

Kirkenes Verdensråd (KV)

1. Endringar i konstitusjon og reglar for KV

Sakshandsamar: Generalsekretæren

Saksdokument:

1. Brev frå KV's generalsekretær Konrad Raiser m/forslag til nye, eller ny ordlyd i ulike paragrafar (*tidl. utsendtt*)
2. Kopi av aktuelle delar av nojeldande konstitusjon og reglar (*vedlagt*)

1. Bakgrunn

KV har sendt medlemskyrkjene eit brev der ein ber om at dei drøftar og gjev respons på eit framlegg i konstitusjonen og i reglane for KV, jf. brev frå generalsekretæren av desember 2003.

Det gjeld endringar som følgjer av dei konklusjonane ein trekte etter arbeidet i spesialkommisjonen som tok opp dei ortodokse kyrkjene sin plass i KV. Særleg viktig var det å leggje til rette for konsensus-prosessar og for ei rimeleg fordeling av styrkjeforhold i avrøystingar. Derav har ein også auka nivået på minstemål av medlemmer. Vedlagt er dei nye forslaga og dei gamle tekstane for tilsvarende punkt, der endringane er merka i det nye forslaget. Det er no tale om ei førebels høyring. Vi skal ta endeleg stilling til dette i 2005. Her følgjer nokre kommentarar til forslaga.

2. Innhaldet i saka med nokre vurderingar

a. Konstitusjonen

Her er det lagt inn ein ny måte å definere korleis ei kyrkje kan bli medlem, der avgjerda uansett skal bli teken i sentralkomiteen (ikkje i Assembly under noko tilfelle). Det skal vere ein konsultativ prosess i sentralkomiteen i interaksjon med det lokale fellesskap av kyrkjer. Etter ei tid skal sentralkomiteen vurdere om det er ein akseptabel konsensus.

Dette gjev sentralkomiteen meir makt, og det er ikkje lenger klare reglar for kva som er tilstrekkeleg konsensus (2/3 fleirtal). Resultatet vert at ei stor gruppe (men ikkje eit fleirtal) i sentralkomiteen kan hindre nye kyrkjer medlemskap om dei vil, men dei må argumentere i staden for å stemme. Dette gjer avgjerda meir open og krev meir innsats.

Dette er akseptabelt fordi regelen om 2/3 skulle ivareta same omsyn, men ein går bort frå numeriske definisjonar av konsensus. Er det store og viktige motsetnader, må ein ta omsyn til dei. Det vanskelegaste kan vere at det lokale kyrkjefellesskap skal tilleggjast stor vekt, dersom det er kyrkjer som har ein sterk territorialtenking som vil hindre aksept av andre kyrkjer i same område. Til gjengjeld er meininga at ein skal fostre samarbeid lokalt.

b. Reglane

Her er det fyrst lagt opp til større kyrkjer eller kyrkjegrupper som medlemmer. Det er kompensert med at mindre kyrkjer kan støtte kandidatar til sentralkomiteen saman med andre, og at dei skal bli oppfatta som fulle medlemmer, men utan stemmerett på generalforsamlinga. I og med at det er tale om ein verdsorganisasjon, er det rimeleg at det krevst ein viss storleik, og at det er mogeleg å lage grupperingar av kyrkjer.

Dinest er det lagt inn større krav til gjensidig lojalitet og ansvar overfor innhaldet i basis. Det vert presisert at ein må dele tru og ha ei teneste med evangeliet og sakramenta, samt ha ein anerkjent dåp i den treeinige Guds namn. Slik sett svarar tankegangen til Confessio Augustana (særleg einskapskriteriet i art. 7). Ein må også vere open og anerkjennande overfor andre kyrkjer og deira bidrag, sjølv om ein ikkje anerkjenner dei fullt ut (som t.d. i ein bilateral avtale). Her er det teke viktige steg i retning av å definere KV som ein gjensidig forpliktande fellesskap, som er noko meir enn det som går på ein liten fellesnemnar.

Det vert stilt krav om å anerkjenne andre kyrkjer innan sin familie og innan sin region. Dette er særleg utfordringar retta til dei ortodokse kyrkjene.

Det er for det tredje lagd ein ny definisjon av "churches in association with the WCC" og ikkje lenger "associated members". Det er tydelegare presisert at dei ikkje skal delta i "decision making", til gjengjeld har dei ikkje krav om å yte noko økonomisk til KV. Dette er endringar som opnar for tydelegare skiljer mellom medlemmer og assosierte medlemmer, og gjer fellesskapet av medlemmer meir forpliktande. Det kan verke utestengjande, men fordelten med tydelegare forplikting på fellesskapet er likevel ein fordel.

3. **Samla vurdering**

Det er naturleg og viktig at intensjonane i meir tydeleg gjensidig ansvarlege kyrkjer i KV må kome til uttrykk i reglar om krav til større vekt på konsensus og ei tydeleggjering av kven som er fullt ansvarlege medlemmer. Det har vore i samsvar med Den norske kyrkja si linje å leggje vekt på at KV er eit ansvarlege fellesskap i forhold til felles basis (basisparagrafen vart foreslått av Berggrav i si tid). Det er også klårt vårt ynskje å leggje til rette for meir forpliktande økumeniske fellesskap, som også inkluderer dei ortodokse kyrkjene.

