rev Trotman suggested voting on point 1 of the resolution. The proposal was after some discussion accepted and point 1 of the resolution put to a vote.

VOTE DOCUMENT CCME GA 2011-4, POINT 1: YES: 53 NO: 0 ABST: 6 (see Annex 3)

The motion was thus carried.

Rev. Trotman closed the official session, inviting participants to join the screening of the movie "Surprising Europe" after supper. See: <http://www.surprisingeurope.com/>

18th June 2011 morning

Rev Trotman led the assembly in the morning prayer.



DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2012-15

Ms Franca di Lecce opened the meeting and invited General Secretary Ms Doris Peschke to present the draft work programme 2011-14. Ms Peschke explained that the work programme adopted in 2008 had initially been expected to cover the work of CCME as a commission of CEC until 2015. Little changes had therefore been made to the structure and content of the programme draft.

Ms di Lecce invited questions and comments. In their questions and comments delegates raised how CCME could best contribute to the work within the churches and

serve as a platform of exchange, welcomed the open acknowledgement of the challenges in the “uniting in diversity” process and asked if CCME was exclusively involved in advocacy with EU institutions. The particular situation of displacement of Cypriots due to the occupation of Northern Cyprus was echoed as well as the situation of domestic workers in view of the new ILO convention. The situation of children in removal was highlighted. The need of CCME to encourage churches e.g. on migration and development was mentioned and sharing of expertise on trafficking prior to the 2012 Olympics encouraged. In more general terms, concepts used in the work programme such as the notion of “stranger” or the concept of “integration” were called in question and the need for theological reflection highlighted.

Ms Peschke underlined that most aspects could be discussed in more detail during the working group. She explained that CCME was not exclusively dealing with EU advocacy but was also present vis-à-vis the Council of Europe and on certain issues the OSCE. However in view of limited resources and importance of the EU also for non-EU countries, a certain focus was on EU policy. The particular situation of Cyprus could possibly be looked into during the EU Presidency of Cyprus.

DRAFT BUDGET 2012-15

Ms di Lecce then asked Ms Peschke to present the draft budget 2012-14. Ms Peschke explained the difficulty of budgeting for CCME as a lot of the activities were dependant on successful fundraising. In past years, important areas such as improved communication or outreach to non-members could not sufficiently take place due to a lack of funding. Ms di Lecce invited questions and comments on the draft budget. In the discussion several speakers warned about a strong reliance on EU funding and the dependence this might create. A technical question on the distinction between services and equipment and services was raised and answered.

INSTALLATION OF WORKING GROUPS



On behalf of the ExCom, Ms Kristina Hellqvist went to explain the practicalities of the 4 working groups, namely on 1. Work programme; 2. Budget; 3. CEC-CCME integration and 4. Assembly message. The assembly split into these working groups.

18th June afternoon

It was noted that the representative of the Church of Cyprus had left and in writing transferred his voting rights to Prof. Dr Papantoniou. The vote of the Czech Republic, which had been exercised by Rev Popescu, had in writing been transferred to Ms Katerina Dekanovska.

PRESENTATION BY NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE AND EXCOM ELECTIONS

Rev. Trotman re-opened the proceedings of the assembly and called the nominations committee to present its report.

On behalf of the nominations committee Mr Lemma Desta thanked delegates for their trust. He explained that the nominations committee had been encouraged by the number of highly qualified and experienced persons who had been nominated. However, it had been difficult to find a balanced proposal which would respect regional, intercultural, gender and denominational balance as well as assuring certain continuity.

Despite these difficulties, the nominations committee was happy to propose a shortlist for the ExCom which would as much as possible do justice to these different requirements. The nominations committee therefore suggested:

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Victoria Kamondji (France)
Treasurer: Apostle Adejare Oyewole (United Kingdom)
Members: Rev. Alfredo Abad (Spain)
Ms Kristina Hellqvist (Sweden)
Rev. Thorsten Leißer (Germany)
Dr. Antonios Papantoniou (Greece)
Ms Elena Timofticiuc (Romania)

Substitute(s): Rev Rainer Mittwollen (Germany)
Ms Tetty Rooze (Belgium)

All candidates briefly presented themselves.

Rev Trotman thanked both the nominations committee and the candidates and invited comments and questions.

The question of how substitution works was raised and the General Secretary explained that the elected substitutes would step in in order of election results and not related to regional /denominational or other balance. Several delegates expressed happiness with the proposed slate, but some concern regarding regional balance if substitution might lead to two German ExCom members. The question of ExCom members and assembly participants with Asian background was raised. After explanations of the voting procedure, Mr Razvan Samoila, Mag. Michael Bubik and Ms Pat White were appointed as tellers. They distributed the ballot papers. The election was opened and a few minutes later, after the Rev Trotman had ascertained that all delegates had cast their votes, closed. The session was adjourned for a short break.

Rev Trotman re-opened the meeting and asked the tellers to announce the results. Mag. Bubik explained that 59 valid votes had been cast. The results were as follows:

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Victoria Kamondji 59 votes
Treasurer: Apostle Adejare Oyewole 59 votes
Members:

Rev. Alfredo Abad	59 votes
Ms Kristina Hellqvist	59 votes
Rev. Thorsten Leißer	59 votes
Dr. Antonios Papantoniou	59 votes
Ms Elena Timofticiuc	58 votes
Substitutes:	
Rev Rainer Mittwollen	58 votes
Ms Tetty Rooze	59 votes



From left: *Prof. Dr. Victoria Kamondji, Dr. Antonios Papantoniou, Apostle Adejare Oyewole
Ms Kristina Hellqvist, Rev. Alfredo Abad, Ms Elena Timofticiuc
Rev. Thorsten Leißer, Ms Tetty Rooze, Rev Rainer Mittwollen*

All candidates had therefore been elected. They all separately accepted the election.

