AGENDA
Meeting of the LWF COUNCIL
Geneva, Switzerland, 18 – 22 June 2015

EXHIBIT 5

THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

Meeting of Council
Medan, Indonesia
12 - 17 June 2014

MINUTES
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THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

Meeting of Council

“Like a Tree Planted by Streams of Water”

12 - 17 June 2014

MINUTES

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1. WORSHIP LIFE AND SPECIAL EVENTS

(1) On 10 June a Christian-Muslim Dialogue workshop and a visit to church projects had been organized. The Pre-Council meeting Women and Youth had taken place there on 11 June. It was followed by the Opening Service which took place at 5:00 a.m. in the HKBP church Jalan Sudiman. Bishop William Simarmata from the Protestant Christian Batak Church (HKBP) delivered the sermon. Council participants were invited to worship with local congregations on Sunday 15 June. On plenary days, morning prayers, Bible studies and evening devotions were prepared by the local Worship Committee together with staff from the Department for Theology and Public Witness. During the committee meetings, devotions were conducted by these groups in their respective meeting rooms. The closing devotion was held in the plenary.

(2) On Friday 13 June Council participants had been invited to join in the Fast for Climate campaign by the LWF President.

(3) The Council session “A picture on Youth Participation in the LWF communion,” led by the young Council members and young Advisers, focused around 1 Corinthians 12, highlighting how all Christians are part of the body of Christ and that they are all essential if the body is to function properly. The youth presented the publication “Here I am, for you called me” – Youth Participation and Leadership in the LWF Member Churches. The document summarizes a survey done among the LWF member churches on sharing and learning among the different generations and the facilitation of meaningful youth participation represented in the Lutheran communion. In addition, the toolkit “Intergenerational Sharing” was launched and presented during the session. Council members were urged to commit to using the intergenerational toolkit in at least one strategic session in their churches before the next Council meeting in 2015. They were also asked to give youth the space to report on their activities and make an impact on their churches.

2. FORMAL OPENING OF THE BUSINESS SESSION

(4) LWF President, Bishop Dr Munib Younan, from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, welcomed all participants and officially opened the meeting on 12 June at 9:15 a.m. He appreciated and encouraged the atmosphere of love and generosity and referred to the theme of this meeting.
(5) Bishop Dr Younan also expressed his gratitude, on behalf of the communion, to the local National Committee for their generosity to host the Council meeting.

(6) Bishop Langsung Sitorus, chairperson of the National Committee, introduced the 12 member churches.

3. ROLL CALL

(7) The roll was called by the General Secretary, Rev. Martin Junge. He reported that apologies had been received from the following Council members: Rev. Martina Berlich, Evangelical Church in Central Germany, Presiding Bishop Helga Haugland Byfuglien, Church of Norway, Rev. Dr Samuel Dawai, Church of the Lutheran Brethren of Cameroon, Archbishop Antje Jackelén, Church of Sweden, Bishop Melvin Jiménez, Lutheran Costa Rican Church, Ms Anna-Maria Klassen, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hanover, Pröbstin Astrid Kleist, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Northern Germany, Ms Eun-hae Kwon, Lutheran Church in Korea, Ms Titi Malik, The Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria, Ms Jenette Alisha Purba, The Indonesian Christian Church, Ms Christina Soren, Northern Evangelical Lutheran Church, India and Mr Elijah Zina, Lutheran Church in Liberia. As the quorum was reached, the Council met constitutionally.

(8) The President invited the participants to stand up and pray in remembrance of Dr Mangisi Simorangkir, who had extended the invitation on behalf of the National Committee to host the Council in Indonesia.

3.1 Greetings

(9) Ecumenical guests presented their greetings at different moments of the Council program.

(10) Rev. Dr Henriette Hutabarat Lebang, General Secretary of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), welcomed the participants to the Asian continent. As an Indonesian, she also joined the churches in her country to warmly welcome the Council to Indonesia. Dr Lebang found the Council’s theme inspirational. Referring to the many signs of decay and death around us, she said it was a great challenge to hear that we are called to be “Like a Tree Planted by Streams of Water.” Indeed, many of the trees and forests in Asia have been cut on a massive scale in the name of development and for increased profit. Many streams and rivers worldwide are heavily polluted with household garbage and chemical wastes, to the extent that they are unable to provide freshness and to sustain life on this planet. Yet we are called by God the Creator, the Redeemer and the Sustainer to revive the genuine images of the Tree and the Streams of Water that nourish life. CCA General Secretary stressed that this call is crucial for Asian churches, as their communities are facing various forms of deterioration in the quality of life. Although Asia is experiencing economic development, at the same time Asians are experiencing situations of increasing poverty, inadequate health care, economic exploitation, massive flow of migrant workers, human trafficking, environmental degradation, growing trends of religious intolerance, politicization of religion and various forms of corruption. Rev. Dr Lebang concluded by saying that in order to fulfill our call, we need to constantly relate to God, meditate on God’s will day and night, so that we can let our trees produce leaves for the healing of the nations. (Rev. 22:2).

(11) Rev. Dr Olaf Fykse Tveit, General Secretary of the World Council Churches (WCC), was unable to attend personally or to send a representative. His message, read by Presiding Bishop Dr Alex Malasusa from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, in his capacity as member of the WCC Central Committee, focused on faithfulness to God as reflected in the
Council’s theme, which, Rev. Dr Tveit said, evokes a much loved image of God’s faithfulness as “trees planted by streams of water” (Psalm 1:3). WCC’s message went on to describe the Lutheran journey of communion, of churches growing together as a family and reaching out together in service to the world. WCC’s message also referred to the LWF’s journey of justice, in which theology and public witness go hand in hand. This, he noted, is not simply a strategic plan, but a vision of the church being present in the world, inspired by faith and called to service. Concluding, WCC General Secretary underlined that the LWF has been strengthened through its growth in communion, while the diaconal engagement of the churches has inspired a strong commitment to advocacy, human rights and dialogue. Together, Lutheran churches stand as trees planted by streams of water in service to the God of life who watches over the “way of the righteous”. Rev. Dr Tveit said the LWF plays a leading role in the ecumenical movement, both the Communion Office and the member churches. The significant presence of the Lutheran churches at the recent Busan Assembly of the WCC was encouraging and strengthened the existing cooperation between the LWF and the WCC.

Monsignor Matthias Türk presented greetings in the name of Cardinal Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. He noted that any consideration of the journey of ecumenism begins with what we can joyfully affirm after almost fifty years of astounding progress in ecumenical relations since Vatican II, which has led to a harvest of wonderful fruits. Many prejudices and misunderstandings of the past have been overcome. Agreement and convergence have been achieved by approaching traditional problems in fresh ways. On themes such as justification, the relationship between Scripture and Tradition, the nature of the Church and the sacraments, the ability to overcome historic and painful disagreements has been remarkable. Mgr. Türk went on to mention that there are still remaining differences between Lutherans and Catholics and much work is still to be done together. He stressed that it is the strongly held position of the Roman Catholic Church that whatever obstacles to progress might occur, the goal of ecumenical dialogue is nothing less than full and visible communion. He pointed out that ecumenism is grounded first of all in divine imperative. Ecumenism is also sharing of gifts; and Catholics are grateful for the gifts received from dialogue partners, which have assisted their own doctrinal development. Finally, Mgr. Türk said that Catholics see the path to full communion as a multiple-way movement in which all parts must move.

LWF President noted Monsignor Matthias Türk had been present in every LWF Council meeting since 1999 and expressed the appreciation of the LWF for his commitment.

Rev. Dr Setri Nyomi, General Secretary of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC), referred to the words of Psalm 1:3 stressing the need for urgently redressing the unjust systems that lead to parched land, with people hungering and thirsting for justice, food and peace. He said it was refreshing that the LWF echoed the Psalmist who understands God’s value for those who indicate that a different reality is possible. He went on to say how happy the WCRC is that the Lutheran - Reformed Working Group report was now out. The WCRC Executive Committee joyfully received it about a month ago when they met in Hannover and commended it to their member churches. The report would now be before the LWF Council for a similar action in this meeting. Rev. Dr Nyomi praised the outcomes of the working group and other expressions of the strong relationship between Lutherans and Reformed. He said Reformed pray for new ways of strengthening that bond. The World Communion of Reformed Churches has constantly expressed their desire for the day when the LWF and the WCRC will have a joint Assembly. This is also an expression of how seriously they take the relationship. He noted that 2017 would be a significant opportunity for this vision to materialize. Before concluding, Rev. Dr Nyomi informed the participants that on 31 August this year - after 14 years fulfilling his current ministry as General Secretary of the WCRC - he will hand over to his
successor, Rev. Chris Ferguson from Canada. The WCRC General Secretary took this opportunity to personally thank the governing body of the LWF for the work the two communions have done together for many decades and especially during the last 14 years.

(15) Mr Gany Wiyono, representing the Assemblies of God within the Pentecostal movements, read the message co-written with Dr Jean-Daniel Plüss. They expressed how grateful they were to the LWF for inviting a Pentecostal guest to the Council meeting. This is not only a symbol of open ecumenical relations but also a much needed sign that Christians take seriously their calling to be a common witness of God’s grace to a world with many challenges. Referring to the Council’s theme, the Pentecostal representative said that in the same way that it takes time for roots to grow and for a tree to bear fruit, it is understandable that more than ten years have passed since the preparatory meetings began between Lutherans and Pentecostals at the Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg. Meanwhile the two communions have been growing in mutual understanding and trust has been built. The ecumenical tree between the LWF and classical Pentecostals is ready to bear fruit. Finally, Mr Wiyono referred to the beatitude at the beginning of the first Psalm: “Happy is the one!” that reminds us of the Sermon on the Mount. When we know that we have our being in Christ we can consider ourselves to be happy in spite of the big questions that we are facing. Mr Wiyono ended his message by praying that God’s Spirit grant it that Pentecostals can join Lutherans in playing their part towards the fruition of the Kingdom of God.

