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No. 126 April 2004

A link between the Executive Council  
and the World Christian Life Community

## **First ExCo Meeting – February 2004**

Dear Friends,

A lot happens during an 8 day World ExCo meeting—perhaps especially the first one with a new ExCo. Please receive this brief report as an attempt to share the important movements and decisions of our time together. We invite you to connect with any ExCo member or the World Secretariat to further explore the issues discussed during our annual meeting.

### **1. The ExCo Community**

The annual World CLC ExCo meeting was held in Rome from February 20 – 28, 2004 with the entire ExCo present. In addition to those elected in Nairobi and the ex-officio members, our ExCo Community included two co-opted members and our new Vice Ecclesial Assistant.

After Nairobi, the ExCo discussed whether to add co-opted members from Asia and South America. We decided that the work of linking effectively to the National Communities would be better facilitated with a person from each of these regions. Sandra Chan from Hong Kong and Mari Carmen Mora de Peña were invited and accepted co-opted membership.

We were also fortunate to have Fernando Salas, S.J. and Alberto Brito, S.J. present for our meeting. Fernando is just completing his service to World CLC and returns to Chile in late April. World CLC has been blessed greatly by his work with us and we sent Fernando back to his work in Chile with deep gratitude. We were very pleased that Alberto Brito, who was already identified as the next Vice Ecclesiastical assistant, joined us for the entire meeting. On March 25<sup>th</sup>, the World CLC day, he was officially appointed to his new mission with us. Fr. Kolvenbach met with us for a Friday morning session.

The entire ExCo included: President: Daniela Frank; Vice-President: Jose Reyes; Secretary: Leah Michaud; Consultants: Lois Campbell, Rita El Ramy, Levi Matseshe, Chris Micallef, Mari Carmen Mora de Peña, Sandra Chan; Ex-officio members: Alberto Brito S.J. (incoming Vice-EA), Fernando Salas S.J. (retiring vice-EA), Guy Maginzi (Executive Secretary) and Fr. Peter Hans Kolvenbach S.J. (world EA)

### **2. The important tasks of the meeting were to**

- Begin to build our ExCo community;
- Set the dynamics of our work together;
- Get oriented to and further define this ExCo's role and responsibilities;
- Approve the finance report for 2003 and set the guidelines for the new budget;
- Decide how to best link with and improve communication with each National Community;
- Set a general program for our work of the next five years.

### **3. Community Building and clarifying roles**

We spent the first part of our meeting in community building. This began with a time of sharing with each other on our life and CLC history. We then entered a process designed to better understand each person's work styles on a team, and to explore the particular gifts and desires we bring to the ExCo. We came to discover more deeply the giftedness and long commitment to CLC and to mission that resides in the ExCo members. We also began to see the rich potential in our various cultural differences and in the diversity of the life experience from our own country realities.

Out of this clarity, we put in place some working agreements to facilitate shared responsibility for our work and our meetings. We also clarified our decision-making processes especially when decisions must be made between annual meetings. We began the process of clearly defining our various roles as ExCo members, Executive Secretary, and Vice-Ecclesial Assistant. We began to feel like a team.

### **4. Planning Process**

Planning for the ExCo's work during the next 5 years began by reviewing and reflecting on the reports received from National Communities; hearing Regional reports; and reviewing the evaluations from the Nairobi Assembly. Finally we reviewed and reflected together on the Recommendations of Nairobi. Each of these inputs helped fill out a picture—especially for new ExCo members—of our current World CLC Reality and the work of the World ExCo. Some themes emerged:

- The need for formation in our Charism and formation that is oriented to outreaching community.
- The need for re-focused CLC meetings that facilitate discerning, sending supporting and evaluating.
- The need to develop additional leaders, locally, in National Communities, in Regions and for World CLC with the spiritual grounding and the skills to facilitate our movement to outreaching community.
- The need to focus on Social Responsibility.
- The need to support and define a more effective CLC - Jesuit Collaboration
- A desire for more regular contact with National Communities and a focus on both communication and developing relationship.
- The importance of the Lay Vocation and the lived lay expression of Ignatian Spirituality. This was stressed especially by Fr. Kolvenbach and by Archbishop Stanislaw Rylko (President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity) in our meetings with them.

