

The Uppsala Report

– A Report on the Renewal of CEC
from the Revision Working Group to CEC
and its Member Churches



And now what are you waiting for?
CEC and its Mission in a Changing Europe
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Abbreviations

CALL: Church Action on Labour and Life

CC: Central Committee

CEC: Conference of European Churches

CiD: Churches in Dialogue Commission

CSC: Church and Society Commission

CCME: Churches Commission for Migrants in Europe

ECEN: European Christian Environmental Network

RWG: Revision Working Group

EYCE: Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe

AACC: All Africa Conference of Churches

WSCF: World Student Christian Federation

MECC: Middle East Council of Churches

CCEE: Council of European Bishops' Conferences

COMECE: Commission of the Bishops' Conferences in the European Communities

CEPE: Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (Leuenberg Church Fellowship)

The Remit of the Revision Working Group as provided by the Lyon Assembly, July 2009

Motion

Referring to the discussions in the Plenary concerning the renewal of the CEC the Assembly establishes on the proposal of the Nominations Committee, a working group of 15 members to carry out a revision of the CEC as a whole, including a common purpose and vision and the setting of strategic goals and which structures would serve these goals in an optimal way and in accordance with the wishes and needs of the Member Churches. In this process, it is important to pay due consideration to the present status of the General Assembly, the Central Committee and the Commissions.

This revision should include constitutional, legal and decision-making aspects deemed necessary. This working group is to be accountable to the Central Committee and has to make a first draft available no later than 31 December 2011, after which the Member Churches and the Commissions are to be consulted.

The Central Committee has to bring a final proposal to an advanced constitutional and general assembly to be held in the summer of 2013.

Mandate for the Working Group

1. The Working Group shall make sure that this revision takes account of the need for a concise and coherent body of constitutional, legal and decision-making provisions and procedures that is easily manageable.
2. It is set up as a special task force. As its work will be conducted between Assemblies, it shall not be a committee according to Nr. 8.12 Standing Orders, but be constituted as a body of experts representative of the regions, the denominational families and of majority and minority churches within CEC. It shall present a report on the current state of its work at every meeting of the Central Committee for discussion and take the recommendations of that body into account. The President and the two Vice-Presidents can, in an advisory capacity, take part in the meetings of the working group.

3. The Working Group shall be convened within five months of the closure of this Assembly. The Group shall constitute itself and adopt standing orders in line with the general legal framework of CEC to regulate more detailed procedures. The General Secretariat shall provide the logistic support asked for by the presidium of the Group.
4. The Central Committee shall transmit the final proposal to all Member Churches no later than six months before the Constitutional Assembly, as stated in the Bye Laws.
5. The Working Group presents the final proposal submitted by the Central Committee to the Constitutional Assembly and advises it on the feasibility and/or impact on the entire body of revised texts of any amendment to its proposal submitted at that Assembly.
6. When convening the Constitutional and General Assembly in 2013 the Central Committee has to take into consideration the date and place of the General Assembly of the WCC as well as the financial consequences for CEC and its Member Churches.

Executive Summary

PREPARING CEC FOR THE EUROPE OF TOMORROW

- I. The Europe of today is radically different to the one that CEC first encountered in 1959, and the pace of change continues to be relentless. Old barriers have broken down, while new divisions have begun to emerge. National boundaries have been redrawn, and the constant movement of peoples has become a dominant feature. The power of business and of new technologies has reshaped our lives.
- II. At the same time the ecumenical landscape has also changed. While certain Church traditions have declined, others have grown in strength. New ecumenical trends have emerged, and at the same time tensions between churches have become evident. Old forms of institutional ecumenism look tired, as churches find fresh ways of talking and working together.
- III. In analysing these changes, the RWG has sought to ask a number of key questions:
 - What will it mean for CEC to continue to faithfully live out the gospel of Jesus Christ?
 - How does CEC respond to the changing face of Europe and the changing patterns of ecumenical engagement?
 - How does CEC renew its own institutional arrangements such that it can provide clarity of purpose in its management and governance structures?
 - What is the uniqueness of CEC in the colourful ecumenical arena? What is it that CEC can uniquely offer to support the Churches in their efforts towards unity and advocacy in Europe;
 - What will the future life of CEC look like, such that it can effectively serve and resource the Member Churches?

A NEW STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

- IV. This report seeks to give answers to those questions. It invites the Member Churches of CEC to embrace a new way of being together that is both deeply rooted in our shared faith, and engaged with the world of which we are a part. It calls for an organisation that is responsive to the Member Churches, able

to be flexible in its ways of working, and a catalyst for new partnerships and new possibilities.

- v. At the heart of this report is the conviction that CEC needs renewed clarity regarding its self-understanding and its calling within the world. Building on past statements and reference points, the Member Churches are invited to affirm five different statements that together provide a coherent strategic framework for the future.
- vi. First, a statement of faith that affirms the spiritual roots of CEC within the life of the Triune God, and our calling to serve the mission of God in the world.
- vii. Second, a vision statement that sets out how CEC understands its own identity and purpose, and the kind of future for Europe to which CEC seeks to contribute.
- viii. Third, a mission statement that sets out in broad terms how CEC will seek to achieve its vision for itself and Europe.
- ix. Fourthly, a statement of values that seeks to ensure that CEC's organisational behaviour truly reflects a commitment to its vision and mission.
- x. Fifthly, a historical statement that explains CEC's origins and gives historical meaning to CEC's current status and future direction.
- xi. It is proposed that, together, these statements offer a clear, coherent and constant framework that will be the guide and measure of CEC's life. The RWG believes that if accepted, they should be used to determine the strategic objectives agreed by CEC's General Assemblies.
- xii. The strategic objectives will change. They will be shaped by CEC's environment, and reflect its on-going commitment to the mission of God within a changing context. The RWG identifies and proposes six strategic objectives for the immediate future. They reflect the need to embed the organisational changes that are part of this report, along with the changes in focus and direction that are required, and it is proposed that

these should guide CEC through to its next General Assembly. Each subsequent Assembly will agree a new set of strategic objectives.

A NEW ORGANISATIONAL MODEL

- XIII. To be faithful to its vision and mission and to deliver its strategic objectives, CEC needs coherence and simplicity in its governance and management structures. For this reason, the RWG set out proposals for a radical renewal of the organisation, designed to ensure accountable leadership and good management.
- XIV. The main features of the new organisational model are as follows:
- A small decision-making General Assembly consisting predominantly of Member Churches that meets once every four years.
 - A Governing Board consisting of representatives chosen for their expertise to oversee the functioning of CEC and to ensure that the strategic objectives agreed by the General Assembly are followed through in the annual work programmes.
 - A General Secretary to act as the chief executive of the organisation with responsibility for managing the resources of CEC and delivering the strategic objectives through the annual work programmes.
 - A Brussels based Secretariat that that can deliver programmatic research and development, and manage CEC's external relations with European and pan-European institutions.
- xv. Whatever organisational changes are agreed, the RWG is clear that the culture that underlies the ways of working must also be renewed. In place of Commissions with their own agendas there must be one Secretariat that models collaborative working, always responsive to and inclusive of the Member Churches and their networks. The difference between governance and management needs to be carefully maintained. New opportunities need to be provided for Member Churches to learn from one another, to grow in their ecumenical commitment to each other, and to share and receive resources with one another.

xvi. To support the proposals within the report, details of a new constitution and ways of financing CEC are carefully set out.

THE ROAD AHEAD

xvii. The RWG believes that CEC can continue to be a faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ, serving as an agent of change in Europe. To be so, however, requires that CEC has clarity of vision and purpose, and that it sets itself an ambitious agenda of reform to its governance and management structures. This report provides the Member Churches with a realistic, viable and affordable framework within which this can be achieved.

Recommendation(s)

The RWG recommends that the following composite Motion be presented to the General Assembly in 2013 for reflection and decision.

“To help Member Churches pursue together the path of growing conciliar understanding on which they have set out, the CEC General Assembly:

- (1) receives and welcomes *The Uppsala Report* (2012) as foundational for any common understanding of CEC;
- (2) mandates CEC’s governing bodies and CEC’s General Secretary to use *The Uppsala Report* (2012) as the common road map and the agreed terms of reference for the reconfiguration and renewal of CEC as a whole;
- (3) adopts the new constitution as set out in the Appendix to this motion.”¹

¹ *The Appendix referred to in this presenting motion would mirror the constitutional text included in Chapter 4 to this report. The Constitution presented in the Appendix would no doubt change as a result of Assembly debate and reflection.*

PART ONE

WORKING AS ONE BODY

Chapter 1

A RWG Rough Guide to the Future

1.1 The RWG saw its task first and foremost as preparing CEC to face the Europe of tomorrow. The RWG believes that CEC can confidently face the future if it is willing to think afresh what its vision and mission should be in a Europe significantly different from the one that it first encountered and then to structure itself accordingly. What then is the future that CEC needs to prepare for?

A RWG ANALYSIS OF GLOBAL AND EUROPEAN FUTURES

1.2 The following section draws on a host of future studies that are publicly available online. It discusses a number of trends and uncertainties that CEC is likely to encounter over the next two decades. The RWG accepts that this is very much a rough guide to the future rather than a comprehensive survey, and that there are other trends and variables that could be added, and maybe should have been added, to this list. The RWG holds that however important these absent trends turn out to be, their future effect is likely to strengthen rather than weaken the RWG's meta narrative, namely that we face the prospect of a period of transition for globalisation in the decades ahead that will fundamentally affect every aspect of our lives. In the discussions that follow this report, the RWG trusts that CEC and its Member Churches don't become so embroiled in the minutiae of specific policy debates that they lose sight of the bigger picture CEC needs to be aware of when agreeing a new strategic direction for the organisation.

A multi-polar world with new bi-polarities

1.3 Europe has seen a shift from a bi-polar world involving the 'blocks' of East and West, to a gradually unfolding multi-polar system in which new bi-polar frames are becoming evident. There still exists the polarity between rich and poor within Europe and

between Europe and its southern neighbours. A new bi-polarity appears to be growing between the ‘Islamic world’ and the ‘Christian West’. How might Churches work together through CEC to address the concerns and questions raised by how we live together peacefully without neglecting the challenges this co-existence raises?

A multi-polar Europe

1.4 Europe needs a strategy not so much to prevent wars between Europe’s powers, but in helping countries to live together in peace. Europe now comprises four alternative identity building projects – the post-national EU, the post-imperial Russia, the post-Kemalist Turkey and the newly sovereign states on the territory of the former Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia. How might CEC as a pan-European body with a track record in reconciliation and bridge building stretching back over 50 years respond to this changed reality?

The changing nature of political influence

1.5 The continuing development of social networking technologies is likely to encourage mass collaboration projects and change the nature of political activism. This will impact on the relationship between the state and the citizen in unexpected ways. This might result in the rise of new populist political movements and see citizens move from being relatively passive consumers of government services, to being active and highly empowered participants in influencing decision making and priority setting. What might these changes mean for how CEC relates to its Member Churches and other partner organisations as well as the European institutions?

An avalanche of new technology

1.6 Over the next decade a range of game-changing innovations will emerge into society, with far reaching implications. Biotechnology and genetics are key areas to watch as is the field of low carbon and environmental technologies. Computers will continue to get smaller, cheaper, more universal, more connected and above all more powerful. A range of technologies could offer upgrades for humans, physiologically and cognitively. These innovations are likely to alter existing systems of power and control. These technological innovations are likely to sharpen many of today’s ethical debates which will require a response from the Churches.

Europe’s economic and social models under strain

1.7 The combination of ageing populations and a contracting labour

force is set to have drastic consequences for Europe which if left unchecked will translate into unsustainable pressure on pension, health and welfare systems. How Europe reinvigorates its economic and social models in a manner that binds together sustainability, solidarity, responsibility and competitiveness is a long term challenge that requires a response from CEC and its Member Churches. If as expected Europe can't meet its future labour shortages without migration, how might CEC encourage Europe to secure a balanced, fair and proactive immigration policy at a time when, in many countries, societal and political attitudes towards migration are hardening?

Growing societal insecurity and political extremism

1.8 Frustrations with the prevailing economic system and the growing pressure on the European social security system caused by growing unemployment has led – amongst other things – to a growth of right wing extremism in many European countries. Intolerance and aggression are fighting for ‘legalisation’ by far right wing politicians and parties. CEC provides a vehicle for Member Churches to work together with the institutions of Europe to develop a shared understanding of what constitutes the European common good. How might CEC and its Member Churches help to connect the European institutions with spiritual values and to link these institutions with the lives of Europe's citizens?

Islam is part of Europe

1.9 Recent demographic projections foresee an overall increase of Muslim minorities in Europe from 6 percent of the total population to 8 percent over the next 20 years. Italy, Britain, Belgium, and Sweden are all likely to see their Muslim populations double by 2030. Many non-Muslims are worried about their future in a changing Europe. But the prospect of failed integration should be far more frightening to all concerned. At the same time, there are many regions in Europe where there is a long history of coexistence. How will CEC respond to these challenges and contribute to the debate about the future of multiculturalism? How might CEC and its Member Churches assist in the successful management of Europe's complex demographic transition? How might CEC and its Member Churches use the guidelines provided by the Charta Oecumenica to work with Muslim communities and organisations for the common good by engaging together with European and pan-European institutions?

Future global shocks

1.10 While future studies deal by definition with the uncertain, they also have a tendency to extrapolate existing trends forward in their search for what could happen next. This can give the impression that change is more gradual and linear than is in fact likely to be the case. The last few decades have been fundamentally shaped by shocks. These range from the two oil shocks of the 1970s to the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989, and from the events of 9/11 and the combined food and fuel price spike from the decade just ended, to the financial crisis of the past few years leading into the current experience. If the past is anything to go on, it will be shocks rather than stresses that are likely to be the key drivers of global change in the decades ahead. How might CEC best respond to such shocks and stresses in the future? How might it learn from its response to the present systemic shock (2007/8 Global Financial Crisis) to better prepare for the future?

The long crisis of globalisation

1.11 The linking theme throughout this section has been the prospect of a period of transition for globalisation in the decades ahead that will fundamentally affect every aspect of our lives. The greatest ‘known unknown’ however is what this process will lead to.

1.12 On the one hand, it could lead to globalisation failing altogether. More than one future studies assessed for this paper pointed to the fact that globalisation has failed before and offers no guarantees for the future.

1.13 On the other hand, globalisation’s long-term crisis could prove to be a catalyst for a transition towards a more just, sustainable and resilient globalisation that meets global challenges with global solidarity in which the most vulnerable are protected and helped to flourish by a nurturing, interdependent and globally aware human family.

1.14 What appears least likely is that the world will be able to muddle through the long crisis indefinitely, leaving existing political and economic systems in place largely untouched, in the hope that things get ‘back to normal’ before too long.

A RWG ANALYSIS OF CEC’S OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

1.15 The following section narrows the focus of study to CEC’s immediate operating environment.

Growing secularisation in Europe

1.16 CEC's ability to contribute to Europe's future is complicated by the growing secularisation of Europe and in a number of countries the marginalisation of religion from the public sphere. Old assumptions about familiarity with the Gospel and its claims can no longer be made. The authority of Churches and the perceived relevance of Christian values are increasingly questioned or not even considered. In some European countries non faith-based communities participate actively in public debate in which the sub-context is informed by an anti-Church and aggressive atheism.

1.17 Churches will have to work harder to ensure that their voices are not neglected in the wider European scene and that their contribution to the development of European society is not ignored. CEC should have a major role in this interaction especially in so far as it relates to the institutions of Europe. This will not be an easy task given that denominational DNA affects the way that a number of Member Churches work politically.

1.18 CEC's operating environment is becoming more competitive. Many organisations have a clearer sense of purpose and understanding of their added value and are willing to aggressively promote their own interests. Organisations that might be CEC partners due to shared interests or public bodies that CEC might dialogue with are more interested in what CEC can actually deliver. CEC has to prove its value in this context.

Europe's shifting ecclesiastical and ecumenical landscape

1.19 The ecclesiastical and ecumenical landscape facing CEC is significantly different to twenty years ago. The growth of Pentecostal and Free Churches is a marked feature of Europe's new ecclesiastical landscape. Migrant Churches are also an increasingly common feature in European Church life. They bring with them self-confidence in evangelism which has largely eluded Europe over the last century. How might CEC and its Member Churches engage with Pentecostal Churches and new migrant Churches?

1.20 There are also new links emerging between some charismatic Free Churches and the Roman Catholic Church. They sometimes gives the impression that they have a common view of what a true Christian witness will mean in today's world, often in opposition

to views held by the reformed folk-Churches and other Churches in the Protestant and Orthodox traditions.

