



Prophetic, Pragmatic and Practical

A Review of Global Advocacy undertaken by the World Council of Churches, Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, ACT International and ACT Development

by
Jenny Borden

This report contains the summary and analysis of the author based on her research and interviews of knowledgeable persons within the ecumenical family. The individuals interviewed spoke in their own capacity and not on behalf of their institutions.

The report does not aim to be an exhaustive compilation of all advocacy efforts by the four organizations involved, nor by their members, nor by all actors within the ecumenical family. The report, however, is more a "snapshot" of the key definitions, activities, methodologies, strengths and limitations of the advocacy work of the secretariats of ACT Development, ACT International, Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, and the World Council of Churches. This report has been received by the Ecumenical Staff Working Group on Global Advocacy (ESWGGA) as one part of a scoping exercise on advocacy for which they have commissioned the author. Where conclusions have been drawn, based on different and sometimes competing inputs, these are solely the conclusions of the author and have not been endorsed by the ESWGGA, its members or their organizations. The Working Group receives the report with appreciation and anticipation of ways in which it may stimulate deeper reflection and cooperation.

Author: Jenny Borden

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For more information, contact:

ACT Development

www.actdevelopment.org
actdevelopment@wcc-coe.org

Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance

www.e-alliance.ch
info@e-alliance.ch

ACT International

www.act-intl.org
info@act-intl.org

World Council of Churches

www.wcc-coe.org
info@wcc-coe.org

The above organizations may all be reached at: 150 route de Ferney, P.O. Box 2100, CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland.

The author, Jenny Borden, may be contacted at: jeborden@aol.com

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Foreward

Advocacy is not a static concept or practice. Nor are ecumenical structures. Institutionally we are changing, and our members are changing. We work hard to learn from our experience. And the priorities and tactics of advocacy efforts also present ever changing opportunities.

In commissioning this paper, the members of the Ecumenical Staff Working Group on Global Advocacy¹ aspire to learn and reflect, in ways that strengthen our effectiveness, deepen our cooperation, and help us to be good stewards of resources within the ecumenical family. We are members of one family. We are related to one another. We have many of the same stakeholders. It is increasingly imperative that we seek complementary action, play to our strengths, and build upon synergies for greater impact in our advocacy.

This scoping exercise prompts much in our thinking. It has revealed trends and experiences, but also challenges and opportunities. What is presented in this report, is a snapshot -- it is not a permanent prescription of who we are, how we work, or our potential.

On the basis of this report we look to the future and see the urgent need to:

- Build greater strategic synergy, utilizing both specialized expertise and broad systemic approaches;
- Provide high profile leadership and mass mobilization in the churches, from national to community level;
- Deepen the ownership and commitment within the ecumenical family to advocacy that seeks to mount a faithful response to the most critical challenges of the day; and
- Give greater visibility to the advocacy of the ecumenical family as rooted in common vision and values with a distinctive message rooted in the Gospel.

We encourage all readers to reflect on their past experience and future possibilities in contributing to ecumenical advocacy that is prophetic, pragmatic and practical.

**— the Ecumenical Staff Working Group on
Global Advocacy**

¹ The Ecumenical Staff Working Group on Global Advocacy is made up of staff representatives of ACT Development, ACT International, the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, and the World Council of Churches.



Executive Summary

This review of global advocacy undertaken by the WCC, EAA, ACT International and ACT Development was commissioned by the Ecumenical Staff Working Group on Global Advocacy (ESWGGA). It is a scoping exercise of the global advocacy work of the four organisations and not an evaluation of the work. It is part of a longer process which is intended to lead to a policy document on advocacy for ACT International and ACT Development, and ultimately for the proposed unified ACT alliance, a Memorandum of Understanding between the four bodies and finally a reflective piece looking to the future for advocacy work in the ecumenical family. This review does not cover the work of the member churches and ecumenical agencies and so is a very incomplete and partial picture of the global ecumenical advocacy work. It does however include a brief description of the work of LWF, given its special status as a global church family headquartered at the Ecumenical Centre. The report is primarily based on discussions with individuals working in the four organisations and an examination of documents. A wider process of interviewing members and those involved in the governance follows in the next stage of the work.

The report traces something of the history of global advocacy work undertaken by the WCC. It places WCC's organisational birth within the context of the setting up of the UN, the World Bank and the IMF, as part of a wave of new global organisations with responsibilities

for ensuring a better world. It highlights the early relationship with the UN and the initial advocacy to influence the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. It notes particularly the period from the 1968 Uppsala Assembly where WCC was seen as playing a visible, prophetic and inspirational role in global advocacy. It notes particularly its call for a percentage of GDP for development work which eventually led to the UN's 0.7% target being set, WCC's role through the Christian Medical Commission in the signing of the Alma Ata declaration on health for all, and its brave and controversial high profile work during the seventies and eighties on racism and apartheid in South Africa through the Programme to Combat Racism.

The scope of global advocacy work currently being undertaken at the WCC is very wide ranging. It includes work with the UN Human Rights Council and work against impunity with the International Criminal Court. Human rights work is a key priority with specific geographical focuses on Sudan and the Middle East. But there are many countries on which WCC is making statements, supporting member churches and pursuing diplomatic initiatives. Disarmament has been a consistent theme for WCC and the Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV), which will culminate in an International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in May 2011, is a priority. The latter work is advocacy in the widest sense of the word — raising awareness, building constituencies

for peace and non-violence and networking the church-based actors through its materials and ecumenical delegations. WCC has been working on climate change for over 20 years, and was at the forefront of encouraging churches and agencies to take up this issue which is now seen as a key global challenge needing a multilateral response. It was active at the Rio UN Conference in 1992 and at the Conference of Parties meetings in the run up to the Kyoto Protocol, brokering between the different players, supporting key Ambassadors, pursuing high level lobbying and more generally raising awareness, and at the Bali Conference in December 2007 WCC will be present. The Ecumenical Water Network is hosted by WCC. It seeks to promote the human right to water, and pursues an advocacy agenda at the international level and by promoting advocacy through members and partners at the national and regional levels.

Whilst economic justice issues have been on the agenda of WCC for decades, the Harare Assembly asked that the challenges of globalisation be central to work. The links between poverty, wealth and ecology have been set out in the "Alternative Globalization Addressing People and Earth" (AGAPE) call to action following the Porto Alegre Assembly. Plans for this work include the development of a "consumption and greed line" to go alongside the "poverty line" as a guideline for Christians. This work is complex and there are strongly held opposing views within the ecumenical family about the issues, with those in the global south more appreciative than many in the north who question the impact of the work. WCC's agenda also includes health and healing and specifically HIV and AIDS advocacy, work with indigenous people and migration issues.

Despite this wide agenda, the General Secretary is clear that the priorities should be those big issues which have the potential to undermine life as currently known, such as climate change and violence, and which need a global and multilateral response. In this regard support for the role of and reform of the UN is crucial. The WCC's UN Liaison Office in New York has an important role to play and the importance of equipping that office to meet its potential for the whole of the ecumenical family is noted.

EAA came into being in December 2000 and engages a different wider platform of participants bringing a more popular campaigning style of work. EAA's agenda is a narrower one with its two clear issues of HIV and AIDS

and trade, and a watching brief over the area of peace and conflict-resolution.

ACT International came into existence in August 1995 to provide a coordinating mechanism for the ecumenical response to emergencies. Its mandate was intended to be a limited one and in particular it was not given an advocacy role. This was partly because of concerns regarding strict impartiality and the potentially adverse effects on operational programmes, but also because advocacy was considered to be the task of the churches and agencies themselves. Over the years, in response to its membership and with the agreement of its Executive Committee, ACT International has made a number of statements, which have been communicated through press releases, not only to the members but to the media and key web sites. These have been carefully focused on matters of humanitarian policy and practice, bringing the experience of ACT's members working in the field to support its statements. Until recently ACT has not had the capacity to pursue engagement with the UN bodies in Geneva and with ICVA and SCHR, and its lack of accreditation with the UN also hampers this. However, there is increasing pressure from its members for ACT to be speaking out on humanitarian issues in a visible and coordinated way in the name of the ACT International alliance.

ACT Development, having come formally into being under the WCC only in February 2007, is in the process of discerning where its efforts can most effectively be placed. Its founding Assembly affirmed the importance of advocacy within ACT Development's mandate, and this review is part of the development of an approach for its advocacy work, taking into account the unification plans for ACT International and ACT Development.

LWF's advocacy work is focused around a few big issues. The UN reform process and particularly the work of the Human Rights Council is one such issue. Its Human Rights Accountability project is directed at those instruments (the Treaty Body system, the Universal Periodic Reviews, the Special Procedures) where civil society engagement can have the greatest impact. Its Interfaith Action for Peace in Africa programme is another major issue bringing religious leaders of all faiths together. A further long standing issue for LWF is work related to the Dalit Solidarity Network. In other pieces of work the attempt is to focus on things that others are

not working on and where LWF has a direct line and expertise and so can bring added value, such as the situation of Bhutanese refugees.

The report looks at the understandings of advocacy of the different organisations. The WCC's wider understanding includes accompaniment, solidarity and public witness as well as the narrower focus of EAA which aims to influence policies and practices of governments, corporations and international institutions and internally its churches and communities. For ACT International the focus is on influencing, lobbying and speaking out in the narrow field of humanitarian policy and practice.

The different methodologies of the four organisations are also considered. It notes the high level diplomatic and lobbying work of WCC; its brokering role; its key tool of pronouncements, statements and public letters; its substantive reports, publications and theological analysis, and its regularly used "Living Letters" or team visits and ecumenical delegations. It recognises EAA's more popular campaigning style and its networking skills. It outlines its ability to bring together in a coordinated package the full range of educational and action oriented material including liturgy, information leaflets, popular cards and tools, posters, T shirts, bulletins, action alerts, sign-on letters and petitions in very accessible ways. The strategy groups for the two key issues enable clear messages to be formulated and detailed plans to be drawn up. Communications are important to all of the organisations for their advocacy work, but for ACT International this is the primary methodology used and advocacy work is in the main contained within the communications strategy. The innovative work being explored by LWF through the development of a wiki site to promote awareness, build capacity and facilitate contributions for submissions and lobbying on its Human Rights Accountability project is noted.

The report looks at the points of intersection in the work of the four organisations related to targets (e.g. UN, World Bank), related to issues (e.g. HIV and AIDS, climate change), and related to geography (e.g. Sudan, the Middle East). There are also points of intersection in relation to constituencies. The report notes that whilst there are house wide working groups on some key issues and good personal cooperation between some staff in the different organisations, there is generally less cooperation and coordination than might be expected given the proximity in the same building.

This is attributed to styles of work, governance models and particularly the overloaded agendas of many staff. Greater coordination would bring the potential to support one another's work and find the synergies between work which could improve the effectiveness of all.

The strengths and limitations of each of the four organisations for global advocacy work are examined. The key strengths for WCC include its brand as the world council of churches, a global body with a history, UN accreditation, a world wide membership, a legitimacy to advocate from a moral and ethical perspective and a responsibility to be prophetic on the global issues of our age. The importance of WCC engaging in advocacy has been repeatedly affirmed. But this wide canvas however contains within it a number of limitations, not least with regard to the size of the agenda and the seeming inability - given the demands of the member churches, the governance structure, the bureaucracy, the nature of the staff and management systems – to adequately prioritise and discern those issues where it can bring real added value and those roles which it is uniquely positioned to play. The potential strength that WCC has in relation to work with the UN is limited by an inability to adequately coordinate the UN work or set a strategic focused agenda. The UN Liaison Office in New York is seen as a potential strength which is severely limited by its lack of adequate personnel and position at the heart of a coordinated ecumenical strategic UN agenda.

EAA on the other hand has neither the strengths of an historical track record nor a recognised and visible brand. Nevertheless in seven years it has proved able to focus resources on two key issues, set clear agendas and messages through its strategy groups for those issues, bring a wide ranging Christian participation into the Alliance, and network effectively, both internally within the churches and externally, particularly with the other global players in the HIV and AIDS field. These strengths – the clear focus, broad participation, effective strategy groups – are complemented by an ability to produce a very wide range of accessible materials which are well regarded and widely used. Whilst some consider its lack of policy analysis capacity a limitation there are others within the ecumenical family with considerably more resources and capacity for this. Whilst there is a language limitation, EAA has sought to translate key materials and make many materials available on the web for participants to adapt and use in their own context. It has strengths in its systems for shar-

ing and disseminating information, communicating effectively and electronically through bulletins, action alerts, differentiated data bases and email lists such that its work has a wide reach. Its light and flexible structure, few people and limited budgets, have permitted an agility and responsiveness which has enabled EAA to coordinate and sometimes lead a wide response. The challenge posed in maintaining this light and flexible structure as the organisation grows is noted, potentially imposing a limitation on EAA's growth. A further limitation noted is that with regard to visibility. Given the broad participation in EAA, which is a significant strength, a united global brand is unlikely to be possible or desirable. EAA has effectively overcome this weakness by getting participants to act in their own names from many points around the globe in a coordinated and timely way on a particular point. The problems and limitations associated with key agencies with substantial resources moving on to other issues at the point when smaller participants have just come on board could in part be addressed by a stronger element of joint planning over and above the current coordinating role.

ACT International's principal major strengths are its ability to act quickly and disseminate information widely, informed from its members in the field on specific humanitarian situations. There is strong potential for the ACT Coordinating Office to engage more actively in the humanitarian debates by following the global level advocacy agenda in Geneva and New York and coordi-

nating input from its members at the international level with national and regional engagement on a given issue. The major limitation to this taking place is the lack of a unified brand and joint visibility as ACT around the world. ACT Development will face the same strengths and limitations but there is enormous potential for the unified alliance. Working through ACT Forums, with both southern and northern participation, there is potential for coordinated advocacy work with legitimacy and difference on specific humanitarian and international development issues. This potential is limited by capacities, by the willingness of members to work together under a common brand and by the willingness of members to genuinely seek to understand issues from the perspective of others.

The report concludes not with recommendations, given the nature of the scoping exercise, but by recognising that there is more that can be done between the four organisations to share information, clarify roles, consider divisions of labour and support one another. Taking into account the different strengths and limitations in planning priorities and work agendas, there is potential to ensure that the sum of the work is greater than that of the uncoordinated parts, so that together all contribute to effective global advocacy which is prophetic, pragmatic and practical.



1. Introduction and Methodology

The Ecumenical Staff Working Group on Global Advocacy (ESWGGA) brings together representatives of the World Council of Churches (WCC), the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA), Action by Churches Together (ACT) International and ACT Development. These four organisations all have their headquarters offices in the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva. ACT International, EAA and ACT Development all came out of discussions between WCC and its related-agencies and churches about how to respond more effectively to emergencies, advocacy and development respectively. WCC is an ex-officio member of the governance structure of all three organisations. In these ways the organisations are all part of a common tradition and are related to one another. WCC is a participant of EAA and a 'parent' to both ACT International and ACT Development.