(16) Rev. Paulus Widjaja, Chair of the Mennonite World Conference (MWC) Peace Commission, and of the Persatuan Gereja-Gereja Kristen Muria Indonesia (GKMI), read the message sent by Rev. César García, MWC General Secretary, who was unable to participate personally. The message spoke of the great respect Mennonites have for witness that Lutherans bear. This has been evident in the different ministries developed by Lutherans and in the vibrant life perceived in the Lutheran global communion. Referring to the LWF strategy for 2012 – 2017, “With Passion for the Church and for the World”, Rev. García highlighted how in the past few years Lutherans and Mennonites have been walking together in the path of reconciliation. It is because of the Lutheran passion that Lutherans and Mennonites continue experiencing new implications of the historical moments lived in July 2010 in Stuttgart. Mennonites appreciate the work of the LWF Task Force on “The Mennonite Action.” The Mennonite Faith and Life Commission keeps working on following up the commitments made jointly of living out the new reality of forgiveness and reconciliation between the two global communions. Reflecting on the new moments of revelation that are being experienced in the trilateral dialogue of Lutherans-Mennonites-Roman Catholics on the topic of baptism, Mennonites look forward to joining Lutherans in the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

(17) Bishop Ivan Abrahams, General Secretary of the World Methodist Council (WMC), brought greetings and best wishes on behalf of the Global Methodist/Wesleyan family. He referred to the challenging theme of this year’s Council, “Like a Tree Planted by Streams of Water” and said that like Lutherans, Methodists are also passionately committed to eco-justice and the care of creation. Bishop Abrahams expressed his prayer that as Lutherans drank from the calabash of collective wisdom at the Council meeting, the dreams they shared at the 11th General Assembly in Stuttgart will be incubated and that a fresh vision be cast for the future. WMC General Secretary continued by saying that subsequently the “trees” planted by streams of water will be for the generations yet to be born, who will enjoy their shade and fruits. He encouraged participants to sow and nurture wisely - building upon the great theological contribution, prophetic witness and moral legacy that Lutherans have inherited and on the vision from Lund in 1947 for greater cooperation within the Lutheran family. Bishop Abrahams concluded by referring to this year’s celebration of the 15th Anniversary of the Joint Declaration
on the Doctrine of Justification signed by the Lutherans, Methodists and Catholics. He expressed his hope that the three signatories will go beyond declarations to concrete expressions of common witness and visible unity of the Church.

4. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND TIME SCHEDULE

The Council

(18) VOTED: to adopt the Agenda and Time Schedule with the understanding that in the course of the meeting further changes might be made as required.

4.1 Adoption of Proposed Rules of Procedure for LWF Council Meetings

The Council

(19) VOTED: to approve the proposed Rules of Procedure for LWF Council Meetings as presented.

4.2 Code of Conduct Concerning Sexual Harassment and Exploitation for Participants in Events Organized by the LWF

The Council

(20) VOTED: to adopt the Code of Conduct Concerning Sexual Harassment and Exploitation for Participants in Events Organized by the Lutheran World Federation for this meeting and appoint the following persons as the response team:

Prof. Dr Bernd OBERDORFER
Bishop K.L. Jenny CHAN

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE 2013 COUNCIL MEETING

(21) Since no amendments had been presented,

The Council

(22) VOTED: to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the LWF Council in Geneva, Switzerland, 13 - 18 June 2013, as circulated.

6. UPDATE ON THE MEETING OF OFFICERS AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES

(23) As there was no physical Meeting of Officers in October 2013, no minutes had been shared with the Council. The Meeting of Officers received Minutes of the Virtual Conference on 27 November 2013 and the mail vote actions. These Minutes were approved during the Meeting of Officers preceding the Council (11 June).

(24) The LWF President, Bishop Dr Younan, gave an oral update about the discussions and decisions taken by the Meeting of Officers and Board of Trustees preceding the Council. Special attention was given to the Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH) cash flow crisis and the
exploration process for its revised legal setup, the construction of the Elder Care Pavilion, the Mount of Olives Housing Project, and the Trusteeship relation between LWF and KAVSt.

7. APPOINTMENT OF AD-HOC NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

(25) The Council appointed the following members of the Ad-hoc Nominations Committee for the duration of the meeting with the task to discuss matters referred to it from the plenary.

The Council

(26) VOTED: to appoint an Ad-hoc Nominations Committee for the duration of the meeting with the following members:
- Oberlandeskirchenrat Rainer KIEFER (male, ordained) (chair)
- Dr Iwona BARANIEC (female, lay)
- Rev. Dr Endor Modeste RAKOTO (male, ordained)
- National Bishop Susan JOHNSON (female, ordained)
- Bishop Jenny K.L CHAN (female, ordained)
- Ms Jenny SKUMSNES MOE (female, lay)
- Ms Daniëlle DOKMAN (female, lay)
with the task to discuss matters referred to it from the plenary.

7.1 Election of Council member in replacement of Ms Maria Immonen

(27) Following the appointment of Council member Ms Maria Immonen as Global Program Coordinator in the Department for World Service by mail vote through the Meeting of Officers, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland proposed replacing Ms Maria Immonen by Dr Minna Hietamäki for the remaining term of service until the Twelfth Assembly.

The Council

(28) VOTED: to elect Dr Minna Hietamäki (female, lay) from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland as Council member in replacement of Ms Maria Immonen (female, lay) from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland.

7.1.1 Appointment of Dr Minna Hietamäki to the Committee for Theology and Ecumenical Relations

The Council

(29) VOTED: to appoint Dr Minna Hietamäki to the Committee for Theology and Ecumenical Relations

7.2 Election of Council member in replacement of Dr Mangisi S.E. Simorangkir

(30) Following the passing away of Dr Mangisi S.E. Simorangkir, the LWF National Committee in Indonesia proposed replacing Dr Mangisi S.E. Simorangkir by Bishop Jaharianson Saragih of the Simalungun Protestant Christian Church for the remaining term of service until the Twelfth Assembly.
The Council

(31) VOTED: to elect Bishop Jaharianson Saragih (male, ordained) from the Simalungun Protestant Christian Church as Council member in replacement of Dr Mangisi S.E. Simorangkir (male, ordained) from the Christian Protestant Church in Indonesia.

7.2.1 Appointment of Bishop Jaharianson Saragih to the Committee for Mission and Development

The Council

(32) VOTED: to appoint Bishop Jaharianson Saragih to the Committee for Mission and Development.

7.3 Election of Council member in replacement of Rev. Mark S. Hanson

Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton had been elected as Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, succeeding the Rev. Mark S. Hanson. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has nominated the newly-elected Presiding Bishop Eaton as Rev. Hanson’s replacement for the remaining term of service until the Twelfth Assembly.

The Council

(34) VOTED: to elect Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton (female, ordained) from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as Council member in replacement of Rev. Mark S. Hanson (male, ordained) from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

7.3.1 Appointment of Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton to the Committee for Advocacy and Public Voice

The Council

(35) VOTED: to appoint Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton to the Committee for Advocacy and Public Voice

7.4 Election of Council member in replacement of Rev. Oi Peng Lok

Bishop Aaron Chuan Ching Yap had been elected as Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Malaysia, succeeding Rev. Oi Peng Lok. The Lutheran Church in Malaysia has nominated the newly elected Bishop Yap as Rev. Lok’s replacement for the remaining term of service until the Twelfth Assembly.

The Council

(37) VOTED: to elect Bishop Aaron Chuan Ching Yap (male, ordained) from the Lutheran Church in Malaysia as Council member in replacement of Rev. Oi Peng Lok (male, ordained) from the Lutheran Church in Malaysia.

7.4.1 Appointment of Bishop Aaron C.C. Yap to the Committee for Theology and Ecumenical Relations

The Council
VOTED: to appoint Bishop Rev. Aaron C.C. Yap to the Committee for Theology and Ecumenical Relations.

7.4.2 Appointment of one member to the Board of Trustees of the Lutheran Foundation for Inter-Confessional Research, Strasbourg in replacement of Rev. Oi Peng Lok

In keeping with Article VI, § 1 (3) of the Constitution of the Lutheran Foundation for Interconfessional Research in Strasbourg, France, “the Council shall elect from among its own members the Chairperson and two other members of the Boards of Trustees”. Following the resignation of Rev. Lok, no name has yet come forward and therefore the Nominations Committee does not have a nominee to recommend at this time.

7.5 Appointment of six Lutheran members to the International Dialogue Commission with Pentecostals

The Council was requested to appoint six Lutheran members to the International Dialogue Commission with the Pentecostals.

VOTED: to appoint the following members to the International Dialogue Commission with Pentecostals:

- Rev. Prof. Dr Walter Altmann (male, ordained) (co-chair)
- Rev. MA Anna Balogová (female, ordained, youth)
- Rev. Dr Cheryl M. Peterson (female, ordained)
- Rev. Dr Wilfred John Sundaraj Samuel (male, ordained)
- Rev. Buntausa Amos Sunday (male, ordained, youth)
- Rev. Mag. theol. Johannes Zeiler (male, ordained)

7.6 Replacement of one member of the Assembly Planning Committee

Rev. Agnes Pángyánszky from The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary had to withdraw her participation in the Assembly Planning Committee. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary proposes replacing Rev. Pángyánszky by Ms Kinga Pap.

VOTED: to appoint Ms Kinga PAP (female, lay) from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary as Assembly Planning Committee member in replacement of Rev. Agnes Pángyánszky.

7.7 Appointment of International Worship Planning Committee

The Council was requested to appoint the members to the International Worship Planning Committee for the LWF Twelfth Assembly.

VOTED: to appoint the following members to the International Worship Planning Committee for the LWF Twelfth Assembly:

- Rev. Dr Stephen Larson (male, ordained) (chair)
There are two additional vacancies on the International Worship Planning Committee allocated to Asia and Namibia respectively.

The Council

VOTED: to authorize the Meeting of Officers to fill the two additional vacancies on the International Worship Planning Committee.

The Meeting of Officers is urged to consider filling the Asia vacancy with a youth.

7.8 Information about the Replacement of two CWS members

The Council was informed that the Australian Lutheran World Service (ALWS) appointed as of 2014 Mr Chey Mattner as ALWS representative at the Committee for World Service in replacement of Mr Peter Schirmer.

