

# **ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES**



**2016**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

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## i. AACC's STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

**The AACC's VISION:** "Churches in Africa together for Peace, Justice and Dignity"

**The AACC's MISSION:** "The All Africa Conference of Churches is a fellowship of churches and institutions working together in their common witness to the Gospel by:"

- Mobilizing to faithfully live the message of God's love;
- Nurturing a common understanding of the faith;
- Interpreting and responding to challenges to human dignity; and,
- Acting prophetically in Word, Life and Service for healing.

**The AACC's VALUES:**

In obedience to God and the imperatives of the Gospel we are committed to operate honestly and with integrity, and in the spirit of love.



### ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES AND PRINCIPLES

**Our Strategies:**

- AACC is the prophetic presence and witness of the Churches in Africa.
- AACC is an ecumenical instrument facilitating synergy amongst its members, with the people of Africa.
- AACC mobilizes its constituency to speak with one voice on issues affecting the people of the African continent and beyond.

**Our Principles:**

- We are proactive in the accompaniment of Churches;
- We engage in discernment for positive transformation;
- We are issue driven and focus on result oriented Programmes;
- We are committed to ecumenical movement.

## ii. ACRONYMS

AACC	All Africa Conference of Churches
AATEEA	All African Theological Education by Extension Association
AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
AEA	Association of Evangelicals in Africa
AMECEA	Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
ASTHEOL	Association des Institutions Théologiques en Afrique Francophone
ATISCA	Association of Theological Institution in Southern Africa
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CAPA	Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa
CAR	Central Africa Republic
CBS	Contextual Bible Study
CCPAU	Centre for Citizens' Participation on the African Union
CEVAA	Community of churches in Mission
CIDO	Citizens and Diaspora Directorate
CNEB	Council of Churches in Burundi
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
CWME	Commission on World Mission and Evangelism
CWWM	Churches Witnessing with Migrants
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
EU	European Union
FBOs	Faith Based Organizations
FECCLAHA	Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa
FLC	Fellowship of the Least Coin
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GFMD	Global Forum on Migration and Development
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
ICFLC	International Committee of the Fellowship of the Least Coin
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
ILO	International Labour Organization

IOM	International Organization for Migration
KAICIID	Center for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue
LPI	Life and peace Institute
MECC	Middle East Council of Churches
NCCs	National Councils of Churches
PVE	Preventing Violence Extremism
MSU	Mediation Support Unit
PROCMURA	Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa
PSC	Peace and Security Council
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SPLM-IO	Sudan People’s Liberation Movement in Opposition
SSCC	South Sudan Council of Churches
STI	Swedish Theological Institute
ToT	Training of Trainers
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
URI	United Religions Initiative
UJCC	Uganda Joint Christian Council
WCC	World Council of Churches

### iii. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) had a successful 2016 which saw the organization's programmatic work being implemented under the new programmatic arrangement as reviewed in 2015. This new arrangement saw the merger of the departments from 4 to 2 namely (i) Theology, Family Life and Gender Justice and (ii) Peace, Diakonia and Development. Therefore, these two departments moving forward will implement the organization's strategic framework for the next 2½ years.

This report covers the work undertaken by the above two departments and the work carried out by the office of the General Secretary as well as the office of the Deputy General Secretary in charge of Finance, Administration and Resource Mobilisation.

The AACC during the year under review identified numerous concerns and challenges that faced her member churches in the African continent and activities were planned to respond through the two departments as per the thrusts outlined in the revised Post Jubilee Assembly Programmatic Thrust and Structure (2014-2018).

During the period under review, AACC programmatic work was enacted through the following:

- a) **Office of the General Secretary:** - Provided the overall leadership, coordination and management of the organization and facilitated the regular meetings of the governing bodies and partners.
- b) **Peace, Diakonia and Development:** - The department strived for sustainable and lasting peace in Africa by accompanying the churches and National Christian Councils in Africa as active participants in the prevention and transformation of conflicts through a focus on peace and security as an important ingredient to Africa's development. This was enacted through high level ecumenical diplomacy, good governance and democratic transitions, interventions in specific burning situations, migration and human trafficking as well as in responding to climate change issues in the continent. The AACC AU Liaison Office and the Lomé Regional Office though cross-cutting are included under this department and carried out activities that supported this department's thrust.
- c) **Theology, Family Life and Gender Justice:** - the department discharged its strategic functions by addressing the specific concerns of families, women, youth and children, as well as mobilizing churches to care for the harmony and well-being of various categories of individuals and communities. Further

it provided relevant contextual theological reflection that focused on the needs of the churches in Africa that formed the basis or anchor of all the programmatic work of the AACC.

- d) **Finance, Administration and Resource Mobilisation:** - the department complimented the work of the General Secretary's office in ensuring effective use of both human and material resources of the organization as well as overseeing the strategic business unit. During the year under review, this department offered support services to the two departments programmatic work on issues of budgeting, financing and fundraising efforts.

### **AACC 11<sup>th</sup> General Assembly**

During the year under review, preparations for the AACC 11<sup>th</sup> general assembly started in earnest. The Assembly theme was formulated by the Theology Advisory Committee meeting in June 2016 and presented for approval to the General Committee meeting in October 2016. The 11<sup>th</sup> General Assembly will be held in Kigali, Rwanda in 2018 under the theme: - ***“Respecting the Dignity and God's image in every human being”*** (Gen 1: 26-27).

A local organizing committee has been set up as well as fundraising strategies put in place.



# 1. OFFICE OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

The Office of the General Secretary has the overall responsibility of leadership, coordination and management of the organization including the regular meetings of the governing meetings, nurturing the relationships with ecumenical partners and other key players, communication and public relations and strengthening the relations with the AACC constituency.

During the year under review, the General Secretary participated in the following meetings and activities: -

Month	Activities
<b>February</b>	
16 February	Meeting of the Executive Council of Editions Clé, Yaoundé, Cameroon
17 February	General Assembly of Editions Clé, Yaoundé, Cameroon
17 - 20 February	Symposium on Reformation legacies and African theologies, Kibuye, Rwanda
22-23 February	Partners' Consultation, Nairobi, Kenya
23-24 February	Bilateral meetings with partners, Nairobi, Kenya
<b>March</b>	
6 March (morning)	Finance and Personnel, Nairobi, Kenya
6 March (afternoon)	Executive Committee, Nairobi, Kenya
<b>May</b>	
8 May	Retirement service for Archbishop Eliud Wabukala, Nairobi, Kenya
<b>June</b>	
5 – 10 June	United Church of Zambia Synod Meeting (message)
22 – 28 June	WCC Central Committee Meeting, Trondheim, Norway
<b>July</b>	
3 July	Enthronement Service of the 6 <sup>th</sup> Archbishop of Kenya – Rt. Rev. Jackson Ole Sapit
14 – 18 July	African Union Summit, Kigali, Rwanda
<b>August</b>	
17 – 24 August	18 <sup>th</sup> Synod of the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (message)
<b>September</b>	
7 – 10 September	General Assembly of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) (message)
9 – 10 September	GlobeTheoLib Consortium Committee Meeting
<b>October</b>	
5 October (morning)	Finance and Personnel Committee
6 October (afternoon)	Executive Committee
6 – 7 October	General Committee
17 – 26 October	Assembly of CEVAA, Sète, France

## 1.1. Activities Carried Out

The following activities were carried out by the General Secretary's office:

- a) **Relations with the Constituency:** The General Secretary's Office received notifications from member churches for the holding of Synods, Conferences, General Assemblies. Although it was not possible for the General Secretary to attend many of them, the Office endeavored to send goodwill messages. Nevertheless, the General Secretary attended the retirement service for Archbishop Eliud Wabukala and the enthronement service of the 6<sup>th</sup> Archbishop of the Anglican Church in Kenya, Rt. Rev. Jackson Ole Sapit.

Further, request for membership by 6 churches, a National Council of Churches and a Christian Association was presented and approved by the General Committee, during its ordinary meeting in October 2016.

- b) **Relationship with ecumenical partners:** - The Annual Consultation of the AACC with her ecumenical partners was held from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016. Twenty-six (26) partners were in attendance. The secretariat shared with them the changes in the structure of the organisation which led to the merging of the departments into two: "Theology, Family Life and Gender Justice" and "Peace, Diakonia and Development". The general observation was that, as it has been happening for the last years, the partners announced more dwindling of grants, due to the restructuring of their own organizations and encouraged the AACC to think about the diversification of her partners. They also encouraged the AACC management to strengthen the relationship with the African churches for enhanced ownership through the payment of their annual contributions. They noted with appreciation the fact that more churches were getting involved in the Campaign for African Dignity and that a good percentage of the budget was financed by returns from AACC Strategic Business Unit. They also requested for more regular and timely communication on the AACC's activities.
- c) **Participation in Meetings:** - The General Secretary participated in the WCC Central Committee Meeting in Trondheim, Norway from 22 to 28 June 2016 and in the Assembly of CEVAA (Community of churches in Mission), in Sète, France from 17 to 26 October 2016. A goodwill message was sent to the General Assembly of the Middle East Council of Churches in Amman, Jordan, which was held from 7-10 September 2016.
- d) **AACC participation in high-level AU meetings:** The General Secretary attended the Summit of the Heads of States held in Kigali, Rwanda, from 14 to 18 July 2016. The staff at the AU Liaison Office also represented the organization in a number of meetings organized by the AU.
- e) **Governance structure meetings:** - The AACC governance structures – namely the Executive Committee with its advisory Committee, the Finance and Personnel

Committee and the General Committee – met as per their calendars, in order to continue giving orientation and guidance to the management.