The responsibility of the ESGGGA is to promote cooperation between the four bodies in their advocacy work, sharing experience, ensuring coherence and strengthening advocacy work between their members and participants. It met first in February 2007 and one of its early initiatives was to agree to carry out a scoping exercise of global advocacy work carried out by the global ecumenical organisations. It is recognised that much advocacy work is carried out by the members and participants of the four organisations and this report does not include the individual contributions from these churches and agencies. In that sense it is a very incom-

plete and partial record of the global ecumenical advocacy work. Nevertheless at this stage in the life of the four organisations it was considered valuable to look specifically at their contributions and a brief scoping of other advocacy work within the ecumenical family will take place at a later stage in the process.

The first stage of this work is to produce a review document, giving an historical overview of the work and setting out the different understandings of global advocacy, the issues being addressed, the methodologies used, the lessons learnt and the strengths and limitations of the work of each organisation. The terms of reference for the assignment are set out in Appendix A. It is not an evaluation of the work of these organisations and it is not within the terms of reference to make recommendations for the improvement of the work or for the future. This review is intended to be the first stage of a process which will lead to a policy document on advocacy for the ACT alliance, a Memorandum of Understanding between the four bodies and finally a reflective discussion piece looking to the future for advocacy work in the ecumenical family.

The context for this work is important. It comes at critical points in the life of each of the four organisations. For WCC the programmatic plans arising out of its 9th Assembly at Porto Alegre in 2006 are being shaped for the period 2008 – 2013. For EAA evaluation is taking

place leading up to its next General Assembly in 2008 when decisions about the focus for the future will be taken. In the next two years ACT International and ACT Development are exploring the option of moving to a unified structure and there is a need for the identification of appropriate roles in advocacy for the alliance. This review report is therefore intended to be a resource to help all of the four organisations look at how best they take their advocacy work forward and how they can build on past experience and work together in ways which enable each to play to their strengths in a coordinated way which maximises the global ecumenical contribution in advocacy work for a just and sustainable world.

A wide range of individuals from each of the four organisations were interviewed, with the intention that those who have some historical perspective on the work as well as those now working on current initiatives could be included. The reviewer also sought to get a balance of interviews with those working at the centre and those working with the organisations from around the world. As envisaged in the terms of reference this re-

view did not seek in depth external opinions of the effectiveness of the work of the organisations, other than that provided through reference to past evaluations. A wide range of documentation was considered, including reports, policy documents, plans, evaluations, statements and campaign materials.

The reviewer is grateful to all of those who took time in their busy schedules to talk about their work and provide their views. Inevitably different and sometimes contradictory views were heard about certain areas of work. Not everyone will therefore agree with all of this report. Particular thanks are due to the members of the ESWGGA (Linda Hartke, Jill Hawkey, Elenora Giddings Ivory, Guillermo Kerber Mas and Callie Long) for their support and guidance, and to Faautu Talapusi for her gracious hospitality and assistance with logistics. A special mention should also go to FinnChurch Aid for providing much of the financial support for this work and to the Director, Antti Pentakainen, for his championing of the role and potential that the ecumenical family can have in global advocacy.



2. An Overview of the Global Advocacy Work

2.1. *The World Council of Churches (WCC)*

Advocacy work has been one of the key areas of WCC's work since it came into being. In fact the advocacy work of WCC in relation to the United Nations (UN) was taking place even before WCC came formally into being in August 1948. In 1946 when it was in the process of formation it came together with the International Missionary Council to form a joint Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA). This new Commission had a particular responsibility to relate to the new global body – the UN – that had been set up. CCIA therefore became one of the first international NGOs to be granted consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). There are now several thousand NGOs with consultative status, but CCIA has the higher level General Consultative Status with ECOSOC which is only afforded to some 120 organisations and this is testimony to the length of engagement and the range of issues on which CCIA has related to the UN. The earliest advocacy was that to influence the Charter of the UN to ensure that working for justice and human rights was within its remit. Once CCIA was formed it embarked on work to support and influence the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, agreed in December 1948.

Shortly after the UN and the WCC came into being, other global bodies – the Bretton Woods institutions

– the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) – were established with particular responsibilities in the international financing and economic areas of global life. Thus WCC was part of a wave of global organisations with responsibilities for ensuring a better world. At that time these institutions could be seen as parallel organisations, and the WCC itself, coming out of decades of working together for church unity, had a stronger moral authority, global reach and democratic structure than the others. It was naturally therefore a key collaborator in this endeavour for a better world and these institutions – UN, World Bank and IMF – were natural targets for WCC advocacy. The WCC saw itself as having a special onus to add the moral and ethical dimensions to the debates of the day as well as to work for justice and human rights. It is from this understanding that the roots of WCC's advocacy work can be found and both the world context and this understanding set the agenda for the work of the organisation.

It is perhaps in the period from the 1968 Uppsala Assembly until some time in the 1980's that WCC can be seen as playing a visible, prophetic and inspirational role in global advocacy, leading education, prayer and activity in churches all over the world. In part this heyday had something to do with the global atmosphere of the time and the greater clarity and seeming simplicity of the injustice. Cold War politics, the racism of apartheid, the growing gap between rich and poor all

seemed more open to simple right and wrong interpretations and there was a huge groundswell of popular individual support throughout the churches and wider to address these issues. It was also a time when there were more resources available and when the visibility of the General Secretary of WCC was at its highest. For WCC in particular two issues – a percentage of GDP for development financing and combating racism – became huge advocacy issues, for which WCC gained much respect and where its advocacy, along with that of others, had results.

The Uppsala Assembly in 1968 called for 2% of GDP to be allocated for development work and this was the beginning of the move that eventually led to the 0.7% of GDP target for development set by the UN. In many senses the work that the WCC continues to do on economic justice – debt, trade and ecological justice - follows on from this work on sustainable development started in the sixties with the significant role played within WCC by the Churches Commission on Participation and Development (CCPD). In some ways this parallels the work of the UN and the Millennium Development Targets.

A further area of work for which WCC has a long and highly regarded history is that on Health and Healing. Through the Christian Medical Commission (CMC) WCC has engaged in advocacy on this issue for more than 30 years, with links to church medical institutions and Christian Health Associations around the world. Whilst resources are now very small in relation to the needs and the resources available in the past, WCC still maintains a positive and formal relationship with the World Health Organisation (WHO), giving it the possibility to make statements and have formal representation at meetings. With this accreditation WCC has an important role to provide a platform for the ecumenical family and other civil society actors, as at this year's meeting where under WCC's auspices and accreditation there were 150 delegates from 31 countries present, so able to network and engage with the issues. The important status of WCC in relation to WHO is evidenced by the fact that WHO has asked WCC to manage the civil society engagement in the 30 year anniversary in 2008 of the Primary Health Care Movement, signalled in the Alma Ata declaration. This comes in part from the good and close working relationship between WHO and WCC, in part because of WCC's historically significant role, and in part because

of the important position of the churches as the largest grouping of civil society and the importance of and value given to a faith-based voice.

Another major advocacy theme for WCC which had high visibility and lasted for decades was the work of the Programme to Combat Racism in relation to racism around the world and particularly apartheid in South Africa. The blatant and clear cut nature of the evil of apartheid and the role of parts of the church in sustaining it led to the debates about the role of economic systems in maintaining unjust structures, and to huge debates on liberation, whether liberation movements could use violence, whether there was a difference between oppressing violence and liberating violence and to the setting up of the Special Fund to Combat Racism. In all of this the WCC was in the centre of the debate and the controversy – being prophetic, leading, advocating and having high visibility for its work.

In some ways this work has been followed by support for indigenous people which was signalled at the 8th Assembly in Harare in 1998. This work in enabling indigenous people themselves to play an advocacy role in relation to the Convention for the Protection of Indigenous People their Land and Culture has been significant. It has signalled new ways of working – responding to the requests of indigenous people themselves, providing them with facilities to make their own case and to speak for themselves in UN fora.

Human Rights provide both a framework for WCC's advocacy work and also a body of specific work around critical human rights situations around the world. The United Nations Commission on Human Rights (now Human Rights Council) which meets annually in Geneva provides an opportunity for WCC and its members around the world to make representations. With reform of the UN's Human Rights instruments and the new process of periodic review there will be new opportunities for the WCC to support its members. The agenda for this work is set not so much by what is coming up at the UN but what the member churches of WCC have concerns about. A good example of WCC's work and approach can be found in its human rights work on West Papua. Its work on Guatemala at the Commission on Human Rights in 2003 has also been highlighted as a success. It also engages in important work against impunity. This entails advocacy towards the creation, ratification and now implementation of

the International Criminal Court (ICC) procedures and enhancing the rights of victims at the ICC.

Statements from the Executive Committee, the Central Committee and the Assembly of WCC, brought to them by staff following concerns raised by churches, can be released and used nationally as well as internationally for advocacy work. Similarly pastoral letters issued about particular situations to member churches can be used by them in the national context as a focus for advocacy. This methodology is one which responds well to members and although it may not be strategic at the international level it can be used within a national context to help to raise the voice and concern of the churches and sometimes to provide protection to those making similar statements. There are many situations around the world where support is sought and so the nature of the support has by definition to be largely of a one off nature without the sustained work which would be necessary to have impact internationally. From time to time, because of the particular circumstances and the needs of the churches, WCC does undertake longer term work on a particular geographical situation. Sudan and the Middle East are two such situations noted below. This methodology of responding to the concerns of members has limitations where there are clearly human rights matters causing widespread moral and ethical concern but where the member churches for one reason or another are not keen to speak out – the situation in Rwanda in the early 1990's and in Chechnya, Zimbabwe and Burma have all been cause for concern. Frequently WCC looks for other quieter diplomatic ways to provide support and make representation which will not endanger the churches in that place. Frequently such advocacy is largely invisible to the rest of the ecumenical family, leading to expressed concerns that the WCC voice is less clear about situations of injustice than it once was.

WCC has engaged in advocacy work on the Middle East since 1948 and this work was strengthened from 2000 and the second intifada. It has followed negotiations and UN resolutions and supported the peace building work of its members. There is strong support for this work both from its member churches within the region and from the wider ecumenical family around the world. On Israel/Palestine it is widely acknowledged that the WCC has regularly made meaningful statements and has tried in a reasonably sustained way to take forward these statements. These positions have

come from strong support and consensus from its members within the region and from being rooted in work in the region with regular and up-to-date contact. The office in the region, the fact that the work has been fairly well resourced, the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI), which has now placed over 500 monitors on the ground for three month periods, have all added to the strength of what could be done. High level, ecumenical delegations have sought to both provide support and protection and also to engage in dialogue to move forward specific advocacy positions. The 2005 Central Committee encouragement to churches to take economic pressure was a well thought through and researched strong advocacy position. Through an annual Week of Action in June WCC coordinates concern and action. Coordinated action takes place in some 15 countries but given the importance of the issue and the international concern within the churches this seems rather minimal and there are perhaps questions about whether or not WCC is the most appropriate body to be coordinating such work. For the ecumenical family around the world the statements from WCC have provided leadership and have given a degree of legitimacy and protection to others undertaking advocacy within their own national context. The added value and the appropriateness of the latter contribution from WCC is evident.

On the Middle East the WCC has also engaged in strong advocacy in relation to the war in Iraq, using its unique position as someone who can speak for the world Christian community. Initially WCC made statements warning the United States (US) and United Kingdom (UK) governments against a pre-emptive invasion and supporting efforts of the UN Security Council for non-military measures, and these were picked up and used for advocacy purposes by churches around the world, particularly in the US and UK. Given the global importance and level of global debate the WCC's statements and actions were widely picked up by media, including the call for a global day of prayer at the beginning of Lent 2003. With the growing and continuing disquiet over Iraq the Central Committee has continued to make strong statements about the situation. There are those, especially in the region, however, who feel that WCC should be doing more to protect and advocate for the Christian minority in Iraq and that the global significance and profile of the Iraq situation is such that WCC should be investing more resources in support of its members in the region.

"Behind the News" was a joint initiative of WCC, EAA and ACT International following 9/11 and in the run up to and during the invasion of Iraq, producing 24 bulletins until March 2003. It was put together quickly with up-to-date information. It gave a far wider circulation to the statements coming from WCC and from members of the wider ecumenical family, small and big churches and Councils, disseminating them in a wider and more popular form than is usual. It also provided statements and actions of the global church, information about humanitarian relief and resources, worship reflections, analysis and calls to action. It provided "visions for peace" and "voices of faith" and was much welcomed and appreciated by churches and Christians around the world.

Another area of the world which has been subject to long WCC involvement, much of it in the area of global advocacy, is Sudan. The churches are well regarded for the crucial role played in the 1960's when they brokered the end to war between north and south. More recently WCC together with the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) have been involved in advocacy and diplomatic initiatives contributing to the 2004 Comprehensive Peace Agreement. WCC was instrumental in establishing the Sudan Ecumenical Forum (SEF), and with its offices in both Europe and in Africa, it is seen as something of a model in the way that advocacy work can be organised. More recently, and working closely with SEF, WCC has a representative for Sudan working between Khartoum, Nairobi and Europe to broker consultation and agreement and to further processes working towards a just peace in Sudan. Working closely with AACC, WCC sees its role as one of accompaniment of the churches and of a coordinator of the advocacy efforts in relation to Sudan. Preparations are underway to support this work by a high level church visit to Sudan in 2008 to draw the attention of the world to the situation and to express solidarity with those suffering.

Disarmament has also been a theme for advocacy by WCC stretching back over the decades. Nuclear disarmament is a global issue about which a global church voice could reasonably be expected. Whilst WCC through Conference and delegation work has engaged in relation to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, makes statements and follows them up, and networks regularly with secular groups working on this issue, it has not been given the priority required for WCC to meet its potential to put forward a strong unified Chris-

tian voice. Following calls at the Harare Assembly the "Ecumenical Decade to Overcome Violence: Churches Seeking Reconciliation and Peace" was launched for the period 2001 to 2010. Whilst this followed on from a great deal of earlier work, in many ways this was seen as a new start and a new time-limited piece of work to move the issue of churches' response to violence to the forefront. Either by accident or design or because the time seemed ripe for both, the decade has the same time frame as the UN's Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World. Arising out of these two Decades and this work a concrete outcome was the agreement from 2004 for WCC to call for a day of prayer for peace on 21 September, the same day as the UN day for peace.

The work of the Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV) is advocacy in the widest sense of the word. It is awareness raising on the nature and types of violence, the difference between violence and conflict and the priority of violence prevention. It is building constituencies for peace and non-violence, encouraging engagement and challenging assumptions. It is networking with church based actors: the REOs, NCCs and churches and through ecumenical delegations (Living Letters) and its web materials. It is hard, however, to measure the extent and effectiveness of these types of general awareness raising advocacy, particularly when the types of violence being considered are so wide ranging. However, the Pre-Assembly Programme Evaluation of WCC found that it received very high affirmation from the constituency.