This reflection also helped us think more deeply about how to link with National Communities. We made a commitment to look for opportunities within our financial constraints for ExCo members to be present in each of our National Communities in the next five years.

A summary of the National Community Reports is included in this Project.

### **5. Planning for 2004:**

From the above themes and specifically the Nairobi Recommendations, we identified seven initiatives:

- Supporting formation in National Communities and Regions to become an outreaching, lay apostolic body.

- Supporting and developing leadership throughout WCLC to facilitate growth as a lay apostolic body;
- Facilitating the development of apostolic initiatives and social responsibility;
- Developing stronger CLC and SJ Collaboration at all levels;
- Defining, encouraging and developing financial responsibility within the world Community.
- Strengthening our Identity within our CLC community to foster commitment and growth in the Charism;
- Developing and strengthening communication vehicles within World CLC and externally.

Five working groups were initiated to carry forward work on each of these initiatives. Working Groups will be expanded as needed as the work progresses. One member took responsibility for leadership and coordination of the group's work.

- Formation: Mari Carmen Mora de Peña (coordinator), Sandra Chan, and Guy Maginzi
- Leadership: Lois Campbell (coordinator), Rita El Ramy, and Levi Matseshe
- Apostolic Initiatives: Chris Micallef (coordinator), Daniela Frank, and Jose Reyes,
- SJ Collaboration and connection to Church Hierarchy: José Reyes (coordinator), Alberto Brito, S.J., and Chris Micallef
- Survey : Daniela (coordinator), Leah and Lois

The first step in this process is to get input on current activities and needs in each of these areas. Daniela Frank and Leah Michaud will coordinate a survey of National Communities. Each National Community will receive this survey around September.

## **6. Finances**

We got an overview about the current financial situation of the world community, approved the finance reports for 2003 and made a decision on the use of the surplus of the solidarity fund. Based on some principal guidelines, the ExCo gave a working group the mandate to prepare the budget for 2004 and to present a proposal on future budgets that differentiates between a standard operating budget and a program budget.

## **7. NGO**

We received NGO reports from the New York and Geneva groups and agreed to assess that work in our 2005 meeting.

## **8. World Social Forum**

Roswitha Cooper reported on the January 2004 World Social Forum in Mumbai, India which she and Leah and Gilles Michaud were missioned to by the World CLC. Ten 10 CLC members from Indian including nine from their ExCo joined the WCLC Representatives at the Forum. Look for the report on our website and in the next Progressio.

The next ExCo meeting will be held again in Rome from February 13<sup>th</sup> to February 20<sup>th</sup>. As always, we ask you to distribute this Project to your National Community. We also ask you to pray join with us in praying for each other and for World CLC that we may hear and follow the call to Apostolic Community.

**Lois Campbell**  
**Consultor**

**Daniela Frank**  
**President**

## **Summary Responses National Community 04**

In October 2003, we sent a letter to all National ExCos asking for some feedback on how they have started to implement the Recommendations of Nairobi and set priorities according to the specific situation of their communities. We are very grateful, that around 34 communities (a bit more than the half of our World Community) have reacted to our little questionnaire in one way or the other.

Obviously, in all these communities, there has started an intensive discussion how to integrate and adapt the challenges of our Nairobi Assembly in one's own reality. Several stressed how they have been confirmed e.g. in their conviction of the importance of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises as foundation for our CLC identity, the apostolic involvement lived in their communities or their efforts for collaborating with the Society of Jesus. Many feel the profound challenge of the call to become and act as an apostolic community which shares responsibility. Some also stressed how much they still have to struggle with the discrepancies between the reality of their community and this vision as formulated in the final recommendations. Nevertheless, in all, there is clear desire to move forward.

