

**ATTENTION! NEW ADDRESS!**  
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**Minutes of the 55th Oikosnet Europe Annual Conference**  
**September 8th to 12th, 2010**  
**Seurakuntaopisto/Church Training College, Järvenpää/Finland**

**Participants**

<b>Agoy, Nils Ivar</b>	Norwegian Church Academies	NO
<b>Ahonen, Helena</b>	Church Resources Agency	SF
<b>Anhelm, Fritz Erich</b>	Treasurer	DE
<b>Bodrov, Alexei</b>	St. Andrew's	RU
<b>Draeger, Arne</b>	Prot. Academy Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	DE
<b>Dupré, Caterina</b>	Centro Ecumenico di Agape	IT
<b>Harri, Hannu</b>	Church Training College	SF
<b>Heinrichs, Martina</b>	Klooster Huisen	NL
<b>Hosszu, Andreas</b>	House of Reconciliation	HU
<b>Kenanidis, Constantinos</b>	Orthodox Academy of Crete	GR
<b>Kovacic, Waltraut</b>	Ev. Akademie Vienna	AT
<b>Krieg, Paul</b>	Casa Cares	IT
<b>Lenz, Sören</b>	Le Liebfrauenberg	FR
<b>Lenz, Wolfgang</b>	Staff	DE
<b>Linderman, Alf</b>	Sigtunastiftelsen	SE
<b>Lüssi, Walter</b>	Ev. Tagungs- und Studienzentrum Boldern	CH
<b>Mattila, Ilkka</b>	Church Resources Agency	SF
<b>Middlemiss, Peter</b>	Guest, former President	UK
<b>Molnar, Janos</b>	House of Reconciliation	HU
<b>Nafstad Lyftingsmo, Berit</b>	Norwegian Church Academies	NO
<b>Noll, Rüdiger</b>	Guest	BE
<b>Rantala, Tapani</b>	Turku Christian Institute	SF
<b>Reichen, Elisabeth</b>	Centre Théologie Éducation Formation	CH
<b>Saari-Musakka, Marjatta</b>	Church Training College	SF
<b>Sareika, Rüdiger</b>	Ev. Akademie Villigst	DE
<b>Schwarz-Sterra, Barbara</b>	Guest	DE
<b>Steiner, Antoinette</b>	Casa Cares	IT
<b>Szabolc, Lörincz</b>	SDG Konferencia Központ	HU
<b>van der Sar, Jaap</b>	Stichting Oikos	NL
<b>Veiteberg, Anne</b>	Norwegian Church Academies	NO
<b>von Thadden, Marielisa</b>	Ev. Akademie Bad Boll	DE
<b>Wagner, Wolfgang</b>	Ev. Akademie Bad Boll	DE
<b>Wenz, Georg</b>	Ev. Akademie der Pfalz	DE

## **Proxies**

<b><u>Proxy by</u></b>		<b><u>For</u></b>
Academy of Dimitrias	GR	Church Training College
Orth. Academy Valamo	SF	Church Training College
Secretariat for Culture	SE	Sigtuna Stiftelsen
Paulus Akademie Zürich	CH	Centre Théologie Éducation Formation
Ev. Akademie Arnoldshain	DE	Ev. Akademie Villigst
Centro Ecuménico Los Rubios	SP	Casa Cares
Ekumenická Akademie Praha	CZ	Stichting Oikos
Ev. Akademie Hofgeismar	DE	Ev. Akademie der Pfalz
Lux Mundi	SP	Casa Cares
Ev. Akademie Loccum	DE	Ev. Akademie Bad Boll
Saints Methodius and Cyril Christian Educ. Center	BL	St. Andrew's

Waltraut Kovacic as Acting President and Hannu Harri as host and Director of Seurakuntaopisto/Church Training College welcomed participants. Hannu Harri underlined how important the participation of this centre in the lay and academy movement over the past fifty years has been, still being an integral part of the identity of the centre.

## **Item 1. Agenda & Quorum**

The Acting President, Waltraut Kovacic, proposed to accept the agenda as it was sent out – although the items will be discussed in a different order. Item 11 was expanded with some new items. The quorum was based on 58 members and amounts, by consequence, to 30. 20 member centres were present in person and 11 by proxy – so the quorum was met.