På denne bakgrunn burde ein kunne gje støtte til framlegga frå KV. Det kan eventuelt stillast spørsmål til om kravet om storleik på kyrkjene er for stramt. Det kunne vore bra med ein konsultasjon med andre nordiske kyrkjer om denne saka, t.d. i samband med sekretærmøtet i starten av mars.

Framlegg til vedtak:

1. MKR bed sekretariatet drøfte desse spørsmål med andre medlemskyrkjer i Norden så snart som råd, i samsvar med det som kom fram i samtalen i rådsmøtet.
2. MKR bed sekretariatet meddele KV dei synspunkt som er lagt vekt på i drøftinga av rådet.

2. Ny gruppering/regionalisering av kyrkjer i KV

Sakshandsamar: Generalsekretæren
Saksdokument: Brev frå KV, desember 2003

Bakgrunn

I arbeidet med å gjere medlemskap i KV meir forpliktande, også i forhold til andre kyrkjer lokalt og i same region, har ein spurt dei nordiske og baltiske medlemene om dei kan utgjere ein region i KV, jf vedlagt brev av desember 2003. Det gjeld dei nordiske lutherske folkekyrkjene, dei baltiske lutherske kyrkjene, Svenska missionsförbundet, den ortodokse kyrkja i Finland. Til no har ein hatt ei slik ordning i Norden, med ei samordning av nominasjon og representasjon.

Vurdering

Det er naturleg med slikt regionalt samarbeid, og det fungerer bra i Norden som det er. Det er difor gode grunnar til å ha det som i dag. Å ta inn dei baltiske kyrkjene er i så fall ein form for solidaritet som gjev dei ein plass mellom dei nordiske som kanskje er betre enn den dei har elles i Europa. Det er dessutan ein del kontakt med baltiske kyrkjer allereie, og det er eit logisk spørsmål. Det vil forkludre roteringa på plassar i sentralkomiteen, men det er ikkje større endring enn at ein bør gå inn på den. Alternativet er å seie at dei baltiske må kunne utgjere ein region saman med dei sentraleuropeiske kyrkjene, men det kan verke litt fråstøytande overfor kyrkjer vi elles prøver å trekkje inn i samarbeid med nordiske kyrkjer.

Framlegg til vedtak:

MKR tilrår at KV regionaliserer kyrkjene i Norden og Baltikum i ein region.



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KIRKERÅDET MELLOMKIRKELIGT RÅD SAMISK KIRKERÅD	
20 JAN. 2004	
Til:	OFT
J.nr.:	04/79-1
Arkiv nr.:	772.1

December 2003

To the WCC Member Churches in the Nordic and Baltic countries

Dear Olaf,

In his letters to the member churches of 16 September 2002 and 27 February 2003 the General Secretary of the WCC has mentioned the Study on Membership which was conducted in 2001 - 2002 in conjunction with the work of the Special Commission.

I am writing to you with specific reference to one of the recommendations of the report on the Membership Study which was approved by the Central Committee in 2002:

“that member churches join in groupings, e.g. geographically, confessionally, or according to other models, for purposes of representation and participation, strengthening local ecumenical cooperation, including making nominations for the Central Committee”.

The intention behind this recommendation is to enhance the consultation and cooperation between member churches regarding their participation in the life and work of the WCC, and their representation on the governing bodies of the WCC, especially the Central Committee. It is suggested that member churches which have in common a certain affinity, e.g. their belonging as churches in the same country or region, or their confessional identity as churches belonging to the same family, or their ecclesiological self-understanding, come together for this purpose. Such “groupings” should each comprise a fairly small number of churches, so that consultation and cooperation are possible and practicable.

Obviously, the implementation of this recommendation requires close consultation with the member churches and no decisions will be taken without their consent. Several churches have already been contacted and a first report was presented to the Executive Committee in August 2003. The Executive Committee has encouraged the staff to carry on with the consultation process; it is expecting a full report at its meeting in August 2004.

As the staff member who has accompanied the work on the Membership Study, I am seeking your advice as to whether the WCC member churches in the Nordic and Baltic countries would find it helpful, and would be willing, to form together a "grouping" for the purposes of their participation and representation in the WCC. I am aware that this has already been to some extent the practice of the Nordic churches. Indeed the Nordic example has served as a model for the current proposal to apply the principle across the membership of the WCC and to officially acknowledge the groupings. Kindly share with me your views on this proposal and also any other suggestion for such a grouping you may have from the particular point of view of your church.

Please note that the proposed grouping is for the purpose of representation and participation, *not* membership.

National councils of churches could play a facilitating role in helping WCC member churches to consult and cooperate more closely. I am therefore copying this letter to the general secretaries of the national councils of churches in the Nordic and Baltic countries.

For your information I enclose a copy of the section of the Report on the Membership Study on Models of Representation and Participation which sets out the rationale for the recommendation. I draw your attention in particular to paragraph 43 on the proposed process of the election of the Central Committee as envisaged for the future, which has also been the subject of a recommendation approved by the Central Committee in 2002.

With many thanks for your attention and response, and kind regards,

Yours in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Hubert van Beek', with a long horizontal arrow pointing to the right extending from the end of the signature.