- f) **Communication:** - During the year under review, the AACC strengthened its communication structure which had posed a major challenge to communicate to the constituency, ecumenical partners and the public. The AACC had carried out a number activities concerning the issues affecting the continent but these information was not being shared and thus little awareness in the constituency.

To enhance the communication structure, the organization created a Twitter and a Facebook account to post updates in a timely manner. Further, the AACC Website was revamped and articles were regularly posted on various activities and meetings, either organized directly by the AACC or attended by the staff. An effort has been made also to post the articles in the three AACC languages (English, French and Portuguese). A calendar of upcoming events/meetings is also posted on the website to announce the activities scheduled. The newly revamped website is now accessible via [www.aacc-ceta.org](http://www.aacc-ceta.org)

In order to use current and emerging technological development, the organization has enhanced its social media presence and our members can now follow us through the following links:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/All-Africa-Conference-of-Churches-602718183213123/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AaccCeta>

### **1.2. Achievements/Impacts**

Feedback received from the Member churches indicates appreciation for the goodwill messages sent by the General Secretary on the auspicious occasion of their events even though the physical presence of the AACC leadership was not there.

The organization's social medial platform received high traffic and many partners engaged with us and followed us as well as shared our updates with their network thus increasing AACC's visibility in the public arena.

Further we received positive feedback from individuals who visited our website which helped us improve the content contained therein.

The relationship with the African Union is growing stronger by the day. They have even linked our website to theirs, so that people visiting their website can also have a look at ours.

### **1.3. Lessons learnt**

The office of the General Secretary in the process of discharging it's strategic functions noted the importance of involving members churches in the planning of programs and engagement and the need for continuous communication across multiple platforms,

with a focus on digital media. Further, there is need to have programs that attract and interest the youth.

#### **1.4. Challenges**

The secretariat noted that the majority of churches are still lagging behind as far as technology is concerned. So, there is still need to share information through emails. Unfortunately, some of the email addresses provided were not functional whereas those that went through no feedback was received. Therefore, this necessitated continuous follow up through phone calls for correspondences that required urgent response.

#### **1.5. AACC 11<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

In addition to providing leadership and general coordination of the organization, the Secretariat main focus for 2017 will be mobilization of resources and member churches towards the realization of the 11<sup>th</sup> General Assembly to be held in Kigali, Rwanda in 2018 under the theme ***“Respecting the Dignity and God’s image in every human being”*** (Gen 1: 26-27).

At the time of this strategic report, the AACC has already put in place plans and strategies for the 11<sup>th</sup> General Assembly slated to take place in Kigali, Rwanda, including the formation of a local organizing committee and fund raising strategies have been developed. Letters have gone out to member churches announcing the date of the assembly and asking them to pray and to begin the mobilisation of their membership and funds for the assembly. The venue of the assembly shall be the Kigali Convention Center.

## **2. REGIONAL OFFICE – LOME / SPECIAL ENVOY TO WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA**

The AACC Lomé Office hosted several Programmes and continued to strengthen the visibility, relevance and ownership of the AACC in West and Central Africa, and to bring the organization closer to its constituency. It also played a key role in peace building by accompanying the churches in the region in advocating for peace.

### **2.1. Objectives and Activities planned**

The activities planned for the year were namely annual meetings of the AACC member churches, advocacy in conflict and post conflict countries such as DRC, CAR and workshops on thematic conferences to build the capacity of Church leaders, youth and women.

The objectives of these activities were to mitigate the potential of latent conflicts; seek solutions with the leaders for preventive actions; and support the efforts of leaders through solidarity visits and having an active presence.

From the above, the following activities were undertaken namely: -

- Participation in the synods of the EP Church Togo and Methodist churches of Togo and Benin
- Meeting Methodist Church's Leaders in Nigeria
- Participation in a spiritual manifestation of the Aladura Church of Nigeria
- Participation in the ASTHEOL meeting in Cameroon
- Meeting with political leaders of Ibadan State, Nigeria
- Workshop on "Women and youth for sustainable peace" in Togo and Benin
- Statutory meetings in Nairobi, Cameroon and Lomé.

### **2.2. Activities not planned but undertaken**

There were some activities that were undertaken outside the scheduled plan. These were: Cconflict prevention meeting for the DRC in Kinshasa and Addis Ababa, workshop on decent work in Cote d'Ivoire organized by International Labour Organization (ILO), vvisit to the political leaders of Benin and Togo and the regular accompaniment of Edition CLE Yaoundé.

### **2.3. Achievements/Impacts**

The work carried out in the region was very successful as the AACC Accompaniment of the churches in DRC, Nigeria, Benin, Togo and Cameroon was felt. Women and youth from Togo and Benin who attended the above workshops are ready to be agents of peace and development in their region. The advocacy helped to ease local tensions and mobilized the AACC Constituency in the region to speak with one voice.

### **2.4. Lessons learnt**

Churches of the different countries accompanied by the Special Envoy were committed to undertake all common activities and contributed in cash and kind for the organization of workshops and seminars. This showed their commitment to act and speak in one voice on the issues affecting their people in the region.

### **2.5. Challenges**

Several challenges were noted namely the limited human resources in the AACC member churches in terms of qualified staff as pastors and lay people for specific activities. Several churches have inadequate logistics (meeting rooms) or lack financial resources for the diaconal and evangelization work. The existing potential was not being properly utilized and must be organized for success of the mission.

The Campaign for African Dignity had not pick up very well and there is need to strengthen its efficiency.

### **2.6. Future Strategic Focus**

The office plans to continue the advocacy work in DRC, Cameroon, Togo and several other countries. Participation in annual synods in several countries, where the physical presence of AACC moderates the order of the delegates. There are workshops and conferences planned for capacity building in several churches, and the office will continue advocating for the reform of the Christian Council of Togo and the revitalization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Togo.

# 3. AACC AU LIAISON OFFICE

The office allows for full exploitation of the Observer status of the AACC with the AU and strengthening and coordinating AACC advocacy work in relation to the AU, its component institutions, the UN Economic Commission for Africa, and other international organizations with representation in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The role of the office is to bring influence on the policies of the AU, the churches' ethical, moral, and voice in formulating policies.

During the year under review, the following activities were undertaken:

## 3.1. African Union Summit

The office participated in the 26<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union Summit, 30-31 January, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. As observers at the African Union, the AACC was invited to the Annual Heads of State Summit in Addis Ababa. The theme for 2016 is the 'Year of Human Rights with particular focus on the Rights of Women' which marked celebrations of the continental efforts towards Gender equality. H.E Idriss Déby President of Chad was elected as the new Chair of the AU for 2016 and 15 new members were elected for the Peace and Security Council (PSC), i.e. Congo, Kenya, Egypt, Zambia, Nigeria, Burundi, Chad, Rwanda, Uganda, Algeria, Botswana, South Africa, Niger, Sierra Leone, Togo. It is to be noted that the AACC was invited by the AU to give presentations at the PSC Open sessions. During the discussions, it was agreed that there needs to be enhancement of the implementation of the decisions of the AU Summit. It was further agreed that next Year will be the year of the Youth under the theme, 'Harnessing the demographic dividend through investment in Youth.'

## 3.2. Peace and Security Council

The Open Session of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union is a platform that provides CSO's an opportunity to address the AU Policy makers on the different issues affecting our continent. The meeting is attended by the AU Member States representatives to the AU and as well as AUC staff, the UN, EU and Diplomatic representatives in Addis. During the first and second quarters of 2016, the AACC was represented at the following Open Sessions:

- a) **Natural Resources and Conflicts in Africa, 11 February Addis Ababa, Ethiopia:**
  - The Above Open Session was led by discussions on how Natural resources have also caused challenges in societies that are already affected by or are vulnerable to conflict in Africa. It was also noted during the presentations from key stakeholder in the field that weak management of resources in Africa is what can also lead to prolonging conflicts. The meeting had the objective of seeing the link between the effective, people centered and transparent management of extractive industries and conflict prevention

and how the AU can support its Member States to prevent and manage natural resource related conflicts.<sup>1</sup> Organizations and experts from the area spoke on their work on protection of victims from the conflicts developed out of lack of management of resources in Africa. Participants further shared recommendations to the AU and Member States to this effect.

