

# Conference of European Churches Governing Board Brussels 22 – 24 November 2018

## MINUTES

*The meeting was preceded by:*

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- *an opening service of prayer led by Bishop Guli Francis-Dehqani (Vice-President) and members of staff in the Chapel for Europe;*
  - *an informal gathering at the Ecumenical Centre, during which the Rev Christian Krieger (President) invited the former President, Bishop Christopher Hill, to address the members and staff (see Appendix 8).*
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*Morning, midday and evening prayers were led each day by different members of the Governing Board, each according to his or her own liturgical tradition.*

### 1. Roll call

Rev Christian Krieger, President of CEC, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. Metropolitan Cleopas and Bishop Nick Baines had apologised for absence, in both cases on health grounds. Metropolitan Joseph and Lea-Kathrin Schlenker had also apologised. The President gave a special welcome to two proxies, drawn from the electoral reserve: Ella-Maria Boba (Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Austria) and Canon Carol Wardman (Church in Wales). (The list of participants is set out in Appendix 1.)

### 2. Adoption of the agenda

The Governing Board <b>took note</b> of the agenda prepared by the General Secretary and approved by the President (see Appendix 2).
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### 3. Public Issues

*70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

Elizabeta Kitanovic (Executive Secretary) presented a draft declaration on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (document 2GB2018\_Doc3a).

In the discussion which followed, some felt that individual countries where aspects of human rights gave cause for concern should be mentioned, but it was pointed out that if

so it would seem necessary to list all such countries. It was agreed that a short text of this nature should be specific about human rights issues but not about the countries involved.

Some wondered whether it was wise to mention safe passage for migrants but it was pointed out that this term, which CEC had frequently used, implied controlled access, not unlimited access.

It was agreed to add a reference to freedom of religion or belief for Christians and other religious groups outside Europe.

The Chair asked Anne Burghardt to work with Torsten Moritz and Elizabeta Kitanovic to make some amendments to the text in the light of the discussion.

At a later stage of the meeting, the amended text was adopted. Voting on the final text was as follows: 14 for, 0 against and 1 abstention.

#### *UN Global Compacts on refugees and migrants*

Torsten Moritz (General Secretary, Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe, CCME) presented a draft text on the UN Global Compacts on refugees and migrants (see document 2GB2018\_Doc3b).

Zsusanna Repas said that she could not agree to this text because neither her Church nor her government was in favour of joining the UN Compacts.

The President recalled CEC's and CCME historical line on such matters and referred also to the public issues documents of the General Assembly in Novi Sad. On that basis, he said that even where countries or churches had differing opinions, CEC should try to give a lead.

There was some discussion about how to refer to the possible return of refugees to their countries of origin. It was pointed out that Middle Eastern churches hoped that Christians who had fled from their countries would return when they could do so safely. It was also stated that, while it seemed likely that many such refugees would remain indefinitely in European countries, Europeans could help to make return possible, for example by reconstructing houses in places where they had been destroyed.

Torsten Moritz hoped that the Governing Board would at some time in the future engage in a thorough consideration of the question of return and recalled that CCME had prepared a position paper on the subject.

At a later stage of the meeting, the Governing Board adopted a text which had been somewhat revised in the light of the discussion. Voting on the revised text was as follows: 14 for, 1 against and 1 abstention.

## *COP24 and a sustainable Europe*

Peter Pavlovic (Study Secretary) presented a draft text with reference to the forthcoming UN Climate Change Conference (COP24) in Katowice, Poland.

Several members expressed a wish to see the text strengthened.

At a later stage of the meeting, a revised and strengthened draft was presented and adopted. Voting on the revised text was as follows: for 14, against 0, abstention 1.

Emma Johnson explained that she had abstained on grounds of a possible conflict of interest, namely that she was employed by an oil and gas company.

The Governing Board **adopted** the following public issues statements:

- All are born free and equal: Celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948-2018 (joint statement with CCME ExCom);
- Global Compacts on refugees and migrants;
- Act now for a future with hope: COP24 and a sustainable future.

(see texts in Appendix 3)

## **4. Minutes of the previous meeting (6 June 2018, Novi Sad)**

The draft Minutes were adopted without change, except to correct the date of the meeting.

The Governing Board **adopted** the Minutes of the meeting held in Novi Sad on 6 June 2018 (see document 2GB2018\_Doc4).

## **5. President's Report**

The President presented his report and distributed the text (see Appendix 4). Among the points he underlined were the following:

- CEC's new Constitution would finally enter into force when two Belgian royal decrees were promulgated, probably on the near future;
- The President also referred to. Both CEC and COMECE considered that the high-level meetings between the European Commission and religious leaders were not very satisfactory at present; they intended to work together with the new Commission to arrive at a better structured and more useful dialogue.

In reply to a question, the General Secretary said that it would be interesting to hear Bishop Nick Baines' remarks on the Brexit process at the next meeting.

Bishop Gulnar Francis-Dehqani (Vice-President) expressed the thanks of the Governing Board to the President for his energetic work during the first few months of his mandate.

The Governing Board <b>received</b> the President's report (see Appendix 4).
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## **6. General Secretary's report including report of staff activities**

The General Secretary presented his report (document 2GB2018\_Doc6), pointing out that it included reports on each area of CEC's work by the staff members responsible. He drew particular attention to the following points:

- The Governing Board needed to arrive at clear conclusions about CEC's work for the next five years, taking into account the needs of member churches and the expertise of the staff.
- He hoped that CEC would play an active part in the World Council of Churches (WCC) General Assembly in Karlsruhe in 2021; CEC would be invited to participate in the WCC Assembly Planning Committee.
- Cooperation with the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE), which now had legal status and a full time General Secretary, could be expected to intensify in the coming years.

In reply to a question, the General Secretary explained that his report did not contain much material about the thematic reference groups because their mandates had now concluded and new ones had not yet been set up. Noting that there had been more thematic reference groups than staff during the last five years, he hoped that there would in future be a better balance between the number of thematic reference groups and staff resources.

In response to a question about access by CEC to the work of the European institutions, the General Secretary said that CEC was recognised by the EU as a lobby group and although it could not be a member of formal EU working groups it was sometimes invited to attend where it had recognised expertise and good working relations with the responsible officials. At the Council of Europe, CEC had the position of international NGO with participatory status.

Members of staff added that it was important to take the initiative to build cooperative relations with European officials. Moreover, CEC was actively involved with bodies such as the EU Fundamental Rights Agency in Vienna and the EU External Action Service.

Archimandrite Ignatios and Bishop Hovakim underlined the value for CEC of personal visits to church leaders.

Anders Gadegaard said it would be helpful if the General Secretary could include a list of his travels in future reports.

The General Secretary then circulated on his own initiative a personal and confidential report on the church situation in Ukraine. He mentioned that a number of member churches had asked him to provide some information about the current problems.

Aleksandra Pistalo then circulated the official statement of the Serbian Orthodox Church on the church crisis in Ukraine.

Archimandrite Nektarios expressed the view that the time had not yet come for the matter to be discussed by the Governing Board.

The Chair invited members to study both documents as a basis for a future discussion of the matter.

The President clarified that the two documents were unofficial; they had been circulated on personal initiative for information but not for discussion. He requested participants not to circulate unofficial papers and asked the General Secretary to consult the Presidency before handing over a document, especially one linked to such a sensitive church political issue.

Finally, the General Secretary referred to some indications that the Russian Orthodox Church may wish to revive its relations with Western churches. It was good that they had sent an observer to the CEC General Assembly in Novi Sad.

The Governing Board <b>received</b> the General Secretary's report (see document 2GB2018_Doc6).
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## 7. Election of Nominations Committee and election of Treasurer

### *Election of the Nominations Committee*

The Chair presented the list of members of the Nominations Committee as proposed by the Presidency in discussion with the General Secretary. The intention was to involve all members of the Governing Board in one or other of the committees to be set up (see also agenda item 13, below). Every effort had been made to respect the various balances laid down for CEC bodies.

Some members of the Governing Board felt strongly that a more transparent method should be devised for determining committee membership. Although it was in theory possible to challenge the names proposed, in practice this was embarrassing and members would be reluctant to do so. They therefore felt that a decision was being imposed without an opportunity for real consideration by the Governing Board.

Others felt that, particularly in view of the difficulty of respecting the various balances, the only practical way to proceed was for the Presidency to present a carefully worked out proposal, as had been done.

It was further pointed out that, even though the former standing orders had been sent to all new Governing Board members, they were not yet familiar with the committee structure; it would therefore have been helpful if a special document had been prepared in advance setting out the terms of reference of the committees and inviting candidatures.

A number of members also expressed dissatisfaction that the Governing Board had not had an opportunity to decide which of the two vice-presidents should serve on the Nominations Committee.

In response, Bishop Gulnar said that she was in any case not willing to serve on the Nominations Committee. It therefore fell to the other vice-president to do so.

After some further discussion and a break for consultations, the Chair said that the Presidency maintained its original proposal. She asked those nominated to confirm their willingness to serve.

They so confirmed.

She then asked for additional nominations.

There were none.

The Chair then invited the Governing Board to vote on the list of members proposed for election to the Nominations Committee. The result of the vote was as follows: 14 for, 0 against, 4 abstentions. She declared the members elected.

Archimandrite Nektarios, supported by Aleksandra Pistalo, expressed his dissatisfaction with the election procedure, considering it to be undemocratic. It was significant that three of the Orthodox members had abstained.

### *Election of the Treasurer*

The Chair recalled that, as already foreseen at the time of the General Assembly, Rev Jelle Brouwer (United Protestant Church in Belgium) was proposed for election as Treasurer.

At the invitation of the Chair, Jelle Brouwer spoke about his experience with financial matters and expressed his willingness to serve.

The Chair then asked if there were any other candidates.

There were none.

The Governing Board then elected Jelle Brouwer as Treasurer. The voting was unanimous with one abstention.

The Governing Board:

- a) **elected** the members of the Nominations Committee (see Appendix 7);
- b) **elected** Rev Jelle Brouwer as Treasurer.

## **8. Evaluation of the 2018 General Assembly**

Szabolcs Lőrincz (Assembly Coordinator) presented his evaluation report on the 2018 Novi Sad General Assembly (see 2GB2018\_Doc8b), including feedback from participants (Section 2.2) and the evaluation by staff members (Section 2.3). He was pleased to report that, thanks to strenuous efforts to keep costs down, the General Assembly expenditure had kept within the budget and indeed that there was an overall surplus of around €170,000. He took the opportunity to thank all involved, particularly the CEC staff, the local team and the local churches.

He went on to say that the feedback from participants and from staff was generally positive. There were of course some critical remarks too, concerning such matters as the tight schedule, late delivery of documents, late launch of the website, some degree of confusion about the management of documents and translation. The youth programme and youth participation were positively received. Finally, he thanked the Governing Board and the General Secretary for entrusting him with the challenging and stimulating task of organising this major international assembly.

The General Secretary thanked the Assembly Coordinator for his hard work and especially for his budgetary discipline. Holding the General Assembly in Serbia had been a valuable

experience for CEC. Participants seemed to have enjoyed the General Assembly although many felt that the thematic discussion had not been as lively as might have been expected. The General Secretary also thought it necessary to reflect further on why several political figures had cancelled their attendance at a late stage.

The following points were made in the discussion that followed:

- Not enough time was allowed for committee work, and it was difficult for committees to work efficiently in the late evening;
- The consensus voting procedure, which was used for the first time, could have been better handled;
- It was good to meet in a non-EU country;
- There were some interesting workshops but their results did not seem to be fed into the plenary proceedings;
- Consideration might be given to small groups in which participants would share their spiritual journeys (as was done within the Global Christian Forum);
- The work carried out by CEC since the previous General Assembly, especially the work of the thematic reference groups, was not given adequate attention.

The President said that the General Assembly committees needed to be better briefed about their tasks and working methods. In particular, the instructions to the Strategy and Policy Committee were not clear.

The Chair concluded that the Novi Sad General Assembly had been a successful event. It was well organised and had a good atmosphere; it was certainly more appreciated by participants than the previous Budapest Assembly, which had been dominated by constitutional issues. Planning of the next General Assembly should start now, and should take into account the points that had been made in the evaluation process. Finally, warm thanks were due to the Assembly Coordinator and all the staff.

At another point in the meeting, Archimandrite Nektarios asked what had happened to the Handbook giving information about member churches, which should have been prepared in time for the General Assembly. Considering that CEC had spent money on this operation, he felt that it had been unwise to accept the offer of a member church to prepare this text.

The General Secretary replied that the draft had arrived very late and that it was found to contain a number of errors. The staff had therefore needed to check the contents with all the member churches. This process was now almost complete and the handbook would be published on the internet and possibly also in printed form.



The President agreed that the situation was unsatisfactory but felt that the Handbook would still be a useful guide and could be used, for example, in connection with CEC's forthcoming 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The Governing Board **took note** of the evaluation report drawn up by the Assembly Coordinator including evaluation by participants and by the staff (see document 2GB2018\_Doc8b).

## 9. CCME Activities Report

Lemma Desta (Moderator of the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe, CCME) brought greetings from the CCME Executive Committee and said how much he looked forward to working with the new Governing Board. He expressed particular thanks to Andreas Aarflot for all he had done to promote good relations between CEC and CCME during the past few years.