The 9th Assembly at Porto Alegre asked that DOV work towards an International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in May 2011 at the end of the Decade with an "Ecumenical Declaration on Just Peace". The value of this will be in the focus it brings for projects in churches and theological colleges at the grassroots.

The WCC has been working on climate change for over 20 years, in fact since the Vancouver Assembly in 1983 when those present were moved by the testimonies of women from the Marshall Islands. Bringing together disarmament and climate change the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation work began the task of helping to get churches to understand these issues in a broader way. From this history WCC has seen the issue of climate change as a justice issue rather than an environmental issue, as a matter related to faith going beyond

percentages of carbon, as well as an issue of global magnitude needing a multilateral approach. The first major advocacy work was preparatory to the UN Conference on Environment and Development at Rio de Janeiro in 1992 where WCC had a delegation of 15 people. Following this the WCC focus was on the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the meetings of all of the parties in the Conference of Parties (COP), and specifically work in the run up to the Kyoto Protocol. In all of this WCC recognised that it was only possible to be successful at the international level if there was also a presence, with both information and influence, at the national level. To support this it worked on creating Regional Networks. It tried to broker contracts between civil society in north and south where there were divisions of opinion and splits, as well as working at the level of national governments lobbying and supporting certain key Ambassadors, such as that from Argentina, who played crucial roles in brokering the Kyoto Protocol. In this work WCC got closer to undertaking a campaigning style of advocacy, whilst also pursuing high level lobbying and wide awareness raising, than is usual for WCC. Its campaigning for signatures in 1998 for the Kyoto Protocol, where 500,000 signed up, is an indication of its measure of success. It was also recognised by UNFCCC as a key supportive voice and received public praise for this. The interaction of widespread popular support and action with high level lobbying and policy work was a key feature of this advocacy work and a major contributor to its success.

Where the work was less successful was in the efforts in the second half of the 1990's to bring the specialised ministries/agencies on board with their constituencies, popular appeal and resources. They argued at that stage that it was not their core task, and though WCC attempted to bring climate change as a key ingredient into the discussion on risk assessment and emergency preparedness they failed at that time to make the case. In 2001 WCC took the issue again to the Heads of Agencies meeting trying to get them to recognise the importance of climate change through a plea for "solidarity with victims of climate change" and recognition that climate change was a justice issue. But it was still another five years and more than a decade after the first approaches that the agencies seemingly rather suddenly decided this was a huge priority for them.

The Ecumenical Water Network is one specific focus which arose out of the climate change work of WCC.

It is somewhat different from the other WCC global advocacy work in that strictly speaking the network is hosted by the WCC rather than being the work of the WCC. The network, which came into being in 2005 with a secretariat since early 2007, is still working on such things as criteria for membership. Although there is a best practice element to the work, the primary work has been that of advocacy in the widest sense. The style of work is very different from other WCC global advocacy work with its newsletter and website and more campaigning style, with strong contacts by email and phone with a core group of participants. Its focus is to promote the human rights of water, just distribution, pro-poor policies, sustainable use, access to water as a public responsibility, protection for individuals against commercial and agricultural interests and community based solutions. It has sought to raise awareness of the issues through conferences in Machakos in 2005 and in Entebbe in 2007 engaging church leaders and church based NGOs on the need for advocacy and how it can be done. It has done direct advocacy with the UN in Geneva around the Human Rights Council, following the preparations for the September council meeting and taking part in the public consultation process, making a submission, organising a side event at the Human Rights Council meeting and an expert workshop following it. The Network, initiated by Church World Service (CWS), also had a panel presentation on water at the WCC – UN advocacy week in New York in November 2007.

Now there are new resources in the ecumenical family available for climate change and many new actors and the whole configuration for advocacy on climate change has changed. WCC having played a key role in the 1990's and again in the period 2001 to 2006 now finds itself redefining its role, following a meeting in London in April 2007 of the WCC Climate Change Working Group. Some work is shifting to the regions, for example work with the Pacific Conference of Churches and work on drought and floods in Africa and this can be supported by the agencies. Within WCC work is now linked into that on economic justice, environment, corporate responsibility, sustainability and ecological debt. Whilst WCC continues to use its good offices to organise and coordinate ecumenical input at key meetings, with for example participation at the Bali Conference, a common statement, worship and the provision of side events, it no longer has the detailed dedicated advocacy capacity to direct to this brokering and high level lobbying on the issue that it once had.

Work on economic justice and economic globalisation is another focus for advocacy. Whilst economic justice issues have been on the agenda of WCC for decades, the Harare Assembly asked that the challenges of economic globalisation be placed at the centre of the ecumenical agenda. This therefore has been a key area for advocacy work. Whilst the background to the work has been providing theological analysis on globalisation, developing and highlighting alternative models, and seeking the participation of all communities and particularly the poor and marginalised in the development of policy, a number of key international conferences and the World Bank, the IMF and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) have been the targets for advocacy work. The UN General Assembly Special Session on Social Development held in Geneva in June 2000 was one such conference. WCC followed the preparations for the meeting for several years through its New York office bringing ecumenical delegations to participate in the preparatory meetings. Similarly WCC participated in the International Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey, Mexico in 2002 appealing for a more people centred approach and for greater democratisation of the World Bank, IMF and WTO. During all of this work WCC maintained a dialogue with the World Bank and IMF which led to three high level encounters between February 2003 and October 2004 between the President of the World Bank, Managing Director of the IMF and the General Secretary and President of WCC. There was a certain caution about these meetings given the guidelines "Lead Us Not into Temptation" prepared at the request of Central Committee to guide churches in how to dialogue with the IFIs and the position of WCC that these institutions have contributed to widening the gap between rich and poor and have excluded the poor from having a voice. Nevertheless there was some common ground found in the fight against global poverty and support for the Millennium Development Goals, themes on which WCC has consistently advocated since the 2% call in 1968. The conclusion agreed that there should be some detailed country case studies in order to provide empirical evidence, and these are part of the planned future work within the "poverty, wealth and ecology" agenda.

Economic globalisation and the links between poverty, wealth and ecology are set out in "Alternative Globalization Addressing People and Earth" (AGAPE) a call to action following the 9th General Assembly. It developed out of a number of regional consultations as well as the

dialogue with the IFIs and in this new phase aims to bring together churches and ecumenical partners from around the world to analyse, reflect and act together on this issue. Plans for this work include the development of a "consumption and greed line" to go alongside the "poverty line" as a guideline for Christians. It is a complex area and there are strongly held opposing views about some of the issues. The work appears to be appreciated rather more in the global south and than in the north. Some, primarily in the north, believe that the approach is such that pragmatic and practical approaches to advocacy which could have some effect have been excluded and therefore it is difficult to see the impact of the work. That view considers that the work and positions coming out of WCC are driven from a particular ideological perspective and that despite the eight actions listed within the AGAPE documents there are not clear advocacy messages which are useful for focused advocacy for specific and incremental policy change. But others point to the importance of WCC maintaining a prophetic stance on these issues, being seen to be on the side of the poor, taking care not to be co-opted by the advocacy targets, undertaking the theological reflection, underpinning and analysis needed as a background to the more campaigning advocacy work of others.

A key to the narrower advocacy and lobbying work of WCC is a focus on the UN institutions. In recognition of this, since the very beginning of WCC's existence under CCIA who holds the accredited status, there has been a presence in New York. In the early days the WCC presence had a significant profile and in the eighties the office gained a strong reputation for its work on human rights, particularly that in conjunction with its Human Rights Office for Latin America. There remains openness at the UN to engage with the churches. Despite regular statements from the leadership of WCC about the importance of the work with the UN, for some time it has been generally agreed that the WCC could do much more and be much more effective in its work with the UN, and that its office in New York with its status and history should be a key part of this.

The New York office has worked on a wide range of advocacy issues: human rights and impunity, disarmament, reform of the UN, indigenous people and many other issues. It has had a responsibility to work to coordinate and facilitate the work of the churches and ecumenical bodies at the UN and to work with the US

church offices at the UN in this. A regular methodology used for the UN advocacy work has been ecumenical teams/delegations. Whilst there have been questions about cost and effectiveness WCC has gained a positive reputation for including people from the global south, indigenous people, women and youth in these teams. These teams have enabled access for member churches from around the world to make their voices heard at the UN and they have assisted people to build their understanding and capacity to work with the UN system both globally and in their home countries. They have also enhanced the visibility of WCC where its commitment to southern participation is recognised. The office has also seen itself as assisting with access to the UN and providing opportunities for ecumenical formation/training in UN advocacy. The annual WCC UN advocacy week is the chief instrument for this, a major part of the office budget, and well regarded for its introduction to the issues; but many wish that it were more of a forum for strategising together, agreeing a coordinated role and deciding on the issues of focus. There is some concern that combining ecumenical formation and briefings with practical lobby work means that those most expert on a particular issue are not the ones meeting officials at the UN to lobby and this is not the way to maximize impact or good for the reputation of the WCC as a serious interlocutor on an issue.

The Communications Office of WCC has a focus to build and enhance the profile of WCC and the intention is that all programme staff should be trained to understand the role of communications in their work. The framework within which it works is one of "Unity, Witness and Service". Communications work – primarily in the case of WCC, press releases and web releases – is a key component of any advocacy strategy. But currently it is the Communications Office's responsibility to work with each of the six programme areas to support them in their communication needs. Given the limited time and resource for work and the limited market for their output, decisions between competing priorities have to be made. But currently this is more in relation to what is likely to be picked up and who has first requested and had planned the time of the WCC Communicators rather than on the basis of key priorities or work that will build support for a particular WCC narrative. This may be clarified as part of the current WCC prioritisation process and the current work on developing a renewed communications strategy which seeks to fashion and focus a message that differentiates WCC as a world

fellowship of churches from that of other actors, including other ecumenical actors.

There is clarity on the part of the WCC General Secretary about the big issues for WCC's advocacy and the need to see these issues as they relate to one another rather than as single issues. These issues include those that have the capacity to undermine human existence on this planet, such as climate change and violence, and those for which the churches have a particular responsibility, such as the role of religion in public life. As a fellowship of churches there is a responsibility to respond to the cries of the churches, but given its history and world status there is also a responsibility at this time to promote multilateralism rather than unilateralism and to engage particularly with the UN. With a new programme strategy and a further process of prioritisation taking place, there is a need for a clear narrative from WCC which brings all of this together and inspires staff and others, enabling all to see the coherence of the Council's work, to see how their work fits together and to provide a framework for deciding what the Council can do and where it can add value which will make the greatest contribution to a more just and sustainable world.

2.2. The Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA)

EAA came into being at a founding meeting in Geneva in December 2000. But its birth was the result of a long process. Certainly from 1997 some of the ecumenical agencies were questioning whether there was a need for a more focused approach to faith-based global advocacy and whether new structures and processes were required. Key to that thinking was the view that there needed to be a new approach to Christian representation on the big issues of the day where there could be scope for informed action without having to go through a long process of extensive consultation with members before a view could be reached and a comment made. There was however resistance to EAA's arrival from those in the ecumenical family who thought that advocacy was and should be the domain of the WCC itself, and from some in WCC who felt that EAA could damage the careful diplomatic style of some of the WCC's carefully developed work. There were others who were wary of multiplying ecumenical instruments that needed to be funded and maintained and fearful that this would draw support from the WCC.

After much discussion, however, it was agreed that a different platform and different style was needed for work on some advocacy issues, and EAA, housed at the WCC and with an Ecumenical Advocacy Committee (Board) that initially was convened by the WCC, came into existence. From the outset it was agreed that it should be a light and flexible organisation focused on a limited number of concerns. To support this and in recognition of the differences between EAA and council of churches it was agreed that EAA would have participants rather than members and that these participants would be from a much wider spread of faith-based organisations than those who are in membership of WCC. Intentionally it set out to be a broad based alliance of faith-based organisations wanting to work together to increase the effectiveness of advocacy work, without the bureaucratic constraints and difficulties posed by strict membership criteria. It currently has over 100 participants ranging from global organisations such as Caritas Internationalis and World Vision, REOs such as AACC and CLAI, ecumenical and Catholic agencies from north and south such as Bread for All, CAFOD and CESE, Christian Councils and national churches such as Christian Council of Tanzania and Church of Christ in Thailand, and faith based organisations such as the Ecumenical Pharmaceutical Network in Kenya, the Iona Community and the Churches Health Association of Zambia. Faith-based organisations can become “participants” in EAA if they are willing to commit and sign up to the EAA’s Covenant for Action. But the objective has always been to mobilise the widest possible ecumenical support to address the focus issues and to provide a framework for ecumenical agencies to work together and coordinate work around these issues to maximise impact and effectiveness.

The aim of the EAA, as set out in its Covenant for Action is: *“to enable churches and their related organisations to be effective advocates for a more just, peaceful and sustainable world”*. From the beginning it was agreed that EAA should focus on a few issues that would be global and thematic rather than geographically specific and for which it was agreed that advocacy on a global level was needed. It was agreed that issues should be suitable to “campaign-style” advocacy and where an ethical and theological perspective could be brought to the international policy debate. At the founding meeting, following intensive consultation and a major questionnaire which identified 170 possible issues, it was agreed that EAA should focus its work primarily on two

issues: global economic justice with a specific focus on global trade, and ethics of life with a specific focus on HIV and AIDS. Additionally peace and conflict-resolution was also placed on the agenda by those for whom this is the overriding consideration and who see this as a root cause of both HIV and AIDS and economic injustice. More generally EAA is seen as a mechanism to bring ecumenical organisations working on advocacy together to exchange and share and encourage one another. Early thoughts that this might entail an inventory of work being undertaken were given lower importance as the priority for resource to work actively and practically on the key issues – HIV and AIDS and trade – was affirmed.

The joint effort around “Behind the News” mentioned above was one of the visible contributions to the peace and conflict-resolution area of work, following 9/11 in 2001. It was also a turning point in joint cooperation, particularly between EAA and WCC, and a point of recognition on the part of WCC that EAA could be a useful addition to their work and that they could cooperate together practically in producing and disseminating something which was of real value and which one organisation alone would not so readily have been able to do.

The work on HIV and AIDS is acknowledged from all quarters to have been particularly successful and effective. From the beginning the EAA Strategy Group for HIV and AIDS bonded well together and developed a clear plan for how to move forward. The WCC has always been fully engaged and supportive and a part of the Strategy Group. For HIV and AIDS the time was right. It was seen as an urgent issue by the ecumenical family around the world and there were clear advantages to churches working together on this issue, not least the fact that some elements of secular civil society were somewhat wary about working closely with the churches.