It was also informed that in view of Mr Jouni Hemberg's change of position, Finn Church Aid (FCA) appointed as of 2014 Mr Tomi Järvinen as the new FCA representative at the Committee for World Service.

Furthermore, due to the new organizational structure within Church of Sweden and the internal changes, Church of Sweden appointed Ms Maria Lundberg as replacement of Mr Urban Jormeus.

8. ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

LWF Vice-President Bishop Dr Tamás Fabiny chaired the session. LWF President Bishop Dr Munib Younan delivered his address entitled "Like trees planted by streams of water".

The President referred to both the challenging and at the same time encouraging realities in Asia, where the Council meeting was held. He also related the theme of the Council to the sacrament of Baptism which believers live as a daily reality, and mentioned that Baptism can be the foundation of ecumenical relationships.

Referring to the issue of justice, the President mentioned that in our time, water is becoming a symbol of injustice and inequality. He stressed that quest for justice must be not only in the realm of ideas, but should be concrete, promoting life abundant.

The President invited the communion to work in the following three areas towards tangible justice: environmental justice, relationships with Islam, and the evangelical call for education.

All speakers expressed gratitude for a rich and engaged address giving deep insights in the various subjects addressed by the President.

A comment from a Council member referred to the meaning of Baptism described by the President as a beginning of a journey, from Baptism to pilgrimage towards a deepened spirituality, asking what was the particular contribution as Lutheran pilgrimage. In his response
President Younan stressed that the LWF is looking into options to work together with ecumenical partners on the subject of pilgrimage towards peace and justice.

(58) Another speaker expressed appreciation for the efforts of His Majesty, King Abdullah II from Jordan, who encouraged the Christian communion to call for Peace in the Middle East region. President Younan in his response confirmed the King’s commitment and strong desire that Christians would be able to speak with a unified strong voice claiming for peace.

(59) Regarding the recent kidnapping of 20 young women in North-eastern Nigeria by Boko Haram, it was stressed that violence against the Christian population particularly girls and women was happening all over Africa, not only in Nigeria. Local churches do not have the capacity to protect the members of their community. In his response, the President underlined the danger of extremism and the importance to promote education for every human being.

The Council then

(60) VOTED: to receive the Address of the President with appreciation.

9. REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

(61) LWF President Bishop Dr Munib Younan invited the General Secretary to present his report.

(62) As it was made available beforehand, the General Secretary did not read out the full report. Facilitated by a PowerPoint presentation, the General Secretary highlighted the various stages and sections of the report. Since this was mid-term year, the report was longer than usual.

(63) The General Secretary stressed the issue of the role of a region when appointing Council members and that this still needs follow up.

(64) It was mentioned that the Communion Office is making progress regarding how planning and operations are presented and that accountability is one of the values which the Communion Office holds dear.

(65) The General Secretary proposed to extend the lifespan of the LWF Strategy from 2017 to 2018, and to engage in the mid-term review with a focus on sustainability. This will allow the Assembly to bring its voice to the Communion Office on the direction they may want to see.

(66) The departmental work has continued being strengthened. The Department for World Service (DWS) continued serving and responding to the needs of the most vulnerable. The Department for Mission and Development has been repositioned to assure that regions remain connected.

(67) Referring to the Emmaus accompaniment process, it was mentioned that it includes a study on self-understanding of communion, guidelines for the exchange of personnel, communication process and accompaniment.

(68) Talking about ecumenical developments, the General Secretary expressed that the work done today can bear fruits 10 – 15 years later.

(69) It was mentioned that the number of member churches complying with the payment of their full membership fees has grown to 81% since last year. The 13 member churches in Indonesia took responsibility for covering the cost of board and lodging of participants to the Council meeting, which is a new situation and very much appreciated.

(70) The General Secretary confirmed that the cash flow crisis in the Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH) is due to receivables, not to mismanagement. Special appreciation was expressed to those churches who are closely accompanying the process. He underlined that the work done by the AVH is adequate and necessary and all the steps are taken to receive the owed money.
When talking about the forthcoming LWF Twelfth Assembly, the General Secretary proposed the following key focuses for the Assembly:

- Joyful
- Transformative
- Forward looking
- Outward looking

The General Secretary concluded his presentation by expressing special gratitude to Ms. Christina Jackson-Skelton, chair of the Finance Committee, to the Council, to colleagues in the Communion Office and to Bishop Younan for the work done and the support received.

Participants were invited to comment on the General Secretary’s report or raise relevant questions.

All speakers expressed thanks and appreciation for an informative and thoughtful presentation.

Referring to a question related to response to terrorist acts, i.e. abduction of Nigerian school girls, the General Secretary stressed the importance of immediate communication with the affected church(es) requesting how would they need the LWF support to be expressed. Conversations with the High Commissioner for Human Rights (HCHR) are fluent in this area. He also mentioned that the LWF Gender Justice Policy is an important tool to respond to these issues.

A speaker from Asia mentioned that a Gender Justice Policy was also developed in India, and thanked the motivation from the LWF.

On the issue of peace with justice, another speaker stressed that Palestinian and Israeli people need support in their reality. The President expressed affirmation.

A speaker from Africa expressed appreciation for the President’s and the General Secretary’s presentations indicating that they were complementary and both raised very serious issues in regard to the prophetic witness of the communion and member churches. He stressed the need to think on how the communion can amplify the prophetic voice so much needed today, i.e. the situation of those in the South where issues of poverty, pain and oppression are so concerning. In a world so preoccupied with secular issues, how can the prophetic voice become the voice of the membership, so they do not look too much at themselves but more outward looking?

The General Secretary responded that the church has to address these concerns by speaking out loudly with one voice. The Communion Office continues improving the contact with member churches and working together on these issues, so people will learn about the prophetic voice not only through LWF communication but also through the actions of its members.

The importance to invest more in theological education was mentioned. Advocacy happens not only through statements but also through preaching on which the issues are; the pulpit is a place of advocacy where to hear the good news of life in abundance. These are powerful advocacy messages particularly for people who are not recognized.

Another participant from the North underlined the importance of climate change and advocacy and appreciated the work of the LWF youth delegation. The work on the ground implemented by the Department for World Service and ACT Alliance was very important; the fasting for climate change was a symbolic action and a signal of LWF work and commitment.

Another speaker from the Nordic region expressed gratitude for the affirmation of the role of young people, likewise advising to combine the call for climate justice with the Reformation anniversary in order to reach a broad audience.
The General Secretary expressed that the challenge is to see how to connect all the things that are happening, to develop the work in view of what will be done at the Assembly.

A Council member from Africa expressed gratitude to the Council for its action and efforts to accompany the churches facing difficult relationship and stressed the need to continue listening to one another. At the same occasion, he observed that the LWF delegation visiting Ethiopia at the end of April 2014, met with The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) Executive Board Members.

He continued underlining the need for an action regarding the high number of refugees from South Sudan arriving in Ethiopia. In response, he was advised to collaborate with the LWF desk for Advocacy and Human Rights in order to draw the attention of the international community with one strong and common voice on a foreseeable human disaster.

In response to the concern of financial constraints faced by the Department for Mission and Development (DMD), it was said that all efforts are made to resolve the problem. While increased membership allocations had been transferred to the Department for Mission and Development, it was essential to find other ways to respond in a sustainable manner.

In this connection, another speaker questioned if funds from the Department for World Service could not be used to balance possible deficits in DMD. It was however underlined that it is impossible to use funds earmarked for DWS projects for other purposes.

The Council then

VOTED: to receive the Report of the General Secretary with appreciation and refer relevant matters arising from it to the Committees for discussion and appropriate action.

9.1 Report of the LWF Communion Office Operational Plan (COOP) 2013

The Council received the LWF Communion Office Operational Plan 2013. The report was discussed by the respective committees and recommendations were forwarded to the Finance Committee. The Council took action based on the Report of the Finance Committee (see item 17, paragraph nr 170)

9.2 First Report of the LWF Working Group on Self-Understanding of the Lutheran Communion

Dr Minna Hietamäki, LWF Council member and member of this LWF working group, presented the report from its meeting in March 2014. She then invited the LWF Council to provide guidance and input to their process. The LWF Council discussed in groups of 8 to 9 people three questions:

1. What concerns, observations or advice do you have on the proposed process and the general structure and ethos of the proposed paper?
2. What concerns, observations or advice do you have on the proposed idea of "diversified accountability"? Do you find that this way of formulating the question would be helpful for the communion?
3. What kinds of examples can you give of the ways in which diversity of opinions or practises is managed in a fruitful way in your church/context?

Each group put their findings on flipchart papers which were then displayed in the plenary hall for further exchange among Council members. Full notes from these small group discussions were handed to all working group members after the Council meeting.
10. **REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON FOR THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

(92) The President invited the chairperson of the Finance Committee, Ms Christina Jackson-Skelton, to present her report.

(93) A PowerPoint presentation was used to highlight the key points of the presentation.

(94) In the fiscal year 2013, the total income for the Lutheran World Federation was EUR 105.6 million, an increase of 5% over the prior fiscal year. The increase is a result of two dynamics:

- Increased financial response to the emergencies in Africa (Ethiopia, Chad, Namibia) in providing essential humanitarian assistance to the affected population
- Increased programming and revenue for patient care and maintenance in AVH hospital, Jerusalem

(95) Revenue increased sufficiently to cover annual expenses and to deliver our strategic commitment without having to use any reserves.

(96) In 2013, the Membership fees contribution continued to increase with 115 member churches contributing EUR 2,545,503. This is a significant and remarkable increase in the number of churches that contributed, from 69 member churches in 2012 to 115 member churches in 2013 (81%).

(97) In 2013, the Augusta Victoria Hospital patient fees amounted to EUR 20.1 million, 33% higher than in 2012, and the receivables increased to EUR 19.4 million from 12.6 million in 2012, a 53% increase. This high amount of outstanding receivables affects the cash flow. It would be advisable that the receivables of AVH be limited to the amount of AVH reserves in order to avoid financial crisis.