- b) **Agriculture, Food Security, Peace and Stability in Africa, 27 June, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.** This open Session was held in support with the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture of the AU Commission that deals with Agriculture in Africa. The aim of the meeting was to build consensus on key areas of intervention and synergies as parts of Africa's efforts to promote peace and security by leveraging on the gains of agricultural transformation and boosting of food security in the continent. It should be noted that the role of the AUC's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), which is the continent's flagship project to boost African agriculture and food security, was discussed among participants in order to share knowledge of the AU efforts in strengthening African agriculture and food security.<sup>2</sup> Participants were given a platform to share their views on the current situation on the continent in terms of peace and security and how conflict affects the stability of a country.
- c) **The Education of Refugees and Displaced Children in Africa, 9 August, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia:** - Representatives of AU Member states, policy makers, CSO's and Stakeholders in the area of education and refugees met at the Open Session in order to share experiences on their work on the education of refugees in Africa and provide recommendations to the PSC. The main objective of the meeting was to 'appraise the refugee situation in Africa and the specific impacts on the rights to education for refugee children. Further, the meeting created a set of recommendations to the AU that inspire urgency for the provision of education after initial displacement for refugee children in Africa.' During the delivering note from the AACC, the AACC mentioned, "Religious bodies believe that education is a human right for all, and children who are forced into displacement have an equal right to good quality education as well." We further expressed the importance of "Peace Education especially for refugees in host countries and increase programmes aimed at curbing violent extremism." The PSC took note of our recommendations.
- d) **Panel of the Wise (POW) And Au Mediation Program:** The Panel of the wise supports the Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) in the promotion

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<sup>1</sup> CN:AUC PSC Open session on Natural Resources-Addis Ababa 11 Feb 2016

<sup>2</sup> CN: AU PSC Open session on Agriculture, Food Security, Peace and Stability in Africa, 27 June



and maintenance of peace, security and stability in Africa. Among the many roles of the PoW, it also carries out fact-finding missions and assists and advises mediation teams. The Pan-African Network of the Wise (PanWise) was endorsed by the AU Assembly in May 2013 to bring the Panel of the Wise together with regional counterparts with complementary responsibilities. “The objective of the PanWise is to strengthen, coordinate and harmonize prevention and peace-making efforts in Africa under a single umbrella.”<sup>3</sup> The AACC being an Associate Member of the PanWise Network and due to our commitment on peace and mediation in the continent was invited to the following meeting

- i. **Conference on Truth Commissions and Peace Processes, 17-18 April, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia:** - The AU in collaboration with the Kofi Annan Foundation and the International Center for Transitional Justice held a conference on Truth Commissions and peace processes and brought together senior AU staff, Member States, representatives from Truth Commissions in Africa, as well as international and national experts. Participants were given the opportunity to engage with practitioners in field who discussed what peace mediators and transitional justice practitioners should take into account when considering a truth-seeking mechanism as part of a peace process. The meeting also gave opportunities to reflect on lessons learned from truth commissions that have emerged from peace processes in Africa and other continents. Relevant countries under discussion were Tunisia, South Africa, Sierra Leone, Mali, Kenya, Cote d’Ivoire, and Colombia.<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that the AU has been closely involved in the formulation of many of the peace accords that have led to the establishment of truth commissions, as well as in the development of African instruments and norms for justice and reconciliation on the continent.<sup>5</sup>
- ii. **Meeting on the Operationalization of the African Union Mediation Support Unit (AU MSU), 6-8 September, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.** The African Union Commission (AUC) has established and begun to operationalize a Mediation Support Unit (MSU) in order to respond to the mediation/facilitation/negotiation needs of the continent in a more systematic manner. The main objective of the MSU will be to ensure effective coordination of the mediation engagements of the AUC through the harnessing of internal capacity as well as collaboration and partnerships with external stakeholders in order to support mediators

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<sup>3</sup> AU Handbook 2015

<sup>4</sup> Kofi Annan Foundation news item on Truth Commissions and Peace Processes, 19 April

<sup>5</sup> CN AU meeting on Truth Commissions and Peace processes

and parties in dispute.’ The meeting brought together experts in the field of mediation including the AACC given our experiences in the different countries in the continent where Faith leaders have led mediation processes. It was noted that the AU ‘should involve the inclusion of religious, traditional, youth and other community leaders as well as other important and influential diaspora groups and individuals in mediation efforts at various levels in Africa. In that regard, participants called for the development of a roadmap for the implementation of the activities of the AU MSU. They also suggested the development of at least a two-year work plan and an outline of resource implications of the plan.

### **3.3. Seminar on Regional Reconciliation, Peace building and Transitional Justice in Africa, 30-31 March, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

Life and Peace Institute (LPI) in collaboration with the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation convened a seminar on reconciliation, peace building and transitional justice, bringing together stakeholders on the related field. The focus of the discussions was on:

- a) Understanding the guiding principles of reconciliation, peace building and transitional justice;
- b) Identification of effective strategies and processes to stabilize and transform war-affected countries;
- c) strategies for engaging the African Union, RECs, member states and civil society actors in promoting regional reconciliation, peace building and transitional justice.

The main objectives of the meeting were:

- a) Increase in knowledge sharing and development of skills to implement activities that promote reconciliation, peace building and transitional justice;
- b) Establishment of a Pan-African network of enablers to enhance reconciliation, peace building and transitional justice; and
- c) Generation of policy recommendations aimed at engaging the African Union Peace and Security Council, Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department, and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development in enhancing the effectiveness reconciliation, peace building and transitional justice processes across Africa.

### **3.4. Countering Violent Extremism - Remedy or Rhetoric? 21 April, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

The Life and Peace Institute held its 4th Horn of Africa Bulletin Forum under the theme, ‘Countering Violent Extremism - Remedy or Rhetoric?’ The meeting brought together stakeholders engaged in the field of counterterrorism, countering violent extremism (CVE) and peace building in the Horn of Africa to discuss on what extent the three approaches are achieving their supposed common goal of building a peaceful

society in the Horn of Africa. It was further noted that a combination of different social, economic, political, cultural, ideological and personal pull and push factors lead an individual to join a violent group. Furthermore, one of the key areas noted from the meeting was the role of religious leaders in disentangling religion from violent extremism. It was noted that religious leaders have a major role to play in educating their congregations and the wider public against the criminal actions. It was also noted that Muslim communities should be seen not only as allies but also as leaders in the fight against violence in the name of their religion.

### **3.5. Faith Perspectives on the Space for Civil Society in East, 2-3 May, Africa, Kampala Uganda**

Dan Church Aid Kampala in collaboration with the Alliance Community of Practice on Human Rights in Development, Act Alliance Uganda members and Uganda Joint Christian Council organized a dialogue meeting bringing together Church leaders and FBO's in the region and partners working on Human rights and Development. The meeting was called as a follow up to a previous meeting on similar lines where it was recommended that they needed to enhance the importance of solidarity between partners across countries in the region. Participants were given a platform to explore and share experiences on the role, opportunities and challenges that they face on their given context. The AACC shared her experiences on working with the AUC and REC's and participants' collaborations lead to a deeper understanding of how CSO's engage at policy and National level. Participants further highlighted their roles civic space in society and it was understood that in order for FBO's to make great impact, we need to have more training of skills among our members and work united.

### **3.6. The role of religious leaders from Africa on preventing incitement that could lead to atrocity crimes, 9-10 May, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

The United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention in collaboration with the World Council of Churches, the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Center for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) and the Network of Religious and Traditional Peacemakers held a meeting bringing together African religious leaders and FBO's to discuss the role of religious leaders in preventing incitement to violence that could lead to atrocity crimes. It was revealed during the meeting that incitement to hatred, hostility and violence is prevalent in Africa, as it is in all regions; incitement has preceded and accompanied violence and atrocity crimes in countries affected by conflict and violent extremism, as well as in countries considered to be relatively peaceful. The targets of incitement have included communities defined by their religious and ethnic identity or political affiliation, as well as women. An Action Plan was further produced from the meeting where it was stated that Religious leaders and actors committed, among other actions, to respect and promote human rights; respond to and counter incitement speech; increase interfaith collaboration; and partner with traditional and new media, as well as with state authorities and education

institutions, to prevent and respond to incitement to violence and build communities that support each other, across faiths, and are resilient to incitement to violence. One of the key recommendations for the Religious leaders was that Religious leaders and actors should be trained on intercultural and interreligious communication so as to be enabled to better understand religious, ethnic and tribal differences as well as their consequences.<sup>6</sup>

### **3.7. Birth Registration and Gender Discriminatory Nationality Laws in Africa, 11-13 May, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

The WCC held a training workshop to educate Church leaders on the current issues on Statelessness in Africa and Globally. UNHCR shared with the participants on the different instruments at the UN to prevent statelessness and as well as the current trends and causes of statelessness. UNICEF also provided us with statistics and how birth registration is a right and should be done in order to further prevent statelessness. It was clear the people who became or are born stateless end up not having the chance to enjoy their human rights such as education and work because they do not belong to a State. Church leaders were thus put to task to create awareness back in their constituencies so as to create prevention of the matter. The AACC was also put to task to act as a focal point on the matter and engage with our member churches on the issues affecting people who become stateless.