The first four years of work concentrated on working for the dignity and rights of people living with HIV and AIDS, rejecting all forms of stigma and discrimination, and mobilising resources and access to resources for prevention, care and treatment. During that period many excellent resources were developed and made available through EAA, including fact sheets, worship materials, theological studies and briefing documents. Many of these were translated into several languages. EAA also promotes and disseminates good materi-

als produced by participants and others through the quarterly bulletins, online resource library, and mailed packages of materials. Some 1250 names were sent bulletins and Action Alerts by email and a Global Poster Competition against HIV and AIDS-related stigma and discrimination was organised. That poster competition inspired campaigns in 37 countries. The 2,300 posters were used around the world, including at the UN HQ in New York on World AIDS Day 2003 and during the 2004 International AIDS Conference in Bangkok in 2004. EAA's resources and some of the winning posters have also been distributed around the world through over 17,000 copies of a CD-Rom "Signs of Hope, Steps for Change". The use of Action Alerts has been an important tool for EAA to galvanise churches and faith-based organisations for joint action. The topics, moments and action come from a variety of sources: other civil society actors, the EAA secretariat, the Strategy Groups, and also from participants asking for action in solidarity. A good example of this is the Action Alerts regarding Abbott Pharmaceuticals in Thailand at the request of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) and the Church of Christ in Thailand (CCT).

In May 2003 a number of participants were brought together in a consultation on the HIV work in Brandenburg. This consultation and subsequent ones for the trade campaign at Bossey in March 2004 and at Bonn in June 2007 are an important way for EAA to bring together participants to share best practice, develop capacity and strategize.

A key strategy of EAA has been to strengthen partnerships with the major global bodies working on the issue. A publication on intensifying partnerships targeted how government bodies could work with faith-based organisations. Through tireless networking and building a reputation for serious work, EAA has become a key partner for UNAIDS. It has gained a place on the Global Steering Committee of the World AIDS Campaign (WAC) representing faith-based organisations and it has built collaborative working relationships with UNFPA and WHO. EAA has achieved visibility for a faith-based voice for work on HIV and AIDS. It has made a positive impact on its external partners and the place and importance of faith-based involvement is now fully accepted and seen to be of value. A good example is the key role played by EAA at the UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/High Level Review held in New York in 2006.

EAA is now working on the second four year cycle (2005 – 2008) of its HIV and AIDS campaign, now under the heading "Keep the Promise" referring to the promises which governments and others have made concerning the response to HIV and AIDS.

It continues to operate at several levels. With its materials it is working with participants to ensure churches themselves live up to the promises they have made and are able to fight stigma and discrimination and deal openly with difficult issues concerning sex and sexuality, the role of women, and injecting drug use. As part of wider civil society initiatives it works with participants and churches to demand accountability from governments for the pledges and commitments they have signed up to in the fight against HIV and AIDS. At the global level EAA is promoting "universal access": scaling up treatment by churches and their organisations; advocating to governments for scaling up at the national level, and globally advocating for more resources and for effective use of those resources. Specific campaign actions have been around the Global Fund replenishments and in relation to pharmaceutical companies and access to reasonably priced ARVs. The newsletter mailing list has grown to over 3,000 names and EAA is working with contacts in its participant organisations to enable rapid response and action around specific issues.

Overall EAA's work on HIV and AIDS has gained a very strong reputation for effectiveness. The role and importance of engagement with and participation by faith-based organisations is now entrenched in the main global players as a result of EAA's work. The numbers of people that EAA is in touch with and can mobilise through its email contacts and Action Alerts continues to grow. Many participants are taking up and using the materials with their constituencies and using the Action Alerts to involve far wider numbers of people. However, not all EAA participants are taking up these issues, and some of the larger agencies who have the issue as a priority do not always make full use of EAA's materials and action alerts, so weakening the overall coordination of work and reducing the potential effectiveness.

The second major issue for EAA has been global trade. There was widespread agreement that one of the focus areas should engage with globalisation and be an economic issue, and finally agreement was reached at the founding meeting on "Economic Justice with a specific focus on Global Trade". However from the outset this

remained a broad and much more complicated and difficult issue. It was less clear from the point of view of the churches that this was an issue they should work on. Within the trade strategy group there were different points of view and therefore it was much more difficult than with HIV and AIDS to have a consensus and come up with clear messages. WCC, though represented in the strategy group, was less able to help and more wary about EAA's role from the beginning and concerned that a campaigning style could damage the careful policy and high level work being done on economic justice. The WTO was much more difficult to work with than UNAIDS and the Global Fund.

Nevertheless a "Trade for People Not People for Trade" campaign was agreed for the 2002 – 2005 period. Within a human rights framework, it was decided to encourage Alliance participants to emphasise social and environmental agreements in trade rules, with specific attention on food security, access to services and regulation of transnational corporations. EAA sought to engage its participants in this issue and encourage ecumenical action. It engaged in, supported and fostered ecumenical involvement in a "Farmers Food and Trade" conference focusing on WTO advocacy in January 2002, the International Trade Campaign Consultation in New Delhi in December 2003 and the World Social Forum in January 2003 and 2004. EAA organised an ecumenical consultation in Geneva in March 2004 bringing key individuals involved in trade-related advocacy from its participants together. The high point of this work came with the Global Week of Action for Trade Justice in April 2005 where EAA mobilised churches around the world to take part in this wider initiative, providing extensive information and materials translated into several languages, supporting the global petition, and building the capacity of particularly southern participants to engage in advocacy on this issue which was already high on the agenda of many of the northern agencies.

In the second cycle and second Framework for Action for the Trade for People Campaign, 2005 – 2008, more specific campaigning themes have been developed. In-depth research has taken place on the impact of trade liberalisation in rice farming communities in Ghana and this provides valuable case study material as well as a detailed plan of work for follow up with the communities, national government, civil society and international bodies, such as the Human Rights Council. A trade consultation was held in Bonn with 35 participants in May/

June 2007 and the "Right to Food" has become a more tangible and specific target for the work. The Trade Week of Action in October 2007 focused on this. More carefully defined and planned jointly with the HIV and AIDS focus work is a campaign on access to medicines, pressing governments and transnational corporations to keep their promises on universal access to treatment and to advocate for trade agreements to guarantee access to essential medicines, with an even more specific focus on access to medicines for children living with HIV. This aspect of the campaign had the potential to bring the two focus issues of EAA more strongly together and reap the benefits of the stronger HIV and AIDS participation, but it seems difficult to fulfil the potential in this regard.

The trade area of work has been far less easy than HIV and AIDS. Whilst it was a priority for many of the northern ecumenical agency participants of EAA there were not always common positions coming from them. It was less easy to clarify the role of the churches in this area and to agree an agenda. For many of the southern participants whilst HIV and AIDS was seen as an urgent priority, global trade was not seen as a particular priority for church action. Despite the widespread work on debt and the Jubilee movement, trade was seen as less a matter for churches and more a matter for the secular organisations and networks. Notwithstanding all of these difficulties EAA has built interest and commitment within many participants in the south as well as in the north on this issue. The external evaluation of EAA carried out in 2004 stated that "*The ecumenical family has moved closer to a common approach on Trade Issue campaigning than could have been achieved by the previous mechanisms*"² The April 2005 Week of Action on trade was very successful in terms of mobilising people. But even then a global agenda was difficult when the particular trade related issues and concerns differ from country to country. For some northern churches, along with other northern civil society groups, the implications for the livelihoods of some people in their own constituencies of campaigning on some of the issues, such as farm subsidies, is a process that has had to be worked through. One difficulty with the mobilisation however is that by the time southern participants had fully come on board the northern participants were already moving on to the next issue. Consequently the Global Week of Action in 2007 was recognised and en-

2 Causemann, B and Nightingale, N, 2004, Final Report Evaluation of the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance

gaged in far more in the south than in the north and as a result of the reduced northern involvement EAA itself had fewer financial resources with which to support the Week. Those who supported the work so well in 2005 but did not in 2007 argue that other things had become more important, that not much was happening in terms of WTO negotiations to provide a global focus and those in the north still working on trade saw work with APRODEV around the EPA negotiations as more important and more likely to have impact. The breakdown of the WTO Doha round and the proliferation into bilateral negotiations naturally pulls participants to work nationally and regionally with other civil society organisations. EAA therefore struggles to find a global focus and space in which to work. The focus in Europe on EPAs for example is of little concern to the North American participants and so it is difficult for EAA to find elements that can create a global buy-in by the Alliance.

The trade focus for EAA has now moved to work on agriculture and food security and in particular the position of small scale farmers and the situation of domestic agriculture in an age of globalisation. This area of focus starts to tie in with work which many of the ecumenical agencies are doing from the climate change perspective rather than the trade agenda.

In 2008 EAA's second four year cycle of work will come to an end and following an evaluation its Assembly will have to take decisions about the priority focus for the next four years. It was not envisaged at the outset that EAA would become an Alliance solely for HIV and AIDS and trade related work, but rather that for serious periods of time it would focus on particular issues and then move on to other issues. With a tremendous reputation established for its role on HIV and AIDS advocacy and much more to be done on both HIV and AIDS and trade justice, the decisions about the future will be difficult.

2.3. Action by Churches Together (ACT) International

ACT International came into existence in August 1995 following three years of discussions about how best to improve the coordination and the effectiveness of the response to emergencies by the ecumenical family. These discussions came at a time when humanitarian response was becoming ever more complex, when major funding from bilateral and multilateral government

sources was assuming greater importance, and when competition for public visibility and brand on the part of northern agency actors was increasing. The secular families of agencies were growing and becoming stronger and more visible, whilst the church-related agencies, representing in many ways a more legitimate global expression of civil society, were continuing to act in disparate and invisible ways. There was a sense at that time that whilst the churches - both related agencies and local churches - were contributing massively in many of the emergency situations, the lack of coordination diminished the effectiveness of the response. Furthermore the level of involvement, coming as it did from a variety of agencies and churches within the ecumenical family all using their own names with no common visible thread linking them, was felt to be unrecognised by the international community, by government funders and by the UN humanitarian actors, and hence the ability to raise funds and have influence was diminished.

During the discussions which brought ACT into being, the genocide in Rwanda – a high profile humanitarian crisis – led to a hasty coming together as Church World Action, in an attempt to try out a more coordinated approach to emergency provision. LWF took on the lead agency role in this instance. After much debate—about membership in general and in particular, relationships with WCC and LWF, about the appeal mechanism, the role of the Coordinating Office and about the name—ACT International formally came into being on 25 August 1995, under the legal auspices of the WCC and with both WCC and LWF having equal governance roles. In those discussions, the role of ACT—as a coordinating office for emergency response—was agreed to be a limited one. In particular it was agreed that it was *not* ACT's job to speak out on humanitarian issues. It explicitly was not given an advocacy role. There were several arguments for this position. One was that joint advocacy should be done by the churches and at the global level this was the preserve of the WCC. Another was that within the national government and media contexts, this was best done by the local church/agency. A third was that advocacy work and speaking out was incompatible with the impartiality required of humanitarian actors. Furthermore, it was feared that advocacy work from one part of the ACT membership could undermine the work and security of other members of the ACT family responding to a humanitarian emergency. In line with this decision, the WCC continued to represent the ecumenical family on the Standing Committee for

Humanitarian Response (SCHR), which provided the key opportunity for interaction with the other agency families engaged in humanitarian response, as well as the formal opportunity to engage in the global system with the UN humanitarian policy makers in the Office of Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA). Meanwhile, LWF, by virtue of its long operational role in emergency response and its family status, maintained its seat on SCHR.

Over the twelve years of ACT International's existence it has grown and developed. It currently has 122 members. In March 2004, ACT was founded as an independent international organisation, under Swiss legislation in accordance with the Civil Code of Switzerland, although WCC and LWF retained their ex-officio places on the ACT Executive Committee and their key role as 'parents' of ACT International. By 2006, with a new ACT International Director and changes in personnel and structure at WCC, ACT took up the place on SCHR at the principal and policy working group level on behalf of WCC.

Over the years, ACT has wrestled with the issue of when it should make public statements. In February 2003 a working group on political issues, drawn from its executive committee, was set up to look at this point in more detail. As an outcome of its work in 2004 a "*Policy for ACT Statements on Political Issues*" was approved. In this document an 'ACT Statement' is defined as "*any public statement on behalf of ACT International which expresses the position of ACT International on either a particular humanitarian situation or on broader humanitarian issues*". It gives two rationales for ACT making public statements. The first is that it may want to raise the concerns of disaster/crisis affected populations. The second concerns its adherence to the Code of Conduct and Humanitarian Law and a need in certain situations to make statements about this. The ACT policy sets out that statements should be restricted to issues of importance to the ACT alliance; that they should concentrate on major sensitive issues; and that they should be restricted to those that add value to public debate or international lobbying efforts. It also includes that ACT statements should not contradict statements issued by other international ecumenical bodies, such as WCC and EAA. In fact ACT makes very few actual statements. Since 2000, there seem to have only been six statements issued - on Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Darfur, GMOs and Mental Health Guidelines.

However, despite the early decision that ACT should not speak out on behalf of its members or engage in advocacy ACT has, with the agreement of its Executive Committee, put out many public feature articles, news updates and press releases that went beyond news about the emergency situation and the emergency response. While formal statements were inevitably the subject of news releases, other news releases were also issued. ACT has three instruments by which it communicates with the wider world: ACT Datelines, News Updates and News Releases. The News Updates are very strictly information about the humanitarian work. But the other two mechanisms both sometimes contain elements of advocacy. The Datelines are feature articles usually written from the location of the emergency aimed primarily at the Alliance itself. News Releases, on the other hand, are aimed at the media as well as the alliance, and are frequently related to policy statements and decisions. News Releases are normally agreed in advance with the ACT Executive Committee and sometimes the impetus for putting out a release comes itself from one of the ACT Committees or the communications unit in consultation with the director.

While on average there have been between 20 and 50 Datelines a year, and perhaps a half of these have some advocacy element within them, News Releases are exceptional.

To date in 2007 there have only been two news releases: "*ACT International endorses IASC mental health guidelines*" and "*Darfur: ACT calls for continued commitment to humanitarian response and peace efforts*" both based on ACT statements. Similarly in 2006, there were also two, on ACT policy on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and on the appointment of the new Director. In 2005 there was only one news release also concerning the Director appointment, in 2004 no news releases, in 2003 two news releases both concerning the situation in Iraq and in 2002 twelve, covering a wide range of situations around the world including Afghanistan, Congo, Malawi, Colombia and the Middle East.

An early example of a Dateline with an advocacy element included was one issued in February 1999 on Sudan "*The Media, the Donors and the Poor: Reflections on the Sudan Emergency 1998*" written for ACT by John Ashworth, Director of Churches Ecumenical Action for Sudan (CEAS) based in Nairobi. It raised issues concerning the ramifications for those working on the ground of a media-driven emergency and challenged the way

agencies and donors alike directed their frenzied concern to the places highlighted by the media whilst other places were also in great need. It was a think piece, adding to the debate and putting a distinctive alternative and Christian input to the debate. In April 2001 a further "Dateline ACT" focused on Sudan and especially the Nuba Mountains in "*Oil Before Food*". While reporting the humanitarian needs and the human suffering caused by oil exploitation, it highlighted the advocacy asks set out in a report from ACT member Christian Aid to hold UK, Swedish and Canadian oil companies to account. This particular Dateline is tagged with the caveat "*The points of view...are...not official positions of ACT or its membership*".