DISCUSSION AND ADOPTION OF WORK PROGRAMME 2012-15

Ms Kristina Hellqvist took over the chairing of the last session and invited the working group on work programme to present its results. Ms Katharina Stamm and Mr Johannes Brandstätter introduced the working group results. The working group had generally been very happy with the draft, felt that the draft work programme set the right priorities and strikes a good balance between different issues. However, a number of minor amendments were being suggested, some of which had been a consensus among working group members, others being controversial.

Mr Johannes Brandstätter introduced the motion to replace the word “stranger” in parts 1.1., 1.2. and 2 of the work programme suggesting that the notion of stranger was one excluding and therefore contrary to the mission and work of CCME. He noted that there had been no consensus in the working group on these amendments. If amended, the work programme would read (amendments in capital letters, highlighted in gray and underlined):

1.1. With this work programme, CCME seeks to contribute to the Christian witness in Europe; seeking to develop a Europe welcoming THE DIVERSITY OF EUROPEAN SOCIETIES AS WELL AS THOSE ARRIVING NEWLY and building inclusive societies: "So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God" (Eph. 2:19).

1.2. The work of CCME in fostering Christian reflection and action on migration is grounded in the clear command in both the Old and the New Testaments to act AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AND TO share...

2. Mandate of CCME

As outlined in the joint memorandum of understanding "Different Backgrounds – Joint Future" signed by the leadership of CEC and CCME in Vienna in November 2007, the CCME General Assembly and CEC Central Committee have affirmed the mandate of the CCME of CEC, namely to

- serve the churches in their commitment to THOSE NEWLY ARRIVED AND TO OVERCOME RACIST DISCRIMINATION

Several speakers expressed support for the idea, while others felt that the proposed wording was not clear or appropriate. Several speakers suggested that a more in-depth discussion on terminology would be needed. It was also highlighted that both the biblical narrative as well as the constituent documents of CCME (e.g. articles of association) speak of the stranger and it might therefore be useful to keep this terminology in the work programme. As a result of the discussions, the proposed amendments were withdrawn and a motion proposed.

MOTION

"The CCME assembly asks the ExCom to review and revise the language of the documents of CCME to reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity of the people in whose interest CCME carries out its work."

YES: 59 NO 0 ABST 0

The motion was unanimously carried.

Ms Katarina Stamm went on to introduce the amendments which the group had agreed on.

1.3. In the context of the European Council for Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) CCME will support efforts to defend asylum, including complementary protection, in Europe. CCME in cooperation with its members will in particular monitor the implementation of framework legislation on asylum, E. G. THROUGH SHARING EXISTING BRIEFING MATERIAL OR EXISTING PRACTICE ON ADVOCACY. CCME will also advocate for improved framework legislation (ASYLUM DIRECTIVES, DUBLIN II REVISION). CCME WILL ADVOCATE FOR A FAIR SYSTEM OF SHARING OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR REFUGEE PROTECTION; WHICH WILL OFFER ACCESS TO A FAIR ASYLUM PROCEDURE AND A HIGH LEVEL OF PROTECTION TO REFUGEES THROUGHOUT EUROPE.

2.7. CCME will continue to **SUPPORT AND FACILITATE EXCHANGE AMONG MEMBERS ON WORK IN MONITORING OF** expulsion, detention and removal of migrants **AND RECOMMEND SUCH ACTIVITIES TO CHURCHES IN EUROPE.** CCME will monitor and give input on implementing the (few) positive aspects of the EU return directive and seek to acquire additional resources for operational activities in this area. If resources allow CCME will explore how practical cooperation with partners in other regions can be enhanced in this field. **CCME WILL SUPPORT CHILDREN'S RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS IN THEIR ADVOCACY FOR THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD IN RETURN AND REMOVAL.**

3. Working mechanisms

The CCME working mechanisms are derived from the mandate of CCME:

3.1. To serve the churches in their commitment to strangers, responding to the message of the Bible, which insists on the dignity of every human being, in order to promote an inclusive policy at European and national level for migrants, refugees and minority groups.



- Communication with CCME and CEC members, **CCME WILL IN THIS CONTEXT EXPLORE MECHANISMS OF INFO SHARING BETWEEN MEMBERS E.G. THROUGH NEWSLISTS AND "MEMBERS ONLY" SECTION OF THE WEBSITE**

- working groups, ad hoc task forces **AND REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS CONVENED BY CCME MEMBERS**

There was general support for the proposed changes. General Secretary Doris Peschke suggested that the cooperation with children's rights organisations referred to in amendment 2.7. would be worded: "CCME will continue cooperation with children's rights organisations...". This suggestion was widely accepted.

With these modifications, the suggested amendments were put to a vote.

YES: 59 NO: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 0

The amendments were therefore carried.

At this point an additional suggestion to convene a panel of migrants to comment on the work of CCME was put forward. Discussions resulted in the following motion put to a vote:

"The assembly requests the ExCom to explore the feasibility to seek mechanisms to include wider views and opinions from migrants from different backgrounds, including artists and other relevant groups".

YES: 59 NO: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 0

The motion was carried

The work programme as amended was then put to the vote.

YES: 59 NO: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 0

The amended work programme was thus adopted.

DISCUSSION AND ADOPTION OF BUDGET 2012-15

Mag. Michael Bubik introduced the report of the working group on the budget. The group had examined the financial situation and expressed concern that there might be a deficit in the future, in particular as the project funding in next years could not be taken for granted. In general there was a need to increase the contribution through membership fees, both by ensuring that all members pay some membership fee as well as increasing the amount of membership fees. The group therefore suggested one budget modification, namely to increase the income side under membership fees by 5.000,- to 135.000 € and to reduce grants by 5.000,- € to 55.100,- €. The group would also like to suggest that a recommendation be adopted that the minimum membership fee would be fixed at 250,- €.