1.21 A new generation of ecumenists are increasingly drawn to movements such as Taizé, Iona Community, Focolare and St Egidio rather than to the institutional ecumenism of old. Pilgrimage has taken on a new and significant meaning in personal spiritual development. Uncertainty as how best to deal with this complexity is mirrored by a growing weariness and frustration with the commonly seen harder line taken by the Vatican in recent years.

1.22 Churches are looking for new ways of coming together. There is a near consensus amongst ecumenists that a golden era is ending. Cardinal Kasper's (President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity) eve of retirement 'harvesting' forty years of dialogue since Vatican II with Western traditions as well as CEC's Churches in Dialogue stock taking on Orthodox – non-Orthodox European dialogues provides a helpful reminder of what has been achieved even if there is uncertainty regarding what the next chapter in ecumenism holds.

1.23 While institutional and multilateral ecumenism seems to be in crisis, bilateral relations appear to be developing. The growing co-operation between the Vatican and Moscow Patriarchate is but one example of this new trend.

1.24 Ecumenical instruments across the world, especially in Europe and North America, are in the process of being down-sized and re-adjusted. The new generation of ecumenists are less concerned with institutional ecumenism than they are with personal belonging.

1.25 The new generation is a network generation that connects to organisations and movements because of a cause. Sometimes the connections are very informal and personal as they are creative. This will challenge the future role of umbrella organisations like CEC and the visions of the visible unity of the Church as embodied in international ecumenical organisations.

1.26 The perception of the ecumenical movement as an avant garde movement for its Member Churches has slowly given way to a growing understanding that the ecumenical movement needs to progress at a steadier pace if it hopes to actively engage and

involve the Churches. The Charta Oecumenica increasingly looks like a missed opportunity and a distant foot note in the history of the ecumenical movement and yet the Charta Oecumenica still represents an untapped resource that can help guide the work of CEC and its Member Churches.

1.27 For some this means working with the Member Churches rather than trying to supplant them. To others however all this seems like a lowering of ambitions away from the visible unity of the Church which is central to the mission of the Church. The debate between these two positions is still ongoing within ecumenical circles and it will continue to impact on the life of CEC.

Tensions between Member Churches

1.28 The list of external challenges facing CEC is obviously large, but it is probably the lack of trust and respect between Member Churches which poses the biggest threat to CEC. Regaining a sense of hope about the future will be difficult so long as the perceived divisions and mistrust between CEC's Member Churches continue. The General Secretary's report to the Lyon Assembly noted: *"Relations between Churches of Eastern and Central Europe suspect their Western Christian sisters and brothers of not listening with sufficient attention to their own particular concerns and to their own particular understanding of what it is to be a servant of the Gospel in the early years of the 21st Century. The CEC Orthodox member churches in particular challenge CEC to ensure that the Orthodox voice is heard clearly within our counsels."*

1.29 An important element of being committed to CEC is that all Member Churches take part in carrying the financial burdens of the organisation. There is a growing frustration, however, among some Member Churches that for several reasons not all Member Churches are respecting this financial duty even though these same members require a dominant voice in the life of the organisation. This contributes to some inter-church tensions. While the strengthening of bilateral partnerships and relationships deepen the ecumenical spirit among the Member Churches and is to be encouraged, there is some concern that these dialogues can result in the wider community of CEC being left behind.

1.30 This situation is complicated by the replication of these tensions at the level of majority-minority Church relations. All these tensions

and mutual suspicions weaken the fellowship of CEC and impact on CEC's efficiency and effectiveness as an agent of reconciliation.

A RWG UNDERSTANDING OF CEC'S EXISTING STRENGTHS

1.31 CEC is the only Europe wide ecumenical body that brings together Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox and Old Catholic Churches. It offers great potential in being a space in which Churches come together seeking new ways to work towards the visible unity of the Church of Jesus Christ.

1.32 Besides providing a space for its Member Churches to learn from one another, CEC provides a means by which its Member Churches can work at the European level with several Roman Catholic organisations.

1.33 CEC is one of the few pan-European civil society bodies which by virtue of its Church base membership has a visible and living presence at every level of European society. CEC should regard this as a significant strength, but it will only remain a strength if the disunity within CEC can be healed.

1.34 CEC has a wealth of non-financial resources available to it through its Member Churches. It also has access to the networks and expertise of associated organisations and other ecumenical bodies.

1.35 CEC is a well recognised and established dialogue partner with the EU institutions, the Council of Europe and other political institutions. These institutions actively seek out the views of CEC and its Member Churches on a range of issues. They welcome the fact that CEC is not an aggressively lobbying NGO but a fellowship of shared witness.

CONCLUSIONS

1.36 The preceding analysis leads the RWG to draw the following conclusions.

Being in the world, but not of the world

1.37 CEC needs to take seriously the theological and biblical imperative to be in the world but not of the world (John 17 ff). CEC needs to be able to hold a mirror up to society and reflect back what is happening. It is this text of being in the world but not of the world which gives CEC its identity and its distinctiveness.

1.38 CEC needs to realise that it stands on the edge of society looking in not in the centre looking out. There will be times when CEC will stand alongside others in society and go with the flow, but at other times CEC will be counter-cultural challenging societal change and offering a different view from the prevailing wisdom.

1.39 Being a theological community is an essential part of CEC's contribution to European society, as is its witness to the reconciling love of Jesus Christ. CEC's structures need to reflect this sense of "being reconciled" in the diversity of European Churches, in the diversity of staff and in the unity being forged.

Be ready – because shocks will be the drivers of change

1.40 CEC needs to be ready with concrete ideas to take advantage of the shocks and stresses that open windows of political opportunity. CEC cannot afford to wait till shocks arise to initiate new thinking. It needs to set aside a large proportion of its policy and advocacy resources to develop policy and strategies that can be rolled out rapidly when ten times as much political space opens up overnight.

Put the Member Churches in charge – because they can bypass CEC

1.41 Member Churches will increasingly expect to be more involved in influencing the direction and priorities of CEC. This will create new tensions within CEC as to how best to meet competing expectations and demands. CEC has no option but to navigate tensions like these as creatively as possible given that the change is coming anyway. CEC should put its Member Churches in charge as far as possible – using new technology platforms to ask them regularly what to work on, where, how to do it and how they want to be involved.

Bring news from elsewhere – because innovation will come from the edges

1.42 A decade of turbulence will lead to interest in new models of being Church and new ways of connecting. This will enable fresh ways of framing the ecumenical agenda and instruments for the 21st Century. Ecumenism needs to be open to continual innovation and change.

1.43 CEC needs to see itself less as a repository of expertise and more as a harvester of the expertise that resides with its Member

Churches and partner organisations. CEC is blessed by having Member Churches with considerable depth of expertise in a range of areas that need to be drawn on more effectively and shared more widely.

1.44 CEC needs to embrace new models and platforms of communication which ensure that Member Churches have more opportunities to learn from one another. This will enable new knowledge to be created which can then be articulated publicly and represented to European political and social arenas.

Specialise in coalitions – and not just of other Christian organisations

1.45 Over the next two decades power is likely to become steadily diffuse. People are no longer the audience but the voice. For CEC to flourish in this environment the key challenge will be interoperability: the capacity to communicate and work with radically diverse sets of partners. CEC needs to ensure that as many of its staff as possible have extensive experience outside Churches in as many different kinds of organisational contexts as possible.

1.46 CEC needs to be the catalyst by which Member Churches are mobilised around particular concerns and the glue by which they can partner together other organisations in multi-stakeholder coalitions. CEC needs to be an organisation that networks its Member Churches and an organisation that is itself better networked with others. CEC needs to invest further in building relationships of trust with those who work in the institutions of Europe so that insights drawn from the experiences of Member Churches can help shape political thinking and decision-making.

Be a storyteller – because stories create worldviews

1.47 *The Book of Proverbs 29.18 (AV)* records that “*where there is no vision, people perish.*” CEC needs a grand narrative both for Europe and for the world in which it operates. If diverse coalitions are the key to effecting political change, it is narratives and compelling visions of the future that will animate networks and coalitions over the long term. CEC needs a new narrative to animate its own Member Churches.

1.48 CEC needs to re-position itself as storyteller about the future. CEC has a good news story to tell, but it has lost the art of being

a good teller of that story. CEC needs to radically change how it communicates. To a certain extent it needs to let go of being a ‘regional ecumenical body’ in favour of something much more ambitious – telling a larger story about global and European transitions in which religion is but one (essential) part. If CEC can recapture the ability to be a good communicator Member Churches are more likely to invest human and financial resources in the organisation.

Chapter 2

RWG Proposals for a New Strategic Framework for CEC

2.1 In setting up the RWG, Member Churches recognised that CEC needs a roadmap to guide it forward, answering questions about its vision, mission and values and what the organisation might realistically want to achieve over the coming years. This roadmap needs to be grounded in Christian faith and built on CEC's rich history. It needs to provide CEC with a strategic framework to help it and its Member Churches navigate the Europe of tomorrow. The RWG did not see its task as one of discarding past statements and reference points, but rather one of identifying common threads within and between the existing documentation that might be drawn together and presented in a more coherent and strategic way. The RWG's recommendations in this chapter are informed by the analysis of CEC's existing strategic capacity as set out in Chapter 5 of this paper.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

2.2 Member Churches are unequivocal in holding that any strategic framework document should include a statement of faith setting out CEC's spiritual roots. The RWG suggests that this statement should be kept separate from the other statements (vision, mission, values etc) as it is of a different order and category. Faith is what grounds the work of CEC and provides CEC with its distinctiveness as a fellowship of Churches. The RWG recommends that the statement of faith should be drawn from the preamble to the existing constitution but amended to include the statement of purpose from the Charta Oecumenica:

- **Our Common Faith:** The Conference of European Churches (hereafter referred to as the 'Conference') is an ecumenical fellowship of Churches in Europe which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as

God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Member Churches of the Conference seek, by the grace of the Triune God, to pursue together the path of growing conciliar understanding on which they have set out. In the faithfulness to the Gospel, as witnessed in the Holy Scripture and transmitted in and through the Church by the power of the Holy Spirit, they seek to continue to grow in fellowship (*koinonia*) of faith, hope and love. Faithful to this Gospel, they also seek to make a common contribution to the mission of the Church, to the safeguarding of life and the well-being of all humankind. In its commitment to Europe as whole the Conference seeks to help the European Churches to renew their spiritual life, to strengthen their common witness and service and to promote the unity of the Church and the peace in the world. As recognised by the Charta Oecumenica (2001) European Churches have a responsibility to call each other to a life of reconciliation as an expression of Christian unity and for the sake of the well-being of our continent and world.

2.3 The RWG recommends that this statement of faith should remain constant over the life of CEC. It should form the basis of the preamble to CEC's new constitution.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

2.4 CEC has a long and rich history that needs to be celebrated. The RWG recommends that the strategic document should include a brief historical narrative that explains CEC's origins and its development since 1959. This narrative should not entrap CEC in its past, but give historical meaning to CEC's current status and future direction. The RWG recommends that the following text drawn from Charta Oecumenica and the various official CEC publications fits this purpose:

- **Our Common History:** CEC was founded in Nyborg Denmark in 1959 as a bridge building organisation between Churches living in isolation from each other as a result of the post Second World War division of Europe into two different political and ideological blocks. Since then the number of member churches has increased and the fellowship between them has deepened, as has cooperation with the Council of European Roman Catholic Bishops' Conferences. CEC has always held firm to the conviction that the

growing unity between Churches provides the foundation for the Churches' common witness in society. As set out in the *Charta Oecumenica* (2001), Churches support the closer integration of the European continent, but they believe that without common values, unity cannot endure. Central to our common witness is the conviction that the spiritual heritage of Christianity constitutes an empowering source of inspiration and enrichment for Europe.

2.5 The RWG recommends that this statement should be used in any strategic framework document and be visible in relevant CEC publications – such as annual reports - and on its website. It does not need to be included in the preamble to CEC's constitution, but it should be updated by CEC's Governing Board when and if necessary.

TOWARDS A VISION STATEMENT FOR CEC

2.6 The RWG recommends that CEC should adopt a single vision statement consisting of two parts. First, CEC's vision for itself as an organisation that it wants to become. Second, a vision for Europe in the world that the organisation wants to work towards.

2.7 The RWG recommends that CEC's vision for itself should be informed by paragraph three of the existing preamble to the Constitution and the relevant section of *Our Common Way* that deals with *Our Challenge as a Growing Fellowship of Churches*.¹ Consideration also needs to be given to the overarching affirmations agreed by the Lyon Assembly as well as Chapter 2 of the *Charta Oecumenica*, *On the Way Towards the Visible Fellowship of the Churches in Europe*.

2.8 The RWG recommends that CEC's vision for Europe in the world should be informed by Chapter 3 of the *Charta Oecumenica* that deals with *Our Common Responsibility in Europe* and the relevant sections of *Our Common Way* that deal with *Our Challenge as Churches in Europe*.

2.9 Taken together the RWG recommends the following vision statement.

² *Our Common Way* was the document giving assent to some agreed theological and social principles for direction of travel for CEC that was agreed by the Central Committee in 2008. It is examined in greater depth in Chapter 6.

- **Our Common Vision:** In faithfulness to the Gospel, CEC seeks the reconciliation and common witness of the Churches to help build a humane, socially conscious and sustainable Europe at peace with itself and its neighbours, in which human rights and the basic values of peace, justice, freedom, participation and solidarity prevail.

2.10 The RWG recommends that this vision statement should remain constant over the life of CEC, or until such time as CEC's General Assembly agrees by a two thirds majority to change it. This vision statement should be included in the articles of CEC's new constitution.

TOWARDS A MISSION STATEMENT FOR CEC

2.11 The RWG recommends that Member Churches should adopt a single mission statement that spells out how CEC will achieve Our Common Vision.

2.12 The RWG holds that the mission statement needs to set out clearly and succinctly what CEC will do to make its vision a reality. The mission statement needs to be achievable and set out the core deliverables for which CEC exists. It needs to be presented in such a way that it inspires support and commitment. It therefore needs to be articulated in a way that is convincing and easy to grasp. It needs to be free of technical jargon.

2.13 The RWG is clear that a mission statement is not a work programme. It should not try to capture all that CEC does on a day-to-day basis or prescribe which organisations CEC should partner. A mission statement is not a reworded and lengthier version of the vision statement.

2.14 The RWG recommends that any mission statement be informed by the relevant sections of the *Charta Oecumenica*, *Our Common Way* and the Lyon Assembly's *Policy Reference Group Report* that are consistent with CEC's new vision statement:

- **Our Common Mission:** Through programmatic development and research CEC works to strengthen the bonds of Christian fellowship (*koinonia*) between all its members so that they might be better equipped and empowered to work together and with others in advocating an authentic and credible Christian witness to European society, and to European and international institutions.

2.15 The RWG recommends that this mission statement should remain constant over the life of CEC, or until such time as CEC's General Assembly changes it by a two thirds majority. This mission statement should be included in the articles of CEC's new constitution.

TOWARDS AN ORGANISATIONAL VALUES STATEMENT

2.16 The RWG recommends that CEC should have a single organisational values statement to help CEC better align actual behaviour with preferred behaviour and in so doing assist CEC to fulfil its mission and realise its vision. Each of the values included in this statement should be clearly spelt out.

2.17 The RWG warns against including numerous commendable values in a way that devalues the statement. The values statement should make demands on CEC by virtue of its precision and clarity rather than being seen as menu from which CEC can self-select from.

2.18 For CEC to accomplish its future mission it needs to base its decisions and actions on the core values set out in the values statement below. These organisational values are ones that featured most prominently in the RWG's own work and deliberations.

- **Mutual Trust and Respect:** As a fellowship of Churches we are called to trust and respect one another. We depend on each other to achieve our common objective, the visible unity of the Church. As such we honour and value the contribution of all. Our diversity is a gift that enriches us. We recognise the unique identity of every human being as having been made in the image of God. We recognise the innate worth of all people and the value of diversity. In our work we will ensure equal opportunity to everyone irrespective of age, gender, colour, class, ethnicity, location and religion. We also respect the rights and values of communities and people. Our commitment to trust and respect one another will help CEC to grow as an inclusive and open fellowship of churches able and willing to both give and receive.
- **Courage:** Working towards a humane and socially conscious Europe requires us to be creative and radical, bold and innovative – without fear of failure. We take courage from the Gospel message that providing for human dignity is an imperative from

God, not a mere dream. This gives us faith to turn our hope into action through practical work that challenges both the causes and consequences of human impoverishment.