Between these two pieces on Sudan there was another "Dateline ACT" on the Congo "*The international churches have been almost deaf towards the needs of the Congo*" in July 2000. It was a call to action quoting the churches and telling of what they were doing and the immense needs which were seemingly being ignored by the international community. In that regard it was a one-off piece of advocacy, but was not part of a sustained campaign to raise the level of assistance for work in the Congo. While it was an act of solidarity with those in the Congo feeling forgotten and it fulfilled one objective of ACT International, which is to seek to highlight forgotten emergencies, as a one-off piece from ACT it was unlikely to be widely picked up or to be effective. Other Datelines followed on the Congo, but again, as one-off pieces, it could not serve to sustain the impetus required to engage fully in advocacy work.

In contrast, an ACT News Release that was based on an ACT Statement and was widely picked up was that of October 15, 2001 "*ACT International Warns Against Linking Humanitarian Airdrops and Military Actions*" in relation to US led military strikes in Afghanistan. In this release the Director of ACT is quoted at length and whilst great care has been taken in the release to ensure that the concentration is on all of the negative impacts of airdrops of food as a method of providing humanitarian aid, there is also concern expressed about the breaking of concepts of impartiality and neutrality and the plight of the Afghan people as a result of the war. The very specific tack in the press release led to media interviews by the BBC and German media and was an early example of ACT International in its own name being quoted and engaged with by the international media.

The Middle East and particularly the situation in Iraq has been the subject of many ACT Datelines and News Releases, as well as the "Behind the News" series mentioned above. In March 2003, there was "*Church agencies call for humanitarian space*" quickly followed by "*Winning hearts and minds – ensuring impartial aid*" and in April 2003 "*Needed now, humanitarian 'resistance'*". These releases provided lines for advocacy to the ACT membership backed with information from those working on the ground, which were widely used by churches and agencies in the ACT membership, which were wanting to speak out about the war.

In June 2006, ACT put out a news release "*A matter of ethics*" about the use of genetically modified organisms in emergencies. The ACT Emergency Committee after much debate approved a policy paper on the use of GMOs and instructed the staff to put out a press release on the matter. This generated a great deal of interest. There was positive feedback from the membership, especially those in Southern Africa, who had been directly engaged in the issue. The press release was taken note of by many outside of the ACT Alliance and there was negative feedback from the pro-GMO lobby. The release was picked up on scores of anti-GMO and lobby group websites, in blogs, and newsletters and was widely quoted in national newspapers in Southern Africa.

The joint ACT-Caritas programme in response to the humanitarian crisis in Darfur got underway in 2004, and there have been a number of feature articles and News Releases concerning the situation, including two in 2007. Much work has been done within the ecumenical family on advocacy in relation to Sudan, as mentioned above with the Sudan Ecumenical Forum. The ACT-Caritas governance structure set up a Darfur Advocacy Network (DAN) to guide advocacy work in relation to Darfur, outlining messages, targets and methodologies and ensuring that risks in relation to work in Darfur were properly assessed. A recent review of the ACT-Caritas DAN indicated that information sharing and template letter/press releases were seen as the most useful advocacy activities by the members, whereas coordination of advocacy initiatives was seen as the least effective activity. ACT International can take some credit for playing a leading role in information sharing within its membership. Despite the resources invested in advocacy in relation to Darfur and the network structures, sign off procedures and efforts at coordination, both Caritas and ACT issued their own news releases

in relation to the resolution by the UN Security Council to send peacekeepers to Darfur. CARITAS issued a statement without consultation with ACT which was very supportive, followed by ACT International, with sign off from the ACT Executive Committee and with a quote from the ACT Moderator, issuing a news release in August 2007 taking a much more cautious welcoming stance, recognising that this would not of itself bring an end to the conflict. This news release was picked up by a number of northern-based ACT members, which reissued it as their own release. AACC also used it for its own newsletter.

The strength of the ACT International information is its timeliness, accuracy and authenticity in normally coming from those with direct involvement on the ground. The ability of the Coordinating Office to get things out fast, so that they can be picked up by the membership and the information used without being out of date, is a very positive aspect of ACT International's contribution to advocacy. But the advocacy itself has to be done by others, and whilst there have been some sustained areas of attention for limited time periods, ACT has not developed advocacy strategies in relation to particular situations, and currently has neither the mandate nor the staff resources to do so.

In addition to statements, feature and news articles and press releases, ACT International is also involved with others on advocating for humanitarian standards and space. ACT International was a core member of the group which brought the Sphere standards into place and remains an active member of the Board of Sphere. As a signatory to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief, ACT is involved in disseminating its contents and advocating for it, similarly for its own Code of Conduct on Sexual Exploitation Abuse of Power and Corruption.

ACT is also a member of ICVA, with its advocacy role towards UN bodies, particularly UNHCR and at the IASC. ACT is able to respond to requests for information from ICVA needed for ICVA's statements and engagement with the UN on behalf of the NGO community. Where ACT can gather together input directly from members in the field, this is especially valuable to ICVA, and this provides ACT International's members with an opportunity to feed experience from the work of the churches in situations of emergency into policy and advocacy

initiatives in ways which are unattributed, so avoiding some of the potential problems with this type of advocacy at the same time as engaging in on-the-ground emergency work.

ACT's ability to engage directly with the UN bodies in Geneva – especially UNHCR and OCHA – has been limited both by mandate, by available staff time and by the fact that ACT is not accredited to the UN and therefore access is more difficult than it might otherwise be. Recently ACT's capacity has been strengthened by the addition of a humanitarian policy officer. She is now working diligently on getting ECOSOC accreditation which would greatly facilitate ACT's ability to engage with the UN bodies in its own name and right. Outside of Geneva, ACT tends to be somewhat invisible at humanitarian fora and at UN coordination mechanisms in the field. It has, with some exceptions, been largely absent in the debates around for example the cluster approach and the pilots of this.

Emergency assistance is increasingly being linked to a democratic approach and to issues of protection and human rights, rather than more narrowly to a relief response. In this scenario the need to understand the human rights framework, as the basis on which humanitarian space is negotiated and emergency response is carried out, becomes more and more important.

Increasingly ACT funding members are looking to place their response within such a framework and this leads to advocacy needs and responsibilities in relation to particular emergency situations. To date ACT International has reckoned that, except in special situations such as that with the ACT-Caritas Darfur programme, required advocacy work around particular emergencies is the responsibility of the members involved. The ACT Coordinating Office does not have a role in taking forward this work, as normally it has not been in a position to respond to requests to engage in specific advocacy work on behalf of and with its members. For example, following ACT Appeals for funds to provide humanitarian assistance to Iraqi refugees in camps along the Jordanian border, MECC asked that ACT should be involved in work advocating for their resettlement, but ACT felt unable to respond. Sustained advocacy work arising out of specific emergency situations and humanitarian work has never been seen as part of ACT's mandate, yet from time to time members are asking for this kind of support.

To date ACT's strengths have been in their ability to quickly get information out through its website and email lists to its members and to the UN's Reliefweb and other web portals. That information is credible, accurate, sourced and valuable, because of the nature of the on-the-ground information from its members and the efforts of the communications unit to ensure the accuracy and contexts of the information, in consultation with other coordination office staff and the members responding. The information is multiplied by ACT's wide membership, many of which do not have the information or the capacity to generate their own information materials on emergency situations and therefore look to ACT to provide this. ACT's engagement in the humanitarian debate, however, is limited by its mandate, by its capacity, by its lack of brand visibility and by its restricted access to UN fora.

2.4. Action by Churches Together (ACT) Development

ACT Development formally came into being in February 2007 after many years of discussion. As far back as the 1990's ecumenical agencies in north and south were coming together to discuss the need for a Global Ecumenical Platform for Development where issues could be discussed and plans developed that would bring together agencies within the ecumenical family on common initiatives that could really make a difference and could have profile, visibility and engage decision makers. In February 2005 a consultation was convened in Geneva by WCC where churches and agencies agreed that a global ecumenical platform - then named ACT Global and later the Proposed Ecumenical Alliance for Development (PEAD) - was needed to share policies and look strategically at work together. Many of the factors driving the need for this global platform were similar to those that had driven the creation of ACT International ten years earlier. There was continued concern about the lack of visibility of ecumenical work, particularly in comparison with that of the work of many of the other families of international development agencies, and concerns about the effect of this on both access to income and influence with international policy makers. There were concerns about coordination of work in some areas, particularly in the transition from relief to development and on advocacy. And there were concerns in such areas as standards, impact assessment, reporting and accountability requirements and the need for agreed and common practices.

In February 2007 ACT Development came into being with 55 members world wide and a secretariat in Geneva housed within the legal framework of WCC. It held its first Assembly in Nairobi. At that Assembly there were a number of affirmations of the importance of advocacy within ACT Development's mandate. The minutes record "Involvement in strategic global advocacy is a must". However, there was little said about how advocacy work should go forward in relation to ACT Development. The Minutes of the Assembly only make one substantive reference to advocacy as follows:

"Advocacy: we need to begin by developing an approach to advocacy rather than only focusing on specific issues e.g. how does advocacy integrate into the overall mandate and plan of ACT Development? Our relationship with ACT International also needs to be considered (will it effect ACT International's neutrality?)."

ACT Development's initial work is to ensure that the staff of its members know about and understand something of ACT Development. It is working to facilitate the collaboration of ACT Development participants at the national and regional level, often via the widening of existing ACT International forums. Participants at the national level are starting to identify advocacy issues that they want to work on together eg: climate change in Malawi, and mining in Peru. A further proposal from Southern Africa is for the two ACTs to undertake an HIV and AIDS initiative, working closely with EAA and EHAIA, recognising that this is an issue which needs to be "joined up" impacting as it does on work at times of emergency, at times of rehabilitation and at times of development and also needing advocacy nationally, regionally and internationally. The first global project of ACT Development is a three year project on impact assessment with Bread for the World and CASA as the lead agencies, and this too is likely to have international development advocacy components.

2.5. The Lutheran World Federation (LWF)

Whilst a scoping of LWF's global advocacy work is not explicitly a part of this review, given its special position as a global church family with operational capacity and headquartered within the Ecumenical Centre, a brief listing of its work is included. At the founding Assembly of LWF in Sweden in 1947 participants called for the development of international legal rights for the promotion and protection of human rights. So as with WCC

global advocacy has been a part of LWF's remit since it came into being. Also as with WCC, LWF came into being at the same time as the global multilateral instruments were being put in place. It has had a consistent focus on human rights and on advocacy towards the UN system and particularly the UN Human Rights Commission/Council. Reform of the UN system and the promotion of coherence between different international legal streams runs through much of LWF's current advocacy work.

With human rights as the first priority, interfaith action for peace in Africa is a second priority bringing religious leaders from all faiths together to develop practical strategies for peace. There is an HIV desk which has an important role in relation to programmes as well as advocacy.

LWF's approach is to focus on particular things where they can add particular value or where others are not working and they have some direct link and expertise. Negotiations with the Israeli government on tax issues and indirectly the status of Jerusalem as well as work on the plight of Bhutanese refugees fit this category.

For some time LWF has advocated for UN attention on the issues of Dalits, and has been instrumental in setting up the Dalit Solidarity Network and working with national partners at the national context to address the

issue which is far wider than is recognised and an issue in many countries. The 2003 Winnipeg Assembly explicitly added the subject of indigenous people to the LWF advocacy agenda.

Whilst substantive letters from the General Secretary on a range of issues, including key issues such as climate change, add to the body of global advocacy work carried out by LWF, the focus is very much on where value can be added and discerning the most effective actions and places where advocacy effort can have concrete pay-off. LWF's location in Geneva and its UN accredited status is seen as a benefit for its member churches and partners. In that sense LWF sees part of its advocacy contribution as being a service unit and a conduit for others into the appropriate advocacy forums. As it looks to the future it sees the huge potential for civil society to have input into the UNHRC Universal Periodic Review process, the Treaty Body system and the Special Procedures investigations but the danger of this becoming unmanageable and unfocused. The new wiki website being developed is a creative attempt to provide a way to facilitate contributions and provide a platform for collaborative online drafting for member churches and partners. It is a very practical element of the LWF Human Rights accountability project which seeks to build awareness within its constituency about the instruments for global human rights accountability and build capacity to use those instruments effectively.



3. The Understandings of Advocacy and the Methodologies

The term “advocacy” can be used in very different ways. For the WCC the term is used in the widest sense. It is seen as a form of prophetic and public witness, and as such is rooted in theological meaning. The WCC advocates on many things, including matters of faith and order and Christian unity and much of this is done within the churches, but most often the term global advocacy is used to describe specific forms of witness on political, economic and social issues, where the churches and their members aim to influence the policies and practices of the powers that be in order to bring about a better world.

Within this wider concept of advocacy is the view that WCC is responding to its members and joining together and coordinating its member churches around the world to raise their voices. It is seen as a kind of accompaniment with its members and a form of solidarity with them at times of trouble. Three elements: accompaniment, solidarity and public witness, are seen as important for WCC’s advocacy, and differentiating ecumenical advocacy in some way from that of secular advocacy.

Much of the wider advocacy work carried out by the WCC is awareness raising. It is also about constituency building around an issue, and about deepening the understanding of advocacy within the ecumenical community. It is about advocating with people and not for them and ensuring that the language used is inclu-

sive and allows fully the participation of those from the global south, women and youth.

Despite this wide understanding of advocacy and this ecumenical concept of advocacy as prophetic witness rather than the more precise and limited definition of advocacy as a series of activities to secure a desired outcome, WCC does from time to time on particular issues engage in more targeted advocacy initiatives. It also as a long standing world church body has an important, and less visible role, in high level diplomatic engagement in relation to particular situations in the search for peace and justice.

EAA has set out its understanding of advocacy in its Covenant for Action as follows:

“Ecumenical advocacy is a specific form of witness on political, economic, cultural and social issues by churches and their members, church-related agencies and other organizations which aims to influence policies and practices of governments, international institutions, corporations, and our own communities in order to bring about a more just, peaceful and sustainable world.”³

3 A Covenant for Action. Guiding Principles for Action: The Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance.

EAA has many of the same emphases in its understanding as has WCC, including its commitment to marginalised communities and engagement of women, its commitment to learning from the churches and to justice, peace, environmental integrity and the dignity of all human beings. However, there is a major difference in the governance/decision-making mechanisms which influence what can and cannot be done and the timeliness and style of advocacy work. In particular EAA is more explicit in its commitment to practical action as part of an inclusive vision of witness encompassing analysis and action. Similarly it is more explicit in its commitment to campaigning and one-off campaigns albeit within a sustained process of advocacy.