In the discussion several delegates underlined the need to make the work of CCME more visible in order to attract more funding. Others underlined that more money would be a precondition of making CCME more visible. Several delegates underlined that both an increase in membership fees and a minimum fee would require serious commitment of all members.

The amendment was put to a vote:

to increase the *income side of the draft budget under membership fees by 5.000,- to 135.000 € and to reduce grants by 5.000,- € to 55.100,- €*

YES: 43 NO: 0 ABST: 16

The amendment was carried

The amended budget was then put to a vote

YES: 59 NO: 0 ABST: 0

The amended budget was thus adopted. (see annex 2)

RESOLUTION CEC-CCME INTEGRATION

Rev. Alfredo Abad introduced the report of the working group. He underlined that there had been a strong consensus on the proposed motion. Some questions were raised how the need for inclusive decision-making structures and inclusive membership could be most adequately expressed.

The motion was put to a vote

YES: 59 NO: 0 ABST: 0

At this point the Spanish delegate left without transferring the votes.

PUBLIC STATEMENT

Dr Jan van der Kolk introduced the draft public declaration of the working group. There was general approval of the text, even though small linguistic corrections were suggested. The motion was therefore put to a vote with a mandate to the newly elected ExCom to review the linguistics of the text.

YES: 56 NO: 0 ABST: 0

The statement was therefore adopted.

Ms Hellqvist thanked all participants, indicated that there would be a farewell party in the evening and declared the general assembly closed.



ANNEX 1: CCME WORK PROGRAMME AS ADOPTED

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Work Programme 2011-2014 of the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe

A. WHERE WE COME FROM

CCME is an ecumenical organisation that serves the churches in their commitment to strangers, responding to the message of the Bible which insists on the dignity of every human being, in order to promote an inclusive policy at European and national level for migrants, refugees and minority groups.

(CCME Mission Statement, adopted at the General Assembly 2005)

1. Foundations of the work of CCME

1.1. With this work programme, CCME seeks to contribute to the Christian witness in Europe; seeking to develop a Europe welcoming the strangers and building inclusive societies: "So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God" (Eph. 2:19).

1.2. The work of CCME in fostering Christian reflection and action on migration is grounded in the clear command in both the Old and the New Testaments to act humanely and compassionately towards the strangers who share with all human beings the dignity of the Being of God, (Genesis 1,26-27; John 1,1). That "You shall love the alien as yourself" (Leviticus 19, 34; Hebrews 13, 1-3) is typical of the humane attitude towards 'the other' found in the Moses law, an obligation recognized by the three Abrahamic world religions and other faith communities. It is believed to have been given both by revelation and natural law, that is, a moral principle which is capable of being recognized by all human beings.

1.3. The Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe in their memorandum of understanding "Different Backgrounds – Joint Future" adopted in November 2007 by the CCME ExCom and the CEC Central Committee respectively, have agreed to journey together to make the witness of churches in Europe more visible.

1.4. The decision of the CEC General Assembly in Lyon in 2009 to completely revise the working structures of CEC, including those agreed upon in the 2007 memorandum of understanding, has effectively put on hold the final steps of the integration process. CCME remains committed to concluding the integration process once CEC has reaffirmed that the memorandum of understanding can continue to be the basis of these final steps of integration of CEC and CCME. In the meantime CCME will contribute as a legally independent organisation to the overall work of CEC and its constituencies and provide input to the common work priorities of CEC and its commissions.

1.5. The CCME Mission Statement adopted by the 16th CCME Assembly in London, October 2005 continues to guide the work of the CCME.

2. Mandate of CCME

As outlined in the joint memorandum of understanding “Different Backgrounds – Joint Future” signed by the leadership of CEC and CCME in Vienna in November 2007, the CCME General Assembly and CEC Central Committee have affirmed the mandate of the CCME of CEC, namely to

- serve the churches in their commitment to strangers, responding to the message of the Bible, which insists on the dignity of every human being, in order to promote an inclusive policy at European and national level for migrants, refugees and minority groups;
- work on issues of migration and integration, asylum and refugees, and against racism and discrimination, undertake research, initiate, develop and implement projects in these fields;
- represent the common voice of the churches in Europe on the above issues vis-à-vis the European institutions.

3. Process towards this work programme

This work programme is the result of a participatory process: the CCME General Assembly in Protaras/Cyprus on 11th October 2008 had adopted a work programme 2009-2015 for CCME. CCME members, based on an invitation sent out in March 2011, suggest work priorities for the period 2011-14. The CCME ExCom in its meeting in Geneva 28-30 March 2011 further developed these priorities. The CCME General assembly in Bucharest 16-19 June 2011 discussed, amended and adopted this CCME work programme 2011-2014.

B. WHAT WE WILL BE DOING

Within its general mandate, CCME will seek to focus its activities on a limited number of strategic areas, in which it pro-actively engages with high quality contributions and potential for impact, rather than trying to address every issue of potential relevance. In other areas, CCME will facilitate contacts between its constituency and other actors leading on the issue, participate in coalitions lead by others, or simply monitor without developing own activities. CCME will carefully evaluate if, as a European network with national member organisations, it is best placed to address a particular issue.

In its work CCME will work for coherence in the ecumenical witness in Europe. It will therefore, together with CEC and its Commissions, engage in work on a number of cross-cutting themes. Within the wider ecumenical family CCME will also contribute to the monitoring of developments influencing the life of migrants, such as economic development, conflict around the world, climate change.

CCME’s work will both reflect a socio-political analysis of current contexts and theological reflection on migration.

1. Europe's role in refugee protection in the 21st century

1.1. The large majority of refugees are currently hosted by poorer countries in the world. In the 20th century, Europe was the scene of displacement but also of providing protection. New forms of displacement and forced migration (e.g. due to environmental degradation) may pose challenges in the years to come. Yet, in the past years, the numbers of refugees in Europe has overall drastically declined. However, numbers of refugees vary significantly between different European countries and the current system of responsibility-sharing places over-proportional responsibility on the EU member states - and non EU members - at the external border of the EU. Generally, fewer refugees find access to Europe, and access to effective protection is becoming increasingly difficult. Effective access to a fair and just asylum procedure for those in need of protection remains crucial. At the same time, the declining numbers of refugees coming to Europe further underline the need to extend solidarity to those refugees who will not be able to access European territory.

