



Saksdokumenter:

Notes from the Nordic-Baltic preparatory meeting to the CEC General assembly 2013

## Saker i de økumeniske organisasjonene

### Konferansen av europeiske kirker (KEK)

#### Forberedelse til KEKs generalforsamling 2013

##### Sammendrag

Den norske kirkes delegater til KEKs generalforsamling deltok på et nordisk-baltisk forberedelsesmøte i Dragør, Danmark, fra 28.-29. januar 2013.

På møtet ga Erlend Rogne og Elise Sandnes en introduksjon til organisasjonen. I tillegg ble det gitt innføring i generalforsamlingens program. Delegationene jobbet grundig med «Uppsala-rapporten», som er det endelige forslaget til revisjon av organisasjonsstruktur. Diskusjoner rundt strukturendringene fant sted, og en del uklarheter ble avdekket mht. prosedyre og hva som er forventet av kirkene. På bakgrunn av dette skrev forberedelsesmøtet et brev til KEKs generalsekretær for å få en avklaring på disse uklarhetene. Generalsekretæren har svart noe på dette, og det er ventet at ytterligere klargjøring kommer i god tid før generalforsamlingen.

Møtet opplevdes som nyttig, og det er mange felles vurderinger blant de nordiske delegatene. Det vil likevel være nødvendig med et eget norsk forberedelsesmøte i forkant av generalforsamlingen. I tillegg vil Andreas Henriksen Aarflot delta på forberedelsesmøtet for de unge delegatene i Budapest fra 1.-3. juli.

##### Forslag til vedtak:

1. Mellomkirkelig råd tar rapporten fra det nordisk-baltiske forberedelsesmøtet til orientering.
2. Mellomkirkelig råd ber om at følgende innspill til forberedelsesarbeidet oversendes KM-komiteén som skal arbeide med de økumeniske generalforsamlingene.



# Notes from the Nordic-Baltic preparatory meeting to the CEC General Assembly 2013

Denmark 28.-29. January 2013

## Session 1

### General introduction to CEC

Presentation by Erlend Røgne and Elise Sandnes is attached.

### Looking at the Assembly Agenda

Introduction by Canon Leslie Nathaniel, Chair of the Assembly Planning Committee.

Various comments were made following the presentation, particularly to the shortness of the plenary sessions. Comments will be brought back to the APC and taken into account.

### The Uppsala Report (CEC revision proposal)

Presentation by Kimmo Kääriäinen is attached.

## Session 2 - The CEC revision proposal discussion

Minutes were taken by Beate Fagerli. Please find the complete minutes attached. Below please find a shortened version and some follow up questions.

### General comments

- Transparency in the revision process: it was asked which churches had responded and the lack of transparency was pointed out. *For clarification (RHS): the General Secretary allowed access for the Member Churches in a letter on July 12. Go to <http://www.ceceurope.org/extranet/> User: **respondq** Password: **mcaocom**. All answers from the consultation are placed here.*
- Orthodox participation in the process? Worries about the lack of response from most Orthodox churches. It might be that this reform process is not a priority for the churches. As for the Serbian Orthodox Church, it might be that it does not want to commit itself neither positively nor negatively.
- CCME (Churches Commission for Migrants in Europe): There has been no genuine willingness in the Revision Working Group (RWG) to integrate CCME in the new organisation.
- The size of the board: Most voices still point to 20 persons in the Governing Board (GB), and the idea of proxies was generally not approved.
- How to elect a new governing body in July 2013 must be clarified before the time of the Assembly. (see the attached letter to the General Secretariate).
- The broadness of membership (Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox, Old Catholic) is essential for the life of CEC. This is where there is a forum for Orthodox – Protestant dialogue.
- Assembly: Business or celebration? The Uppsala Report states that there is no reason why the main business of the Assembly cannot be completed within two working days. The constitution says nothing on the topic. It is therefore up to the organizers to decide, according to needs and resources, how much time will be allocated to the celebration part. It was pointed out that the time spent outside the business meeting is essential for the possibility to reach consensus in an ecumenical context.

- The issue of unity: The dialogue and cooperation with CCEE – the Roman catholic Church is important.
- Churches in Dialogue (CiD): The Uppsala Report is not taking the work of this commission much into consideration. It will be up to the Member Churches to make sure that this work is always a priority.
- Relations to other ecumenical organisations: It was mentioned that the report does not point to other ecumenical networks as opportunities but as challenges. This was found too pessimistic.
- Reflection: The task of CEC to be conscious about Europe, and the task of the churches for Europeans. Now many operations which were church initiatives have become independent networks. This is partly good, but some of it is becoming too specialised, being independent from the churches and going about their own business. If CEC specialises on the work in Brussels it will lose out on something ecclesial, something people-minded. As a specialised Brussels-oriented representation of the churches it makes itself unuseful since the bigger churches have their own offices in Brussels. We need a connection to the core question of what Europe needs.
- The language issue needs to be addressed in CEC for the sake of participation.