- **Hospitality:** As a fellowship of Churches we are called to love one another with sisterly affection and to do so without grumbling. We understand hospitality to be more than administering to practical needs and welcoming the stranger, important as these matters are. It is a fundamental expression of the gospel and an outworking of what it means to be members of the one ‘body of Christ’. As a fellowship of Churches we will always be ready to show generous and loving hospitality to one another and to others, and we will do so with zeal and cheerfulness. As a fellowship of churches we are ready both to give and to receive.
- **Humility:** We will be humble in our presentation and behaviour recognising that we are part of a wider ecumenical movement and that only by working in partnership and in cooperation with others will we be able to provide for the flourishing of human relationships in all its fullness as mandated by the Gospel.
- **Accountability:** We are committed to monitoring and assessing the work of our staff and the organisation and how we receive that work. We will provide regular and timely accounts of its activities to our Member Churches and modify its practices in light of the feedback that it receives from them. Our Member Churches will account for how they have received the work and why have acted in a certain way. Together we will ensure that our structures avoid duplication and confusion and are themselves evaluated against their ability to help the organisation realise its full potential.
- **Transparency:** We believe that timely, free-flowing information in accessible language, form and format is essential for ensuring mutual accountability, learning, trust and good performance. Transparency opens up channels of communication and builds trust with those we are called to serve. Transparency leads to a more effective allocation of scarce resources and better alignment of expenditure and needs.
- **Good Stewardship:** We are accountable to God and to one another for the responsible care and use of those possessions and resources that have been entrusted to us. We are committed to

properly utilising and developing our resources in a way that is sustainable and responsible. We will ensure that our current spending programs are affordable and sustainable over time. We will provide training and development opportunities for our staff to enable them to meet the changing needs of the organisation.

- **Subsidiarity:** Our common witness is enhanced by harvesting the expertise of our Member Churches and related organisations and in awareness of the gifts of others. In setting our work programmes, we will consider whether there are others who are better placed to do that work or who have a gift to offer. We will only perform those functions that our Member Churches cannot fulfil themselves or where the work brings added value over and above that which could be achieved by Member Churches working alone.

2.19 The RWG recommends that this values statement should remain constant over the life of CEC. There is no need for this values statement to be included in CEC's new constitution, but it should, however, be visible in CEC's communications and in any strategic framework document agreed by the CEC's governing bodies.

IDENTIFYING STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR CEC

2.20 The organisation's vision and mission need to remain constant over the life of CEC or until such time as the General Assembly votes otherwise, but the strategic objectives necessary to assist CEC operationally realise its vision and mission will change from Assembly to Assembly.

2.21 The RWG holds that agreeing strategic objectives should serve to channel the energies and resources of CEC to achieve common goals. This will help to motivate and inspire staff and Member Churches to higher levels of commitment and support. Clearly stated strategic objectives will help to prevent individual parts of CEC pursuing their own goals rather than the overall objectives of CEC.

2.22 These strategic objectives need to be shaped by an analysis of CEC's own environment, its strengths, its weaknesses, its opportunities and threats. They also need to be informed by an understanding of future trends that impact on CEC's vision and mission. Strategic objectives are not the same as a work programme.

2.23 Drawing on the analysis of the preceding chapter and in light

of the above strategic statements the RWG identified six strategic objectives that it recommends should guide the work of CEC until the next ordinary meeting of CEC's General Assembly. In making these recommendations the RWG is aware that there remains uncertainty as to when the General Assembly might next reconvene after 2013.

- **Implementing the organisational changes:** Any reforms agreed by the Constitutional General Assembly in 2013 will not happen overnight. There will necessarily be a transition period between the old structures and the new. Managing this change will take time and energy and needs to be seen as a strategic priority in itself. Beyond any structural and physical reorganisation of CEC, consideration will be given to changing the organisational culture of CEC in such a way that it mirrors the new vision, mission and values statements. In this process the results of the reconfiguration of the wider ecumenical movement will be considered. Attention will be given to retraining existing personnel and where necessary recruiting new personnel to enable the organisation to fulfil its strategic objectives. By the time of the next ordinary meeting of the General Assembly, the proposals agreed by the Constitutional General Assembly for the reconfiguration of CEC will have been implemented and CEC will be fully working as one body.
- **Securing the financial sustainability of the organisation:** CEC is operating through a period of economic recession and financial crisis which challenges the way it currently uses its resources. CEC's Member Churches entrust it with their money and need to have complete assurance that their funds are being used efficiently and effectively to maximise CEC's impact. By the time of the next ordinary meeting of the General Assembly the declining membership fees from CEC Member Churches will have been reversed or at the very least halted and a robust budgetary system installed. CEC is alert to the possibility that long term the contribution from Member Churches is unlikely to increase and alternative funding streams need to be found. By the time of the next ordinary meeting of the General Assembly, CEC will have put in place fundraising strategies and have developed its own capacity to deliver on these strategies by securing project funding from a range of European organisations and institutions. Proposals/protocols will also have been developed to enable those Member Churches that are experiencing genuine financial difficulties to make alternative

contributions to CEC through suitable ‘gifts in kind’. Taken together these measures will help to secure the financial stability of the organisation.

- **Strengthening the CEC fellowship through dialogue and learning:**

CEC will better enable Member Churches to interact with one another in order to develop the necessary social and theological capital and knowledge to resolve common problems that impact on their shared future. This bridge building measure is necessary in order to ensure that all Member Churches feel that they have a stake in CEC and that their voice is being heard. The acceptance of diversity should be seen as an indicator of CEC’s willingness to entertain new ideas and accept change, both of which are prerequisites for learning and development. By the time of the next ordinary meeting of the General Assembly new and more inclusive opportunities for dialogue and learning between Member Churches will be provided to strengthen the cohesion, regeneration and further development of CEC as a whole. Creating and nurturing specific communities of learning within the context of CEC, whether on-line, through face to face encounter, or on specific issues such as theological education, bioethics, migration, or other pressing socio-economic challenges that Churches in Europe struggle with today. This will provide the opportunity for individual learning and collaborative empowerment. Such opportunities for intensive and continuous dialogue and learning will provide an important mechanism by which churches hold each other to account. This will benefit not just CEC, but the wider community that CEC is called to serve.

- **Developing CEC’s capacity to be an effective partner in dialogue:**

CEC is the bridge building instrument by which Protestant, Anglican, Old Catholic and Orthodox churches in Europe engage with European and pan-European institutions on matters of common concern. New opportunities for dialogue and consultation are emerging the whole time which place considerable strain upon the resources of CEC to respond effectively. Over the next few years CEC will respond to these challenges by further developing its capacity to engage in dialogue with European, pan-European and international institutions in such a way that the diversity of positions held by its Member Churches on any given issue is seen as a strength rather than a weakness. CEC will have the confidence to set the terms of the debate by structuring its dialogue with

European and pan-European institutions around the communities of learning that it initiates. CEC will strengthen its ability to be an effective partner in dialogue by intensifying the internal dialogue between its Member Churches. By the next ordinary meeting of the General Assembly CEC will have further enhanced its reputation as a reliable and constructive dialogue partner.

- **Developing CEC's capacity to partner others:** CEC will only be able to achieve its objectives and realise the vision it has for itself and for Europe in the world if it works in partnership with others. CEC has a unique role to play by acting as a bridge builder between its Member Churches and others. To be open to collaborative ways of working is to recognise that it is not possible for any one organisation to understand all the complexities of this modern age without drawing on and accepting the contributions of others. Considerable synergies will be gained by strengthening the bridges of cooperation with other ecumenical bodies (e.g. WCC, MECC, AACC, WSCF and EYCE). CEC has good working relationships with CCEE and COMECE which it needs to build on, but over the coming years it will develop suitable working relationships with other religious communities and organisations that are sympathetic to its mission and vision. CEC will develop structured cooperation with other ecumenical arrangements and Church bodies, offices and associations (CPCE, Porvoo, Church Offices in Brussels etc) so as to enable a more faithful witness in Europe. Similar bridges will be developed and maintained with the WCC in order to avoid duplication of resources and energy. CEC will actively seek new bridging partnerships with others to enable their insights to assist its own thinking and to show European and pan-European institutions that CEC is part of wider civil society movement.
- **Exciting and engaging others through more creative communication:** Developing new channels and instruments of communication is crucial for CEC. By the time of the next ordinary meeting of the General Assembly CEC will have developed and implemented a strategy of communicating with others the changes that it is going through. This strategy will also extend to supporting, capturing and sharing the learning that emerges from the interactions of its Member Churches, while at the same time making more transparent CEC's decision making processes. The strategy will embrace new ways of communicating such as blogs and podcasts

that might help to excite and engage a wider audience. This new communication strategy is necessary to help sustain CEC as a network organisation and to help it reach out and involve more young people in its activities and deliberations.

2.24 The RWG recommends that these six strategic objectives should not be seen as separate channels of activity but part of an integrated approach for the next chapter in CEC's life. For example, before CEC can be an effective partner in dialogue, it needs to strengthen its internal dialogue through the communities of learning and in so doing identify the core that unites its Member Churches on any particular issue. In so doing CEC can be both a bridge builder between Member Churches and also a bridge builder between Member Churches and the wider political, ecumenical and interfaith environment. CEC's governing bodies should give priority, energy and resources to achieving whatever enabling goals are necessary to deliver these objectives through the work programme to be agreed following the Assembly.

USING THE STATEMENTS AND OBJECTIVES STRATEGICALLY IN PRACTICE

2.25 The RWG recommends that each CEC Assembly be presented with two documents. The first needs to spell out how and in what way CEC has delivered on its strategic objectives since the last Assembly. The second needs to present the strategic framework document with new strategic objectives, enabling goals and subsequent indices of success that should guide the organisation until the Assembly next meets.

2.26 The RWG recommends that in between Assemblies CEC should produce an Annual Report documenting its progress in delivering its strategic objectives. This Annual Report should also provide the financial accounts for the year. As part of these efforts CEC should draw up an annual work and financial plan for the coming year setting out the concrete steps that it will take to realise the strategic objectives falling in that particular year. This work plan needs to be publicly available to CEC's Member Churches and other stakeholders.

2.27 The RWG recommends that these strategic documents (strategic framework and strategic objectives) should be incorporated into the evaluation process both at a staff and governance level. Evaluation needs to be both quantitative and qualitative. The eva-

luation needs to take into account how that work was done and the extent that it adhered to and advanced CEC's stated objectives. This exercise also needs to include CEC's decision making bodies.

2.28 In making these recommendations the RWG holds that changing the organisational structure of CEC necessitates a change in organisational culture. The only way to do this is to remain conscious at all times of the strategic framework document and to keep it squarely in the forefront of CEC's decision making. The easiest way to do that is to create habits such as continually reminding each constituent part of CEC that this is what we are about.

Chapter 3

RWG Proposals for a New Organisational Model

3.1 Member Churches are clear that CEC needs a new organisation model that enables it to act as one body in today's networked environment. This organisation model needs to encourage and sustain new ways of relating that empower CEC to realise its vision and mission. It needs to recognise that CEC is a fellowship of Churches that is one part of a larger ecumenical movement. The RWG recommendations for a new organisational model are informed by its analysis of current arrangements set out in Chapter 6 of this report.

MEMBERS, ORGANISATIONS IN PARTNERSHIP AND NATIONAL COUNCILS OF CHURCHES

3.2 Member Churches want CEC to be an inclusive, hospitable and open fellowship. Even though CEC is a Church based fellowship, Member Churches want to ensure that other Church related organisations and ecumenical bodies that do not meet the criteria for full membership but are nonetheless ecclesial bodies can participate in and enrich the life of CEC. The RWG believes that the proposed measures will help to strengthen CEC's conciliar nature.

Members

3.3 In addition to the existing category of Member Church the RWG recommends that a new category of membership be created for pan-European federations of Churches. Pan-European federations of Churches should be entitled to apply for full membership rights to CEC. Those that meet the membership criteria should be entitled to send a delegation of no more than one to the CEC General Assembly. These membership rights need to be balanced by the full set of membership responsibilities including the payment of membership dues.

Organisations in partnership

3.4 The RWG recommends the creation of a register of Organisations in Partnership with CEC for specialised Church and ecumenical organisations that have responsibility for particular issues or areas. Those who register under this category would feed into the preparation for the General Assembly and would attend the General Assembly if needed and if invited. Those invited would not have voting rights and the terms of their engagement with the General Assembly would be determined by CEC's governing bodies in consultation with CEC's management.

3.5 *Organisations in Partnership* would contain the list of those bodies that CEC would actively seek to involve in delivering its work programme and designated projects. It is the responsibility of CEC's Governing Board to draw up the necessary regulations setting out the rights and responsibilities of those organisations that register under this category. The RWG recommends that organisations and bodies wanting to register should pay a registration fee to be renewed at each General Assembly.

National Councils of Churches

3.6 The RWG recommends that CEC develops a regular, open and transparent dialogue with national councils of churches both in Europe and further afield so that these national ecumenical bodies can contribute to the operational life of CEC. The ecumenical insights and expertise resident in many national councils of churches can help enrich the fellowship CEC.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

3.7 Member Churches want to participate actively in the decision making of CEC and to ensure the accountable leadership and management of the organisation. Member Churches therefore need to meet on a regular basis to receive reports and agree on the future strategic shape and direction of the organisation.

Functions and responsibilities

3.8 CEC's General Assembly needs to deliver the following core functions:

- evaluate the progress made by CEC in delivering the strategic objectives as agreed by the previous ordinary Governing Assembly;

- agree new or revised strategic objectives for CEC up to the next ordinary meeting of the Governing Assembly;
- agree a financial strategy for the period up to the next ordinary meeting of the Governing Assembly;
- elect the members of CEC's governing instrument(s);
- take decisions by a two-thirds majority on proposals from CEC's governing instrument(s) on matters arising under Article 3(4) of the existing constitution;
- adopt its own Standing Orders.

3.9 This list closely resembles those already set out in CEC's constitution. It does not represent a radical departure from the existing functions and responsibilities of the Assembly. The challenge, however, is to structure the Assembly in such a way that it can deliver these functions.

Preparation for Assemblies

3.10 Member Churches need to have confidence that any new strategic framework document presented to the Assembly is informed by and captures the contribution and expertise of Member Churches, pan-European federations of Churches, Organisations in Partnership and national councils of churches. The process by which Assembly documentation is prepared is therefore all important. The preparation process needs to be both wide and deep. It needs to be participatory, inclusive and bottom up. It must enable all voices to be heard.

Assembly composition

3.11 The RWG recommends that each Member Church should be apportioned a number of delegates at the Assembly reflecting their numerical size. The total number of delegates apportioned to any one Member Church should not exceed 5.

- Membership up to but not exceeding 100,000 = 1 delegate
- Up to but not exceeding 500,000 = 2 delegates
- Up to but not exceeding 3 million = 3 delegates
- Up to but not exceeding 10 million = 4 delegates
- Over 10 million = 5 delegates

3.12 When appointing their delegates the RWG recommends that churches need to seriously consider the age profile, gender and cultural profiles of their delegates in order to make their delegations as inclusive as possible.

3.13 The RWG recommends that pan-European federations of churches that become members of CEC should be entitled to a voting delegation of no more than one.

3.14 The RWG recognises that these proposals represent a departure from existing practice. These proposals would limit the delegate size of the General Assembly to below 200. This amounts to a reduction in the size of Assembly delegations by a third.

3.15 The RWG recognises that Assemblies, whatever their size, need adequate staffing, moderating and resourcing. The RWG recommends, however, that those attending the Assembly in an auxiliary function should not exceed half the number of total delegates. Using this formula, the RWG recommends that the total size of any Assembly should be kept under 300.

3.16 The RWG holds that smaller assemblies will:

- encourage interactions between delegates so making it easier to reach decisions;
- help to ensure that all voices are heard thereby increasing ownership of any decision reached by the Assembly;
- be less expensive and require less staff time to manage and resource;
- focus the attention of Member Churches as to those who are best placed to represent them at the Assembly;
- be less of a financial challenge on Member Churches who often have to pay for their delegates to attend the Assembly;
- enable ecumenical celebration, interaction and learning between Member Churches, but in a way that enables the Assembly to carry out its functions and responsibilities as a governing instrument of CEC.
- enable Organisations in Partnership to contribute where necessary to the operational life of the Assembly.

