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– A Communion of Churches**

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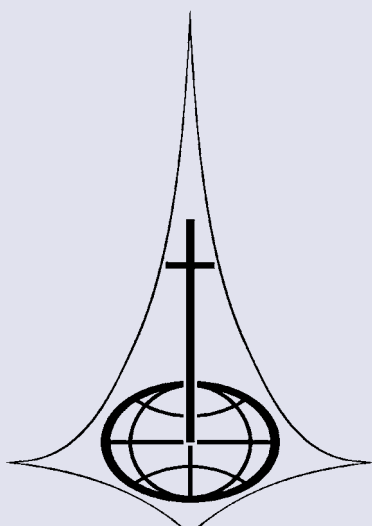
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Looking Back at 30 Years of Life-Changing Experience



Annually, staff of the LWF Department for World Service (DWS) country program in Mauritania plant thousands of small saplings to prevent the desert advancing toward the capital, Nouakchott. Today, belts of lush green forests around the capital and many villages bear witness to 30 years of DWS' effective approach. Rahma Mint Ahmedou, coordinates an environmental protection and village reforestation project. © LWF/D.-M. Gröttsch

Amadou N'diaye remembers the first assignment with his new employer in 1974—transporting materials for the planting of trees to prevent the desert advancing toward Mauritania's capital Nouakchott. Aged 25 years, with a young family, he had joined a newly established Christian organization in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

He was more familiar with the work of the Mauritania Red Crescent Society, which he later learned, worked closely with the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) to set up irrigation systems, distribute seedlings, and provide health services outside Nouakchott.

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Members of the Lutheran - Roman Catholic Commission on Unity gathered in Bari, Italy, 23-29 September, to discuss "The Apostolicity of the Church" in the last meeting of the current phase of the international Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue.

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"Travelling to a conflict zone, to meet people and understand the way they live was a privileged moment. It has deepened my own faith," is how Canadian Lutheran pastor, Dr David Pfrimmer, summed up his visit to Jayyous, a small Palestinian village near Tulkarem in the West Bank.

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Third Lutheran Woman Bishop in Norway

Rev. Helga Haugland Byfuglien was appointed bishop of the Diocese of Borg in Norway, on September 23, becoming the third woman among the 11 Church of Norway bishops. Byfuglien succeeds Bishop Ole Christian M. Kvarme, now bishop of Oslo. She will be installed during a worship service in the Cathedral of Fredrikstad on December 11.

The bishop-elect describes the church's main challenge as how to pass on the "message of love, forgiveness and hope in such a way that people find our words and deeds relevant," reports the *Church of Norway Information Service*.

Byfuglien, born in 1950, has held positions in the dioceses of Nidaros and Borg. She is also chairperson of a



*Bishop-elect Helga Haugland Byfuglien.
© Church of Norway*

national project to reform religious education in the church. Since 2001, she has been Secretary General of the Norwegian Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations (YMCA and YWCA.)

The Church of Norway, a state church, has over 1,200 clergy of whom about 12 percent are women. Its first woman bishop, Rosemarie Köhn, was appointed to the See of Hamar in February 1993. Rev. Laila Riksaasen Dahl has been bishop of the Diocese of Tunsberg since February 2003.

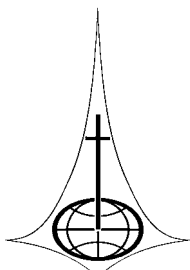
Eighty-six percent of Norwegians belong to the 3.9 million-member Church of Norway, which joined the Lutheran World Federation in 1947. *(217 words)*

Church of Sweden Archbishop Hammar to Resign in 2006

After nine years of service as head of the national Church of Sweden, **Archbishop K. G. Hammar** has announced that for personal reasons he will resign from office next summer. Election procedures for a new archbishop are

scheduled to begin next January, a news release from the church stated.

Some 87 percent of Swedes belong to the 7.2 million-member church, which joined the LWF in 1947. *(75 words)*



Christian Leaders Urge Further Partnerships with Governments to Reduce Poverty

LWF General Secretary at Religious Leaders Consultation on Global Poverty

WASHINGTON D. C., United States of America/GENEVA, 14 September 2005 (LWI) – As world leaders gathered for the United Nations World Summit, September 14–16 in New York to discuss among other concerns, global poverty reduction, an international group of Christian leaders called on world governments to facilitate further partnerships with churches and religious organizations in the fight against poverty.

“We believe that our communities of faith, representing millions of people and sponsoring numerous human-development initiatives, can provide new models for advancing a global movement against poverty,” the 30 church leaders from the Northern and Southern hemispheres said in a communiqué following a September 11–13 conference at the Washington National Cathedral, Washington D. C. A delegation of participants in the Consultation of Religious Leaders on Global Poverty presented this declaration to the World Summit in New York on the eve of the UN’s 60th anniversary.

In the communiqué, they offered their partnership with political leaders in joint efforts to build a global movement that would realize the promises of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) agreed on by world leaders in 2000. These goals are “a crucial step toward a more just world for all God’s children,” the Christian leaders said.

The General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Rev. Dr. Ishmael Noko, was among participants in the international consultation, called for by churches of different Christian traditions in their search for a common affirmation of concern for the plight of people living in poverty worldwide. The Washington National Cathedral organized the event as part of its recently-established Center for Global Justice and Reconciliation.

For Noko, the churches’ crucial role in advancing a global movement against poverty was aptly expressed by Bishop Theodore F. Schneider, Metro-

politan Washington D. C. Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Speaking at the consultation, Schneider stressed that the ecumenical community could not afford to be silent at this critical time when globalization was dividing society into the ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots.’

The representatives of churches and church bodies commended the UN as it marks its 60th anniversary this year for its work in peacemaking and global reconciliation, particularly the historic commitment to eradicate poverty in the MDGs’ declaration. They noted however, that the five years since the declaration was made had been a “triumph of principle,” but “a failure in practice.”

“The increasing concentration of wealth in our world, while so many suffer, is a scandal that impoverishes us all,” they said, and urged governments to create a just society by protecting human life, defending human rights and fostering just economies.

While welcoming the world’s wealthiest nations’ (G8) recent debt cancellation as a significant step forward, the Christian leaders called upon creditor nations and international institutions to cancel the remaining debt of all nations struggling with extreme poverty. “Too many nations still labor under a burden of debt that does not allow them to invest in the health, education, and economic development of their peoples,” the church leaders said.