1.2. While the EU and its members states are formally committed to establishing a Common European Asylum System, procedures and conditions for obtaining refugee status as well as recognition rates vary considerably across the EU. There is a need to further harmonise EU legislation and practice across EU member states. While the EU Asylum Support Office, which will officially be opened on 19 June 2011 in Valetta, Malta, will play a role in practical cooperation, true harmonisation will depend on "hard law". The assessment of the correct implementation of previously adopted EU framework legislation on asylum, both in terms of legal transposition into national law by EU Member States, as well as in terms of practical impact, will be of critical importance.

1.3. In the context of the European Council for Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) CCME will support efforts to defend asylum, including complementary protection, in Europe. CCME in cooperation with its members will in particular monitor the implementation of framework legislation on asylum, e.g. through sharing existing briefing material or existing practice on advocacy. CCME will also advocate for improved framework legislation (Asylum directives, Dublin II revision). CCME will advocate for a fair system of sharing of responsibility for refugee protection, which will offer access to a fair asylum procedure and a high level of protection throughout Europe.

1.4. CCME will take forwards initiatives to promote additional forms of refugee protection; in particular the resettlement of refugees to Europe. CCME will, where possible in cooperation with partners from other regions, seek to strengthen the role of churches in promoting and implementing refugee resettlement.

1.5. CCME will monitor initiatives of UNHCR to redefine the need of protection in view of present challenges in refugee protection.

1.6. For CCME, the area of work on "Europe's role in refugee protection in the 21st century" will be a privileged field of cooperation with CEC and its Commissions on Church and Society and on Churches in Dialogue under the heading "Representing the common voice of the Churches vis-à-vis the European institutions". In this context CCME will continue to represent CEC in ECRE:

2. Human Dignity in the process of labour migration

2.1. With economic globalisation, patterns of international migration are changing. While the majority of migrants move within their region, more migrants travel further distances for a job and a living.

2.2. While they are welcome when (cheap) labour is needed, permanent settlement and participation in societies meet barriers and restrictions. In countries recovering from the economic crisis, a trend to increase labour migration can be observed in, while migrants' status and rights remain uncertain. In many countries, migrants have become scapegoats in times of crisis. The right to family life for migrants is particularly under threat in many countries.

2.3. While more and more EU member states need, and actively recruit, migrants for various sectors in the labour markets, there is wide disparity with regard to the rights of migrants across the EU. The Council of Europe has addressed the issue of labour migration in September 2008 in the conference of ministers responsible for migration, and the Council of Europe standards, conventions and recommendations on labour migrants ought to be taken as a common basis also for developing EU standards. In addition, the recommendations of the International Labour Organisation in this field provide a good framework for advocacy with governments, employers and trade unions. The call for ratification of the 1990 Convention on the rights of migrants and members of their family will be at the heart of CCME's advocacy in this field.

2.4. CCME will continue its advocacy for a uniform set of rights for all migrants in the debates on EU wide migration policies. In particular CCME will promote the ratification of binding legal instruments Europe-wide and globally.

2.5. In ecumenical cooperation CCME will underline the importance of the right to family life for migrants, both as a human right and as sine qua non of integration.

2.6. CCME will continue to monitor the development of EU legislation. Seeking coherence with the area of migration and development, CCME will advocate for circular migration on the basis of a migrant-centered approach.

2.7. CCME will continue to support and facilitate exchange among members on monitoring of expulsion, detention and removal of migrants and recommend such activities to churches in Europe. In particular CCME will monitor and give input on implementing the (few) positive aspects of the EU return directive and seek to acquire additional resources for operational activities in this area. If resources allow CCME will explore how practical cooperation with partners in other regions can be enhanced in this field. CCME will continue the cooperation with children's rights organisations in their advocacy for the best interest of the child in return and removal.

2.8. Following up on the recommendation of the CEC Assembly in Lyon 2009, CCME and CEC will encourage their members to hold prayers of intercession for persons who have lost their lives on their way to dignity and safety.

2.9. CCME will, where appropriate, cooperate with PICUM in its work of addressing situations of migrants in irregular situation, and seek to involve CCME members in the work of broader platforms on the issue of detention.

3. Countering contemporary forms of slavery, in particular trafficking in human beings

3.1. Parallel to stricter immigration controls, trafficking in human beings has become more visible in the past two decades as a new form of slavery. While joint efforts of authorities and non-governmental organisations and churches against this international crime have produced some results, trafficking for various forms of exploitation remains still a significant problem. Expertise on trafficking in women for sexual exploitation is fairly developed, but policy responses are still insufficient. Other forms of exploitation, e.g. forced labour are still a rather unknown field. Activities of civil society are still mainly focussed on areas of “damage control” such as prevention and assistance, with issues of rights and compensations often being sidelined.

3.2. The human rights of trafficked persons are generally still insufficiently protected. However, implementation of new legislation by the EU and the Council of Europe Convention offer opportunities to better protect the rights of trafficked persons.

3.3. The basis of the work and the rights-based approach of CCME against trafficking have been laid down in the 2008 CCME position paper “If the son sets you free” on trafficking.

3.4. CCME will maintain its role as a center of expertise for churches in Europe wishing to address trafficking in women. CCME will contribute to events organised by churches and Christian agencies across Europe and based on experiences from the field give input to European policy debates.

3.5. CCME will further develop expertise on patterns of labour trafficking and best practice to combat it – if possible in partnership and with specific projects. Particular focus will be on the role of civil society organisation in identification of victims and on models of guaranteeing the access to rights, such as compensation.