Social and ethical issues

3.17 The RWG is aware of the dissatisfactions raised by Orthodox Churches and others with the way in which certain social and ethical issues have reached the CEC Assembly and the ways in which they have been treated. The formation of moral judgments on social and ethical issues must be a continuing discernment of the will of God rooted in scripture and Tradition, reason and experience, liturgical life, theological reflection, all seeking the guidance of the

Holy Spirit. To this end, the RWG recommends that on those rare occasions that the Assembly is invited to reach a position on social and ethical issues that it does so by using a consensus model of decision making. The RWG recommends that the consensus model as set out in Appendix B of the 2006 Final Report of the Special Commission on Orthodox Participation in the WCC be used to inform the Assembly's own standing orders. On all other questions, except changes to the constitution of CEC, which require a three quarters majority, only a majority vote is required for a measure to be carried.

Frequency and length of meetings

3.18 The RWG recommends the General Assembly should meet once every four years. This recommendation is conditional upon the size of the Assembly being reduced in accordance with the RWG's report. Meeting less often makes it difficult to agree a coherent set of strategic objectives. Meeting more often might prove costly financially and impact detrimentally upon the delivery of programmatic work. Meetings of the General Assembly should be significantly shorter than current practice. There is no reason why with sufficient preparation the main business of the General Assembly cannot be completed within two working days.

GOVERNING BOARD

3.19 Member Churches need to have confidence that CEC delivers and follows through on the decisions taken by the General Assembly. They also need to have confidence that credible institutional checks and balances exist to ensure the accountable leadership and management of CEC between Assemblies. Member Churches need to have confidence that those elected to the Governing Board represent the best interests and welfare of the fellowship of CEC as a whole rather than their own specific denominational and/or confessional interests. The RWG recommends that this is best achieved through a Governing Board comprising expert representatives.

Duties and responsibilities

3.20 The RWG recommends that CEC's Governing Board should have the following functions and duties:

- **Review CEC's vision, mission and values:** It is the Board's responsibility to review periodically CEC's strategic statements (Faith, Historical Narrative, Vision, Mission and Values) for accuracy

and validity and where necessary propose amendments to the General Assembly;

- **Ensure effective organisational and strategic planning:** As stewards of CEC, the Board must actively participate with the chief executive in the overall strategic planning process and assist in implementing the strategic objectives as agreed by the Governing Assembly;
- **Determine and monitor CEC's programs, services and working groups:** The Board's role in this area should be to determine which programmes are the most consistent with CEC's vision, mission and values, and to monitor their effectiveness;
- **Ensure adequate resources:** One of the Board's foremost responsibilities should be to provide adequate resources for CEC to fulfil its mission. The Board should work in partnership with the chief executive and relevant finance personnel to raise funds from its Member Churches and other potential donors;
- **Manage resources effectively:** The Board – in order to remain accountable to its Member Churches, donors and the wider public – must assist in developing the annual budget and ensuring that proper financial controls are in place;
- **Select the chief executive:** The Board must reach consensus on the chief executive's job description and undertake a careful search process to find the most qualified individual for the position;
- **Support the chief executive and review his or her performance:** The Board should ensure that the chief executive has the moral and professional support he or she needs to further the goals of CEC. The chief executive, in partnership with the entire Board, should decide upon a periodic evaluation of the chief executive's performance;
- **Serve as a Court of Appeal:** Except in the direst of circumstances, the Board must serve as a Court of Appeal in personnel matters. Solid personnel policies, grievance procedures, and a clear delegation to the chief executive of hiring and managing employees should reduce the risk of conflict;

- **Enhance CEC's public image:** The Board and its members must lead by example by articulating and advocating CEC's vision, mission and values to the wider community, including CEC's Member Churches, the public, decision makers and the media;
- **Authorise official reports and submissions:** The Board must be responsible for receiving and approving official CEC reports and submissions prior to their publication. The Board should draw up rules and regulations consistent with the constitution of CEC to determine this process. This is an important quality control mechanism. It is also necessary if the Board is to have ownership of such work and to act as CEC's advocate in public;
- **Assess its own performance:** By evaluating its performance in fulfilling its responsibilities, the Board can recognize its achievements and reach consensus on which areas need to be improved;
- **Adopt its own Standing Orders and that of the Secretariat:** The Board should draw up these Standing Orders consistent with the constitution of CEC;
- **Reflect on the opportunities for ecumenical encounter:** The Board needs to identify ways in which existing forms of ecumenical encounter outside of CEC's governing bodies can be strengthened in the operational life of CEC.

Size

3.21 Member Churches want a Governing Board that is both representative but functional and one that is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of CEC as whole. This is a delicate balancing act especially for a fellowship as big and as diverse as CEC. Too small a Board will lack legitimacy, but too large a Board becomes unwieldy and lacks functionality. If a Board is too small, its members may be overworked and unproductive, but if a Board is too large, every member may not have the opportunity to participate actively. When a Board becomes too large there is an inevitable tendency to create an additional governance structure in the form of an executive committee. This can be expensive and can contribute to institutional tension.

3.22 The RWG recommends that the size of the Governing Board should not exceed 27. This figure is inclusive of 3 Representational

Officers, 12 Principal Board Members and 12 Proxy Board Members. The RWG holds that a smaller Board will:

- encourage members to experience a feeling of unity, common purpose and ownership;
- encourage Board members to be active and engaged, which makes for a more rewarding experience;
- help Board members to get to know each other better, which may make their work together more fruitful and productive;
- help CEC to be more flexible in terms of scheduling meetings and setting agendas;
- be less expensive and require less staff time to manage and resource;
- contribute to the effective governance of CEC.
- removes the need for an Executive Committee and in so doing remove institutional confusion while saving money.

3.23 In an organisation where finances and human resources are always going to be stretched, it is important that the Board is not too expensive to feed, house, service or too large that it can't fit in CEC's conference/meeting room. The RWG notes that the proposed size of the Governing Board while smaller than the existing Central Committee is still more than twice as large as the CEC CSC Executive Committee.

Nomination process

3.24 Member Churches want a strong, effective and representative Governing Board and one that is committed to promoting the welfare of CEC as a whole. The RWG recommends that to achieve this CEC must recruit and select Board members with the same diligence that it would recruit for any other position of responsibility within CEC. Those wishing to become members of the CEC Governing Board, either as a Principal Board Member or as Proxy Board Member, should complete a nomination form.

3.25 The Board needs to set out in the nomination form the skill sets that it believes a future Board might need in order to meet the future strategic objectives to be agreed by the Assembly. These skill sets might include, for example, technical expertise in areas such as finance, law, public affairs, IT, theological education as well as confessional experience and ecumenical knowledge. The nomination form should request sufficient information regarding the candidates' gender, age profile and cultural profile. These perspectives need

to be part of the nomination process, allowing the final make-up of the Board to be as inclusive as possible without detracting from the paramount balance of skill sets.

3.26 The RWG recommends that those seeking nomination to the Board be proposed by their Member Church and seconded by 2 other Member Churches from the same region. The RWG recognises that this approach will challenge Member Churches to understand representation less in terms of their own interest and more in terms of the fellowship of CEC as a whole. The RWG holds that this measure will help CEC to grow as a fellowship of churches.

3.27 The RWG recommends that the General Assembly's Nomination Committee should propose a list of candidates to be nominated by the General Assembly. It should do so on the basis of the completed nomination forms forwarded to it by CEC's chief executive. A complete list of nominated candidates and their sponsors should also be available to all delegates attending the Assembly.

3.28 The RWG believes that this process will ensure that the Governing Board represents the diverse constituency of CEC and possesses the necessary skill sets to fulfil its governance responsibilities. This approach has the added advantage of enabling those not present at the Assembly, even individuals from Organisations in Partnership, to be nominated to CEC's Governing Board.

Proxy board Members

3.29 The RWG recommends each member of the Governing Board, exclusive of the Representational Officers, should have a permanent proxy elected by the General Assembly. The Proxy Board Member should come from the same confessional family and same region as the Principal Board Member that s/he is linked to.

3.30 This regulation will ensure that meetings of the Governing Board are sufficiently attended. It also helps to involve more people in the work of CEC which in turn makes it easier to secure a balanced and representative Governing Board.

3.31 All Proxy Board Member should be included in the Governing Board's general circulation and distribution list. This would enable them to track the work of the Governing Board thereby enabling them to participate actively in any Board meeting they happen to attend.

3.32 Proxies ought to be invited at least once in the life of the Board to attend a meeting of the Governing Board (in addition to Principal Board Members) without the right to vote so that they can actively participate in its work. Proxies may be elected as full members of the Board at the following Assembly.

When, where and how often?

3.33 The RWG recommends that the Governing Board should meet no less than three times a year. Additional meetings might be needed to suit the pace and rhythm of CEC's work and should be called either at the request of CEC's Representational Officers or when requested by two thirds of Principal Board Members.

3.34 The RWG recommends that meetings of CEC's Governing Board should take place at CEC's Headquarters. This would strengthen the relationship between the Governing Board and the organisation. It would also cause less disruption to CEC's work and ensure that attending staff have the infrastructure to service the needs of CEC's Governing Board.

Terms and conditions

3.35 The RWG recommends that appointment to CEC's Governing Board should be for a period of 4 years which may be renewed for a further period, but that no individual should serve for more than two terms in any capacity on the Board.

3.36 The RWG believes that organisations that work without a fixed term policy can experience: stagnation if no change occurs; perpetual concentration of power within a small group; intimidation of the occasional new member; tiredness, boredom, and loss of commitment by the Board; and a loss of connection to the constituency due to a change in demographics or environmental factors.

3.37 Fixed terms might bring diversity to the Governing Board. It should ensure that there is a built-in balance of continuity and turnover. Fixed terms might ensure that a regular infusion of fresh ideas and new perspectives are brought onto the Board.

3.38 The RWG recommends that as regards the matter of pay and conditions, no salary should be payable, but all Board Members should be entitled to claim and be reimbursed for all reasonable and necessary expenses. It should be the responsibility of the Board

to draw up suitable protocols on what constitutes a reasonable and necessary expense.

REPRESENTATIONAL OFFICERS

3.39 The RWG recommends that CEC should have a President who should fulfil the following representative functions:

- Oversee Board meetings;
- Oversee the implementation of Board resolutions;
- Call special meetings of the Board if necessary;
- Ensure the Board fulfils its governance duties and responsibilities;
- Provide a point of contact for Church leaders of CEC's Member Churches;
- Consult with Board members on their roles and help them assess their performance;
- Oversee searches for a new chief executive;
- Coordinate the chief executive's annual performance evaluation;
- Speak on behalf of CEC's Governing Board on strategic issues;
- Moderate the General Assembly.

3.40 The RWG recommends that the President should be supported in his or her role by two Vice Presidents who should fulfil the following representative functions:

- Attend all Board meetings;
- Carry out special assignments as requested by the President;
- Understand the responsibilities of the President and be able to perform these duties in the President's absence or by his or her delegation;
- Participate as a vital part of the Board leadership.

3.41 The existing practice whereby the President and Vice Presidents are drawn from CEC's differing confessional families (Protestant, Orthodox and Anglican) should be maintained under the new arrangements. Together, they provide CEC with a valuable theological resource that enables the chief executive to focus his or her attention on the good management of CEC.

ECUMENICAL ENCOUNTER IN THE LIFE OF CEC

3.42 The RWG's proposals for the General Assembly and the Governing Board will enable both to discharge efficiently their responsibilities and duties as governing bodies of CEC. Both will still provide scope for worship and celebration, but their smaller size will inevitably give them a different feel to what has gone before.

3.43 The RWG recommends, however, that existing forms of ecumenical encounter outside of CEC's governing bodies need to be strengthened in the life of CEC. That is one of the reasons why the RWG included in the Strategic Objectives the proposal for communities of learning be established to strengthen the fellowship of CEC.

3.44 Actively encouraging and providing opportunities for Member Churches, pan-European federations of churches, *Organisations in Partnership* and National Councils of Churches to participate in and enrich the operational life of CEC needs to feature high on the agenda of CEC's Governing Board.

3.45 Non-statutory provision should be provided for the Church leaders of CEC's Member Churches to meet as and when it is deemed necessary. These occasional meetings of Church leaders, and they should be occasional rather than regular meetings, would have no governance or management role, but they would help to strengthen the identity of CEC and enable CEC to consult with Church leaders on particular issues at specific times.

3.46 CEC's governing instruments will also need to give serious consideration to when it is appropriate, desirable and affordable to hold wider ecumenical gatherings along the model of European ecumenical Assemblies.

3.47 The RWG is clear that encouraging the creation of other forms of encounters outside the proposed governing instruments of CEC will help provide valuable additional spaces for dialogue, theological debates, sharing and ecumenical formation. These activities together with the effective workings of CEC's governing instruments, all contribute to the realisation of churches and communities moving towards unity.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

3.48 Member Churches are clear that CEC should have one chief executive and that the chief executive should occupy the most important position in the management of the organisation. The chief executive should be directly accountable to the Board. Given the importance of this position it is imperative that the chief executive is recruited first and foremost on the basis of his or her managerial qualifications and practical experience. It is not necessary for the post holder to be an academic theologian. Such expertise though

desirable is not essential as it resides in abundance elsewhere in CEC not least with CEC's representative officers and Church leaders.

3.49 The RWG recommends that the functions of CEC's chief executive should include:

- Implementing the strategic goals and objectives of CEC as agreed by the Assembly;
- Working with the President and Vice Presidents to enable CEC's Board to fulfil its governance functions;
- Giving direction and leadership toward the achievement of the organisation's vision, mission, values, strategy and its annual goals and objectives;
- Overseeing the design, promotion, delivery and quality of programs, products and services;
- Recommending a yearly budget for Board approval and prudently managing the organization's resources within those budget guidelines;
- Managing the human resources of the organization according to authorized personnel policies and procedures;
- Ensuring the organization and its mission, programs, products and services are consistently presented in a strong and positive image to relevant stakeholders;
- Overseeing fundraising planning and implementation, including identifying resource requirements, researching funding sources, establishing strategies to approach funders, submitting proposals and administrating fundraising records and documentation;
- Act as the Secretary to the Governing Board and participate as a non-voting member of CEC's Governing Board;
- Ensure effective communication internally and externally;
- Liaise with stakeholders and strategic partners, including ecumenical partners and organisations, in order to ensure they can contribute significantly to the operational life of CEC;
- Act as a spokesperson of the organisation on operational issues in accordance with the standing orders agreed by the Governing Board.

3.50 The RWG recommends that CEC's chief executive should carry the title of General Secretary.

3.51 At present CEC's General Secretary is supported in post by an Associate General Secretary. The RWG sees no need for this position to continue under the new arrangements. Retaining this manage-

ment position under the new structures threatens to undermine the position of the General Secretary. It would also be costly financially. Most organisations the size of CEC need only one Chief Executive. The RWG does recommend however that the chief executive should be supported by a full time administrative assistant.

CEC SECRETARIAT

3.52 Member Churches value immensely the work undertaken by the Commissions but they find the duplication of governance and management structures and processes within CEC and between the Commissions confusing and wasteful.

3.53 The RWG recommends that the Commissions' governance structures and management processes should be disbanded and that the work of the Commissions should be pursued with equal vigour by staff working within a Secretariat that is managed by the General Secretary who is accountable to the Governing Board. Removing this layer of governance and management is necessary if CEC is to work organisationally as one body. This step will free up and release valuable staff time and other financial resources that can be re-invested in the work which all Member Churches rightly cherish.

Core deliverables

3.54 Member Churches have always held that theological reflection, socio-ethical questions, engaging with the European institutions and advocacy all belong together. Only when they are seen as inter-related do they constitute a complete witness which is credible and trustworthy. Cross-organisational working will improve organisational efficiency and ensure the good stewardship of the resources entrusted to CEC. Collaborative ways of working will ensure that CEC works as one body operationally.

3.55 The RWG recommends that the Secretariat should deliver the following core functions: 1) programmatic development and research; 2) political engagement.

- **Programmatic development and research:** A core part of the Secretariat's work must be to facilitate the interaction between Member Churches, Church related organisations and other expert ecumenical bodies and associations on specific areas of common concern mandated by CEC's governing bodies. This is an important ingredient in strengthening the bonds of fellowship

between Member Churches so that they might be better equipped and empowered to work together and with others. It is a necessary prerequisite in ensuring that CEC is first and foremost a properly resourced theological community. This function requires the Secretariat to provide a mechanism by which Member Churches interact with one another and with others to develop the necessary social knowledge and theological capital to resolve common problems that impact on their shared future. This can help in promoting the cohesion, regeneration and development of CEC as a whole and would be a useful contribution from CEC to the wider ecumenical movement. It is less important that the Secretariat has expertise in specific areas. It is more important that the Secretariat contains staff who are expert generalists able to manage the interactions between Member Churches and other Church related bodies on a range of theological and socio/economic issues. This could be through seminars, conferences, workshops, expert working groups, task forces. The results of the interactions can be captured, harvested and then shared more widely.

