

MESA



Record of the Meeting with the Planning Committee for “Just Trade Agreements?”

**held at the Centro Nacional de Ayuda a las Misiones
Indígenas (CENAMI) in**

Mexico City on April 1-2, 2004



*Iglesias Trabajando por una
Comercio Justo al Servicio de una Economía de la Vida*

*Churches Working on
Just Trade for an Economy in the Service of Life*

*Founding Meeting of MESA
Churches Working on Just Trade for an Economy in the Service of Life*

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Just Trade Planning Committee Members Present

- Stephen Allen, Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC)
- David Pfrimmer, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC)
- Rajyashri Waghay, Church World Service (CWS)
- Lourdes Villagomez, Centro des Estudios Ecumenicos (CEE)
- Jim Hodgson, United Church of Canada (UCC)
- Peter Noteboom, Canadian Council of Churches (CCC)
- Álvaro Salgado Ramírez, Centro Nacional de Ayuda a las Misiones Indígenas (CENAMI)
- Dennis Frado, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)
- Joe Gunn, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB)
- Raul Martinez, Diocesis de Valle de Chaqua
- Carlos Tamez, Iglesia Nacional Presbiteriana de México (INPM)
- Javier Ulloa Castellanos, Seminario Bautista de México

Regrets

- Maylanne Maybee, Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) present by way of written communication

Guest on Thursday morning

- Clodomiro Siller, Centro Nacional de Ayuda a las Misiones Indígenas, (CENAMI)

Translators

- Leticia Diaz
 - Maria Abero
 - Geriberto Gomez (technician)
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Thursday Morning - Opening, Theological Reflection, and Debriefing from Visits

Chair: Dennis Frado

Opening Prayer

Led by David Pfrimmer.

Introductions and Presentation of the Agenda

Theological Reflection led by Clodomiro Siller, CENAMI

Below, please find a paraphrase of Clodomiro's fast-paced and in-depth presentation, punctuated by occasional questions from the participants. For a more coherent version, please see his two-page Spanish outline (not yet available in English).

.....

The church has opened to a new plurality and understanding of indigenous theology.

I am pleased to be invited to talk about the theology of economy. These must include indigenous concepts such as harmony, equilibrium, consensus and decision-making. I am pleased to speak from our common basis, the Bible.

Bible and God's word. These are different. It is possible to know both of these, but still miss the revelation. We are all brothers and sisters of the God who created us. We need to have a close relation both with revelation and with faith.

Theology

Theology is our daily living of what we believe. This is our essential theology. We live out the response that we give to God. Then we also have the theology in books, carried out by technicians, professionals.

Another theology is to make God's experience our own experience. The Exodus is an example here. The people lived out God's plan. This is conscious theology.

Critical theology – this is one we question, where prophets, people who give a testimony of their faith. They are committed to change and a desire to answer to God's plan due to a theological exploration or praxis.

Economical issues

Economy means house + nomos/norm, or regulation of a house or home. We live in this city, our country, our continent, our world, our universe, This is our house. We have to make a political theology about the continent, dealing with economy in a wider house. Today the meaning of economy has become more complex. Today we talk about the economics of saving. Managing public goods and assets. Economy determined by prices, supply and demand, which affects wages and salaries, costs and prices.

Economic and social processes are linked with culture. Selling culture. I know indigenous peoples where researchers have come and made videos, published books, etc. and make money on these things, yet the people know nothing about it.

We can see a progression from economics to ideology, an ideology that justifies what is occurring.

Economy is the management of a household. But now it has become the art of getting wealth and creating goods. Yet, after all this time we have not been able to escape this

economy of creating assets. We can't have real development based on the non-development of other groups.

Empires began to amass wealth and assets. These empires didn't take us anywhere. It used to be collecting precious things. Today it is has changed for the worse, people collect electronic information, wealth that is not tangible. The wealth is in cyber-space, a collection of numbers. The theological implications of this with regard to God's plan are important.

I am drawing on an Indigenous perspective, though I want to talk about the Bible.

Creation

We move in the universe, God created the whole universe with life. God gave life, he created humanities' house, paradise. Before something existed, God worked, and on the 5th day he is sowing paradise. Genesis has important economical significance. God also created work. Work is not a consequence of sin, but is the very basis of creating economic activity. This was intended by God.

In Genesis we have the Tree of Knowledge and the Tree of Good and Evil. This choice, deciding what is good and bad will also have an important effect. Paradise was our first house. We have to manage it, and that is what economy is.

Joined together here in paradise we have the decision about what is good and what is bad with God placing an angel with swords of fire that prevents us from reaching that tree of life. If God placed these barriers, then it means we will also face barriers to having an economy that is centered on life.

We are not in paradise, we are in the universe. Life turns into a horizon. We only move because of life... we rest, we eat, we dress. Economy affects all aspects of a person's life. We have to be theologically and ecclesiastically conscious that the decisions we make affect attaining life.

More on the barriers to the tree of life.

Once Adam and Even left paradise, the barriers were put into place to prevent them from returning. God placed two angels, so that human kind could not have free access to life. In the same way, a father might make a decision about educating their child, yet it doesn't provide direct access to life for that child. Poor countries might want to make a decision regarding life and death, yet they are prevented by powerlessness.

Theologically, there is sin in our decisions and barriers that prevent us from reaching Life.

More of the Genesis story

Sin leads us to decide regarding the death of our brothers. There is nothing in our world that can provoke more death than economics. Most of the diseases and social violence

that we find, these are derived precisely by economic issues. They come from big, global decisions.

If we read Genesis three or four, then we see that the death of a brother needs to be refuted. Sometimes we are confronted with death, and we do not refute it.

Here is mystery: Why would our Lord protect Cain's life? The only theological and revealed reason that I see is that because he has life, we have to have in mind that bankers and politicians also have life, and that they need to be protected too.

Slavery – we find slavery in Abraham. Slavery caused by economics. We now have slavery as a consequence of economic relationships, but with another name called external debt, or globalization. But finally it turns out to be slavery.

There is another detail that wounds us. What about what happens in other houses, other countries? What happens there doesn't come about because of laziness. We have been dispossessed. Our wealth is found in other houses.

Judges

God as a God of Judges. In the Book of Judges, God puts in place Judges for the release of the people. Are we considered like Judges of Israel? Not because of what people are doing, but because of what we release? A Judge releases from slavery and death caused by the economics of slavery and globalization.

Kings

When the people asked Samuel for a King, God did not accept this. Kings are opposed to an economy of salvation. From the first King that committed suicide, then David and Solomon because of the concentration of management, the temple became the center. This concentration was different than being in the desert, where mana was present. This is a different situation.

Bad management of religious affairs leads to oppression as well. How can we manage, in an accountable way, what has to do with culture and spirituality?

Isaiah

Isaiah: Wealth belongs in our global home. Joining house with house, keeping the products of the fields, his vision has everything changing.

Good we call evil, sour we call sweet. We refuse the teachings of God. I have seen that in the way we use theological language. Sometimes textual words of revelations are used to revoke the teachings of God in this theological sense, as a political response to the situation we are living in.

The reversal of meanings makes it difficult to choose between good and evil.

Work and Creation

Work is a theological activity, a divine activity. We all need to go global in our theology. We are accountable for what has been given to us. God fully provided this for us.

We have often heard that the Bible says, here is Earth, you must dominate it. When I refer to the original text, I see that the word means to have support, to continue to serve everyone, including our enemies. The Earth, or creation is called a foot stool, or foot support.

Earth can be our support as was the footstool that was placed for the king so that they can receive ambassadors and diplomats. At one time footstools were transformed into slaves, but that is not the original meaning. We have wrongly translated this as domination of earth, to enslave the earth, rather than using Earth as a support, a resting place, with its resources as a support for humankind. I also saw this in Indigenous culture, God being present eternally providing life.

You have to subject the land... support yourselves from that crop so that it can reach its plenitude. For our house, we need to take into consideration what God intended. We should not destroy it, nor dispossess it from its goods. Land is to be inhabited, it is a promise to Abraham and Israel. All people have the promise of land. People will all be heads of tribes to administer the land where they live.

Diversity of peoples

Israel is not just one culture. After the flood, the sacred authors were concerned to talk about people and diverse lineages. So different from globalization where diversity is not allowed, people are only seen as consumers.

For Israel, the 12 tribes are chosen as 1 people. That ethnic diversity is integral to mankind. This is a necessary component. God chose not just one people, but 12 peoples, not just 12 tribes. Abraham is symbolic as the Father of many nations. It is important to see the diversity of religions, and how we get along with one another. The huge aggression to the beliefs of indigenous people today is incredible. But if we see what happened in the Biblical story, then we can conclude that God's people have a diversity of religions.

God said, you have your land, your patriarchs, and you are going to call God. At that time, all 12 tribes had different names for God. Now, we are all going to call him Yahweh. In the Psalms, however, we see that he was also called Adonai. From other names for God that exist in Israel we will see that there was a theological pluralism. This is today very difficult. I live this in a dramatic manner as Indian theology within the Catholic church. There is enthusiasm for an indigenous Christian theology. This catholicism actually lives in a larger Catholicism where there is often just one way of doing liturgy, one way of doing things. This dogmatic trend doesn't allow us to have this beautiful pluralism.

Jubilee

In the Bible we can also see the vision of an economy that talks about a jubilee liturgy that helps people treat others rightly, every 50 years. Every two generations there will be a time of happiness and release. It is painful to see that churches themselves did not practice jubilee. We need a jubilee from patents. Lands need to be freed.