Torsten Moritz (General Secretary of CCME) drew attention to the following documents:

- Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting, held in Brussels from 22-23 March 2018 (document 2GB2018\_Doc9a);
- CCME Work Programme 2018-2020 (document 2GB2018\_Doc9b);
- Agreement between CCME and CEC ((document 2GB2018\_Doc9c).

The General Secretary of CCME went on to review recent developments in the migration field, with particular reference to the following points:

- The attempt by the EU to "externalise" responsibility for refugees to third countries, e.g. Libya; in the view of CCME such practices were neither desirable nor feasible;
- Conditions of refugees in Greece are shocking but this is partly because Greece does not get the help it needs from the EU; CCME works closely with the Church of Greece in this connection;
- Return of refugees to their countries of origin must be on a voluntary basis, respect the dignity of those concerned, and take place only if it is safe to return;
- CCME is drawing up information materials for churches to use during the European Parliament elections;
- CCME tries to promote calm discussion and mutual understanding between churches with differing views on migration;

- Church personalities are being asked to sign a “Christmas statement” on migration which should be handed over to Mairead McGuinness, First Vice-President of the European Parliament, in December.

The General Secretary added that he was grateful for the assistance he had received from the CEC leadership since taking up his position.

After the CCME General Secretary had responded to some requests for information, the Chair thanked him for his contribution to the work of the Governing Board.

The Governing Board **took note** of the report by the General Secretary of CCME (see documents 2GB2018\_Doc9a, 2GB2018\_Doc9b and 2GB2018\_Doc9c).

## 10. CEC Strategy Plan 2019-2023

### *Presentation of the draft Strategy Plan and Implementation Plan*

The President recalled that a questionnaire about future work had been sent to members of the Governing Board during the summer. Meanwhile, the staff had prepared a Work Plan (or “Implementation Plan”) – see document 2GB2018\_Doc10b. On the basis of the responses to the questionnaire and the Implementation Plan, the President had then drawn up a Strategy Plan organised around three aims:

1. CEC promotes peace, justice and reconciliation in Europe
2. CEC deepens church communion and ecumenical fellowship
3. CEC raises the Churches’ voice in Europe and toward the European Institutions.

The preliminary draft Strategy Plan was set out in document 2GB2018\_Doc10a. In order to keep up with changes in the European scene, the Strategy Plan would no doubt need to undergo an interim evaluation and revision after two or two and a half years.

The President was well aware that the Strategy Plan could not be implemented in full unless it was possible to reinforce the staff. He was therefore exploring possibilities for secondments by certain member churches.

The President further pointed out that the Strategy Plan did not contain a section on the contribution of youth or one on communication. This was deliberate: these were cross-cutting issues that needed to be addressed in all areas of CEC’s work. Guidelines for youth involvement and a working group to draft a communication strategy will complement the overall strategic plan.

As far as the contribution of youth was concerned, he proposed that there should be a youth advisor in the Governing Board, that all groups and conferences should have 10-

20% youth members and that there should be regular meetings between the Presidency and youth organisations. Moreover, it had already been agreed that a number of youth representatives would participate in part of the next Governing Board meeting and visit the European institutions in Strasbourg.

Concerning communications, he noted that the CEC communications strategy would be reviewed (see decision (b) under item 13, below).

The General Secretary then presented the Work Plan (Implementation Plan) drawn up by the staff for the period 2019-2023 (see 2GB2018\_Doc10b). Like the Strategy Plan, it reflected the report of the General Assembly Strategy and Policy Committee and the General Assembly Public Issues Committee. It sought to strike a balance between continuity with CEC's existing work and the need to address new issues and to work differently. It was clear that existing staff resources were not adequate to implement the programme in full. It would therefore be necessary to set priorities at the same time as exploring possibilities for reinforcing the staff.

#### *Formulation of an overarching theme for CEC's future work*

Katerina Pekridou (Executive Secretary) presented document 2GB2018\_Doc10c which put forward three alternative suggestions for overarching themes aiming to highlight the main thrust of CEC's work for the period up to the next General Assembly.

Erin Green (Communications Coordinator) said that having one overarching theme would be of great help in giving a clearer overall identity to CEC's different areas of work.

After some discussion, the formulation *You shall be my witnesses: together in hope and witness* was put to the vote. This was adopted unanimously with one abstention as the overall theme for CEC's work in the next five years.

The Chair noted that care would need to be taken in translating the theme into other languages. While it was necessary to retain the same basic meaning, it was clear that an over-literal translation would not always give a satisfactory result.

#### *Discussion and revision of the draft Strategy Plan*

At the invitation of the Chair, the Governing Board then split up into three parallel groups each of which would have about an hour and a half to examine the proposals under one of the three aims listed above. Each group would be assisted by a member of staff and

would choose a moderator and a rapporteur. The groups should bring back to the plenary precise proposals for revising the preliminary draft Strategy Plan that had just been presented. The overall goal would be to identify the added value that CEC could bring.

At a later stage of the meeting the rapporteur of each group presented their proposed amendments to the Strategy Plan.

Petr Kratochvíl presented results of the group that had worked on Aim 1 (“CEC promotes peace, justice and reconciliation in Europe”). Apart from proposing a number of relatively minor drafting changes and clarifications, the group had engaged on a long discussion on how to phrase the reference to populism and nationalism. While all agreed on the need to fight racism and xenophobia, it was not clear to all members of the group that populism and nationalism were dangers to democracy.

After some discussion in plenary, it was agreed to maintain the reference to populism and nationalism because this was a mandate from the General Assembly, but to add some positive language about strengthening democracy.

Valérie Duval-Poujol presented the results of the group that had worked on Aim 2 (“CEC deepens church communion and ecumenical fellowship”).

A number of minor drafting points were noted and there was then a discussion in plenary of what was meant by the formulation “the Orthodox-Protestant dialogue shall be fostered at CEC level in partnership with CPCE”. Although it was the case that CPCE had asked CEC to assist it in developing Orthodox-Protestant dialogue, it was not very clear what CPCE intended in this respect; in any case CPCE should avoid duplicating work already undertaken by CEC. It was also pointed out that official Orthodox-Protestant dialogue already existed.

There was also a discussion of the formulation “strengthen Orthodox participation in CEC and in the ecumenical movement”. Although various member churches had on a number of occasions expressed the wish to see more extensive Orthodox participation in CEC, some Governing Board members doubted whether it was appropriate to single out one church family in this way, particularly as a lot had already been done to facilitate greater Orthodox involvement in CEC. It was also pointed out that this was not just an Orthodox issue: it was quite difficult to get other member churches to participate actively in CEC.

The Chair concluded that it would be better to speak of “strengthening participation” in general, and not to single out one particular church family.

Alison McDonald presented the results of the group that had discussed Aim 3 (“CEC raises the Churches’ voice in Europe and toward the European Institutions”). The group proposed only a small number of minor drafting changes.

These were noted in plenary and one or two other minor changes were agreed.

At a later stage of the meeting, the revised text of the Strategy Plan, taking into account the points made by the groups and the discussion in plenary, was presented.

The Chair then invited the Governing Board to vote on the revised text of the Strategy Plan, as set out in Appendix 5. The result of the vote was as follows: 14 for, 0 against, 1 abstention. Adopted.

The Chair noted that this text would now be sent to member churches for their observations, after which it would be revised where necessary before being submitted to the Governing Board at its next meeting for final adoption.

The Chair added that the Presidency would now work with the General Secretary and the staff to see where additional staff seemed to be needed. However, the approval of the draft Strategy Plan did not imply any decision about additional staff; the Governing Board would decide at its next meeting whether additional staff were in fact needed.

The Governing Board:

- a) **amended** the preliminary draft Strategy Plan and decided to send the revised draft (see Appendix 5) to the Member Churches for their observations;
- b) **agreed** that the following matters should be seen as cross-cutting concerns to be borne in mind across the whole strategy:
  - cooperating with various partner bodies, notably the organisations in partnership;
  - seeking input from youth;
  - communication and access to media;
- c) **agreed** to adopt a final draft of the Strategy Plan, taking into account the observations received from Member Churches, at its next meeting;
- d) **decided** on the following overarching theme for the Strategy Plan: *Together in hope and witness*<sup>1</sup>;
- e) **took note** of the detailed Work Plan (also referred to as the Implementation Plan) drawn up by the staff (see document 2GB2018\_Doc10b) and **agreed** to examine it more closely after finalising the Strategy Plan at its next meeting;

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<sup>1</sup> French: Ensemble, témoins d’espérance; Russian: Vmeste: svidetelstvo i nadezhda ; German: to be confirmed later.

- f) **agreed** to decide at its next meeting on the working mechanisms, e.g. thematic reference groups, which would be needed in order to implement the strategy;
- g) **agreed** to return to the question of setting priorities within the Strategy Plan at its next meeting by which time it should be clearer what were the prospects for obtaining additional staff resources.

## 11. Adoption of the Standing Orders of the Governing Board

The Chair recalled that members of the Governing Board had already had two opportunities to comment by email on earlier drafts of the new Standing Orders (see documents 2GB2018\_Doc11a, 2GB2018\_Doc11b, 2GB2018\_Doc11c and 2GB2018\_Doc11d). She now invited them to examine the proposed revised text as set out in the left hand column of document 2GB2018\_Doc11e.

The Governing Board decided to treat this item in closed session but with the presence of the General Secretary.

In addition to a considerable number of minor drafting points, the Governing Board discussed the following matters:

- With reference to paragraph 5.3 (concerning proxies), “church family” is to be understood as defined in the Constitution; it is not necessarily the same as “denomination”;
- With reference to paragraph 6.4 (Nominations Committee), it was decided to increase the size of the Nominations Committee to 6 (Chair + 5) even though this could occasionally result in a tied vote, in which case two alternative options would be presented to the Governing Board for decision; experience during the preceding period of office showed that members had frequently been absent; it was therefore not really essential for the committee to have an odd number of members;
- With reference to paragraph 6.5 (Budget Committee), some members felt that it was unwise to provide that most of the members of the Budget Committee be from outside the Governing Board; others felt, however, that what mattered was competence, members of the Governing Board not generally being chosen for their financial expertise;
- The General Secretary left the room during the discussion of Paragraph 15 (Dismissing the General Secretary).

Lemma Desta, Moderator of CCME, said that there ought, in his view, to be a mention of cooperation between CCME and CEC. This would safeguard the continuance of this cooperation.

In the discussion that followed (partly in the absence of Lemma Desta), some felt that no such mention was needed because the Governing Board was in any case bound by the terms of the Agreement which it had entered into with CCME. Others, however, felt that, even if it was not strictly necessary, a brief mention of cooperation with CCME, without going into details, would reassure CCME about CEC's wholehearted commitment to such cooperation.

The Chair concluded that such a sentence would be added to the Standing Orders.

Andreas Aarflot (Legal Advisor) was requested to amend the text of the Standing Orders in the light of the discussion and to submit it to the Governing Board for adoption the next day.

Andreas Aarflot duly presented a revised text the following day, pointing out that he had also consulted the other legal advisor, Patrick Schnabel, who was in agreement with the amendments.

A few additional minor drafting changes were agreed during the presentation.

The Chair asked the Governing Board to vote on the Standing Orders as amended during the present meeting. The Governing Board voted unanimously in favour.

The Chair expressed the Governing Board's deep gratitude to Andreas Aarflot and Patrick Schnabel for their hard work and their practical wisdom.

The Governing Board <b>adopted</b> its revised Standing Orders (see Appendix 6).
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## 12. Budget and Accounts

The General Secretary apologised that, with the prior agreement of the President, he was unable to be present for most of this agenda item because he and the General Secretary of COMECE had been invited to meet the Permanent Representative of Romania in order to plan the meetings with the Romanian authorities in preparation for their EU presidency. It was unfortunate that, because of the diary commitments of the other participants, it had proved impossible to find any alternative timing.

The Treasurer, Jelle Brouwer, presented the following documents:

- Forecast of the accounts for 2018 (2GB2018\_Doc12);
- Draft financial plan 2019-2023 (2GB2018\_Doc12a);
- Budget plan 2019-2023 as adopted by the Novi Sad General Assembly (2GB2018\_Doc12b);

- Budget and forecast of the accounts of the Novi Sad General Assembly (2GB2018\_Doc12c).

The Treasurer went on to make the following observations:

- Although some minor items remained to be finalised, the Novi Sad General Assembly had resulted in a surplus, which was very welcome;
- On the other hand, the expected financial result for CEC in 2018 indicated a deficit, mainly because it had been necessary to incur substantial legal fees in order to ensure that the CEC Constitution was fully in conformity with Belgian law.

After some discussion, the Governing Board agreed that it would be entirely appropriate to move the legal fees from the CEC budget to the General Assembly budget on the grounds that it was the General Assembly that had dealt with the constitutional issues. Moreover, the usual annual transfer to the General Assembly fund should be made.

Concerning the staffing plan for 2019 (contained in the draft financial plan 2019-2023, document 2GB2018\_Doc12a), the Treasurer drew attention to the amounts included under the headings "Requested seconded staff" and "Requested administrative staff". This was what needed to be obtained, over and above what was included in the Novi Sad financial plan, if the Strategy Plan was to be carried out in full. These amounts could be sought either by secondment of staff or by fundraising.

A number of members said that there was little or no prospect of obtaining additional funding for CEC from their churches.

The possibility was raised of seeking project funding from the EU, although Torsten Moritz said that CCME's experience was that this was not easy to plan and organise.