- **Political engagement:** A core part of the Secretariat's work must be to engage with and influence a range of individuals, groups, institutions and bodies with an interest in the affairs of CEC or whose activities impact on the life of CEC and/or its Member Churches. The Secretariat needs to be able to explain agreed policies, shape the policies and positions of others, partner others and where necessary undertake advocacy on issues which could impact on the life of CEC and its Member Churches. An essential component of this work is political monitoring and where necessary the development of strategies as to which EU, pan-European or international institutions to engage with, on what issues and at what stage during the legislative or policy process. It requires Secretariat staff to organise and attend suitable events where the views of CEC and its Member Churches can be promoted and explained in a concise, efficient and transparent manner. All of this requires the Secretariat staff to be politically aware and astute, confident at networking and coalition building and persuasive communicators.

3.56 The RWG holds that these two core functions should be seen as inter-related. It is imperative that Secretariat Staff do not work in isolation from one another. The emphasis must be on collaborative working across the organisation in order to deliver agreed strategic objectives drawn up to deliver CEC's vision and mission.

Office support

3.57 The RWG holds that these core deliverables necessitates the Secretariat having office support in the following areas: personnel, finance, administration and communications.

- **Personnel:** The Secretariat needs to have the capacity to maintain appropriate legal and employment policies, manage staff appraisals and deal with disciplinary issues if and when they arrive;
- **Finance:** The Secretariat needs the capacity to develop and maintain an effective budgetary system. The Secretariat needs to be able to supplement its core funding from Member Churches with additional funding streams such as grant applications;
- **Administrative Support:** Even with executive staff taking administrative responsibility for their own work the Secretariat will require a small administrative capacity to assist in the smooth running of the organisation. This might include office management and assistance in the planning of ad hoc meetings or meetings of the General Assembly and the Governing Board;
- **Communications:** Communications is a central ingredient in delivering on CEC's core work. All executive staff should therefore be good communicators and be comfortable with new social media platforms and media management. The Secretariat will however need some capacity to assist in developing and maintaining the website, writing press releases and articles, copy writing, producing annual reports and managing data bases of contacts;

Collaborative working culture

3.58 Member Churches need to have confidence that the Secretariat can implement the work programme that is necessary to realise the strategic objectives agreed by the General Assembly. With limited resources CEC is unlikely to be able to afford a Secretariat of experts who have considerable knowledge in one area but who are unable to contribute more broadly to the working life of CEC. In the future, staff will not be able to work in silos, they will need to work with greater flexibility across a number of portfolios. In many cases they already do. This functional and dynamic way of working needs to be encouraged and supported.

3.59 Staff will need to be able to work collaboratively with other

members of the Secretariat as well as with officers and experts from the Member Churches and Organisations in Partnership with CEC. A staff member might be responsible for leading on one or more programmes of work while at the same time actively contributing to the programmatic work of other colleagues. This working methodology requires staff to possess or develop a broad range of skills that can be used in multiple settings. Any transitional arrangement needs to make provision for the retraining of staff according to revised job descriptions.

3.60 The RWG holds that if Member Churches fully embrace the idea of CEC as a networked organisation then the opportunity exists to draw more creatively upon the resources of Member Churches, Church related bodies and Organisations in Partnership with CEC to assist the Secretariat at an operational level. For example, the chief executive, with the agreement of the Governing Board, might decide that on personnel matters it makes more sense to contract out this competence to another Member Church or related organisation rather than retain this expertise within the Secretariat. In some areas, such as with the redesign of the CEC website, this practice is already happening. This model of working encourages more flexible ways of working and offers a dynamic and creative mechanism by which Member Churches and Church related bodies and Organisations in Partnership with CEC can contribute to the operational life of CEC. This approach might also provide better value for money.

Participatory working mechanisms

3.61 Member Churches, pan-European federations of churches, associated organisations and National Councils of Churches have always valued the opportunity to be involved in the operational life of CEC and to be consulted on specific projects. Participatory working mechanisms are necessary if CEC's work is to be grounded in the life of its Member Churches as well as the wider ecumenical movement.

3.62 The RWG is keen to stress that disbanding the Commissions' governing structures and management processes does not mean disbanding the working mechanisms that enable Member Churches and partner organisations to contribute to the life of CEC. There will be a need for Church leaders' meetings, seminars, ecumenical gatherings, theological conferences, workshops, expert working groups, online-interactive consultations, task forces and dialogue sessions. There might also be a need to establish advisory groups to

assist staff and/or groupings of staff to implement particular programmes of work and to advise staff on the most appropriate working mechanism to use. Used properly these working mechanisms can give CEC greater flexibility to respond to emerging shocks and stresses such as those identified in Chapter 1 of this report.

3.63 The RWG recommends that where a fixed group (i.e. expert working group, task force or advisory group) is established for any period of time as opposed to an open and one-of conference, seminar or dialogue session, then it should be the responsibility of the Governing Board under advice from the chief executive to determine their remit, composition and balance, budget and time frame.

3.64 Taken together these mechanisms, allied to the Secretariat's collaborative working culture, offer Member Churches, Pan-European Federation of churches; Organisations in partnership and national councils of churches creative opportunities to contribute meaningfully to the operational life of CEC. They also provide Secretariat staff with the necessary support to deliver the high quality projects the Member Churches have come to expect. It is important to stress, however, that none of these working mechanisms dilute the governance role of the Governing Board or the management responsibilities of the chief executive. These working mechanisms have no statutory basis or legal identity.

Staffing

3.65 The RWG did not see its task as one of determining the size of the Secretariat or how existing staff might be reallocated under these new arrangements – that is a decision to be taken by CEC's chief executive and the Governing Board in the light of agreed strategic objectives and the funds available.

3.66 If CEC's chief executive and Governing Board believe that it makes operational sense to group Secretariat staff together in teams with team coordinators then it should be free to do so, so long as such arrangements do not result in new governance structures and management processes. Any staffing arrangements agreed on should not impede collaborative ways of working across the secretariat and CEC more broadly. Staffing arrangements need to be functional and tailored to take forward work programmes necessary to achieve the strategic objectives set by the Assembly.

3.67 The RWG recognises that some Member Churches might find it difficult to envisage what CEC might look like and how it might operate if the RWG proposals were implemented. There might therefore be value short term in establishing teams around the existing areas of work undertaken by the existing Commissions. An arrangement such as this might assist some Member Churches in making the transition to the CEC of the future.

3.68 Alternatively, it is possible to imagine the Governing Board agreeing to a proposal from the chief executive to establish teams with team coordinators around the Secretariat's core deliverables and office support. Then again, the Governing Board might decide on a more creative approach which is beyond the diminished imagination of the RWG. At the end of the day, however, these are operational rather than constitutional details and they should be treated as such. They are certainly beyond the remit of the RWG.

Executive Staff Meetings

3.69 In an organisation the size of CEC where the emphasis must be on cross-organisational working there is little need for the type of a senior management team as currently exists in CEC. Instead, the RWG recommends that the chief executive should hold executive staff meetings on a regular basis according to its own standing orders agreed by the Governing Board.

LOCATION OF CEC'S SECRETARIAT

3.70 Member Churches are keen for CEC to be a coherent and professionally managed enterprise. The RWG believes that it is easier to do this when staff, wherever possible, work from the same office and when the chief executive is physically located where the majority of staff is present.

3.71 The RWG recommends that CEC's chief executive and other staff located in Geneva should be relocated to Brussels:

- Having, wherever possible, Secretariat staff located under one roof will encourage collaborative patterns of working;
- It will avoid duplication of resources by enabling common services to be developed thereby enabling financial savings to be made;
- Focusing CEC's operation in Brussels will enable CEC to sharpen its engagement with the European and EU institutions;
- A CEC with a more concentrated inner structure and a clearer profile could have more weight as a regional working partner of the WCC.

3.72 The RWG recommends a pragmatic approach to office space. It obviously makes sense for the existing CEC office in Strasbourg to be maintained so long as it is financially viable to do so.

LEGAL IDENTITY

3.73 To work as one organisation CEC needs a single legal identity. The RWG believes that moving beyond the governance and management structures offered by the Commissions and relocating CEC's chief executive and staff from Geneva to Brussels provides an opportunity to reconstitute CEC on another legal basis. This legal reconstitution is reflected in the new Constitution.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COMMISSIONS

3.74 The RWG is aware that the decision to disband the Commission governance and management structures will impact on CEC's relationship with CCME, CSC and CiD.

3.75 The RWG assumes that should Member Churches decide at the Assembly in 2013 to endorse the RWG's proposals then it follows that Member Churches working through the instruments of CEC CSC and CEC CiD will either take the necessary constitutional decisions to wind down the responsibilities and structures of these Commissions or to amend their existing statutes in a way that reflects the new reality.

3.76 The RWG realises however that the situation regarding CCME is of a different order to that of CiD and CSC. CCME has communicated to the RWG that it has put on hold its integration with CEC following the decision by the Lyon Assembly to establish the RWG.

3.77 The RWG holds that the recommended new strategic framework allied to this new organisational model provides ample scope for the work areas covered by CCME to be taken forward with vigour and enthusiasm.

3.78 Under the RWG's proposals CCME's non-Church members can contribute significantly to the operational life of CEC by registering as an Organisation in Partnership with CEC. Those of its members that are pan-European federation of Churches can apply to become full members of CEC.

3.79 The RWG recommends that if CCME decides that it cannot

after all proceed with the integration with CEC, and that it cannot give up its own identity and autonomy, then CCME should be invited to register as an Organisation in Partnership with CEC. In so doing the existing memorandum of understanding between CEC and CCME, to which the RWG has given serious thought, would become null and void.

3.80 Under this new arrangement CEC's governing bodies on the recommendation of CEC's chief executive could invite CCME to deliver specific projects in the field of migration for CEC's Member Churches. These projects could be managed by recourse to a service agreement.

3.81 Either way, the RWG recommends that CEC should avoid the scenario of agreeing a new organisational model that enables CEC to work operationally as one body only then to create alternative structures and processes that have the effect of replicating many of the management and governance problems of the past.

MANAGING THE TRANSITION

3.82 The RWG's proposals for the renewal of CEC are at the same time both simple and complex. They are simple because they are informed by models of best practice. They are complex because CEC itself is a complex set of independent legal entities with their own self-understanding, that operate from multiple geographical locations with overlapping governance and management structures and processes. Finding a way through this maze of competing structures and jurisdictions is not an easy task.

3.83 Moving CEC, as the RWG proposes, to a single coherent organisational model working predominantly from one physical location with a single strategic narrative is a transition that needs to be managed carefully and sensitively. The RWG is aware that such transitional matters are outside its remit, but it is conscious that uncertainty and anxiety as to how the process might be managed can lead to an inevitable defence of the status quo. To resolve this situation the RWG recommends that the General Secretary prepare a report for the General Assembly in 2013 setting out how, if the General Assembly approves the RWG proposals, the proposals might be implemented.

Chapter 4

RWG Proposals for a New Constitution for CEC

4.1 The RWG's proposals have constitutional implications for CEC. The following chapter sets out a revised constitutional text for CEC that reflects the organisational and strategic changes set out in the preceding chapters. It is recommended that this single text replace both the existing constitution as well as CEC's Bye Laws. In making this recommendation RWG holds that the purpose of a constitution is to provide a set of written rules setting out the aims of an organisation, how it will be run, who can be its members and how its members will work together. Since it is a legal text it should only include that which is necessary for the essential running of the organisation.

CONSTITUTION

Preamble

The Conference of European Churches (hereafter referred to as the 'Conference') is an ecumenical fellowship of Churches in Europe which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seeks to fulfil their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Member Churches of the Conference seek, by the grace of the Triune God, to pursue together the path of growing conciliar understanding on which they have set out. In the faithfulness to the Gospel, as witnessed in the Holy Scripture and transmitted in and through the Church by the power of the Holy Spirit, they seek to continue to grow in fellowship (*koinonia*) of faith, hope and love. Faithful to this Gospel, they also seek to make a common contribution to the mission of the Church, to the safeguarding of life and the well-being of all humankind.

In its commitment to Europe as whole the Conference seeks to help the European Churches to renew their spiritual life, to strengthen their common witness and service and to promote the unity of the Church and the peace in the world.

As recognised by the Charta Oecumenica (2001) European Churches have a responsibility to call each other to a life of reconciliation as an expression of Christian unity and for the sake of the well-being of our continent and world.

ARTICLE 1

Name, Legal Status, Headquarters, Duration

- (1) The name of the corporation is “Conference of European Churches”. It is ruled by ... (*here to be regarded the Belgian Law*).
- (2) CEC is a non-profit-making corporation. Aims and objectives pursued by CEC are of an exclusively non-profit nature. It does not seek to make a profit, either for itself or for its members. CEC uses its financial resources solely to fulfil the objects set out in its statutes and does not offer disproportionately high remuneration to its constituent bodies, to its staff or to third parties.
- (3) The headquarters of CEC are established at Brussels in Belgium. They may be transferred to any other location within Belgium, published within the month in the appendices to the “*Moniteur belge*”.
- (4) The duration of CEC shall be unlimited. It can be dissolved at any time in accordance with this Constitution.

ARTICLE 2

Objects and Functions

- (1) CEC’s vision is to seek the reconciliation and common witness of the Churches to help build a humane, socially conscious and sustainable Europe at peace with itself and its neighbours, in which human rights and the basic values of peace, justice, freedom, participation and solidarity prevail.
- (2) Through programmatic development and research CEC works to strengthen the bonds of Christian fellowship (*koinonia*) between all its Members so that they might be better equipped and

empowered to work together and with others in advocating an authentic and credible Christian witness to European and international institutions.

- (3) CEC has no legislative authority over its members. CEC may act on behalf of members and in their name only in such matters as are referred to it by one or more members.
- (4) The individual members have the freedom and the responsibility to implement recommendations and declarations of CEC in their life and witness.

ARTICLE 3

Membership

- (1) The members of CEC shall be those churches and Pan-European federations of Churches which are members on the date when this Constitution enters into force.
- (2) Each Member shall assume all obligations resulting from its membership.
- (3) Each member shall pay a yearly membership fee fixed by the General Assembly, on a proposal of the Governing Board.
- (4) A church or Pan-European federation of Churches may be excluded from CEC or restricted in the exercise of its rights as a member if it persistently and seriously fails to comply with the conditions of membership or with its obligations as a member.

ARTICLE 4

Terms and conditions for accession, resignation, exclusion and restriction of rights

- (1) A church or Pan-European federation of Churches seeking membership of CEC shall submit a written application for admission to the chief executive. The application must include acceptance by that church or Pan-European federation of Churches of the basis and aims set out in the Preamble to the Constitution of CEC. The Governing Board shall decide on the acceptance of the application by a two thirds majority. A positive decision by the Governing Board shall be notified to all members. If within six months one quarter at least of the members oppose this decision, it shall become null and void. The result shall be notified

to the members. New members shall be received in an act of worship during the following General Assembly.

- (2) Resignation from CEC by a member requires a written notification to the chief executive, who shall inform the Governing Board without delay. Resignation shall take effect six months after receipt of the notification by the chief executive. Within this period the notification of resignation may be withdrawn by the member. A church or Pan-European federation of Churches which has resigned from CEC and seeks re-admittance as a member must follow the normal admission procedure.
- (3) The Governing Board shall decide on the exclusion of a member by a two-thirds majority after allowing the member to be heard. This decision has to be confirmed by the following General Assembly by a two-thirds majority. In the period between the membership of this church or Pan-European federation of Churches shall be in abeyance.
- (4) The Governing Board shall decide on the Restriction of the rights of a member by a two-thirds majority after allowing the member to be heard. The decision shall become effective immediately. It has to be confirmed by the following General Assembly by a two-thirds majority.

ARTICLE 5

Organisations in Partnership; National Councils of Churches

- (1) CEC maintains a register of “Organisations in Partnership” for specialised Church and ecumenical organisations that have responsibility for particular issues or areas, which recognise the basis of CEC in accordance with the Preamble to the Constitution and the aims of CEC as set out in Article 2., which maintain relations with the churches in their area and are representative of their region, or which are constituted by members of CEC in specific regions of Europe or for particular purposes. Organisations in Partnership shall attend the General Assembly if needed and if invited without having voting rights. The Governing Board shall in consultation with the Chief executive determine the terms of the engagement of the Organisations in Partnership with the General Assembly and shall draw up the necessary regulations setting out the rights and responsibilities of those organisations. Organisations in Partnership shall pay a

registration fee to be renewed at each General Assembly.