Wolfgang Lenz conveyed greetings from colleagues who could not participate in the conference:

Laszlo Varga (who has become a member of the Hungarian Parliament), Hermann Düringer (Arnoldshain), Pentti Lemettinen (Lapua), Gloria Uribe (Torre del Mar), Manfred Benzing (Malaga), Sirpa Koriala (Valamo), Roman Juriga (Czech Republic), Eveline Valtink (Hofgeismar), Stephan Schaede (Loccum), Eleni Kasselouri-Hatzivassialidi (Volos), Zoltan Lörinz (Köszeg), Vadimir Misijuk (Suprasl), Katalin Zoltáni (Brasov), Katerina Karkala (Brussels), Barnabas Balogh (Hungary), and Laszlo Kallay (former president who moved with his family to the U.S.).

## **Item 2 Minutes**

### **2.1. Minutes of the 54th Annual Conference 2009 in Pendéli/Greece**

The Minutes, as presented to the members before the conference, were discussed. General remark: Present in the minutes the decisions of the conference more clearly.

Under item 7.9 in the middle, the word 'not' has been left out. It should read correctly: A decision "cannot be taken".

Some items were discussed later separately under various topics of the agenda.

Decision 1: The minutes were accepted with one abstention.

### **2.2. Selection of the co-signer for the minutes of the 55th Annual Conference**

Decision 2: Anne Veiteberg was elected to co-sign the next minutes.

### **Item 3 Members**

Quite some information about members was already given in the written Annual Report. Two members have left (Le CART/France and Tahi/Hungary); four have announced to be interested in becoming a member – and there are some more potential candidates.

### **Item 4 Finance**

#### 4.1. Accounts for the year 2009

(Remark: The budget 2011 was already presented and decided upon in 2009. Answering questions from the floor, it was pointed out that, given the uncertain situation at present, it is too early to already present a budget for 2012-13. This will happen in 2011.)

Fritz Erich Anhelm, the Treasurer, explained the accounts of the year 2009, which have been audited by a professional auditing firm (PTG Group, Düsseldorf). The year closed with a deficit of 9.231,88 Euros, mainly due to unpaid membership fees, which are still expected to be paid this year. He suggested that in the future, unpaid membership fees should be written off if they do not come in during the following year. He also explained the strategy, discussed in the board and in order to make up for the loss from EED funding, to involve a number of European churches to make smaller contributions to the core funding of the association, like the German EKD does (even on an increased level, compared to the years before). It is likely, that in 2011 or 2012 the latest, the old EU funds can be unfrozen. If this is possible, the association should use part of them as "seed money", enabling the investment in new project and learning programmes.

The internal auditors of the association, Paul Krieg and Rüdiger Sareika, explained that they studied the report of the external auditing firm and that this report certifies the correct practice of the association in the year 2009.

Decision 3: The General Secretary and the Board were asked to work on unfreezing the EU funds in the near future. Accepted unanimously.

Decision 4: In the future, unpaid membership fees shall be written off if they do not come in during the following year. Accepted unanimously.

Decision 5: They proposed to the conference to discharge the responsibility of the Board and the General Secretary for the year 2009. Accepted with two abstentions.

### **Item 5 Elections**

Paul Krieg presented the situation regarding the composition of the Board. There was no president at the moment since Laszlo Kallay moved with his wife to the United States. Waltraut Kovacic accepted in 2009 to stay on for one year as a Vice President. However, the present situation led to another request for her to stay on until 2011 (when she will retire). She accepted to take the role as a President of the Board for the next year.

Waltraut explained that she originally wanted to quit her job as well this year; this wasn't possible, so this allowed her to take the leadership role within Oikosnet-Europe for one more year.

In this situation it was according to our tradition that there will be a male acting Vice President for the coming year. Constantinos Kenanidis was therefore the candidate for this role in the next year.

#### 5.1. Election of the President

Decision 6: With one abstention, Waltraut was elected for one year as the President.

#### 5.2. Election of the Vice President

Decision 7: With one abstention, Constantinos was elected for one year as one year as the Vice President.

#### 5.3. Election of the Treasurer

Decision 8: Unanimously, Walter Lüssi was elected as Treasurer.

All candidates accepted their election by the Annual Conference.