(98) The LWF Staff Welfare Plan—Pension fund has been liquidated and the authorities removed the name from the registry in 2014. All assets and liabilities were taken over by the Stiftung Abendrot, effective January 1, 2012, and an agreement has been signed by LWF and Abendrot Foundation. With the liquidation of the LWF Staff Welfare Plan, LWF is only liable to pay the monthly employer contributions to the fund and no longer liable for managing the pension funds nor for any under coverage in pension funds.

(99) The LWF Endowment Fund is a separate legal entity; its results are not consolidated within the LWF financial statements. The Report of the LWF Endowment Fund Board had been shared with the Council. Contributions to the Endowment fund in 2013 were CHF 91,191, following the lowest point in 2012 and continuing a trend of receipts below expectations. On the other hand, the investment performance of the portfolio in 2013 was positive with a net return of CHF 582,129.

(100) The 2013 Operating Reserve shows a positive balance of CHF 530,171 that is available for potential distribution as per the distribution policy. The total assets of the Endowment Fund are CHF 13,809,660 including the Endowment benefiting LWF that is held in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Endowment Fund Pooled Trust.

(101) Ms Jackson-Skelton concluded by offering her thanks to the leadership of the Lutheran World Federation, its staff and its Council, has maintained a strong commitment to financial stability, a balanced budget and adequate cash reserves to ensure on-going operations.

(102) One Council member asked why the reserve fund had declined in Geneva.
Ms Jackson-Skelton explained that this was due to exchange losses on the various currencies. It is hoped that these losses will be recovered in the coming year and the rates swing back.

The Council

VOTED: to receive the Report of the Chairperson for the Finance Committee with appreciation and refer it to the Finance Committee and other Council Committees for discussion and appropriate action.

11. KEYNOTE PANEL ON INTERFAITH

The session was chaired by Presiding Bishop Dr Alex G. Malasusa, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. He welcomed Ms Kamala Chandrakirana, human rights advocate from Jakarta, Rev. Bonar Lumbantobing, lecturer at the Theological Seminary of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestan in Pematang Siantar, and Prof. Dr Katimin, from the State Islamic Institute in Medan (IAIN). They shared their insights on current issues in interreligious relations in Indonesia as they relate to manifold societal changes in this country.

Ms Kamala Chandrakirana provided a sharp analysis on achievements and setbacks within the last 15 years. She described the rebuilding of democratic institutions after 32 years of authoritarian rule, the legal framework, and concrete procedures that guarantee human rights and gender justice. At the same time, she pointed to rampant discrimination, especially against women and minorities, in some cases backed-up by so-called “local regulations”. With reference to data collected by the Komnas Perempuan (National Commission of Violence against Women) she spoke of currently 342 local regulations mostly at district level, which are discriminatory against women and minorities (in comparison to 154 of such regulations in 2009). She deplored that the Supreme Court and the Ministry of Home Affairs have failed to put these discriminatory regulations under effective judicial review. Ms Chandrakirana named impunity as a key problem and said that “violence and discrimination against minorities are rampant and occur with impunity, making the Indonesian state a recurring violator of freedom of religion or belief:

- An average of 230 cases of religious violence against minorities each year between 2008-2013 (Setara Institute)
  - the victims: Ahmadiyah, Syiah, Christian, indigenous beliefs
  - the perpetrators: non-state and state actors at the local level
- Since 2005, more than 100 people have been prosecuted for blasphemy under a discriminatory 1965 anti-blasphemy law produced by an undemocratic state
- A 2006 ministerial decree on ‘religious harmony’ which effectively restricts the construction of new houses of worship for religious minorities"

In her analysis, Ms Chandrakirana highlighted the critical role of state actors, but also discussed the role of religious communities amidst current changes in society. She underlined that religious institutions, too, are “sites of contestation”: On the one hand, they can and do use religious interpretation to legitimate discriminatory policies and acts, on the other hand, religious communities can also be a space where new understandings are being developed. With reference to her own religious community, Islam, she said: “In Indonesia, which is the country with the largest population of Muslims in the world, I have been part of the emergence of a new theology that recognizes equality between men and women, respects diversity and human rights for all, and promotes the secular state as a logical consequence of its worldview. The vibrancy of new thinking within religious communities – rooted in and responsive to the
realities of today's life – is a prerequisite for the continued relevance of religion to our future, and depends on the extent of democratic space within religious communities themselves."

Rev. Bonar Lumbantobing spoke about insights for building constructive interfaith relations from an Indonesian Lutheran perspective. In the first part of his presentation, he gave an outline of the historic developments in the encounter between Christians and Muslims in North Sumatera from the 19th century until today. He spoke about the strong impact of the missionary movement and then referred to the effects of the economic developments, especially how establishing new plantations (palm oil, rubber, cacao, etc.) attracted migrant workers from other parts of Indonesia and beyond and thereby contributed to a rich multi-ethnic and multi-religious configuration of North Sumatera. He pointed to many decades of peaceful living together between people of different faiths, and then he also mentioned the repressive state power under Suharto in the second half of the 20th century. Currently there are a number of different dynamics: Due to increasing economic injustice and environmental destruction, there are civil society initiatives where Christians and Muslim come together to jointly work and advocate for change. Furthermore, the life-threatening experiences of natural disasters like earthquakes and volcano eruption also trigger interreligious cooperation. On the other hand, there have also been experiences of violence and discrimination between different religious communities in Indonesia.

In the second part of his presentation, Rev. Lumbantobing highlighted some theological themes that are topical in relation to people of other faiths in Indonesia. First of all, he referred to the missionaries who encouraged the Christians to understand their lives as a channel of God's blessing for their fellow human beings. By quoting Luther, Rev. Lumbantobing underlined the meaning and impact of the vocation of a Christian to love and serve the neighbour. Rev. Lumbantobing interpreted the meaning of neighbour-love through Luther's notion of the *larvae Dei* (masks of God). He argued that God is at work in the neighbour-love of Christians, though in a hidden way, and Christ is present in our fellow human-beings. Furthermore, he pointed to Jer 29:7 and invited to joint commitment for the common good in society. Finally, he urged Christians and Muslims together to direct engagement and involvement in the lives of the vulnerable and marginalized. Choices for the lives of the excluded have to be made in a world where the global market economy produces exclusion. Rev. Lumbantobing ended with the visionary affirmation that God invites us to participate in a cosmic celebration as God will restore the whole of creation.

Prof. Dr Katimin from the IAIN in Medan gave a brief overview of interreligious relations in Indonesia from a Muslim perspective. He affirmed that interfaith relations in Indonesia are generally good, and not as contentious as in the Middle East or Africa. Nevertheless, he admitted that there are also tensions in Indonesia, as it is a challenge to live with a huge diversity, and active radical groups. Tensions arise, in particular, in relation to specific groups such as the Shia group in Sampang Madura, Ahmadiyah etc.

Prof. Dr Katimin highlighted the role of the two big Islamic civil society organizations Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah that are active in the fields of conflict prevention, conflict handling and de-radicalization. They continue to engage in dialogue with groups that the Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI, Council of Islamic Scholars in Indonesia) has declared deviant sects, such as sufistic sects in Titipapan Medan, and Percut Sei Tuan Deli Serdang. Furthermore, they continually develop a consistent and moderate theology through *pesantren* educational curriculum or by way of seminars, workshops, dialogues and discussions in North-Sumatra. In Nahdlatul Ulama, theological thinking and ethos moderation plays a key role.
Prof. Dr Katimin expressed the hope that Christians and Muslims can together empower people in society to live peacefully together. He pointed to local wisdom in the communities, especially in North-Sumatra, such as: Aron (Karonese tradition in cultivating agriculture), marriage and religious ceremonies, i.e., Christmas and Idul Fitri that involves mutual visitation. Furthermore, he commended joint activities in protecting the environment, in disaster response and disaster preparedness.

12. LWF TWELFTH ASSEMBLY

The session was chaired by LWF Vice-President Bishop Dr Frank July. LWF Vice-President and member of the Assembly Planning Committee (APC) Rev. Dr Gloria Rojas Vargas introduced the Report of the first APC meeting held in February 2014 in Geneva.

Summarizing the main topics reflected in the APC report, General Secretary Rev. Martin Junge gave a PowerPoint Presentation providing detailed information on the various issues for decision by the Council.

Theme of the Assembly

The Council took note of the theme and subthemes as developed by the “Special Committee 500 Years of Reformation” combining the theme and subthemes for the Assembly and the Reformation Anniversary.

Upon the recommendation of the APC, the Council

VOTED to adopt “Liberated by God’s grace” as theme for the LWF Twelfth Assembly

to approve the three sub-themes to be used to structure the content of the LWF Twelfth Assembly:

- Salvation – not for sale
- Human beings – not for sale
- Creation – not for sale

Structure and Length of the Assembly

The Council noted the proposed main dimensions as well as specific purposes.

Upon the recommendation of the APC, the Council

VOTED to adopt the following main dimensions to structure the life of the Assembly:

- Celebration (worship, Eucharist, prayers);
- Enrichment, reflection and discernment (Bible studies, small group discussions, plenary discussion, keynote addresses, exposure visits);
- Joint decision-making (business sessions for actions on reports, elections, Assembly message, other Constitutional matters);
- to commend to the various Assembly preparatory committees, for their information and consideration, the comments and proposals to be found in the relevant parts of
The Council furthermore approved the APC’s recommendation on specific purposes for the Twelfth Assembly and

(120) VOTED: to consider the following specific purposes for the LWF Twelfth Assembly:

a. Commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, with special reference to its ecumenical and global contexts.

b. Help empower the Lutheran Communion and its churches as they begin their witness and service for the next 500 years, discerning and sharing how the Lutheran Reformation continues to be alive and active in the church in the world.

c. Learn about and reflect upon the local context of Namibia and the regional context of Southern Africa, with special reference to the reconciliation and healing and to the impact of the involvement of the Lutheran World Federation.