They affirmed the initiatives of countless church communities and faith-based relief and development agencies that work for and with those living in extreme poverty, and at the same time challenged churches to pursue further partnerships with governments, international organizations, civil society, and across confessional lines. “Without new strategic partnerships, the world will fail to fulfill the aspirations of the Millennium Declaration,” they added. (577 words)

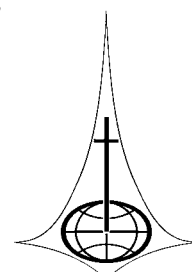
Buenos Aires: LWF Churches Co-Host International Consultation on Illegitimate Debt

External Debt Has Led to the Impoverishment of Millions

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina/GENEVA, 23 September 2005 (LWI) – An international consultation on illegitimate external debt called for by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) member churches in Latin America and the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI), took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina, September 21–23. The meeting’s objective was to improve the ecumenical partners’ knowledge of the

Latin American perception about the illegitimacy of external debt.

There were 35 participants from Latin American LWF member churches, from Germany, Kenya, Norway, Sweden and the United States of America. The church representatives hoped to develop common goals and strategic programs concerning illegitimate debt with a view to achieving the cancellation of external debt.





At the international consultation on illegitimate external debt in Buenos Aires: (from left to right) Argentinean Nobel Peace Laureate, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel; Carlos Möller from Brazil; and Ilo Utech from Nicaragua. © LWF/P. Prove

The meeting was organized by the Argentine-based program on illegitimate debt sponsored by the LWF member churches in the Latin America and Caribbean region, in cooperation with the Latin America and Caribbean Desk of the LWF Department for Mission and Development (DMD). The working theme of the consultation was “Illegitimate External Debt: From Prophetic Denunciation to Political Action.”

Keynote speakers included Argentinean Nobel Peace Laureate Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, honored in 1980 for his non-violent action to protect human rights in Argentina and other countries in Latin America. Other presenters included local economist and debt expert, Claudio Lozano, also a Member of Parliament; as well as former Ecuadorian Minister of Economy and Finance, Dr Rafael Correa.

Setting the Record Straight

According to Rev. Juan Pedro Schaad of the Evangelical Church of the River Plate in Argentina (IERP), the conference’s focus was the illegality, illegitimacy and injustice of the Latin American countries’ immense external debt, which has led to the impoverishment of millions of people over the last 30 years. Schaad and Rev. Angel F. Furlan of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Argentina are jointly responsible for the Latin American churches’ program on illegitimate debt.

Schaad said the record should be set straight regarding the fact that most of the countries have long since paid off their external debt. He pointed out that since 1985, Argentina alone has paid 2.4 times the amount of its original debt. The former IERP president emphasized that the illegitimacy of external debt needed to be proven with examples of solid evidence.

Rev. Martin Junge, LWF/DMD Area Secretary for Latin America and the Caribbean, spoke of the need to discuss and reflect on the various approaches to debt management used by churches and non-governmental organizations. “We also want to develop concrete steps and models in order to drive forward the issue of illegitimate external debt and to encourage political action at regional, national and international levels,” he explained. A broad international campaign supported by the churches and partner organizations was required, he noted.

Junge underscored that debt relief or any type of debt management that failed to take into account the illegitimacy of external debt would not be viable from the point of view of the Latin American churches.

He particularly welcomed the participation of Bishop Zachariah Wachira Kahuthu, Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church, who was invited with the aim to link the Latin American illegitimate debt discussion process with that of the African LWF member churches. (549 words)



Former Minister of Economy and Finance in Ecuador, Dr Rafael Correa. © LWF/P. Prove

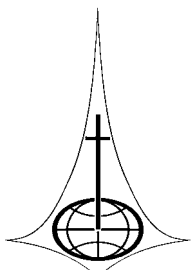
Churches, Civil Society Organizations Affirm Continued Advocacy for Debt Cancellation

‘Unethical, Immoral and Odious Debt Is Illegitimate’

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina/GENEVA, 20 October 2005 (LWI) – A group of Christian churches, social and political organizations from Africa, Europe, Latin America and the United States of America have affirmed their continued advocacy for the immediate cancellation of all illegitimate external debt.

Following a September 21–23 international consultation hosted by the Lutheran World Federation

(LWF) member churches in Latin America and the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI) in Buenos Aires, participants affirmed that the concept of illegitimate external debt, as discussed and recognized by the LWF Ninth Assembly in 2003, was based on a moral, ethical and legal viewpoint, rather than only on the narrow economic perspective adopted by many governments. “Debt is clearly illegitimate if it



is unethical, immoral and odious,” the consultation participants said in a statement.

The consultation’s theme was presented from biblical, theological, pastoral, historical, economic and juridical perspectives. Participants heard about the different strategies, campaigns and debt cancellation initiatives in various parts of the world. It was affirmed that external debt servicing in many developing countries worldwide had led to the continued impoverishment of millions of people over more than three decades.

“The impoverishment and deaths produced by this debt are dramatically increasing. From the standpoint of our faith, we hear the call to address the issue of debt from the perspective of the victims,” the 35 participants said. Their call for illegitimate debt cancellation stressed four areas of action, namely awareness building, mobilization, public advocacy and legal proceedings.

The church, civil society and political representatives stressed the need to cooperate with the United Nations independent expert on the effects of structural adjustment policies and foreign debt, particularly in relation to the drafting of relevant guidelines.

Discussing their concern for legal measures against those implicated, participants in the LWF/CLAI consultation emphasized that institutions and individuals responsible for the external illegitimate debt both in North and South could be identified.



From left to right: Rev. Alan Eldrid, President, United Evangelical Lutheran Church (Argentina); IERP President, Rev. Federico Schäfer; Rev. Ángel F. Furlan, IELU; Rev. Martin Junge, DMD Area Secretary for Latin America and the Caribbean; and Rev. Juan Pedro Schaad, IERP. © LWF/P. Prove

They cited the G8 meeting—of the world’s most industrialized nations—to be held in Germany in 2007, and the annual World Social Forums as focal points for campaigning for the cancellation of illegitimate external debt and for the creation of mechanisms that would prevent such debts in the future.

They described illegitimate external debt as “an instrument of domination and exclusion, a vehicle of the neo-liberal model,” which impeded human development in several countries subjected to it. It “seriously affects the integrity of creation, mortgaging future generations,” they added.

(477 words)



Nora Cortiños is a member of the “Madres de la Plaza de Mayo” association of mothers, whose children disappeared during the military dictatorship. © LWF/P. Prove

Chilean President Commends Lutherans’ Commitment to Human Rights

LWF President Hanson Visits Churches in Chile

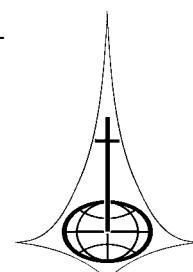
SANTIAGO, Chile/GENEVA, 22 October 2005 (LWI) – Chilean President Ricardo Lagos Escobar has commended Lutherans for playing an “important role” in sustaining humanitarian rights in Chile, particularly during a time of military dictatorship.

Lagos paid his tribute during an October 17 meeting in the Chilean capital with the Rev. Mark S. Hanson, president of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA); Rev. Gloria Rojas, president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile (IELCH); and Bishop Rolando Holtz, Lutheran Church in Chile (ILCH).