The differences between the WCC and EAA in their advocacy work are not so much about their understanding of advocacy, but more about the range and scope of their work and the methodologies used. For WCC the range of work is huge. Its position as the council of churches for the world, with its global membership with all of their expectations and demands, means that it is hard to focus on a limited number of issues as all expect that in some way or another their concerns will be heard. For EAA on the other hand it has been agreed from the beginning that there will be a focus on a limited number of priorities in order to increase the impact of the work, and this focus has been strictly adhered to throughout its seven year existence. The participants of EAA sign up to support and participate in the work of EAA. These participants expect them to deliver on the focus issues but they are not placing demands on them beyond this agreed remit. In that sense they are not pulled in many directions and stretched over a wide number of issues by the constituency in the same way that WCC finds itself.

Similarly EAA concentrates on a narrower range of methodologies and tools with a tighter content and focus than WCC to carry out its advocacy work. Its strategy groups are charged with defining clearly the goals, objectives, strategies and messages for each of the focus areas, and this provides the framework and the direction for all of the work. For both the trade focus and the HIV and AIDS focus EAA has produced materials – posters, briefing documents, leaflets, Action Alerts, sign-on letters, petitions and fact sheets. Whilst these are educational, information sharing and awareness raising they are also explicitly designed to support the strategy and to contribute to bringing about the change identified by

the strategy for that area of work. EAA also produces worship materials targeted to support its messages and to be useful to participants in their own awareness raising activities. It develops materials targeted to a particular event to support understanding, networking and action. Networking with others at the global level on the focus issues is a methodology which has been employed particularly effectively by the Co-ordinator of EAA. The methodology of targeted activity used before and during the Bangkok June 2004 AIDS Conference, for example, raised the visibility of the Christian ecumenical family and had significant impact in creating a platform for faith-based input which had real standing alongside that of others, such as the medical profession.

EAA has an up-to-date website and produces regular bulletins and action alerts. Increasingly it is producing and making available materials on CDROM. With the action alerts sent to the differentiated email lists for the different issues EAA can keep its participants up-to-date and help them to have simple ways to engage their constituencies in taking action, such that targeted action in a coordinated fashion can take place around the world. At particular times EAA has employed narrow campaigning tools: the Global Petition on trade, the Global poster campaign on HIV and AIDS, the various postcard actions as well as template letters and sign-on campaigns. Generally however whilst EAA sees itself as using a campaigning approach, the campaigns themselves have to be run nationally through its participants, and EAA provides that campaigning framework, campaigning materials, the background resource and analysis and the overall coordination to turn national campaigns into something coordinated and global.

For WCC a key tool of advocacy is pronouncements, statements and public letters. These may be addressed to churches, to governments, to the UN and other international bodies and sometimes more generally to the world. These come out of discussion at Central Committee, from pastoral visits of the General Secretary and meetings with high level decision makers, from solidarity initiatives to support member churches at times of difficulty, from WCC work in relation to key conferences or world events. They are communicated widely and picked up in press releases from WCC and through ENI. Whilst this work is sometimes seen as one-off and lacking in strategic follow-up, often these are useful tools for use by member churches for advocacy nationally and regionally.

A second major methodology used by WCC to take forward its advocacy is team visits of one kind or another. "Living Letters" is a term used to describe team visits usually to an area of trouble, normally mixing participants from outside the area, coming to demonstrate solidarity, with those from within the area. Together the team take up issues of concern and meet decision makers to advocate. The identified issues are then supported with statements, reports and press releases both regionally and internationally. Very similar is ecumenical delegations when a mixture of people from different parts of the world and representing men, women, young and old come together to work on an issue and advocate to decision makers. There are also fact finding missions, where areas of conflict and difficulty are visited by WCC missions to find out facts and prepare reports for governing bodies to be used as a basis for advocacy work. For some areas of work – for example economic justice and globalisation – detailed analysis and theological exposition is produced and published as serious books as part of WCC's advocacy work. Out of this work comes position papers and briefing papers for use at meetings and for communications around key international events – most often global conferences. Through these means the WCC sees itself as allowing victims of injustice and the marginalised to tell their stories and to have direct access to decision makers in order to attempt to influence policy in their favour.

From time to time and for certain advocacy initiatives WCC uses a more direct action based style for engaging churches, church organisations and individuals from the churches. The work on climate change and the Ecumenical Water Network uses this more targeted approach to attempt to achieve specific changes in outcome in relation to national and international agreements and has used tools such as an international petition to engage people in the issues. Generally however the style of the WCC with its governing bodies and its member churches around the world has to be more cautious, longer term and more general, than the modern day campaigning style used in highly targeted ways to achieve specific and usually incremental change on global matters.

For ACT International with its lack of clarity about whether it is mandated to involve itself in advocacy and its lack of resources to take work on humanitarian issues very far, the principal means of undertaking advocacy are through policy statements approved by the

Executive Committee and then communicated widely to the membership and to the media through email and its own and other relevant websites. News Releases, opinion pieces, web articles, photo essays and stories from members from the field, support this work. Inputting experience and views from ACT members work in the field into the work of ICVA, in discussion at SCHR and through attendance at OCHA and UNHCR meetings in Geneva is a further way in which ACT International engages in advocacy. Occasionally information is sent out to members to enable them to input directly or engage within their own countries on an issue, but ACT International is currently not set up to play a proactive role in leading and coordinating the advocacy efforts of its members on humanitarian policy issues.

WCC, EAA and ACT International all need their members or participants to engage in advocacy work. WCC sees its agenda coming from its member churches, sees its role to support those member churches particularly when in situations of turmoil, and to engage those churches in global advocacy to raise voices at the national, regional and international level in the mission to contribute to a more just and sustainable world for all God's people. In all of this it has a particular relationship with the Regional Ecumenical Organisations (REOs) to ensure that they support one another. For particular issues and to respond to particular situations WCC has offices in the regions, as in the Middle East, in the US at the UN, and in Nairobi for EHAIA and the Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network.

For EAA whilst it can network and advocate at the global level, the value of this depends upon the strength of the understanding, involvement and action of its participants around the world. Encouraging this involvement and understanding, coordinating messages and activity to support change at the national as well as the global level, and ensuring the linkage between the two, is key to EAA's work and success.

Similarly for ACT International, its information and experience is primarily that of its members, which are themselves working on the ground, responding to emergencies. Without a good flow of information, and experience and analysis from those working in the emergency, they have little to contribute to the international level advocacy efforts on humanitarian issues.



4. Points of Intersection

Within the Ecumenical Centre the key players in global advocacy are WCC and EAA working with their members, participants and related agencies. Of member churches LWF is in a somewhat different category to others. It is an organisation based in the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva, seriously engaged in global advocacy with its churches with shared related agencies and experience from programmes of work and partners around the world through LWS. For ACT International a narrow range of humanitarian issues and emergency situations around the world with which it is concerned intersect with some of the advocacy agendas of parts of WCC and LWF.

There are points of intersection related to targets (e.g. UN, World Bank), related to issues (e.g. HIV and AIDS, climate change, trade), and related to geography (e.g. Sudan, the Middle East). There are also points of intersection in relation to constituencies, where there are huge overlaps in terms of membership, participation and connections through related agency status.

The UN and its many agencies are key targets for advocacy for many in the ecumenical family. Whilst some of the agencies, for example UNHCR, are of particular interest to ACT International, to the migration desk of WCC, and to LWF, increasingly issues of global significance, in whichever agency they originate, end up in New York at the Security Council or the General Assem-

bly. There is therefore huge potential for far greater leadership and coordination of the churches engagement at this level. At this global level WCC has many advantages and should be able to play this role. With its history of engagement, with its global nature and reach, with its accreditation, with its office in New York, WCC should be in a position to play a strong role. There is a role to facilitate the work of others within the family, but much more importantly there is a need to lead on a very limited number of key global issues and to ensure that the voice of the churches, and the advocacy efforts at national levels, feed into a coordinated mutually reinforcing effort which aggregated together makes the churches once more a voice to be listened to and reckoned with.

The Human Rights agenda is a massive one and in various ways all of the organisations work within its framework and their work is influenced by it. Both WCC and LWF particularly see Human Rights work as core to their global advocacy. But they work in very different ways and therefore the opportunities for cooperation and intersection of the work are limited.

There are many issues on which more than one organisation within the Ecumenical Centre are working. The main two focus areas for EAA – HIV and AIDS and Trade - are also on the agenda of others. WCC has a desk working on HIV and AIDS, ACT International has a policy on

HIV and AIDS in emergencies, similarly LWF has a desk and this as an important issue in all of its programmes around the world, and EAA has it as one of its two main focus areas. Within the Ecumenical Centre there is an Ecumenical Working Group on HIV, where information and initiatives are shared, and where the Ecumenical HIV/AIDS Initiative in Africa (EHAIA) was created. WCC sits on EAA's HIV strategy group and there has been good cooperation and support between the two organisations. When ACT International was looking to develop a formal policy on HIV and AIDS there was also good co-operation and support from EAA, LWF and WCC. Cooperation has worked well in part because of the personalities of key individuals involved and their desire to support one another, but also because it is clearly an issue of great importance for churches and seen as such by members and participants, and clear messages have been agreed which everyone can work in support of with their own constituencies and own methodologies. Between WCC and EAA each can bring their own strengths to the work and the combined result has far greater impact than one or another working alone. WCC brings the relationship with WHO and accreditation with the UN, the work of EHAIA, the name and history, the theological reflection on the issue and internal advocacy with churches and church structures. Whilst EAA can greatly increase the resources and so follow the issues and take initiatives more easily, bring a wider grouping of faith-based participants on board, and bring more action oriented and popular campaigning methodologies to the work.

Trade is another issue where work is taking place within different parts of the Ecumenical Centre. For EAA it is a focus of the work and both WCC and LWF are represented on their Strategy Group. The issues are complicated and it is much more difficult than with HIV and AIDS to agree clear messages, to agree on ways to approach targets and to agree the strands of work to pursue. There is not a natural synergy between the different actors within the Ecumenical Centre and EAA perhaps has to work harder than might be expected to get involvement in the issue, despite successes such as the Central Committee wearing T shirts for the Trade Week of Action in April 2005 and using EAA's trade liturgy for some of its worship. For WCC trade is one element of a much wider advocacy interest on economic justice and globalisation. Between the different organisations methodologies of work are different and there are sometimes fears that the message and the style of

work of one organisation might undermine the work of another. But efforts are made to support one another at meetings and not to duplicate attendance at routine meetings. When EAA through its campaigning style was able to engage Pascal Lamy at a mini-ministerial meeting, and get him to do one of the daily NGO briefings being held in the Ecumenical Centre, the General Secretary of WCC was able to meet him and give him EAA petitions from church leaders. This led on to a follow up meeting between WTO and the faith community in September 2006 and at a certain level continues through an informal structured dialogue. But this is not easy and in the past there were occasional tensions between styles and messages on this issue within the house which potentially can undermine advocacy opportunities and effectiveness.

There are lower levels of interaction within the house on an issue such as climate change and water. As the profile of this work grows rapidly coming from many different parts of the ecumenical family and different parts of the world, and as it becomes perhaps the global issue for our age, then it is likely that many advocacy agendas will look for the points of intersection with this issue. For ACT International, many of the emergency situations the members are responding to and for which appeals have been issued have a connection with climate change. As well as the adaptation to climate change work that is increasingly needed in many parts of the world, ACT's work on capacity building for disaster preparedness and mitigation is relevant to the climate change issue. For both ACT International and ACT Development, this issue is likely to increasingly appear on the agendas of ACT Forum meetings in many countries. For EAA as it looks to clarify the areas within the trade agenda that it should focus on, then sustainable agriculture and small scale farmers are likely to grow in importance, and with that provide links into the climate change issue. For WCC climate change has been on its advocacy agenda for over 20 years and although this work has in some ways been scaled down, with its position and accreditation WCC will have a delegation at the UNFFFC meeting in Bali in December 2007, and many look to it for leadership without which the efforts of the ecumenical family will be more disparate and less effective than they might otherwise be.

The Middle East is a matter of such concern to so many that one would expect to find considerable intersection between the work of those in the Ecumenical Centre.

The joint initiative of WCC, EAA and ACT International to put out "Behind the News" was an excellent example of working together to respond to a need within the church constituency, which was warmly welcomed. This work, however, is primarily in the remit of WCC and the very specific work of ACT International on humanitarian relief and the specific work pursued by LWF in relation to Jerusalem are very separate. In the latter case in particular this separation is a necessary requirement in order to effectively pursue the very specific advocacy work being undertaken.

There is also positive co-operation between ACT International and WCC over the situation in Sudan, with good communication between relevant officers in the two organisations. ACT International as part of the ACT-Caritas Programme and therefore a part of the Darfur Advocacy Network is in a coordinated structure with member churches in Sudan, member agencies in the north and linked into the SEF. The latter is a good example of a model with its offices in Europe and in Africa that has shown itself to have advantage in undertaking advocacy on a difficult issue. With information coming from the field and those nearer to the situation combined with up-to-date information about

the international agenda of the bilateral and multilateral governments and bodies in relation to Sudan, it has been possible to direct advocacy efforts to those points and times when it could have best effect. It has also been possible within the ecumenical family to combine in the planning and strategising the views and information of those on the ground, those working in the area and those from outside and use this to advantage, but in ways that do not make the direct connections with those in the field, so protecting their ability to continue to work there.

Despite the examples given above where the work intersects and there is co-operation between the different organisations, there is less cooperation and coordination between the organisations than one might expect given the fact that they are all working out of the same building. It is partly a matter of different styles, partly different governance models, partly the different constituencies and partly a matter of overload of individual work agendas. But greater creative cooperation and coordination would have the potential to support each other's work and find the synergies between different work so improving the effectiveness of all.



5. Strengths and Limitations

An analysis of the strengths and limitations which each of the organisations has in relation to global advocacy work shows very different characteristics.

WCC's primary strength comes from what it is: the world council of churches with members in the majority of countries across the globe and therefore a real link into virtually every situation and a potential to have knowledge from the grassroots to inform a global perspective. With its Christian basis and theological perspective it has a reason to be concerned about the state of the world, a responsibility to work for a just and sustainable world and a right to speak out and engage with world powers bringing a faith-based, moral and ethical input to global debate. It is seen as having a right to input on a very wide range of matters of concern for the world – from specific human rights situations to global matters such as climate change and nuclear disarmament. It has a history that stands it alongside other world multilateral bodies and as such it also has a platform and credibility from which to speak and a possibility to engage at the highest levels of global governance. A non-partisan faith-based voice is generally welcome in situations of difficulty and WCC has a breadth and depth and reputation that gives it a legitimacy to speak out. It has a real role to link member churches and the ecumenical family around the world to raise their voices for justice, and has successfully worked at ensuring that women, youth and the marginalised are included in that voice.

More specifically WCC, like LWF, has a particular strength with its accreditation to ECOSOC and therefore its ability to make submissions, send delegations

and speak at UN meetings. In relation to the UN it has an advantage that its headquarters is in Geneva, with its proximity to many UN agencies, it has a Liaison Office in New York, and it has member churches and REOs in every region of the world able to provide information from the field.