In response to questions, the Chair confirmed that new staff could not be hired except with the agreement of the Personnel Committee and if the necessary funds were available.

Given the uncertainties over the final content of the Strategy Plan, which would not be adopted until the next meeting, as well as uncertainties over the real need for additional staff, it was decided to delete the "to be fundraised" amount from the draft 2019 budget. Nothing would prevent CEC from accepting additional help should it be offered during the course of 2019.

A number of questions were asked about the meaning of "meetings income" and about how the costs of meetings had been calculated.

The General Secretary said that meetings were financed partly from the budget provision, partly from fundraising and partly from in-kind contributions from member churches.



The Chair said that the Budget Committee should be asked to supply the next meeting of the Governing Board with more details about meetings income and in-kind contributions.

Anders Gadegaard said it was worrying that a significant shortfall was expected in payment of membership fees by member churches.

Andreas Aarflot reminded members of the procedures for the adoption of the budget. According to the Constitution, the Governing Board adopts a draft annual budget and staff plan based on the decisions of the General Assembly. These are then submitted to member churches for approval by a written General Assembly.

A number of members said that this agenda item had been difficult to handle because of the late arrival of the documents and also because they lacked detail and explanatory comments.

While agreeing that this had indeed caused problems for members, especially the new members, the Chair pointed out that the rather prolonged absence on sick leave of the staff member responsible for finance and accounts had made it impossible for the Budget Committee and the Secretariat to prepare the finance papers with their customary efficiency. For this reason, the draft budget submitted to the present meeting was not as detailed as usual.

The Treasurer confirmed that the draft budget to be submitted to the member churches for adoption in the written General Assembly would be as detailed as usual.

At a later stage of the meeting, the Chair invited the Governing Board to vote on the revised version of the draft budget for 2019 (the "to be fundraised" item having been deleted). The Governing Board voted unanimously in favour.

Frank Kopania regretted that the General Secretary had not been present for most of the time for this important agenda item because it coincided with another important meeting. He felt nonetheless that this kind of clash should be avoided.

The Governing Board:

- a) **noted** with satisfaction that the financial result of the Novi Sad General Assembly indicated a surplus of income over expenditure (see document 2GB2018\_Doc12c);
- b) **noted** that a deficit was predicted for the 2018 CEC accounts (see document 2GB2018\_Doc12);
- c) **agreed** to that it would be appropriate to place the expenditure on legal fees for the constitutional revision agreed at Novi Sad within the accounts of the General Assembly, thus reducing the expected deficit in the CEC budget;

- d) **took note** of the financial plan for 2019-2023 as adopted by the Novi Sad General Assembly (see documents 2GB2018\_Doc12a and 2GB2018\_Doc12b);
- e) **approved** the outline CEC budget for 2019 (see 2GB2018\_Doc12d), and **noted** that a more detailed version would be prepared by the end of 2018 and sent to member churches for adoption by the General Assembly by written procedure;
- f) **requested** the Budget Committee to submit to the next meeting of the Governing Board details of the in-kind contributions made by member churches;
- g) **requested** the Treasurer and the staff to ensure that in future a detailed budget for the coming year, accompanied by an explanatory commentary, would be sent to the members of the Governing Board well in advance of its autumn meeting.

### 13. Appointment of Governing Board committees

Alison McDonald, Acting Chair of the Nominations Committee, presented the Committee's proposals for membership of the various committees to be set up by the Governing Board.

The Governing Board went into closed session to discuss the proposals.

The Chair then invited the Governing Board to vote on the proposals. The voting was as follows:

Budget Committee: 10 for, 1 against, 3 abstentions (agreed).

Personnel Committee: 11 for, 0 against, 3 abstentions (agreed). Joint

Committee CEC-CCEE: 13 for, 0 against, 2 abstentions (agreed).

Vice-President Bishop Gulnar to be CEC's delegate to the Executive Committee of CCME (with the President as proxy): 15 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions (agreed).

Bishop Nick Baines to fill the vacant seat on the Nominations Committee: 13 for, 0 against, 2 abstentions (agreed).

Taskforce on communication: 15 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions (agreed).

The members of these bodies as agreed above are listed in Appendix 7.

The question was raised as to what should be the duration of the mandate of the Taskforce on Communication. It appeared that the Communications Coordinator would appreciate having a long-term group which would serve as an advisory group to her work.

The Chair said this question should be left open until the next meeting of the Governing Board, by which time the Taskforce would have had ample opportunity to discuss with the Communications Coordinator what type of group would be most helpful.

The Governing Board:

a) **elected** the members of its various committees and appointed representatives to other bodies (see Appendix 7);

**b) set up** a taskforce on communications composed of Anders Gadegaard (Chair), Emma Johnson, the Communications Coordinator and three or four other communicators to be identified.

#### 14. CEC Strategy Plan 2019-2023 (continued)

See item 10, above.

#### 15. 2019 Projects

##### a) Peace Conference

The Governing Board **took note** of the plans for a Peace Conference in 2019 (see Appendix A to 2GB2018\_Doc6).

##### b) Human Rights projects

###### *Conference on human rights and populism*

Elizabeta Kitanovic presented a proposal for a Conference on human rights and populism as detailed in document 2GB2018\_Doc15a.

Zsuzsanna Repas considered that the project description was one-sided; it stigmatised a number of political parties that participated in government in certain European countries and contained inaccurate information.

Others felt that populist parties, whether in government or not, could be dangerous to democracy, and when this was the case churches should not be afraid to say so, even at the risk of upsetting some of their own members. It might, however, be appropriate to moderate some of the language in the proposal.

The Chair asked the Governing Board to vote on the project, it being understood that some of the language would be moderated and that fundraising would be necessary if the project was to go ahead.

The vote was as follows: 14 for, 1 against, 0 abstentions. Approved.

###### *European Christian Forum on freedom of expression at a time of rising populism*

Elizabeta Kitanovic presented a proposal for a European Christian Forum on freedom of expression at a time of rising populism as detailed in document 2GB2018\_Doc15b. Among

the principal topics to be discussed would be restrictions in some countries on freedom of expression for churches and others, and also the problem of hate speech.

The Chair asked the Governing Board to vote on the project.

The vote was as follows: 13 for, 1 against, 0 abstentions. Approved.

The Governing Board:

a) while requesting the staff to moderate some of the language in the existing proposal, **authorised** the staff to organise a Conference on *Human Rights and Populism* in 2019 along the lines set out in document 2GB2018\_Doc15a;

b) **authorised** the staff to organise a Forum on *Freedom of expression at a time of rising populism* along the lines set out in document 2GB2018\_Doc15b.

### c) Communication projects

Referring to paragraph 2 of document 2GB2018\_Doc15d and e, Erin Green (Communications Coordinator) said that it was time the CEC website was updated. To this end she was discussing possibilities with colleagues and website developers.

It was agreed that this has to be linked to the global communication plan. Considering also, however, that updating a website was an ongoing task, Erin Green was encouraged to continue along the lines she had outlined, in coordination with the communication taskforce.

Erin Green then presented her plans for a meeting of church and ecumenical communicators, to be held in April 2019, on “Christian communication in an age of hate speech” (see paragraph 1 of document 2GB2018\_Doc15d and e). The meeting is being organised jointly with the World Association for Christian Communication and financial support is coming from the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland. Hate speech and fake news will be the main concerns.

The Chair invited the Governing Board to vote on this proposal.

The proposal was approved unanimously with one abstention.

The Governing Board:

- a) **authorised** the Communications Coordinator to proceed with the updating of the CEC website as outlined in document 2GB2018\_Doc15d and e;
- b) **authorised** the Communications Coordinator to organise a conference of church and ecumenical communicators on *Christian communication in an age of hate speech* as outlined in document 2GB2018\_Doc15d and e.

#### d) 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of CEC

The President said that resources did not allow for any major project for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary but that the following three CEC events which were already planned for 2019 could be presented in such a way as to relate them to the anniversary:

- i) The Governing Board meeting in Strasbourg with representatives of the Youth organisations will give an opportunity to discuss with them the history of CEC and its current aims (peace DNA and current challenges);
- ii) The peace conference in Paris for the 100th anniversary of the Treaty of Versailles will also be linked to CEC's 60th anniversary;
- iii) The Governing Board meeting in November 2019, possibly in Crete, will be a joint one with the ExCom of CCME. It will provide an opportunity to link the commemoration of three type of peace- and bridge-building events: CEC's 60 anniversary, CCME's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall.

Erin Green then presented an additional proposal to compile a book of interviews with a variety of people who had made a significant contribution to CEC's work. This could also serve as a way of recording the memories of CEC's founders and early personalities. If the interviews were videoed it would also be possible to post them on the internet.

Some members wondered whether, in view of the pressure of work on the communication staff, this was a priority. The work could be quite time-consuming.

Others felt the need for a more fully worked out proposal before coming to a decision.

The Chair therefore asked Erin Green to send to the members of the Governing Board for their observations a more detailed proposal, including budgetary and staff resource implications. Given the urgency of the matter, the Presidency would then decide, in the light of the responses from Governing Board members, whether or not to go ahead with the project.

The Governing Board:

a) **noted** the proposal of the President to give to three already planned events a special character linked to the 60th anniversary of CEC (namely, the Governing Board with a youth delegation in May 2018, which would give with special attention to CEC's reconciliation and peace history, the Peace Conference for the 100th anniversary of the Versailles Peace Treaty, and the joint Governing Board meeting in November 2018 with CCME (30 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CCME);

b) having considered the proposal to compile an anniversary book (see document 2GB2018\_Doc15g), **requested** the Communications Coordinator to send a more detailed proposal to members of the Governing Board by email in the near future; on the basis of members' responses, the Presidency was **authorised** to decide whether or not to go ahead with the project.

### e) European Parliament elections

The President and Erin Green presented this project as set out in document 2GB2018\_Doc15f.

The aim was to provide a guide and tool for member churches on core issues that could be raised within the campaign for the forthcoming elections to the European Parliament. It was suggested that the materials to be offered to churches would take the form of a brochure, a postcard and a series of videos with members of the Governing Board. This was a joint activity with CCME.

Petr Kratochvil offered to help with the work.

The Chair said that Ms Lena Kumlin (Advisor on EU legislation, Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland) was also willing to help.

Given that the materials needed to be ready in the near future (January 2019), the Chair asked members to send in their comments on the proposal in 2GB2018\_Doc15f within two weeks. In addition, churches should be given advance notice that these materials are coming; and the project should be evaluated after the event.

The Chair invited the Governing Board to vote on the project.

The Governing Board voted unanimously in favour with 1 abstention.

The Governing Board **authorised** the staff to prepare, jointly with CCME, a guide for member churches on issues arising in connection with the forthcoming European

Parliament elections and, in view of the urgency of the project, agreed that members would send to the staff their comments on the project as set out in document 2GB2018\_Doc15f within the next two weeks.

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**NOTE** for information: The Governing Board agreed at its meeting on 6 June 2018 that the forthcoming meetings will be held as follows:

**15 May (starting at lunchtime) to 18 May 2018 (finishing at lunchtime), Strasbourg**

**20-22 November 2019 (including a joint session with CCME ExCom)**

**4-6 June 2020**

**18-20 November 2020**

## PARTICIPANTS LIST

- Rev Christian **Krieger**, Union of Protestant Churches in Alsace-Lorraine (President)
- Rt Revd Dr **Guli** Francis-Dehqani, Church of England (Vice President)

### Members

- Mr Andreas Henriksen **Aarflot**, Church of Norway
- Rev Ella-Maria **Boba**, Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Austria  
*Electoral Reserve for Lea-Kathrin Schlenker, Evangelical Church in Germany*
- Rev Jelle **Brouwer**, United Protestant Church of Belgium
- Rev Anne **Burghardt**, Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church
- Dr Valérie **Duval-Poujol**, Federation of Evangelical Baptist Churches of France
- Dean Anders **Gadegaard**, Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Denmark
- Bishop **Hovakim** Manukyan, Armenian Apostolic Church
- Very Rev Archimandrite **Nektarios** Ioannou, Church of Cyprus
- Ms Emma **Johnson**, Methodist Church of Great Britain
- OKR Frank **Kopania**, Evangelical Church in Germany
- Prof Petr **Kratochvil**, Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren
- Rev Alison **McDonald**, Church of Scotland
- Dr Aleksandra **Pistalo**, Serbian Orthodox Church
- Ms Zsuzsanna **Répás**, Reformed Christian Church in Slovakia
- Very Rev Archimandrite **Ignatios** Sotiriadis, Church of Greece
- Revd Canon Carol **Wardman**, Church in Wales  
*Electoral Reserve for Rt Revd Nicholas Baines, Church of England*



## **Apologies**

- H.E. Metropolitan **Cleopas** of Sweden and All Scandinavia, Ecumenical Patriarchate (Vice President)
- Rt Revd Nicholas **Baines**, Church of England
- H.E. Metropolitan **Joseph** of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolis of Southern and Western Europe
- Lea-Kathrin **Schlenker**, Evangelical Church in Germany

## **Staff**

- Ms Véronique **Engels**, Assistant to the General Secretary
- Rev Frank-Dieter **Fischbach**, Executive Secretary
- Very Reverend Protopresbyter Heikki Theodoros **Huttunen**, General Secretary
- Dr Elizabeta **Kitanović**, Executive Secretary
- Rev Sören **Lenz**, Executive Secretary
- Mr Szabolcs **Lörincz**, Assembly Coordinator
- Rev Dr Peter **Pavlovič**, Study Secretary
- Ms Katerina (Aikaterini) **Pekridou**, Executive Secretary
- Dr Torsten **Moritz**, General Secretary, Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe

## **Guest**

- Mr Lemma **Desta**, Moderator, Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe

## **Minute taker**

- Rev John **Murray**

*Updated 22 November 2018*

# Agenda

1. Roll Call
2. Adoption of the Agenda (Doc2a)
3. Public Issues
  - 70th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
  - Global Migration Governance
  - COP24 – Climate Change
4. Minutes of the previous meeting (6 June 2018, Novi Sad)
5. President's Report
6. General Secretary's report including report of staff activities
7. Election of Nominations Committee and election of Treasurer
8. Evaluation of the 2018 General Assembly
9. CCME Activities Report
10. CEC Strategy Plan 2019 -2023
11. Adopt of the Standing Orders of the Governing Board
12. Budget and Accounts
13. Appointments of Governing Board Committees
14. CEC Strategy Plan 2019-2023 (continued)
15. 2019 Projects
  - a. Peace Conference
  - b. Human Rights projects

- c. Communication projects
- d. 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of CEC
- e. European Parliament Elections



Conference of European Churches  
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churches' commission for migrants in europe

## Public Issues Statement

**Adopted by the Conference of European Churches Governing Board and Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe Executive Committee  
November 2018**

### All are born free and equal

*Celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948-2018)*

On 10 December 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations in Paris (France). This historic milestone in international human rights law continues as a source of inspiration for states and people in the fight for the dignity of all.