Hubert van Beek
Programme Executive
Church and Ecumenical Relations

Cc: General Secretariat WCC

Rev. Omulf Steen, General Secretary Christian Council of Norway

Rev. Dr Trond Bakkevig, Central Committee member

Excerpt from the Final Report of the Membership Study Group

(WCC Central Committee 2002)

IX. Models of Representation and Participation

38. The current model of representation of member churches belonging to the fellowship of the WCC, at the Assembly, on Central Committee, on Executive Committee and in ancillary committees has evolved with some difficulty. The seats in the Assembly are allocated by the Central Committee, with the understanding that all member churches are expected to be represented at the Assembly. Membership of the Central Committee, limited by Rule and practicality to 150 members, is elected from among the delegates of the member churches by the Assembly, with due regard for numerical importance, adequate confessional representation, adequate geographical distribution, and consideration for appropriate gender and youth representation. Currently, twenty-five percent of seats on the Central and Executive Committees are reserved for representatives of Orthodox churches which have their own process of nominating representatives to Central Committee. A number of member churches or groups of member churches have procedures for making nominations for election to the Central Committee. The survey of distribution since 1975 of Central Committee seats among the member churches shows that some seventy churches out of 240 that were members in 1975 have not been afforded a seat on the Central Committee since 1975.
39. Members of Central Committee represent their own churches and are accountable both to their own church and to the Central Committee. Some already represent wider groupings of member churches, which may be confessionally or geographically defined. However, this system results in a large number of member churches other than the Orthodox member churches having no direct representation on a Central Committee. This is an aspect of representation which the Study Group believes should be addressed.
40. For many churches, their ecclesial tradition is primary to their self-understanding; for many other churches, their geographical setting is primary in their self-understanding. For some churches, both ecclesial tradition and location are significant when determining appropriate representation. There are also member churches for which their international character is an essential mark of their self-understanding.
41. The Study Group suggests that where no grouping of member churches already exists, all member churches join in groupings for purposes of representation and participation. The Special Commission and the Membership Study Group propose that churches join in groupings, e.g. geographically, confessionally, or according to other models, in order to make nominations for the Central Committee. If this principle is established, a process of grouping member churches will have to be carefully worked out and agreed upon in close consultation with the member churches.
42. The Study Group believes that the process of representation and participation, wherever possible, should enhance the New Delhi vision which held that "...the unity which is both God's will and his gift to his Church is being made visible as all in each place who are baptized into Jesus Christ and confess him as Lord and Savior are brought by the Holy Spirit into one fully committed fellowship..." By inviting the churches in a country or region to group themselves for the purpose of participating jointly in the life and work of the Council, the WCC contributes to strengthening the local fellowship of churches. It is hoped that this

will result in a stronger sense of common accountability for their representation in the governing bodies of the WCC, especially the Central Committee. It may also encourage other ways of joint participation in programme activities, responses to studies, common action, mutual accountability, etc. Strengthening local fellowships of churches, whether of the same or of different confessions, is part of the journey towards the "*one fully committed fellowship*" held up by the visionary statement of the New Delhi Assembly. The Orthodox, in welcoming this emphasis at New Delhi, stressed the need for "*...a reintegration of Christian mind, a recovery of apostolic tradition, a fullness of Christian vision and belief, in agreement with all ages.*"

43. The process of electing a Central Committee would begin prior to the Assembly with member churches identifying persons from within its delegation to the Assembly available to attend the Assembly and who would have the approval and support of that church to represent it on governing bodies. These names would be made available to a local grouping, or other model of member churches. Such a grouping would then discuss and agree on a list, offering a list of names significantly larger than the number of vacancies allocated to that grouping. Working from these lists, the nominations committee will have the crucial role of shaping nominations for the Central Committee by taking into account the various priorities regarding balances of representation. Those individuals agreeing to be placed in nomination for the Central Committee would be expected to be available, responsible and accountable both to their own ecclesial tradition or family through their own church and also to the grouping of churches which has proposed them, both with regard to speaking for them at meetings, and reporting to them following meetings.
44. In order for the groupings to function and for the Central Committee member to undertake the responsibilities of availability, accountability and communication as spelled out above properly, appropriate resources and ecumenical formation would, where necessary, have to be provided.
45. The Study Group proposes that the effectiveness of the new model referred to in the previous paragraphs should be tested by a mid-term evaluation to which both Central Committee members and member churches should be invited to contribute. An analysis of the findings of such an evaluation should be presented to the officers of the Central Committee for necessary action.



World Council of Churches

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To: WCC Member Churches

Geneva, December 2003

KIRKERÅDET MELLOMKIRKELIG RÅD SAMISK KIRKERÅD	
16 DES. 2003	
Til:	OFT
J.nr.:	66/411 - 18
Arkiv nr.:	7721

Membership with the World Council of Churches Proposed Amendments to the Constitution and Rules

Dear friends,

Greetings to you in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

In my letter of 22 September 2003, which I wrote to you after the meeting of the Central Committee from 26 August to 2 September 2003, I mentioned (under point 5, Follow-up of the Report of the Special Commission on Orthodox Participation) that the Central Committee approved the proposed new wording of Article II of the Constitution and Articles I and II of the Rules, all these articles being related to *Membership*.