### **3.8. Follow up on Leadership Training Course, 6-10 June, Kampala, Uganda**

The AACC was invited to a follow up meeting on the 2014 Leadership course offered by the Church of Sweden and Swedish Theological institute (STI). The follow up workshop brought together former participants to the course, to evaluate and analyze the skills learned from the leadership course. The workshop had various engagements, such as Bible study guided by the first five books (Chapter 10) of the New Testament which were to guide participants on God's call to mankind on leadership. The workshop further led participants to be joined in different discussion groups and further evaluate their newly acquired skills on leadership and as well share feedback to the organizers of the workshop.

### **3.9. Academia Engagements**

Understanding and managing migration in Africa multidimensional perspectives, 15-17 June, Pavia, Italy. The University of Pavia in conjunction with the University of Ghana-Centre of migration studies held a forum on migration to address human mobility and migration within, to and from Africa with attention for long-term historical processes and the current international dimension of the phenomenon. The meeting was led by academics from the several universities that have led research on migration in Africa. The meeting further brought forth the dynamics of mobility as a platform for

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<sup>6</sup> Plan of Action for Religious Leaders from Africa to Prevent Incitement to Violence that could lead to Atrocity Crimes-9-10 May, Addis Ababa

discussion among international scholars, policy makers and stakeholders. The AACC presented on the role of the Faith communities in Africa on the current migration crisis and the work of the AACC on ending human trafficking. The meeting touched upon the current debate on migrant/refugee status and its implications on policymaking and humanitarian aid where by UNHCR and ICRC lead presentations depicting the humanitarian assistance they provide to institutions supporting / hosting refugees in their member countries.

### **3.10. African Union Migration Program**

The AACC is actively involved with the AUC on the current migration crisis by bringing the voices of the Churches, advocating for migrants in Africa and working towards ending human trafficking. The AACC is part of the AUC Migration working group that meets every month at the AU to discuss the ongoing Migration crisis happening on the continent. The meetings are attended by the EU, UN and other Policy bodies that deal with Migration and human trafficking. The AACC representatives at these engagements give a presentation on the work and role of the FBO's and the Churches on migration. During the year under review the AACC was invited to a number of meetings and engagements at the policy level which complemented our advocacy work such as the second intra-regional forum on migration in Lusaka Zambia where the AACC was represented by Dr. Bright Mawudor and in the following meeting:

- a) **Meeting to launch the Drafting Process of the Africa Union Protocol on Movement of Persons in Africa, 27-29 July, Nairobi, Kenya:** The AACC was invited to participate in the drafting protocol of free movement of people in Africa. The main purpose of the meeting was to “finalise the review of the continental study prepared by the CCPAU on free movement of people in Africa which will inform the drafting of the protocol, and to draft and finalise the roadmap for drafting AU protocol on free movement of people in Africa.” The meeting brought together leading experts on free Movement and migration and as a result from the meeting, the draft Protocol is to be considered and adopted by AU Heads of State and Governments during the AU Summit in January 2018. The outcomes of the meeting included the continental study report on Free Movement of Persons in Africa finalized and is used as a basis to inform the drafting process of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons in Africa and the roadmap on the development of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons in Africa is developed as a guiding document to the process.

**3.11. Consultation on ‘Development of the East Africa Region Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PVE/CVE) Strategy’ 7 July, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

The IGAD Security Sector Program invited the AACC office in Addis Ababa and other partners to participate in an on-going consultative process to develop the E.A regional program on CVE. The process is being supported by the UNDP which will result into developing and implementing the regional CVE strategy. The main aim of the meeting was to collate the views, perspectives and recommendation of key national stakeholders such as AACC on what should be the main elements of the PVE/CVE strategy. We thus recommended that the process and action plans derived from the strategy should include religious leaders and FBO’s because they have a large constituency and we are able to influence at the community level and policy level. Faith-leaders are able to talk to address the youth as they have direct linkages with them and further address root causes of violent extremism in Africa. IGAD took note of the recommendations.

**3.12. Pre-Summit Multi-Stakeholder Seminar: African Year of Human Rights with Special Focus on the Rights of Women, 29 July, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

Oxfam Liaison to the AU organized a half-day pre-summit seminar as part of its regular efforts to provide a platform for debating and considering the major issues on the Summit agenda. The main objective of the half day meeting was to analyze various policy options, expectations and, implications of the AU summit outcomes. Presenters shared the latest information stemming from the AU PSC as well as updates on the AU summit. The meeting further gave an opportunity for CSO’s to directly engage with the AU on the upcoming summit and they had a platform to debate on the key items on the agenda ahead of the AU Summit.

**3.13. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Meeting on Africa-EU policy Dialogue Migration: In for the long run. 14 September, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.**

The AACC was invited by FES to attend in the 1st dialogue of the Africa-EU Policy Dialogue Plat-form Series by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and CCPAU. The aim of the meeting was to ‘deliberate on the different migration frameworks between Europe and Africa as well as the future challenges the continents will have to face.’ The meeting brought together representatives from the AU and partners to discuss the different dynamics on the Valletta summit and to share on the different engagements that have occurred since the summit. The main objectives were on fostering political dialogue and exchange of knowledge in order to find common ground and facilitate continued and heightened co-operation. Fostering sustained and inclusive political dialogue in between the inter-governmental summits. Facilitating an interface and network building between the AU and EU, and member state representatives, RECs, experts and African and European CSOs and think tanks working on migration. Drawing up policy recommendations that will contribute to an improvement on the co-ordination and co-operation between Africa and Europe in the area of migration.

### **3.14. Africa Partnership and Coordination Forum for AIDS, TB and Malaria, 1-2 November, Johannesburg, South Africa**

The AACC is working towards ending HIV/AIDS in Africa through its advocacy program and strengthening its awareness campaign and through partnering with the AU, UNAIDS and as well as through its member churches. The AACC was invited to the AUC partnership forum which “serves as a continental platform to identify opportunities for joint action, advocate for continued political commitment, coordinate the efforts of the different partners and chart a collective way forward.”<sup>7</sup> During the meeting, the AACC shared with the participants about the role of FBO’s in supporting implementation of the existing policies and the strength that we have in advocacy given our positions at the policy levels. The AACC further shared how FBO’s are present in the grassroots level through our member churches and this is a way we create stronger support to the existing tools of awareness raising and address the issues on ground. The AACC has from then on worked closely with UNAIDS to create a partnership in the coming years to address the issues on HIV/AIDS in Africa.

### **3.15. Second African Union Interfaith Dialogue Forum, 10-11 November, Abuja, Nigeria**

The AUC held its second Interfaith Dialogue forum in partnership with KAICID under the theme “Leap of Faith: Religious Leaders Advance Justice, Peace, Security, Inclusiveness, Dialogue and Development in Africa.” The meeting brought together Religious leaders and CSOs in Africa to deeply engage in discussions on the role of religious leaders in ‘advancing peace, development and inclusiveness in Africa.’<sup>8</sup> The meetings main aim was to create a Steering committee which would engage with the policy makers in order to strengthen the interreligious dialogue in Africa and as well as promote the partnership between the religious leaders and the AU. One of the main objectives of the forum was to develop a joint Plan of Action for religious leaders and policy makers addressing key priorities in the African regions. One of the key recommendations given at the meeting was the engagement of the youth in Africa, investing in quality education and creation of jobs for the youth, it was also stressed during the group discussions that the refugees need to be given better education and as well as introduction of peace education for refugees. The AACC was honored to be given a sit in the Steering Committee as well.

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<sup>7</sup> AUC Concept note

<sup>8</sup> IBID

### **3.16. Churches Witnessing with Migrants (CWWM) Seventh International Consultation, 6 - 8 December, Dhaka, Bangladesh**

The AACC is part of the steering committee of the CWWM which meets every year along the sidelines of the UN Global Forum on Migration and Development. The consultation brings together FBO's and partners globally to discuss the current trends of migration and as well as address the root causes of forced migration while providing recommendations to policy makers. During the consultations, participants presented on their experiences and lessons learned in the field of migration from the different regions and as well as 'contributed to measures that actually ensure that the international community and all UN member states do deliver on their human rights and humanitarian obligations, including the protection of people on the move.'<sup>9</sup> Participants also discussed the planned CWWM Africa forum which is to be launched in 2017 in Dhaka, Senegal. The meeting will bring together experts in the field of migration in the continent, Religious leaders and CSO's in order to address the migration in Africa with the view of the African narrative. It is hoped that this will take place in mid-2017. The CWWM secretariat gave its full support to this meeting and we hope for continuous collaboration towards successful meetings.