"The Universal Declaration has helped countless people gain greater freedoms and equality," said UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein. "Violations have been prevented; independence and autonomy have been attained."

The 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the declaration reminds us that human rights are universal, belonging to every human being. This same yearning is found throughout the deep and rich traditions of Christianity. The opening passages of our Holy Scriptures affirm this equality in dignity and support the idea of rights that all enjoy by virtue of their common humanity as all are made in the image of God (Gen 1:27). The fundamentally equal dignity of different ethnicities, genders, and social groups is further emphasized in the letter to the Galatians where the Apostle Paul proclaims that "there is no longer Jew or Greek, no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28).

These fundamental messages are under pressure in Europe today. Recent years point to a time of rising populism and intolerant nationalism. The promotion and protection of human rights is as urgent as ever before. Maintaining what was created and inspired by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is an ongoing task for the churches and global actors, including the United Nations, European Union, Council of Europe, and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

The Conference of European Churches and Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe are deeply committed to the promotion and protection of human rights. In our European context, this includes advocating for more robust implementation of existing laws and continuing our fight for freedom of religion or belief inside and beyond Europe, Christians and other religious groups. Our human rights horizon also extends beyond European borders, with repeated calls for migrants

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churches' commission for migrants in europe

and refugees to have safe passage<sup>1</sup> and warm welcome here. Human rights exist for all humanity and can only be effectively advanced when we see ourselves as part of this bigger picture.

On this occasion we recognise the value of the declaration and human rights law, and their role in combatting ongoing violations. The CEC human rights education program continues its theological and advocacy work to help churches use legal instruments in support of those facing human rights violations.

The Governing Board of the Conference of European Churches joins with all people of goodwill in working to promote, engage, reflect on, and advance the achievements of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We recall in all our work, as simply stated in Article 1, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and right."

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1. Compare Public Issues Statement CEC Novi Sad Assembly 2018, which called "for safe and legal access to Europe, taking up the positive examples given by churches in Italy and other countries which have facilitated safe access to their countries" as well as [http://www.ccme.be/fileadmin/filer/ccme/20\\_Areas\\_of\\_Work/01\\_Refugee\\_Protection/2014-11-20\\_Christian\\_Group\\_Recomm\\_for\\_safe\\_legal\\_paths\\_to\\_protection\\_final.pdf](http://www.ccme.be/fileadmin/filer/ccme/20_Areas_of_Work/01_Refugee_Protection/2014-11-20_Christian_Group_Recomm_for_safe_legal_paths_to_protection_final.pdf) 23.11.2018

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## Public Issues Statement CEC Governing Board, November 2018

### Global Compacts on Refugees and Migrants

The Conference of European Churches Governing Board notes with thankfulness the efforts of the United Nations and its member states to adopt global compacts on migration and refugees.<sup>1</sup> We take note of the intention to adopt these compacts at the UN General Assembly and an intergovernmental conference on international migration in December 2018. The compacts are receiving the support of the vast majority of UN member states, along with reservation from some, including European countries.

We share the analysis expressed by the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants of September 2016 that “since earliest times, humanity has been on the move (I.1.)” and that yet “we are witnessing in today’s world an unprecedented level of human mobility (I.3).”

In this context, CEC and its partners have noted that “Christians are migrants by vocation”<sup>2</sup> and, therefore, also welcome the New York Declaration that the UN and member states “reaffirm and will fully protect the human rights of all refugees and migrants, regardless of status; all are rights holders (i.5).” They echo the World Council of Churches Executive Committee message of 7 November 2018 that “stresses as a matter of first principle that all refugees and migrants, regular or irregular, are human beings each created in the image of God, children of God, sisters and brothers, with equal human dignity and rights regardless of their immigration status.”<sup>3</sup>

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1. The “Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)” and “Global compact in Refugees (GCR)” (building on the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF).
  2. Joint press release CEC CCEE of 11 March 2011: Christians: migrants by vocation; CEC CCEE joint committee 7-11 March 2011 Istanbul
  3. <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/executive-committee/uppsala-november-2018/statement-on-people-on-the-move-migrants-and-refugees>

More Information:

<https://www.iom.int/global-compact-migration>

<http://www.unhcr.org/towards-a-global-compact-on-refugees.html>

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The CEC Governing Board believes that the exercise towards and finally the adoption of both compacts are good examples of further establishing a process and regime of global governance in the areas of displacement and migration. The board also notes that a certain lack of communication on both compacts may have contributed to suspicion about the instruments themselves, particularly in countries where migration is seen with scepticism.

For many years, churches and related organisations have been calling for an international regime on displacement based on human dignity, human needs, and human rights. They have argued strongly for safe and regular migration to reduce or stop deaths and exploitation in the process of international migration and allow for better reception in host countries. While not all provisions supported by churches and related organisations in the discussions on the global compacts have been taken up, the adoption of the compacts will be an important step forward. These frameworks will hopefully help in the process of the establishment of a clearer human rights framework for those migrating for different reasons, an enhanced understanding of responsibility among the different countries and regions on the globe. They will also hopefully contribute to more solidarity and trust between UN member states and their citizens in addressing displacement, migration, welcoming newcomers, as well as the possibility or necessity of return.<sup>4</sup>

While the Governing Board notes with some concern that the global compacts are per se non-binding frameworks, it strongly hopes and encourages that the follow up and monitoring mechanisms of the compacts will be designed and resourced in a way that they achieve the much needed international standard setting.

Churches and related organisations in Europe are aware of their responsibility in this domain, domestically, regionally and internationally, and commit to supporting the UN and its member states in these endeavours.

CEC Governing Board  
Brussels  
November 2018

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4. Cf. [http://www.ccme.be/fileadmin/filer/ccme/20\\_Areas\\_of\\_Work/01\\_Refugee\\_Protection/2018-05-30\\_position\\_paper\\_return\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.ccme.be/fileadmin/filer/ccme/20_Areas_of_Work/01_Refugee_Protection/2018-05-30_position_paper_return_FINAL.pdf)

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## **Public Issues Statement CEC Governing Board, November 2018**

### **Act now for a future with hope** Statement on COP24 and a sustainable future

Climate change is a serious threat to our future. The Conference of European Churches (CEC) welcomes the growing engagement of decision makers, as well as many initiatives among churches and elsewhere responding to climate challenges. We believe much more needs to be done. CEC calls for ambitious and immediate action from governments of individual countries and the European Union, as well as from individuals, enterprises and other public institutions to step up efforts to address climate change.

The recent [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\) report](#) urges rapid, far-reaching, and unprecedented action to limit global warming to no more than 1.5°C. Individually and collectively we must reduce our environmental impact and rapidly transition to a low-carbon economy with a more just distribution of resources. As a disproportionately high contributor to climate change, Europe and the European Union have a special responsibility in this regard. The people of Europe expect joint and committed action.

As people of faith, we believe that responding to climate change and our hope for a sustainable life are linked to our ethical choices. Efforts to reduce carbon footprints have to start from an acknowledgment of our individual responsibilities. This includes our own commitment in CEC. A lifestyle and economy that do not respect the world around us are not sustainable. We need to acknowledge mistakes of the past and reverse attitudes to creation from ones of dominance and misuse to more stewardship and respect.

What is at stake is not only our future but the future of those living elsewhere and suffer from our consumption choices and lifestyle. Disproportionately, the impacts of climate change are felt by those who are most vulnerable but who contributed least to the problem. This will include future generations; those yet to come. Climate change needs to be addressed as an issue of justice.

In supporting the recent statement of the [European Christian Environmental Network \(ECEN\)](#) we underline the need to work together with hope for the future. Science can tell us what is happening; faith tells us why we must respond. We call upon governments of individual countries, the European Union and political decision makers to:

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- Act accordingly and commit to reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions to align with the IPCC target of global warming of no more than 1.5°C;
- Work for a sustainable future and establish adequate mechanisms to support the most vulnerable. This includes allocating in a transparent way finance to address loss and damage caused by climate change in vulnerable parts of the world; to support implementation of sustainable development goals, to intensify efforts for energy saving and renewable energy production; and to promote an economy of sustainable production and consumption;
- In anticipation of the forthcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP24) in Katowice (Poland) we call for a visible and determined action plan with a clear time frame and commitment from all involved parties. We call for measures to develop trust that helps overcome obstacles in reaching an agreement on meaningful joint action.

We encourage CEC Member Churches to:

- continue and intensify efforts to bring about a more sustainable and equitable lifestyle in parishes and church communities across the continent, to respect creation, promote a just transition to a low carbon economy, act for inter-generational justice, share best practices among churches on these issues and work together as much as possible;
- engage in advocacy and dialogue with political decision makers to express our concerns and to urge increased action in response to climate change;
- develop theological resources on care for creation that address the crisis and offer a vision of a more just and sustainable future, and engage in this work in an open ecumenical spirit.

Effective response to the threat of climate change requires long-term effort, commitment and a profound transformation. Achieving this demands endurance. When grounded in faith it leads to a hope that cannot disappoint as “God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.”

CEC Governing Board  
November 2018  
Brussels

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## Conference of European Churches Governing Board

Brussels, 22-24 November 2018

### Presidents' Report *oral report, check against delivery*

## I. The work within CEC

### Constitution and legal matter

Following the General Assembly held in Novi Sad, one of the first tasks was to finalize the French version of the constitution adopted in English, so that it could be approved at the Extraordinary General Assembly held on 5 October 2018. The French reference version was developed in close collaboration between our legal team (Patrick Schnabel and Andreas Aarflot) and the law firm KOAN. The extraordinary General Assembly of 5 October was held in the presence of the Presidency, the Secretary General, his assistant and our two legal advisors.

CEC is now a non-profit legal body in Belgium. Its Constitution is now published in the Belgian legal announcement newspaper "monitor". However, two articles do require a royal decree. It is therefore likely to be a few more weeks before the new constitution fully comes into force. Moreover, the law firm KOAN has informed us that a revision of the Belgian law on non-profit associations and foundations is planned for early 2019, and scheduled to come into force on 1 January 2020. It is therefore very likely that the CEC will have to revise its Statutes for a third time at the next General Assembly.

I would like to emphasize the considerable work done by Patrick Schnabel and Andreas Aarflot, and to thank them and their churches for their extremely competent support to the CEC.

Since 5 October, they have been working on a revision of the Standing orders to adapt them to the new constitution. We have agreed on a pre-consultation with the members of the Governing Board and staff in order to clarify issues before the Governing Board as much as possible, and thus avoid lengthy discussion. Some members of the Board of Directors have expressed the wish to have time to discuss it, we have planned two and a half hours for that.

### General Secretary and Staff

I was in regular contact by telephone with the General Secretary, usually several times a week. Skype doesn't work yet; we see each other once or twice a month.

I met the staff twice.

A first meeting in June allowed me to get to know the team, but also to evaluate the general assembly and discuss the development of a strategic plan. I also asked them to work on a CEC document that could be made available to Member Churches inviting them to question candidates in the May 2019 European elections.

The second meeting was held in the beginning of November to discuss their strategic proposals.

### **Meeting of Presidency**

The Presidents met on 5-6 October 2018. This meeting was an opportunity to prepare the Governing Board agenda, assess the preparation of the strategic plan and discuss the composition of the Governing Board committees (the proposal is to be discussed this evening). Proposals for the Personnel Committee, Budget Committee, Joint CEC-CCEE committee, will be entrusted to the Nominations Committee once it has been elected.

### **Consultations**

I met Bishop Christopher Hill who gave me a general overview of CEC. He shared with me his personal perception of CEC, the relation with its partners, the current matter areas of work. He also raised several points of attention. I am grateful for such a trustful exchange. At the same time, I was able to meet Bishop Nick Baines, member of Governing Board, and especially Chairman of the Strategy and Policy committee during the General Assembly in Novi Sad. We discussed the methodology for developing a strategic plan for CEC. As drafting a strategic plan until the next General Assembly is one of the Governing Board's first main tasks, I have spent a lot of time defining a method and producing a project that can be the guiding principle of the work of the Governing Board.