Upon the recommendation of the APC, the Council

(121) VOTED to approve the following duration of the Twelfth Assembly:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 May 2017</td>
<td>Meeting of Officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 May 2017</td>
<td>Pre-Assembly Council Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 – 16 May 2017</td>
<td>Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 May 2017</td>
<td>Post-Assembly Council Meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Composition of the Twelfth Assembly

(122) Some comments were made regarding the composition of the Twelfth Assembly and the various categories particularly regarding the categories of Visitors and Advisers.

Upon the recommendation of the APC, the Council

(123) VOTED to approve the category of participants for the LWF Twelfth Assembly as outlined in the Council Exhibit 12.1.1.

Proposed Key for nominating delegates

(124) In response to an inquiry, it was explained that the number of delegates assigned was a projection only based on the proposed nomination key. Member churches are free to decide on the composition of their delegations. However, with the invitation letter to nominate their delegates, member churches will be reminded of the constitutional requirements as well as of the decisions taken by the 8th and 9th Assembly with regard to female and youth participation. It was hoped that the regions would use the additional seats to ensure gender balance and youth participation.

(125) Another comment referred to the delegation size of small member churches, asking to consider an increase of the number of delegates of smaller churches.
Upon the recommendation of the APC, the Council

(126) VOTED to approve the revised key for the nomination of delegations as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church Membership</th>
<th>No. Delegates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 25,000</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,001 - 100,000</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000 - 500,000</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500,001 - 1,000,000</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000,001 - 2,000,000</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,000,001 - 3,000,000</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,000,001 - 4,000,000</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,000,001 - 5,000,000</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,000,001 - 6,000,000</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6,000,001 - 7,000,000</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Regional delegates for gender and youth balance: Africa: 8, Asia: 8, Europe: 6, LAC: 6, North America: 4

Total delegates: 370 – approximate 167 men, 131 women, 72 youth (40 young men and 32 young women)

Logo for the Assembly and Reformation Anniversary

(127) The head of the Office for Communications presented the proposed logo. Participants expressed gratitude likewise appreciating that the same logo was used for the Assembly as well as for the Reformation anniversary. It was requested that detailed background information material on the logo and its use be shared early enough for distribution in congregations and communities.

Upon the recommendation of the APC, the Council

(128) VOTED: to approve the Logo for the LWF Twelfth Assembly as presented in Council Exhibit 12.1.3;

to approve the Logo for the Reformation Anniversary as presented in Council Exhibit 12.1.4

Budget of the Assembly

(129) The discussion on the Assembly budget was postponed until the Finance Committee would meet. The Finance Committee was requested to include a revised Assembly budget in their report and bring it back to the Council for discussion and action in a later session.

The Council

(130) VOTED: to receive the Report of the Assembly Planning Committee with appreciation.
13. **LWF COMMUNION OFFICE OPERATIONAL PLAN (COOP) 2015 – 2016 AND BUDGET 2015**

(131) The General Secretary presented the LWF Communion Office Operational Plan 2015 – 2016 and the Budget 2015. The report and the budget were discussed by the respective committees with specific focus on their priorities. Committees forwarded their recommendations to the Finance Committee. The Council took action based on the Report of the Finance Committee (see item 17.3 paragraph nr 165 -166).

14. **COMMITTEE FOR THEOLOGY AND ECUMENICAL RELATIONS**

(132) The chairperson of the committee, Bishop Dr Milos Klátik, presented the Report of the Committee for Theology and Ecumenical Relations.

14.1 **Report of the Chairperson of the Board of the Lutheran Foundation for Interconfessional Research**

(133) The committee expressed its appreciation of the work of the staff of the Institute for Ecumenical Research.

The Council

(134) **VOTED:**

- to receive the Report of the Chairperson of the Board of the Lutheran Foundation for Interconfessional Research with appreciation;
- to express appreciation for the continued support by the Institute for the bilateral dialogues and for its substantial contributions to these dialogues; and
- to affirm the strong commitment of the LWF to the assessment process which the Institute is about to enter.


The Council

(135) **VOTED:**

- to receive the Report of the Lutheran–Reformed Joint Commission between the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC), 2006—2012 and its recommendations with appreciation and to commend the report to the member churches for study.

There was no discussion and the Council

(136) **VOTED:**

- to receive the Report of the Committee for Theology and Ecumenical Relations with appreciation.

15. **COMMITTEE FOR MISSION AND DEVELOPMENT**

(137) The chairperson of the Committee for Mission and Development, Bishop Niels H. Arendt, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark, presented the report.
15.1 **The Report of the Committee for Mission and Development**

The Council

(138) **VOTED:** to receive the Report of the Committee for Mission and Development with appreciation.

15.2 **Department for Mission and Development (DMD) Review Process**

(139) The chairperson of the Committee for Mission and Development reported on the DMD process to refocus its work. Based on the report of the committee,

The Council

(140) **VOTED:** to approve the renewed DMD programmatic directions of Communion Building, Church Growth and Sustainability, and Capacity for Diakonia.

15.3 **Task Force on Resource Sharing in the LWF Communion of Churches**

(141) The chairperson also reported that as a follow-up of the LWF Council June 2013 decision, the Department for Mission and Development would take the initiative to research and analyse trends and changing dynamics in funding relationships between LWF, member churches and related organizations. A Task Force on Resource Sharing in the LWF Communion of Churches that involved Committee for Mission and Development members was established.

The Council

(142) **VOTED:** to request DMD to establish mechanisms for communion solidarity for member churches to share gifts and support each other. These support mechanisms could include funding such as a communion solidarity fund, human resources and other capacity building aspects.

15.4 **Other items**

(143) The committee’s comments on the Report of the General Secretary were received. The comments lighted up the concern relating to the absence of HIV and AIDS programs and responsibilities in the LWF. On this issue the committee called for further discussions on the place and priority given to HIV and AIDS issues in the LWF Communion of Churches.

(144) Information was shared on the proposed Guidelines for the Exchange of Personnel within the LWF Communion of Churches. The guidelines are intended to create a better understanding about the functioning of the basic principles and procedures for the exchange of church workers and personnel in the communion. A detailed report on this process is expected at the Council in 2015.

(145) Additionally, the committee shared information on LWF member church projects approved by the Subcommittee for Mission and Development during its meeting in April 2014.

16. **COMMITTEE FOR WORLD SERVICE**

(146) The chairperson of the committee, Rev. Dr Augustine Jeyakumar, presented the Report of the Committee for World Service to the Council.
The Committee for World Service at its meeting in January 2014 discussed the status of Associate Programs of the Lutheran World Federation, World Service. Associate Programs are former World Service programs now under autonomous local governance but closely connected to the World Service. The Committee for World Service appreciates the close relationship and cooperation and agrees with the request of the Associate Programs to strengthen the link between World Service and its Associate Programs by creating an advisory position to the Committee for World Service for one representative of the Associate Programs to be nominated collectively by the Associate Programs for a 3 year term.

In reply to a question on the financial implications of this recommendation, it was explained that the costs implied by this new advisory position would be covered by the World Service’s budget.

The Council

VOTED: to create an advisory position to the Committee for World Service for one representative of the Associate Programs of the Lutheran World Federation, World Service, to be nominated collectively by the Associate Programs for a 3-year term.

The Council

VOTED: to receive the Report of the Committee for World Service with appreciation.

As per decision of the Director for World Service to resign from his position as of end of August 2014, the President expressed gratitude on behalf of the Council for all what he has done for World Service. He highlighted the diligence, passion, commitment and missionary approach of the Director for World Service in managing the largest department of LWF. The President thanked the Director for World Service in expanding the capacity of World Service to respond to global needs as a respected international humanitarian and development arm of the Communion. He also highlighted the important role of the Director for World Service in involving, beyond consulting, the church in the work of World Service.

The Council echoed the President’s words of gratitude with a standing ovation for the Director for World Service.

The chairperson of the committee, Rev. Dr Augustine Jeyakumar, also thanked the Director for his guidance to the Committee for World Service.

Finally, the Director for World Service expressed his gratitude to the Council and mentioned that it has been outstanding honour and privilege to serve LWF over the last eight years. He thanked the Council for its commitment and support towards global mission and diaconal work. He recommended World Service as a fantastic treasure for the Communion and a very strong tool to reach out to the poor and oppressed.

Rev. Eberhard Hitzler will continue to work for LWF in serving as Special Representative of the LWF General Secretary for the Trusteeship on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem and in a review process of the AVH legal structurees, from September 2014 onwards.

17. **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

The President called on the chairperson of the Finance Committee, Ms Jackson-Skelton, to present the report to the Council. Thanking the committee for its diligent work, Ms Jackson-Skelton read the report with its eight recommendations.
She then referred to the main areas discussed by the committee and brought as information to the Council: her Finance Committee report, the LWF Audited Financial Statements for 2013, the Appointment of the External Auditor for 2014, the Communion Office Operational Plan (2015-2016), the LWF Budget and Program Plan for 2015, the LWF Membership Fees 2015-2016, the LWF 12th Assembly Budget, and an overview of the activities of the Office for Finance including resource mobilization.

The chairperson of the Endowment Fund Board, Rev. Dr Robin Steinke, took a moment to present the new Endowment Fund brochure and reminded Council members of the opportunity to support the Fund financially.

One council member thanked Rev. Dr Steinke for this presentation. It is the responsibility of the regions to support the Endowment Fund but it is useful to receive reminders from the Communion Office.

In conclusion, Ms Jackson-Skelton thanked the staff of the Office for Finance for their work and guidance to the committee members over the past year.

The President thanked Ms Jackson-Skelton for the report.

17.1 **LWF Audited Reports and Financial Statements**

The Council

(162) **VOTED:**

to receive the Report of the Auditors on the Consolidated Financial Statements for the year ended December 31, 2013; and

to receive and adopt the Consolidated Financial Statements and the Financial Statements of the Department for Theology and Public Witness, Department for Mission and Development, Department for World Service, Department for Planning and Operations and General Secretariat for the year ended December 31st, 2013.

17.2 **Appointment of Auditors**

The Council

(163) **VOTED:**

to appoint PricewaterhouseCoopers as the LWF auditor in Geneva for the fiscal year 2014.