How can we create and construct a fair economy for poor people? In Mexico, there were beautiful churches built by indigenous people. Later they were built by poor people. We can't create an economy built on the hunger of poor people.

Conclusion

To be released, to be the chosen one is narrated in Matthew 25. I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me water. These are political terms. This is presented in dramatic terms for our continent today.

In conclusion, I believe we need to reread the Bible based on economic terms. We have read it on linguistic terms, spiritual terms, moral terms, etc. We now need to be ready to see what is required of us in economic terms.

We need to work together as sister churches, and we can all get great benefits when we follow the path together. Some actions are violent, others are political that are difficult for the church to support. Prophetically, our churches should support actions for fair trade.

This is only a start, we need to get more churches around the table. We need a just trade and a just economy. We also need more liturgical work where economics is included, where fair trade is included. We need liturgical resources to be able to change the communion.

Discussion

Helpful to point out that work is not a consequence of sin. Work provides access to livelihood, and work is what you can do to help your neighbour.

Globalization can rob people's access to livelihood, but perhaps more importantly the right to care for our neighbour.

Reports of the visits - Debriefing

Cooperatives visit (Stephen Allen)

National Cooperative Alliance (Alcona)

Current trade and industrial policy is not friendly for cooperatives and credit unions. Currently they can only survive if they get bigger and focus more on the monetary bottom line.

66% of all the savings in Mexico are held in credit unions. The banks, 90% foreign-owned, don't lend to small businesses and individuals.

While banks have been bailed out under financial crises, credit unions had no such assistance, and now the framework is again unfavourable to credit unions.

There is sensitivity to occupational health and safety standards in the cooperatives.

Alvero added that a new social solidarity institutions bill will have a negative effect on cooperatives, credit unions, and ejidos, community land councils. This legislation and recent developments make possible, for example, that Coca Cola can buy up all the water resources from an Ejido, the local community landholdings.

Embassy visit (Peter Noteboom)

See full report as "Record of Meeting at the Canadian Embassy" in the appendix.

Parliamentarians

See the full report as "Record of the Meeting with Parliamentarians" in the appendix.

Institute for Social Development, Mexico City

The report on this visit is forthcoming.

Pilgrimage to the Guadalupe Shrine

Prior to visiting the shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe, we received a historical explanation to understand how the Virgin of Guadalupe is an important part of Mexican culture.

The story is a dialogue between the indigenous culture with the Christian message. It is a revelation, but at the same time this is an indigenous belief within the Christian text. We can say that we received some seeds from the indigenous culture before the evangelization. We are here at the Sierra del Guadalupe. Juan Diego was working here and travelled to the location where we are going to.

At this site they used to pray to Our Mother, Mother Earth, Tonantzin. This is where we venerate her. At the same time it is where the Virgin elected to talk with Juan Diego to give a message to the priest. Juan Diego said "why are you choosing me, rather than someone who has more power? I do not really have these skills, the capability to talk about this." He does not stay at the palace of the bishop, so what what we can see is that this new faith that arrived in the continent could not have happened by means of the power mechanisms. It was going to be conveyed by a humble, dominated people. This message was to create a shrine, a new church, while Europe is going through a decadent period. Not a new temple, but a new life in common, as from faith, with local faith, with the seeds that were already established. This was Juan Diego's message.

Many indigenous people tried to have a dialogue with the religious people. They said, "The God you are talking to me about is the same God I believe in." This is a message for indigenous people where they said, "Do Not Be Afraid", I am here to help you. This has been integrated into Mexican beliefs. They feel loved and covered by the land that defends us, our Mother Earth that chose us, and goes together with us on this path. The shrine will be full of people because they want to be with this Mother who takes care of us. This is to have both a paternal and maternal image.

Guadalupe is a transfiguration of an indigenous myth, the 5th son. #5 is perfect the perfect number for indigenous people. When the Spaniards came they interrupted a 5th session. So the myth talks about the creation of a 5th, perfect mankind. Syncretism, and at the same time the Christian message. We build a new church that was translated from a temple.

There are two temples. To pray for the Virgin of Guadalupe is not controlled by the church. Organizations and indigenous peoples venerate her on their own. For Catholics, it is the Virgin of Guadalupe and represents the role of indigenous people, very strong, to create a new mankind.

Thursday afternoon – Debriefing of Visits, Evaluation of Stony Point Consultation

Transgenic Corn Conference

Alvaro reported on the GM corn workshop, a process of study and advocacy on corn. Corn is sacred for food security, not just a commodity. We are studying one of the consequences of NAFTA, the transgenic contamination of corn. In 1995, corn was protected by an agreement within NAFTA. Mexican imports had to pay a 120% duty. Importing companies had to pay these tariffs which allow the US to export when the price reaches a minimum. But this tariff was never applied. Under NAFTA, it was agreed to have protection during a certain period of time for certain crops, among these corn. The time assigned was ten years, with high tariffs on the price, so that Mexican importing companies or US and Canadian exporters did not find it attractive. Some of these tariff payments could have been applied to the streamlining the rural sector for Mexican farmers but those tariffs were never collected. So the growers are asking that this be done. In 1995, the govt. didn't do any marketing of national supply and production. It transferred this task to American marketing companies like ADM which are buying Mexican corn and importing it into the US. The US absorbs 73% of world corn exports.

The Mexican government never collected the import or export tariffs due to corruption. The government lacks control of the corn trade and leaves it to companies. 3.5-4 million corn producers in Mexican produce 18 million tons a year. Mexico consumes 32 million tons. The government decided that it was cheaper to import corn from US. To lower the price of corn they started importing processed corn instead of buying local corn. So, indigenous people are migrating to the US as they are unable to compete. Currently, over 8 million of the 32 million tons are transgenic corn.

Some transgenic corn causes allergies and digestive problems. BT Corn carries bacteria. Scientists have been able to create corn which produces a poison against insects. Now there is other corn, like roundup which is resistant to drugs. Some corn contains both BT and roundup. Greenpeace protested the use of this corn and civil society has denounced this contamination. So the native production of corn may be lost. BT corn works against a specific pest.

Lately there are international agreements to protect local production such as corn in Mexico and rice in India but the US has refused to sign these agreements. The NAFTA supersedes these agreements. The environmental committee of NAFTA confirmed this contamination and the risks. Mexico should make a decision in June but it doesn't take the situation seriously. It seeks to lower the number of people who are farmers. Forests are to be occupied by peasants and farmers. The control of the forest is under the control of big companies and the US government. The contamination wounds the autonomy of the indigenous people. We met with ecologists, indigenous communities, research groups in civil society as well as representatives of churches to plan this resistance process at the local level. Also we want to advocate with the Congress.

The group liked the declaration and especially the paragraph on corn. They felt supported. I will share these agreements which we reached. Corn is not just a seed but the life of the people. There is pressure from Monsanto, Arancia, etc., on parliamentarians and the govt. that they don't stop the trend.

Long-term health hazards are not clear about GM corn. There hasn't been much assessment on this. A third of the corn crop in Ontario is GM corn. The right of consent has been lost. We don't have the research done but we argue that there should be the right to refusal.

The Canadian govt. is saying no to GM wheat because it will harm exports to Japanese or European markets.

Some info is on a CD and you can take it back home.

Genetic engineering is just starting in Mexico. We don't know what will happen and what exactly is happening already now. A committee of scientists from NAFTA said there are some hazards to human health and animals. Some resistance to plagues, pesticides and agro-chemicals is known, so there is toxic potential. We anticipate the risk of allergies. We have an immunological memory from our ancestors. But it could suffer from these new crops; we don't know yet scientifically what the results will be.

Official studies say up to 15% of contamination in some nine states (3-23% contamination from two types – Monsanto, Bayer, DuPont). This data will be provided later. One can see some malformation after use of transgenic corn.

The government doesn't want to conduct studies on the impact. They say we are rich because we have a new gene on native corn. We anticipate a report in June and then we will see if precautionary measures will be taken.

The attendees were indigenous peoples at the conference were from various Mexican states. Some were farmers, some priests, reps of evangelical communities and peace groups and local Greenpeace affiliates and research entities. The materials will be made available to the people.

Raj said she will share info on impact of BT cotton in South Asia where there has been major research done. There is evidence that Bt has an impact. For rice almost all variations come from forests where this GM rice is being planted. So we need to prevent the companies from impacting the genetic pool without an assessment. Mexico signed the Cartagena biodiversity treaty. The indigenous people pressed the Congress to protect their rights but Congress denied this. So the legal path is difficult. Political parties have been fighting amongst one another and so we don't want to do lobbying but rather follow the precautionary principle.

The significance of the Stony Point declaration in the various countries

What went well and what didn't go well –

Canada

Maylanne's reflection was sent by e-mail and she noted that the Worship team hasn't had a follow-up meeting.

(Incorporate Maylanne's list from her e-mail) read by David.

Peter mentioned that worship was excellent and appreciates the work that went into it. It was much appreciated. Good arrangements for participation and most voices were heard. Despite the concerns from Geneva, we worked out of our own context. The engagement of Mexican churches made for a unique event. 3-4 hours or one day more time would have made for a better working pace. Logistics went well for such a big event. Clearer expectation regarding logistics would have been helpful.