The aim is to propose an overall vision of CEC's work in response to the current challenges. We will come-back to this approach in more detail tomorrow, when we introduce the work on the strategic plan.

## **II. Institutional meetings**

In this part I would like to report on introductory visits and presentations and first meetings with partners.

**On EU level**, we tried to arrange an introductory visit with Franz Timmermans, First Vice-President of the commission in charge of the dialogue with religion (Art 17). Unfortunately, he could not make it. I took the opportunity to introduce myself during the High-level religious meeting organized on the 8<sup>th</sup> October. According to the invitation, 3 topics were on agenda: 1) Priority challenges the EU should address on migration, 2) social integration and 3) sustainability of our way of life. The meeting was led by the First Vice-president of the European Commission. He sometimes spoke more than he listened. The initial agenda was not followed; we had a more general exchange. In the end, it was more an open exchange than a concrete discussion or a consultation. The photo showing the

consultation was important.

The Themes were as follows: The future of European Union after the May 2019 EU parliament election, Euroscepticism, the need for a European narrative, the climate of irrational fears and its political misuse, the challenge of intercultural societies, the need for trust in a common future, the possible contribution of churches, the gender issue/equality of men and women issue, Brexit, etc.

The meeting with Mrs. Mairead McGuinness, Vice-President of the Parliament, is postponed. It will take place at the end of the year.

**CPCE:** I have met several times with the General Secretary (previous and current one) and the President. These meetings were opportunities to discuss the continuation of the position seconded by CPCE, and coming from a Landeskirche EKD (as Frank Dieter Fischbach's mandate expires at the end of December). These discussions were successful: The Council of the CPCE, just before its General Assembly, decided in principle to renew the appointment of an executive secretary to the CEC. However, the framework still needs to be redefined.

**COMECE:** I met twice with the leaders of COMECE, President Archbishop Hollerich of Luxembourg, and Secretary General Olivier Poquillon. COMECE intervenes at the level of the European Union with a clear political lobbying project. It is concerned about Catholic representation; it considers that Catholicism (almost 50% of Europeans) is under-represented in comparison with CEC and CEC member organisations present in Brussels (EKD office, CROCUE, Bishop of diocese in Europe). COMECE, while seeking bilateral relations, also expressed its concern about how collaboration is organized. We have agreed on a President and Secretary meeting to further analyse these issues.

**CCEE:** With the General Secretary, I took the opportunity of the first ecumenical opening celebration for the season of creation to encounter Cardinal Bagnasco and discuss how to restart a good working of the joint-committee CEC-CCEE. We agreed to organize a meeting in autumn 2019, to work on the reception of *Charta ecumenica* and to reflect on how churches should deal with fears, populism, dissatisfaction.

**EKD office:** I had the opportunity to join a meeting in the EKD office in Brussels, which welcomed a EKD delegation (foreign office, Synod...). The General Secretary and I gave a presentation where CEC stands now and how CEC will implement its work after the General assembly of Novi Sad.

So far, I have had no contacts with CROCEU, and the Evangelical office in Brussel.

### III. Representation, conferences and other events

#### 1) WCC 70th anniversary (17 + 21 June)

I attended twice the general council of WCC held in Geneva. The first meeting was on the 17th of June for the Celebration in Saint Peter. The message was

given by His Holiness Bartholomeus 1st. It was a brief opportunity to greet him and thank for his kind words on my election. The 2nd meeting was on the 21th of June, on the occasion of the visit of Pope Francis to the Ecumenical Centre. The media reported widely his message of the ecumenical journey and the place of witness in it.

### **Ecumenical celebration in Assisi (31 August-1 September)**

To start the season of creation, for the first time this year, an ecumenical journey in Assisi was organized. It started with a contemplative prayer in front of the shrine of renunciation, then came an evening prayer in Santa Clara (before the cross of Assisi) and it ended with a public event in front of the Basilica, celebrating the beginning of 3 days' pilgrimage to Guido. It was an opportunity to meet Cardinal Bagnasco and to discuss the future of the CEC-CCEE joint committee

### **Farewell Dine Fecht (Hanover, 6 september)**

It seemed important to me that CEC should participate in the farewell of Oberkirchenrätin Dine Fecht, and in the installation of Oberkirchenrat Frank Kopania at the Head of the foreign office of the EKD. I was thus able to thank EKD for the support provide to CEC's work and working mechanism. I had the chance to meet Michael Bunker (General Secretary of CPCE) and discuss with him the CEC-CPCE cooperation, especially the issue of the Frank Dieters successor.

### **GA CPCE (Basel, 13-18 September)**

The CPCE General Assembly brought together about 100 delegates and was held in Basel Cathedral. Many theological texts have been received or adopted (ecclesial communion, religious plurality, theology of the diaspora, continuing education of pastors, reproductive medicine). On the basis of a report, a declaration of intent was signed, opening the prospect of a dialogue with the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity on the theme "Church and ecclesial communion". For the first time, the Catholic Church is engaging in a dialogue with a communion of Church and recognizing the model of unity in diversity promoted by the Leuenberg Agreement. The theological work carried out on the deepening of ecclesial communion reaches its limit (the resistance of the Churches to transfer some of their competences). Instead, the CPCE will focus its work on ethical and societal issues.

Several goals and working areas raised in the final report of the General Assembly are to be linked to CEC: dialog with Orthodox, work on the relation with the Anglican churches (Meissen, Reuilly, Porvoo), and social issues. I brought CEC's greetings to CPCE's general assembly and underlined our willingness to continue the CEC and CPCE cooperation, which was also subject of informal discussions.

### **Klingenthal colloquium of ICCS (3 October)**

Invited by Peter Schreiner, I took part in the Klingenthal colloquium organized by the Inter European Commission on Church and School. I presented a project

on interreligious and intercultural education in school led by the Union of Protestant Churches in Alsace Lorraine, and also CEC and how CEC will implement its work after the General Assembly.

#### **CCME and Deutsche Diakonie Asylum conference in Greece (17-18 October)**

After an impressive, for some depressive, visit in Chios, the conference took place in Athens. Professors in political science, journalists, lawyers, analyze the policy and treatment of the Greek and EU institutions on migration issue, especially on the Greek islands. They showed how asylum procedures are beyond international and legal standards. In an opening speech, I underlined the agreement CEC – CCME 2017 and some aspects of the public issue from Novi Sad. Being thankful for the close cooperation CEC-CCME, I emphasized, by my participation, CEC's interest and commitment in CCME working area. We had also the opportunity to meet with archbishop Hieronymus II of Athens and Greece.

#### **Forum Chrétien Francophone, Lyon 28-31 October 2018**

In order to replicate the model of the Global Christian Forum at the regional level, a first Francophone meeting was organized in Lyon. It brought together 230 participants from all ecclesial families (50% of the participants were from historical churches, 50% from new churches). This very stimulating meeting is a real ecumenical encouragement. The public evening was attended by more than 600 participants; I was able to present the CEC, discuss the Novi Sad General Assembly and its themes, and invite people to pray and act in the face of the challenge of the upcoming European elections.

#### **Conference "Rediscovering the common good" (Brussels, 6 November)**

Invited by the *Jesuit European Social Center* (JESC) and the *Chapel for Europe*, I had the opportunity to contribute with Bishop Hollerich to a panel discussion after a keynote speech of Herman Van Rompuy. I emphasized CEC's paper "What future for Europe" and underlined the churches concern about rediscovering the values of the European founders.

#### **The Centenary of first World War's end (10-11 November, Berlin)**

The event was organized by the evangelical Church of Berlin-Brandenburg-Schlesische Oberlausitz and the Catholic Archdiocese of Berlin. Four youth choirs, coming from England, France, Russia and Germany prepared together a peace concert in the Dom of Berlin. It was followed on Sunday morning by an ecumenical service in commemoration of the end of the first world war and prayer for peace and reconciliation. In his message, Bishop Dröge, reminded us of the commitments of the *Charta ecumenica*.

#### **After Brexit colloquium (London, 16 November)**

The Colloquium was organized by the Archbishop of Canterbury in cooperation with the Chair of EKD Council. The discussion went along the following themes: the church and the unity of society (with a special focus on the social roots of

the Brexit issue), the churches and the unity of Europe, the unity of European churches (Fr Heikki participated on this panel). Considering its roots, its consequences and how other internal political issues were decisive, it became obvious that Brexit is a far broader concern for Churches in Europe.

### **To be remembered**

Solidarity with Spanish church: After the video on the discrimination of Spanish retired pastors shown during the Novi Sad General Assembly, which was widely diffused in September, CEC sent out a letter which called for solidarity with them.

Invitations declined

- I was unable attend the International Conference organized in Armenia on "The Holy Scripture in a Changing World" by the Apostolic church of Armenia and the United Bible society (27 to 30 September).
- For family reasons, I had to give up travelling to Würzburg to attend the Synod of the Evangelical Church of Germany (11 - 14 November).

**Draft CEC Strategy Plan: 2019-2023**  
***Together in Hope and Witness***

**AIM 1: CEC promotes peace, justice and reconciliation in Europe**

Building peace and reconciliation in Europe	Contributing to the future of Europe	Supporting interreligious dialogue	Educating on diversity and plurality
<p>CEC will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓work on current issues related to peace, security, and reconciliation in Europe (e.g., organise a peace conference in 2019)</li> <li>✓follow European political developments regarding peace, security, and military solutions</li> <li>✓strengthen churches' competence in the field of reconciliation</li> <li>✓provide broader theologically grounded understanding on how to deal with polarising discussions</li> <li>✓share the best practices of Member Churches in the field of reconciliation</li> <li>✓work on Christian approaches to fear dissatisfaction, and insecurity</li> <li>✓promote solidarity and mutual justice</li> <li>✓discuss nationalism in relation to ecclesiology</li> <li>✓reflect on the sense of non-participation and marginalisation in relation to democracy</li> <li>✓provide and exchange best practices for Member Churches on how to strengthen democracy, human rights and rule of law, and to respond to xenophobia, populism and nationalism within the church framework</li> </ul>	<p>CEC will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓work on a new narrative for Europe (e.g., organise a conference on a new narrative for Europe)</li> <li>✓discuss the future of Europe under the motto "unity in diversity"</li> <li>✓strengthen a theological understanding of social and ecological justice in Europe</li> <li>✓reflect on the issue of EU internal migration</li> <li>✓follow broader political developments in the European Continent (e.g. Brexit, entry of Balkan states to the EU))</li> </ul>	<p>CEC will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓apply the commitments of <i>Charta Œcumenica</i> and strengthen dialogue with Islam, Judaism, and other religions</li> <li>✓contribute to the shaping of a Theology of Religions</li> <li>✓address anti-religious prejudice, including Antisemitism, Christianophobia and Islamophobia in Europe</li> <li>✓share best practices, create a network of church representatives involved in interreligious matters</li> </ul> <p>* Staff needed</p>	<p>CEC will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓empower its Member Churches in the discussion about diversity and pluralism in our societies</li> <li>✓monitor and contribute to current developments in intercultural education and dialogue policies (e.g., <i>Competences for Democratic Culture</i> program of the Council of Europe)</li> <li>✓develop Intercultural learning on the basis of an ecumenical project to enable Member Churches to become bridge builders</li> <li>✓discuss the issue of education on religions in school</li> </ul>



## AIM 2: CEC deepens church communion and ecumenical fellowship

Seeking growth as an ecumenical church fellowship	Continuing the theological dialogue	Being Church together with migrant and minority churches	Acting with ecumenical partners in Europe
<p>CEC will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ provide space for dialogue and encounter (e.g., by organising regional church meetings on ecumenical, ecclesiological and ethical issues, and by organising a kind of “Erasmus program” of a different length, exploring the possibility of European funding)</li> <li>✓ commit itself to strengthen Member Churches’ participation in CEC</li> <li>✓ develop a communications strategy enhancing the churches’ fellowship, especially in creating a network of communicators</li> <li>✓ raise participation in at least one CEC program in 2019-2023 to at least 100 Member Churches</li> <li>✓ increase cooperation with Member Churches (e.g., organise an annual meeting of ecumenical officers; enhance cooperation with National Councils of Churches by organising an annual meeting)</li> <li>✓ offer training to church leaders and ecumenical officers on ecumenism with elements on specificities on European context, specific ecumenical agreements, and so on</li> <li>✓ organise regular meetings with Organisations in Partnership</li> </ul>	<p>CEC will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ reflect on our different ecclesiologies and understanding of “communion”</li> <li>✓ reflect on our different cultural contexts and church relations with nation and state</li> <li>✓ carry out an inventory of the theological dialogue between and among Member Churches and identify priorities and key questions of concern, working theologically on common relevant topics</li> <li>✓ encourage further reflection on Christian witness and evangelisation in a secularised society</li> <li>✓ deepen the theological foundation of CEC programs</li> </ul>	<p>CEC and CCME will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ organise conversations and cooperation between European churches on migration and displacement</li> <li>✓ intensify and enhance ecumenical cooperation and fellowship at national and European levels with migrant and minority ethnic churches</li> <li>✓ discuss ecclesiologies of churches with historical longevity in Europe in dialogue with ecclesiologies of ‘migrant’ churches</li> <li>✓ reflect on the impact of the changing religious landscape (new Churches, other religions) on the self-understanding of churches</li> </ul>	<p>CEC will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ build further on existing work with CCEE, particularly on <i>Charta Œcumenica</i> and populism</li> <li>✓ strengthen cooperation with COMECE, especially to improve the functioning of the dialogue in the framework of TFEU Art 17.</li> <li>✓ strengthen cooperation with and give expression to our relationship with inter-confessional partners in Europe (e.g., engaging young theologians with their work and common history, annual training, Global Christian Forum, especially in the regional level)</li> <li>✓ clarify and strengthen the relations with WCC, contribute to the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace and cooperate in preparing their assembly in Karlsruhe</li> </ul>