17.3 **Communion Office Operational Plan 2015 - 2016**

The Council

(164) **VOTED:**

to approve the LWF Communion Office Operational Plan 2015 – 2016;

to authorize the General Secretary to revise the COOP as need arises;

to request the General Secretary to report annually to the Council about the implementation of the LWF Communion Office Operational Plan.
17.4 **LWF Budget and Program Plan for 2015**

The Council

(165) VOTED: to approve the LWF Budget for 2015 with expenditure of EUR 106,297,472 as presented in Exhibit 13.1; to charge any possible deficit against the reserves of the respective departments; to authorize the LWF Communion Office to fundraise for the LWF Program Plans as presented in Exhibit 13.1; to authorize the Meeting of Officers to approve adjustments to this budget as necessary.

17.5 **LWF Membership Fees for 2015 & 2016**

The Council

(166) VOTED: to approve the updated membership fees for 2015 and 2016 amounting to EUR 2,916,989 as presented in Exhibit 10.1 and to strongly encourage all member churches to pay their full fair membership fees; to approve the LWF minimum membership fee of EUR 77.00.

17.6 **Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH)**

The Council

(167) VOTED: to affirm the actions taken by the LWF Board of Trustees; namely:

1. to express gratitude to the AVH management board as well as to the LWF member churches for their various efforts to address the cash flow crisis of the AVH;

to request the AVH management and board as well as LWF member churches to continue with these efforts until the situation is resolved;

to request the AVH management and the LWF Communion Office to continue deploying all possible efforts to resolve the current cash flow situation;

to request the General Secretary to closely monitor the developments so as to ensure:

- The LWF’s ongoing solvency
- The avoidance of a qualified audit of the AVH operations
to request the General Secretary to regularly update the Board of Trustees on the situation;

2. to reconfirm the commitment of the LWF to the AVH and its diaconal services;
17.7 Twelfth Assembly Budget

The Council

VOTED: to approve the Revised Twelfth Assembly Budget of EUR 2,994,964 to approve the member church Assembly Fees as reflected in Exhibit 12.1.6 Annex 2 (revised) and to commend to the member churches the payment of the fees before the 2017 Assembly to authorize the Meeting of Officers to take any further action on the budget, as needed.

17.8 Report of the 2013 Communion Office Operational Plan

The Council

VOTED: to approve the Report on the implementation of the 2013 Communion Office Operational Plan, with appreciation.

17.9 Issues discussed by the Committee

17.9.1 Finance Office Activities

The committee received an overview of the Finance Office activities including information on the application of the new single accounting system, general reserves and treasury fund activities.

17.9.2 Resource Mobilization

The committee includes resource mobilization within its responsibilities. It was encouraging to receive reports on the recent progress being made in generating additional resources for the LWF. The committee extends genuine appreciation to those member churches that paid their membership fee in 2013 and would encourage, in particular, all Council members to act as champions in this respect.

The committee also discussed the Directions Paper on Fundraising and encouraged the staff to finalize the strategy with the input from the Finance Committee.
17.9.3 2013 Audited Financial Statements of other LWF Entities
(173) The committee reviewed and took note of the 2013 Audited Financial Statements of the Lutheran Foundation for Interconfessional Research, the Staff Welfare Plan (SWP) Liquidation Accounts and the LWB Stiftung (LWF Endowment Fund Foundation).

The Council
(174) VOTED: to approve the Report of the Finance Committee with appreciation.

18. COMMITTEE FOR ADVOCACY AND PUBLIC VOICE
(175) The acting chairperson of the committee, Ms Mikka McCracken, presented its report.

18.1 Public Statement on Climate Justice
(176) In the discussion a question was raised about what was new and that such a statement needed to be heard. Ms McCracken mentioned that this statement highlights the new Fast for the Climate campaign and the importance of the upcoming Conferences of Parties to the Climate Change Convention in 2014 and 2015. Another member of the Council said that this statement was important for the LWF’s advocacy work at the conferences. However, a shorter version may be needed to promote discussion within congregations. Ms McCracken noted that Ms Martinussen had met with the committee and it was hoped that her office could be called upon to assist in this task.

The Council
(177) VOTED: to adopt the following public statement:

The Lutheran World Federation, a communion consisting of 72 million Lutherans worldwide, regards the challenge of present and future Climate Change with utmost seriousness. Both from the perspective of our belief in God as the Creator and from the perspective of justice and human rights, Climate Change is a matter that must be urgently addressed by human beings in our age.

“As Christians, we do not live in the despair and melancholy of the tomb, but in the light of the Risen Christ. Our resurrection hope is grounded in the promise of renewal and restoration for all of God’s Creation, which gives us energy, strength and perseverance in the face of overwhelming challenge. For us, this promise is more than an abstraction. It is a challenge to commit ourselves to walk a different course and serve as the hands of God in working to heal the brokenness of our hurting world.” (Joint statement of the Episcopal Church, the Church of Sweden, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), May 2013)

The LWF expresses its gratitude for its longstanding partnership with the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the ACT Alliance in caring for creation and working together for climate justice.

This statement aims to:
- provide background information about the engagement of the LWF with climate justice,
present the position of the LWF regarding Climate Change, and

propose ideas for the work of LWF on this issue up to 2016.

Background

2014 is crucial year in shaping the human response to Climate Change, during which the United Nations will determine the scale and ambition of a global warming treaty. In this context, religious leaders play an important role in advocating for an ambitious and binding global agreement on climate change. The upcoming December 2014 UN Climate Change Conference in Lima (Conference of Parties [COP] 20) will lay the foundations for binding agreements which must be reached in Paris in December 2015 (COP21). Throughout the year, there are significant moments in the climate advocacy calendar, and LWF will be represented at all of them:

- The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) session in Bonn, Germany
- The UN Climate Summit in New York, USA
- COP20 in Lima, Peru

At this critical juncture we look back and recall:

- the Public Statement of the Tenth Assembly in 2003 on the United States and the Kyoto Protocol,
- the Resolution adopted by the LWF Council in 2008 on Climate Change,
- the Resolution adopted by the LWF Eleventh Assembly in 2010 on Climate Change,
- the recommendation from the LWF Delegation to the COP18, the capacity building work on advocating for climate justice by the Department for Mission and Development and the Department for Theology and Public Witness, and
- the work of the LWF Department for World Service in responding to this issue through its projects of adaptation to climate change in the field.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) fifth Assessment Report (AR5) is in the final stages of completion. It concludes that the reality of Climate Change is “unequivocal” and that there is increasing certainty that anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions play a measurable and significant role.

Science detects human influence in the warming of the atmosphere and the ocean, in changes in the global water cycle, in reductions in snow and ice, in global mean sea level rise, and in changes in some climate extremes. This evidence for human influence has increased since AR4 in 2007. It is therefore extremely likely that human
influence has been the dominant cause of scientifically observed warming since the mid-20th century. (IPCC, 10.3-10.6, 10.9)

It seems that many aspects of climate change will persist for centuries even if we succeed in halting the increase in CO₂ emissions. This presents the need to create a long-term, multi-century Climate Change commitment as a result of past, present and future emissions of CO₂ gases. (IPCC, p. 27)

The Position of the LWF

As a result of these reports, the LWF understands that:

- Climate change is real and influenced by human actions;
- Increasingly severe impacts are already being experienced on every continent, with growing economic and social costs;
- If we act now it will still be possible to keep global warming below the internationally agreed danger-threshold of an increase of 2 degrees Celsius. To achieve this, carbon pollution must be reduced quickly; and
- Climate change is a matter of social and economic justice, as it most affects the poorest people and displaces the most vulnerable.

As those who live in the resurrection hope of renewal and restoration for all of God’s Creation, we believe we cannot stand by and ignore the impacts of Climate Change. Creation groans under the weight of human action and inaction (Rom 8:22). Our hope for justice and peace for all, and our trust in God, forms the impetus for this statement. We believe that taking global action now can make a difference.

Call for Commitment by the World’s Leaders

1. The LWF calls on world political and business leaders to:

   a) Design and agree on elements of a strong global response to climate change that reflects the strong and growing scientific and environmental evidence and draft an ambitious new climate agreement to tackle climate change in the coming decades;

   b) Urge Heads of State and key decision makers to make it a personal priority to address the human contribution to Climate Change, and make firm commitments for deeper cuts in carbon pollution;

   c) Make national contributions meaningful by ensuring that they feature convincing targets to reduce carbon pollution while providing money to help poorer countries take climate action as well; and

   d) Respect the principles of equity, ensuring that the response includes provisions to assist the most vulnerable communities to adapt to the impacts of Climate Change already being
experienced, and to account for the loss and damage being caused.

Call for Commitment by Member Churches

2. The LWF calls on its member churches to:

a) Take action now to initiate or strengthen policies and practices aimed at becoming sustainable and eco-friendly, with the goal of becoming carbon-neutral at organizational, congregational and personal levels by 2050;

b) Help and galvanize each other in the communion by sharing their good practices through the LWF Facebook page LWF for Climate Justice;

c) Engage in sustained climate justice advocacy with local and national governments as soon as possible, in the perspective of COP20 in Lima, Peru, and all along the process leading to COP21 in Paris, France. This advocacy would be based upon the advocacy call of the LWF and the policy papers on climate justice of the ACT Alliance;

d) Promote and work with ecumenical and interfaith climate justice initiatives in the local, national and regional contexts; and

e) Sign up to the #fastfortheclimate campaign on the 1st day of each month until December 1, 2015, at the beginning of COP21 in Paris:

“We fast in solidarity with the poor and vulnerable who are unduly affected by extreme weather events. We fast to underline the urgency of the negotiations on climate change. We fast in many different places and faith communities worldwide, united in a common practice. We fast for climate justice.”

http://www.lutheranworld.org/fastfortheclimate.

A Joint Commitment to Global Action

As leaders of the Lutheran World Federation – A Communion of Churches, we commit to join the global Christian community, and people of all faiths and persuasions, on the journey for climate justice. This task is one that we can only achieve when we unite in a common cause, living out our joint destiny on this fragile, beautiful world which we all share.