Alvaro felt that there was a good effort on the part of the US and Canada to understand the realities and problems faced in Mexico. I like the work methodology which led to a very good document. It was quite prophetic and I felt good about it. We had long working hours but this allowed us to make a good product for churches locally. The document is now in the hands of more people.

Carlos said it was an excellent event. The small logistical issues weren't big and we came out with a very good document. The theological and contextual work was good and it made participants think about the issues. There were great riches in the reflections. The document was very complete and has good equilibrium. It is well accepted when I share it. We handled adequately the pressures that were there.

Lourdes said that the meeting demonstrated a good methodology and the liturgy was very meaningful also. We were heard by the participants and there was lots of respect and cooperation. Of course there was some barrier with the language in some of the workshops.

Javier said there was a common language used but people were willing to participate. We have learned and participated in other processes such as the CLAI, the Southern Cone and the work of the Mexican Catholic church on the impact of NAFTA in Mexico. The theological reflection was good but it would have been richer if we had seen responses in other contexts. It would have been a better debate. The impact of NAFTA on all three countries was clear; it wasn't just an examination of the impact on the South. There was some controversy within the US participants about the US government position on globalization. There was a great effort by interpreters but they may have been more professional in order to handle the material.

Jim mentioned his special role in coordinating with the Mexicans along with his "regular" role. The response of the UCC participants was positive and they will carry this forward in their respective areas. Agree with others re worship and quality of the participation. Also appreciated the theological presentation. My participation was a bit limited by the coordinating role I had. Since Stony Point I have met with some staff of CLAI and shared with them the outcomes of the event. This work should not displace "faith, society and economy" in Mexico.

Raj said as a planning team member I found this to be an excellent planning team. One of the best meetings was the May Canadian Justice and Peace meeting where I could see how much further the Canadians were. In terms of membership in the event and the quality of the participation I don't think we could have done better. At CWS, John McCullough, Kirsten and I have continued to receive positive inquiries. CWS was named as an outstanding organization for having organized this. CLAI has also invited us to be in Brazil in August. Many have written positively about the Meeks presentation. It would have been better if the Geneva misunderstandings had been communicated to the planning group and not to CWS alone.

David commented on the positive worship and the fact that the event has forced trade onto the church tables. ELCIC Bishop and other colleagues felt that the process was open and transparent. They therefore had ownership of the document. They felt the declaration was a living document. There may have been too many presentations and we could have started the discussion earlier. We needed more and longer breaks as people talk and things happen which can't happen in a big plenary. David appreciated Mary Campbell's help in bringing the different groups together on the document. We talk about combining theology and technical knowledge, but we don't always do it. This time we were able to hold up the theological side well and did well despite the struggle. I felt a strong sense of identity among the participants.

Stephen enjoyed and learned much from testimonies on real life. Thought it was good chairing the sessions on a tri-national basis. It was clear we have extraordinary commitments and this was a major undertaking.

Joe said that the Cardinal form Rome for Justice and Peace was in Mexico and thanks to Raul, we were able to present the document and speak to one of his advisors from Guadalajara. We said that this process was worthy of following developments. Also there were five bishops who had heard about this declaration.

In the Catholic Church in Canada we still need official approval. The bishop who attended the consultation felt that it was a transparent process and he was impressed by reflections by Mexican group which allowed the discussion to be concrete as compared to being in the air. In Toronto we have three reps on the Commission on Justice and peace from the Bishops, the Canadian Religious Conference, and Development and Peace (like CRS) who have reacted positively.

Raul reported that we met at CEE to hear reflections and it was about inter-religious dialogue. The experience of dialogue can have fruitful outcomes. This was true at Stony Point with the dialogue. One thing we heard today was that there wasn't explicit mention of the ecumenical element. I said that we are meeting today to strengthen this. The delegate of the Vatican received the document well today.

Lourdes said that, in summation, things worked out fine and went well.

Alvaro said what he missed, because of different contexts in Mexico, was that there was not sufficient dialogue with those suffering from globalization and marginalization from the three countries. It was strange not to be talking with these people, the ones who are suffering.

Carlos also said there has been a multiplying effect in some regional workshops where we shared the document with them. Some found the language difficult but their situations were being explained so they appreciated this despite the complexity of the text for them. We are preparing a power point presentation with the key themes by the end of April. The Ministry of Social Communication of Churches is seeking the signatures of 20 churches to move this into the churches by sharing it through the media.

The Future of the Planning Committee

What is now the mandate of this group? And what do we want to do together?

We have developed an ecumenical consensus, engaged the churches and we want to go forward. The tri-national nature of this group is important.

David suggests a modest action plan. Meet twice a year, once by conference call and once as an annual gathering.

Joe Gunn commented that the relationship with the international entities isn't covered in the Plan of Action.

David commented that there is no connection at the moment. The three (WCC, WARC and LWF) will use the declaration internationally. Karen Bloomquist, for example, declined to attend this meeting and said it was now in the hands of the region.

Alvaro noted that the Mexican Bishops conference did not send a formal participant. But they have related to the National Catholic Rural Life Commission in the US. So we need to share the declaration with them.

Raul explained that the Mexican Bishops conference is planning a social-pastoral event on August 23-27. They have discussed the topics to be addressed and thought that justice, peace and reconciliation needed to be discussed from the point of view of democracy. Not only members of the Catholic church will participate but also other churches as well. We will have reports from the countryside also.

In CWS we need to be clear why we became a member when we were approached to join the planning group. We are evaluating what role we will have. The question is whether CWS or NCC will assume the lead. NCC will focus on domestic issues in the US. International justice will be that of CWS as it is a development agency. Advocacy is a vehicle to coordinate work in the countries in which we work. Some key partners have asked us to pursue the just trade issues in a concerted and coordinated effort and we are willing to do this via international entities (e.g. EAA). It is unclear how much we at CWS will focus on member communion involvement on this group. We have heard a willingness of churches to be part of this.

Alvaro said that the issue of who we are means that we need to discuss indigenous issues. How can we invite the evangelical indigenous group and the indigenous bishops' group into this work? The pastoral social group in the US was not included.

Stephen commented that it is interesting to see if we have a longer life together. Some times after you do what you sought, you then pack up until there are future reasons to get together. The alternative is a flexible structure that does not place huge demands. We have heard that we shouldn't do research as it is done; we don't need more campaigns as we are already participating in them. We wouldn't join other coalitions.

David favors a light organization. We can't end this work because we made a commitment to do more after Stony Point. A proposal was that we call it a tri-national churches ecumenical commission /working group on trade. We'd share perspectives on issues and what we're doing in our churches. We'd try to identify one or two common actions, like a joint letter. We'd meet twice a year, once by conference call and the other a conference call or face to face. We would not endorse other campaigns as a tri-national group. We would have a virtual location, such as a web site with links. We need to consider who is part of the group – three rotating chairs who would coordinate logistics.

We need to be clear who needs to be around the table – each national group needs to define this but we need member churches, including the Catholic church.

Raj mentioned that she (CWS) coordinates with CRS for example. There are so many information exchange groups.

Javier asked with whom we are going to work, such as the key churches in Mexico. It shouldn't be based on how many big leaders of Protestant churches we can get. Rather we want an impact in the communities. We can go to those groups which are seeking theological education. In the Catholic church, we can speak with bishops but in Protestant churches it is more complicated.

Lourdes said that we need to follow up on the Stony Pont agreements. Individuals can meet. We could do video conference or be all together. It won't replicate what others are doing.

Raul said that maybe within Protestant churches the power was at the base. But it would snowball and involve other actors to be in the struggle. Who in the Catholic church should be involved in the World Social Forum? We need to be prophets and have an external role to play at the international level, as well as an internal agenda. We have to see that this process isn't stopped.

David said that the reaction to FTAA negotiations may be uneven. We connect with popular movements in our national context but what was unique about this group was to mobilize and say that this doesn't comply with what is in the Declaration. This is the kind of time specific actions we could take.

Jim commented that if the question of FTAA returned, how we would react? We have a certain momentum with the Declaration. Contact with CLAI would be helpful, of course. We should combine forces and not duplicate them.

Raj asked whether CLAI should be a member of the group.

Peter suggested a tri-national commission on an economy in the service of life or just trade agreements. He offered a number of alternatives to commission.

Stephen said that "forum" would be a good word to describe our work.

Alvaro said that a forum is not too flexible. Maybe a group is better. A reference group.

Dennis said consultative group.

David: the tri-national churches' consultation on just trade.

Javier said that we are beyond being a consultative group. We are a network as it would suggest integrating more people all the time. I like network.

Peter said that we are a table.

Lourdes said how about an association? Tri-national association of churches

Alvaro likes table; networks can trap you and few can free you. Don't like nets. Table is a participatory concept.

Peter said a table for an economy in the service of life.

David asked about "house" – "casa". Does it work?

Lourdes referred to Clodomiro's comments about prophetic nature of what we need to be doing.

The question of CLAI being involved led to the question of the Caribbean Conference of Churches, the Meso-American Protestant churches. How many can we handle?

Lourdes also commented on the question of who will be participating.

Carlos agreed to come because he was involved in this issue before Stony Point. CLAI is fostering the faith, economy and life which started in Argentina first. There was a Latin American forum last year and another one here about Plan Panama. How can we link both processes and strengthen them?

David said that national groups could gather now. Could we have a spokesperson for each country and tell Lourdes who they will be? We should have a proposal for tomorrow morning.

Stephen said that our meeting to update one another is perhaps to enable us to develop common action.

Jim said that the advantage of meeting with CLAI is to enable us to work together.