The Nominations Committee (Paul Krieg, Martina Heinrichs and Herman Düringer) was asked to continue their work for one year, since new board-members have to be elected in 2011.

*Decision 9: Unanimously, the Nominations Committee was chosen to continue their work until 2011.*

## **Item 6 Reports**

### **6.1. Oikosnet – Global CLLT 2009 – EED**

The issue was already mentioned in the Annual Report. The question was raised what is the important aspect for us to be part of the global network. We have – first reaction – a potential of doing good and great things. We can, together with others, show to the world what the laity can do. Without Europe Oikosnet organisations in other continents there is no such global visibility. Wolfgang Lenz gave information about the time-consuming aspects of Oikosnet-Global. There were quite some crises in the past – requiring up to about 25% of his working time. Martina Heinrichs asked whether there will be another global meeting of all Oikosnet centres. In addition she raised the question how much money is in the reserves of Oikosnet global (Answer: About 100.000 Euros). Third element: What is our advantage of us to be there in the network? What is encouraging there? Fritz Erich Anhelm responded that you can say it in this way – but you can also say this is the success story of the lay movement in the world. It spread from Europe to many countries. Several of these centres are not doing well at the moment. But you see quite some centres in Africa which function very well. In North America it is not a success story at the moment. How can it be more visible? We have had good meetings in Montreat (1993 – about 350 participants) and Loccum (2000 – 100 participants). Wolfgang Lenz reported that there are some plans to have a global meeting in 2013 – but this plan has changed due to limited funding (EED-challenge).

Walter Lüssi said that you have to be very practical and tell members in other continents what you expect from them. This can create a win-win situation. Marielisa von Thadden mentioned that she was disappointed about the fact that Oikosnet Global had a meeting at the Kirchentag, but she was not even aware of it. Paul Krieg mentioned that it is a solidarity that needs to play out both ways. The fact that people participated in our annual conferences was very supportive for us as well. Unfortunately, this has been suspended for the last three years.

There is another CLLT planned in Canada for 2011. But at the moment it is not yet clear whether this can take place or not. For Europe at least two places would be available.

### **6.2. CEC and WCC**

Rüdiger Noll pointed to the Annual Report of CEC/CSC, printed copies being available during this conference. In CEC, they had an "annus horribilis", but the crisis has been overcome with new leadership and some measures of crisis-management. Three elements were important according to him. 1. Many people know what they do not want, but they do not know what they really want positively. At this moment one of our academies helps CEC with it – Loccum. 2. There is a tension between the big member churches and the small ones. 3. There is a trend to translate everything in projects. This is difficult when at the same time one knows that churches also have a prophetic task.

In the coming years, CEC will engage more with Central & Eastern European churches. CEC engages in a new human rights debate, with education for citizenship, with social commitment, with Western Balkan Churches and with the EU-Year of Poverty and Social Exclusion.

Rüdiger Noll re-discovered in this conference the significance of the Roma issue. He will take this impulse with him to Brussels. He also expressed interest in the proposed common projects which are emerging.

Regarding WCC, the Kingston conference regarding "just peace" seems important. There is, in his view, a growing confusion regarding several distinctions between "Church and ....," where all kinds of different subjects are mentioned, implying that these issues do not belong to the heart of the churches.

Fritz Erich Anholm informed that 'Kingston' is the world convocation of the WCC on just peace, continuing the Decade to Overcome Violence. The point is: What can you do with that type of vision if you cannot link this to activities on the ground? Could it be related to climate-issues? According to Fritz Erich this is a worldwide issue. What does it mean for the new North-South relationships? In Germany there are two preparing conferences for the delegates. Important to notice: Quite some donor agencies do not participate in it.

Wolfgang mentioned that when the idea of the conference came up initially, Oikosnet International immediately offered to the WCC to contact member centres to be part of their preparation.