The importance of WCC engaging in advocacy has been repeatedly affirmed – at its General Assembly, at its Central Committees and from its General Secretary and senior management. It is seen as a unique contribution that the global church working together can make. Its member churches and the ecumenical agencies all want it to take a leading role in global advocacy and for many years there have been high expectations. The church is the largest organised civil society body in the world and church leaders often have greater legitimacy to speak on behalf of their people than politicians. WCC has a role both from a practical point of view, as the obvious body to be coordinating and leading a world ecumenical advocacy response to the key issues of our time, and from a prophetic point of view, where it is acknowledged to be the mission of the church to be a prophetic voice for social justice in the world.

It has shown itself able to play significant roles, often at the level of quiet high level diplomacy in situations of turmoil, and to provide solidarity and accompaniment to churches in situations of difficulty. It is able to make statements that coming from the world body can be used by others to pursue their more detailed advocacy work with governments. It can engage in issues of concern for the church in the world - such as HIV and

AIDS, overcoming violence, economic justice - and raise the level of concern and engagement in these issues in its constituency around the world.

However, so many of the strengths that WCC has in relation to advocacy also contain elements of weakness, and many strengths at this point in time are only potential strengths.

The strengths that WCC has in relation to working with and advocating at the UN are not being fulfilled in the way that so many in the ecumenical family hope for. The lack of a clear strategy and strategy group and clear coordination of work targeted at the UN, limits what can be achieved. The UN Liaison Office does not have the consistent staff resource needed to both follow the agenda and build the relationships at the UN and also respond to the needs of the ecumenical family for formation, facilitation, information and coordination. The potential is there to follow key issues, to alert the regions concerned, to coordinate or see that some other place in the ecumenical family is coordinating, so that advocacy at the international level on an issue is both sustained and supported by coordinated advocacy at the national level. Whilst because of what it is and because of its history, WCC has a good reputation and good access, it is not as visible as it would like to think. Too often the voice of the church that is heard in public arenas seems to be coming from the more fundamentalist church perspective and focused on single issues and this is a frustration to many churches in membership of WCC who look to WCC to bring together their individual contributions into a meaningful global response.

Many staff within the WCC in Geneva and many member churches and specialised agencies engage in advocacy work which is targeted at the UN. But for some time within WCC there appears to have been no overall coordination of this work with the UN and no strategic planning as to where WCC's efforts could best be placed. Whilst the principle of the work has been to respond to requests from member churches and to facilitate their access, given the finite resources and without serious coordination, this has limited the effectiveness of the work. For a while there was a part-time coordinating position for UN work in Geneva and a liaison point in Geneva for the New York office but this came to an end in 2001 and there has been no overall focal point in Geneva for the past few years. There have also been questions about how far the office in New York

should engage with all of the work in Geneva covering the UN. Recently it has been agreed that the Liaison Office should be the Liaison Office for all of the WCC's work with the UN and not just for particular agenda items and facilitation of delegations.

The strengths that come from being a global fellowship also mean that being sharp, focused and cutting edge – qualities that often distinguish effective advocacy methods – are unlikely to be achievable. There are obvious tensions between the almost unlimited needs of members around the world and the limited financial and human resources. There is also a lack of management systems available to manage these competing interests and priorities. There are tensions between the need to respond to so many critical issues for the world and yet the need to focus in order to be effective. The methodologies used make it difficult to be clearly targeted on desired outcomes and to work in ways which enable results to be measured. With the demands of member churches driving the work rather than a detailed analysis of where WCC can really add value and be most effective, there is a danger of so much being attempted that too little is achieved. With so many issues of concern there is a need to find the coherence between them and coalesce the work around a few clear focuses and the new programme plans attempt to do this. For so many of the areas of advocacy work there is a lack of a unifying strategising function to enable the clear discernment of what should be done. Thus, with very individual ways of working, a lack of team work and management capacity, it is difficult to identify out of the broad priorities those clear topics on which WCC could really make a difference and provide significant added value.

The bureaucracy of a world body with its inclusive and consultative systems of governance means that it takes a long time to make a statement on a key issue and hence such statements are necessarily carefully measured and rather general. Too often statements are disseminated in ways which may have been valuable in a time before the information revolution but now are largely inaccessible to the majority of ordinary church members. The proliferation of press releases, not differentiated between release globally and solely regionally when of only regional interest, does not sufficiently signal to the world the big issues on which WCC's voice should be heard and taken into consideration. In general WCC neither has the resource, the expertise nor the desire to popularise and target information so that churches

can engage their membership. Nor do they have the possibility to sufficiently support their REOs, NCCs and members to take up the issues on which the staff of WCC do so much work.

There are increasing limitations for WCC in much of its style of advocacy work. Pastoral visits, ecumenical delegations, team visits, conferences all entail a high carbon footprint and increasingly this will be seen as problematic, despite their value in terms of solidarity, accompaniment and formation. The new electronic ways of interacting and contributing will need to play a stronger role. Many of the major issues for the world seem almost intractable and require a very long term commitment. But that long term engagement needs to be rewarded by seizing the appropriate moment to take an initiative that can really make a difference. Whilst WCC has shown itself able, on such issues as Sudan, the Middle East, nuclear disarmament and migration, to engage for the long term, there is a lack of resources to follow issues unless the constituency can feel itself engaged and see that there are meaningful results. There is a role for WCC to play the catalyst for issues, as it has done with climate change over the years, but timing is crucial for advocacy work and it is sometimes necessary to be riding the wave of global interest, as it did in the sixties and seventies, if the WCC constituency is to be inspired to engage in ways that would support WCC to be an effective voice for justice in the world.

EAA as a relatively young organisation, deliberately created to respond to a very limited number of issues, has completely different strengths and weaknesses to that of WCC. One of its key strengths for advocacy work is that it has a very broad Christian base encompassing within its participants the Catholic and the evangelical churches and their agencies. Within the ecumenical family it is one of the few instruments that brings together such a wide Christian grouping for common action. It has also deliberately sought to engage with those from other faiths. It has established itself as a broad faith-based coalition and has brought a faith-based advocacy perspective into its advocacy engagement. In its HIV and AIDS work in particular in less than seven years the reputation and place that it has earned for providing a faith-based input is impressive.

The very clear focus of EAA, notwithstanding the conflict issue, on two key areas – HIV and AIDS and trade – is a strength. With clear strategy groups for each of

these issues, EAA has been able to develop strategies which are relevant to their participants and which set out the goals and expected outcomes, the key messages, the specific issues and lines within the focus which should be pursued and there is clarity about what, of the many possibilities, it should do. Whilst the structures set up to deliver this strategy have been extremely effective in respect of HIV and AIDS, they have been less effective in relation to trade given the complexity of the issue and the strongly held and somewhat opposing views. The fact that membership of the trade strategy group has not been as consistent as it might have been has meant that developing a vision and strategy and then holding onto it and pushing it through has been more difficult than for the HIV and AIDS work.

EAA has sought to engage in both internal and external advocacy and this is a strength. For both of its focus issues it has worked to engage its churches and participants and church leaders in the issue. This has perhaps been particularly important and effective in relation to HIV and AIDS, where advocacy within the church in support of its work against stigma and discrimination for people living with HIV and AIDS has been especially important. EAA can point to clear successes in this area but there have also been setbacks as at the Porto Alegre WCC Assembly where HIV and AIDS did not get an official mention. Complementing this advocacy work within the ecumenical constituency EAA has made good external links to enable it to engage with and bring a respected faith-based voice to the UN and international HIV and AIDS decision making forums.

EAA has produced a wide range of very accessible materials. With their popular style and imaginative qualities they are easily used and there are consistent reports from participants within EAA around the world about the value of these materials to be used, to be distributed and sometimes to be adapted for the local context. The key limitation in respect to its materials is that of language. Whilst EAA makes a big effort to translate key materials, work moves quickly and translation takes time and money and so necessarily EAA has to be selective about what can be produced in several languages.

EAA has made good use of new forms of sharing and disseminating information, of communicating effectively and electronically interconnecting its participants. With its bulletins, action alerts, databases and email lists, it has effectively used the new technologies

available to reach a very wide group of people with up to date information and action initiatives. With these methodologies from Geneva EAA can lead a campaign ensuring a coordinated response from north and south to a target on a particular issue at a point in time when it is appropriate and has potential to make some positive difference.

An important strength of EAA is its ability to provide a coordinated package of materials. EAA not only provides the posters, the popular leaflets and the action cards, it also provides the worship materials, the church magazine articles and covers, together with the statements, the petitions, the specific information for letters and emails of action and the stories and news about what others are doing. It is a complete reinforcing package and is provided in an accessible way, such that a lot of the information can be downloaded and adapted for use as required.

A strength of EAA's work has been its timing. For the HIV and AIDS work in particular, EAA met a need at a point when the issue was globally recognised as a key issue. In that sense it was able to benefit from working on the issue at the right time so that initiatives become mutually reinforcing and there was a stronger possibility of advocacy having effect. Trade was also recognised at the time as a key issue, but given the complex policy positions within it, the toughness of the external target, and the stalling of global negotiations, it was more difficult for participants and their constituencies to see that this was an issue on which there was an imperative to act. It was also difficult for them to see that it is an issue where the churches have experience and an issue where their actions could possibly have effect.

EAA has shown great strength in its ability to network with a wide range of players and has proved itself strong at getting a facilitated faith-based voice into UN and international decision making places and processes. Within the ecumenical family it has ensured itself always open for collaboration, even where it has not received the support it might have expected. By deliberately allowing participants to sign up if they want to participate in the work on an issue, rather than have criteria for membership, and by having a diverse and institutionally well represented composition for the EAC and strategy groups, EAA has brought successfully together a very wide range of ecumenical involvement to work on these two key issues.

Organisationally EAA has had strengths in its deliberately light and flexible structure. Despite its few people and limited budgets, through the methodologies it uses, it has a wide reach. For some the lack of detailed policy capacity is seen as a weakness but within the ecumenical family there are others with enormous policy resource. However, as the years pass, and EAA continues to grow in response to its success, it will be more and more difficult to maintain this light and flexible structure which has served it so well. With growth comes requests for greater accountability necessitating more bureaucratic structures diverting staff time from the immediate, light, quick, responsive, highly practical focus of the work. Maintaining this light and flexible campaigning style will be a challenge and poses a limitation on the expansion of EAA's work.

There are complicated issues with regard to visibility and EAA. Generally speaking effective advocacy is enhanced by visibility and brand reputation. But given the broad participation in EAA a united global brand is neither possible nor desirable and so EAA has not promoted its own name or brand, leaving its participants to use their own names. In some situations this is a limitation, but EAA has positively maximised this potential weakness with its strategy to get a large number of actions taking place from many points around the globe in a coordinated timely way on a particular point.

EAA's overriding strength has been in engaging increasing numbers of churches and other participants from the south to work on its focus issues. It has provided them with accessible information, materials and actions and has helped them to be part of a global ecumenical family working on these issues. Whilst those in the regions wish that EAA had the resource to support them more physically with a presence at their regional meetings as well as at global ones the support that they provide to enable their participants to engage themselves is impressive. For smaller northern churches EAA provides similar benefits and their materials and leadership is welcomed. For the larger northern ecumenical agencies that may also have these issues as priorities and therefore can devote substantial resource of their own to the work the relationship is more complicated. For best effect there is a need to ensure that EAA's leadership is coordinated with the work of the larger agencies, who are linked into the secular networks working on these issues, and who can afford to push through with their partners their own timescales, messages and agen-

das. The larger agencies appreciate EAA's ability to provide advocacy support to smaller participants and are happy with their leadership of the whole ecumenical response on an issue when it ties in with their own plans. At such points they are generous to EAA with funds and other support. But there is a difficulty when northern agency agendas move on and very quickly funding and supportive relationships on an issue become minimal. For EAA itself and for those in the south it is immensely frustrating when northern agendas change seemingly overnight and seemingly without consultation at a point when southern participants have just come on board with an issue and need support to continue to work at their national level on it. This relates to the wider issue of the need for a degree of joint planning. So far efforts between organisations have been largely directed at trying to ensure good coordination. To increase effectiveness further and to minimise frustrations, like that of key players in the ecumenical family moving on at a point when others have just come on board, a level of coordination of ecumenical agency planning cycles and processes is needed.

ACT International's principal strength, given that advocacy is not currently a clear part of their mandate, is the ability to act quickly and disseminate information widely on specific humanitarian issues. It has a strong capacity to deliver good press releases and stories which can be used by its members and can be picked up, re-branded and disseminated to local press. Its visibility on Relief Web and Reuters Alertnet (maintaining its Platinum membership for instance) is often high and its own web site is a source of significant information for especially its members.

Its other major strength is the information it has from the engagement of its members in most emergency situations around the world. That information is potentially extremely valuable for global advocacy work both on specific issues but as examples to illustrate the need for change in the humanitarian policies and practice of the multilateral players. To date ACT has not had the capacity to gather and use this information to play an active global advocacy role in those forums, but there is strong potential to engage more actively within SCHR and ICVA in Geneva, with the UNLO and others in New York, and with particular regional pilot projects and initiatives on certain key humanitarian issues. A good example is the reform debate that has been taking place within the UN on the coordination of humanitarian re-

sponse and particularly the cluster system. The members of ACT International working in the pilot country areas have the potential to come together through the ACT Forum to both gather the information and advocate locally, but also to provide information to Geneva to use for coordinated lobbying at the international level. This is not yet happening at either the national and regional levels or at the international level. A key constraint to this happening is the issue of unified brand and joint visibility as ACT. Whilst LWF in its own right and own name is often visibly engaged in these issues, ACT is only noticeable by its absence from the national level debate. This is a huge weakness and a non-realisation of the advocacy potential of the ACT Alliance. To facilitate this work there is an urgent need for ACT to get UN accreditation in its own name, lack of which is a current limitation on its work.

Once ACT International and ACT Development are unified, some of these same strengths and limitations will apply to coordinated global advocacy work on issues of international development. The importance of all members participating fully in ACT Forums at the national level and being prepared to work together in national and regional advocacy under the ACT brand is paramount, if the voice of the ecumenical church family working together in relief and development is to have impact and to be recognised alongside the voices of the other major families of agencies working in the field. With the vision of southern churches and church related agencies working jointly with northern churches and church-related agencies, on particular issues in particular situations, bringing their different expertise and viewpoints, the potential for high quality advocacy with legitimacy and a difference is immense. The thought that on a selected number of issues this work at the national/regional level could then be linked to similar advocacy work in other regions, and inform advocacy work at the international level shows the potential strengths for the future. The potential is limited by capacities, by the willingness of members to work together under a common brand, and by the willingness of members to genuinely seek to understand issues from the point of view of other members. In the latter case the increasing professionalism and headquarters level planning systems of many of the northern agencies limits their ability to genuinely engage in co-operative priority setting and working together at the national and regional level and this will be a limitation for the ACT Alliance.