18.2 Resolution on Universal Code of Conduct on Holy Sites

The acting chairperson of the committee, Ms McCracken, read the proposed resolution. A question was raised about the origins of the code. Ms McCracken pointed out the members of the writing group. In response to a question, Bishop Younan noted that the Code was supported by the Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land, which is a group in which the three Abrahamic traditions are represented. A request was made to see detailed resolutions such as these earlier so they can be studied prior to voting. In response the General Secretary said that efforts would be made in future to have briefings sessions on
detailed or new topics at future Council meetings. It was noted that the Code had been mentioned in the President’s report and that the proposed text built upon the Council’s action in 2013 on freedom of religion. A motion to postpone action until the following day was defeated. It was noted that Religions for Peace encompassed additional faith traditions such as Hindus, Sikhs, Taoists, etc. A member recalled that numerous attacks were occurring on holy places beyond the Israeli-Palestinian context, such as in South Asia. It was important to signal our support for interfaith harmony and not chaos. Bishop Halmanson was invited to describe a recent interfaith commitment and action to affirm as holy a place of religious significance to Lutherans, Mennonites and First Nations in Canada. The General Secretary said that the Code was not tailor-made for one specific situation. He said that the Code would be helpful to have in the Central and Eastern Europe contexts, for example.

The Council

(179) VOTED: to adopt the following resolution:

Preamble

(180) The Universal Code of Conduct on Holy Sites was developed in consultation with religious leaders and experts from many of the world’s major faiths by a writing group of representatives from the following organizations: One World in Dialogue (EVID), Oslo Centre for Peace and Human Rights, Religions for Peace (RfP) and Search for Common Ground (SFCG). After consultation with experts from different faith traditions worldwide beginning in 2009 and throughout 2010, a universal code of conduct on holy sites was finalized in early 2011. During 2011, 2012 and 2013 a number of endorsements to the universal code of conduct have been obtained from interfaith networks and religious communities, among them: the World Council of Religions for Peace, the World Sikh Leadership, Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land, President of the All India Imam Organization, World Council of Churches, and the Russian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate.

The Council:

(181) VOTED: to endorse the Universal Code of Conduct on Holy Sites;

to encourage member churches to support initiatives in their contexts; and

to call upon the United Nations to adopt a UN resolution in the spirit of the Code.

18.3 Public Statement on Indonesia

(182) Ms McCracken read the proposed public statement. Mr Deffenbaugh noted that the text had been discussed with the LWF National Committee for Indonesia as well as the new LWF Council member from Indonesia prior to being distributed to the Council.

(183) VOTED: to adopt the following Public Statement on Indonesia:

The LWF Council, meeting in Medan, Indonesia 12-17 June 2014, is thankful to the thirteen Indonesian Lutheran member churches for their warm welcome and hospitality. Indonesia has the fourth largest number of Lutherans in the world—5.8 million—and two-thirds of all Lutherans in Asia are Indonesians. We give thanks to God for the Indonesian sisters’ and brothers’ vibrant and faithful witness to the Gospel and for the way in which they live out their faith in love and
service for the neighbor. They live in communion amidst diversity. It has been a great blessing to have our meeting here.

We have marveled at the immense size and diversity of Indonesia, the fourth-largest nation of the world, with more than 17,000 islands and more than 500 languages and dialects, tied together by the unifying language of Bahasa Indonesia. Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world—86% of its 240 million people. The Indonesian state is based on the philosophy of Pancasila—Five Principles: belief in God, just and civilized humanity, the unity of Indonesia, representative democracy, and social justice.

There are so many impressive achievements of the Indonesian people to celebrate and for which to give thanks. Among them are:

- A constitutional framework that provides for freedom of religion and the equal rights and dignity of each citizen;
- The lively revival of democracy since 1998;
- The huge treasure of how Indonesians deal with diversity, allowing so many people to live together peacefully, in most places at most times;
- The valuable “local wisdom” which helps to promote the cultural and religious respect for each other;
- The vibrant civil society; and
- The way the country has been helped by women and men working together toward addressing the important concern of gender justice.

We have also learned that there are pressing challenges with which the people of Indonesia are grappling. Among them are:

- Inconsistent enforcement of the rule of law as the country has been decentralized, with certain laws and practices enforced in different ways in different regions and local areas;
- The need for the national government and local authorities to protect the rights of all religious communities, especially the Shia, Ahmadiyya, Christians, Buddhists, Confucians, and those who practice local religious traditions;
- An increasing separation of people in their daily lives along religious lines;
- Economic justice issues such as increasing gaps between the rich and the poor, and the use of land; and
- Environmental degradation, deforestation, and increasing CO₂ emissions.

The LWF Council joins and supports the Indonesian churches in their efforts to uphold freedom of religion, their interreligious solidarity in working against injustice and in responding to human
need, and in their continuing engagement in dialogue with different religious groups to promote understanding, just and peaceful communities and environmental protection.

We give thanks to God for the people and churches of Indonesia.

18.4 Public Statement on Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa

Ms McCracken read the proposed statement.

The Council (185) VOTED: to adopt the following Public Statement on Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa:

We, the members of the Council of the Lutheran World Federation, meeting in Medan, Indonesia June 11-17, 2014, representing 72 million Lutherans in 144 member churches in 79 countries;

Bearing in mind the recent statements made by the Lutheran Council in Africa and the General Church Council of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria;

Having shared the pain caused by, inter alia, the abduction of more than 270 school girls and, in separate incidents, the abduction of women by Boko Haram in Nigeria; bombings in Kenya and Tanzania; and violence in the Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan and South Sudan which spills over to Chad, Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, Cameroon and other countries in the region;

We strongly and unreservedly condemn violence irrespective of who the perpetrators are.

We therefore resolve to call upon:

Boko Haram to release the school girls and others abducted in Nigeria unconditionally and immediately;

The Nigerian and all African governments and all other U.N. member states to act jointly in order to prevent such barbaric actions to be taken in future and to take action together now to secure release of all those abducted;

Al-Shabaab and its allies to desist from using violence as a vehicle to air and articulate their grievances;

Seleka and Anti-Balaka in the Central African Republic to desist from killing their fellow citizens. Especially egregious are acts of violence perpetrated in the name of religion;

The combatants in South Sudan, who have already caused much bloodshed, interrupted the planting season and are directly responsible for an impending famine which will likely affect 7 million people, to cease hostilities;
The faith communities in the region to engage in inter-faith dialogue so as to foster the spirit and culture of peaceful co-existence in this part of God’s world, which God has given to all its people;

The churches of the Lutheran World Federation and their ecumenical partners to engage in critical reflection on the pain and suffering people are experiencing from the violence in sub-Saharan Africa and to continue to pray for peace and work for justice in Africa and the whole world.

18.5 Public Statement on Ukraine

Ms McCracken read the proposed statement. Ms Piddubska offered some additional perspectives as someone who resides in Odessa.

VOTED: to adopt the following Public Statement on Ukraine:

The Council of the Lutheran World Federation, meeting in Medan, Indonesia June 11-17, 2014, is deeply concerned about the conflict in Ukraine which has intensified since December 2013 and has already resulted in nearly 400 deaths. This conflict, while centered in Ukraine, has the potential of destabilizing all of Europe.

We have learned from the German Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ukraine, our member church there, that many of the Ukrainian people feel helpless and cut off from the international community and that many are receiving misinformation about the reality in Ukraine. Our brothers and sisters have expressed fear that no one is willing to respond adequately to their situation, placing economic interests over the protection and preservation of human rights.

Our member church asks for our prayers and expressions of love and solidarity.

Therefore, the LWF Council, together with the German Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ukraine and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of European Russia, affirms the unity and indivisibility of the Church of Jesus Christ everywhere regardless of political divisions and calls on all member churches to:

1. Pray that God may grant wisdom to all decision-makers to establish peace, stability and common understanding between the Ukrainian and Russian nations for the sake of the people of Ukraine and in order that the current conflict does not escalate or spread to other places in the region;

2. Pray for all churches in Ukraine and pledge our spiritual support for the well-being of all people; and

3. Pray for the German Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ukraine and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of European Russia that they may continue to witness to unity in Christ despite political boundaries and divisions.
18.6  **Public Statement on Welcoming the Stranger**

(188) Ms McCracken read the proposed statement. Bishop Dr Phaswana raised the issue of some migrants to his region who, having secured some quick economic and social advantages, have left those already present to sometimes express xenophobic tendencies. Others raised concerns about how addressing this issue in the text could change its overall tone and message which was one of solidarity with migrants and refugees. The context in Europe was such that the statement, as initially proposed, would be a very useful tool. After further discussion it was requested that a small group meet to come up with a proposal.

(189) When the discussion resumed it was proposed that “All persons in a country of refuge, ‘including the stranger, are subject to its laws and none should be subject to hostility or discrimination’ (Welcoming the Stranger, 2013)” be added to end of the fourth paragraph, that the sentence which followed in the next paragraph be deleted and that “We can stand in solidarity with the communities where the newcomers are and help them address the burdens and fears of welcoming the stranger,” be added at the end of the penultimate paragraph. Following brief discussion of the substitute, the Council adopted the amendment.

The Council

(190) **VOTED:** to adopt the following public statement:

The LWF Council, meeting in Medan, Indonesia 12-17 June 2014, appreciates the affirmations thus far expressed by faith leaders in the *Welcoming the Stranger* statement, launched in June 2013 and endorsed by the LWF Council at that time. Many faith leaders and secular organizations have signed this document which was produced under the strong leadership of the LWF together with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other partners.

We see today that Welcoming the Stranger is as necessary as ever before in our world. It is part of our duty to act with love toward those in need, regardless of their religion, gender or nationality. Bearing in mind that migration can sometimes lead to great challenges, we want to focus on the positive outcomes, on the benefits of welcoming strangers:

- In many countries refugees and migrants have enriched the fabric of society;
- In many countries it has been refugees and migrants who have formed the churches there;
- Many churches have received many benefits from the migrants which, in turn, have enriched the whole communion; and
- New ways of living the faith have been brought by migrants and refugees to existing congregations, thereby enriching them.