## AIM 3: CEC raises the Churches voice in Europe and toward the European Institutions

Continuing and strengthening the dialogue with the European Institutions (European Union, Council of Europe)	Promoting human rights and freedom of religion or belief as essential for justice and human societies	Advancing economic and ecological justice	Analysing and reflecting on the issue of digitalisation, artificial intelligence, and human dignity	Monitoring and engaging with science, bioethics and technology	Defending the rights of migrants, refugees and asylum seeker with CCME, according to our agreement
<p>CEC will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ contribute to high level meetings in the European Institutions, work for a better effectiveness of the dialogue (Art 17) and develop dialogue seminars in cooperation with COMECE</li> <li>✓ monitor the work of the European Institutions and engage in advocacy on CEC's strategic priorities</li> <li>✓ contribute proactively to faith networks and networks of NGOs</li> <li>✓ meet with the EU presidency in cooperation with local Member Churches.</li> </ul>	<p>CEC will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ help to broaden its Member Churches' understanding of human rights and advance their implementation</li> <li>✓ support its members in cases of human rights conflicts or violations, especially concerning freedom of religion or belief</li> <li>✓ provide expertise on human rights issues, in particular freedom of religion or belief, by institutional and political actors (European Union, Council of Europe, OSCE and UN)</li> </ul>	<p>CEC will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ work to increase engagement of Member Churches in care of creation and global sustainable development and sustain the ECEN network</li> <li>✓ advocate at the European level for an alternative and sustainable economy</li> <li>✓ work together in effective cooperation with other ecumenical actors (WCC, organisations in partnership from civil society)</li> <li>✓ monitor and contribute to the development, the discussion and the European political decision making on the changes (or future) of work in Europe</li> </ul>	<p>CEC, in cooperation with CPCE, will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ provide an inventory of the questions linked to this issue</li> <li>✓ organise a conference on the subject</li> <li>✓ collect the churches' views on this issue</li> <li>✓ produce a theological reflection document and orientation guide</li> </ul> <p>* Staff needed</p>	<p>CEC will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ create a network to enable Member Churches to participate in the ethical, social and theological debate relating to science, bioethics, and technology</li> <li>✓ monitor and respond to policy developments in the European Institutions (in particular the Council of Europe) in these areas</li> </ul>	<p>CEC and CCME will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ advocate and network to enable safe and legal access to Europe for those in need of protection</li> <li>✓ defend international refugee protection in Europe and EU member states</li> <li>✓ advocate for a clear, transparent and accessible system of migration to Europe based on fundamental rights of migrants</li> <li>✓ address the protection of those groups discriminated against in the context of ethnic, social, racial, religious and gender-based exclusion</li> <li>✓ provide a space for dialogue where there are divergent views among Member Churches on the</li> </ul>

					consequences of migration to Europe and within Europe
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\* There is no specific field of work on youth. The involvement of young people will be ensured through an effective presence in all working groups and conferences and regular meetings with representatives.

\* There will be a work on a global communication strategy.

### Acronyms

CCEE	Council of European Bishops' Conferences	CPCE	Communion Protestant Churches in Europe
COMECE	Commission of Bishop's Conferences in the European Union	WCC	World Council of Churches
CALL	Church Action on Labour and Life	OSCE	Organisation pour la sécurité et la coopération en Europe
ICCS	Intereuropean Commission on Church and School	ECEN	European Christian Environmental Network
CCME	Churches Commission on Migrants in Europe		

# Conference of European Churches

## Standing Orders

*Adopted by the Governing Board 24 November 2018*

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## Part I – The Governing Board

### § 1 General provisions

- (1) *'The Governing Board shall meet no less than twice a year'* (Const. Art. 8 XI).
- (2) Meetings of the Governing Board shall normally take place in Brussels. The Governing Board may decide to hold a meeting in any country where the Conference has Members or applicants for membership.
- (3) Meetings of the Governing Board shall be opened and closed with a prayer and a blessing.
- (4) The members of the Governing Board shall be entitled to claim and be reimbursed for all reasonable expenses. The members of the Governing Board shall not be remunerated.

### § 2 Convening of the Governing Board

- (1) *'The Governing Board shall meet (...) upon convening by the President. If the President is unable or unwilling to convene the Governing Board, it shall be convened by a Vice-President. If the President and the two (2) Vice-Presidents are all unable or unwilling to convene the Governing Board, the General Secretary shall do so or, if he/she is unable, one of the executive staff members of the Secretariat.'* (Const. Art. 8 XI).
- (2) The President shall *'call special meetings of the Governing Board, if necessary'* (Const. Art. 9 I). Such meeting shall follow the convening procedures in paragraph (1).
- (3) The Governing Board should normally decide on a meeting plan specifying the date(s), place and expected duration of the meeting at least three (3) months before the date fixed. The meetings should, if possible, include the Saturday.
- (4) *'The General Secretary shall send the invitation via regular mail or any other means of written communication (including e-mail) at least seven (7) calendar days before the meeting. This invitation shall mention the date, time and place of the meeting. The agenda and the relevant documents necessary for the discussion shall be attached.'* (Const. Art. 8 XI).

### § 3 Agenda

- (1) The President, or the person convening the Governing Board meeting according to § 2 (1), shall announce his or her intention to convene a meeting of the Governing Board at least one (1) month in advance. Each member of the Governing Board shall have the right to request items to be put on the agenda. The request must be sent to the President or the person convening the Governing Board meeting within

- one (1) week after the above announcement. The request must be acceded to if it has the support of at least two (2) other members of the Governing Board.
- (2) *'The agenda of the meetings of the Governing Board shall be prepared by the General Secretary and approved by the President. If the President is unable or unwilling to approve the agenda, it shall be approved by a Vice-President. If the President and the two (2) Vice-Presidents are all unable or unwilling to approve the agenda, the General Secretary shall do so when sending the invitations.'* (Const. Art. 8 XII).
- (3) The agenda of the meetings of the Governing Board shall normally contain the following items:
- a) Minutes of the previous meeting;
  - b) Report of the President;
  - c) Report of the General Secretary;
  - d) Report on the programmatic work;
  - e) Report of the Treasurer.
- (4) The provisions in paragraph (1) and (3) do not apply to special meetings of the Governing Board.

#### § 4 Meetings of the Governing Board

- (1) The following quorum is required for the Governing Board: *'Unless otherwise stipulated in this Constitution, the Governing Board shall be validly constituted and have a quorum when at least half of the members of the Governing Board, with a minimum of seven (7), are present or represented.'* (Const. Art. 8 XIII).
- (2) The following majority requirements apply to the decisions of the Governing Board: *'Unless otherwise stipulated in this Constitution, decisions of the Governing Board shall be validly adopted if they obtain the simple majority of the votes cast by the members of the Governing Board present or represented. Each member of the Governing Board shall have one (1) vote. Blank votes, invalid votes and abstentions shall not be counted. In the event of a tie, the President has the casting vote.'* (Const. Art. 8 XII).
- (3) *'The Governing Board shall be chaired by the President. If the President is unable or unwilling to chair the Governing Board, the Governing Board shall be chaired by a Vice-President. If the President and the two (2) Vice-Presidents are all unable or unwilling to chair the Governing Board, the Governing Board shall be chaired by a member of the Governing Board designated for this purpose by the Governing Board.'* (Const. Art. 8 XIV).
- (4) Votes shall normally be cast by show of hands. If at least one (1) member of the Governing Board requests for a secret written ballot, this request must be granted.

- (5) In accordance with the 'Principle of Confidentiality and the Secrecy of Affairs' of the governing body of an association governed by Belgian law, meetings of the Governing Board shall be held in closed session.
- (6) By way of derogation to the preceding paragraph, the Governing Board may invite one (1) or more third party(ies), i.e. non-Governing Board members, including the executive staff, to attend without voting rights in one or more meeting(s) or part(s) of meeting(s) of the Governing Board.

## § 5 The 'electoral reserve' of the Governing Board

- (1) *'Except for the President and the two (2) Vice-Presidents, each member of the Governing Board - in order to be represented at a Governing Board meeting - shall have the right, via regular mail or any other means of written communication (including e-mail), to give a proxy to a member of the 'electoral reserve', who should be from the same church family and region as the member of the Governing Board conferring his or her voting right. No member of the 'electoral reserve' may hold more than one (1) proxy.'* (Const. Art. 8 VIII).
- (2) The members of the 'electoral reserve' shall be included in the Governing Board's general circulation, information and distribution list, with the exception of confidential documents.
- (3) The member of the Governing Board who cannot attend the meeting, should give its proxy to a member of the 'electoral reserve' from the same church family (Protestant, Orthodox (Eastern, Oriental) or Anglican/Old Catholic) and from the same region as said member, and if possible, taking additionally age and gender balances into account. The proxy must be sent directly to the member of the 'electoral reserve' with a copy to the General Secretary.
- (4) Members of the 'electoral reserve' should at least once in the Governing Board's term be invited to attend a meeting of the Governing Board in addition to the members of the Governing Board.
- (5) *'Except for the President and the two (2) Vice-Presidents, if the mandate of a member of the Governing Board ceases before its term, for whatever reasons, the Governing Board may freely appoint (by co-optation) a new member of the Governing Board from [the] 'electoral reserve' for the remainder of the term, who should be from the same church family and region as the replaced member of the Governing Board.'* (Const. Art. 8 VII).

## § 6 Bodies of the Governing Board

- (1) The Governing Board shall *'take the decisions to establish and delegate tasks to one or more working group(s), committee(s) or any such body, determine rules for their work*

*and governance, and oversee their activities'* (Const. Art. 8 IX). The Governing Board shall have the following bodies:

- The Presidency;
  - The Nominations Committee;
  - The Budget Committee;
  - The Personnel Committee;
  - The General Assembly Planning Committee, and
  - The General Assembly Nominations Panel.
- (2) The General Secretary shall participate in the meetings of the Governing Board as its secretary in an advisory capacity (Const. Art. 11 I).
- (3) The Presidency shall consist of the President and two (2) Vice-Presidents. The Presidency shall have the following functions:
- Between meetings of the Governing Board, the Presidency shall carry out the decisions of the Governing Board and supervise the implementation of the decisions of the General Assembly and the Governing Board.
  - Between meetings of the Governing Board, the Presidency shall be empowered to take decisions and measures which cannot be postponed, and which are not by law, the Constitution of the Conference or these Standing Orders reserved to the Governing Board.
  - The Presidency shall inform and consult the members of the Governing Board on important decisions having fundamental implications for the working of the Conference between meetings of the Governing Board.
  - The President shall report to the Governing Board on the decisions and measures the presidency has taken at each meeting of the Governing Board.
- (4) The Nominations Committee shall be chaired by one (1) of the Vice-Presidents and consist of five (5) other members of the Governing Board. The members shall include at least two (2) women and at least two (2) men. At least two (2) of the members shall come from Orthodox Member Churches. The Nominations Committee shall make recommendations to the Governing Board on the Governing Board's appointments. The Nominations Committee, together with the President, shall be the Search Committee for the appointment of the General Secretary.
- (5) The Budget Committee shall consist of the Treasurer, the Vice-Treasurer, the General Secretary and three (3) other members appointed by the Governing Board. The Treasurer and at least one (1) of the other members must also be members of the Governing Board. Besides the General Secretary, at least two (2) members must be non-Governing Board members. The Budget Committee shall be chaired by the Treasurer. The Budget Committee shall oversee the financial situation of the Conference and make recommendations for decisions and actions of the Governing Board. *'Each year, the Governing Board shall, on a proposal from its Budget Committee, draw up the draft annual accounts of the past financial year, as well*



- as the draft budget for the next financial year* (Const. Art. 14 IV). The Budget Committee shall normally meet twice a year.
- (6) The Personnel Committee shall consist of the President, the Treasurer, the General Secretary and two (2) other members of the Governing Board. The Governing Board appoints the Chair of the Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee shall oversee the general procedures for appointments of staff positions salaried by the Conference, the working regulations and rules for the staff and policies for remunerations and conditions for staff.
- (7) The Governing Board shall *'make appropriate preparations for the General Assemblies'* (Const. Art. 8 IX). To that end, the Governing Board should appoint a General Assembly Planning Committee at least two years in advance of a physical meeting of the General Assembly. The General Assembly Planning Committee shall consist of
- a member of the Governing Board as Chair;
  - at least seven (7) other members appointed by the Governing Board,
  - the General Secretary,
  - as well as, in an advisory capacity,
    - the coordinator of the General Assembly;
    - the head of the local planning committee for the General Assembly in the host country;
    - the legal advisors of the General Assembly.
- (8) The Governing Board shall appoint a General Assembly Nominations Panel consisting of nine members to prepare the elections by the General Assembly. The appointment should be done at least eighteen (18) months prior to the physical meeting of the General Assembly in which the elections shall take place. The Chair of the General Assembly Nominations Panel should be an outgoing member of the Governing Board. The General Assembly Nominations Panel shall:
- Propose candidates for Moderator and two (2) Vice-Moderators of the General Assembly to the Governing Board;
  - Propose, through the Governing Board, candidates for the General Assembly's Nominations Committee to the General Assembly;
  - Draft a first proposal of candidates for the President, the two (2) Vice-Presidents, the members of the Governing Board and the members of the 'electoral reserve' to the General Assembly's Nominations Committee.
- Members of the General Assembly Nominations Panel shall not be eligible for any election or appointment by the General Assembly. Further details, including a clear time-frame for the preparations of the elections, shall be laid down by the Governing Board in the committee's terms of reference.
- (9) The Governing Board may also appoint and delegate tasks to other committees.
- (10) The Governing Board can appoint non-Governing Board members to serve on its bodies, with the exception of the bodies mentioned in paragraph 3, 4 and 6.

