

## Newsletter EEA October 2012

### Neighbourliness...

The theme of the General Assembly in Spain ('Loving our neighbour') was extremely important. Recently I heard a radio interview on developments in Europe. The two concerns mentioned most were: 1. The continuing financial and economic malaise and the social unrest arising because of that. 2. The increasing indifference toward others because of what you can call: lack of 'neighbourliness'. Not very surprising, I guess. The GA as such was a good exercise in neighbourliness, bringing together over 130 people from 36 nations.

This Newsletter brings you a small report, reasons to be thankful to the Lord and to pray for His continuing help.

### Niek Tramper

General Secretary of EEA



### General Assembly, 8 – 12 October, Coma Ruga, near Barcelona.

This 5 days conference brought several highlights, evoked many reactions. We (organizing team) are still busy with collecting recommendations and conclusions. 5 provisional conclusions:

1. 'Generosity' (the art of giving) will become an increasingly important subject to deal with in churches and organizations. It is necessary that the European church shows a more convincing example of hospitality, care, giving time, energy and money for the case of others, in particular those who are marginalized, in distress and persecuted. For no other reason than the full and unconditional grace of God in His Son, given to us who didn't deserve it at all.
2. The Bible expositions of dr. Samuel Escobar from the Gospel of John showed us how Jesus crossed barriers of culture and tradition, sickness and sin. We are called to follow Him in today's reality. Dr Escobar gave several examples of migrant (international) churches doing a better job comparing to traditional churches in Europe. They need each other badly! The nice lecture of the Ghanese pastor Victor Akko from Hamburg underlined this in a special way.
3. Dr. Christine Schirmachers lecture on the future of Christian church and Islam evoked many questions and comments. It is clear that we need to give more priority to this subject in our work.
4. Tracks and Round Tables brought several interesting conclusions about contact and cooperation of migrant and international churches, of cooperation between different European church planting networks, about the improvement of the Week of Prayer and finding resource partners.
5. Many participants commented that GA was an excellent opportunity for networking and partnerships. There was a strategic meeting of Russian speaking delegates that will have a follow up in Moscow next week.



Round table with Colin Piper



Plenary meeting



Bible Exposition by Dr. Samuel Escobar



Lecture by Dr. Christine Schirrmacher



All GA attendees

## Members Meeting at General Assembly

The Members Meeting at the GA ('Members Council') was an important meeting because of the following reasons:

1. The members accepted *EEA's Year Report '11/'12, Accounts '11, as well as Year Plan '13 and Budget '13*. Some members said that the Year plan indicated too many points of attention to be realistically doable for EEA staff. They asked for some review and focus according to the articulated vision and mission of EEA.
2. The gathering appointed *three new EXCO members*: Inga Zinge Pupina from Latvia, Julian Richards from UK (Wales), Adri Veldwijk from the Netherlands (as treasurer) and said farewell to former treasurer Joeke van der Mei with a big thank you. Also *three new members of the Authorisation Team* were appointed: Marc Jost from Switzerland, Jacob Rudolfsson from Sweden and Giuseppe Rizza from Italy. Farewell with a big thank you: Leonardo de Chirico from Italy and Kris Vleugels from Belgium.
3. Much attention was given to the *financial situation of EEA*, the financial contributions of the members and all efforts for finding reliable resource partners. We are waiting for decision of a major donor to help us with financing EEA's ministry in Brussels for a number of years and hope to have more clarity in the beginning of November. It is stressful for our staff, in particular for the socio-political team.
4. Some members expressed the idea *to set apart a day of prayer and fasting* to seek for the Lord's guidance in what is necessary for EEA in the near future, for insight in handling financial pressures and finding the right priorities in the sea of needs and opportunities in Europe and Central Asia. Such a day will be announced to general secretaries and board members soon.



Jiri Unger leading the members meeting

## The Next Generation of Evangelical Leaders of Society

This year's European Student Forum in Brussels was very special. Organised by IFES and EEA, with support from Forum Brussels, nearly 30 young Christians came from every corner of Europe (& Israel) to learn from, work and pray with mentors in politics, business, media and law, including some who had been European Student Forum participants a decade ago. Niek Tramper did Bible expositions from the book of Daniel and several interesting speakers like Katharina von Schnurbein, Arttu Mäkipää, Jeff Fountain gave their vision to the students.

There were 2 highlights. (1) Christel Ngnambi needed to step in at the last minute as the key note speaker for a prestigious evening lecture on Christian values with EU friends. Christel did a valiant job, highlighting the Global Charter of Conscience and giving depth to the discussion that followed.

(2) The prayer breakfast, kindly hosted by Sari Essayah MEP at the European Parliament. This was a time of blessing for EU guests and students alike as testimonies were shared and we all prayed together. We were exhorted to pass on the bright flame of our beliefs to the world, not the ashes, and to do so with humility, prayer and servant hearts. Many were deeply moved by the Lord and by being together as family around the breakfast table.