4. Uniting in Diversity: Migration as an opportunity and a challenge for the unity of the church

4.1. There is an increasing awareness that migration is changing the ecclesial landscape in Europe: more congregations of migrants are found, a greater diversity of denominations is observed. Separate and segregated church life is a phenomenon similar to fragmentation in societies, at the same time more transnational and international congregations emerge. Migration constitutes an enormous opportunity and yet a considerable challenge for churches in Europe. The way churches in Europe manage to achieve the goal of uniting in diversity will in many ways determine the future of Christianity in Europe. The credibility of Christian witness for inclusive communities in Europe will largely be influenced by the way in which churches achieve inclusiveness in their own midst.

4.2. As one of its priorities CCME will further advance activities assisting and encouraging churches in Europe in the process of “Being Church Together” with “migrant churches” (including migrant-led, black majority and minority ethnic churches). CCME will map ongoing activities of churches in Europe in this area, collect them and share information.

4.3. CCME will seek to encourage input from ecumenical bodies on the specific role religion can play in integration of migrants and host societies. As a member of the "ACCEPT Pluralism" research project consortium, CCME will exchange and share knowledge on tolerance and cultural diversity in Europe.

4.4. For CCME, the area of work on "uniting in diversity" will be a privileged field of cooperation with CEC and its Commissions on Church and Society and on Churches in Dialogue under the heading "Promoting the unity of the churches..."

5. Churches as witness to inclusive communities in Europe

5.1. Various forms of exclusion continue to exist in societies, some of which are becoming even more dramatic. Vulnerable groups of migrants are particularly affected by exclusion, e.g. asylum applicants and undocumented migrants, children of migrants, but also ethnic minorities are often marginalised. Anti-discrimination legislation provides an important instrument even if it also poses challenges.

5.2. CCME will maintain its involvement in anti-racism networks, both ecumenical and secular. It will in this context keep informed about anti-discrimination legislation and, where appropriate, contribute to its promotion in churches. Where possible CCME will participate in platforms for the Inclusion of ethnically discriminated groups within church and society.

5.3. The issue of discrimination of Roma has in recent years received considerable attention. EU policy declarations have highlighted the need for decisive action by member states as well as the need for civil society involvement in overcoming the discrimination of Roma. Churches and Christian agencies in some countries have begun to address the issue in a more coherent fashion.

5.4. CCME will continue to enhance the cooperation with Eurodiaconia to develop synergies between the two organisations working in this field.

5.5. CCME will in particular seek funding for a programme looking at the role of churches in overcoming the discrimination of Roma. Activities could include team visits and studies on acknowledging the role of the Roma community in national and church history.

5.6. In cooperation with other partners CCME will monitor discussions on migrants' integration. CCME will where appropriate contribute to them, based on the conviction that integration in all aspects is a two way process, that should include migrants' rights and anti-discrimination and should create a logic of better inclusion rather than pre-emptive exclusion of certain groups of (potential) migrants.

5.7. For CCME, the area of work on "churches as witness to inclusive communities" will be a privileged field of cooperation with CEC and its Commissions on Church and Society and on Churches in Dialogue under the heading "promoting inclusive communities".

6. Migration and development

6.1. The nexus between migration and development is recognised in communication and statements; policies and concrete cooperation activities (e.g. the European Neighbourhood Policy) are however still largely dominated by the aim to use development cooperation as a tool for migration restriction and control. The process around the Global Forum on Migration and Development has shown interest in the issue, but equally signalled the difficulty to get actors from both fields, migration and development, into communication.

6.2. Churches as actors in the fields of migration and development are ideally placed to explore positive ways of action which go beyond remittances. However, this potential of being actors of migration and development is not yet fully used.

6.3. CCME will continue to seek cooperation with APRODEV, its agencies and global bodies like ACT Alliance to monitor policy developments at European level. CCME will explore possible project cooperation with partners from other regions in the area of migration and development, in particular around the Global Forum on Migration and Development.

C. HOW WE WILL BE WORKING

1. Elements of planning

1.1. Potential activities of CCME will need to be evaluated against their potential:

- to have a clear impact among churches, or
- to have an impact in voicing the churches' concerns towards policies on the national level;
- to provide specific added value by addressing an issue on a European level.
- to make a specific contribution of churches to a wider debate and serve the churches' witness in the area of migration on a global level;
- to be complementary to or to have specific added value in relation to activities of other actors and to achieve synergy with them;
- to give a voice to the voiceless.

2. Planning stages

All activities need to be scrutinised in a process following a number of stages:

- 2.1. A thorough needs assessment,
- 2.2. Reflection on possible alternatives (e.g. other actors addressing issue, other working method),
- 2.3. Initial reflection on strategy and methodology of activity;

- 2.4. Assessment of potential impact, in particular of the potential added value for member organisations of addressing a particular topic on European level and in the context of CCME and CEC,
- 2.5. Reflection on how CCME or CEC activities would link to similar activities undertaken by other actors in the same thematic area,
- 2.6. Analysis of potential impact on CCME-CEC advocacy work for refugees, migrants and minority ethnic people,
- 2.7. Identification of thematic and financial support, in particular among members and strategic partners,
- 2.8. Support for project methodology among members,
- 2.9. Adequate methods of impact assessment and evaluation will need to be developed.

3. Working mechanisms

The CCME working mechanisms are derived from the mandate of CCME:

3.1. To serve the churches in their commitment to strangers, responding to the message of the Bible, which insists on the dignity of every human being, in order to promote an inclusive policy at European and national level for migrants, refugees and minority groups.

- Communication with CCME and CEC members CCME will in this context explore mechanisms of information sharing between members, e.g. through newlists and a "members only" section of the website;
- working groups, ad hoc task forces and regional consultations convened by CCME members;
- trainings and project activities;
- visits;
- membership in and cooperation with the Global Ecumenical Network on Migration of WCC.