### **Item 7 Thematic focus** "Different forms of violence and aggression in our societies, and how to deal with them"

The thematic focus was presented by lectures and project visits as follows:

- Jarmo Kökkö (Helsinki Diaconess Institute): Different forms of Violence and Aggression in our Societies & Violence discussed in the Media
- Paul Ilsley (Ph.D. and Professor emeritus, Adult Education; Northern Illinois University and University of Helsinki): Multicultural Education for Peace and Understanding
- Ville Turkka (Founder and manager of the Icehearts project): The Icehearts – How to avoid Violence via Participation?
- Anna-Mari Jaatinen (Principal): Presenting a model elementary school with a "zero stress" environment class room.
- Seija Markkanen (Church Training College): Interaction – General Idea fo Finnish Education from Baby Care up to Vocational Training for Adults
- Miriam Schwartz, Anu Danouzi, Tuula Lindgren, Marjatta Saari-Musakka: Work with and for the Roma People in Finland

Some catch words from the country reports and the discussion:

Unfulfilled expectations in wealthier countries as one cause of violence (Greece).

"Banlieue", collective violence (France).

Right wing populism, e.g. Gert Wilders (Netherlands).

Violent history and lack of respect for the human person. Politicization of religion. Fundamentalisms vs. militant atheism (Russia).

Organised crime. State violence. Violence within and around minorities (Italy).

Hidden violence (e.g. domestic violence). Youth gang clashes. Discrepancy between media picture and research information (Norway).

Traumatized soldiers. Xenophobic violence (Germany).

### **Item 8 Strategic reflection & planning**

What is the Association about? What is the Board doing? What is the task of the General Secretary? There were many questions to be discussed. The President challenged the participants to look for contributions which help the Association to work more effectively in the future. The proposal was accepted that Rudiger Sareika moderate this session.

Waltraut Kovacic gave some reflections from the present Board about concrete commitments regarding improved practices.

Following her proposal, the conference engaged in a brainstorming exercise on how to improve the performance of the association, producing a list of ideas which were prioritized at the end of the exercise (cf. Annex I).

The following issues were highlighted the most:

- (d) "Network has a great potential. Collaboration is what it is all about. There are two levels. First is for the GS to get to know everything in all centres where others can participate in. And it can also be an announcement about activities in other centres that can be included in publicity-activities of other member centres. This can be realized quite easily – however only when it is a responsibility of someone. Second aspect of cooperation is to develop common projects. The head office can be the resource for this." *15 priority dots*
- (o) "There are two levels in the contributions: 1. We need a network for information about content and partners and 2. We just have to remind ourselves to the mission as stated in the constitution so nicely" (cf. Annex II). *12 priority dots*
- (g) "Information itself is important –information must be available in English about the work of each centre. It should be presented. A leaflet can shortly present the association." *10 priority dots*
- (f) "We now collect ideas for items. We have to come to an action plan." *8 priority dots*
- (u) "Visibility in other circles is important, like Kirchentag-events. Continuous reporting over the year." *7 priority dots*

Paul Krieg raised a question about the way our members dedicate time to Oikosnet – within their daily routine. It is also about an attitude of seriousness regarding what we approved now. How does it work out? This raises the question how serious we (senders and receivers) take the communication from and to each other. It is important to limit the input for this; otherwise we would just organize our future frustration already now. It is connected to the minimum standards we have to introduce.

Decision 10: The Board shall work on a) Minimum standards regarding times and dates to send out minutes, to give job descriptions for the Board members, for the General Secretary. b) A strategic plan for the next 2-3 years. A draft shall be prepared and circulated to all members within a few months. c) A plan for fund development will be prepared by the Treasurer and the General Secretary. Accepted unanimously.

## **Item 9 EU funding opportunities**

Jaana Ignatius (Project Development officer of the centre) and Hanna Päivärinta (EU Information Officer from Helsinki) gave presentations about EU funding opportunities and project development (available on the conference web pages.)

## **Item 10 Annual Report**

Wolfgang Lenz presented the Annual Report.

Priorities had to change during the year and therefore it was decided to present the report at the beginning of the Annual Conference so that issues for discussion could be raised before the business meetings later in the week. The President, Laszlo Kallay had resigned during the year since he moved to the United States.

### *Finance and Funding*

The proposed removal of the EED support of Oikosnet was still being challenged. Other avenues of funding were being pursued, without success so far.

EKD funding was not going to rise despite an earlier promise that it would.

The Office was moved to a different place in Solingen in February.

### *Common Programming*

Alf Linderman, Fritz Erich Anhelm, and Jaap van der Sar made some initial remarks regarding present or planned projects (details under Items 11.2, 11.4., 11.10).