Hanson was in the South American country October 16-18 to learn more about the ministries of the IELCH and ILCH, and the impact of both LWF member churches on Chilean society.

President Lagos acknowledged the continuing Lutheran commitment for human rights and ministry among the poor in Chile today. The Lutheran leaders briefly recalled General Augusto Pinochet’s 1973–1990 military rule, during which thousands who were opposed to the dictatorship were tortured, imprisoned without trial or “disappeared.” Hanson, shared some impressions about his visit to the “Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi,” a former detention and torture center during the dictatorship period, now transformed into a park of remembrance and peace.

The Chilean president said it was now important that “the democratic government has been consistent” in its pursuit of “truth to what happened during that time, particularly to those who disappeared,” adding that around 29,000 people were reported to have been detained and tortured. Lagos presented Hanson “The Report of the



Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation,” the first-ever major investigation into torture during the military regime. Previous reports have focused on those who were killed, estimated at around 3,000.

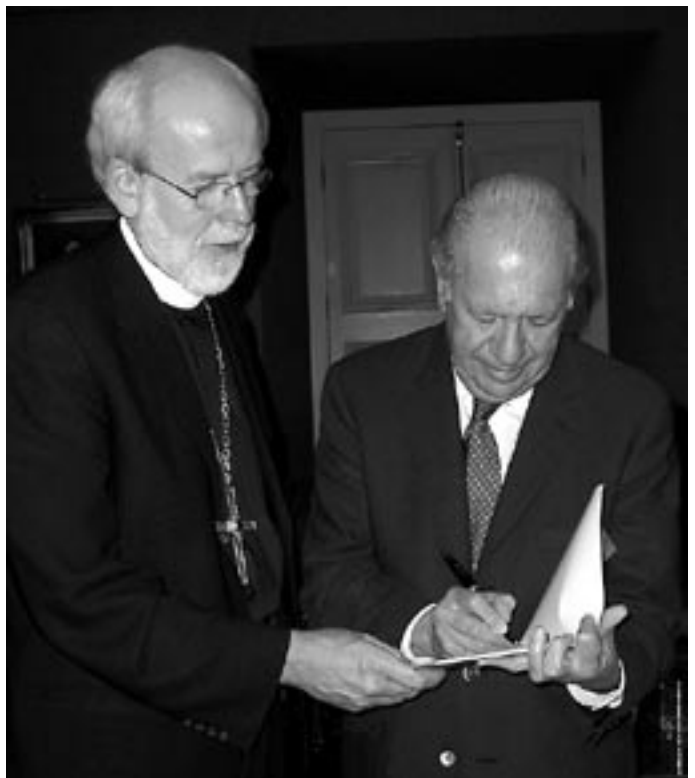
As leader of the LWF and ELCA, Hanson said he seeks to meet with the United States’ political leaders to hold them accountable for the impact and dominance of the United States in the world.

Evangelical Churches’ Recognition

The group also discussed the government’s affirmation of “creating more space” for evangelical churches to be fully recognized as religious organizations, given the prevailing presence of the Roman Catholic Church in Chilean society. Hanson said Lutherans “can serve as a bridge” to facilitate dialogue between local evangelical and Roman Catholic churches. He cited the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification which he described as a “living letter” documenting the Christian unity between the LWF and Roman Catholic Church.

Hanson described as “a sign of hope” separate meetings earlier with a group of local ecumenical leaders, the majority of whom are Pentecostal, and with the Roman Catholic Church auxiliary bishop. He said Evangelical churches, or all those that were not Roman Catholic in Chile, were interested in coming together and creating space to take up common challenges.

“We have great respect for the number of churches in Chile today,” Lagos said. He noted there had “been a very good advancement” in regard to the presence of non-Roman Catholic churches.



Chilean President Ricardo Lagos Escobar (right) signs a copy of “The Report of the Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation” for LWF President Mark S. Hanson (left). © ELCA/Melissa Ramirez Cooper

Other concerns discussed during the meeting with Lagos included the increasing disparity between the rich and poor as a result of economic globalization, and the need for partnership between governments and religious bodies like the LWF in HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and support for those who are affected.

The IELCH with 3,000 members joined the LWF in 1955. The 11,800-member ILCH has been an LWF member church since 1991. (569 words)

LWF Sunday 2005 Focuses on HIV/AIDS

Compassion, Conversion, Care – A Contribution to the Global Struggle Against HIV/AIDS

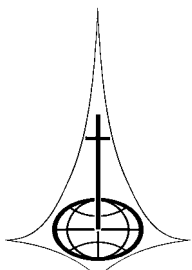
GENEVA, 29 October 2005 (LWI) – The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) invites its members churches, ecumenical and other partners of the global communion to reflect on the subject of HIV/AIDS during events commemorating Reformation Sunday this year.

The theme of LWF Sunday 2005 is “Compassion, Conversion, Care – A Contribution to the Global Struggle Against HIV/AIDS.” This topic “is at the very core of our churches and communities as it affects the whole of humanity,” LWF General Secretary, Rev. Dr Ishmael Noko, says in worship guidelines that have been distributed for use on or around Reformation Day, observed on the last Sunday of October.

Noko notes that the HIV/AIDS pandemic continues to challenge and provoke the church to



During the July 2003 LWF Tenth Assembly in Winnipeg, Canada, youth delegates and stewards urged the churches to assume a more active role in their response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. © LWF/Dirk Zimmermann



manifest its true identity as the Body of Christ. "It has revealed to us our weaknesses and failings to respond adequately to the call of our brothers and sisters who are living with this disease," he says.

"Over the last two decades or so of HIV/ AIDS response globally, the church has been known as a structure that hindered prevention efforts by not speaking out but remaining a mute spectator of the suffering endured by its own communities," Noko observes.

The general secretary says the "deafening silence and taboos imposed around matters of sex and sexuality" made it difficult for the church to fulfil its prophetic role of sounding the warnings and showing the right path especially to the youth. He underlines the church's calling to be inclusive, and notes, however, that "the stigma and discrimination experienced by those infected and affected within congregations bear witness to the exclusive nature of our faith."

Recalling the July 2003 LWF Tenth Assembly theme, "For the Healing of the World," Noko says this declaration continuously places upon the Lutheran communion the responsibility of restoring society's well-being.

In 2002 the LWF launched its global HIV/AIDS campaign titled, "Compassion, Conversion, Care – Responding as Churches to the HIV/AIDS Pandemic," with the aim to intensify ongoing efforts among member churches and related organizations to respond effectively to the pandemic.

The LWF Council adopted the concept of an "LWF Sunday" or a "Lutheran Communion Sunday" in 1995.

The preparatory material for LWF Sunday 2005 is available on the LWF Web site www.lutheranworld.org/Essentials/LWF-Sunday.html in PDF format in English, German, French and Spanish.

