



World Conference of Associations of Theological Institutions
ΠΑΓΚΟΣΜΙΑ ΣΥΝΟΜΟΣΠΟΝΔΙΑ ΘΕΟΛΟΓΙΚΩΝ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΤΙΚΩΝ ΙΔΡΥΜΑΤΩΝ
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GLOBAL SOLIDARITY IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION AND THE FUTURE SHAPE OF WOCATI. STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Draft paper from ETE/WCC

The World Conference of Associations of Theological Institutions (WOCATI) was inaugurated during the Yogyakarta consultation of in 16-19th June 1989 in which – funded and enabled via PTE and EMW – more than 20 Associations of theological education were represented.

The aim of WOCATI was

- to create a global network of theological institutions and their associations;
- to facilitate exchange and mutual learning between its member organizations
- to contribute both to contextualization and to globalization in theological education.
- To facilitate dialogue on issues like accreditation and mutual recognition of academy institutions of theological education
- To lobby for solidarity for theological education worldwide
(cf. The first report in Ministerial Formation 47 (1989), p. 32ff)

The WOCATI Congress according to its constitution until now met every four years, heavily dependent in its funds from contributions from the Lilly and Pew US Foundations and the administrative assistance of ATS and recently also from EMW.

The WOCATI network until now has not established its own office and is not employing its own staff – thereby remaining dependent on the services of its officers and others (like ETE).

The functioning as well as the inner working mechanism of WOCATI need serious reconsideration to be viable for the future.

Three aspects might be considered in this line:

- 1) There is a legitimate and justified need for a meeting of representatives from all regions and associations of theological schools, but funds and infrastructure will not allow for a meeting each fourth year.

It is therefore proposed to consider a rhythm of meeting which would harmonize the WCC plannings for assemblies with full WOCATI conferences. A full assembly of WOCATI could be envisaged to take place prior or after each main assembly of WCC in order to allow for better synergies between the networks of theological education and the networks of ecumenical work in WCC.



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- 2) There is a need for a regular, smaller international working group on strategic issues and global solidarity in ecumenical theological education which could meet every year or every second year.

In the light of recent processes around Global Christian Forum initiated by WCC it is therefore proposed to constitute a smaller and enlarged International Working Group on Ecumenical Theological Education which would bring together

- five representatives from five major regions represented in WOCATI
- two or three major representatives from major Evangelical and Pentecostal networks in theological education
- two or three representatives from major funding agencies promoting global solidarity in theological education
- ETE office/WCC

- 3) There is a serious need and legitimate concern to strengthen the role and visibility of institutions of theological education in regional councils of churches (REOs) as it is mainly within the regions that important processes can achieve something together.

It is therefore proposed to envisage a system by which more close cooperation is secured between REOs and regional desks or consultancies of theological education in further developing the concept which is applied by ETE on regional consultancies for theological education in Latin America, Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa.

- 4) There is a serious need and legitimate concern for a leading journal on ecumenical formation in theological education. As the WCC sees itself unable to continue this on its own with the journal on Ministerial Formation one should explore different scenarios of cooperation by which WOCATI and ETE would cooperate more intensely also in order to prepare an annual journal on ecumenical formation in theological education.

It is proposed therefore to nominate a joint editorial board to be asked to develop a common concept for the future of a common journal on ecumenical formation in theological education between WOCATI and ETE/WCC (might be also others).

- 5) There is a serious need to bring together the various websites of associations of theological schools and their member lists in an attempt to strengthen the visibility and interconnectivity of ecumenical theological education in the web.

It is proposed therefore to positively consider the offer of WCC to host the future website on WOCATI and develop a concept to strengthen the visibility of theological education institutions as a second layer in the new section on WCC member churches in the WCC website.

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