The presence at the meeting of four national representatives who are on the International Committee of the Kirchentag highlighted the Kirchentag strategy of encouraging Churches more and more from other countries to participate.

Crises in leadership, funding and moving office contributed to feeling that the Association had had "a lost year." As the Board had to use energy to cope with these issues, new ventures were not developed. Structural changes and an absence of 70% of the membership from this conference mean that changes that are more radical are needed for the future health of Oikosnet Europe. The association will need a creative approach to the future.

In the reaction to the report from members the following contributions were made:-  
Marielisa von Thadden: Communication with the members had been difficult because of the crises.

Nils Ivar Agoy: The Norwegian experience is that it is difficult to stimulate their members if they haven't received the Annual Report and previous minutes in advance.

Paul Krieg: We all have to take responsibility for the future of the Association.

Georg Wenz: We should engage in discussion around the three possible alternatives that he outlined : the present model (but that is not possible); restricted working caused by a reduction in funding; because there was a smaller budget, working out a different model of working.

Rüdiger Sareika: It needs to be clear what we should expect from the administration of the Association, and who is going to do it.

Nils Ivar Agoy: Asked if it would be necessary to revise the 2011 budget. (Information - it was pointed out that the post of Assistant had not been filled in 2010 and that the real issues (which would be consequent on funding and strategy decisions) are to do with the 2012 budget).

Alf Linderman: Funding is required to facilitate greater participation in projects. At the moment there are difficulties in persuading someone to be more involved in the life of the Association.

Decision 11: The report was received unanimously.

## **Item 11 Common Activities & Collaboration**

### **11.1. Women's Network / "Women Crossing Boarders"**

At the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ecumenical Kirchentag in Munich (2009), the Women's Network very successfully organised an event under the theme 'Women crossing boarders'. Martina Heinrichs reported about the project. Visual material will be available on the web page of the Annual Conference.

### **11.2. Dialogue for Peaceful Change (DPC) 2009/10**

Jaap van der Sar gave a status report about this global project that builds on the global network of Oikosnet centres. In the report period, fifteen trainings and workshops took place all around the world, and 175 new facilitators got certified. In California, DPC together with its local partners received an award from the Department of Justice of the US. Subsequently, DPC was invited to Washington D.C. for further talks. At the moment, translation of the DPC manuals in Arabic is on the way. A MindMap with more details is available on the conference web pages.

### **11.3. Sigtuna-Pfalz Jerusalem trip 2010**

Georg Wenz informed about the project regarding visiting Jerusalem. It is shortly mentioned in the annual report. The project was very positively received by the participants. The project will last for more than one year; interested persons can contact him. The organizing group will provide organizational information. Georg is the contact person. Next year it will last 1 week.

#### 11.4. European-Arabian Dialogue project (2010 ff.)

Fritz-Erich informed about the first ideas. They are available on the SharePoint-website as well. The project will start in May 2011 in Crete. People from the member centres in Europe and other continents are invited to participate. Quite some European centres contribute to this project. In the paper, issues are mentioned for the first three conferences. Mosques are also included in Egypt as well as universities, journalists and NGO's. At this moment, the cooperation network is being established. The list is not closed – but limited to Arab and Europe. A Conference is planned for May 2011 in Crete. Be aware: It is not an interreligious dialogue.

11.5. Martina Heinrichs also reported about another collaborative project, a visit from Dominikanenklooster in Huissen to the member centre Akademia Supraska in Suprasl/Poland, under the title of 'Byzantine art and music in Eastern Poland'.

11.6. Arne Dräger and Alexei Bodrov are organising a common youth project under the title "20 years after the collapse of the Soviet Union" for next year with three countries involved: Germany, Lithuania, and Russia. Participation is open from all centres in Oikos-net, especially from the participating countries. Information will come after February 2011.

11.7. Caterina Dupré shared information about international activities in Agape. There are scholarships for the programmes. Information is available on their website: <http://www.agapecentroecumenico.org/>

11.8. Constantinos Kenanidis invited to a conference in Crete on "ECOTHEE - Ecological Theology and Environmental Ethics", to be held 1 – 6 June 2011 in his centre. Academies as well as individuals are very welcome to participate.

He also announced that icon-painting courses started this spring. Up to 10 people at a time can participate. Further information is available on the website of his centre.