David said that this group will monitor endorsements so that piece of the work is to be done.

Friday morning – Declaration Update and Process, MESA Terms of Reference

Opening Prayer

Led by Lourdes Villagomez

Picture!

Declaration Update and Process

Mexico

We met after Stony Point to talk about this event. We got together to see how this was going. This charter was shared between our organization, the Economic Studies Center, and the National Center for Indigenous Missions, National Presbyterian Church.

We are glad you are here, we could use your visit as a reason to share the declaration with other organizations. We are thinking about a popular education process to bring this declaration home.

Protestant churches confederation. More difficult to reach those in power, they are mostly working at the local level.

In the Presbyterian Church, this was delivered to all regions, and they will consider endorsing it at the Summer Assembly.

Possible Endorsements

Center of Ecumenical Studies

Theological Ecumenical Association of Studies

Ecclesiastical Observatory

Urban Pastoral

RMALQ

CENAMI

Father Raul

Some bishops who are participating in the Secretariat of Mexican Episcopalian

Presbyterian National Church

CLAI

Bishop of Dioceses

The Earth Cannot Tolerate it Anymore

USA

The CWS board has recommended that it be a guide to future action, and has commended the principles to member churches for their endorsement.

The Board unanimously endorsed the declaration, with a strong endorsement by the General Secretary of the National Council of Churches of Christ – USA. He also recommended that it be endorsed by the National Council of Churches of Christ – USA Board.

Also shared with the Board of the ELCA. With the commendation from CWS, it will now go back to the ELCA Church Council.

At the moment, primarily within the churches – Lutherans, Methodists and Presbyterians especially. But others are not excluded. Also informing the Network on Trade in Washington, DC. Also coordination with Inter-Action and they will use it for their meetings in May.

Comment

In the USA too, is it possible to look for some links with migrants organizations? What about confederations like ICIR in regard to migrants' human rights? Also the Tepayac movement.

Good and helpful comments. Two things that come to mind are that in the US, the churches through the NCCC-USA have started a boycott of several companies because the wages they are paying migrant workers are so low – Taco Bell and X Pickle.

Canadians

The declaration was submitted to the Presbyterian churches' international affairs committee. The recommendation is that the declaration be endorsed and made available for study within congregations.

The Eco-Justice Committee of the Anglican Church of Canada is recommending that the General Synod adopt it. They are especially interested in something more on lifestyle integration.

United Church of Canada doesn't have a major General Council meeting until 2006. It will go in April to the General Council Executive for their endorsement.

At the Bishops' Conference, the Commission of Social Affairs has approved the document. It will now go with the President for endorsement by the CCCB. Publicly it has not yet been approved, it is currently following the appropriate protocol.

The Commission on Justice and Peace of the Canadian Council of Churches will meet on April 15, and our suggestion will be that the Commission recommends that the Governing Board endorses the document and shares it with its 20 member churches. Last week we also had a KAIROS meeting with the Economic Justice Program Committee. The committee also recommended that the KAIROS Board approve the document.

Mandate & Terms of Reference

MESA: Churches Working on Just Trade in Service of an Economy of Life

Mesa: Iglesias Trabajando para un Comercio Justo y una Economía en el Servicio de la Vida

See the separate document, "MESA Terms of Reference" in the appendix.

Church World Service already has a clear mandate for this work. Canadian churches will need to submit these for adoption.

Review of the Plan of Action

Three questions to consider:

- What have we already done that is on this list?
- What are the actions that are top priority?
- What are the actions that are important but we may not be able to complete due to a lack of capacity?

For details of the review, please see the revised colour-coded Plan of Action in the appendix.

On August 11-13 there will be a meeting held in Sao Paulo regarding the FTAA. This confronts us with some questions regarding this charter. It will be interesting to know if US Conference of Catholic Bishops will be approached for endorsement.

Priorities for the new group

1. Promotion of the Declaration and endorsements
 2. Communications strategy to government and elected leaders
 3. Create a virtual space on a web page.
 4. Communicate the establishment of this group and the results of this meeting.
-
1. Promoción de la Declaración y búsqueda de firmas
 2. Estrategia de comunicaciones públicas – dirigida hacia – gobiernos, líderes elegidos, medios, público en general
 3. Crear espacio virtual a través de un sitio web

Endorsements timeline

Target date for endorsements, Sept. 15, 2004

Deadline for endorsements, Dec. 31, 2004

Report for this event needs to be distributed and received right away, by April 15, 2004.

Provisional members of the Steering Committee:

USA – Dennis Frado

USA – Rajyashri Waghay

Mexico – Raul Martinez

Mexico – Lourdes Villagomez

Canada – Stephen Allen

Canada – Jim Hodgson.

Secretariat – Peter Noteboom

We established a very tentative date for an annual meeting of at least 2 days – Dec. 16-17, 2004, with a location to be decided by the Steering Committee.

Who can endorse the declaration?

Perhaps three categories, but the new Steering Committee will study this more closely:

- Churches and church-related groups
- Other organizations

➤ Other prominent individuals

Timeline of Events

See the document “MESA – Timeline of Events” in the appendix.

Evaluation

Lourdes passed around a feedback sheet for CENAMI.

Closing Remarks and Gifts

Brief Meeting of the new Steering Committee

The new Steering Committee met briefly to establish dates for the next two conference calls and decide on the first chair.

The scheduled conference call dates are:

May 19, 2004, @ 10AM EST.

September 10, 2004 @ 10AM EST

The Canadian Council of Churches Secretariat will arrange these calls.

Stephen Allen offered to serve as the first rotating chair!

Adjournment

Appendices

- *NAFTA, FTAA, bilateral trade deals*, Record of the Tri-partite meeting at the Camara de Diuputados; Mexico City - March 30, 2004, 5pm
- *NAFTA @ 10*, Record of the meeting at the Canadian Embassy; Mexico City - March 31, 2004, 10am
- *Debriefing on Stony Point*, Record of the Meeting with Church Representatives; Mexico City - March 30, 2004, 7pm
- *MESA: Churches Working on Just Trade for an Economy in the Service of Life*, Proposed Terms of Reference/Mandate – April 2, 2004
- *Revised Plan of Action – MESA*, April 2, 2004
- *MESA - Timeline of Events* (as of April 2, 2004)

NAFTA, FTAA, bilateral trade deals

Record of the Tri-partite meeting at the Camara de Diuputados Mexico City - March 30, 2004, 5pm

Hosts

- Francisco Javier Szucedo Pérez, Presidente, Comision de Fomento Cooperativo y Economía Social (promotes the development of cooperatives)
Federal deputy for Mexico city, representing about 230,000 people (52% of the people in the district voted. All deputies have 3-year terms.
- Alejandro Viamar, Mexican Action Network on Free Trade (professional advisor for the entire chamber, currently working with the Commission on rural development)
- Miguel Luna, Federal Deputy, Chair of the Rural Development Commission and the Rotating President for the rural commissions.

Working Group members present

Jim Hodgson (United Church of Canada), David Pfrimmer (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada), Raj Waghray (Church World Service), Lourdes Villagomez (Centro des Estudios Ecumenicos), Maria Dolores Villagomez (Centro des Estudios Ecumenicos), Dennis Frado (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America), Stephen Allen (Presbyterian Church in Canada), Joe Gunn (Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops), Peter Noteboom (Canadian Council of Churches)

Brief Introductions

General discussion on the role of the parliament and its history of elections, the length of deputy terms. They are coming from a history of a monolithic system, toward a system where deputies can be re-elected.

When I go out to neighbourhoods in my district, I still get asked local questions like garbage pick-up, even though he is a Federal deputy.

He comes from the community of social movements, where free trade is an important issue. Now also in his work in cooperatives they are considering the impact on cooperatives after 10 years of NAFTA and discussions about FTAA.

Opening – Setting the Context and Posing our Questions

Dennis provided background on our reason for coming here and requesting a meeting to discuss just trade and globalization. He made an introductory presentation on the Declaration and the Plan of Action for tri-national action.

David added the historical perspective of churches working on trade, debt and economic justice issues over the past 25 years. He emphasized our convictions regarding fair trade and just trade, and our experience regarding the restructuring of local economies by free trade. Many social programs are being eliminated. Governments seem no longer to be able to safeguard the interests of their citizens. For churches this is unacceptable... the status quo can't continue without disastrous consequences. We propose the principles in the Declaration as moral principles to guide trade discussions. Governments and civil societies need to work at putting these into practice, so that we can realize what churches are calling an "Economy of Life".

Three questions

1. What you see is the current situation in the negotiations around trade agreements and their impacts in Mexican society?
2. What role churches can play in this public discussion and debate?
3. What areas are you most concerned about in the negotiations themselves?

Response

Miguel

The perspective we have on the agricultural sector is that we can't compete. We don't have access to credit, we don't have access to a market, and the cost of production is high, high in fertilizers, seeds, inputs like fuel, electricity. So products like corn, beans, rice, wheat, sorghum – primary grain products – are in trouble. We are passing through a grave and profound crisis. For production in irrigated land of corn, for example, we get 10 tons per hectare. In sorghum, we get 12 tons per hectare. In rice, we get 2 tons per hectare. In wheat, 5 tons per hectare... on the best, irrigated land. On non-irrigated land, you might get a ton and a half of corn. Output is low, input costs are high.