### Specific comments

#### Rough guide to the future:

- 1.9. This part of the report lacks explicitly the component of visible unity and spirituality.
- Ch. 1: Youth and youth unemployment needs to be an issue for the churches and CEC.
- 1.32, page 17. A longterm aim should be to cooperate with the Roman Catholic Church.
- Hope rather than pessimism. It is important that the Assembly is hopeful about the future and not as pessimistic as many find the Uppsala Report.
- The report receives criticism but is in general received as a thorough, serious and necessary tool which is believed to bring CEC into a better position as a Conference of Churches.

#### Strategic framework:

- Statement of faith: The Charta Oecumenica has been taken more into account in this version. It is still a question whether the actual document should be mentioned in the statement itself. Against it stands the argument that a statement of faith ought to be able to stand on its own and not refer to one specific document made at a specific point of time by a specific representation of churches. For it stands the argument that Charta Oecumenica is the most significant and broadest ranging document made in the history of CEC.
- Mission statement: The original proposal was more in detail. Why it was shortened would be interesting to know. There was a proposal to add to some points to the statement.
- The theological content is still weak and the missions of the current CiD and CCME are not included in the mission statement.
- Values statement: Mission and dialogue could be a part of this.

#### Organisational model:

- Membership: Pan-European organisations are not clearly defined. If EBF and CPCE are examples, the question of double membership/representation at the Assembly should be more clear.
- General Assembly: Double purpose: Bringing people together and management of the organisation. The Uppsala reports only speaks of management. GA every four years is a way to make space for the smaller churches which are in many ways less represented in the new structure.
- 3:8 The GA should also have the task of positioning CEC in the European situation.

- **Governing board:** The proposal points to a radically new way of electing the Governing Board, and the thinking behind it is new. It is difficult to imagine how it will work which is also seen by our discussion.
- **Office:** The discussion about how to secure that the work now taken care of in the commissions (especially CiD) will be carried out in the future was still relevant. A proposal of having project groups or advisory boards connected to the office was discussed.

**Follow up questions:**

Will someone propose an amendment to the statement of faith?

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Will someone propose an amendment to the Mission statement? Who will ask the RWG why it was shortened?

Will ELC Finland propose an amendment to enlarge the Governing Board to 20 persons?

Will there be a suggestion at the Assembly to include CCME in the organisation?

The proposed constitution has to be rewritten according to the Uppsala report. It is inconsistent as it is now. How will this be done?

How will the question of Pan-European church federations be clarified?

How will these be discussed among the Nordic-Baltic/other churches before the Assembly?

## **Session 3 – legal and practical issues**

Reflections on the topic by Lena Kumlin and Canon Leslie Nathaniel. Questions and discussion followed. This session was not minuted.

## **Session 4 – regional priorities**

A proposal was made to address the General Secretariat concerning the need for clarification on the issue of elections to a new governing body in CEC at the Assembly 2013. An initial draft was shared by Karsten Fledelius (ELC Denmark). Following the discussion, a new text was drafted and the final letter was approved in plenary. Please find the letter attached.

Suggestions concerning a strategy for nominating candidates to a new governing body were discussed in plenary.

The initial draft by Karsten Fledelius:

Delegates and staff from the Nordic churches and the Estonian Lutheran Church gathered at a preparation meeting for the CEC General Assembly 2013 have discussed the Uppsala report and agreed on a series of points we want to raise in connection with the reform plans for CEC.

First of all we strongly appreciate and value the work made by the RWG the proposals of whom we support in various aspects. We agree in the need of a simplification of the structure of CEC in order to make work more effective and reduce costs. In particular we support the following points:

1. A significant smaller Central Committee/Governing Board and the abolishment of the Presidency – three presidents will do.
2. The integration of commission work in the work of the General Secretariat
3. The concentration of staff in Brussels, with Strasbourg being kept as long as it is economically viable
4. Not more than 4 years between ordinary general assemblies

5. The abolishment of the vice general secretary and the choice of the word GS instead of Director

Contrary to § 18 in the report we see no reason to propose a constitutional change and elections accordingly at the GA in July 2013. According to § 6 the GA itself decides the number of members of the Central Committee, thus the number can be reduced. Most of our delegates support a Governing Board of 20 or 27 people instead of the present CC of 40 members. We propose that the constitution is voted for as the first step, and that the elections are carried out afterwards according to the rules then valid. We see no impediment to this procedure in the current constitution of CEC.

It is considered very important that the member churches are well and timely informed about the possibilities lying ahead. Possible outcomes of the GA will range from an immediate decision on and implementation of a new constitution to an unchanged continuation under the current constitution. It all depends on the outcome of the first hours of the GA.

The delegates have been elected by the member churches according to the current rules. And so have the members of the current Central Committee. But this group of people is vested with a strong, legitimate power. The preparation work by the reform group has been very solid and has presented us with a balanced proposal. It is now up to the GA to decide the future of CEC.

*Notes by Rebekka Højmark Svenningsen (ELCD)*