Finally he pointed to a seminar took place about gastronomy, Olives and olive oil, taking place in March 2011. For a full group of 10, another event can be organized and booked as a package in the Orthodox Academy of Crete. More information on their website:

<http://www.oac.gr/>

11.9. Anne Veiteberg and Rüdiger Sareika presented a common cultural project for the Kirchentag 2011 (June 1 to 5) in Dresden, titled "Arts, Religions, and the Process of Liberation".

11.10. Sigtuna Project "Religion and modernity in Europe: A civil society response to the mediatization of religion. Implications for the development of a modern, pluralistic and democratic European Union". In the media, religion is often being presented as being at odds with the secular democratic state. This initiative would be a response to that stance.

Alf Linderman gave a feedback on his conversations with some colleagues who expressed their interest in participating in the project. More centres can still join. Alf will refine the concept and come back to the members later in the year. If the project flies, it would represent a significant part of the Annual Conferences 2011 and 2012.

### **Item 12 Dates**

#### 12.1. 56th Annual Conference 2011

Wolfgang checked with the inviting centre Home of Hope in Brasov for next year's Annual Conference. They confirmed the invitation for 7 – 11 September 2011. Some additional information was given about the centre and the local context.

## 12.2. 57th Annual Conference 2012

The Norwegian Church Academies invited us for the Annual Conference 2012 in Trondheim. The dates will be 5 – 9 September 2012.

Decision 12: The Annual Conference 2012 will take place in Norway.

12.3. There was an idea for inviting the Annual Conference for 2013 to Le Liebfrauenberg in France. Sören Lenz will discuss this in his Board and inform us next year. Tentative date: 4 – 8 September 2013.

Janos Molnar raised the question why there were no visiting communities. The main argument: A week away from the home centre is too long for most colleagues. The new model now is to have a shorter Annual Conference while Visiting Communities can be organized independently on other dates. This has not worked out very successful so far. Suggestion: Can something be included for the conference in 2012?

A request was made to reconsider the dates of the Annual Conference since the first full week of September is for some centres a horrible burden. One week later would solve already some difficulties. The Board was asked to look into that issue more closely.

## **Item 13 Any other business**

Evaluation of the conference:

Formal evaluation was in the past through written reports and expressions. But it did not produce useful conclusions.

- a. Saturday was a very important and productive way. Could it be possible to have a longer time for the business meeting and informal sharing of experiences?
- b. Time for personal encounters was not sufficient.
- c. Time for exchange was very good.
- d. Probably too many lectures, although they were very informative.
- e. Good support from the staff for the conference centre.
- f. Presentations about EU-funding and the first lecture in the afternoon on Friday were did not meet expectations.
- g. Primary purpose of participation is to interact with colleagues and look for possibilities to cooperate.
- h. More group work will allow more people to give their contribution to the whole work.
- i. A shift of the conference date for one week – later – would be very helpful for more participation.

The president closed the business-meeting, announcing the closing worship in the chapel, as well as the then following evening programme with Finnish and other cultural contributions.

For the minutes:

November 2010

Waltraut Kovacic

President

Anne Veiteberg

Co-signer chosen by the Annual Conference

(Note: Outside of the formal agenda, the conference enjoyed an informal evening conversation with Bishop-elect Irja Askola, former President of Oikosnet Europe, and Heikki Huttunen, General Secretary of the Ecumenical Council on Thursday, which highlighted the good ecumenical relations in the country. Another important element in this category were three morning reflections or “interpellationes” by Peter Middlemiss, former President of Oikosnet Europe, and our colleagues Alexei Bodrov and Paul Krieg, the former two of them also available on the conference web pages.)

Conference documents as pdf-files available are available in the “Shared Documents” section on the SharePoint website:

<http://oikosneteurope.sharepointhosting.ch/ac-2010/default.aspx>

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### **Annex I: Brainstorming results (Item 8)**

Elements (and behind the issue the number of “priority dots”, given during an exercise after having made this full list):