The government of our country has abandoned us completely. There is an absence of policies for the countryside. They say they'd rather import everything. As farmers, we are very unprotected. For our culture, especially indigenous people, it is very difficult. The government wants to turn us into agricultural exporters, but only about 1% of the producers are exporters. So the government is trying to sell the idea of exporters and join the globalized market, but we can't because of the high costs.

The 1% of exports is, for example broccoli, garlic, tomato, chili, cantaloupes, avocados, limes, oranges... nothing else. We recently received a delegation to the House of Senators that explained that the new bio-terrorism legislation will make even these exports difficult. How do we enter into that global marketplace - the government tells us that the major market should be the United States – because there are barriers like the

bio-terrorism law... even for the present exporters. Even the big producers have difficulty since the products are perishable, and if a customs agent prevents them from crossing the border, then they will incur a loss.

We say to the government that you need to invest in training of people in the countryside, education in rural areas, housing in rural areas. The government says no. They promote training to go mow lawns in the US. In the face of that situation, entire families tend to sell off their land because there is no market for their products. Competition is greater. Difficult to compete in cattle, chickens, eggs... we are importing all these things from the US. Even the big producers of poultry who also produce meat and eggs... they've stopped producing and buy from the US, then distribute it here. They are promoting the closure of their own businesses.

Stephen: You said that Mexican agriculture cannot compete with American agriculture. Is that because of subsidies?

In Mexico, only one of every 100 producers has a tractor. Here we get a subsidy of \$80 for a hectare. For each animal they give us 200 pesos or \$20 so there is a big imbalance between the two countries. And so legally, they reformed our constitution (deformed!), so this is the reform of article 27 of the constitution. Our land that was collectively owned can now be embargoed or seized, and sold. Not everyone can produce anymore, so they sell the land. There is a danger of large corporations buying up all the useful land in this country. So we are captivated by American technology. All the big seed companies too. In this situation many of our companions are discouraged from continuing to produce.

But the indigenous people say this is my land from which I eat, Mother Earth. They say "we won't sell", so there is a big struggle because of the planned Puebla Panama. This has to do with the great resources our country has like forestry, water. By reforming article 27 the strategic resources of our country are up for sale. President Fox has a problem... more than 50% of Mexican land is owned by the indigenous organizations, the richest part of the land (the whole Southern part of the country). So reform hasn't had an impact to privatize that land. Many of the energy resources are there too on ejidos, communal landholdings.

David: What happened when Mexico raised the questioning about reopening NAFTA around Agriculture?

The NAFTA agreement benefits mostly large corporations.
Let's talk about the rural areas...

The producers in the US or the government in the US benefit the most. However, at a meeting in Des Moines, IA, men and women were complaining that they were not getting subsidized, only the owners of the land were getting the subsidies, not the renters of the land.

Who wins?

For Mexico, it promotes the emigration of migrant workers to the US. They cross the border illegally, while crossing the border is more difficult. The remittances they send back are the first source of income for many families. Currently \$13.4 billion annually.

Cooperatives promote social development, and in this question of migrants there is a new law in Mexico – credit and popular savings. This has the effect of bankifying the economy... from a local economy to a monetized economy. This is to make effective the Basel rules on banking. This means that savings and loans are going through a process of adapting to the new law. These coops or credit unions are the ones with the greatest resources: they can pay to become technologically adequate and conform to the law.

Other smaller institutions have been working for 40-50 years, on the margins of legality, and they may disappear in the future, or they will have to merge with the bigger cooperatives. This is important because Mexico has an experience of cooperatives that has been frustrated. It wasn't an authentic cooperative culture. The government subsidized the cooperatives to buy loyalty. With the recent (20 years) neo-liberal model, the state withdrew its support for cooperatives. An authentic cooperative, however, doesn't need a subsidy. So the current problem is that the law for cooperatives does not correspond to realities. It doesn't promote cooperatives or their development. Ejidos, collective land systems, have also suffered. They've been controlled, not promoted.

What can the churches do?

This document... is a subversive document. Some bishops here would rip up this document! But it is important that this alliance of churches from different countries bring out this content, discuss it, and debate what it promotes. Some of the principles coincide perfectly. People don't participate in the trade negotiations, people have no right to debate until after it is decided. To debate up front, helps us be prepared. We need to take the social sector to the same level as the private sector and the public sector, according to the constitution. We should come with ideas and proposals. This is not a simple debate because there is inertia in the Fox government today. In the face of unemployment, with factories closing, people are unemployed. The government proposes that you create micro-enterprise businesses to sell clothes or food so that your family can survive. Get \$50 credit to launch such a business... this is promoting an individualized idea of business, and runs counter to cooperatives of solidarity and collectivized ways of working.

David: How can you as politicians assist the churches? For example, if parliamentarians took this document and discussed the principles at COPA and the International Parliamentary Union, invited business leaders, and said this was helpful... that would help the churches too to be stronger in their own advocacy.

Francisco: There are many relationships that already exist. I was a Jesuit for many years, and there are organizations like the CEE where it seems there is an openness in the

political world to think about different kinds of alliances. We can promote forums, meetings, encounters, and participation in different areas.

The problem for the Mexican church, is how do you introduce this to the local people? We have lost some of the momentum of the base communities. All this process of transformation in this country over the past decade, there are a lot of political, social and church work that needs to go on with the grass roots, conscientization, and leadership development.

Last month there was a meeting of the social pastoral where they presented a document of the Catholic International Development Network.

There are now ecumenical efforts, and efforts with the Catholic church. All the energy around just trade, the growth of the movement opposing FTAA, there is a lot of work happening with the Mexican Network on Free Trade.

Francisco: Many cooperatives have their origin in the churches. I visited three cooperatives that are very old. They proposed many ideas similar to these... sustainable economy, care for the human person, that this be the backbone of the economy.

David: In Canada we had a big campaign on debt. One in 50 Canadians signed the jubilee debt cancellation campaign. Before that we had a moral economy project where we trained people in church communities. It is also important to hear from politicians that the message is heard. One of the message that energized the community was that the Finance Minister, Paul Martin, confirmed that he heard from people all the time. It is important for politicians to acknowledge that this is an important contribution.

Stephen: The debt question was named as an ethical issue, and therefore needed an ethical response.

Francisco: Yes, I can put in a word at COPA. At COPA they have been getting documents from different social movements, but I'd like to add something from here back up there. Mexican churches are an uneven work. Some identify with this, some don't. Everyone signs the letters, but not everyone does the work. People don't fulfill their promises. But one thing that is worthwhile is the opportunity you have to work with the leadership of the churches, it is important to sensitize them because the people who work at the local level are already aware. But especially on the Catholic side, the leaders are pro free trade. That is also true in Canada and the United States. It would be interesting to know about the work that you have done at the leadership level.

To be very concrete, for Mexicans it is very important to make the leadership aware, and raise the ethical and moral principles of the re-negotiation of NAFTA at the local level, especially for the agricultural sector. The model of the free trade agreement has no political escape. You can't abandon the entire agricultural sector because besides creating dependence, it creates enormous social damage. You can't resolve the problem of migration if we don't resolve these other problems. We need to take into account

violations of human rights of migrants when they are re-negotiated. For US and Canadian society it is very important to renegotiate the treaty, not only for Mexico. But the business interests are strong.

David: One of the reason we are here is to take back the stories and cases to help us in our educational efforts.

Alejandro: Civil society networks with the WCC in Geneva, including the Mexican networks. I'm sure that if the WCC and all the other groups did a campaign with the US ambassadors of Canada, the US and Mexico, that could have an impact.

Particular challenges we should watch for?

Miguel: Grains. Because that is what the peasant farmers plant in Mexico, and they are paid field wages of \$4/day.

Migration – human rights and labour rights.

We need an analysis of the situation so that we can recognize the big differences that affect all the countries – fairness, equity, respect for indigenous cultures, their whole identity is being challenged. Indigenous cultures should be part of the process, rather than having the process imposed on them.

We would recommend all trade agreements require participation by the population, sharing information, analysis and a means for participating in the decision. In other words, democratic involvement. This is a principle we need to rescue not only for Mexico but for all the countries that are affected.

David: Not only how the decision is made, but also compliance with international covenants on economic, social and cultural rights, and other international conventions, ILO standards, environmental agreements.

The other issue for Canada in addition to the agricultural one, is the Chapter 11 provisions. These will have as great an impact as the agricultural concerns.

Adjournment

Thanks and gratitude all around!

*Record of the meeting at the Canadian Embassy
Mexico City - March 31, 2004, 10am*

Present:

Neil Reeder, Minister – Counsellor
Emmanuel Kamarianakis, First Secretary
Nicolas Sabourin, Third Secretary

David Pfrimmer, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada
Joe Gunn, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
Peter Noteboom, Canadian Council of Churches
Gabriela – Mexican Free Trade Action Network (latter part of the meeting only)

Introductions and Setting the Context

David's presentation of the background, context for our visit, including the role played by global ecumenical institutions (WCC, LWF, WARC).

Economic globalization has become a big issue for the churches and the question we pose ourselves is: How should the churches respond both theologically, and in terms of economic policy issues?

We have completed a two-year process to reflect on recent developments. Trade agreements have been the chief expression of economic globalization in North America, whereas elsewhere it might be Structural Adjustment Programs

New tri-lateral meetings with representatives of US, Canadian and Mexican churches have lifted up both similarities and differences.

The first meeting was held in Niagara Falls, the second at Stony Point, New York, and we are now meeting in Mexico City.