**§ 7 Conflict of interest**

- (1) If a member of the Governing Board has, directly or indirectly, a real or apparent conflict of interest relevant to a decision or an operation within the competence of the Governing Board, he or she must inform the other members of the Governing Board accordingly before the deliberation of the Governing Board. The same applies to any other participants in meetings of the Governing Board. In case of financial, comparable material, or personal conflict of interest, the person may be heard, but must not take part in the deliberations and decisions concerning the issue. In all other cases, the person may, at the discretion of the Governing Board, also be required to leave the meeting during the deliberations and vote. His/her declaration, the reasons of the conflict of interest and whether the member was present, must appear in the minutes of the Governing Board. When there is a doubt as to whether a conflict of interest exists, the matter shall be resolved by a vote of the Governing Board, excluding the member concerning whose situation the doubt has arisen.
- (2) The preceding paragraph applies accordingly to other bodies of the Conference.

**§ 8 Minutes and information from the meetings of the Governing Board**

- (1) Minutes shall be drawn up at each Governing Board meeting. The draft minutes shall be sent via regular mail or via any other means of written communication (including e-mail) by the General Secretary to the members of the Governing Board and, with the exception of confidential items, to the members of the 'electoral reserve' within six (6) weeks of the meeting of the Governing Board. The minutes shall be approved by the Governing Board at its next meeting, signed by the President and kept in a register of minutes. Copies of the minutes shall be sent via regular mail or via any other means of written communication (including e-mail) by the General Secretary to the members of the Governing Board and, with the exception of confidential items, to the members of the 'electoral reserve'.
- (2) The register of minutes shall be kept at the registered office of the Conference where all members of the Governing Board may consult it, without, however, displacing it.
- (3) The General Secretary shall, within two (2) weeks of the meeting of the Governing Board, send a summary of the decisions taken to the members of the Governing Board and, with the exception of confidential items, to the members of the 'electoral reserve'. The summary of the decisions shall be sent via regular mail or via any other means of written communication (including e-mail).
- (4) The Governing Board shall communicate its decisions in appropriate ways to the Member Churches, Organisations in Partnership and National Councils of Churches after each meeting of the Governing Board.

## Part II – The life of CEC

### § 9 Membership

- (1) When considering a Church for membership, the Governing Board shall first ascertain, based on the information provided in the application according to Const. Art. 4 I that the requirements for membership according to Const. Art. 3 II are met. The applicant shall
  - a) *'Be a Church or a Federation of Churches;*
  - b) *Have its registered office in Europe;*
  - c) *Be duly constituted in accordance with the laws and practices of its country of origin, whether it has legal personality or not; and*
  - d) *Accept and respect the basis of the Conference in accordance with the preamble to this Constitution and the aims of the Conference as set out in Article 2 of this Constitution.'*
- (2) *'The decisions of the Governing Board regarding the admission shall obtain a two-third (2/3) majority of the votes cast by the members of the Governing Board present or represented. The decisions of the Governing Board regarding membership admissions are final and binding, and the Governing Board shall give reasons for its decisions. A positive decision by the Governing Board shall be notified by the General Secretary to all Members.'* (Const. Art. 4 I).
- (3) The admission will only come into effect after six months after this notification, as *'at the written request of at least one quarter (1/4) of the Members'* during this period *'the decision of admission to membership of the Governing Board shall not take effect'*. In such a case, the Governing Board will put the decision to the next physical General Assembly (Const. Art. 4 I).
- (4) Members can resign any time by notifying the General Secretary, who shall inform the Governing Board without delay. The resignation will take effect only on the first day of the sixth (6) full month after such notification (Const. Art. 4 II). In general, *'a Member that has resigned from the Conference and wishes to rejoin the Conference as a Member shall be considered as an applicant for membership'*, however, if the Member wishes to rejoin the Conference *'within six (6) months as from the date of its resignation, it shall be readmitted as a Member upon decision of the President'*. (Const. Art. 4 III). The latter provision cannot be applied, if membership has been terminated by exclusion.
- (5) If a Member *'persistently and seriously fails to comply with its obligations as a Member'*, this can lead to suspension of membership rights (Const. Art. 4 IV) up to exclusion from membership (Const. Art. 4 V). Exclusion is mandatory, if a Member does no longer fulfil the requirements of membership. The procedures of Art. 4 IV and V shall be followed. In case doubts are raised about the conduct of a Member, the Governing Board must establish criteria to define relevant violations of membership

obligations and the time and magnitude needed to meet the conditions to enter into a procedure to suspend or terminate membership.

## § 10 Finances

- (1) The Governing Board shall appoint a Treasurer and a Vice-Treasurer. The Treasurer must be a member of the Governing Board (§ 6 V of these Standing Orders). These two shall execute, in conjunction with the Budget Committee, the tasks laid down in Const. Art. 14 and § 6 V of these Standing Orders.
- (2) Based on the financial strategy according to Const. Art. 7 III, the Governing Board shall work out short term, midterm and long term financial plans for the Conference;
- (3) The Governing Board shall, on the proposal of the Budget Committee, adopt financial regulation for the Conference, which should, *inter alia*, include the following:
  - Budget headings for the different work areas, including provisions which of them and to which extent should be mutually coverable;
  - Investment criteria (security, ethics, sustainability) for the assets of the Conference;
  - Rules for which sums may be spent by the General Secretary, the Presidency and staff in the exercise of their general duties without prior decision of the Governing Board in one sum and/or altogether per financial year;
  - Rules for expenses and other expenditure of staff, including travel costs, hosting of guests etc.;
  - Rules for subsidies for Members to participate in the life of the Conference, including travel costs, expenses and other reimbursements.
  - Rules for secondary employment and comparable activities of staff.
- (4) The Governing Board shall adopt a donations, partnerships and sponsorships scheme, including the allocation of responsibility, negative criteria for third party involvement etc.

## § 11 Preparation of the General Assembly

- (1) The Governing Board shall '*make appropriate preparations for the General Assemblies*' (Const. Art. 8 IX). To this end, the Governing Board shall in particular
  - appoint an Assembly Coordinator, either from the existing staff or as a temporary position on the staff;
  - determine terms of reference for the General Assembly Planning Committee according to § 6 VII of these Standing Orders, including provisions on delegated powers and a time-frame.

- (2) In its work, the General Assembly Planning Committee shall draw upon expertise from staff and be empowered to establish subcommittees and other internal bodies, such as a worship committee.
- (3) The General Assembly Planning Committee shall regularly report to the Governing Board, both in its meetings and, where necessary, in writing.
- (4) The Governing Board shall, in consultation with and upon proposal of, its Members in the country where the next physical General Assembly will take place, appoint a local planning committee to support the General Assembly Planning Committee with local expertise and contacts.
- (5) *'The Governing Board shall call the meetings at least three (3) months in advance and at such time and place as stated in the invitation. The invitation shall include the agenda ...'* (Const. Art. 7a). However *'information about the date of the next physical General Assembly shall be sent out to the Members at least eighteen (18) months in advance'* (RoP, B1.1). The General Assembly Planning Committee must therefore provide the Governing Board with its proposed agenda for the business sessions at such a time that the three (3) months limit can be met. The agenda will normally take the form of a timetable for the General Assembly, already including a tentative schedule also for general sessions, services and events. It will be adopted by the Governing Board by way of a formal proposal to the General Assembly.
- (6) Based on the agenda for the business sessions, the Secretary of the General Assembly shall prepare all material and briefing necessary for the General Assembly's committees to commence with their work immediately after being elected. Every committee must also be provided with appropriate tools for electronically communicating with each other and the Delegates.

## **§ 12 Written procedure for the General Assembly**

- (1) At the last meeting of each year, the Governing Board shall, upon proposal by the General Secretary, adopt a time frame for the written procedure to be held in the following year – unless a physical General Assembly shall be held. The time frame, based on the provisions of Const. Art. 7b shall be communicated to Member Churches in a separate Mail from the general information about the decisions of the Governing Board, usually at the beginning of the year for which the written procedure is scheduled.
- (2) Further details are laid down in the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly.

## **§ 13 Secretariat and Collegium**

- (1) The Secretariat is headed by the General Secretary. Nevertheless, the General Secretary and executive staff work in a collegial form. They constitute the Collegium, which normally meets once a month, but not less than six (6) times a

year to discuss the thematic work and take decisions relevant to the overall management of the Conference.

- (2) The Collegium shall adopt its own Standing Orders.

#### § 14 Appointment of the General Secretary

- (1) The President shall '*oversee the recruitment of the General Secretary*' (Const. Art. 9 I). The Nominations Committee, together with the President, shall be the Search Committee for the recruitment of the General Secretary.
- (2) Candidates shall be invited to submit their candidature for the position of General Secretary; such applications shall be submitted in writing with curricula vitae to the Search Committee. An appropriate reference shall normally be sought from the applicant's Church. The Search Committee shall submit its recommendation in the form of a prioritised list of at least two candidates to the Governing Board, together with the applications and curricula vitae of the recommended candidates. The Search Committee shall provide all necessary information about the recommended candidates to the Governing Board. The names of shortlisted candidates contacted for interviews (reduced from the list of all the people who applied) shall be communicated to the Governing Board.
- (3) '*The Governing Board shall appoint a natural person, who is not a member of the Governing Board, as General Secretary. His or her office may be remunerated. The General Secretary's mandate may be of a definite duration. The terms and conditions of his or her office shall be determined by the Governing Board.*' (Const. Art. 8 VII). The General Secretary shall have theological competence and ecumenical experience. He or she shall normally be appointed for a six-year term of office. The term of office may be extended by the Governing Board. The total term of office may not exceed twelve years.
- (4) In negotiating the designated General Secretary's 'Service Agreement' (special contract of employment for management positions), the Governing Board must consult a Belgian lawyer to make sure that the Conference's interests are ensured and that the 'Service Agreement' complies with Belgian labour law.

#### § 15 Dismissing the General Secretary

- (1) If the Governing Board so decides, it may at any point prior to the termination of the term of office of the General Secretary decide to dismiss him or her, '*possibly with immediate effect, (i) without having to justify its decision, (ii) without any compensation or cost becoming payable by the Conference, and (iii) without prejudice to mandatory labour law provisions, if applicable.*' (Const. Art. 11 IV).

- (2) In negotiating his or her 'Service Agreement' (special contract of employment for management positions) with the designated General Secretary, the Governing Board must consult a Belgian lawyer to make sure that such a dismissal is possible within the limits of Belgian law and that in the case of a premature dismissal no more compensation becomes due than Belgian law requires.

## § 16 Appointment of the staff of the Secretariat

- (1) *'The Governing Board shall devise the annual (...) staffing plan for the Secretariat on the basis of the financial plan agreed by the General Assembly (...).* (Const. Art. 14 III).  
*'Secretariat staff should be representative of the constituency of the Conference'* (Const. Art. 13 VI).
- (2) The General Secretary shall have the power of *'hiring (...) the staff of the Secretariat, according to the procedure laid down in the Standing Orders of the Conference'* (Const. Art. 11 II).
- a. The General Secretary shall appoint executive staff members after consultation with the Personnel Committee, with the approval of the Presidency, and according to procedures fixed by the Governing Board on the proposal of the Personnel Committee.
  - b. The General Secretary shall appoint the other staff of the Secretariat according to procedures fixed by Governing Board on the proposal of the Personnel Committee.
  - c. The General Secretary shall have the power to approve paid internships, substitutions or similar temporary staff, with contracts limited for up to six months, after consultation with the Chair of the Personnel Committee and within the approved budget.

## § 17 Dismissing staff of the Secretariat

- (1) The General Secretary shall have the power of *'dismissing the staff of the Secretariat, according to the procedure laid down in the Standing Orders of the Conference'* (Const. Art. 11 II). Generally, the dismissal of staff is the ultima ratio and shall be used only if (1) a position cannot be financially supported any longer or (2) a bond of trust with the employee is no longer possible.
- (2) In the case of § 17 I (1), a termination of the contract according to Belgium labour law is to be sought immediately.
- (3) In the case of § 17 I (2), the General Secretary shall first seek an amiable settlement of any dispute that might exist. This having failed, the Personnel Committee of the Governing Board shall hear both sides and issue a recommendation on how best to settle the issue amiably. This having failed, the Governing Board shall *'act as the internal appeal tribunal in cases of labour conflict within the Secretariat'* (Const. Art. 8 IX), meaning that the final decision on a possible termination of the work contract must be taken by the Governing Board after both sides have been heard and the

Governing Board has had the opportunity to investigate the case as it deemed necessary.