(399 words)

Lutherans' Biblical Understanding, a Significant Response to Emerging Movements

Highlights of LWF President Mark Hanson's Visit to Brazil

PORTO ALEGRE, Brazil/GENEVA, 31 October 2005 (LWI) – In response to emerging fundamental, charismatic movements around the world today, Lutherans must remain secure in the fact that they also have an understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit. Bishop Mark S. Hanson made these remarks during his first official visit to Brazil, October 9–14, as president of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), was visiting the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil (IECLB) to learn about its countrywide mission and ministry.

Lutheran Christians in Brazil and worldwide can "make a contribution as to how we read and understand the Bible, and how we describe the work of the Holy Spirit rather than become defensive or fearful about other movements," Hanson said during discussions with IECLB leaders. He recalled similar concerns being raised by Nigerian Lutherans during his February 2005 visit to West Africa as LWF president.

IECLB President Rev. Dr Walter Altmann described Hanson's visit as extremely important, saying the relationship between the Brazilian church and the ELCA as partner churches had "helped us in many ways with the sharing of resources and personnel."

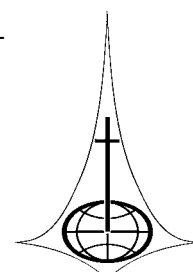
As LWF president, Hanson "also strengthens our feeling of being part of the worldwide communion and represents a strong witness and service the church is rendering in this country," Altmann said.



Visit of LWF President Mark S. Hanson (second from right) to Brazil; Rev. Silvio Schneider (left), director, IECLB Lutheran Diakonia Foundation; Ione Hanson (second left); and IECLB President Rev. Dr Walter Altmann (right). © IECLB

The IECLB president and other leaders described the life of the church, which had been affected by the migration of the rural population from southern to northern Brazil, and by the increased poverty of the middle class, that comprise the majority of the church membership. They described the IECLB's understanding of its fourfold ministry—pastoral, diaconal, catechetical and missional. Pastors, deacons and catechists of the church preach the gospel and administer the Sacrament of Holy Communion, Altmann said.

Hanson likened the ELCA's age to that of a teenager. At 18 years, from a 1988 merger of three former church bodies, the ELCA "is at a time when one is both claiming one's identity given by one's parents and family but also creating a sense of one's independence and own identity," Hanson said. He noted that while the ELCA



was at a place of claiming the gifts of its predecessor churches and its immigrant ancestors, what it meant to be evangelical Lutherans in a diverse, changing American global context was also becoming clearer.

Hanson received a letter and USD 2,500 from the IECLB toward the ELCA's relief and recovery efforts following Hurricane Katrina, which struck areas of the United States' Gulf Coast in August.

The IECLB, which joined the LWF in 1952, has 710,000 members. The 4.9 million-member ELCA has been an LWF member church since 1988.

The LWF president's itinerary included a meeting with Rev. Dr Carlos W. Winterle, president, Evan-

gelical Lutheran Church of Brazil (a fellowship of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod); visits to IECLB community projects in Sao Paulo; and addressing the Fourth Conference of International Black Lutherans in Sao Leopoldo.

Accompanying Hanson was his wife Ione; Bishop Callon W. Holloway Jr, ELCA Southern Ohio Synod, Columbus, Ohio; and Rev. Raquel E. Rodriguez, director, Latin America and Caribbean desk, ELCA Global Mission, Chicago.

(550 words)

(The ELCA News Service and IECLB journalist Caroline Strüssman contributed to this article.)

First African American Lutheran Bishop Honored

LWF President, Brazilian Church Leaders in Panel Discussion on Ecumenism

SÃO LEOPOLDO, Brazil/GENEVA, 31 October 2005 (LWI) – Participants in the Fourth Conference of International Black Lutherans (CIBL) presented LWF President Mark S. Hanson with a plaque commemorating Rev. Will L. Herzfeld, presiding bishop of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, a predecessor church body of the ELCA, 1984–1987.



Rev. Will L. Herzfeld, 1937-2002.
© ELCA

Herzfeld, a former CIBL member, was the first African American to serve as presiding bishop of a Lutheran church, and was a leader in the US civil rights movement in the 1960s while pastor of a Lutheran congregation in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. He died in 2002. The CIBL participants requested that the plaque be displayed at the ELCA churchwide office in Chicago.

During the conference, Hanson and Brazilian church leaders took part in a panel discussion on ecumenism. Hanson explained his response to concern about Lutherans' involvement in many different "full communion" relationships. "I always say that's because our confessions call us to seek deeper unity in the church but allow greater flexibility when there is agreement on the gospel" with other churches, he said. The conference was hosted by the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil (IECLB) in Sao Leopoldo, October 11–17.

"We have a biblical mandate for ecumenism. With the growth of evangelical churches, the question of unity is rising from within," IECLB President Rev. Dr Walter Altmann said. Rev. Luis Vergilio Batista da Roja, conference bishop of the Methodist Church said ecumenism was currently challenged to move from an institutional ecclesial to a political agenda. Recognition of slavery as a crime against humanity was essen-

tial for building new social relations, and was "a basic issue of the church and of the Protestant movement," he said. Dr Rudolf von Sinner, systematic theology professor at the IECLB theological college said contextual reality was the main polarity in ecumenism. "Ecumenism is linked to the world in one sense, so whatever we do in practical terms has strong implications for diakonia," he added.

At a press conference, Hanson drew attention to the fact that 97 percent of Lutherans in the USA were white, and that effort was needed to overcome the

widespread stigma of a white church.

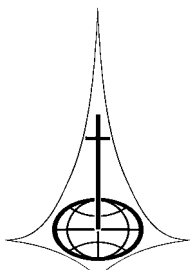
Founded in 1986, the CIBL comprises black Lutheran theologians both clergy and lay from Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America.

(396 words)

(The ELCA News Service and IECLB journalist Caroline Strüssman contributed to this article.)



CIBL conference coordinators, from left to right: Selenir G. Kronbauer, Lutheran School of Theology (EST) in São Leopoldo; Lee Wesley, ELCA; and Irma Ellwanger (EST).
© EST



Bavarian Bishop to Lead United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany

Valuable Contribution to Dialogue and Peace Building

KLINK, Germany/GENEVA, 2 November 2005 (LWI) – Bavarian Bishop Dr Johannes Friedrich is the new presiding bishop of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany (VELKD).

The 57-year-old theologian was elected by the VELKD General Synod at its October 17 meeting in Klink bei Waren an der Müritz, Germany. He succeeds Schleswig Bishop Dr Hans Christian Knuth, 65, who served two three-year terms. Friedrich's position as head of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria remains unchanged.

In a congratulatory letter, General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Rev. Dr Ishmael Noko notes that in his new capacity Friedrich will also chair the LWF National Committee in Germany becoming involved in international ecumenical challenges.