### **3.17. Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) Civil Society Days, 8-10 December, Dhaka, Bangladesh.**

Following the CWWM meeting, the AACC attended the Civil Society Days of the GFMD under the theme, "Time for Action: Doing rights-based governance of migration and development; in our communities and across borders." The GFMD Civil Society Days highly focuses on the advocacy of the protection and promotion of the human rights of all migrants as central to human dignity and human development. The AACC given its experiences at the AU level on advocacy contributed to the meeting, sharing experiences of the dynamics of migration within the continent, and sharing recommendations to the forum. Participants shared on the emphasis of implementation of policies which will help to reduce forced migration. It should be noted that almost half of the participants were migrants and people representing migrant institutions globally which contributed to the debates from the different dynamics within the groups. It was also noted that the Global Compact must include binding commitments to address root causes of forced displacement and human rights for all.

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<sup>9</sup> CN CWWM7



## 4. PEACE, DIAKONIA AND DEVELOPMENT

The Mission of the Department is to accompany Churches and National Councils of Churches (NCCs) to foster a culture of peace, tolerance and harmonious relations within communities and nations encompassing all divergent cultures and interests but living together in peace with dignity, on the basis of the conviction that peace is not only a right and a gift from God but a prerequisite for development. The department diaconical work entails empowering churches and NCCs to address economic and social challenges in the society to see a just, equal and sustainable continent that is free from poverty, oppression, inequality and violence advocating for the promotion of an environment that is conducive for life with dignity in the continent.

### 4.1. Activities Planned

The following activities were planned for 2016:

- a) Peace and Human Trafficking
- b) Election observation in Uganda
- c) Consultation on Migration and Human Trafficking
- d) Consultation on Sustainable Peace
- e) Workshop on Church Asset Management
- f) Capacity building for newly elected Church Leaders
- g) Participation in various AU meetings and panels
- h) Participating in partner-hosted engagements and meetings

### 4.2. Goals/Objectives:

The objectives of the above activities were to promote sustainable and lasting peace in Africa by engaging Churches and Ecumenical Institutions in prevention and transformation of conflicts. To Foster a culture of tolerance and harmonious life within communities; eradication of structural injustice that negate Christ's promise of fullness of life through diaconical work and to provide support and mediations in resolving conflict situations and create space for parties involved in conflict to engage in dialogue.

### 4.3. Activities undertaken for the year

The department carried out the following activities.

- a) **Ecumenical Observer Mission to the Uganda General Elections, held on February 19, 2016:**

The department deployed a team of elections observers to accompany Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) in observe the country's general elections on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

The elections were for the presidential seat, 281 members of parliament and 112 women representatives. According to the Uganda Electoral Commission of Uganda, 15,277,198 (Dec 2015) people out of a population of 37,101,747 (July 2015) representing 41% of the population had been registered to vote in 28,010 polling stations spread out in 208 constituencies. The election attracted 8 presidential candidates and 29 political parties.

The objective of the mission was to team up with UJCC to observe the elections, assess the performance of various election stakeholders in the context of the laws of Uganda and within the international instruments and expectations governing democratic elections. The mission was classified as ‘International’ observers although it was accredited together with UJCC. Overall the, goal of the AACC Election Observer Missions is to bolster democracy and good governance in Africa.

**b) Consultation on Migration and Human Trafficking, 24-28 February, 2016:**

The issue of human trafficking in Africa is rapidly gaining global Centre stage as “modern slavery” over the past few decades. The practice involves the recruitment, movement and exploitation of innocent people through coercion, deception and force abduction or payment of money by perpetrators to parents of victims, usually minors. By these means the victims are transported to unknown destinations for servitude in forced labour, sexual abuse or prostitution and torture for monetary gains. It is with this foregoing that the AACC organized a consultation on Migration and Human Trafficking in Nairobi. This consultative conference brought together 48 participants drawn from 13 countries. It was the second session in a series within a period of eight months aimed at awareness creation and enhancing the capacity knowledge of participants.

**c) Solidarity Mission to Burundi 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> March 2016:**

In response to the crisis in Burundi since 2015, AACC, WCC and FECCLAHA, made a solidarity visit with an ecumenical delegation of nine to the Republic of Burundi, to express their commitment to work with all religious leaders and all peace loving people of Burundi and to support their tireless efforts on the ground to secure a lasting peace and stability in the country. As a follow-up the AACC further participated in a series of meetings and communications which worked on a message targeted to the President of IGAD, President John Pombe Magufuli as the Chairperson of the East African Community, and the other eminent persons working on the crisis in Burundi.

**d) Peace Advisory Committee meeting, 5-6 April 2016:**

The AACC Peace Advisory Committee met in Nairobi ahead of the meeting on mapping and strategy for sustainable peace in Africa. The purpose of this meeting was to provide focus for the peace consultation and to identify the most pressing issues of concern for the AACC member churches and the continent at large.

**e) Meeting on mapping and strategy for sustainable peace in Africa: 7-8 April 2016:**

Peace is a precondition for any development and positive change in any context. As far as Africa is concerned, a number of factors have been identified as threats against peace and have erupted into open conflict in various parts of the continent: It is with this understanding that a two days meeting was organized to map and strategize for sustainable peace and security in Africa. This meeting brought together 69 participants; General Secretaries of National Christian Councils, members of the AACC Executive Committee, members of the Advisory Committee on Peace and Security, representatives of partner organizations and members of AACC staff.

**f) Participation in the Second Intra-Regional Forum on Migration in Africa, 4th to 6<sup>th</sup> May 2016:**

As part of our focus on the scourge of Human Trafficking and Forced Migration, the AACC Deputy General Secretary, Dr. Bright Mawudor, participated in the Second Intra-Regional Forum on Migration in Africa which was held in Lusaka, Zambia on the theme: “Fostering Regional Integration: Facilitating Trade and Human Mobility through Enhanced Border Management”. The first Intra-Regional Forum on Migration in Africa was held in Accra, Ghana, in September 2015, with particular focus on addressing the root causes of irregular migration in Africa. The Intra-Regional Forum on Migration in Africa is a joint initiative of the African Union Commission (AUC), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

The meeting brought experts in the field of migration, policy makers and CSOs to contribute to enhancing capacities of the African Institutions to facilitate intra-regional migration, human mobility and free movement of goods and services through improved integrated border management. This meeting was a platform to share information, knowledge, experiences, lessons and good practices to inspire each other for common understanding and policy coherence on migration issues and as well as Evaluate the visa issuance systems of African countries in order to facilitate the implementation of continent-wide visa free regimes. One of the key recommendations to our respective RECs is to include in their plan of action the speedy ratification, domestication and implementation of the Convention by their Member States including by calling meetings of authorities of Member States with mandate on border issues to consider the Niamey Convention. One of the key Action points to the AU was to engage development partners to ensure that basic human rights are available to migrants from the Continent globally.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>AU: Key Issues, Emerging Issues, and Recommendations: Second Intra-Regional Forum on Migration, 4-6 May Lusaka, Zambia

**g) Focus meetings with ecumenical partners and the South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) at the AACC Secretariat in Nairobi, Kenya:**

Five meetings over three weeks in July, 2016 were held with various partners coming together to collaborate on the way forward following the eruption of violence in South Sudan. These led to the Ecumenical Solidarity Visit to South Sudan, 17-18 August, 2016 where the AACC sent a delegation led by Archbishop Emeritus Rev. Dr. Eliud Wabukala (Anglican Church of Kenya) to continue our peacebuilding efforts and to physically express to our brothers and sisters of South Sudan the support of Christians in Africa and beyond. The delegation managed to meet with the SSCC, government representatives, as well as a representative from the SPLM-IO (opposition). An ecumenical service was held during the visit with prayers led by members of the delegation and South Sudanese Church leaders and the homily made by the Archbishop Emeritus.

**h) Participation in the Forum for Peace, Healing and Reconciliation for Church leaders in Burundi, August 24-25, 2016:**

AACC Director for Peace, Diakonia and Development attended a Peace, Healing and Reconciliation Forum organized by the Council of Churches in Burundi (CNEB) and supported by the Fellowship of Christian Councils in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa (FECCLAHA).

**i) Participation in the Inter-Church Organizations meeting on the conflict in Burundi, 15<sup>th</sup> September:**

The AACC Deputy General Secretary, Dr. Bright Mawudor, and Prof. Bosela Eale (AACC Director for Peace, Diakonia and Development) attended a meeting organized by Tearfund on peace and security in Burundi bringing together organizations representing the Christian Churches in Africa which was held at the Roussel House, Karen, Nairobi. The meeting discussed issues affecting the country of Burundi, the on-going conflict, the violence, the economic decline and the suffering that has been caused to the people of Burundi for more than a year now and, the role the Church in Africa has to play. The organizations which participated were; AACC, AMECEA, CAPA, PROCMURA and AEA.

**j) September 21<sup>st</sup> Celebrated the International Day of Peace:**

AACC together with United Religions Initiative Africa (URI-Africa) and African Interfaith Initiative on Post 2015 organized the 2016 International day of Peace in the aim of convening conversations on *“The role of African Faith-based and Interfaith Organizations in popularizing and implementing SDGs and Agenda 2030”*. To cover this

there was an Interfaith Forum made-up of Faith Based Development Actors, Religious Leaders and their communities to deliberate on ways to educate, advocate, popularize, and collaborate on the SDGs and Agenda 2063.