### § 18 Working mechanisms

- (1) The Conference shall pursue its work in thematic areas drawn from the aims and objectives of the Conference as laid down in the Constitution and elaborated in the strategic objectives and planning adopted by the General Assembly.
- (2) The Governing Board shall operationalise the strategic objectives adopted by the General Assembly and integrate them into a work plan for the Conference.
- (3) Generally, each of the thematic areas shall be assigned to a member of the Collegium or several of them jointly.
- (4) In order to facilitate the closest possible cooperation with its Members and a meaningful cooperation with Organisations in Partnership, as expressed in the partnership agreements, and with National Councils of Churches, executive staff shall be supported in these areas by consultative bodies and/or working groups. In order to attend to the main thematic areas, permanent working groups will normally be the most appropriate instrument. For other purposes, ad hoc groups may be set up.
- (5) In order to deliver the best possible support in any group, the Governing Board shall, upon proposal by the Members, appoint experts from the Member Churches to such bodies and/or groups. Such groups should have between five (5) and ten (10) members. Funding permitting, they can draw on external expertise. They are encouraged to build wider networks, in consultation with the executive staff responsible for their area of work.
- (6) Such networks can be recognised officially by the Conference and also become part of the working mechanisms of the Conference. The decision to recognise a network shall be taken by the Governing Board.
- (7) The Conference cooperates with the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) on the subject of asylum and migration in accordance with the commitments and obligations established in the Agreement of Cooperation between the two associations.
- (8) The General Secretary may, in consultation with the Budget Committee, establish working groups for limited periods of time to organise one-off conferences, seminars or dialogue sessions.
- (9) In all appointments of bodies and working groups, the Governing Board shall ensure a reasonable geographical and confessional balance; the desired distribution among church officials, parish ministers and lay persons; among men, women and young people; minority and majority churches; and participation by persons whose special expertise and experience will be needed in its appointments.



- (10) In drawing upon external expertise for its committees, groups and events, the Conference must seek close contact with the Member Churches to which experts are attached, in order to ensure a permanent and intensive flow of information.
- (11) The General Secretary shall be entitled to participate in an advisory capacity in all meetings of the bodies set up by the Governing Board, with the exception of the General Assembly Nominations Panel, to which he or she may be invited at the discretion of the Panel.
- (12) The mandate of all bodies established by the Governing Board terminates six months after the election of the new Governing Board, unless this Governing Board decides to prolong their mandate. For the permanent working groups, the Governing Board shall decide within one year after its election to prolong or terminate the mandate of individual members or to appoint new or additional members to the group, or to terminate or change the mandate of the group as such.

#### § 19 Communications, public statements etc.

- (1) The Conference aims to bring its Member Churches together to make a Christian voice be heard in Europe, and to speak with one voice wherever possible. The Conference is an instrument of its Members to liaise with the European Union and the other European institutions in Brussels, Strasbourg and Luxembourg as well as with the agencies and less institutionalised fora attached to them.
- (2) While the General Assembly is the most representative and authoritative voice of the Conference, the Conference uses different ways and means of communicating its work and messages vis-à-vis said institutions and the general public.
- (3) If there is a wish to publish communiqués or statement on behalf of the Conference, procedural and qualitative standards have to be met. In general, no such public statement can be issued without prior consultation in the Governing Board. This applies in particular to all statements disseminated via any form of media and publications, both in printing or digital.
- (4) If a person or body within the Conference wishes to issue such a statement or publication, a proposal shall be made to the Governing Board, which will then decide on the wording and the means of communication
- (5) The President of the Conference shall '*speak on behalf of the Governing Board on strategic issues*' (Const. Art. 9 I), meaning that he or she may – without further consultation – freely explicate, expand and elaborate on strategic decisions already taken by either the General Assembly or the Governing Board. Normally, he or she shall have broad discretion in judging how this might best be done, including where it is appropriate or expedient to take the initiative.

- (6) The General Secretary shall act *'as a spokesperson of the Conference on operational issues in accordance with the Standing Orders of the Conference'* (Const. Art. 11 II), meaning that he or she may – without further consultation – freely explain the way the Conference implements the strategic decisions of its governing bodies. He or she shall consult closely with the Presidency on how best to advocate for the aims and objectives of the Conference and inform the public about its work.
- (7) All executive staff shall generally be expected to speak on the work of Conference in their area(s) of responsibility at closed and public events and to enhance the public reception and understanding of this work.
- (8) Thematic groups appointed by the Governing Board shall be encouraged to prepare public statements and publications, which will usually be introduced and recommended to the Governing Board by the executive staff responsible for such a group.
- (9) In case a conference/meeting/symposium organised or hosted by the Conference wishes to publish results of its work immediately, the participants can do so only in the name of those present, not of the Conference. If a reference to the Conference shall be included in such a public statement, participants must consult with the executive staff responsible for that event and, as appropriate, with the executive staff responsible for public relations, on how best to make such results available to the public.

## § 20 Organisations in Partnership

- (1) The Conference can enter into partnership agreements with specialised Church and ecumenical organisations that fulfil the criteria of Const. Art. 5 I. The initiative can come either from such an organisation itself or from the Conference.
- (2) *As 'the rights and obligations of the Organisations in Partnership shall be determined by the Governing Board in mutual consultation with the Organisations in Partnership'* (Const. Art. 5 I), the Governing Board shall negotiate partnership agreements with each Organisation in Partnership, outlining the nature of the relationship and details of concrete cooperation and financial obligations, if any. Such agreements should be regularly reviewed and adapted to the current situation, at least, however, every eight (8) years.
- (3) The Governing Board shall commission one of its internal bodies or the General Secretary to negotiate the partnership agreement, which will then be adopted by the Governing Board and the governing body of the respective organisation. To facilitate the process, the Governing Board can adopt a template agreement to be adapted individually.
- (4) Having successfully completed the process, these organisations shall be entered into an official register.

## § 21 National Councils of Churches

A register of National Councils of Churches shall be maintained at the Secretariat for the purpose of inviting them to the General Assembly and being able to liaise with them in general.

## § 22 Special Provisions

- (1) The official languages of the Conference are English, French, German, and Russian. English shall be the working language in the life of CEC. If a Governing Board member wishes to speak in another language, he or she can do so if another person present at the meeting is able to provide qualified interpretation. Upon request of the Governing Board, translations of relevant documents shall be provided in any of the official languages. Simultaneous interpretation is provided at General Assemblies.
- (2) The Governing Board can temporarily suspend these Standing Orders in cases of emergency, but only on the advice of the Presidency and only for one item at a time.
- (3) These Standing Orders enter into force immediately after approval by the Governing Board and remain in force until revised or replaced by the Governing Board.

## CEC Committees 2018-2023

### Nomination committee

#### From the CEC Standing Orders

§ 6. (4) The Nominations Committee shall be chaired by one (1) of the Vice-Presidents and consist of five (5) other members of the Governing Board. The members shall include at least two (2) women and at least two (2) men. At least two (2) of the members shall come from Orthodox Member Churches. The Nominations Committee shall make recommendations to the Governing Board on the Governing Board's appointments. The Nominations Committee, together with the President, shall be the Search Committee for the appointment of the General Secretary.

1	Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden & All Scandinavia	Orthodox	M	Ex officio
2	Rev. Alison Mc Donald, Church of Scotland	Protestant	F	GB member
3	Mr Andreas Aarflot, Church of Norway	Protestant	M	GB member
4	Bishop Hovakim Manukyan, Armenian Apostolic Church	Orthodox	M	GB member
5	Ms Zsuzsanna Répás, Reformed Christian Church in Slovakia	Protestant	F	GB member
6	The Rt Revd Nicholas Baines, Church of England	Anglican	M	GB member

## CEC-CCEE Joint Committee

No regulations from CEC Standing Orders

1	Rev. Christian Krieger, Union Protestant Church Alsace & Lorraine	Protestant	M	Ex officio
2	Metropolitan Cleopas of Sweden & All Scandinavia	Orthodox	M	Ex officio
3	The Rt Revd Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani, Church of England	Anglican	F	Ex officio
4	Rev. Anne Burghardt, Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church	Protestant	F	GB member
5	Dr. Valérie Duval-Poujol, Fed Evangelical Baptist Churches of France	Protestant	F	GB member
6	Archimandrite Ignatios <i>Sotiriadis</i> , Church of Greece	Orthodox	M	GB member
	Fr. Heikki Huttunen		M	Ex officio

## Personnel committee

§ 6. (6) The Personnel Committee shall consist of the President, the Treasurer, the General Secretary and two (2) other members of the Governing Board. The Governing Board appoints the Chair of the Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee shall oversee the general procedures for appointments of staff positions salaried by the Conference, the working regulations and rules for the staff and policies for remunerations and conditions for staff.

1	Rev. Frank Kopania, Evangelical Church in Germany (Chair-person)	Protestant	M	GB member
2	Rev. Christian Krieger, Union Protestant Church Alsace & Lorraine	Protestant	M	Ex officio
3	Ms Alexandra Pistalo, Serbian Orthodox Church	Orthodox	F	GB member
4	Rev. Jelle Brouwer, United Protestant Church of Belgium (Treasurer)	Protestant	M	Ex officio
	Fr. Heikki Huttunen (General Secretary)		M	Ex officio

## Budget committee

§6. (5) The Budget Committee shall consist of the Treasurer, the Vice-Treasurer, the General Secretary and three (3) other members appointed by the Governing Board. The Treasurer and at least one (1) of the other members must also be members of the Governing Board. Besides the General Secretary, at least two (2) members must be non-Governing Board members. The Budget Committee shall be chaired by the Treasurer. The Budget Committee shall oversee the financial situation of the Conference and make recommendations for decisions and actions of the Governing Board. 'Each year, the Governing Board shall, on a proposal from its Budget Committee, draw up the draft annual accounts of the past financial year, as well as the draft budget for the next financial year' (Const. Art. 14 IV). The Budget Committee shall normally meet twice a year.

1	Rev. Jelle Brouwer, United Protestant Church of Belgium (Treasurer, Chair)	Protestant	M	Ex officio
2	Mr Klaus Winterhoff, Evangelical Church in Germany (Vice-treasurer)	Protestant	M	Non GB
3	Representative of Orthodox Member Churches (Member)	Orthodox	M	Non GB
4	Bishop Atle Sommerfeldt, Church of Norway (Member)	Protestant		Non GB
5	Ms Emma Johnson (Member)	Protestant		GB Member
	Fr. Heikki Huttunen (General Secretary)		M	Ex officio
	Ms Charlotte Van der Borght (Finance & Administration)		F	Ex officio

## Other delegations

### **Communication strategy:**

Dean Anders Gadegaard – Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark

Ms Emma Johnson, Methodist Church of Great Britain

### **Strategy plan:**

The Rt Revd Nicholas Baines, Church of England

### **Delegate to CCME Executive Committee:**

The Rt Revd Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani, Church of England

**Proxy:** Rev. Christian Krieger, Union Protestant Church Alsace & Lorraine

### **Legal adviser:**

Mr Andreas Aarflot, Church of Norway

### **Youth:**

*Ms Lea Kathrin Schlenker, Evangelical Church in Germany*

### **Spiritual life of the Governing Board:**

Very Rev Archimandrite Ignatios, Church of Greece

### **Europe, European integration:**

Prof Petr Kratochvil Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren

### **Theological dialogue:**

Rev. Anne Burghardt, Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church



**Address by Bishop Christopher Hill, former President**

**Summary of the main points**

1. During the past five years the Governing Board has been working together with differing personalities across different ecclesiologies, languages and cultures. The atmosphere was a great improvement on the former Central Committee.
2. It is very important for the Presidency and the General Secretary to work together, as has been the case during the past five years.
3. It has been a period of great change for CEC: the move from Geneva to Brussels, the new Constitution giving CEC a unitary structure. But CEC still needs to develop a more holistic approach to its work.
4. The churches in dialogue work has been dormant but is now getting going again.
5. We work well with CCME on the basis of our Agreement. Closer unity will require constitutional imagination so as not to lose separate income streams and wider membership.
6. Finance: GB members need to work on financial matters as well as the General Secretary and Presidency. It cannot continue that some churches pay little or nothing. The churches which pay a lot are well aware of this situation.
7. We have learned that regional meetings (on future of Europe) work well and give much higher participation of member churches.
8. We need to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the Novi Sad Assembly. We need to think further about the relationship between APC and GB and Secretariat. There were some (manageable) tensions.
9. Orthodox relations. We are now faced with the tragedy of the Moscow-Constantinople conflict. CEC needs to be a prudent supporter of Patriarch Bartholomew who has always supported CEC. If/when the Ukrainian Orthodox Patriarchate is canonically recognised they will almost certainly ask for membership. This will not be acceptable to Moscow. CEC needs to be aware of a debate ahead.
10. COMECE relations are working well. Relations with CCEE have sadly not been so easy but there are now signs of new engagement, especially concerning the renewal of the Charta Oecumenica.
11. For the future of both CEC and CCME there is the question of how European Churches respond to populism and xenophobia. CEC began in the Cold War. Now anti-

European populism/neo-nationalism is the biggest threat to peace (and prosperity) since Cold War. But how do churches understand the populist resentment against 'elites'? We have to listen to those who feel disenfranchised. CEC has a ministry of reconciliation.