3.2. Work on issues of migration and integration, asylum and refugees, and against racism and discrimination, undertake research, initiate, develop and implement projects in these fields;

- networking with Christian and non-governmental organisations,
- partnerships with academia (theological faculties, migration researchers),
- thematic public hearings,
- international conferences,
- mid-term and long-term projects.

3.3. Represent the common voice of the churches in Europe on the above issues towards the European institutions and international organisations active in Europe:

- European Union
- Council of Europe
- Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe OSCE
- UN (UNHCR, ILO)
- Global Forum on Migration and Development
- IOM

4. Partnerships

As ecumenical agency in Europe, CCME can only realize its mandate to serve the churches if it works in partnership with other Christian organisations as well as secular partners. CCME seeks to develop partnerships with like-minded organisations. Existing partnerships, which will be maintained, include:

1. Ecumenical

a. within CEC

Church and Society Commission

Commission Churches in Dialogue

PARTNERSHIPS BEYOND THE MEMBERSHIP

b. within the European ecumenical family

Group of European Christian organisations on migration and asylum (Caritas Europa, COMECE, Eurodiaconia, International Catholic Migration Commission ICMC, Jesuit Refugee Service JRS Europe, Quaker Council on European Affairs)

APRODEV, Eurodiaconia, Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe EYCE, WSCF-Europe, Community of Protestant Churches in Europe

c. In the global ecumenical family

World Council of Churches, Global Ecumenical Network on Migration, Lutheran World Federation

All Africa Conference of Churches, Middle East Council of Churches, Church World Service Immigration and Refugee Program USA

2. Secular partners

European Council on Refugees and Exiles ECRE

NGO Platform of European organisations on migration and asylum

European Network Against Racism, ENAR

European Coordination for Foreigners' Right to Family Life

IMISCOE – Network of Research Institutes on International Migration Integration Social Cohesion in Europe

Adopted by the CCME General Assembly on 18th June 2011 in Bucharest/Romania

ANNEX 3 CEC-CCME MOTION AS ADOPTED

Decision of the CCME General Assembly, Bucharest, 18.06.2011: Integration of CCME and CEC

1. Articles of Association of CCME

Based on the Memorandum of Understanding adopted by the CCME Executive Committee and the CEC Central Committee in Vienna 2007, 2008, the CCME Assembly at Protaras, Cyprus 2008 adopted decisions for the integration with the Conference of European Churches, including changes of the articles of association. These would have had to be ratified at the Assembly planned for 2010 to keep the envisaged changes in line with Belgian legal requirements.

While the Assembly of the Conference of European Churches held in Lyon 2009 followed the proposals of the Central Committee for changes of the CEC Bye-Laws to facilitate working with CCME as one of its Commissions, the Assembly also took the decision to review the constitution and structure of CEC and appointed and mandated a special committee – the Revision Working Group – with this task. This CEC Assembly decision has put on hold the process of concluding the integration process as the wide mandate may have an impact on the details of the negotiated agreement. The underlying aims of the CEC revision are also appreciated by CCME, flexibility and transparency, accountability as well as criteria for CEC membership were mentioned. But some discussions on ending the Commission structure of CEC have raised the concern that the carefully negotiated agreement between CCME and CEC would not be valid beyond the next CEC Assembly. At the same time, under the current CEC constitution and bye-laws, more than half of CCME's members would not have a say in this decision making process.

The CCME ExCom therefore decided to suspend the work on the CCME Articles of Association until clarity on the future CEC is achieved. Therefore, the CCME Assembly meets in 2011 according to the valid statutes of CCME of 1999.

Upon recommendation by the CCME ExCom, the CCME General Assembly confirmed and decided:

As a consequence of the CEC Assembly decision to review the structure and constitution of CEC, the CCME Assembly resolves to put on hold the process of changing the articles of association of CCME until the time when clarity on the future structure of CEC allows for the envisaged changes of the CCME of CEC. Until such a time, the articles of association as decided by the CCME GA 1999 and registered under Belgian law, will remain the basis of CCME's work.

The CCME General Assembly wishes to communicate the following points to the CEC Revision Working Group:

2. CCME and CEC at work

Since the Lyon Assembly, CCME and CEC are nevertheless working as if CCME was a Commission of CEC. This was particularly true for the common year of European Churches Responding to Migration 2010. As other Commissions of CEC, CCME reports to the Central Committee and Presidium of CEC and participates in the Management Team of CEC.

Despite considerable uncertainties since the Lyon Assembly, this process can generally be regarded as positive and constructive.

The CCME Assembly appreciates the constitutional changes decided by the CEC Assembly in Lyon in 2009 facilitating the work of CCME as a Commission of CEC. Therefore, the CCME Assembly endorses that CCME works as if it was a Commission of CEC, participating and sharing in the life and work of CEC. Therefore, CCME has welcomed the appointment of the (legally provisional) members of CCME of CEC by the Central Committee and welcomes their contribution to and participation in CCME.

CCME particularly appreciates the continued work with CEC in communication, exemplified by the common website. Therefore, the reduced capacity of CEC is of concern to CCME as much as it is to the other CEC Commissions.

Other practical matters CCME would hope can be addressed concern the finalisation of the salary scheme for CEC and the harmonisation of employment conditions.

The CCME Assembly decided:

CCME will continue to work as if it was a Commission of CEC.

3. CEC Revision Working Group

CCME is following the work of the CEC Revision Working Group with great interest, as a number of areas negotiated in the years 2005-2009 could not be concluded. CCME communicated this to the Revision Working Group at the end of 2009 and beginning of 2010, and has submitted background and information to the group. A report of the RWG will however only be available at the end of 2011.