Please pray for the Student Forum participants and all those Brussels friends, that their salt and light will be effective because of the Lord's enabling.



## Vision 2020 – Fundamental Freedoms Project

Please pray for the continuing activities to promote the Global Charter of Conscience, which highlights the importance of religious freedom for all and the framework necessary – a civil public square.

On September 27th the Swedish Evangelical Alliance hosted a special launch of the Charter of Conscience with Os Guinness at the Ecumenical Centre in Stockholm, where a number of faith-based organizations and faith-related authorities had their offices. Faith leaders and policymakers attended. The following day, September 28<sup>th</sup> Os Guinness spoke at a special invitation-only meeting for policymakers, professors and people in education that works on issues relating to civil society, pluralism, and tolerance.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> October, the Evangelical Alliance of Ireland is organising the annual C.S. Lewis lecture in Dublin, with Os Guinness speaking on “Soul Freedom - creating safe public space for belief and unbelief”. It is hoped that a variety of leaders in Irish political, media, academic and religious life will attend.

Meanwhile, the EEA and other partners continue to have many private conversations with senior EU, government, academic and faith leaders to promote a civil public square.

Go to <http://www.facebook.com/TheGlobalCharterOfConscience> to like the Charter and to follow developments. (Please note that this is the public, neutral Facebook page. Christian comment & prayer items will continue to be posted on the Friends of EEA page).

## Co-belligerence: a resource or a threat?

A new EEA paper is now available on the website [www.europeanea.org/news.html](http://www.europeanea.org/news.html) exploring the principle of co-belligerence – when people choose to work together on something specific despite differences and even disagreements on other issues. EEA’s Public Policy Authorisation Team asked Leonardo di Chirico of the Italian Evangelical Alliance to explore why and how Evangelicals have chosen to collaborate with non-Evangelicals, what guidance we get from Scripture and what risks we should look out for. He concludes that “Co-belligerence is a resource to respond to God’s calling to serve Him faithfully and practically.”

We would welcome stories of how EEA members have worked with others and with what results. Please contact Julia Doxat-Purser, [eea@community-house.co.uk](mailto:eea@community-house.co.uk)

## Ready for take off! Toward the 3<sup>rd</sup> Mission-Net-Congress

‘Thank you for many encouraging feedbacks to our Summer-News of July 2012! In spite of “Europe on holidays”. Evi Rodemann and her team has been very busy and the **Mission-Net Board was able now to confirm** definitely: We go for the next Mission-Net congress, **28 DECEMBER 2013 TO 2 JANUARY 2014** and it will take place in **OFFENBURG, Southern Germany**. We are very happy about

further steps in preparation, finding people who are ready to invest time and know how, developing partnerships on different levels. We hope you all are subscribed to the Mission-Net Newsletter which will become now a more regular tool of information. [www.mission-net.org](http://www.mission-net.org)

We are still in need to fill certain key positions in the area of **finances, communication and operations**. Thank you for your co-operation! Together we want to see Europe – and the world beyond! - moved by young Christians who are inspired through the love of Christ.'

## News from Italy

### Open air prayer meeting for Nigeria in Rome

By Leonardo De Chirico, Rome

Since the beginning of 2012, almost 200 Christians have been killed in Nigeria in terrorist actions by the Islamic group Boko Haram. The last outbreak of violence happened on 6th August when 20 people were killed during a service. In response to this escalation of persecution, the Italian Evangelical Alliance convened an open air prayer meeting in front of the Nigerian Embassy in Rome. Fifty people representing several evangelical churches in Rome gathered on 9th August to mourn the loss of brothers and sisters, to pray for religious freedom in Nigeria and to ask for God's blessings on the country.

The meeting was opened with the singing of "Amazing Grace", both in English and Italian. An extended time of prayer followed not only for the Nigerian Christians but for the welfare of the whole of the Nigerian people according to the Gospel. A letter was handed to the Nigerian Ambassador to express the concerns of Christians around the world for what is happening and to urge the Nigerian authorities to continue to stand for religious freedom for all faith communities. A delegation of the Embassy came out to listen to all the prayers and eventually thanked for the initiative.

As global Christians it is our responsibilities to stand for the persecuted church and to advocate for religious freedom around the world.



## News from Croatia

Croatian Evangelical Alliance had its 7<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in Zagreb on Saturday, September 15. Representatives from all over Croatia came to this important event in the life of the Alliance that is constituted by Baptist Union of Croatia, Evangelical-Pentecostal Churches of Croatia, Churches of

Christ and God's Churches. Croatian Evangelical Alliance (PEV) was established in 1992, after the proclamation of independence of Croatia from Yugoslavia. Peter Kuzmic, one of the founders of the Lausanne Movement, spoke about importance of Cape Town Commitment in light of almost 40 years of the Movement.

Important point at the agenda: thanking Josip Jendricko, the Bishop of God's Church, who retired after serving as the President of the Alliance for eight years and in auguring the new President, Giorgio Grlj, the pastor of the Rijeka Baptist Church.