Indeed, issues of *Membership* are part of the very nature of the Council as a fellowship of churches and the Special Commission on Orthodox participation in the WCC made concrete recommendations in this area.

Aware of the importance of the matter, the Central Committee in 2002 recommended that, before the proposed amendments are put to the Ninth Assembly for approval (changes in the Constitution) and confirmation (changes in Rule I on *Membership*), a thorough process of consultation with the member churches should take place.

With this letter I am sending you the proposed new wording of Art. II of the Constitution and Art. I and II of the Rules and I invite you to share your initial comments. These will be brought to the attention of the Central Committee when it meets again in February 2005. After final revision by the Central Committee the amendments will be circulated a second time to the member churches so as to comply with the six months notice prior to the Assembly, as indicated in Art. VII of the Constitution.

In order to allow for the Steering Committee of the Special Commission and the Executive Committee to fully play their role in this process, you are kindly asked to send your comments by **31st May 2004**. The Steering Committee will be meeting in mid-June, and will pass on its advice to the Executive Committee at its meeting in August. Please address all correspondence on this matter to the Deputy General Secretary, Mr. Georges Lemopoulos.

Sincerely yours in Christ,


Konrad Raiser
General Secretary

Encl.

Proposed Amendments to the Constitution and Rules of the World Council of Churches

Approved by the Central Committee, 26 August – 2 September 2003

1. Proposed new wording of Article II of the Constitution:

II. Membership

Churches shall be eligible for membership in the fellowship of the World Council of Churches who express their agreement with the Basis upon which the Council is founded and satisfy such criteria as the Assembly or Central Committee may prescribe. The Central Committee shall consider applications for membership according to consensus model of decision making. The application shall be accepted for a specified interim period of participation in the work of the World Council of Churches and for interaction with the local fellowship of member churches. The member churches of the World Council of Churches shall be consulted during the interim period. Following the interim period, the Central Committee shall assess whether a consensus of member churches has developed in favour of the application, in which event the applicant church shall be considered a new member church.

2. Proposed new wording of Article I of the Rules:

I. Membership in the Fellowship of the World Council of Churches

The World Council of Churches is comprised of churches which have constituted the Council or which have been admitted into membership and which continue to belong to the fellowship of the World Council of Churches. The term "church" as used in this article could also include an association, convention or federation of autonomous churches. A group of churches within a country or region, or within the same confession, may determine to participate in the World Council of Churches as one church. Churches within the same country or region or within the same confession may apply jointly to belong to the fellowship of the Council, in order to respond to their common calling, to strengthen their joint participation and/or to satisfy the requirement of minimum size (Rule I, (3)(b) (3)). Such groupings of churches are encouraged by the World Council of Churches; each individual church within the grouping must satisfy the criteria for membership in the fellowship of the World Council of Churches, except the requirements of size. A church seeking affiliation with a grouping of autonomous churches which is a member of the World Council of Churches must agree with the Basis and fulfil the criteria for membership.

The General Secretary shall maintain the official lists of member churches that have been accepted to belong to the fellowship of the World Council of Churches, noting any special arrangement accepted by the Assembly or Central Committee. Separate lists shall be maintained of voting and nonvoting member churches belonging to the fellowship of the WCC.

1. Application

A church that wishes to join the World Council of Churches shall apply in writing to the General Secretary.

2. Processing

The General Secretary shall submit all such applications to the Central Committee (see Art. II of the Constitution) together with such information as he or she considers necessary to enable the Central Committee to make a decision on the application.

3. Criteria

Churches applying to join the World Council of Churches (“applicant churches”) are required first to express agreement with the Basis on which the Council is founded and confirm their commitment to the Purposes and Functions of the Council as defined in Articles I and III of the Constitution. The Basis states: “The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”

Applicant churches should give an account of how their faith and witness relate to these norms and practices:

a) Theological

1. In its life and witness, the church professes faith in the Triune God according to the scriptures, and as this faith is reflected in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed.
2. The church maintains a ministry of proclaiming the Gospel and celebrating the sacraments as understood by its doctrines.
3. The church baptizes in the name of the one God, “*Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*” and acknowledges the need to move toward the recognition of the Baptism of other churches.
4. The church recognizes the presence and activity of Christ and the Holy Spirit outside its own boundaries and prays for the gift of God’s wisdom to all in the awareness that other member churches also believe in the Holy Trinity and the saving grace of God.
5. The church recognizes in the other member churches of the WCC elements of the true church, even if it does not regard them “as churches in the true and full sense of the word”. (Toronto Statement)

b) Organizational

1. The church must produce evidence of sustained autonomous life and organization.
2. The church must be able to take the decision to apply for formal membership in the WCC and continue to belong to the fellowship of the WCC without obtaining the permission of any other body or person.
3. An applicant church must ordinarily have at least fifty thousand members. The Central Committee, for exceptional reasons, may dispense with this requirement and accept a church that does not fulfill the criteria of size.
4. An applicant church with more than 10,000 members but less than 50,000 members that has not been granted an exemption under Rule I, (3) (b) (3), but is otherwise eligible for membership can be admitted as a member subject to the following conditions: (a) it shall not have the right to vote in the Assembly, and (b) it may participate with other churches in selecting five representatives to the Central Committee in accordance with Rule III, (4) (b) (3). Such church shall be considered as a member church belonging to the fellowship of the WCC in all other respects.