Areas for which CCME hopes for positive results to allow for the speedy conclusion of the integration of CCME and CEC in order to jointly enhance the common witness and work on migration and integration, asylum and refugees, and against racism and discrimination are:

- Criteria for membership of CEC and its Commissions. 60 % of the CCME members currently have no effective possibility to participate in the work of CEC, while their contribution to the work of CCME is highly valuable and indispensable.
- Particularly the membership and participation of black and migrant churches in Europe in the ecumenical institutions and in the CEC decision making bodies;

- Meaningful and effective participation of Councils of Churches and specialised ministries such as diaconal agencies, youth organisations in the work of the European ecumenical body. If for any reason this may not be reachable for CEC as a whole, participation should continue to be possible with and through the Commissions of CEC.
- Other major issues of concern for CCME are to ensure a clear, efficient and inclusive decision making structure for our work as well as an appropriate financial management system.
- CCME would therefore very much welcome that the CEC Revision Working Group consults CCME in their process to finalise a proposal for the future of CEC. This implies both a close contact with the CCME ExCom as well as an outreach to the CCME membership.

In view of the many developments with regard to migration in Europe, CCME would hope that sufficient time and resources will be allocated in the coming years to working for welcoming the stranger and cherishing diversity in European societies.

CCME will seek to actively engage in the consultations on the future CEC prior to the CEC Assembly 2013 hoping that decisions will allow the next CCME Assembly in 2014 to conclude the integration process on its side.

The CCME Assembly 2014 will have to evaluate the CEC decisions in view of the Agreement of Understanding "Different Backgrounds – Joint Future" which for CCME remains the basis of our commitment to become one organisation.

ANNEX 4: Public Statement of the General Assembly of CCME, Bucharest 16-19 June 2011

The 18th General Assembly of the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) was held in Bucharest, Romania, from 16-19 June 2011. Romania is one of the countries grappling with the recent economic crisis and related migration issues.

On the eve of International Refugees' Day on June 20th, the CCME General Assembly commemorates the 60th anniversary of the Geneva Refugee Convention. The political changes in North Africa are the most recent examples causing movements of people who risk their life to reach Europe. To avoid further loss of life European churches regard the Geneva Refugee Convention and other International and European Conventions an important basis which need to be fully applied. Churches demand from European governments an enforcement of international refugee protection according to these conventions.

In this context, the General Assembly stresses the need for a real responsibility sharing among European countries ensuring human rights and dignity of all migrants and refugees. This includes also a responsible use of language and images which avoid terms such as "invasion", "migrant flows" or even "human tsunamis". From a Christian point of view every human being is created in the image of God. Therefore, human rights and dignity are non-negotiable regardless of the legal status of persons.

Furthermore, it is an ongoing task of societies as well as of churches to defend the common space of freedom and justice against efforts to implement security measures which undermine the core values of Europe. It needs to live in solidarity within and beyond its borders.

ANNEX 5: VOTING RIGHTS AND DELEGATES AT CCME GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2011

	Country	Member or Partner organisation	Votes	Total votes	Delegates exercising votes
1	Austria	-DIAKONIE-Protestant Refugee Service Austria	3	3	Michael Bubik
2	Belgium	-Eglise Protestante Unie de Belgique	3	3	Tetty Rooze (2)
3	Cyprus	-Church of Cyprus (1)	3	3	Benedict Ioannou
4	Czech Republic	-Ecumenical Commission for Refugees in the Czech Republic	3	3	Cristian Popescu (2) Katerina Dekanovska
5	Finland	-Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland	3	3	Marja-Liisa Laihia (2)
6	France	-Fédération Protestante de France - Cimade		3	René Risch Joël Le Billan Victoria Kamondji
7	Germany	-Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD) -Diakonisches Werk der EKD		3	Katharina Stamm Thorsten Leisser Johannes Brandstätter Prince Ossai Okeke
8	Greece	-The Holy Synod of the Church of Greece	3	3	Antonios Papantoniou (2)
9	Hungary	-The Reformed Church in Hungary	3	3	Mary Gorombey
10	Italy	-Federazione delle Chiese Evangeliche in Italia (FCEI)	3	3	Franca di Lecce (2) Samuel Kpoti
11	Netherlands	-Council of Churches in the Netherlands -Protestant Church in the Netherlands		3	Jan van der Kolk Geesje Werkman (2)
12	Norway	-Church of Norway	3	3	Eva Frydenborg (2) Berit Hagen Agoy

	Country	Member or Partner organisation	Votes	Total votes	Delegates exercising votes
					Lemma Desta
13	Romania	-Romanian Forum for Refugees and Migrants (ARCA)		3	Razvan Samoila (2)
		-AIDRom-Ecumenical Association (1)			Elena Timofticiuc
14	Slovakia	-Ecumenical Council of Churches in Slovakia	3	3	Rainer Mittwollen (2) Elisabeth Krarup de Medeiros (2) Agnes Köber (2)
15	Spain	-Evangelical Churches in Spain	3	3	Alfredo Abad Heras
16	Sweden	-Church of Sweden		3	Lena Blom Kristina Hellqvist (2) Giselle Martine Hedman
		-Christian Council of Sweden			
17	Switzerland	-Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches (SEK/FEPS)	3	3	Simon Röthlisberger (2) Roswitha Golder
18	United Kingdom	- CTBI-Churches Together in Britain and Ireland	1	4	Pat White (2) Fidelia Onyuku-Opukiri (2) Adejare Oyewole (2) Dorritt Stewart Akinbobola
		-Methodist Church in Britain	1		
		-Council of African & Caribbean Churches	1		
		-Joint Council for Anglo Caribbean Churches	1		
		-Conference of European Churches (CEC)	2	2	Katerina Dekanovska Arlington Trotman
		-World Council of Churches (WCC)	2	2	Elena Timofticiuc Arlington Trotman
Total votes				59	

(1) Voting rights were conferred to the Church of Cyprus and AIDRom after their membership application had been accepted

(2) Members of the provisional Commission appointed by CEC CC

ANNEX 6: Statement by H.E. Metropolitan Emmanuel of France, President of the Conference of European Churches

**Speech of His Eminence Metropolitan Emmanuel of France,
President of CEC
on the occasion of the General Assembly of CCME
Bucharest, June 17, 2011**

It is a special joy for me to stand before you today for the opening of this General Assembly. Let me therefore first of all greet you all and express my great satisfaction to see you gathered here today.