- a. Ground base to know what is going on in other centres. By consequence it is easier to find a partner when a common project arises. *1 dots*
- b. Annual Conference is THE place for personal contact. *6 dots*
- c. What are the results? The boards of member centres raise this question. There are already some partners to cooperate with. The present number of projects (2 or 3) is not enough so we need more
- d. Network has a great potential. Collaboration is what it is all about. There are two levels. First is for the GS to get to know everything in all centres where others can participate in. And it can also be an announcement about activities in other centres that can be included in publicity-activities of other member centres. This can be realized quite easily – however only when it is a responsibility of someone. Second aspect of cooperation is to develop common projects. The head office can be the resource for this. *15 dots*
- e. Collective fundraising program where different centres can fit in –cf Soul for Europe. *3 dots*
- f. We now collect ideas for items. We have to come to an action plan. *8 dots*
- g. Information itself is important –information must be available in English about the work of each centre. It should be presented. A leaflet can shortly present the association. *10 dots*
- h. If you want to receive a post card, post one. *2 dots*
- i. There is already a very rich history of successes, which are – and were – impossible without the good working network. The role model of DPC is serving well, since it is more flexible than Oikosnet-Europe can operate. *3 dots*
- j. Is it possible to have one slogan for one year? For instance related to the next Annual Conference? Then existing common projects are more visible. *4 dots*
- k. The planning cycle for the AC is rather short, even although in Finland elements were communicated months before the AC. Can be a multi-year planning. Suggestion: combine with EU-topics can be helpful, also regarding funding. *7 dots*
- l. From CEC-perspective, there is a huge need for our association since churches are going more hierarchical. The laity-input is the very important aspect as a contribution. The laity is out of sight too much.
- m. Agenda-items only come to the agenda of churches through organizations like Oikosnet. Visibility helps on both sides.
- n. A lot of elements have been discussed in the Board. Many decisions have been taken, however the cost-elements are not easily covered. Solidarity-funds and more are discussed – and are not functioning. The question for the future is: How is it possible to revitalize the interest of the members in this association. Probably some EU-Soul money can be used for this. A line is a common project, like pro-

posed by Sigtuna. Second line is to revitalize the regional communication/networks. It is important to get the common issues of centres. Third, it can go through national agencies of the EU. This has to be stimulated. The money for that is there. The third line is to go into these groups and regions and to have common workshops about content, strategy and funding in these regions. Others can be invited there.

- o. There are two levels in the contributions: 1. We need a network for information about content and partners and 2. We just have to remind ourselves to the mission as stated in the constitution so nicely. *12 dots*
  - p. Sharing information and actions (in the form as practiced in Bad Boll 2007) is very stimulating in getting a good picture of present work as well as inspiration for future work. *3 dots*
  - q. The Board could meet more often and could also strengthen its position and contribution. Budgets are not as limiting as they were in the recent past. *5 dots* – this has already been decided by the former Board.
  - r. Throughout the year programs can be supported and receive some assistance. *4 dots*
  - s. Important actions which can be fulfilled are the very important for the Oikosnet-Europe structure. However, when we see this, Oikosnet will be "fit" when we can deliver on this. We need some transparency to show at home why Oikosnet and its members are needed for the churches. *2 dots*
  - t. There is a great need for this network – it should be invented when it wouldn't be there. We have had similar discussions before. However, when one goes back to the centre, something has to happen in between. The fact is that we have now some amount of money for investments. However, there is a need for transparency regarding the benefit of the work for member centres. *1 dots*
  - u. Visibility in other circles is important, like Kirchentag-events. Continuous reporting over the year. *7 dots*
  - v. See money as seed money.
  - w. If we would withdraw from Oikosnet International, this body would get into trouble. *3 dots*
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## **Annex II: Preamble of the Constitution**

### **"I. Preamble**

Many years of experience in the work of Christian academies and laity centres as well as of partnership and collaboration in an ecumenical association in the European sphere have led to the following conception of aims, which are shared despite national, regional and denominational differences:

These institutions seek in their work to understand and reinterpret the significance

of the Gospel for the renewal and unity of the churches and for the fullness of life of each human person and society as a whole.

They work at empowering the laity and they collaborate in dealing with current social problems by dialogue.

They endeavour to assist in giving guidance for necessary changes in living conditions

with a commitment to social justice and the integrity of creation.

They contribute by their work to make it possible for individuals and groups to share in a mature way in the organization of society and in a peaceful order among the nations.

In this common spirit, the members of Oikosnet Europe – Ecumenical Association of Academies and Laity Centres establish the following regulations for their collaboration..." (2007)