(Note: Rule III The Assembly will become Rule IV if the proposal for a new Rule II is accepted.)

5. Churches must recognize the essential interdependence of the member churches belonging to the fellowship of the WCC, particularly those of the same confession, and should make every effort to practice constructive ecumenical relations with other churches within their country or region. This will normally mean that the church is a member of the national council of churches or similar body and of the regional/subregional ecumenical organization.

4. Consultation

Before admitting a church to membership in the fellowship of the World Council of Churches, the appropriate world confessional body or bodies and national council or regional ecumenical organization shall be consulted.

5. Resignation

A church which desires to resign its membership in the fellowship of the Council can do so at any time. A church which has resigned but desires to rejoin the Council must again apply for membership.

3. Proposed new Article II of the Rules:

II. Churches which are in Association with the World Council of Churches

A church that agrees with the Basis of the Council may request in writing to be received as a church in association with the World Council of Churches, stating its reasons for requesting this mode of relating with the Council. If the reasons are approved by the Central Committee, such a church may be accepted to be in association with the World Council of Churches.

Churches in association with the World Council of Churches:

- 1) Can send representative(s) to the Assembly and the Central Committee who can speak with permission of the chair, but have no right to participate in formal decision making, whether by consensus or by vote;
- 2) Can be invited to participate in the work of the commissions, advisory groups and other consultative bodies of the Council as consultants or advisors;
- 3) Have the possibility of participating in the work of the WCC as described, but will not be identified with decisions taken or statements issued by the Council;
- 4) Will not be obliged to contribute financial support to the work of the Council but may do so voluntarily. No financial support will be made available from the Council to such churches to facilitate their participation.

The General Secretary shall maintain a list of churches in association with the Council.

Note: If the proposed new Article II of the Rules is accepted the subsequent articles will be renumbered accordingly.



world council of churches Constitution

I. BASIS

The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

II. MEMBERSHIP

Those churches shall be eligible for membership in the World Council of Churches which express their agreement with the Basis upon which the Council is founded and satisfy such criteria as the Assembly or the Central Committee may prescribe. Election to membership shall be by a two-thirds vote of the member churches represented at the Assembly, each member church having one vote. Any application for membership between meetings of the Assembly may be considered by the Central Committee; if the application is supported by a two-thirds vote of the members of the Committee present and voting, this action shall be communicated to the churches that are members of the World Council of Churches, and unless objection is received from more than one-third of the member churches within six months the applicant shall be declared elected.

III. PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS

The World Council of Churches is constituted by the churches to serve the one ecumenical movement. It incorporates the work of the world movements for Faith and Order and Life and Work, the International Missionary Council, and the World Council of Christian Education.

The primary purpose of the fellowship of churches in the World Council of Churches is to call one another to visible unity in one faith and in one eucharistic fellowship, expressed in worship and common life in Christ, through witness and service to the world, and to advance towards that unity in order that the world may believe.

In seeking koinonia in faith and life, witness and service, the churches through the Council will:

- promote the prayerful search for forgiveness and reconciliation in a spirit of mutual accountability, the development of deeper relationships through theological dialogue, and the sharing of human, spiritual and material resources with one another;
- facilitate common witness in each place and in all places, and support each other in their work for mission and evangelism;
- express their commitment to diakonia in serving human need, breaking down barriers between people, promoting one human family in justice and peace, and upholding the integrity of creation, so that all may experience the fullness of life;
- nurture the growth of an ecumenical consciousness through processes of education and a vision of life in community rooted in each particular cultural context;
- assist each other in their relationships to and with people of other faith communities;
- foster renewal and growth in unity, worship, mission and service.

In order to strengthen the one ecumenical movement, the Council will:

- nurture relations with and among churches, especially within but also beyond its membership;
- establish and maintain relations with national councils, regional conferences of churches, organizations of Christian World Communions and other ecumenical bodies;
- support ecumenical initiatives at regional, national and local levels;
- facilitate the creation of networks among ecumenical organizations;
- work towards maintaining the coherence of the one ecumenical movement in its diverse manifestations.

IV. AUTHORITY

The World Council shall offer counsel and provide opportunity for united action in matters of common interest.

It may take action on behalf of constituent churches only in such matters as one or more of them may commit to it and only on behalf of such churches.

The World Council shall not legislate for the churches; nor shall it act for them in any manner except as indicated above or as may hereafter be specified by the constituent churches.

V. ORGANIZATION

The World Council shall discharge its functions through an Assembly, a Central Committee, an Executive Committee, and other subordinate bodies as may be established.

1. The Assembly

- a) The Assembly shall be the supreme legislative body governing the World Council and shall ordinarily meet at seven-year intervals.
- b) The Assembly shall be composed of official representatives of the member churches, known as delegates, elected by the member churches.
- c) The Assembly shall have the following functions:
 - 1) to elect the President or Presidents of the World Council;
 - 2) to elect not more than 145 members of the Central Committee from among the delegates which the member churches have elected to the Assembly;
 - 3) to elect not more than 5 members from among the representatives which the associate member churches have elected to the Assembly;
 - 4) to determine the overall policies of the World Council and to review programmes undertaken to implement policies previously adopted;
 - 5) to delegate to the Central Committee specific functions, except to amend this Constitution and to allocate the membership of the Central Committee granted by this Constitution to the Assembly exclusively.