Noko says he is convinced the new presiding bishop will bring his valuable and acknowledged engagement in dialogue and peace building to the position, especially from his experience with the German Lutheran congregation in Jerusalem. "As churches, we need leaders who can address issues of conflict and violence from a perspective of individual experience and commitment," the general secretary said.

As VELKD Officer for Catholic Affairs since 2000, Friedrich has committed himself to enhancing ecumenical relations with the Roman Catholic Church in his home diocese and at the broader ecumenical level in Germany. "In this function, you are a valued person, dedicated from the heart to building and sustaining ecumenical friendships," Noko writes.

Openness to Ecumenism

Born in 1948, Friedrich studied Protestant theology at Erlangen and Tübingen, Germany. Among other positions, he was parish pastor and student chaplain in Nuremberg, Germany, then leading pastor of the German-speaking Protestant congregation in Jerusalem from 1985 until 1991, after which he became city dean in Nuremberg. He was elected bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria in 1999, and is a member of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD). He is the second Bavarian bishop to lead VELKD since its establishment in 1948. Bishop Hans Meier was presiding bishop, 1949-1955.



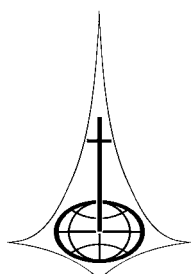
Change of VELKD leadership: In St Mary's Church, Waren an der Müritz, Oct. 17, Schleswig Bishop Dr Hans Christian Knuth (right) and his successor, Bishop Dr Johannes Friedrich (left). © VELKD

After his recent election, the new presiding bishop stressed that Lutheranism played an "important role" for Protestantism in Germany. "We want to show that the Evangelical Church in Germany will be strengthened if we as VELKD bring in elements that Lutheran churches particularly value." These include the Lutheran confessional orientation and traditional issues such as the doctrine of justification and Luther's doctrine of the two kingdoms. The latter should play a "greater role" than is usually the case in Germany, especially in relation to current political, social and ethical questions.

Profiling Protestantism

As presiding bishop, Friedrich said he would feel fulfilled for the most part if VELKD demonstrated itself to be a "meaningful and necessary association of Lutheran member churches that makes its contribution to bringing the gospel of God's love to people in our country so that it is heard and bears fruit." He said he was convinced that the "Evangelical Lutheran profile raises the profile of the Protestant churches in Germany," adding that the profile reflected not separation and exclusion, but rather openness to ecumenism both within the evangelical membership and in the interdenominational context.

VELKD is an association of eight Lutheran regional churches in Bavaria, Brunswick, Hanover, Mecklenburg, North Elbia, Saxony, Schaumburg-Lippe and Thuringia, representing 10 million Lutherans. The EKD brings together 24 Lutheran, Reformed and United regional churches in Germany. (567 words)



Interim Leader for German Evangelical Lutheran Church in Ukraine

Synod Bids Farewell to Bishop Edmund Ratz

ODESSA, Ukraine/GENEVA, 3 November 2005 (LWI) – Dean Georg Güntsch was installed as interim leader of the German Evangelical Lutheran Church in Ukraine (DELKU) October 5, initially for a one-year period. He succeeds Bishop Dr Edmund Ratz, who this year was elected archbishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia and Other States (ELCROS).

Güntsch, 64, recently retired as head of the Castell deanery, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria. The DELKU synod will decide on election of Güntsch as bishop in the second half of next year.

ELCROS Archbishop Ratz, assisted by Bavarian Bishop Dr Johannes Friedrich, presided over the installation ceremony in Odessa's church house, where the synod also bid farewell to Ratz, who served for five years.

An October 4 ceremony during the synod meeting marked the start to restoration of St Paul's Church in Odessa, which was destroyed by fire in 1976. Oberkirchenrat Dr Claus-Jürgen Roepke, president of the Martin Luther Federation, and representatives of major denominations in Odessa participated, as well as political and civic dignitaries.

The church, in ruin next to the church house, will be completely rebuilt during the next three years. The reconstruction is being financed by the Bavarian church, the Free State of Bavaria and the Federal Republic of Germany. The main nave will be reconstructed. In place of the destroyed chancel, an extension will be built to accommodate some of the agencies that have operated in Odessa for years, such as the Bavarian House, or the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) office, with the aim to constitute a "German Center." Income from rent would cover the running costs of St Paul's Church and the extension. Since 2004, the church house has covered its operating costs by renting out guest rooms.

St Paul's Church is one of the four largest ELCROS church buildings in Russia. Others include St Peter's Church in St Petersburg; the Church of St Peter and St Paul in Moscow; and the Church of the Holy Trinity in Marx on the Volga. An 1818 decree of the Russian Czar Alexander



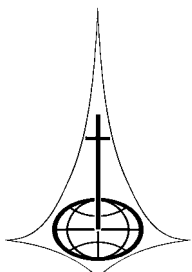
Dean Georg Güntsch, the new DELKU interim leader. © Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria/Susanne Hassen

I made Odessa one of the first two consistorial districts of the Lutheran church in the Russian Empire, along with Satarow on the Volga. The first St Paul's Church, a neo-classical building, was consecrated as early as 1827. The present neo-Romanesque church was consecrated in 1897. Then the tallest building in the city, its tower was a landmark that guided ships to port. After the first almost complete reconstruction, its use as a sports' facility, then a concert hall, the building burned down in May 1976, allegedly due to arson.

With 40 congregations, DELKU is one of ELCROS' regional member churches. It has nearly 3,000 members, (465 words)



Reconstruction work has begun on St Paul's Church in Odessa, which was destroyed by fire in 1976. A new extension will include a "German Center" to accommodate agencies operating there for years. © LWF/D.-M. Grötzsch



Lutherans, Pentecostals Engage in Conversation

Seeking to deepen mutual understanding of their respective communities and lay the groundwork for long-term dialogue, a group of Pentecostal scholars and Lutheran World Federation (LWF) representatives met for the second time, September 10–17, hosted by the Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg, France.

Participants explored the discussion topic, “How Do We Encounter Christ?” both theologically and with a view toward devising an ecumenical methodology appropriate to both traditions. Keynote co-presenter Dr Veli Matti Kärkkäinen, professor of Systematic Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, USA, stressed that while Pentecostals want to be sensitive to the work of the Holy Spirit, they are first and foremost Christological in their focus. Lutheran

theologian Dr Kenneth G. Appold, research professor at the Institute for Ecumenical Research, Strasbourg, said Lutheran theology describes encounters with Christ as something mediated through Word and Sacraments. The ensuing discussion revealed substantial areas of agreement on central issues such as justification by faith and the normative role of Scripture for religious experience.