- (2) CEC develops a regular, open and transparent dialogue with national councils of Churches both in Europe and further afield so that these national ecumenical bodies can contribute to the operational life of CEC.

ARTICLE 6

Organisation

The constituent bodies of CEC are:

- the General Assembly;
- the Governing Board.

ARTICLE 7

General Assembly

- (1) CEC members meet annually for a general meeting. In this, they are represented by the Governing Board. As a “General Assembly”, the members of CEC meet once every four years. An extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly must be convened if one fifth of the members of CEC or two thirds of the members of the Governing Board so request.
- (2) The General Assembly shall be the highest authority of CEC. In particular it shall have the following functions:
 - agree new or revised strategic objectives for CEC up to the next ordinary meeting of the General Assembly;
 - agree a financial strategy for the period up to the next ordinary meeting of the General Assembly;
 - evaluate the progress made by CEC in delivering the strategic objectives as agreed by the previous ordinary General Assembly;
 - elect the members of CEC’s governing instruments;
 - adopt standing orders of CEC.
- (3) The General Assembly shall be composed of the delegates of the members of CEC. Should a delegate be unable to participate, the member may appoint an alternate in the vacant place.
- (4) Each Member Church shall be apportioned a number of delegates at the General Assembly reflecting their numerical size. The total number of delegates apportioned to any one Member Church should not exceed 5.

- Membership up to but not exceeding 100,000 = 1 delegate
 - Up to but not exceeding 500,000 = 2 delegates
 - Up to but not exceeding 3 million = 3 delegates
 - Up to but not exceeding 10 million = 4 delegates
 - Over 10 million = 5 delegates.
- (5) Pan-European federations of churches that become members of CEC should be entitled to a voting delegation of no more than one.
- (6) Usually on all questions in the General Assembly, except those named in this constitution, only a majority vote is required for a measure to be carried. On special theological or socio-ethical questions or issues a consensus model of decision making shall be used. Further details shall be specified in the Standing Orders of the General Assembly.

ARTICLE 8

Governing Board

- (1) The Governing Board shall ensure that CEC lives up to its Member Churches' expectations as expressed through the decisions of the General Assembly. It shall be empowered to conduct the business of CEC when the General Assembly is not meeting. In particular it shall have the following functions and duties:
- review periodically CEC's strategic statements (Vision, Mission and Values) for accuracy and validity and where necessary propose amendments to the General Assembly;
 - ensure effective organisational and strategic planning;
 - determine and monitor CEC's programmes, services and working groups;
 - provide adequate resources for CEC to fulfil its mission and manage them effectively;
 - appoint a chief executive;
 - support the chief executive and review his or her performance;
 - serve as a Court of Appeal in personnel matters;
 - enhance CEC's public image;
 - authorise official reports and submissions;
 - assess its own performance;
 - adopt its own Standing Orders and standing orders of the Secretariat;
 - reflect on the opportunities for ecumenical encounter.
- (2) The Governing Board shall be elected by the General Assembly

and shall not exceed 15 persons including the President and the two Vice-Presidents. The Governing Board shall represent the diverse constituency of CEC and shall possess the necessary skill sets to fulfil its governance responsibilities. Appointment to the Governing Board shall be for a period of four years which may be renewed for a further period. No individual shall serve for more than two terms in any capacity on the Governing Board.

- (3) Each member of the Governing Board except the President and the two Vice-Presidents shall have a named and fixed proxy elected by the General Assembly. The Proxy Board Members should come from the same confessional family and same region as the Principal Board Member that she or he is linked to. All Proxy Board Member should be included in the Governing Board's general circulation and distribution list. Proxies ought to be invited at least once in the life of the Board to attend a meeting of the Governing Board (in addition to Principal Board Members) without the right to vote so that they can actively participate in its work. Proxies may be elected as full members of the Board at the following Assembly.
- (4) Each member of the Governing Board shall have one vote. The transfer of voting rights to persons other than the named and fixed proxies is not admissible.
- (5) A member of the Governing Board who resigns without completing a full term of office shall be replaced by the Governing Board. The new member of the General Board shall be from the same confessional and regional background as the member who has resigned and shall complete the latter's term of office.
- (6) Those wishing to become members of the Governing Board should be proposed by their Member Church and seconded by two other Member Churches from the same region. They should complete a nomination form, in which the skill sets that a future Governing Board might need in order to meet the future strategic objectives to be agreed by the General Assembly are set out. The General Assembly's Nomination Committee should propose a list of candidates to be nominated by the General Assembly.
- (7) The term of office of the Governing Board shall commence at the closure of the General Assembly at which it is elected.

Similarly its term of office shall end at the commencement of the term of office of a newly elected Governing Board.

- (8) The Governing Board shall meet no less than three times a year. Meetings of the Governing Board shall normally take place at CEC's headquarters. Online-interactive consultations or other technical ways of communication are allowed. The members of the Governing Board shall be entitled to claim and be reimbursed for all reasonable expenses. Salaries shall not be paid.

ARTICLE 9

Representational Officers

- (1) CEC shall have a President who should fulfil the following representative functions:
- moderate the General Assembly;
 - oversee Governing Board meetings;
 - oversee the implementation of Governing Board resolutions;
 - call special meetings of the Governing Board if necessary;
 - ensure the Governing Board fulfils its governance duties and responsibilities;
 - provide a point of contact for Church leaders of CEC's Member Churches;
 - consult with Board members on their roles and help them assess their performance;
 - oversee searches for a new chief executive;
 - coordinate the chief executive's annual performance evaluation;
 - speak on behalf of CEC's Governing Board on strategic issues.
- (2) The President should be supported in his or her role by two Vice Presidents who shall fulfil the following representative functions:
- attend all Governing Board meetings,
 - carry out special assignments as requested by the President,
 - understand the responsibilities of the President and be able to perform these duties in the President's absence or by his or her delegation,
 - participate as a vital part of the Governing Board leadership.
- (3) Representatives of the different denominational families of CEC (Protestant, Orthodox, Anglican) shall be elected in turn to the offices of President and two Vice Presidents of CEC. Immediate re-election to the same office is not possible.

ARTICLE 10**Management and administration**

A chief executive and a Secretariat are responsible for the daily administration of CEC.

ARTICLE 11**Chief Executive**

- (1) The chief executive shall be in charge of the Secretariat of CEC, shall be the head of the entire staff and shall act as the Secretary of the General Assembly and the Governing Board. The chief executive shall carry the title of General Secretary.
- (2) The functions of the chief executive shall include:
 - implementing the strategic goals and objectives of CEC as agreed by the General Assembly;
 - acting as the Secretary to the Governing Board and participate as a non-voting member of CEC’s Governing Board;
 - acting as a spokesperson of the organisation on operational issues in accordance with the standing orders agreed by the Governing Board.
- (3) The chief executive shall be appointed by the Governing Board.
- (4) The chief executive shall be accountable to the Governing Board for his or her activities and the work of the Secretariat.
- (5) The legal signatory for CEC shall be the chief executive together with one of the persons duly authorised by the Governing Board. The chief executive may authorise someone to sign in his or her stead.

ARTICLE 12**Secretariat**

- (1) The Secretariat shall facilitate the interaction between members of CEC, Organisations in Partnership and national councils of churches. It shall deliver the following core functions:
 - programmatic development and research;
 - political engagement.
- (2) The staff of the Secretariat shall be accountable to the General Secretary. There shall be office support in the following areas:

- communications;
- administration;
- personnel and finance.

The Secretariat will meet on a regular basis according to Standing Orders agreed by the Governing Board.

- (3) The staff are responsible for particular projects that have been agreed by the Governing Board as necessary to deliver on the strategic objectives set by the General Assembly.

ARTICLE 13

Ways of working

- (1) Resources of members of CEC, Organisations in Partnership and national councils of churches can be drawn upon to assist the Secretariat at an operational level. The staff shall manage the interactions between these bodies, such that the results of the interactions can be captured, harvested and shared widely.
- (2) The Secretariat needs to be flexible in its use of working mechanisms. These might include Church leaders meetings, seminars, ecumenical gatherings, theological conferences, workshops, expert working groups, online-interactive consultations, task forces and dialogue sessions and others.
- (3) The chief executive with the agreement of the Governing Board can contract out certain projects to other Church related bodies and Organisations in Partnership that might be better resourced and equipped to undertake that work.

ARTICLE 14

Budgets and Accounts

- (1) CEC shall be financed by membership fees and contributions from the members of CEC, Organisations in Partnership and national councils of churches and project funding or donations or grants from third parties.
- (2) The financial year shall be the calendar year.
- (3) The Governing Board shall agree the annual budget and the staffing plan for the Secretariat of CEC on the basis of the fi-

financial plan established by the General Assembly and shall determine the contributions expected from the individual member churches with due regard to their financial resources.

- (4) The Governing Board shall elect a Budget Committee and the auditors, discuss their annual reports, approve the financial report and give final discharge to the chief executive.
- (5) The legal liability of CEC shall be strictly limited to its own assets.

ARTICLE 15

Dissolution and Liquidation

- (1) A motion for the dissolution of CEC may be submitted by a two-thirds majority of the Governing Board or by one fifth of the members of CEC. Its adoption by the General Assembly shall require a two-thirds majority of the votes cast and entitled to vote or the written consent of two thirds of the member churches and members of the Governing Board.
- (2) If two thirds of the member churches approve, dissolution shall take effect at the end of the current financial year. If the General Assembly resolves on dissolution, it shall also determine the date on which it will take effect. The Governing Board shall be responsible for the winding-up arrangements.
- (3) Should CEC be dissolved, the Governing Board shall ensure that a church organisation is appointed as trustee for the assets of CEC. The trustee shall undertake to administer the assets and, after deduction of costs, use its revenue for the benefit of churches in Europe, pending the foundation of a new European conference of churches. If within twenty years after the dissolution of CEC no new European conference of churches has been founded, the trustee may use the assets for purposes consistent with the aims laid down in the Preamble to the Constitution.

ARTICLE 16

Reference to Belgian Law

For all points not covered by these Statutes, CEC shall refer to Title III of the Law of 27 June 1921.

ARTICLE 17

Languages, Special Provisions

- (1) The official languages of CEC shall be English, French, German and Russian.
- (2) A motion to amend the Constitution may be submitted by a two-thirds majority of the Governing Board or by one fifth of the members of CEC. Its adoption by the General Assembly shall require a two-thirds majority of the delegates present and entitled to vote.

ARTICLE 18

Transitional Provisions

- (1) This Constitution shall come into force when adopted by the General Assembly of CEC. Elections and restructuring necessary according to this Constitution has to be realised by the following ordinary General Assembly which will take place not later than 2017.
- (2) Until then the elected Central Committee shall continue as the Governing Board as set out in Article 8 of this Constitution and has the task of managing the transitional arrangements.
- (3) This Constitution replaces the Constitution adopted by the General Assembly on the 8th September 1992, last amended on the 21st July 2009 and the Bye-Laws to the Constitution adopted by the General Assembly on the 8th September 1992, last amended on the 21st July 2009.

PART TWO

METHODOLOGICAL WORKINGS

Chapter 5

A RWG History of CEC and its Strategic Capacity

5.1 Does CEC have a vision statement? It probably does, but how well is it known? How about a mission statement? A values statement? If CEC doesn't have these three statements, or if it has them but is not using them to guide the organisation's work, or to communicate that work to its stakeholders then it is missing out on one of the simplest and most effective governance and strategic tools around. These statements if properly articulated can define and guide the organisation to realise the future that it wants to imagine for the community that it is called to serve.

WHAT IS CEC'S VISION OF THE FUTURE?

5.2 Does CEC have a vision for the future? If so what is it and is it a vision that relates to Europe and/or the wider ecumenical movement? If it does have a vision statement, is it the right vision for CEC to have? How well known is CEC's vision statement by its staff and its Member Churches? What is the process by which CEC's vision is articulated? Who within the organisation has ownership for articulating and promoting the vision?

5.3 Paragraph 1 of the Constitution's preamble sets out CEC's self-understanding of itself as "*an ecumenical fellowship of Churches in Europe which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit*". If paragraph 1 provided CEC with its faith basis, paragraph 2 explains that CEC came into existence after the Second World War on the initiative of Church leaders with the aim of exercising "*the ministry of reconciliation incumbent upon all of them.*"

5.4 Against the backdrop of a divided Europe characterised by mu-

tual suspicion and mistrust between states, CEC became a vehicle through which Churches could “*pursue together the path of growing conciliar understanding*” and in so doing “*make a common contribution to the mission of the Church, to the safeguarding of life and the well being of all humankind.*” How far CEC realised the dreams of its founders is not the focus of this report, but it is worth noting that other organisations also existed at this time such as the Peace Conference that had similar objectives.

5.5 In October 2004 an Ad Hoc Group on Ecumenical Reconfiguration presented *Our Common Way* to the Central Committee in Prague. *Our Common Way* was assimilated into the organisational culture of CEC in October 2008, following a meeting of the Central Committee in Paralimni-Protaras, Cyprus. The aim of *Our Common Way* was to clarify CEC’s self-understanding of itself before entering into the process of structural reconfiguration. Its task was to provide a vision for CEC based on an understanding of “who we are and who we want to be together”.

5.6 *Our Common Way* consists of three sections that were described as representing three sides of a dynamic triangle:

- The first, *Our Common Faith – the Basis for our Common Vision*, sets out CEC’s grounding in faith and scripture;
- The second, *Our Challenge as a Growing Fellowship of Churches*, touches on the internal workings of CEC;
- The third, *Our Challenge as Churches in Europe*, reviews the external environment in which CEC found itself and the issues that it needed to address.

5.7 *Our Common Way* is helpful in understanding CEC’s mission but it does not equip CEC with a view of how the organisation would like to be or how it wants the world to be in which it is called to serve. The collapsing of the boundaries between vision and mission is illustrated by the *Ad Hoc Group*’s understanding that “*the following vision of Our Common Way is taking up the central areas of work of CEC*”. CEC’s vision was therefore to be shaped by the existing work rather than vice versa.

5.8 *Our Common Way* endowed CEC with an elaborate mathematical equation: “*For any issue to be addressed by CEC the relation of the three other corners of the triangle have to be considered and the impact of one section for the other two needs to be clarified.*”

There is no suggestion that consideration be given to how the work undertaken might help realise the vision.

5.9 The use of language, *Our Common Way*, signalled a common journey, undertaken by Member Churches and CEC. It re-articulated under *Our Common Faith – The Basis for our Common Vision*, much of what already existed in the preamble to CEC’s Constitution, namely CEC’s origins as a bridge-building organisation, and the fruits to be enjoyed by travelling a common journey together. What it didn’t do was spell out the journey’s destination, merely the “*constant hope that mutual learning and enrichment will be the fruits of listening to each other of sharing joy and sorrow and of finding ways of common witness and service.*”

5.10 If neither the Constitution nor *Our Common Way* empowers CEC with a clear and compelling vision of the future where does the inspiration come from? How does CEC explain to itself, its Member Churches and external audience why it is important to do the work?

5.11 *Our Common Way* suggests that ‘vision’ is the responsibility of the Assembly. The document notes that “*in its (ie the Central Committee) making of decisions and recommendations, it remains true to the overall vision and priorities for the work of CEC fostered by the Assembly.*” However, in setting out the responsibilities of the Assembly, reference is only paid to the Assembly’s role in the setting of priorities. This lack of clarity is not helpful as is the suggestion that CEC’s vision might change from Assembly to Assembly rather than being held constant over the life of the organisation itself. If responsibility for vision lies with the Assembly, what can be learnt from the 13th CEC Assembly?

5.12 The *Future Conference* in Lyon, 10-12 September 2008, was an occasion for CEC to reflect with its member churches on the past, analyse the present and generate a vision for the ecumenical future of Europe as well as the context in which CEC would want to operate in 2029. The resulting report suggests that participants had difficulty in delivering on its primary objective namely grounding CEC with a common vision for the future. The report concludes: “*With this conference CEC opened up the reflection on the future that many are planning locally. Many of the visions in Lyon saw CEC in 2029 as a well known Church organisation that brings together the people in Europe with common goals and no constraints*

to separate them. CEC would be stronger if we concentrated less on our differences and more on what brings us together. The day we will be able to define 'ecumenism' in one sentence, we will know what the role of CEC is as well."