2. The Central Committee

- a) The Central Committee shall be responsible for implementing the policies adopted by the Assembly and shall exercise the functions of the Assembly itself delegated to it by the Assembly

between its meetings, except its power to amend this Constitution and to allocate or alter the allocation of the membership of Central Committee.

b) The Central Committee shall be composed of the President or Presidents of the World Council of Churches and not more than 150 members.

1) Not more than 145 members shall be elected by the Assembly from among the delegates the member churches have elected to the Assembly. Such members shall be distributed among the member churches by the Assembly giving due regard to the size of the churches and confessions represented in the Council, the number of churches of each confession which are members of the Council, reasonable geographical and cultural balance, and adequate representation of the major interests of the Council.

2) Not more than 5 members shall be elected by the Assembly from among the representatives whom the associate member churches have elected to the Assembly.

3) A vacancy in the membership of the Central Committee, occurring between meetings of the Assembly, shall be filled by the Central Committee itself after consultation with the church of which the person previously occupying the position was a member.

c) The Central Committee shall have, in addition to the general powers set out in (a) above, the following powers:

1) to elect its Moderator and Vice-Moderator or Vice-Moderators from among the members of the Central Committee;

2) to elect the Executive Committee from among the members of the Central Committee;

3) to elect committees, commissions, and boards;

4) within the policies adopted by the Assembly, and on the recommendation of the Programme Committee, to initiate and terminate programmes and activities and to set priorities for the work of the Council;

5) to adopt the budget of the World Council and secure its financial support;

6) to elect the General Secretary and to elect or appoint or to make provision for the election or appointment of all members of the staff of the World Council;

7) to plan for the meetings of the Assembly, making provision for the conduct of its business, for worship and study, and for common Christian commitment. The Central Committee shall determine the number of delegates to the Assembly and allocate them among the member churches giving due regard to the size of the churches and confessions represented in the Council; the number of churches of each confession which are members of the Council; reasonable geographical and cultural balance; the desired distribution among church officials, parish ministers and lay persons; among men, women and young people; and participation by persons whose special knowledge and experience will be needed;

8) to delegate specific functions to the Executive Committee or to other bodies or persons.

3. Rules

The Assembly or the Central Committee may adopt and amend Rules not inconsistent with this Constitution for the conduct of the business of the World Council.

4. *By-laws*

The Assembly or the Central Committee may adopt and amend By-Laws not inconsistent with this Constitution for the functioning of its committees, boards, working groups and commissions.

5. *Quorum*

A quorum for the conduct of any business by the Assembly or the Central Committee shall be one-half of its membership.

VI. OTHER ECUMENICAL CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS

1. Such world confessional bodies and such international ecumenical organizations as may be designated by the Central Committee may be invited to send non-voting representatives to the Assembly and to the Central Committee, in such numbers as the Central Committee shall determine.

2. Such national councils and regional conferences of churches, other Christian councils and missionary councils as may be designated by the Central Committee may be invited to send non-voting representatives to the Assembly and to the Central Committee, in such numbers as the Central Committee shall determine.

VII. AMENDMENTS

The Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the delegates to the Assembly present and voting, provided that the proposed amendment shall have been reviewed by the Central Committee, and notice of it sent to the member churches not less than six months before the meeting of the Assembly. The Central Committee itself, as well as the member churches, shall have the right to propose such amendment.

WCC Rules



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world council of churches Rules

I. MEMBERSHIP OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Members of the World Council of Churches are those churches which, having constituted the Council or having been admitted to membership, continue in membership. The term "church" as used in this article includes an association, convention or federation of autonomous churches. A group of churches within a country or region may determine to participate in the World Council of Churches as one church. The General Secretary shall maintain the official list of member churches noting any special arrangement accepted by the Assembly or Central Committee.

The following rules shall pertain to membership:

1. *Application*

A church which wishes to become a member of the World Council of Churches shall apply in writing to the General Secretary.

2. *Processing*

The General Secretary shall submit all such applications to the Central Committee (see Art. II of the Constitution) together with such information as he or she considers necessary to enable the Assembly or the Central Committee to make a decision on the application.

3. *Criteria*

In addition to expressing agreement with the Basis upon which the Council is founded (Art. I of the Constitution), an applicant must satisfy the following criteria to be eligible for membership:

- a) A church must be able to take the decision to apply for membership without obtaining the permission of any other body or person.
- b) A church must produce evidence of sustained independent life and organization.
- c) A church must recognize the essential interdependence of the churches, particularly those of the same confession, and must practise constructive ecumenical relations with other churches within its country or region. This will normally mean that the church is a member of the national council of churches or similar body and of the regional ecumenical organisation.

4. *Size*

- a) In addition to the criteria under Rule I.3 an applicant church must ordinarily have at least 25,000 members. The Central Committee may decide for exceptional reasons to admit into membership a church that does not fulfil the criterion of size.
- b) Churches in the same country or region that do not fulfil the criterion of size may jointly apply for membership and are encouraged by the World Council to do so.