David explained the Declaration and Endorsement process.

The consensus we've reached is that there is a major problem with economic globalization: people are left out of the equation, they are excluded from the process. The Declaration, therefore, lays out benchmarks to assess trade agreements.

What are the things you've learned over the past 10 years and how is that having an effect on current trade agreements?

Emmanuel Kamarianakis, First Secretary

We work on these day-to-day items, so it is good to talk with you.

He passed out two official Canadian government reports on NAFTA @ 10, and commented briefly on the recent Carnegie Endowment Report and the World Bank Report.

The Carnegie Endowment Report looked at some of the social and structural issues and came out with a mixed review – the conclusion is that NAFTA had not been a very positive agreement.

The World Bank approach was somewhat more holistic... generally positive, but at the same time noted that economic benefits did not accrue to all members of society.

The Canadian government position is that regarding the agreement and trade activities since the signature, it solves some problems, but not all. The biggest failure could be seen to be the Mexican rural economy, though NAFTA perhaps cannot be faulted, since it is not a political or economic union agreement. It is only a trade agreement.

On corn, it is true that American-Canadian farmers are now exporting and undercutting Mexican trade. For the Canadian government, it is unfortunate that the Mexican government has not implemented an industrial agro policy to address changes brought about by the agreement.

On balance, cheaper imports help all of society... driving down the prices of tortillas, for example.

On the precautionary principle, we believe that is often used as a non-tariff barrier. So we need to be cautious about the use of this principle.

Neil Reeder, Minister – Counsellor

The 1988-89 Canadian election provided Canadian society with an opportunity to debate these issues, and the Canadian government developed alternative policies to address changes that were coming.

In Mexico, perhaps they oversold the agreement. The government didn't take the 10-year period to prepare... especially with respect to corn. They didn't address the problem of small plots of land, ejidos... etc. In Canada, changes have happened, but here in Mexico the government has not addressed the issue.

On Jan. 1, 2003, the final tariff milestone was lifted. Two of those were beans and corn. That creates problems for Mexican farmers. The government responded with the National Agreement for Agriculture, which is an example of how the government has reacted to

the issue. What it comes down to, is that they don't have the budget, the financial resources, to respond.

Subsidies are a problem.

The only way to deal with rich country subsidies is through multi-lateral trade agreements. This is why Cancun was such a disappointment. Access to additional markets for agricultural products was not secured.

David Pfrimmer

Yes, we're hearing about the corn and its sacred quality. We'd like to see some attention paid to that, rather than on the basis of efficiencies only.

Neil Reeder, Minister – Counsellor

At a political level, when you talk with parliamentarians (across parties), there is a general recognition that the agreement has been positive for Mexico. In agriculture, the reaction is more mixed.

Neil also offered a political analysis of the political parties and their respective bases.

Statistics: trade with Mexico has gone up 300%. Mexico-US trade is up 200%. The level of economic benefits has gone up and Mexico is now Canada's fourth largest export market.

The Senate is also tabling its report on NAFTA @ 10. This report should have been out a couple of days ago.

Joe Gunn

On the industrial side – there isn't a link between the Maquilla sector in Mexico and those who are producing for the export market.

Emmanuel Kamarianakis, First Secretary

Where do the benefits flow to? That's an important question that we should look at. Mexico has more free trade agreements than any other country. They use this as an attraction for investment. But they haven't joined their free trade agreements with industrial policies. One needs more than a free trade agreement, one also needs industrial policies.

Maquillas are quick to pick up and go.

While Mexico put its eggs in the NAFTA basket, it didn't look at other policies to balance the economic sector.

Nicolas Sabourin, Third Secretary

Mexico has signed most international agreements on human and labour rights. They have signed more ILO conventions than Canada has. The problem is enforcement. There is a problem with the capacity to enforce and the lack of political will to do so. NAFTA

didn't create human rights and labour rights problems, they were here before NAFTA and will be here after.

Joe Gunn

Yes, we'd agree there. And before NAFTA, churches advocated on human rights issues.

In Canada, there has been a shift, however. Church leaders are now much more concerned about trade agreements. They want to look again at NAFTA and reopen the Agricultural chapter.

NAFTA forces Mexican society to address the subsistence issue of corn, as a very important aspect of culture. Need to look at land holding and land tenure.

David Pfrimmer

We could debate the significance of the 1988 election. Today there is more scrutiny of the human side.

Trade agreements rob people of their moral agency, they can no longer make choices. What do governments do to engage the civil sector, churches, for example? Civil society is also changing here in Mexico. This leads us into the role of churches in reviewing economic and trade agreements.

How do you build community in these new circumstances?

Neil Reeder, Minister – Counsellor

Mexican bishops play an important role in contemporary Mexican society. I am struck by the visible and important role of the Mexican church.

The Fox government has made progress in the social sector, but much less in the economic sector however.

Mexican trade policy is still run mostly by a small group of experts that doesn't engage much with the rest of the government and society.

Peter Noteboom

How about returning to that question of who benefits. In your experience, what do the statistics show about who, in Mexican society, has benefited from NAFTA?

Emmanuel Kamarianakis, First Secretary

This was the first agreement signed between a developed and underdeveloped country. The potential benefits were overplayed when it was first signed.

NAFTA's benefits have been clear. This is not such a poor country here. GDP per capital is \$7-8000 per person. There are lots of natural and human resources. They can provide a basic level of services. We can't use the Canadian-US lens. Mexico is now the 9th or 10th

largest economy. There is lots of Foreign Direct Investment focused on the domestic market... banks, retailers, consumer market.

Another dimension is that this government is only part-way to where it wants to go. We are beginning to see fiscal reform, tax revenue, political and judicial reforms. The trend line is positive.

The division of wealth within the country is another issue and should be addressed through tax policy, for example.

Neil Reeder, Minister – Counsellor

We say the government hasn't achieved the big tickets, but why? We have for the first time a democratic, multi-party government. This is no longer a one-party state, and there is a learning curve on how to make decisions and compromise in a democratic fashion. They still need to learn more about playing the political game.

Emmanuel Kamarianakis, First Secretary

What are you hearing about NAFTA and the Free Trade Agreements?

David Pfrimmer

We haven't heard the optimistic scenarios. We've heard a lot about corn, but also gm corn, and the heritage that corn seeds represent.

We have also been asked questions about why Canada was opposed to opening the agricultural chapter.

We are not hearing about lower food prices. We are not seeing the macro-economic developments on the ground. The economic liberalism is not being matched with with other rising societal standards.

Gabriela – Mexican Free Trade Action Network

We are into a 3-year research program. On the macro-economic side, our researchers have clarified that there hasn't been the growth that was promised, actually growth rates have been less than prior to structural adjustment. There has been more investment, but it has bought existing factories rather than built new industries. The manufacturing maquila sector gets its inputs from elsewhere, rather than getting them from Mexican sources. There hasn't been improvement in labour standards or national production. Small businesses have suffered to. There has been a situation of urgency in the countryside because there haven't been supports. Production in the North is subsidized more. That's why the Mexicans are emigrating. At a recent demonstration in Oaxaca they documented how their rights were violated, how they are losing the great natural wealth that Oaxaca had. How even the export of the fruit of the cactus tree is being taken over by large transnational corporations. So certainly for the population that is least protected, this has not been a helpful model, especially for the people. More highways and infrastructure is also taking land away from local communities. This can't be the way to

take land away from peasants without involving them. There needs to be greater dialogue to define social policy.

If we want to change the agricultural chapter, what has to be changed? Agriculture should be exempted. Production of basic goods should be exempted so that it will generate employment in the countryside. We can't compete with the transnationals.

At this point in the meeting, Neil Reeder and Nicolas Sabaurin left for another meeting.

Emmanuel Kamarianakis, First Secretary

I'm interested to hear more.

What is the causal relationship between NAFTA and these other concerns? Generally, we can see that open economies are doing much better than closed ones.

Joe Gunn

The churches have been raising the questions about restoring a more balanced perspective. Economics is a social science. Churches talk about an economy of life, econometricians and monetarists do not figure that into their calculations. We want to make the world a better place. This broader perspective needs to be restored. We do not propose a blanket opposition to trade agreements. Instead, we want to advocate for a more normative approach.

David Pfrimmer

In fact, this is not only about the unequal distribution of wealth, it is about actual exclusion from the economy.

We are advocating to reclaim the notion of vocation for the government. We need a better balance of economics and politics.

Moral reflection can provide a sense of who a people is, the kind of contribution people can make and says something about the kind of destination we are working towards.

Globalization, on the other hand, calls you a consumer, identity doesn't matter. You are what you buy, not what you contribute. There's no destination.

This moral contribution cannot be made by economists.