The group will meet for three additional years beginning in 2006. Future gatherings will study ways in which each tradition encounters Christ in proclamation, sacrament and charisms. The next meeting is expected to take place in Pasadena, California, USA.

A first preparatory consultation was held in December 2004. (217 words)

Kazakhstan’s Retired Bishop Peter Urie Dies

Former bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Kazakhstan (ELCRK), **Rev. Peter Urie** died September 15, aged 50, after a long illness. Urie had resigned from office in summer for health reasons.

In a condolence letter to the ELCRK, General of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Rev. Dr Ishmael Noko, paid tribute to Urie’s strong vision for the church’s sustainability. The acknowledgement that he could no longer realize this vision was certainly a heavy blow for him. “His work for the global Lutheran family and his commitment to building up and sustaining the church in Kazakhstan will never be forgotten,” Noko wrote.

Urie was born in 1955 in Salzwedel, Germany. From 1975 until 1978 he pursued training as a preacher at the Gnadau Theological Seminary in Falkenberg, Germany, and then worked in the districts of Bitterfeld, Wittenberg-Gräfenhainichen and as



Former ELCRK Bishop Peter Urie. © ELCROS

a pastor in Radis, Germany. In 1997 he was seconded to serve the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia and Other States (ELCROS) where he was pastor then superintendent of the Evangelical Lutheran congregation of St Peter and St Paul in Moscow, Russia.

Prior to his election as bishop in December 2000, he was head of the Moscow district of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of European Russia.

Rev. Juri Nowgorodow succeeded Urie as ELCRK bishop in June this year

The ELCRK is an ELCROS member church. Its 228 congregations in 1993 are down to 52, due to the emigration of many of its members. These congregations are currently served by ten pastors, 35 preachers and 17 Sunday school teachers.

(267 words)

LWF Leads Panel Discussion at WSIS PrepCom Meeting

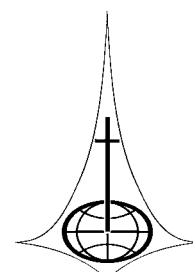
“Communication Rights and a Rights-Based Approach” was the title of a Lutheran World Federation (LWF) panel discussion held during the final Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) meeting of the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) at the United Nations offices in Geneva, September 19–30. Civil society at this final meeting was active with around 170 accredited organizations.

Much of the work was centered around following and advocating civil society positions within the two key governmental agenda items: to investigate and make proposals on future governance of the Internet; and, future mechanisms for implementation of the Action Plan and follow-up of the Summit. Beyond the official governmental negotiations, civil society organized some 125 side events. The meeting was the last prior to the 16–18 November WSIS Summit in Tunis, Tunisia, where the LWF will be represented.



© LWF

The panelists included (from left to right) Ms Manisha Mahanandia, Jeypore Evangelical Lutheran Church, India; moderator Ms Malin Broström, Church of Sweden seconded staff to the LWF; and Mr Rudelmar de Faria, LWF Department for World Service. (185 words)



FEATURE: Looking Back at 30 Years of Life-Changing Experience

LWF Honors Mauritanian Amadou N'Diaye, Praising all DWS Field Staff

GENEVA, 20 October 2005 (LWI) – He remembers the first assignment with his new employer in 1974—transporting materials for the planting of trees to prevent the desert advancing toward Mauritania’s capital Nouakchott. Aged 25 years, with a young family, he had joined a newly established Christian organization in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

He was more familiar with the work of the Mauritania Red Crescent Society, which he later learned, worked closely with the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) to set up irrigation systems, distribute seedlings, and provide health services outside Nouakchott. The northwest African country is predominantly desert, and soil erosion aggravated by drought further contributes to desertification.

Today, Mr Amadou N’Diaye, 56, looks back at more than 30 years of service with the LWF Department for World Service (DWS) with “a great sense of job satisfaction and respect for an organization that not only changed his own life but that of thousands of community members throughout Mauritania.” His tasks have changed though, from truck driver ferrying products to field outposts to chauffeuring the DWS program director and country representative. N’Diaye shared his experiences in an interview for *Lutheran World Information (LWI)* during a recent visit to the LWF Geneva secretariat.

Inter-Religious Understanding and Practice

N’Diaye says he feels privileged to have met people from all over the world, mostly visitors to DWS Mau-



Amadou N’Diaye has worked for the LWF/DWS Mauritania program for over 30 years. His job often involves long hours of driving across the desert, and through places that have no roads at all. He says his main focus is the passengers’ safety and security. © LWF/D.-M. Grötzsch

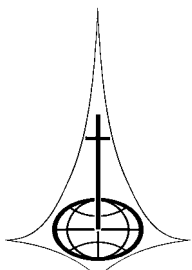
ritania projects, and he cites an experience repeated with his different “bosses,” all of whom have been non-Muslim. Whenever on duty travel, he could stop the car at the roadside and say his prayers at 2:30 p.m., 5 p.m., or 7 p.m. “without ever worrying that the boss was looking at his/her watch.” Less concerned with the theological terminology describing such action, he treasures it as “a living expression of inter-religious understanding and practice.”

LWF work in Mauritania focuses on the cross-cutting issues of HIV/AIDS, gender equality, and promotion of human rights. Projects on poverty reduction, social development, environmental protection and afforestation include a perspective on these key issues.

The father of five children aged between 12 and 24, N’Diaye had never imagined visiting the LWF Geneva secretariat, which has been his first trip to Europe. But, he says, over the years he has gained much more, “I have experience and knowledge that will benefit future generations.”



Members of a women’s cooperative in Ngoral Guidalla in Brakna region, southern Mauritania, cut wood to fence a piece of land on which they grow food crops to generate income. © LWF/DWS Mauritania



A Community School, Clinic and Well

For the past 13 years, N'Diaye has been chairperson of the Dioudé Djeri community, some 400 kilometers south of Nouakchott. Under his leadership in the early 1990s, community members pooled resources for the construction of much-needed additional classrooms in the village. More recently, they have built a small clinic and water reservoir.

N'Diaye was invited to Geneva by LWF General Secretary, Rev. Dr Ishmael Noko, who had visited Mauritania several times before and more recently for the DWS field program's 30th anniversary celebrations in February 2005. During the annual LWF Week of Meetings for Geneva secretariat staff and DWS program directors, October 10–13, Noko publicly acknowledged N'Diaye's dedicated service and that of the nearly 6,000 other staff in the field "who donate their expertise and time." In turn, Mr Robert Granke, DWS director, expressed his personal and the department's trust in N'Diaye, and in all the other dedicated field staff worldwide.