**k) Solidarity visit to DRC, 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> November 2016:**

The AACC had been following with great concern the threatening of peace in the DRC through violence and loss of lives in 2016. The AACC stood in solidarity with the Church and the people of Congo and therefore sent a delegation of six led by the AACC President, Arch Bishop Valentine Mokiwa and Rev. Prof. Bosela Eale, AACC Director for Peace, Diakonia and Development. The peace and solidarity visit to the Congo was very successful.

**l) Seminar on Promoting a Peaceful Africa, Agenda 2063, 28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2016:**

AACC hosted National Councils and Partners on peace concerns called for a 3 day meeting. The meeting focused on: analyzing and mapping on contemporary peace and security situations in Africa; Sharing experiences and successful methodologies for sustainable peace and conflict resolution in Africa; Identifying joint efforts to address key threats against the life and wellbeing of people and communities; A commitment for complementarity between national, regional, and continental levels in promoting sustainable peace in the continent in close collaboration with the African Union.

**m) 2<sup>nd</sup> Interfaith Dialogue Forum, 10<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2016:**

Rev. Prof. Bosela represented the AACC as religious leaders, policy makers, scholars and representatives of civil society organizations from more than thirty African countries gathered at the 2nd Interfaith Dialogue Forum, held in Abuja, Nigeria. The Forum recognized the importance of interreligious and intra-faith dialogue as a tool for peacebuilding and development in Africa. Following an intensive two-day deliberation, the delegates approved a Declaration and a Plan of Action on their joint work in education, partnerships, media and development. The Forum was jointly organized by the African Union Commission through the Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (CIDO) and the International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID).

The Forum succeeded in electing a Steering Committee of two years' term to support and strengthen the process of interreligious and intercultural dialogue within African countries and communities. Rev. Prof. Bosela was amongst the twelve selected.

**n) A Consultation on Governance, Conflict Resolution and Electoral Processes for the Congolese Church Leaders in Addis Ababa, 5-8 December 2016:**

AACC during its Solidarity visit to DRC noticed that in order to have a united DRC, Catholics and Protestants should be united for the interest of country and that's the

reason the AACC decided to send a delegation of Six to Addis Ababa to attend the above consultation.

#### **4.4. Climate Change in Africa**

This thrust provides space and platform for advocacy, awareness creation and sensitization on climate change and vital action to be taken by churches and NCCs, individuals, communities and nation to combat the effects of Climate change in the continent. During the year under review, the Executive Secretary for Communication and Climate change Ms. Afiwa Allahare attended meetings, workshops and seminars in order to understand the concept of Climate Change and its implications. The objectives of these meetings were to enable her gain more insight into the nature and work of churches and NGOs on the Environment and Climate Change.

She further undertook desk research to acquaint herself with what had been done previously by the past Climate Change Officer with an aim of building on past work and achievements as well as identifying challenges for an informed planning process.

The following activities were carried out:

- a) Participation in the sixth Special Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment - AMCEN in Cairo, Egypt, from 17 to 19 April 2016. The discussions of the Ministers centered on the implications of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change for Africa, the implementation of Agenda 2030 or "Sustainable Development Goals" (SDGs), the AU Agenda 2063 and its 10-year implementation plan and their participation in the second United Nations Environment Assembly scheduled for May 2016 in Nairobi, Kenya. They looked at how to tackle the adverse effects of Climate Change as a matter of urgency - called "adaptation" - and started reflecting on ways to reduce the emission of the portion of greenhouse houses Africa was responsible of - called "mitigation".
- b) Celebration of the World Environment day on 6 June 2016. The AACC, in collaboration with United Religions Initiative-Africa (URI-Africa), Mother Earth Network and Kenya Interfaith Network of Action for Environment organized an interfaith celebration of the day, at the Desmond Tutu Conference Centre in Nairobi, Kenya, under the theme: "Role of Faith Based Organizations and Religious Leaders in Environmental Protection and Fight against Illegal Wildlife Trade in Africa", which gathered representatives of various Faith Based Organizations involved in environmental activities.
- c) Seminar on "Laudato Si", the Encyclical of Pope Francis on Care for our common home, the earth. It was held on 17 June 2016 in Nairobi, Kenya, to assess the activities people have managed to conduct since the launching of the Encyclical in June 2015.

- d) 3<sup>rd</sup> Interfaith Youth Forum: - The Officer attended the above with Ms. Zipporah Mwaura, the Executive Secretary, Youth and Children Ministry. It was held on 30 September and 1 October 2016 at the Catholic University of East Africa, in Nairobi, Kenya. It brought together about 200 youths to reflect together on the role of the youth in the protection of the Environment and in Peace building.
- e) "Global Climate Finance Campaign" in Cape Town, South Africa, on 23 and 24 October 2016. The overall goal of that initiative was to establish a global platform and campaign to escalate and globalise existing or new interventions for urgently shifting finance and investments away from dirty energy and other climate destructive projects, into clean and sustainable solutions, such as renewable energy. A special focus would be to support this work within the Global South.
- f) Regional Consultation on Water. The Ecumenical Water Network, a programme of the World Council of Churches, invited the AACC to the preparation of a regional consultation on the theme: "Pilgrimage of Water Justice towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)." It was held from 27 to 29 November 2016 in Lagos, Nigeria. It was an opportunity for the participants, mainly from Africa, to share about the challenges they encounter to access clean water in their different settings. The issue of Clean Water and Sanitation is the focus of Goal no 6 of the SDGs. Participants also had the opportunity to visit an informal settlement called "Makoko", to have a practical experience thereof. They also made suggestions on what both churches and political authorities could do to reduce the problem. A statement was issued at the end of the consultation.

#### **4.5. Activities not planned but undertaken:**

The activities carried out outside the planned schedule were on the participation in the Forum for Peace, Healing and Reconciliation for Church leaders in Burundi, August 24-25, 2016 and the Inter-Church Organizations meeting on the conflict in Burundi on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2016. Further the climate change officer attended a consultation of Church of Sweden and Bread for the World with their African partners.

#### **4.6. Achievements/Impacts:**

The department both in implementing the activities planned as well as in participating in the activities not planned recorded success in the following areas: -

- a) Supported UJCC in observing elections, leading to increased UJCC capacity to interact with the government on behalf of the people of Uganda. This also had the impact of increased staff capacity to observe and monitor national transitions;

- b) Continued to champion the fight against human trafficking, with National Council leaders and representatives from 13 African countries gaining increased awareness on the various ways this issue has affected the continent;
- c) On behalf of our membership, showed solidarity with Burundi during troubling times; this engagement increased our cooperation with ecumenical partners, such as FECCLAHA, led to follow up meetings targeting the use of influential eminent persons in soft-diplomacy approaches, and increased the communication between the sometimes-at-odds groups in the churches and Council;
- d) Through our mapping for sustainable strategies meeting, the AACC increased the capacity of 15 General Secretaries of National Councils to plan their engagement for peace at a national and regional level;
- e) Engagement on the crisis in South Sudan in 2016 helped us show the people of South Sudan and the South Sudan Council of Churches that the people of Africa were watching and praying for them; AACC collaboration with numerous regional and international organizations on the humanitarian and political engagement (and the solidarity visit) strengthened our networking ties, as well as leading to increased visibility for the AACC's work;
- f) Increased interfaith collaboration and public space on the Post-2015 targets through our International Day of Peace celebration; this interfaith forum led to increased dialogue and collaboration on merging the core elements of the SDGs and the Agenda 2063 vision;
- g) AACC helped the Church in DRC and the people engage with the government, through the solidarity visit and talks;
- h) The AACC also helped increase unity amongst Catholic and Protestant Church Leaders in DRC by supporting a mixed-denomination delegation of 6 to attend the Consultation on Governance, Conflict Resolution and Electoral Processes in Addis Ababa;
- i) Increased AACC's collaboration on interfaith efforts and strengthened our ties with the African Union;
- j) Enhanced knowledge and outlook in the Climate Change Programme;
- k) Well placed to engage the churches and other stakeholders on the issue of Climate Change; and
- l) Programme developed to engage churches on the issue of Climate Change.

#### **4.7. Lessons learnt**

In undertaking the above activities, the following were the lessons learnt:



- a) The need to always keep good working relations with partners in the field, as increased collaboration has led directly to increased engagement;
- b) The need for continued efforts at promoting unity within the Church, without resorting to lashing out at other faiths; and
- c) The need for this unity to be promoted as precursor to constructive and unhampered engagement with government and the people.
- d) There is lack of awareness and seriousness on the issue of Climate Change, especially among the churches;
- e) There is need for urgent action by all stakeholders, including governments, churches, CSOs and even the communities themselves to combat climate change; and
- f) There is need for focused climate change interventions at the grassroots even though the damage is global.