You are well aware that the work initiated jointly by the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe and the Conference of European Churches on migration is one of the most important aspects, which echoes the content of the Charta Oecumenica that constitutes a guideline in our commitment. Let me remind you of the contents: "Reconciliation involves promoting social justice within and among all peoples [...]. Together we will do our part towards giving migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers a humane reception in Europe."

Recognizing the importance of this subject in contemporary society, the CEC wanted to multiply initiatives for a better understanding of the phenomenon of migration, but to also raise awareness among all Europeans regarding the problems that the candidates of immigration are faced with. Indeed: "Immigration is at the heart of the agenda of the European Churches." We might as well declare that the day after the Arab spring and at the time of the Libyan and Syrian conflicts immigration is at the heart of the European agenda. These migratory movements affect the religious diversity of Europe. Our Churches must become levers in the mechanism for better integration.

Therefore, we cannot accept that the sanctity of human life is violated and that politics are practiced immorally. It is therefore that we call for vigilance and more particularly to the politicians who have a very special place in the mechanisms of the production as well as of the reception of migration flows.

In order for the voice of Christians in Europe to always remain audible, it was decided at the 12th General Meeting of the CEC in 2003 that a reconciliation process be implemented with the CCME. It consists above all of a better sharing of the testimony of our Churches and their actions in favour of immigration today. One major outcome of this synergy was the consecration by the CEC of the year 2010 to Immigration. This experience, representing the culmination of a series of negotiations, is an important moment in the life, but also in the future of these two organizations. Furthermore, their integration will enable more effective action for migrants themselves. Do not forget, either, that this experience of joint work reflects a commitment towards ecumenical unity of Christians.

Henceforth, the CEC and the CCME shall explore possibilities of future cooperation for a better life together in Europe, both on a cultural and a religious level. It is also about working together towards a better visibility of the actions of the Churches and their

positions on issues related to migration, to the protection of refugees and to the construction of a society in Europe that values integration.

Some lines of thought were especially presented at the International Day for Migrants on December 18, 2010. I remind you in particular of the commitment we made to seek ways to express the absolutely essential character to the Christian witness on these issues. There is indeed a truly Christian perspective, rooted in Scripture, nourished by tradition, strengthened by prayer and carried by the Holy Spirit, to envision the protection of the dignity of each human person. Our efforts must also be directed towards the attention of the political authorities in Europe in order for the international law to respond effectively to the needs of those most vulnerable, among which migrants occupy unfortunately a way too large part. In the longer term, it is the way we view the other that must be changed; it is appropriate to make it evolve; namely because coexistence, integration, and tolerance form the normality of a living society. The abnormality lies in the segregation, in intolerance. In order to fight against this latter reality that brings forth crises and warmongering, it would only be appropriate to build bridges and provide spaces where people can meet and discuss their history, their experience, their lives and identities. Living together should not be understood as living apart.

However, in order for these mere words to become reality, we should strive to vest ourselves with instruments that allow their incarnation. To this end, the CEC has launched since the General Assembly in Lyon in 2009 a reflection on the improvements and changes to the operation of the organization. Thus, it was decided that the Commissions working with the CEC, and therefore the CCME will be helped to contribute to the work of reflection undertaken by the Revision Group, thus providing their analysis on the current structure of the organization and its operating environment. Proposals will be completed to that end when the General Assembly of the CEC takes place in 2013.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Prior to the opening of this General Assembly, let me remind you that our work will never be as active until we have absorbed all the theological depth of the statement: "Christians are migrants by vocation". This phrase reminds us of another well-known expression of St. Seraphim of Sarov for whom: "The Christian vocation is the acquisition of the Holy Spirit." In both cases, it is a question of knowing how to receive the other, as we receive the Holy Spirit. The world today is in desperate need of this. Has not the limitation of the divine always been the prism through which we base our actions in the world? In any case, let us try to make it like this.

Thank you for your attention.

ANNEX 7: Programme of the Conference

Conference “Migration in Times of Economic Crisis”¹

Patriarchal Palace, Conventus Hall,
Aleea Dealul Mitropoliei 25, sector 4,
Bucharest, ROMANIA

9.00 Registration

9.15 Opening

Word of welcome: - Rev. Arlington Trotman, Moderator CCME

Message of His Beatitude Daniel, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church:
Christian responses to Migrants and Refugees among us read by H.G. Ciprian
Câmpineanul, Patriarchal Vicar Bishop.

Churches Responding to Migration,

H.E. Metropolitan Emmanuel of France, President of CEC

Moderator: H.E. Metropolitan Nifon of Targoviste, President AIDRom

10.00 Taking Stock:

Migration to/from Romania – effects of the crisis – Mr Nelu Pop, Director of the
Office for Refugees and Immigrants ORI/Ministry of the Interior
Mr Marian Grigore Tutilescu, Chief Quester, Schengen Department M.A.I

Migration in Europe and the economic crisis – facts and policies
Mr Pedro Agramunt Font de Mora, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of
Europe, Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population (Rapporteur on “The
impact of the global economic crisis on migration in Europe”)

11.00 *Break*

11.30 **Witness and future perspectives** - Ministry among migrants during crisis:

Experiences of churches and future perspectives

Dr Antonios Papantoniou, Greece

Apostle Adejare Oyewole, Ms Pat White – UK

Ms Mary Görömbey, Hungary

Rev. Alfredo Abad, Spain

12:30 Discussion

13.00 End of conference

¹ With the financial support of the Church of Sweden