



Conference of European Churches Governing Board

Brussels, 20-22 November 2019

Activity Report EU Presidencies

To the traditional CEC activities belongs the joint effort with COMECE to approach the government of the country taking over the rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU every 6 months.

In the second half of 2019, the Presidency was in hands of Finland. CEC and COMECE activities were initiated, but because of the internal situation in CEC, late and only at the beginning of June when the dossier and responsibility for this CEC activity were handed over to the hands of the Study Secretary.

In spite of the handicap of a shortage of time, it was possible to find an agreement with COMECE on producing a joint text focusing on churches' concerns related to stated priorities of the Presidency. Production of a joint CEC-COMECE text has not been, unfortunately, possible to achieve in approaching previous Presidencies.

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In a joint effort with COMECE, we succeeded in organising a meeting with representatives of the Finnish Permanent Representation middle of June that has been followed on 12th of June with a meeting with Pekka Haavisto, Finnish Minister of Foreign Affairs. The ecumenical delegation consisted in representatives of CEC, COMECE, the Roman Catholic church in Finland and CEC Member Churches in Finland: The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Orthodox Church of Finland.

The churches' delegation shared with Minister Haavisto perspectives on four of the Finnish Presidency's priorities, including:

- Common values and the rule of law: cornerstones of EU action
- A competitive and socially inclusive EU
- Climate action: serving integral human development
- Comprehensive security and migration

Churches welcomed the commitment of the Finnish EU Presidency to actively engage in the future of Europe, focusing particularly on effective measures to increase sustainable growth, foster security and mitigate climate change.

The Council Presiding country in the first half of 2020 will be Croatia. Preparations for approaching the government as well as Permanent representation have already been initiated. The meeting of CEC-COMECE delegation with the Ambassador at the Permanent representation of Croatia in Brussels will take place on 20th of December.

We received a positive reaction to the letter to the Prime Minister of Croatia. The meeting of CEC-COMECE delegation including representatives of churches from Croatia will take place on the 20th of January.