5. *Associate membership*

- a) A church otherwise eligible for membership may be elected to associate membership in the

same manner as member churches are elected:

1) if the applicant would be denied membership solely under Rule 1.4(a). A church applying for associate membership for this reason must ordinarily have at least 10,000 members;

2) if the applicant, for reasons which must be approved by the Central Committee, expresses its desire to be in associate membership.

b) An associate member church may participate in all activities of the Council; its representatives to the Assembly shall have the right to speak but not to vote. Associate member churches shall be listed separately on the official list maintained by the General Secretary.

c) Each associate member church shall make an annual contribution to the general budget of the Council. The amount of the contribution shall be agreed upon in consultation between the church and the Council and shall be regularly reviewed.

d) Each associate member church shall, in ways commensurate with its resources and in consultation with the Council, participate in assuming responsibility for the costs of the Council's programmes and for expenses related to travel and accommodation of its representatives to Council events.

e) The implications of not fulfilling such obligations shall be such as the Central Committee shall decide.

6. *Financial participation*

a) Each member church shall make an annual contribution to the general budget of the Council. The amount of the contribution shall be agreed upon in consultation between the church and the Council and shall be regularly reviewed.

b) Each member church shall, in ways commensurate with its resources and in consultation with the Council, participate in assuming responsibility for the costs of the Council's programmes and for expenses related to travel and accommodation of its representatives to Council events.

c) The implications of not fulfilling such obligations shall be such as the Central Committee shall decide.

7. *Consultation*

Before admitting a church to membership or associate membership, the appropriate world confessional body or bodies and national council or regional ecumenical organisation shall be consulted.

8. *Resignation*

A church which desires to resign its membership in the Council can do so at any time. A church which has resigned but desires to rejoin the Council must again apply for membership.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the World Council of Churches signifies faithfulness to the Basis of the Council, fellowship in the Council, participation in the life and work of the Council and commitment to the ecumenical movement as integral to the mission of the church. Churches which are members of the World Council of Churches are expected to:

1. appoint delegates to the Assembly, the major policy-making body of the Council, and participate in council with other member churches in shaping the ecumenical vision and the ecumenical agenda;
2. inform the World Council of their primary concerns, priorities, activities and constructive criticisms as they

may relate to its programmes as well as any matters which they feel need expression of ecumenical solidarity or which merit the attention of the Council and/or churches around the world;

3. communicate the meaning of ecumenical commitment, to foster and encourage ecumenical relations and action at all levels of their church life and to pursue ecumenical fellowship locally, nationally, regionally and internationally;

4. interpret both the broader ecumenical movement and the World Council of Churches, its nature, purpose and programmes throughout their membership as a normal part of their own reporting to their constituency;

5. encourage participation in World Council programmes, activities and meetings, including:

a) proposing persons who could make a particular contribution to and/or participate in the Council's various committees, meetings and consultations, programmes, publications and staff;

b) establishing links between their own programme offices and the appropriate World Council programme offices; and

c) submitting materials for and promoting World Council communications resources: books, periodicals and other publications;

6. respond to decisions of the Central Committee which call for study, action or other follow-up by the member churches as well as respond to requests on matters referred by the Central or Executive Committee or the General Secretary for prayer, advice, information or opinion.

III. THE ASSEMBLY

1. *Composition of the Assembly*

a) Persons with the right to speak and vote

The Assembly shall be composed of official representatives of the member churches, known as delegates, elected by the member churches, with the right to speak and with the sole rights to vote and to propose and second motions and amendments.

1. The Central Committee shall determine the number of delegates to the Assembly well in advance of its meeting.

2. The Central Committee shall determine the percentage of the delegates, not less than 85 per cent, who shall be both nominated and elected by the member churches. Each member church shall be entitled to a minimum of one delegate. The Central Committee shall allocate the other delegates in this part among the member churches giving due regard to the size of the churches and confessions represented in the World Council of Churches, the number of churches of each confession which are members of the Council, and reasonable geographical and cultural balance. The Central Committee shall recommend the proper distribution within delegations among church officials, parish ministers and lay persons; and among men, women and young people. The Central Committee may make provision for the election by the member churches of alternate delegates who shall serve only in place of such delegates who are unable to attend meetings of the Assembly.

3. The remaining delegates, not more than 15 per cent, shall be elected by certain member churches upon nomination of the Central Committee as follows:

1) If the Moderator or any Vice-Moderator of the Central Committee is not elected a delegate within the provisions of paragraph 2 above, the Central Committee shall nominate such officer to the member church of which such officer is a member. Paragraphs 5 and 6 below apply to such nominees.

Rapport nr. 6/04

Rapport fra møte i "Assembly Planning Committee", Kirkenes Verdensråd 3-7.02.04

av Trond Bakkevig

Det andre møtet i Assembly Planning Committee (APC) fant sted i et kloster nær Torino i Italia.

Generalforsamlingene finner sted i Porto Alegre, Brasil, 14-23.2.06. Tema er "God, in Your Grace, Transform the World".