Adjournment

Debriefing on Stony Point

Record of the Meeting with Church Representatives Mexico City - March 30, 2004, 7pm

Participants

- Alfonso Vietmeier, Centro des Estudios Ecumenicos (CCE)
- Lourdes Villagomez, Director, Centro des Estudios Ecumenicos (CCE)
- Norma Moreno, Centro des Estudios Ecumenicos (CCE)
- Ignacio Trujillo Monzalvo, Programa Fe, Economía y Sociedad, Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias (CLAI)
- Marcela Franco Martínez, Coordinadora Nacional, Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias (CLAI)
- David Macias Ojeda, Departamento Publicaciones, Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias (CLAI)
- Archbishop Sergio Obeso, President, Social Pastoral Commission, Mexican Conference of Catholic Bishops (MCCB)
- Father Antonio Sandoval, Secretary, Social Pastoral Commission, Mexican Conference of Catholic Bishops (MCCB)
- Maria Atilano, Mexican Action Network on Free Trade, (RMALC)
- Eduardo Tovar, Centro des Estudios Ecumenicos (CCE)
- Carlos Tamez, Minister of Education, National Presbyterian Church in Mexico (NPC)
- Joe Gunn, Social Affairs Commission, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB)
- Peter Noteboom, Justice and Peace, Canadian Council of Churches (CCC)
- David Pfrimmer, Public Policy, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC)
- Stephen Allen, Justice Ministries, Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC)
- Jim Hodgson, Justice, Ecumenical and Global Relations, United Church of Canada (UCC)
- Dennis Frado, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)
- Rajyashri Waghray, Education and Advocacy, Church World Service (CWS)
- David Brondos, ELCA Missionary
- Maria Dolores Villagomez, Centro des Estudios Ecumenicos (CEE)
- Juan Teodoro Conde, Alcona (Cooperatives)
- Guillermina Lopez, Economic Solidarity Foundation
- Elvia Mondragon, Alcona (Cooperatives)
- Father Raul Martinez, Diocese of Chalco
- Bishop Luis Artemio Flores, Chalco, Mexican Conference of Bishops (MCCB)

The meeting was chaired by Lourdes Villagomez, CCE

Introductions

Opening Prayer and Devotion

Brief Reflection on Economics and Luke 14:12-14 led by Peter Noteboom (CCC)

Presentation by Dennis Frado (ELCA) and Stephen Allen (PCC)

Historical background and context of *Just Trade Agreements: Churches in North America Addressing Globalization*. International ecumenical institutions, the planning of the North American consultation, and the outcomes: Declaration and Plan of Action.

Our aim is that the declaration serve as a point for common action and engagement of churches in all of North America. They also highlighted the importance of the Mexican participation for the ethical and theological work.

Reactions to the work of the consultation in Mexico

Alfonso Vietmeier (CEE)

He highlighted the importance of engaging other social sectors, and considering our own economic and consumption choices.

Ignacio Trujillo Monzalvo (CLAI)

Comment about the different social and political concepts, at least the ones represented by CLAI. Human rights and democracy are touched on in the document, but in the case of marginalized people, such as indigenous people... they do not experience human rights, nor is democracy present. There is a barrier that prevents us from opening to each other ecumenically. The lack of an ecumenical dialogue makes our indigenous and poor people doubly marginalized. They need, therefore, an alternative economy within the alternative economy.

Marcela Franco Martíne (CLAI)z

Ecumenism is not an option, but a gospel mandate. We have to be one so that the world believes as Jesus said in his prayer, John 6:21. The ecumenical path is a pilgrimage and it is difficult.

Bishop Luis Artemio Flores (MCCB)

I've read the document and agree that it is important to think of an economy for life. I believe that there are two ideas that are important... the sense of the dignity of the person who has rights, the right to food and work. The other important idea is the universal destiny of goods for everyone. So in the same way that we generate goods, it is important that they are distributed so that inequalities that offend the dignity of the person are addressed. Finally, I think that a family, independent of the beliefs that they hold, each understand that we all have the right to what each person needs.

Carlos Tamez (NPC)

This document is like a framework from where more specific work can be carried out in the area of human dignity, agriculture, trade, politics.. basic principles such as these. This document, as one addressed to government, has respected this process.

We need to be able to work through the media to create new currents of opinion.

Other sectors can work from these principles and use them too. The Minister of Education for the National Presbyterian Church has carried out regional workshops around the country and we've seen from the participants that people identify with the themes of this document. What do we do to reflect those in more specific ways? These need to be realized through the experience of local people. In their process they come up with other declarations as well. The situation is changing all the time.

Alfonso Vietmeier (CEE)

People find themselves in a position where they are crucified. They need to consume what is necessary to survive, they are denied the possibility of work and reproducing life, they are denied the capacity to have the power to decide. Lastly, they are subjugated by the logic of money. This situation is worsening all the time.

The role of the church here is primary. Churches are a believing people. We need animation on the economy within the churches, together with civil society organizations already working here. From the churches, from their faith, we have the privilege to witness to solidarity, between countries and peoples, and so this solidarity can resist, organize and be a testimony for the transformation of humanity. Not for the status quo, but for comprehensive change.

Maria Atilano (RMALC)

Recovering human dignity is a basic human value that has to guide relationships.

One area of work is internal, within the churches. Reflection on what is justice, what is democracy, etc

Another factor is the spirit of service. This initiative of just trade needs to be seen in the global context because trade alone does not lead to development. What other factors are fundamental to living with dignity?

Another factor is the universality of goods. It seems very clear that the universal destiny of goods is not recognized, especially by the big corporations or great powers. What we see happening is that these resources of bio-diversity, health services, food and so on are not seen as being for everyone, in a communitarian sense. There is a spirit of community service in churches. How can we live that in our daily lives?

Then the trade factor, the theme of investment and the financial system. These intersect with trade issues. So one issue we should look at is: what, exactly, are those elements that intersect at the macro level and micro-level to achieve just trade?

Another factor – work with the media. The churches have access to many communications media. How will churches use this?

Another factor – Who is the most excluded? They are the indigenous peoples, not in the sense of the poor Indians who need food, but rather in a collective sense as indigenous

peoples. Also women, they are among the most excluded of the excluded. They are often excluded from churches too. And then migrant workers.

Alfonso Vietmeier (CEE)

Two brief reflections. The text focuses too much on politics. Mexico has already given up much of its sovereignty. We need to use our power as consumers. So the power of the church can also be to teach people to be responsible consumers. I would like to see the document reflect more of this diversity on how to work from and with the churches.

Just trade is an interaction between consumers and producers. Financing is also a factor. It would be worthwhile to put an emphasis, where possible, on influencing this dynamic of trade. Churches have the capacity to work from and with their own reference points, and have the possibility of changing the rules if they begin within their own home.

Antonio Sandoval (MCCB)

For the past 3 years, the bishops approved some principles that existed before to carry out a campaign of solidarity that has as its goal the possibility of finding ways to address specific social problems. The first two themes were on hunger and child malnutrition. Here again comes up the idea of the economy of solidarity. This is a campaign of the whole bishop's conference, and we've sought to link it to the social workers that are working in the same areas. This year we've sought to link it specifically to problems producers are facing in rural areas. So this year we want to focus on what ethical consumption might look like.

It seems there are several phases or steps here. One is about communications; it has to do with reaching the greatest number of people possible, especially through connecting with social organizations that are active here. Another area is to work with communities, and the teaching of the faith to children and adults (catechism). The social pastoral commission wants to engage in significant actions that can help to raise awareness and could bring about changes in habits and attitudes. For example, in the solidarity campaign this year there will be specific agricultural weeks organized. So we can show the specific problems faced by producers, access to markets, prices, and so on. We also want to create relationships of solidarity between city and country.

So we seek to work so that the farmer producers are subjects, who are charting the new routes toward a more just arrangement for themselves. The campaign was unanimously approved by the Bishops, and before that by people working in ministry across the country. Our hope is that this is more than a one-year effort, but at least 3 years.

Ignacio Trujillo Monzalvo (CLAI)

We should not be about opposing the system, but for the fullness of life. We need to look at the experience of popular movements and begin to develop our experience and paths of work. It doesn't help to condemn a system if we are not liberating a human being. With this logic, we can begin on Maria's points or factors, but also ecology, politics, education and human rights. Love needs to bring us together, not the fear of death.

Maria Atilano (RMALC)

It seems that this ecumenical sense needs to grow, and that the churches need to participate along this line. The importance of this should get out to all the churches so that it could prepare and generate dialogue. Not just here in this room.

Alfonso Vietmeier (CEE)

Where is the ecumenical task? The churches can work in different areas: 1) theological work, the question of the free market, the idolatry of the market. Churches must denounce idolatry wherever it finds it. 2) mystical work, the project of the Kingdom, the Reign of God, translating that into the world today. 3) The Eucharist aspect of our faith, the incarnation of God in the person of Jesus. What does this mean in our day-to-day life? Sharing break, sharing life, sharing love. These are our ecumenical tasks.

Maria Dolores Villagomez (CEE)

How do we bring different efforts together at different levels. Our tri-national commission has the task of bringing lots of different initiatives together.

The Canadian Churches' Experience

David Pfrimmer (ELCIC)

We share some of the same vulnerability around the international economy. We're a relatively small country as a population. But churches have almost 40 years of experience addressing justice and trade issues. We've worked on the technical aspects of trade agreements, and we've also worked on the theological and ethical aspects of trade agreements. Canadian churches share some common principles on what needs to be done.

In 1968 in Chile, when UNCTAD met there, the Canadian churches put forward the view that you couldn't have economic justice unless there was a right to development that respects the dignity of people. We did research in subsequent years and advocated with the government in various forums... then in 1988 we had the Canada-US Free Trade agreement and the churches raised serious questions about whether we should proceed with that agreement, unless there were mechanisms that safeguarded human rights, environmental considerations and regulations, labour standards, and protection of social programs, so that people have the right to exercise care for one another. In the deciding election, 35-40% voted for the party that won. More people voted against free trade, than voted for free trade. Because of the parliamentary system, the party who won was free to impose free trade.