#### **4.7. Challenges**

The department while implementing the activities planned faced challenging situations posed by the shifting political scenarios in the countries such as DRC and South Sudan and reduced funding in ecumenical circles that hampered the department's work. The climate change thrust was unfunded and the work carried out by the climate change officer were supported from the undesignated grants.

#### **4.9. Future Strategic Focus**

The department envisages the following activities to be carried out in the future:

- a) High-Level Ecumenical Diplomacy: Continued engagement with South Sudan, DRC, and Burundi using our access to ecumenical Eminent Persons, and the AACC Peace Advisory Committee;
- b) Good Governance and Democratic Transitions: Election monitoring in Angola, Kenya, and Rwanda is vital, with emphasis on the latter two;
- c) Intervention in Specific Burning Situations;
- d) Migration and Human Trafficking: Creation of a Common Ecumenical Position on the Issue of Forced Migration and Human Trafficking in Africa; digital advocacy together with membership;
- e) Economic Justice and Poverty Eradication: Engagement on the issue of tax-funded Social Protection in East and Southern Africa;
- f) Leadership development for self-sustainability;
- g) Food security and climate change in Africa;
- h) Networking and collaboration with Civil Society Organizations;

- i) Survey to map out initiatives carried out by member churches and National Councils of Churches in the field of Climate Change or Environment;
- j) Convene two seminars, one for the Anglophone constituency and one for the francophone one, to share the findings from the above survey.
- k) Explore avenues for more enhanced collaboration with the African Union in the framework of "Agenda 2063: The Africa we want" and the United Nations about "Agenda 2030" on the Sustainable Development Goals.

# 5. THEOLOGY, FAMILY LIFE AND GENDER JUSTICE

The overall objective of the department is to address the specific concerns of families, women, youth and children, as well as mobilizing churches to care for the harmony and well-being of various categories of individuals and communities. Further to providing the relevant contextual theological reflection focused on the needs of the churches in Africa has come to be the basis or anchor of all the programmatic work of the AACC.

## 5.1. Activities Planned

The following activities were planned to be carried out in the year 2016:

- a) International Women's Day 8th March 2016
- b) Workshop on Child Safeguarding and Wellbeing 23-25 May 2016
- c) Theology Advisory Committee Meeting 7-8 June 2016
- d) Seminar on Current Challenges to Family Values in Africa: Role of the Church. 13<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> June 2016.
- e) Theology as a tool to overcome poverty, Orthodoxy Seminary, 8 Oct 2016
- f) Day of the African Child Celebration on 16th June 2016
- g) Workshop on Women and Entrepreneurship - Unleashing Women Power in Entrepreneurship. 22 – 26 August 2016
- h) Workshop on Youth and Entrepreneurship 26-28 September 2016
- i) 36<sup>th</sup> ICFLC Meeting October 17-20, 2016
- j) 7<sup>th</sup> Theological Institute 5 – 9 December 2016

## 5.2. Goals and Objectives

The objectives of the above activities were: -

- a) To address the specific concerns for families, women, youth and children;
- b) Commit to protect and safeguard the wellbeing of children and make their rights and safety a reality;
- c) Create a network and partnership initiatives to advocate for vulnerable children and youth;
- d) Campaigning for drafting of policies and implementations of the same in partner organizations and member Churches;
- e) Empower women and youth to develop skills and competences in the field of entrepreneurship to perceive and act on business opportunities;
- f) Increase knowledge on national and international standards/legal instruments in place to safeguard and protect children and young adults; and

- g) To promote authentic and contextual theological reflection that will enable the churches in Africa to sustain and nurture a generation of ecumenically grounded church leaders in line with Jesus Christ's mission of unity, peace and dignity for humankind.

### 5.3. Activities Carried Out

During the year under review, the department carried out the following activities:

- a) **International Women's Day Celebrations:** On 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016, the department celebrated the International Women's Day under the theme "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality". We used this opportunity to pray and celebrate women leaders and saluted the efforts made by our governments and churches to ensure gender parity in all spheres of our lives. Nevertheless, we noted that much more needs to be done to help achieve gender parity more quickly in all areas of development. The outcomes of this celebration were: -
- i. raised awareness on the importance of this day;
  - ii. message from the guest speaker was shared with all our member churches that urged women in the continent to pray and promote gender equality; and
  - iii. We called upon the church leaders to strive to help women and girls achieve their ambitions, for gender-balanced leadership, respect and value for our differences as well as develop more inclusive and flexible cultures in our countries, at our workplaces and in all spheres of our lives.
- b) **Workshop on Child Safeguarding and Wellbeing.** The department organized a three-day workshop on child safeguarding and wellbeing at the Desmond Tutu Conference Centre, on the theme "Conflict and crisis in Africa: protecting all children's rights," from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> May 2016. It gathered 43 participants from 10 countries in Southern and Eastern Africa. The workshop aimed at making children's rights and safety a reality through identifying and discussing concrete opportunities of preventing and protecting children's rights in conflict and post-conflict situations. The outcomes of this workshop were: -
- i. Enhanced participants understanding of children's rights and safety;
  - ii. strengthened the local and regional networks that support Child Protection Programs;

- iii. participants were trained on the legal tools available to evaluate risks within own organization areas of work;
  - iv. created a network and partnership initiatives to advocate for vulnerable children in AACC member churches and in the community and countries where each participant came from, increased knowledge on national and international standards/legal instruments in place to safeguard and protect children;
  - v. Raised awareness on challenges in child protection and safeguarding, and how to overcome them as a good practice; and
  - vi. Enhanced participants understanding of some of the consequences and impact of war and conflict during and after war on the African child
- c) **Theology Advisory Committee Meeting:** - This meeting took place from 6-9 June 2016 and was attended by 12 participants from the Regional theological networks and sister organizations such as PROCMURA. The outcomes of this meeting were the draft theme of the AACC 11<sup>th</sup> General Assembly which was developed and submitted to the AACC governance bodies for approval and members discussed burning and emerging Theological Challenges from the regions, which the region will continue to focus on.
- d) **Seminar on Current Challenges to Family Values in Africa: Role of The Church:** - The department organized a meeting on current challenges to family values in Nairobi Kenya from 13<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> June 2016 with the aim of addressing some identified current challenges and coming up with ways of addressing these challenges in an effort to strengthen the family unit. The theme of the meeting was “Current Challenges to Family Values in Africa: Role of The Church”. This seminar brought together forty (40) participants drawn from AACC member churches representing the various denominations and regions of Africa in Anglophone countries. Core issues of discussions were: - Globalization and Family in Africa: challenges to the family unit and family values, Gender Based Violence (GBV); Health and healing and its role in strengthening the family unit; Changing gender roles and relations and their impact on the family unit; and the Church's response to the challenges facing the family unit and family values. At the end of this seminar, participants were able to:
- i. Understand the impact of globalization and its challenges to the family unit and family values;

- ii. Increased their knowledge and skills on GBV prevention and promotion of gender equality and how to develop an advocacy strategy against GBV;
  - iii. Understood the role of the Church in promoting family values; and
  - iv. The Role of the Church in protecting and promoting children's rights.
- e) **Day of The African Child Celebration:** - The department celebrated the day of the African Child under the theme "*Conflict and Crisis in Africa: Protecting all children's rights*". Participants were reminded that children have a right to be protected from all forms of abuse, neglect exploitation and violence and that AACC is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children under the age of 18 to ensure that they develop peacefully and live in a safe environment enjoying life abundantly. The outcomes of this celebration were on enhanced participants understanding of conflict and its impact on children and the clear message echoed by the children emphasizing our responsibility to protect children's rights.
- f) **Solidarity Visit to South Sudan, 17-18 August:** - The department participated in the ecumenical high-level solidarity mission to South Sudan from 17 to 18 August 2016 in the framework of the AACC Peace and Advocacy programme. Among other members whom the delegates met, the Director, Rev. Dr. Lydia Mwaniki was able to meet some women church leaders, who shared the difficult and devastating experiences of women and children, some of who were still in the bush, where humanitarian help could not reach them. They had had been organizing a series of prayer and fasting meetings once every month, which were well attended. They saw prayer as their key role in reconciliation and peacebuilding. The outcomes of the meeting with women leaders were the decision reached for the department to liaise with South Sudan women church leaders and conduct trauma healing workshops for women church leaders and a call for prayers was circulated with the report of this visit that called upon other women in the AACC constituency for accompaniment of the South Sudanese women and to stand with them in prayer.
- g) **Workshops on Entrepreneurship** - two workshops were organized for women and youth respectively in August and September 2016: - These workshops aimed at empowering women and youth with knowledge and practical skills of entrepreneurship as a means of Addressing Unemployment". The workshops brought together women and youth from

the following countries: Ghana, Liberia, Lesotho, Zambia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Swaziland, South Sudan, Burundi and Tanzania. The outcomes of these workshops were:

- i. Participants were empowered with skills and knowledge which they would use to empower themselves and their congregations economically, in order to be self-reliant; and
  - ii. New ideas of innovation and creativity were enhanced during the entrepreneurship meetings.
- h) 36<sup>th</sup> ICFLC Meeting:** - The director participated in the 36<sup>th</sup> International Committee of the Fellowship of the Least Coin (ICFLC) annual meeting was held in Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Louisville from 17-19th Oct, 2016. The meeting also coincided with the Church Women United National 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration held from October 13-16, 2016 in Louisville, Kentucky under the theme was *"Remember! Rejoice! Rebuild and the Fellowship of the Least Coin (FLC) 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations*. During the business meeting project grants were approved for 9 projects and 2 scholarship grants were approved for women in Africa.
- i) 7<sup>th</sup> Theological Institute:** - The 7<sup>th</sup> Theological Institute took place from 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016 at the AACC Desmond tutu Conference Centre. The institute gathered fifty-seven (57) young theologians from the AACC Member churches in Africa, and was enriched by participants seconded by the United Methodist church Global Ministries. The countries represented were Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, DRC, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The theme of the institute was, *"Respecting the Dignity and God's Image in Every Human Being."* The objectives of the institute were: -
- i. To reflect theologically on the theme of the AACC 11th General Assembly 2018: *"Respecting the Dignity of God's Image in every human being"* (Gen 1: 26-27);
  - ii. To conduct Contextual Bible Studies (CBS) on the theme;
  - iii. To share and reflect on success stories or case studies of how Respecting the Dignity of God's Image in every human being in Africa has worked;
  - iv. To share mission theological insights that foster the dignity of the peoples of Africa; and
  - v. Share varying experiences and expressions of mission among the churches in Africa and explore ways of ecumenical

perspectives on Respecting the Dignity of God's Image in every human being.

**The following were the outcomes: -**

- vi. An introduction to the AACC 11th General Assembly Theme: "Respecting the Dignity and God's Image in Every Human Being" was done and participants were urged to develop materials on the theme.
- vii. Contextual Bible Studies (CBS) was conducted which provided more insights to the participants on contextual bible reading
- viii. Participants were able to network with each other and with the other theologians from Global Ministries in exchanging experiences and case studies on how the above issue on "Dignity of God's Image" are handled in their respective contexts; and;
- ix. Child safeguarding mechanisms were promoted.

**j) Contextual Bible Study in Cameroon:** - This CBS training workshop was organized on 16th -17 December 2016. The purpose of the seminar was to train trainers (ToT) in Contextual Bible Study. There were eleven participants from Central Africa, all French speakers from Cameroon, Togo and Benin. Most of the participants were pastors, teachers, students, lay people, women and men from different backgrounds. The training was both theoretical and practical in nature. It took place at the Protestant University of Central Africa (PUCA) in Yaoundé, Cameroon. The CBS in Cameroon was housed by The Association des institutions théologiques d'Afrique francophone (ASTHEOL) region, which is one of the AACC Theological Associations. At the end of the meeting, participants were able to: -

- a. Gain understanding of using contextual Bible Study as a method of reading biblical texts with the aim of transforming their communities;
- b. Link CBS with their mission work through engaging their contexts with the text in its context; and
- c. Explore ecumenical perspectives on Respecting the Dignity of God's Image in every human being

**5.4. Activities not planned but undertaken:**

The department while responding to invitations from member churches and ecumenical partners, participated in the following activities which had not been previously planned:



- a) International Conference on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children;
- b) Symposium on Reformation legacies and African theologies, Kigali, Rwanda, 17-20 Feb 2016;
- c) EDAN Coordinators meeting;
- d) Seminar on Radicalization and Violent Extremism, Nairobi, Kenya, 3 June 2016;
- e) Training On Women’s Human Rights Advocacy for Faith-Based Organizations Report- Geneva, Switzerland 4-9 JULY, 2016;
- f) Faiths and (In) Security in Africa Conference, Limuru, St Paul’s University, 4-8 July 2016;
- g) ATISCA Conference on Faith and South African Realities, Pretoria, South Africa, 11-15 July 2016;
- h) Truth Be Told Conference at Rhema Church, Randburg, South Africa 14<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> September 2016;
- i) AATEEA Workshop on Human Sexuality, 17-21 October 2016, Lusaka, Zambia;
- j) Side-By-Side Faith Gender Justice Movement Kenya Chapter Gender Desk Forum;
- k) CWME Working Group on World Mission Conference, 12-17 Nov 2016, Arusha, Tanzania;
- l) AEA Golden Jubilee Celebration on “The Africa We Want”, 15-20 Nov 2016, Nairobi, Kenya;
- m) Prayer Day and Action for Children;
- n) Respecting the Child Dignity and the Mechanism and Policies on Child protection; and
- o) ASTHEOL WEST Meeting, 13-15 December 2016, UPAC, Yaoundé, Cameroon.

#### **5.5. Achievements/Impacts:**

In implementing the planned activities, the following were the achievements recorded:

- a) The activities implemented raised awareness on the specific concerns of families, women, youth and children through the activities that were carried out and in the commemoration of the international day of women and children;
- b) Key messages from these meetings were shared with all our member churches;

- c) Youth and Women were empowered with entrepreneurial skills;
- d) Enhanced understanding of children's rights and safety;
- e) Knowledge on national and international standards/legal instruments in place to safeguard and protect children;
- f) Printing of policies to protect children, books and liturgies that are children inclusive;
- g) Young theologians empowered with training that enabled them to reflect theologically on the theme;
- h) Contextual Bible Studies (CBS) on the theme conducted and shared on their varying experiences and expressions of mission in their work in their various ministries/institutions and explored ways of ecumenical perspectives on “Respecting the Dignity of God's Image in every human being.”

#### **5.6. Lessons learnt:**

The activities carried out were very educative to the women who attended the meetings. Transfer of skills and new ideas of innovation and creativity were enhanced during the entrepreneurship meeting. The AACC theological institutes planned around specific theme have proved to be a useful tool in the development of leaders for the growing churches in Africa. At this institute, young theologians were nurtured to be leaders who can reflect theologically and contextually on the theology of human dignity

#### **5.7. Challenges**

The challenges experienced while undertaking the planned activities were two fold namely: -

- a) Financial resources: - allocated funds were not enough to include more participants in each activity and to carry out similar activities in all other regions of AACC Constituency and the
- b) Language barrier – as a result of the above there was lack of simultaneous translations in meetings thus limiting the selection of participants only to Anglophone speakers

#### **5.8. Future Strategic focus:**

The department envisages the following activities to be carried out in the future:

- a) Workshop on post conflicts and GBV trauma and healing workshop for women leaders

- b) Advocacy training for women advocacy training on the rights of women for AACC women church leaders
- c) Regular engagement of women religious leaders with Continental and International organizations (AU and UN) on gender issues, on the implementation of Agenda 2063 aspiration 6; and the Sustainable Development Goal 5.
- d) Fundraising for Programme work
- e) Follow up workshops on Contextual Bible Study in Cameroon and other regions if budget permits.

## **6. FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION AND RESOURCE MOBILISATION**

This department manages the organization's finances and resources by promoting transparency, accountability and policy implementation. The primary function of the Finance, Administration and Resource Mobilisation department is to implement policies in the acquisition, protection and management of AACC's assets and other resources and their efficient use to achieve value for money. It further supports the General Secretariat in leadership and management functions and sustains the programmatic work of the organization by estimating costs for proposed Programmes and strategizing the allocation of resources.

During the year under review, the department undertook the following: -

- a) Human Resource Management
- b) Financial Administration
- c) Property Management
- d) Legal and Financial Services
- e) Resource Mobilization and Management

**Audited Financial Statement for year 2016 (see separate)**

# 7. CONCLUSION

The year under review was very successful, eventful as well as challenging in the implementation of the organization programmatic work. The Office of the General Secretary provided leadership and coordination for the activities listed under the two departments programmes whereas the Finance, Administration and Resource Mobilisation office guided the two departments in planning and allocating resources needed to carry out the identified activities.

The organization carried out the planned activities successfully as explained above under the Peace, Diakonia and Development department and the Theology, Family Life and Gender Justice Department and reached out to women, youth and children and young theologians by addressing their specific concerns.

As stated in this report, the organization recorded achievements in the activities that were undertaken but also faced a myriad of challenges which hampered the implementation of some of the activities planned. These were among others the unpredictable political environment in the continent as well as limited resources and dwindling funding from our ecumenical partners.

Despite these challenges, the AACC continued to take a leading role in accompanying the churches in the continent and in collaborating with CSOs to remain firm and hopeful in engaging on issues affecting the people of the African Continent. Further, with the support of its ecumenical partners, it will continue to engage the churches pro-actively in the continent in addressing the issues facing the continent and in partnership with other continental and international organizations (AU, UN) in the promotion of sustainable development goals and the AU Agenda 2063 to see a peaceful, prosperous and secure Africa.

It is our hope to create more partnerships and networks to enhance the organizations work.