DWS is the LWF's internationally recognized humanitarian and development agency,

working with marginalized and disadvantaged communities. Through field operations in 37 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, South and Central America, DWS reaches out to people in need, irrespective of ethnicity, gender, religion, nationality or political conviction. (603 words)



A section of the green belt around Mauritania's capital, Nouakchott. In 2000, DWS Mauritania program was nominated for the "Global 500 Environmental Award" of the United Nations Environment Program, in recognition of its achievements especially the Nouakchott green belt initiative, ongoing dune stabilization, and village reforestation projects. © LWF/D.-M. Grötzsch

Current Phase of Lutheran–Roman Catholic Commission on Unity Ends

Publication of Report Expected in 2006

BARI, Italy/GENEVA, 3 November 2005 – Members of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity gathered in Bari, Italy, 23–29 September, to discuss "The Apostolicity of the Church" in the last meeting of the current phase of the international Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue.

The dialogue, begun in 1967, is conducted under the auspices of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU). The phase now being concluded began in 1995.

Hosted this year by the PCPCU, the commission deliberated on the four main parts of its report: Apostolicity of the Church – New Testament Foundations; The Apostolic Gospel and the Church as Apostolic; Apostolic Succession and Ordained Ministry; and, Church Teaching that Remains in the Truth.

They especially identified and assessed the "elements" of apostolicity in the church and their configuration, and sought ways to clarify agreements and differences pertaining to the issues of apostolic succession, the question of *defectus sacramenti ordinis* (holy orders of the priesthood) and a universal teaching ministry. A special feature of the report will be the foundational historical and theological background material.

For both sides, the ecumenical movement is a historical process whereby the partners involved seek to

prepare the ground for increased ecclesial rapprochement through deepening common reflection and mutual respect. The report will stand as a contribution to the sponsoring churches for further processing and reception. Publication is expected in 2006.

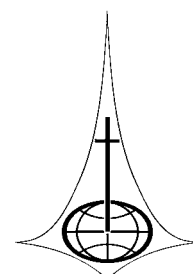
As this was the last meeting in the fourth phase of the dialogue, PCPCU President Walter Cardinal Kasper and LWF General Secretary Rev. Dr Ishmael Noko visited the commission and thanked its members for their indefatigable efforts during the past decade of dialogue.

The commission was co-chaired by Bishop Dr Béla Harmati, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary, and Roman Catholic Archbishop Alfons Nossol of Opole, Poland, who succeeded the then Bishop Walter Kasper in 2002.

Already published reports of the dialogue include: *The Gospel and the Church* (1972) *The Eucharist* (1978); *Ways to Community* (1980); *The Ministry in the Church* (1981); *Facing Unity* (1984); and *Church and Justification* (1994).

The theme and timing of the next phase will be considered by the regular LWF-PCPCU Joint Staff Meeting, co-chaired by the PCPCU President and LWF General Secretary.

(386 words)



Austrian Lutheran Bishop to Chair Ecumenical Council

Bishop Herwig Sturm of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Austria, is the new chairperson of the Ecumenical Council of Churches in Austria. He was elected with a large majority at the council's annual general meeting October 18, in Vienna. His two-year term as head of the body of 14 churches begins on 1 January 2006.

Upon election, Sturm expressed appreciation for the ecumenical council as a learning community. "We learn to show understanding for the other churches, to see ourselves as a community on the move, and to be ready to work with others in several areas of activity." It was important for the council to understand itself as a spiritual community that can be experienced in joint services of worship and devotion, particularly on big public occasions, he noted.

He sees the council as an equally important bridge to young people for the future, with regard to the next generation's understanding of ecumenical ideas and the reality of the



Bishop Herwig Sturm, new chairperson of the Ecumenical Council of Churches in Austria.
© EpdÖ/Schnarr

ecumenical movement. Another important area is expanding inter-faith conversations.

He noted that Austria's European Union presidency during the first six months in 2006 would offer a "fine challenge to look for, and experience, depths of spirituality in a common Europe." The Charta Oecumenica, which defines the common responsibility of churches in Europe, is important in this context.

Sturm succeeds Mother Superior Christine Gleixner of the Roman Catholic Church, who has chaired the Ecumenical Council over the past six years.

The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Austria has around 322,000 members, and has been a member of the Lutheran World Foundation since 1947. (297 words)

(Edited from the original German article by the Protestant press service, Evangelischer Pressedienst für Österreich – epdÖ.)

Baltic Lutheran Bishops Discuss Christian Communion in the Context of Contemporary Lutheranism

The understanding of Christian communion in the context of contemporary Lutheranism and ecumenism was the focus of the 2005 meeting of Baltic Lutheran bishops in Vilnius, Lithuania.

During the September 21–23 meeting, Archbishop Andres Pöder and Bishop Einar Soone, Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church; Archbishop Janis Vanags, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia; and Bishop Mindaugas Sabutis, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania shared their thoughts and ideas on the concerns and challenges characteristic to the

region. The Baltic bishops agreed to consult one another when dealing with urgent theological and ethical issues as well as to share mutual knowledge and experience.

Participating in this year's meeting were representatives of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the Rev. Saïd Ailabouni (Director for Europe and the Middle East, Division for Global Mission) and Bishop Michael J. Neils of the ELCA Grand Canyon Synod, who also took part in festivities marking the 450th anniversary of Vilnius Evangelical Lutheran parish. (167 words)

LWF Joins Protest Ahead of WTO Negotiations

To denounce the present situation in ongoing trade talks, the so-called "Doha Round," representatives of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), with delegates of other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) worldwide, participated in a demonstration ahead of important World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations. The talks are seen to be doing little to help developing countries out of poverty

The protest took place in Geneva, October 15. One of the speakers, Mr Michael Kuehn, LWF Department for World Service (DWS) field program representative in Haiti talked about the situation in the Latin American country where cheap subsidized imports from developed countries were increasingly undermining local production. "Economic globalization as it is happening now is not working for us and for the people we are concerned about," he said. Trade, he added, "is not just an economic issue. It affects the lives and livelihoods of millions of people across the world."

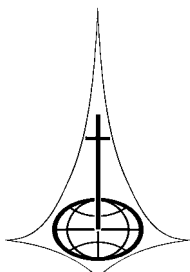
The LWF was also active in the October 17–21 WTO week of debate and discussion in Geneva. Lobbying meetings with trade negotiators took place to sensitize people dealing with



Several NGOs including the LWF participated in demonstrations ahead of the WTO negotiations in Geneva. © EAA/J. Chelminski

specific issues about concerns of economic justice. Discussions also were held with developing countries' trade representatives to seek the involvement of civil society in achieving a greater measure of economic justice in the negotiations. (216 words)

(See also www.lutheranworld.org/news/lwi/en/1707.en.html)



FEATURE: Broadened Horizons from a Conflict Zone

LWF Council Members Share Insights on Israeli-Palestinian Program

WEST BANK/GENEVA, 27 October 2005 (LWI)

–“Travelling to a conflict zone, to meet people and understand the way they live was a privileged moment. It has deepened my own faith,” is how Canadian Lutheran pastor, Dr David Pfrimmer, summed up his visit to Jayyous, a small Palestinian village near Tulkarem in the West Bank.