Klosteret var en utmerket omgivelse for dette arbeidet. Det heter Bose, og er et fellesskap som ble startet i 1968 av Enzo Bianchi. Han hentet inspirasjon fra mange steder, bl.a. Taize og Grandchamps ved Neuchatel i Sveits, to protestantiske klostre. Hans viktigste inspirasjon var likevel Det annet Vatikankonsil og konsilets åpning mot andre kirkesamfunn. Ut av dette vokste et økumenisk kloster hvor det finnes både kvinner og menn som alle lever med sølibatsløfte. Lokalt finnes det avtale og samforstand med den katolske biskop. Det var et godt sted å være!

Denne gangen møtes ikke bare APC, men også "Assembly Worship Planning Committee". De siste møttes for første gang. Det er ganske bemerkelsesverdig at "Worship" kom inn i navnet til tross for rapporten fra Spesialkommisjonen som handlet om forholdet mellom ortodokse og andre kirkesamfunn. Den hadde anbefalt at ordet "prayer" ble brukt! Alle var nå enige om ikke å gjøre noen forslag til endringer i navnet.

Til vårt møte lå det en del forslag fra staben – og noen vedtak i Sentralkomiteen. Det gjaldt program, setefordeling, budsjett osv. Blant annet forelå det et forslag om at man delvis parallelt med generalforsamlingen skulle ha et Ecumenical Social Forum med 2500 deltagere.

Følgende ble resultatet:

- Hver dag vil begynne med morgenbønn og avsluttes med afbønn og middag. Etter morgenbønnen går delegater, rådgivere, økumeniske observatører og gjester i seksjonsarbeid og bibelstudiegrupper. De andre har et parallelt program. I lunsjpausen er det formiddagsbønn, tematiske verksteder for de som ønsker det og komitemøter. På ettermiddagen er det plenumssamlinger, og verksteder knyttet til KV's arbeid. Mot slutten blir dagsprogrammene noe endret for å kunne gjøre unna forretningssesjonene.
- Vi har lagt opp til fem tematiske plenumssesjoner. Den første har generalforsamlingens tema: "God, in Your Grace, Transform the World". Der vil vi ha to talere(en fra Latin-Amerika) og en kort diskusjon. De andre fire har følgende tematikk (konkret tema er ennå ikke bestemt): Økonomisk urettferdighet og kampen for rettferdighet (vi håper å få Brasils president Lula), Kirken – kirkens enhet (et dokument fra KV/F&O skal være utarbeidet til dette, men vi vil ha sesjonen litt løsrevet fra dette), "Decade to Overcome Violence"; og "Å være kirke i et flerreligiøst samfunn".
- Det vil være ti seksjoner som skal møtes i alt fem ganger. Vi regner med ca. hundre i hver seksjon. Disse skal deles opp i ti grupper som møtes som bibelstudiegrupper. Seksjonene har hvert sitt tema – alle knyttet til hvordan vi som kirke og kristne møter en del ulike problemstillinger – alt fra respekten for liv til å leve som Kristi etterfølgere. Bevisst har vi

arbeidet med hvordan vi kan vri seksjonsarbeidet fra å være en diskusjon av temaer til å bli et arbeid med hvordan vi som kirker og enkeltkristne møter utfordringene. Vi ønsker at generalforsamlingens arbeid skal avspeile hvordan vi til daglig lever som kirke.

- Det vil være 700 delegater til generalforsamlingen. 85% er fordelt, resten skal fordeles for å sikre de riktige balanser. Dette innebærer at Den norske kirke får to delegater. Begge kjønn bør være representert og det bør være en ungdom. Det kan være vi kan argumentere oss til en plass til om vi med det er med å sikrer en balanse.
- Det forelå et forslag om at delegasjonene selv skulle få oppnevne rådgivere. Det ble avvist under henvisning til at det bare er rike kirker som har råd til dette. Det vil imidlertid som tidligere være en god del rådgivere som blir oppnevnt på grunn av sin spesielle kompetanse.
- Blant de som kommer inn på de lukkede sesjoner vil være rådgivere, økumeniske observatører og spesielt inviterte gjester. Alle andre vil imidlertid kunne komme inn i møtene i plenumssalen.
- Forslaget om et "Ecumenical Social Forum" ble avvist – både på grunn av antallet og fordi det gir et misvisende signal. Vi skal ikke som kirker dublere annen aktivitet.
- Jeg har kjempet hardt for å få inn et eget ungdomsarrangement knyttet til generalforsamlingen. Det ble akseptert. Dette må det imidlertid jobbes mye med. Det skal også være en to dagers forberedelseskonferanse for ungdom.
- Programmet for de som ikke er generalforsamlingsdeltagere i strikte forstand vil være godt. Det vil bli egne arrangementer på morgenen. Ellers kan de følge det som ellers skjer. Det vil også være gode muligheter for samspill med delegater og rådgivere.

Alt i alt er jeg fornøyd med forberedelsesarbeidet så langt. Vi har unngått noen feilskjær, fått den inn på et spor som tydeligere understreker dens kirkelige karakter, satt noen skikkelig markører for å sikre at den preges av en kirkelig spiritualitet og åndelig liv, og ikke minst sikret et ungdomsarrangement. Men – intet kommer av seg selv. Det må arbeides videre med dette.

9.2.04