6. Conclusion

A great deal of global advocacy work is being undertaken by the WCC, EAA and ACT International. Whilst all have a similar understanding of advocacy entailing specific work aimed at influencing policies and practices in order to bring about a better world, for WCC the understanding is also wider, encompassing accompaniment, solidarity and public witness. All understand the need to advocate internally with their members and participants as well as to build capacity to advocate externally to the relevant bodies.

But the issues for global advocacy are different. For ACT International the focus is on influencing humanitarian policy and practice. For EAA it is focused on two key issues – HIV and AIDS and trade. Whilst for WCC global advocacy work is undertaken on a very wide range of issues. The drivers for undertaking advocacy work are also different. For ACT International despite the hesitations about the appropriateness of an advocacy role it is the members of ACT International who want the Coordinating Office to play a role in influencing humanitarian policy and practice and want to be visibly seen to be doing so. For EAA the participants have chosen to sign up to campaign together on the two focus issues, to improve, through EAA's leadership and coordination, the response that faith-based organisations can have. Nevertheless the breath of the participants and the different church families contained within it, whilst on the one hand a strength, limits the possibilities for visibly

branding the work together. With ACT Development joining the grouping and the proposed unification of the two ACTs, common issues of concern coming out of both humanitarian and international development experience at the national and regional level, which would benefit from coordinated global advocacy will have a possibility of being addressed.

For WCC it is the member churches that drive the agenda. Many of them look to the WCC to take up their concerns, speak out on them and play a brokering role for them. This results in a large number of issues coming onto the agenda, from specific country issues raised by a few churches to the major issues for the world on which WCC is expected to have a voice and play a role. The consequence is a hugely overloaded agenda, and given the nature of the Council and its democratic governance structure, enormous difficulty in making the agenda a manageable one targeted on those issues where WCC can bring added value and have the greatest positive effect. There is a need for WCC to be clearer about the one or two global issues on which it could become a major player. For these issues WCC would expect to become well known as a source of serious reflection, analysis, experience and ideas, looked to to take a lead and consulted with by global institutions. Its role and contribution on these issues would not be more of the same kind of contribution that NGOs and individual churches can make but focused on the added value that

only a world church body can bring. Its contribution to other issues would be much more limited and carefully defined and it would not expect to see itself as a leader but playing a probably small but influential part based on the particular strengths of the organisation.

The differences between WCC, EAA and ACT are not just a matter of the issues on which they are engaging or the constituency which they are serving and which drives their agendas. It is also a matter of methodology and style. For ACT International its limited advocacy work is primarily through high quality communications, speedy and timely dissemination of information and lobbying within the Geneva context. For WCC and EAA there are very different styles of work – even though within those styles there is much overlap in some of the methodologies used. EAA has a much stronger campaigning style, with a whole range of popular tools, methodologies and materials being used and produced, each reinforcing one another and providing a coherent package. WCC on the other hand, given its councillor structure and global position, is generally using methodologies at a heavier deeper level of theological analysis, with carefully crafted governance statements, high level letters and visits, and weighty reports and publications.

Working on different issues in different ways each organisation has different strengths and limitations. Despite the house wide working groups on such matters as HIV and AIDS and climate change, there is less co-operation and coordination within the Ecumenical Centre than one might expect, and less analysis than one could expect about who is best suited to lead on which piece of work. There are clearly some issues on which all of the organisations will want to be involved. The example of HIV and AIDS is a good one, where it is clear that EAA takes the lead, and WCC adds value through its theological reflection and relationship with WHO and ACT concentrates on practical dissemination on policy and response in emergency work. Another good example is the “Behind the News” publication, where the prophetic voice in high level statements and theological reflection from the WCC was combined with in-

formation from the pragmatic action oriented approach of EAA and the humanitarian information and practical disseminating skills of ACT.

At a minimum level the importance of the ecumenical organisations sharing information and keeping one another informed about their work cannot be over estimated if scarce resources of time and money are not to be wasted. Such sharing could also ensure that one another’s work is not conducted in ways which have adverse effects on the work of another organisation and fears about possible negativities could be shared in an open honest manner. Beyond sharing of information, there are a number of issues where the respective roles of the different organisations could be clarified. Due attention could be paid to the capacities and resources of each organisation such that priorities could be set which are within the capacities for delivering impact. There could be analysis of what added value each could bring and decisions taken about where there could be divisions of labour. For some issues it might be appropriate for only one organisation to work on it for the ecumenical family, for others there might be value in more than one organisation working in a coordinated way, each capitalising on its particular strengths. Many issues would benefit from being looked at as having different levels with work coordinated to support one another to maximum effect. WCC might operate at one level - bringing the prophetic and institutional voice of the churches, the leaders of the churches to front high level meetings, having a brokering role and providing theological underpinning. Others might work at another level - delivering campaigning popularising education for the constituency, leading targeted public pressure and coordinating national and regional contributions. With the different strengths and limitations acknowledged and taken into consideration in deciding priorities and divisions of labour, there is potential to ensure that the sum of the entire endeavour is greater than that of the uncoordinated parts and together all contribute to effective global advocacy which is prophetic, pragmatic and practical.

Appendix A – Terms of Reference

Scoping Exercise: A Joint Initiative Ecumenical Staff Working Group on Global Advocacy

1. Introduction

The Ecumenical Staff Working Group on Global Advocacy was established in February 2007 and, to date, has met three times. Its overall goal is to ensure coherence and complementarity and promote cooperation in the advocacy work being undertaken by the World Council of Churches, Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, ACT International and ACT Development.

The Scoping Exercise described below is an initiative of the Working Group. This description of the work to be done by consultant has been shared with the appropriate governing body of all four organizations and the feedback received was incorporated.

2. Scoping Exercise

The Working Group met for the first time on 23 February 2007, agreed on the Terms of Reference and starting sharing information on the key areas of advocacy work currently being undertaken by each organisation. It was noted that:

- the recent Assembly of the World Council of Churches called for the Council to have a renewed emphasis on global advocacy
- the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance have well-established ongoing campaigns on trade and HIV and AIDS
- to date, ACT International has not been mandated to undertake advocacy. This has been seen as the role of the WCC, but increasing pressure is coming from ACT International members for it to take an advocacy role in certain situations
- ACT Development, as a new alliance, is in the process of clarifying its own advocacy role.

In the next 2-3 years, ACT International and ACT Development are expected to move towards a unified structure. In addition, greater cooperation and a closer working relationship are sought with the EAA. As the two ACT alliances begin to share the name 'ACT' and move towards a unified structure, it is essential that they develop a clear mandate and policy related to their advocacy work. Such policies must also outline how the unified 'ACT Alliance' will work collaboratively with both the World Council of Churches and the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance to promote effectiveness and avoid any duplication.

In order to fulfil their task as set out in the Terms of Reference, the Ecumenical Staff Working Group are proposing that they undertake a Scoping Exercise to ensure clarity in the advocacy role of each organisation, promote complementarity and enhance cooperation in the advocacy work being undertaken by the WCC, EAA, ACT International and ACT Development. FinnChurch Aid, a member organisation of ACT International, ACT Development and the EAA had also highlighted the need for a substantial piece of work to be undertaken which identifies appropriate advocacy roles for ACT International and ACT Development as it moves towards a unified structure, and has offered to assist with funding this work. Other funding will be provided by the four organizations, and at least one additional funding partner.

Objectives of Scoping Exercise

1. to develop a document that outlines how each organisation currently defines advocacy, the types of advocacy being undertaken, the current issues being addressed and methodologies used
2. to review the lessons learnt from previous advocacy initiatives
3. to work with ACT International and ACT Development to define an appropriate advocacy role and develop appropriate policies for a merged ACT Alliance
4. to develop a Memorandum of Understanding between the organisations which participate in the Ecumenical Staff Working Group on Global Advocacy

Expected Outputs

1. A review document that outlines:
 - a brief historical overview of the advocacy work undertaken by WCC and EAA
 - major lessons learnt, including an analysis of the effectiveness of this work (based on a review of evaluations already undertaken)
 - a review of the statements made by ACT International to date
 - each of the 4 alliances' current understanding of advocacy, the types of advocacy undertaken, the current issues being addressed and the methodology used
 - the key points of intersection in advocacy work
 - an analysis of the strengths and limitations that each organisation has for their advocacy work
2. A draft policy document for consideration by the Executive Committees of ACT International and ACT Development which outlines an appropriate advocacy mandate for a merged ACT Alliance (or for the two separate ACT Alliances if a merger does not eventuate). This will include the type of advocacy work which ACT will undertake in the areas of emergency response and development, the methodologies used and the boundaries/ limits of any interventions. This document will also examine potential areas of conflict and will outline a risk management strategy to ensure that the impartiality of ACT International's humanitarian work is not compromised.
3. A Memorandum of Understanding between the 4 global bodies as to how they will work together to ensure coherence and complementarity and promote the development of common analyses in their advocacy work. This will include a matrix which will act as a model of the possibilities for advocacy with regard to difference situations and different levels of intervention⁴.
4. A discussion document which explores the direction of advocacy within the ecumenical movement in the next decade.

Methodology

1. The Review Document (No. 1 above) will be based on interviews with key people within each organisation and a review of policy papers, other documents and any evaluations which have been undertaken.
2. The Policy Document for the ACT Alliance will be based on a discussion paper which has been circulated to all ACT-Development and ACT-International members/participants for their comments. This paper will include:
 - a) a proposed theological basis for ACT International and ACT Development's role in advocacy
 - b) a brief history of the ecumenical movement's engagement in advocacy (based on 1 above)
 - c) a review of statements or advocacy initiatives undertaken by ACT International to date
 - d) a brief overview of the advocacy work being undertaken by ACT-Development and ACT-International members/participants
 - e) a summary of the expectations that members/participants have of ACT-Development and ACT-International's advocacy work
 - f) recommendations to ACT-Development and ACT-International
 - g) a proposed draft policy

This information will be gathered from:

- existing documents
- interviews with the four global bodies and other significant ecumenical organisations
- interviews with members of the Executive Committees of the two alliances
- telephone interviews with 40-50 members of ACT International and ACT Development
- interactive web-based discussions.

3. The Memorandum of Understanding will be developed in discussion with the Working Group members once the Review Document and the Policy Document have been drafted.

⁴ This matrix has been specifically requested by the ACT International Executive Committee in a letter to the Ecumenical Staff Working Group on Global Advocacy, February 2007.

Appendix B – List of Persons Interviewed

The individuals interviewed were suggested by the Ecumenical Staff Working Group on Global Advocacy and spoke in their own capacity and not on behalf of their institutions.

Baffour Amoa	Consultant, Ghana, former Secretary General, FECCIWA
Mark Beach	Director of Communications, WCC
Jean Blaylock	Trade Campaign Officer, EAA
Myra Blyth	Regents College and former WCC staff member
Richard Fee	General Secretary, Presbyterian Church of Canada
Christopher Ferguson	Representative to the United Nations, CCIA, WCC
Elisabeth Ferris	Brookings Institute and former WCC staff member
Jonathan Frerichs	Programme Executive, Nuclear Disarmament, WCC
Hansulrich Gerber	Programme Executive, Decade to Overcome Violence, WCC
Elenora Giddings Ivory	Director of Programme Three, WCC
Aruna Gnanadason	Executive Director for Planning and Integration, WCC
Maike Gorsboth	Co-ordinator, Ecumenical Water Network, WCC
Linda Hartke	Coordinator, EAA
Jill Hawkey	Director, ACT Development
Maria Immonen	Programme Officer, LWS, focal point for Human Rights and Rights Based Approachs
Gunstein Instefjord	Director, Department for the Politics of Development, NCA
Martin Junge	Latin America Secretary, LWF
Andre Karamaga	Programme Executive, Africa, WCC
Alison Kelly	Divisional and Global Programmes Manager, Christian Aid
Georgine Kengue Djeutane	Africa Regional Secretary, WSCF
Guillermo Kerber Mas	Programme Executive, WCC
Prawate Khid-Arn	General Secretary, CCA
Samuel Kobia	General Secretary, WCC
Manoj Kurian	Programme Executive, Health and Healing, WCC
Callie Long	Communications Officer, ACT International
Rogate Mashana	Programme Executive, Economic Justice, WCC
Karen Nazaryan	Armenian Round Table
John Nduna	Director, ACT International
Antti Pentikaainen	Director, FinnChurchAid
Peter Prove	Assistant to General Secretary, International Affairs and Human Rights, LWF
Martin Robra	Director of Programme One, WCC
Danuta Sacher	Head of Policy and Campaigns Department, Bread for the World
Arthur Shoo	Programmes Director, AACC
Sara Speicher	Communications Consultant, EAA
Nuad Tomeh	Middle East Council of Churches
Rob Van Drimmelen	General Secretary, APRODEV
Laetitia Van Haren	Humanitarian Policy Officer, ACT International
Robert Vitillo	Special Advisor on HIV and AIDS, Caritas Internationalis
Hielke Wolters	Director of Programme Four, WCC

Acronyms / Abbreviations

AACC	All Africa Conference of Churches
ACT	Action by Churches Together
AGAPE	Alternative Globalization Addressing People and Earth
APRODEV	Association of World Council of Churches related Development Organisations in Europe
ARV	Anti-Retroviral drugs
CAFOD	Catholic Fund for Overseas Development
CASA	Churches Auxillary for Social Action
CCA	Christian Conference of Asia
CCIA	Churches Commission on International Affairs
CCPD	Churches Commission on Participation in Development
CCT	Church of Christ of Thailand
CEAS	Churches Ecumenical Action for Sudan
CESE	Coordenadoria Ecumenica de Servico
CMC	Christian Medical Commission
CLAI	Consejo Latinamericana de Iglesia
COP	Conference of Parties
CWS	Church World Service
DAN	Darfur Advocacy Network
DOV	Decade to Overcome Violence
EAA	Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance
EAC	Ecumenical Advocacy Committee
EAPPI	Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council (<i>of the UN</i>)
EHAIA	Ecumenical HIV/AIDS Initiative in Africa
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement
ESWGGA	Ecumenical Staff Working Group on Global Advocacy
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICVA	International Council for Voluntary Associations
IFI	International Financial Institution
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MECC	Middle East Council of Churches
NCC	National Council of Churches
NGO	Non-government organisation
OCHA	Office for Co-ordination of Humanitarian Assistance
PEAD	Proposed Ecumenical Alliance for Development
REO	Regional Ecumenical Organisations
SCHR	Steering Committee on Humanitarian Response
SEF	Sudan Ecumenical Forum
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	UN Population Fund
UNHCR	UN High Commission for Refugees
UNHRC	UN Human Rights Commission (<i>now Council</i>)
US	United States
UK	United Kingdom
WAC	World AIDS Campaign
WCC	World Council of Churches
WHO	World Health Organisation
WSCF	World Student Christian Federation