5.13 The report's inclusion of the testimony provided by Dean Margarethe Isberg is striking. The Vice President noted:

"The most exciting task was to create a vision for CEC and we managed to express our different pictures in different ways. Then the energy faded away. We were supposed to express goals to achieve the vision. The difficulty was to find the way and goals to a vision, because we all had different visions in our minds. You cannot find common ways of working if you don't have a common vision."

5.14 The *Future Conference* showed not so much the absence of vision but the competing and at times irreconcilable nature of the visions that Member Churches have of CEC and ecumenism in Europe. The 13th Assembly recognised the need for CEC to have clear strategic objectives, but there was no resolution of the *a priori* but more fundamental question of CEC's overarching vision.

5.15 In practice the inspiration for much of CEC's work is left to the discretion of CEC's Commissions and in this they rely heavily on the *Charta Oecumenica*. The Commissions' entrepreneurial spirit should be commended: they at least attempt to provide a long term view of why the work they undertake is important. The absence of a common point of reference remains problematic. It produces differing and diverging visions within the organisation which threatens the coherence of the organisation as a whole. The result is multiple unofficial vision statements suggesting that CEC is not one organisation but four (CEC and its three Commissions).

5.16 The inability to reconcile the differences between CEC and its Member Churches as well as the differences that exist between CEC and its Commissions highlights a fundamental identity crisis for CEC as to its meta-narrative.

DOES CEC HAVE A MISSION STATEMENT?

5.17 Does CEC have a mission statement explaining why it exists and what it hopes to achieve in the future?

5.18 Article 1.1 of CEC's Constitution states "*that in order to fulfil the aims set out in the preamble the Conference*" will undertake a range of functions. The referred to preamble reveals a menu of aims, which could be seen as constituting an elementary mission statement. Self-defined as a fellowship of Churches in Europe, the Constitution stipulates that CEC was created by its Member Churches as a vehicle to help them:

- fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
- exercise the ministry of reconciliation incumbent on them all;
- pursue together the path of growing conciliar understanding on which they had set out;
- grow in the fellowship (koinonia) of faith, hope and love;
- make a common contribution to the mission of the Church, the safeguarding of life and the well being of humankind;
- help the European churches to renew their spiritual life, to strengthen their common witness and service and to promote the unity of the Church and peace in the world.

5.19 At its meeting in Berlin, February 2010, the RWG noted, however, that the CEC Directors responded to the question 'what is CEC's mission' by referring to the paper, *Our Common Way*. Seen from this perspective, CEC exists to:

- preserve and deepen the fellowship of Churches in Europe by acting as a bridge building organisation between Churches in different parts of Europe;
- enable Member Churches to enjoy mutual spiritual growth that arises through mutual learning, listening and sharing of resources;
- stand for the biblical call "to receive strangers" and in so doing to overcome discrimination of single people and groups based on racial injustice;
- to assist Member Churches develop a common understanding of Christian values in societies and politics;
- provide both a platform for European Churches and an instrument by which the voices of European Churches can be heard within the European societies and the European political institutions.

5.20 Rather than taking *Our Common Way* as its point of reference, the Lyon Assembly's *Policy Reference Group's* report concluded with the following overarching affirmations:

- we believe CEC to be a forum for mutual learning and ecumeni-

cal formation, for bridge building and for strengthening relations between the Churches and for common witness.

- we believe CEC to be the common voice of the Member Churches in Europe and an ecumenical instrument for cooperation with the European institutions;
- we believe CEC to be a platform for dialogue with other Christian Churches and other faith communities;
- we believe CEC to be a community living in diversity with migrants, refugees and ethnic minorities.

5.21 There is clearly a broad commonality of purpose between these documents that is encouraging, but the multiplicity of overlapping documents is confusing. The documents give evidence of an organisation attempting to define and redefine its mission even if it has yet to set a vision for the future.

5.22 What is far from clear however is what traction these deliberations have on the internal life of CEC, its Commissions and the relationship between CEC and its Member Churches? No Member Church submission to the Lyon Assembly's consultation made reference to *Our Common Way*. The CEC website gives no prominence to the over-arching affirmations that emerged from the Lyon Assembly. In 2010 the Central Committee overlooked the Lyon Assembly's deliberations by concluding that CEC's mission is to:

- secure a platform of exchange and communication for its Member Churches;
- be a voice for small/minority Churches;
- witness and serve with, by and through Churches;
- promote dialogue and theology.

5.23 This points to a disconnection between CEC, its Commissions and the Member Churches. It points to a separation between CEC's instruments of governance namely the Central Committee and the General Assembly. The only consistent point of reference in this muddle is the mandates of the Commissions and even here the final Lyon Assembly's Policy Reference Group Report suggested that "*the work of the Commissions as a whole has to reflect the major policy lines and be in harmony with the strategic objectives for which CEC stands*".

5.24 The problem is not that the Commission mandates are contradictory with the overall aims of CEC as set out in the various

CEC documents, they obviously are not. Rather that the mandates because of their specificity and consistency have become unofficial mission statements in their own right. The Commissions' mandates are more coherent and thought through than anything that CEC as an organisation has to offer. In this respect the Lyon Assembly's Policy Reference Report's observation that "*for many people in Europe CEC stood and stands for the work of CSC and CCME*" is a double edged sword.

WHAT ARE THE ORGANISATIONAL VALUES THAT SHAPE CEC?

5.25 Does CEC have a values statement to help align actual behaviour with preferred behaviour? If so, what was the process by which it was developed and what role does it play in determining how the organisation behaves both internally and with others?

5.26 The RWG explored with CEC Directors the question of values when it met with them in Berlin, February 2010:

- The Director of CEC CSC suggested that the values that drive CEC's behaviour externally are unity, justice and solidarity, and that internally the values are transparency, accountability and subsidiarity;
- The Director of CEC CiD listed CEC's values as love, faith and hope;
- The Director of CEC CCME indicated that human dignity was the overarching value that drove CEC's work.

5.27 Even the most cursory examination of CEC documentation as well as Member Churches' submission to the Lyon Assembly reveals a more extensive list than that offered by the Directors. Even where there is consensus between parties that a particular value is important, it is far from certain that a shared understanding exists as to what that value means and how it should impact upon the life of CEC.

5.28 The draft work programme submitted by CEC-CSC to the Lyon Assembly referred, for example, to the importance of subsidiarity as a value or guiding principle in shaping the work of CSC. A number of churches in their submissions to the Lyon consultation recommended that further efforts be made to spell out what subsidiarity might mean as an organising principle or value for CEC.

5.29 The Lyon Assembly's Policy Reference Group included the term 'subsidiarity' within an early draft presented to the Assembly.

Delegates were unable, however, to agree on whether to include reference to it in the final report. The final report therefore spells out what subsidiarity might mean, even if it was not labelled as such. This illustrates that CEC's values and guiding principles are contested and the process by which agreement might be reached politicised. Where values are referred to they are rarely defined. Where they are defined they are rarely applied consistently.

DOES CEC HAVE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES?

5.30 Does CEC have a clear statement of intent setting out what goals it thinks it necessary to achieve between Assemblies?

5.31 The General Assembly is CEC's highest decision making body and responsible for setting the overall direction of the Conference. Analysing the deliberations of the Lyon Assembly helps in understanding how CEC approaches this area of its strategic planning. Two documents are of particular import: first, the official Lyon Assembly report, *Called to One Hope in Christ: from Trondheim to Lyon*; second, the Assembly's *Policy Reference Report*.

5.32 *Called to one Hope in Christ* consists of five sections: the General Secretary's report, the CiD report, the CSC report, the CCME Report and a report on financial and human resources. The reports are comprehensive and informative. But, it is far from easy when reading the reports to identify the strategic objectives that the work was trying to realise. This is not to say that the work is not important rather that it is difficult to see how it all fits together. This makes it difficult for Member Churches to assess accurately what the work achieved in practice.

5.33 Section 13 of the General Secretary's report, *Whither CEC?* examines what the coming years might hold for the ecumenical movement in general and for CEC in particular. This report highlights the growing tensions between CEC Member Churches, a hardening in the Vatican's attitudes to ecumenism and the changed political landscape in Europe. Against this background, the General Secretary raised five questions that he thought needed addressing:

- How widely can the ecumenical tent in Europe spread?
- What has CEC to learn from the growth of ecumenical movements within Europe?
- How can we communicate positively the value of being a member of CEC?

- How can CEC continue to respond effectively to the issues which will shape the Europe of the coming years?
- How can CEC see itself in a wider context?

5.34 The General Secretary's written report to the Lyon Assembly is the nearest that CEC comes to a situational analysis of CEC's environment, both internal and external - its strengths and weaknesses as well as the opportunities and threats. This analysis was subsequently lost as the forward looking report by the General Secretary was at odds with the retrospective reports provided by the Commissions.

5.35 The General Assembly's *Policy Reference Report* was presented as offering a strategic framework comprising main policy lines that might assist the Central Committee to agree future objectives. This report departed therefore from previous Assemblies by refusing to mandate an exhaustive list of specific pieces of work. Based on this methodology, the Assembly agreed "*the following overarching issues along which policy should be shaped in the coming years: trust and commitment; dialogue and strengthening of relations; coherence and visibility; witness and responsibility.*" Under each of these issues the Assembly tried to list a mixture of subsidiary recommendations and enabling goals, not all of which on closer inspection were complementary to one another. This report did not answer the strategic questions raised by the General Secretary.

5.36 It is far from clear what impact this report or indeed the Assembly as a whole had on the subsequent policy deliberations of CEC. The 2010 Central Committee in September 2010, adopted a work programme and budget for 2011 in relation to the following four strategic objectives that for the most part mirror the existing Commission mandates:

- promoting the Unity of the Churches in theology, mission and witness (engaging with the mission of the Churches);
- representing the common voice of the Churches vis-à-vis the European institutions;
- promoting inclusive communities and welcoming the stranger;
- promoting coherence and strategic objectives within the whole of CEC.

5.37 All of this suggests a growing capacity by CEC to organise its work in a way that delivers on a small number of objectives. What

is less obvious however is the extent to which the conversations across CEC's decision making bodies are consistent and where responsibility rests within CEC for drawing up and agreeing the strategic objectives?

5.38 Missing from the process is any indication of what success might look like. This is important if CEC is to meet the expectations of its Member Churches by showing that it is using the resources gifted to it efficiently. CEC needs to show that it is making a measurable and beneficial difference to the community that it is called to serve.

CONCLUSIONS

5.39 What does the preceding analysis reveal about CEC's understanding of and approach to strategic thinking and planning?

5.40 *Our Common Way, the Future Conference* and the deliberations of the Lyon Assembly all indicate an organisation struggling to think strategically. CEC is aware that it needs to redefine itself following the end of the Cold War, but it has found it hard to deliver a coherent and convincing road map that might guide it forward, answering questions about its mission and values and what it wants to achieve. In today's rapidly changing world CEC's loss of an institutionalised capacity for and culture of strategic thinking is worrisome.

5.41 The Commissions appear to have a greater understanding of their vision, mission and values than the organisation as a whole. Yet it is perhaps also true that this understanding has more impact in shaping the identity of the Commissions in opposition to CEC itself than in actually shaping their work. The extensive list of working areas presented by the three Commissions to the Lyon Assembly highlights the difficulty that the Commissions have in thinking strategically when setting priorities to deliver their own agendas.

5.42 A number of reasons help to explain this state of affairs. These include the changed external environment in which CEC finds itself 60 years after it was founded. CEC's internal environment is also different following an increase in Church membership and the attempted integration of CSC and CCME. The transformation of CEC's internal and external environment makes it simultaneously more important but more difficult to reach agreement on why CEC exists.

5.43 The situation has not been helped by the slow awareness within CEC of the importance of strategic planning and what the process entails in practice. All too often CEC confuses strategy with policy. Strategy is not policy, but is the means of effecting it. Policy without strategy is, to a high degree, flying blind.

5.44 CEC needs a strategy for extending its influence, for maintaining its presence in Europe and the wider ecumenical movement and for ensuring that it can meet the needs of its Member Churches. That requires something more than just dealing with things on a day to day basis. There should be some sense of what CEC is trying to achieve as an organisation or fellowship of Churches over a longer period.

5.45 All too often CEC's inability to articulate what is meant by the terms 'vision', 'mission' and 'values' results in a collapsing of the boundaries between the categories. This undermines the utility of the process by introducing a further layer of confusion. There is unnecessary institutional uncertainty between the bodies as to who is responsible for overseeing the process. This contributes to institutional tension within CEC and results in a multiplicity of unconnected statements most of which have a limited shelf life.

5.46 There is little evidence of sustained strategic thinking in CEC or a clear mechanism for analysis and assessment. This leads to a culture of fire fighting rather than long term planning. All this gives the impression of an organisation muddling through and one that is prone to lurching from one crisis to another. To those tasked with governing and managing CEC, the organisation's inability to think and act strategically makes it hard if not impossible to navigate CEC forward. Unless CEC can resolve these strategic deficiencies its future is far from assured. The choice for CEC is clear: reform or decline.

Chapter 6

A RWG Assessment of Existing Governance and Management Structures and Processes

6.1 Are current arrangements sufficiently coherent and robust to enable CEC to deliver the new strategic framework proposed by the RWG?

CEC'S EXISTING GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES

6.2 This section describes CEC's governance and management structures as well as its physical and legal characteristics. The information is drawn from *The Structure of the Conference of European Churches*, a report agreed by the Central Committee in 2008.

Governance Structure

6.3 CEC has a General Assembly consisting of all Member Churches and Associate Members. It meets every six years. The General Assembly is CEC's highest authority. It is responsible for formulating priorities for the work of CEC alongside a general financial framework for the period up to the next Assembly. The Assembly reflects on a specific theme selected by the Central Committee from which it issues statements and adopts recommendations. The Assembly provides a space in which Member Churches pray for one another and for the whole world.

6.4 In between meetings of the General Assembly a Central Committee of up to 40 representatives drawn from the General Assembly meets annually to make decisions consistent with the overall vision and specific priorities agreed by the Assembly. At the same time it responds to new ecumenical and political developments within Europe and other parts of the world.

6.5 The Central Committee has the right to issue public statements on behalf of CEC on matters of interest and relevance to the work of the organisation. The Central Committee is therefore that body which oversees the business of CEC and exercises governance of the organisation in between Assemblies.

6.6 In fulfilling its responsibilities the Central Committee approves the working priorities of the Commissions as set out in their work programme and thereafter receives progress reports. On the advice of the Budget Committee, the Central Committee approves CEC's budget and determines the financial contributions by CEC Member Churches.

6.7 The Central Committee has responsibility for staff matters and appoints a Personnel Committee to assist it in this task. The Central Committee is responsible for the election of the General Secretary, for the appointment of the Associate General Secretary and for the election of the CEC Commission Directors.

6.8 The Central Committee is supported by a Presidium consisting of the President and Vice President of CEC as well as additional members drawn from the Central Committee. The Presidium meets approximately six months after each meeting of the Central Committee.

6.9 The Presidium reviews the decisions of the Central Committee and prepares for decisions to be taken by the next Central Committee. It also receives interim reports from the Commissions as well as an interim financial report from the Budget Committee. It takes decisions concerning each new appointment of executive staff upon the recommendations of the Nominations Committee which has been convened to deal with that appointment.

6.10 CEC has three Representative Officers: a President and two Vice-Presidents. They are elected by the Central Committee and moderate those meetings as well as meetings of the Presidium. Together with the General Secretary they represent the overall CEC vis-à-vis its constituency as well as to partner organisations and the broader public.

6.11 CEC's work is undertaken through its Commissions and the General Secretariat. In essence there remain only two Commissions

of CEC as CCME has put on pause its integration with CEC due to the establishment of the RWG. Although each Commission has a mandate which can be changed by the Assembly, the Assembly determines the work priorities for CEC overall and in turn determines the priorities for the Commission's work programme.

6.12 Each Commission is required to establish a long term work programme, in the framework of their mandates and the priorities as established by the Assembly, and to submit it to the Central Committee for approval. The Commissions are therefore accountable to the Central Committee.

6.13 The Commissions have their own governance structures. Each of the Commissions has an Executive Committee to oversee their work. These Committees meet between 1-3 times a year.

6.14 The CiD Executive Committees is appointed by the Central Committee from a list of names submitted by Member Churches. The Church and Society Executive Committee is elected by the Commission Plenary. The Church and Society Plenary consists of representatives appointed by the Central Committee from a list of names submitted to it by Member Churches. The CCME Executive Committee is appointed by its Assembly consisting of member organisations of CCME.