The actions to be taken in the different communities are manifold, but there are some priorities which seem to be quite common:

- \* re-focusing local group meetings according to the four steps discerning-sending-supporting-evaluating and formation of coordinators and group guides
- \* Formation of leaders and spiritual guides
- \* Preparation of national formation plans
- \* strengthening of CLC presence in the local Church through more intensive contacts with the Hierarchy and the national Councils for the Laity
- \* Intensification of communication with the Society of Jesus
- \* Promotion of financial co-responsibility at all levels

As stressed in the report about our first meeting, the responses have been very helpful for planning our work for the five years of our ExCo mandate. We will also pay special attention to the aspects in which communities expect special support from us. Once again many thanks for all the responses received! We invite all national communities who have not yet reacted to contact the World ExCo and share with us their concerns, in order to facilitate a closer relationship and mutual support.

### **Changes in the Secretariat in Rome**

After a lengthy visa application process both in Canada and Italy, Guy Maginzi finally could take over his position as Executive Secretary in the beginning of January. We all hope that his family will soon be able to join him in Rome. We are very grateful that Agnès Rausch of CLC Luxemburg who had originally offered herself to support Guy between October and December of 2003, agreed to act as an interim Executive Secretary. Many thanks, Agnès, for all your highly committed involvement which allowed us to bridge the time between Leah and Gilles Michaud's return to Canada and Guy's arriving and – together with our secretary Nguyen Thi Thu Van – for your paving the way for Guy's settling into his new responsibility!

On March 25<sup>th</sup>, World CLC Day, Fr. Hans-Peter Kolvenbach SJ, General Superior of the Society and World Ecclesiastical Assistant of CLC, has appointed Fr. Alberto Brito from Portugal as new Vice-Ecclesiastical Assistant. At the same time, Fr. Brito will act as Secretary of the Society of Jesus for CLC. Most welcome, Alberto!

Fr. Fernando Salas returned to Chile end of April. Since our World Assembly in Itaiaci 1998, he has collaborated with great enthusiasm and commitment in and for our world community. Many thanks, Fernando, for all your dedication and support! And may our Lord bless you in your new tasks back home!

Please find below our institutional email addresses, and we encourage you to use them.

<b>Names</b>	<b>Addresses</b>
Daniela Frank	<a href="mailto:president@cvx-clc.net">president@cvx-clc.net</a>
José Reyes	<a href="mailto:vice-president@cvx-clc.net">vice-president@cvx-clc.net</a>
Leah Michaud	<a href="mailto:leahm@cvx-clc.net">leahm@cvx-clc.net</a>
Lois Campbell	<a href="mailto:loisc@cvx-clc.net">loisc@cvx-clc.net</a>
Mari Carmen Mora de Pena	<a href="mailto:maricarmenm@cvx-clc.net">maricarmenm@cvx-clc.net</a>
Rita El Ramy	<a href="mailto:ritar@cvx-clc.net">ritar@cvx-clc.net</a>
Sandra Chan	<a href="mailto:sandrac@cvx-clc.net">sandrac@cvx-clc.net</a>
Levi Matseshe	<a href="mailto:levim@cvx-clc.net">levim@cvx-clc.net</a>
Christofer Micallef	<a href="mailto:chrism@cvx-clc.net">chrism@cvx-clc.net</a>
Alberto Brito sj	<a href="mailto:vicea@cvx-clc.net">vicea@cvx-clc.net</a>
Guy Maginzi	<a href="mailto:exsec@cvx-clc.net">exsec@cvx-clc.net</a>
All ExCo members	<a href="mailto:exco@cvx-clc.net">exco@cvx-clc.net</a>
Progressio	<a href="mailto:progressio@cvx-clc.net">progressio@cvx-clc.net</a>
United Nations Working Group in Geneva	<a href="mailto:genevawg@cvx-clc.net">genevawg@cvx-clc.net</a> (all members of the working group)
United Nations Working group in New York	<a href="mailto:new-yorkwg@cvx-clc.net">new-yorkwg@cvx-clc.net</a> (all members of the working group)

Daniela Frank  
World CLC President.