Pfrimmer and other representatives of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) member churches attending the August 31–September 6 annual Council meeting, had taken part in a three-day exposure visit with the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI). The LWF Office for International Affairs and Human Rights had organized the visit prior to the Council meeting in Bethlehem and Jerusalem to enable interested persons to learn more about the complex conflict between Israel and Palestine, and to experience the living conditions of the Palestinian people.

An initiative of the World Council of Churches begun in 2002, the EAPPI currently brings international visitors from a wide range of ecumenical backgrounds to live and work in six places across the West Bank (Bethlehem, Hebron, Jayyous, Ramallah, Tulkarem, Yanoun) and East and West Jerusalem. Alongside local Christian and Muslim Palestinian and Israeli peace activists, the EAPPI focuses on supporting non-violent resistance to the conflict. The international visitors, so-called EAPPI “accompaniers,” by their very presence on site offer protection to the Palestinian population.

A Complex Structure Hinders Movement

Of particular interest was Israel’s barrier or separation wall, built to prevent Palestinian suicide bombers from entering Israeli territory. Under construction since June 2002, the wall is expected to reach at least 650 kilometers inside the West Bank, according to Vermonters for a Just Peace in Palestine/Israel (VTJP), a local organization promoting the equality and safety of both Palestinians and Israelis through education, advocacy and action.

At a maximum height of eight meters currently, with shorter sections at six meters, the barrier is a combination of high concrete sections for areas perceived as especially vulnerable, and a shorter fenced-only part. The VTJP notes that in addition to the concrete wall and fencing materials used to build the structure, some sections also include electric fencing, roads for patrol vehicles, electronic ground/fence sensors, thermal imaging and videotape cameras, among other things.



Separation fence in Jayyous, West Bank: local EAPPI contact person, Mohammed Othman (right) explains the identity papers that Palestinians require to travel from the West Bank to Israel. Desmond Parsons from Canada (left) is an ecumenical accompanier. © LWF/Thomas Jensch

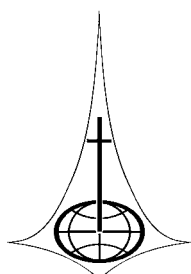
The tasks of the EAPPI accompaniers include monitoring human rights abuses, witnessing and reporting house demolition, working with refugees, and accompanying Palestinians, including children on their way to school, to checkpoints at the fence or Israeli separation wall.

Trust in International Accompaniers

“It was most impressive to see the trust that people put in international presence for the sake of their own security,” said LWF Council member, Rev. Chandran Paul Martin from India who, like Pfrimmer, joined the EAPPI for three days, and was based in Yanoun. The small Palestinian village is surrounded by mountains, where Israeli settlers have erected buildings and patrol cameras. Settlers used to frequently come down the mountains to intimidate the Palestinian population. The EAPPI began their permanent presence in Yanoun in 2004. Since then, there have been no major assaults against the local Palestinians.

Youth members of the LWF Council and stewards, who met for a separate Pre-Council Workshop in Jerusalem, joined the EAPPI for one day. They visited Jayyous, Yanoun, Hebron and Bethlehem.

Twenty-nine-year-old Milita Poškiene from Lithuania was particularly shaken by a story about Israeli children coming down from the settlements to Yanoun carrying machine guns. “We were told that some of them were as young as 10 years, and not much taller than their guns. They threatened the Palestinian farmers. But being under age they cannot be prosecuted for any act of violence. This disposition toward violence is really scary,” she said.



Broadened Horizons

LWF Council meeting steward from Iceland, Gudmundur Björn Thorbjörnsson aged 19, joined an EAPPI team to Hebron, where about 450 Jewish fundamentalist settlers had settled among a majority Palestinian population occupying the upper levels of houses right in the middle of town. As the settlers had taken to throwing stones and garbage onto Palestinian passers by in the streets, it had been necessary to put wire mesh over the streets. The visit not only broadened the young Icelander's "horizon" in relation to the conflict, but also compelled him to "spread the word" about what he had experienced.

Pfrimmer, a member of the LWF Council's Program Committee for International Affairs and Human Rights, was shocked by the oppression the Palestinian people face in Jayyous. The village is fenced in on one side, so the farmers experience great difficulty in reaching their plots of land, which are on the other side of the fence.

He cautioned against being misled by biased media reports on the conflict in Palestine and Israel, noting that the Church had a role to play in making the Palestinian story heard.

Martin compared the situation of the Palestinian people with the living conditions of the Dalit people in India. "Oppression, exclusion and discrimination are the same here as in India," he said. Inspired by the EAPPI, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in India executive secretary plans to initiate a similar program back home: "I would like to replicate the EAPPI in India in the Dalit context, because without



LWF Council member Rev. Chandran Paul Martin from India (middle); Younan Mayor Rashed Marar (left); and Ashraf Tannous (right) from Ramallah, steward at the 2005 LWF Council meeting. © LWF/Thomas Jensch

international presence the perpetrators are not afraid. EAPPI could serve as a model for a new program in India." (894 words)

(By Julia Heyde, youth intern, LWF Office for Communication Services.)

***This article is part of the ongoing series of LWI Features on Healing focusing on the 2003 LWF Tenth Assembly theme, "For the Healing of the World." The stories about activities that promote reconciliation and healing present the relevance of the Assembly theme in the different contexts of the worldwide Lutheran communion.**

Archbishop emeritus Jaan Kiivit Dies

Archbishop emeritus Jaan Kiivit Jr of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church (EELK) died August 31, aged 65, during an official visit to St Petersburg, Russia.

In a letter of condolence to the Estonian church, General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Rev. Dr Ishmael Noko says Kiivit was a faithful representative of his own church and of the churches of the LWF region of Central Eastern Europe. "His voice was always greatly respected among sisters and brothers within the global Lutheran family," Noko notes.

Kiivit, son of former EELK Archbishop Jaan Kiivit Sr, was ordained in 1966. He served nearly



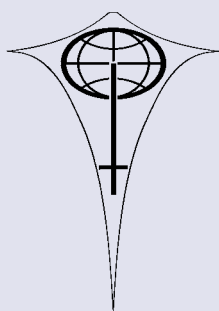
Former EELK Archbishop Jaan Kiivit Jr. © EELK

30 years as pastor of the Holy Ghost in Tallinn. He became archbishop in 1994 until his retirement last February. Prior to election as head of the Estonian church, he served as a member of the consistory. He also taught practical theology at the theological institute in Tallinn.

Archbishop Kiivit Jr was a member of the LWF Council from 1997 until 2003, and served on the then Standing Committee for Ecumenical Affairs.

The 200,000-member EELK joined the LWF in 1963. Archbishop Andres Pöder heads the church since last February.

(200 words)



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