We note that there are an increasing number of refugees in the world. Whether migrants, refugees, or those marginalized, all need our solidarity and support.
Many of them need housing, jobs, and education. We have to continue to address these needs. We recognize that there is a connection between the economic situation in a country and the preparedness to welcome strangers. We recognize that we have to work to avoid the development of tensions between the citizens of a country and the incoming migrants. All persons in a country of refuge, “including the stranger, are subject to its laws and none should be subject to hostility or discrimination.” (Welcoming the Stranger, 2013).

How can we as Lutherans, as Christians, react to this challenge?

- We can tell the story of the Holy Family who were a refugee family shortly after the birth of Jesus;
- We can tell of the strong call in the Bible for all people of faith to welcome the stranger;
- We can tell the stories of our fathers and grandfathers, our mothers and grandmothers who have often been migrants themselves or received migrants into their communities;
- We can tell the story of the LWF which has supported refugees from its beginning and ever since with tangible assistance, such as food, shelter, education, etc., and other forms of care;
- We can tell the various stories of former “strangers” who became a blessing for their societies;
- We can confess that we have not done enough. We should have greater confidence in the support God will provide: God will give us all that we and they need;
- We can recognize that it is often the poorest countries in the world that have been the first to take up and welcome refugees from other poor nations; and
- We can stand in solidarity with the communities where the newcomers are and help them address the burdens and fears of welcoming the stranger.

Therefore it is urgent that we encourage our congregations and all people of faith to build their relationships with the “strangers” among them, and to be more open, to have more faith, and to trust God’s own support.

19. **STANDING COMMITTEE FOR CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP**

19.1 **Communion of Protestant Christian Church (ONKP)**

The Council was informed that in early 2012, the Communion of Protestant Christian Church (ONKP) (based in Indonesia) applied for membership in the LWF. ONKP was originally part of an LWF member church, the Protestant Christian Church (BNKP). In 1952, it separated from BNKP and became an independent church. The main reason had to do with geographical distance and the challenges that presented. The decision was taken on good mutual terms. And on 16 April 1952, the next day, ONKP was established. However, it was only officially registered as a church in Indonesia in 1988.

Although the ONKP is not (yet) a member of the LWF National Committee in Indonesia, it is in fellowship with the rest of the LWF member churches. It has been invited to participate in the programs and training sessions of the National Committee. ONKP’s current membership is 63,274, in 56 parish churches. Its Bishop is Rev. Fatieli Gulö; its General Secretary is Rev. Matias Daeli.

The late Dr Mangisi Simorangkir (LWF Council Member) and Rev Basa Hutabarat (Executive Secretary of LWF National Committee in Indonesia) visited ONKP in Nias on 29 and 30 May 2013. Subsequent to the visit, both the BNKP and LWF National Committee have issued letters of recommendation for the ONKP to be an LWF member. In addition, the Lutheran Communion in Asia (LUCAS) meeting also endorsed the application in March 2014.

The Council

**VOTED:** to welcome with joy the Communion of Protestant Christian Church (ONKP) into membership in the Lutheran World Federation.

19.2 **Guatemala Lutheran Church (ILUGUA)**

The Council was informed that the Guatemala Lutheran Church (ILUGUA) has applied for full membership in the LWF. The ILUGUA currently consists of some 80 families with about 300 members. This number will be increasing because of outreach into the local indigenous communities.

The ILUGUA has its roots in the Independent Lutheran Communities in Guatemala formed in 1984. ILUGUA was founded in 1997 under the name “Iglesia Luterana Guatemalteca”. The ILUGUA’s main goal is to accompany vulnerable indigenous communities in order to share God’s love, celebrate God’s presence in the community (through the sacraments and sharing Bible study), promote life in the communities through sustainable development and food security, and advocate for the rights of indigenous communities.

The major reason for the LWF membership request is that the ILUGUA wants to live in communion and be accompanied and supported by Lutheran churches in the region and the world with opportunity to enhance their prophetic ministry focused in the Zacapa and Chiquimula regions among indigenous communities.

There is currently no LWF member church in Guatemala, but there are other Lutheran congregations, including one LWF Recognized Congregation. Discussions and consultations with those other Lutheran congregations in Guatemala have taken place; there is no objection to ILUGUA becoming an LWF member. On the regional level, LWF has received an endorsement letter from the Salvadoran Lutheran Church for ILUGUA’s membership application.
The Council

(200) VOTED: to welcome with joy the Guatemala Lutheran Church (ILUGUA) into membership in the Lutheran World Federation.

19.3 Addition to the Council’s Rules of Procedure

(201) The Council was informed that the LWF is facing a problem arising from repeated non-attendance by certain members of the Council, committees appointed by the Council, or ecumenical dialogue commissions. This makes it more difficult for these bodies to successfully carry out their work and is discouraging for the members who do attend and for the staff who help organize and prepare these meetings.

(202) There were several questions of clarification raised. It was noted that consideration will be given to the specific circumstances of absences, such as denial of visas. It was pointed out that the problem of absences was most acute with respect to the work of dialogue commissions where the repeated absence of a regional voice can have significant implications for the outcome of the dialogue. In these instances a conversation with the region will take place.

The Council

(203) VOTED: to add a new Section 10 to the Rules of Procedure, as follows:

10. Attendance at Meetings

Members of the Council, Advisers, and members of committees or commissions appointed by the Council are expected to attend meetings, and are requested to give timely notice if they are unable to do so. Those who are absent for two consecutive meetings may be requested by the regional vice-president to resign. Those who are absent for three consecutive meetings shall be considered to be “no longer present for his/her term of office” (see LWF Constitution Section VIII(1)).

19.4 Issues discussed by the Committee - for information to the Council

(204) The committee informed the Council that it had discussed topical areas for proposed amendments to the LWF Constitution, and corresponding amendments to the Bylaws that should be prepared in time for consideration and action at a future Council meeting.

(205) The committee also heard updates on applications or inquiries for membership by the North American Lutheran Church, the North Western Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Church (based in India), the Uganda Lutheran Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Gambia.

The Council

(206) VOTED: to receive the Report of the Standing Committee for Constitution and Membership with appreciation.

20. STANDING COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNICATIONS

(207) Mr Warime Guti, member of the committee presented the report. The Council took note of the issues discussed by the committee and

(208) VOTED: to receive the Report of the Committee for Communications with appreciation.
21. **PERSONNEL MATTERS**

(209) The Council met in an Executive Session with a separate Agenda.

22. **REPORTS FROM LWF NATIONAL COMMITTEES**

(210) In keeping with Article IX of the LWF Constitution, National Committees had been requested to submit annual activity reports.

(211) The Council was informed that the reports had been received from the National Committees of Finland, India, the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark. The reports, presented for information to the Council, were received.

23. **PLACE OF COUNCIL MEETING IN 2015**

(212) For information the Council at its meeting in June 2011 had voted to hold the next Council on 18 – 23 June 2015 in Geneva, Switzerland.

(213) One Council member requested to have a 2-day pre-workshop for youth before the next Council in Geneva, in order to prepare for the next Assembly in 2017.

(214) It was also mentioned that getting the visas for all Council members was increasingly problematic. The LWF General Secretary explained that there are ongoing discussions with the Swiss ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, who offered to support the visa applications for the upcoming meetings hold in Geneva by sharing the participants list to all Swiss embassies around the world.

The Council

(215) **VOTED:** to hold the Council meeting on 18 – 23 June 2015 in Geneva, Switzerland

24. **OTHER BUSINESS**

(216) There was no other business.

25. **CLOSING**

(217) Bishop Dr Younan started his closing speech by mentioning that he appreciated to be in Indonesia like a tree planted in streams of water. The Council felt the water of the Holy Spirit working in each member during this Council meeting and experienced love, generosity, hospitality and the power of the Christian witness in Indonesia, especially on Sunday when the local congregations gave hope and a home to the Council participants.

(218) Furthermore, he encouraged all members to continue to carry the gospel of Christ wherever they are, although recognizing that it is certainly not easy to witness being a minority such as in Indonesia. He thanked all the Council members and Advisers, churches, partner agencies, National Committees and all those who attended the Council meeting and made it meaningful, in order for all to continue growing together.

(219) Bishop Dr Younan thanked those who prepared the Bible studies that have put the Council into the mood and spirituality of Indonesia, and especially highlighted the role of Rev. Dr Martongo Sitinjak as local worship coordinator. He hoped that the Indonesian churches will bring this mood to the upcoming Assembly in Namibia.
Bishop Dr Younan thanked the local committee for all the preparation done ahead of this Council. He especially thanked Rev. Basa Hutabarat for her special role as “mother to the Council”, who received appreciation by the Council members who stood up and applauded her.

The hard work of the interpreters was highly appreciated, as well as the work of LWF staff involved in the Council preparation, including those who stayed in Geneva.

The LWF President then expressed his gratitude to the LWF General Secretary, without whom this successful Council would not have been possible. He appreciated the work done by the General Secretary during the spring and his constant availability to prepare the Council for the sake of the Communion. He then mentioned that the General Secretary and himself are not only friends, but also and most importantly brothers in Christ.

The Vice-President Presiding Bishop Dr Alex Malasusa gave special thanks to the LWF President for his patience, love and care for the Council.

Finally, the General Secretary said a few words about the time spent together as Council in these last four years and explained that he sees the communion both as a concept and a reality that leads the members into a journey of transformation. He was thankful to the Council members for growing together in this understanding, especially at a time where the Council is moving towards the second half of its short-term and the upcoming Assembly in Namibia. He felt very energized and committed thanks to the many good initiatives of this Council, such as the first session moderated by Youth members only, the self-understanding process, and the continuous work done by World Service and the churches to serve the poor and oppressed. The upcoming Assembly in Namibia is about the future, who to be, where to go, and how to offer a prophetic message to the world.

Before closing the meeting, the stewards, nicknamed “orange angels”, were called in front and thanked for showing to the Council the reality of Indonesian hospitality.

The President called for the worship and officially closed the meeting, adjourned at 11 am 16 June 2014.