6.15 In addition to the Commissions, CEC has a Budget Committee, a Personnel Committee, a Nominations Committee as well as other Advisory Groups such as the Communications Advisory Group. These bodies are appointed by the Central Committee and report to it on an annual basis. There are also those networks like ECEN and CALL that are connected to CEC but have their own management and governance structures.

Management structure

6.16 CEC's management is provided by the General Secretary, the Associate General Secretary and the Directors of the Commissions.

6.17 The General Secretary serves as the chief executive of the organisation. Together with the Representative Officers of CEC s/he represents the overall CEC vis-à-vis its constituency and the wider public. The General Secretary is the link between CEC's governing bodies and management structure.

6.18 The General Secretary assumes special responsibility for strengthening the overall development and vision of the organisation. He works through the Senior Management Team to ensure the implementation of the work programmes of the overall CEC as assigned by the CEC governing bodies. The General Secretary serves as line manager for the Directors of the Commissions and for the Executive Staff in the General Secretariat.

6.19 The Associate General Secretary is appointed by the Central Committee from among the Directors of the CEC Commissions. The Associate General Secretary shares under the guidance of the General Secretary in the overall management and strategic development of CEC in the context of the Senior Management Team.

6.20 The Directors of the CEC Commissions are elected by the Central Committee. They serve as the chief executives of their respective Commissions. They are responsible for the staff of their Commissions and for the overall management of their respective Commissions as well as the implementation of the work programmes assigned to them by the governing bodies of their Commission and of the wider CEC. Commission Directors are responsible for working with the Finance Secretary in establishing a budget for their Commissions and for supervising spending within the framework of the adopted budget.

6.21 Together with the Representative Officers of their Commissions the Directors represent their Commissions vis-à-vis their members and the broader public. They can, in consultation with the General Secretary, make public statements on issues that fall within their mandates. As part of the Senior Management Team they share responsibility for the development and common vision of CEC as well as of their Commissions.

6.22 The Senior Management Team consists of the General Secretary, the Associate General Secretary (one of the Directors) and the Commission Directors. The Senior Management Team's main tasks are to work with the General Secretary to oversee the management of CEC across its various areas of work, to ensure the coherence and synergy of CEC's work as well as to facilitate decision making in relation to meetings of the governing bodies of CEC. Other members of staff, such as the Finance and Personnel Secretary, and the

Communications Secretary, participate in the Senior Management Team as required.

OFFICE LOCATION

6.23 CEC operates from three physical sites: Geneva (CiD and General Secretariat) Brussels (CCME and CSC) and Strasbourg (CSC).

STAFFING

6.24 As of the last meeting of the RWG, 23 personnel work for and alongside CEC. This includes 10 administrative staff, 8 senior and/ or executive staff, 2 associate staff and 3 finance officers.

LEGAL IDENTITY

6.25 CEC is a legal entity established under Swiss law. CEC CSC is a legal entity under Belgian law as is CCME. CiD does not have a separate legal entity as it is covered by CEC. The CEC CSC office in Strasbourg is established as an Association.

FINANCE

6.26 CEC is financed by contributions from Member Churches, donations from third parties and public funds. Member Church contributions are calculated by a key comprising the following criteria: the adult membership of the Churches; the GNP per capita; the UN contributions of the European nations; the total contributions over the last five years. This funding covers core costs. Additional funding is required to meet project costs and extraordinary costs like meetings of the General Assembly.

RWG'S ANALYSIS OF CEC'S GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

6.27 CEC has two sets of governance structures: those that deal with CEC as a whole (Assembly, Central Committee and the Presidium) and those that deal with the Commissions. It is difficult to know where authority for making decisions lies within CEC. It is equally unclear who is entitled to speak on CEC's behalf.

6.28 Even within the differing planes of governance it is far from clear where authority lies. On the horizontal plane does authority and responsibility lie with the Assembly, the Central Committee or the Presidium? On the vertical plane does authority and responsibility rest with the Executive Committees or the Commission Plenaries? What is the mechanism by which these differing governance planes interact?

6.29 There does not appear to be one single body with overall responsibility for co-ordinating those aspects of CEC policy which are necessarily the subject of central planning, especially in relation to the allocation of resources. There is a cat's cradle of autonomous or semi-autonomous bodies with distinctive but sometimes overlapping functions which are a source of confusion and wasteful duplication of effort.

6.30 The existence of multiple decision-making bodies within one organisation protracts the process of reaching agreement on any particular issue. The process of dealing with an issue takes more time and more effort than comparable organisations. CEC's governance structures absorbs more energy, than it releases

6.31 Many people participating in CEC's governance structures can stop things from happening, but few, if any, can make things happen. Power is negative rather than positive. CEC's current governance system places a great burden and potentially gives too much influence to the few who try to coordinate its working and master its complexities. The result is a lack of transparency.

6.32 CEC's decision making process is neither predictable nor reliable. Decisions have the feel of being the result of private negotiation involving the self-invited few rather than being taken in the open by properly constituted bodies.

6.33 There is a disconnection between form and function, between theory and practice. CEC's governance structures do not function in the way intended. The Assembly is constituted to act as CEC's highest decision making body, but it operates more as space for ecumenical encounter. The Central Committee is meant to operate as the focal point for decision making between Assemblies, but the size of the Central Committee makes this difficult.

6.34 Much of CEC's work is committee bound. The committee structure provides a vehicle for the participation of Member Churches but it is a cumbersome, expensive and unwieldy way to operate. Too much time is spent keeping the relevant bodies informed of others' thinking rather than in taking forward the work.

6.35 The process by which Member Churches are elected to CEC's governing bodies is contested and politicised and contributes to a

declining level of trust between Member Churches. A premium is placed on ensuring a complex balance across a range of indexes (denomination, geographic, majority/minority, lay/ordained, males/female, young/old).

6.36 There is much to applaud in CEC's approach to achieve this complex balance, but it comes at a cost. Little consideration is given to whether those elected or nominated have the skill sets necessary to fulfil the relevant mandates. As with CEC's General Assembly, CEC's governing bodies become first and foremost a space for ecumenical encounter in a way that disables them from functioning in the way intended. One succinct evaluation of the Trondheim Assembly was "brilliant at celebration, poor at decision making."

6.37 At the management level, there is unnecessary duplication between the roles and responsibilities of the General Secretary and the three Directors. The General Secretary is meant to serve as the chief executive of the organisation and is responsible for CEC's overall development. But, it is the Directors who are responsible, as the chief executives of their own Commissions, for delivering the work. This management structure is top heavy. An organisation the size of CEC does not need a General Secretary, an Associate General Secretary and three Directors.

6.38 The Senior Management Group is the body in which the General Secretary, the Associate General Secretary and the Directors coordinate the work of CEC. The absence of the Finance Secretary means there is disconnection between policy and resources.

6.39 The existing structure was a response to the reconfiguration of the ecumenical movement and the integration of CEC and CCME. This restructuring exercise lost sight of what constitutes good governance and good management. There was resistance during this exercise to allowing the General Secretary to be the chief executive of CEC with any power of decision. Whenever reports were presented to the Central Committee some Member Churches raised concerns that challenged the very idea that the General Secretary should have the power or authority to make any executive decision, even with due reporting. These same Member Churches objected, in their view, to the independent way the Commissions functioned.

6.40 The proposal for a Senior Leadership Team was rejected in favour of a Senior Management Team. This term was dropped once objections were raised to the notion of someone other than the Central Committee having a leadership function. The main objectors were some who had senior roles within their own churches and wanted to maintain that same influential position within CEC.

6.41 The 2008 Report's stated aim was to provide CEC with a tool "to operate as an efficient and effective body, able to impact beyond itself because it is secure within its own structures". This was to be achieved by providing transparency and clarity as to how the various parts of CEC act together and relate to each other.

6.42 The RWG's analysis is that the current arrangements are far from transparent and clear. The management and governance relationship between CEC's overall decision-making bodies and its Commissions is strained both on paper and in practice.

6.43 The understanding of the relationship between the various aspects of CEC and the accountability of the differing parts to the whole organisation is spelt out in tortuous detail. But, by insisting on such a level of detail both the Central Committee and staff members ensured that power was restricted and authority was restrained. This demonstrates the lack of trust within CEC both at a staff level and at the level of CEC's governing bodies.

6.44 CEC's governing bodies did not use the processing of restructuring to consider either CEC's financial health or the cost implications of the proposals adopted. The report from the Moderator of the Budget Committee to the Central Committee in 2005 explains that with the income to ecumenical bodies set to decrease rather than increase over the next decade, CEC like other ecumenical bodies would find it increasingly hard to balance its budget.

6.45 The Budget Committee's Moderator advised that given this financial forecast CEC should use the restructuring exercise to do one or more of the following: reduce costs, reduce staff, reduce the scope of CEC's activities, attract alternative funding and/or find savings through economies of scale. None of these strategies were pursued. The adopted proposals added to CEC's costs.

6.46 In attempting to integrate CCME into CEC, the relationship

between CEC and CSC was taken as a model of best practice. This overlooked the structural tensions that existed between these two bodies.

6.47 These tensions could be managed when CEC consisted of just one Commission but using this model writ large across not one, not two, but three Commissions has created unsustainable governance and management structures that threatens the integrity of the organisation as whole. The 2008 restructuring exercise has left CEC with an existential crisis namely whether it is one organisation with one vision, mission and values statement or a brand name for three differing bodies who have no intention of merging.

CONCLUSIONS

6.48 The RWG concludes that the 2008 restructuring process resulted in organisational confusion as differing bodies were co-ordinated with little thought given to how they should operate in practice. CEC has deviated significantly from a basic model of good governance and good management such that what now exists no longer makes sense.

6.49 The RWG notes that if the intention in setting up the RWG was to provide CEC with a common vision and mission to help frame relevant strategic objectives then it makes little sense to rely on existing structures to deliver this new strategic framework when they actively impede CEC working as one body.

6.50 The RWG concludes that if form is to follow function then CEC must be configured in such a way that it enables CEC to deliver on its new strategic framework. The RWG recommends that rather than trying to bend existing arrangements to future realities CEC needs a new organisational model in keeping with its new strategic framework.

Appendix

RWG Reflections on the Consultation

- I. The RWG wishes to express its thanks to the Member Churches, National Councils of Churches, CEC Commissions and Associated Organisations (AO) who responded to the RWG consultation document. An overwhelming majority of the responses affirmed the key proposals by agreeing, completely or partly, with the direction and general tenor of the document.
- II. The RWG very carefully read all the responses. The key criticisms as well as affirmations were highlighted and the various suggestions and alternatives evaluated. The major points are outlined below and have been included in the final version of the RWG's report.
- III. The Member Churches who responded wish to affirm the conciliar nature of CEC as a fellowship of churches as well as being an organisation which acts in solidarity with and which seeks justice and hope for people living on the margins of society. Further they affirm belief in CEC as an organisation seeking the unity and reconciliation of churches across Europe whilst affirming their diversity. Together, the Member Churches wish to give common witness to faith in Jesus Christ through working towards a more peaceful and sustainable Europe.

A ROUGH GUIDE

- IV. The RWG accepts that there are a few additional issues which could well be referenced in this chapter like climate change, environmental issues, the financial (Euro) crisis, and a few to be further acknowledged like migration and sex trafficking. The RWG accepts that the Rough Guide is a rough rather

than comprehensive survey. It is important not to lose sight of specific issues not mentioned, but the RWG does not believe that their absence materially affects the meta-narrative of this specific chapter or subsequent proposals.

PROPOSALS FOR A NEW STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

- v. The RWG agrees with the submissions of a number of Member Churches that there needs to be greater consistency between vision, mission, values and strategic objectives. The RWG also accepts that under the initial proposals the new CEC is still seeking to do too much. The RWG takes on board the point made in a number of submissions that there is insufficient theological and spiritual depth to the strategic framework and whether enough attention is given to the Charta Oecumenica and the objective of Christian unity.
- vi. The RWG has edited significantly this chapter in line with comments received. In particular it has tried to give greater prominence within the text to the Charta Oecumenica. It has also sought to highlight key themes for CEC such as bridge building and reconciliation. It has also edited the proposed statement of faith to better mirror the existing preamble to the CEC Constitution. It has also taken a fresh look at CEC's mission statement and included additional values in the Values Statement that the RWG thinks mirrors the views of CEC's Member Churches. Taken together the RWG thinks that these changes give the strategic framework greater coherence and simplicity and help to root the document theologically and spiritually.

PROPOSALS FOR A NEW ORGANISATIONAL MODEL

Associated Organisations and National Councils of Churches

- vii. Churches want CEC to be a Church organisation, but they do not want to lose the involvement and the expertise of Associated Organisations. The RWG therefore proposes to differentiate between Member Churches, NCC's, AO's and church federations and to create different categories of membership/affiliation.

General Assembly: voting system and size of delegations

- viii. The majority of responses agreed with the need for a smaller assembly but there was concern at how this could be achieved

without losing the Assembly's representative character. In its revisions the RWG made a judgement call on the number of delegates to reflect the size of each church whilst seeking to ensure minority voices are heard.

General Assembly voting on theological and social-ethical issues

- ix. Many churches disagree with the RWG's initial proposal. The RWG believes that although such a voting situation would only very rarely arise at Assembly, there was a sufficiently clear feeling from Member Churches that this voting mechanism should be removed in favour of a consensus model.

Governing Board

- x. A number of issues were raised by Member Churches about representation and size, but all agreed to the general direction of the proposal to elect a small Board. The core dilemma here is how does Board combine representativeness with the necessary expertise?
- xi. The RWG has sought to resolve this dilemma by increasing the size of the Board to 27: 12 elected members; 3 elected representative officers and 12 elected proxies. The RWG has also included proposals that challenge the way the Member Churches think of representation with greater emphasis on representing the fellowship of CEC rather than their own denominational interests. In its revised report the RWG has sought to clarify the role of the named proxies and to introduce steps so that they might be kept as informed as the elected members and therefore be able to substitute from an informed perspective. The RWG has also made provision that those seeking election to the Board can come from any constituency of CEC.

Balance on Governing Board and at Assembly:

- xii. A number of Member Churches expressed concern that the streamlining of CEC's governing instruments would adversely affect the balance (e.g. gender, young people, ethnicity and race and the balance between larger and smaller churches). Balance is an intractable problem and there is no specific proposal from the RWG, but the RWG thinks increasing the delegation size for the General Assembly and the use of proxies for the Governing Board could provide a

partial solution. However, it is in the hands of the Member Churches to take this issue seriously.

Chief Executive

XIII. Member Churches in their response were very clear that there should only be one chief executive, but there were mixed reactions to the title of Director. The RWG proposes that the chief executive be known as ‘General Secretary’, because it is better understood in ecumenical circles. There will be no use within the structure of the term ‘Director’. The staff will work as one team, led by the General Secretary.

Secretariat

XIV. Member Churches are clear that the governance and management structures of the commissions should be abandoned, but that the working instruments, methodologies and content should continue.

xv. The initial RWG proposals remain in place. This is for a single structure of governance and management that allows flexibility and diversity of working and full participation of the churches and Church related organisations. The different themes or programme areas could be managed through staff teams. The staff team(s) would relate to those parts of the CEC constituency interested in the theme or programme.

xvi. In the revised text the RWG has provided further clarification and reassurance as to how the CEC membership can be involved in new ways of consultation and participation. It has also tried to give more detail as to how the Secretariat might work in practice by use of advisory or reference groups.

xvii. The RWG is clear however its remit does not extend to determining the future work programme of CEC or how the staff of the CEC Secretariat should be organised. These are questions that need to be resolved by CEC’s future governing and management bodies.

Office Location

xviii. A large majority of responding Member Churches supported the proposal of moving the headquarters to Brussels. However, the value of a presence in Geneva and Strasbourg

was noted. In light of the consultation the RWG proposes that the General Secretary and the existing Secretariat should be located in Brussels. This would be the hub for CEC's future work. The existing office in Strasbourg could be retained so long as the existing financial arrangements remain in place and that CEC's Governing Board should explore the option of retaining a hot desk facility in Geneva.

Transition

- XIX. Much of the anxiety voiced by Member Churches in their submissions to the RWG Consultation stem from uncertainty as to how the RWG proposals might be implemented. The RWG has tried to give some guidance on this issue, but it recognises that this is an issue that falls outside its remit. The RWG recommends however that the CEC General Secretary on receipt of this report should draw up a short paper for the General Assembly exploring how the proposals, if accepted, might be implemented.

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