In 1994, the Canadian government took the step to sign NAFTA. Again we said this should not proceed without protection for human rights. All the things we said in 1988 had not been addressed, and we argued that those concerns should be worked out in Mexico before Canada proceeds.

We became concerned about additional issues: Chapter 11 of NAFTA which deals with the rights of investors. The Bishops conference in Canada produced an important document that considered the consequences of that chapter. We have also become

concerned about the protection of indigenous knowledge. And the Canadian Council of Churches has opposed the patenting of life forms, the commercialization of life in a landmark Supreme Court Case.

By the time we reached the Summit of the Americas in Quebec City, there was a joint church leaders' letter to the heads of government meeting on FTAA that once again outlined the churches' concerns.

Since we've been here, people have told us how much Mexico has changed. Since 1998 Canada has also changed. One of the former Canadian political advisors who died last year, said that he felt like a man whose country had left him. Many Canadians also feel that way and share the feelings of Mexicans.

The US Churches' Experience

Dennis Frado (ELCA) & Rajyashri Waghray (CWS)

The record of US churches is much more modest. At the National Council of Churches we adopted a statement in 1977 on international trade issues. However, it is fair to say that the follow-through has been very limited, with the possible exception of the work done in Washington DC to try to address trade, development and debt issues.

I should also highlight the work on debt that US churches strongly supported through the Jubilee network. We are seeking to build on the Stony Point consultation using the model that the Jubilee work provided. But we know that debt is a far more unifying theme than globalization can be. In terms of follow-through, the education of US constituency will be a priority.

Probably one of the bigger challenges is to put before the US churches the question of the idolatry of the market, given that the US dominates the market. So it will take great courage to put this challenge forward.

Closing Contributions

Ignacio Trujillo Monzalvo (CLAI)

The perspective of Canada is very interesting. Nevertheless in Latin America since the 60s and 70s, the state has established mechanisms to assist democracy. But the democracy that we've come to know is the democracy of national security. This democracy planted the seeds that give rise to the system we live with now. Take Chile, for example, on 9/11 1973 they raised the flag for globalization around the world.

Armato Singh speaks of poverty and economy at IMF and World Bank activities, so these institutions also speak of poverty, yet they also create it. They do not speak of poverty, they talk about mathematical formulas.

Lourdes Villagomez (CEE)

The work of the Tri-partite Commission has its work cut out for it!

Archbishop Sergio Obeso (MCCB)

Until now, while listening to you I've been reading the Declaration. My first, superficial comment, is that I immediately see its great value. I will take the opportunity to share it as broadly as I can. Here I find a formulation of many things that come to us in a confusing way, but here is a coherent, well-written declaration of what we are asking from our government.

Raul Martinez, Diocese of Chalco

This not only affects Mexico, it also affects Central America, and this process will continue to grow. So we need to be about developing a broader movement.

Joe Gunn (CCCB)

To complement Raoul, the CCCB has had several conference calls with those different Catholic bishops. One of those points is to discuss the document.

It is interesting that there are no permanent mechanisms for us to relate to one another. We need to continue the reflection, come up with new ideas, deepen the relationship, and use the document to develop stronger relationships with greater trust. So at the office where I work, we have talked about this document, and the bishops have agreed to pick it up.

Carlos Tamez (PNC)

Strategic question re: alliances. More than deepen respect, we heard of several projects and we should weave together the lines to create greater strength. This is something strategic that we will have to consider.

Closing Benediction

Archbishop Obeso agreed to lead the group in a closing blessing and prayer.

Proposed Terms of Reference/Mandate – April 2, 2004

MESA: Churches Working on Just Trade for an Economy in the Service of Life

Membership

US, Mexican and Canadian church representatives.

All participants from the Stony Point consultation and signers of the Declaration will be invited to join.

A Steering Committee of two members each from Canada, Mexico and the US will guide the regular activities of MESA. The committee will identify seconded staff to serve as the central secretariat.

The current, provisional, Steering Committee members are: Jim Hodgson (United Church of Canada), Stephen Allen (Presbyterian Church in Canada), Lourdes Villagomez (Centro de Estudios Ecumenicos), Raul Martinez (Diocese of Chaqua), Dennis Frado (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America), and Rajyashri Waghray (Church World Service). Peter Noteboom (Canadian Council of Churches) will serve as seconded staff for the secretariat.

Purpose

Trade agreements are the primary vehicle for economic globalization in Canada, the US and Mexico. Canadian, US and Mexican churches need a common table to share new information, analyze political and economic developments from time to time, and test the feasibility of common actions by churches in these countries. Our communities and church leaders need to become more aware of the effects of globalization and trade agreements and need a table where they can learn from the experience of church communities throughout the continent.

In this way, our individual and collective witness will be more effective, grounded in local experience, and offer practical solutions to constructing an economy in the service of life in the Americas.

MESA recognizes that good research is already being carried out and many effective campaigns are already underway. We do not intend to duplicate or add to those good efforts that are already underway.

MESA does not have the authority to sign or endorse actions on behalf of its membership.

Duration

These terms of reference are for the period from April 1, 2004 to December 31, 2005, and will be re-evaluated in mid-2005.

Location

Events and leadership will rotate from country to country. Members live and work in Canada, the US and Mexico. Guests will be invited from time to time.

Proposed Activities

The Plan of Action defines specifically the work of MESA. This may include:

- collecting endorsements, coordinating media work, educating and advocating on the basis of the Declaration for Just Trade in the Service of an Economy of Life.
- monitoring developments and negotiations in trade agreements in the Americas.
- Sharing church-related activities and worship resources
- organizing one to two common actions or events per year on relevant topics, such as trade and agriculture, trade and social services, or trade and human rights, for example.
- coordinating participation in major international events, such as UNCTAD, the UN Human Rights Commission, the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, the World Social Forum and so on.

How we will work together

- Conference calls as needed, by the Steering Committee.
- Create appropriate web pages to share and link to information and initiatives
- Organize one annual consultation per year that is aimed at engaging church leaders, staff and constituency, on the topic
- We will be working in two languages, Spanish and English.

Revised Plan of Action – MESA

April 2, 2004

The churches and related organizations that gathered at Stony Point, New York, have committed themselves to the **Declaration for Just Trade in the Service of an Economy of Life** (January 2004) and have worked to develop a Plan of Action to guide collaborative ecumenical and denominational efforts. This revised plan prioritizes action areas for the coordinating group, the newly formed *MESA: Churches Working on Just Trade for an Economy in the Service of Life*. The original plan of action from the Stony Point event remains valid and useful, especially for individual churches and agencies. The original plan also offers more detail on what we hope to achieve and potential joint actions in our respective countries.

| | Potential tri-national joint actions (& timeline) |
|--|--|
| Organizational | <p>A. Establish tri-national coordinating group to develop an overall plan and budget.</p> <p>B. Coordinating group to establish most effective communication methods and tools (e.g. create unique website domain, establish listserve), including continued outreach to denominations and agencies not present at the consultation.</p> <p>C. Consider annual meetings to develop common actions.</p> |
| Policy Development | <p>A. Development of a Just Trade Declaration in Stony Point, New York in January 2004.</p> <p>B. Seek endorsements for the Declaration</p> |
| Policy Advocacy | <p>A. Develop sample letter to send to our respective governments – 2004.</p> <p>B. Determine challenges and develop a tri-national advocacy strategy to governments and elected leaders on common issues for 2004-2005.</p> <p>C. Send tri-national delegations to national capitals to present Declaration and lobby government/ trade officials & meet with media.</p> <p>D. Facilitate the communication of such information from Hemispheric Social Alliance, etc.</p> <p>E. Select a multinational corporation for corporate accountability actions.</p> |
| Linking with Ecumenical Groups and Other Coalitions | <p>A. Share Declaration and Action Plan with other regions.</p> <p>B. Connect/work with regional and global ecumenical bodies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2004 WARC General Council • 2006 WCC Assembly <p>C. Connect with broader civil society movements and alliances.</p> <p>D. Participate in People's Global Week of Action, April 2005.</p> <p>E. Interventions through ecumenical team at the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (April 2004 and 2005), UNCTAD 11 (June 2004) and UN Commission on Human Rights in March 2005.</p> |
| Communications/ Media | <p>A. Joint press statement to be released shortly after January 14, 2004.</p> <p>B. Consider a symbolic action (such as Gandhi's Salt March)</p> <p>C. Create Website to exchange basic information and give updates on related</p> |

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| | <p>work.</p> <p>D. Establish listserv to post conference announcements and proceedings, resources from past global consultations, letters to decision-makers, educational materials, etc...</p> |
| Resources | <p>A. Publish Declaration, selected proceedings and develop study guide based on January consultation and papers.</p> <p>B. Share worship resources with a leader's guide, prepare theological reflection and Bible study guide.</p> <p>C. Promote and share information on more fairly traded products (in addition to coffee)</p> <p>D. Resources that interpret the connections and importance of responsible consumption.</p> <p>E. Development of Community Diagnostic "Tool Kit" to measure the impacts of trade and economic globalization.</p> |
| Education/ Outreach | <p>A. Facilitate speaking tours with representatives of three countries for churches and communities during 2004 and 2005.</p> <p>B. Coordinate delegations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Delegations to the regional Social Forum, Quito, July 25-30//04. • Religious Educators exposure tours <p>C. Develop programs to educate church and lay leaders on these issues.</p> |

Colour Codes

Action Items Already Completed

Priority Action Items

Second Tier Action Items

Possible Action items for Member Churches

