



MESSAGE FROM THE EAA BOARD CHAIR

In a letter to members of the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance on 10 December 2013, EAA Executive Director Peter Prove and I shared news of the challenging financial situation faced by the EAA, but also the very deep commitment of the Board and staff to continue EAA's important work and to support this unique network of Christian advocates for justice and human dignity. Since then, we have been engaged in intensive efforts to resolve the 2013 financial situation and to explore future options for sustaining the work of the HIV & AIDS and Food campaigns, the collaboration among EAA members, and our inspiring and effective model of common, focused, ecumenical advocacy and action.

And so I am pleased to be able to give you this update on where we are now, and to pass on some encouraging news.

CLOSING THE 2013 FINANCIAL YEAR

After over two months of almost weekly conference calls, the Board of Directors met in Geneva on 20-21 February 2014 to review the preliminary findings of the 2013 audit and to discuss concrete steps to secure the future work of the EAA.

We are immensely pleased and grateful that due to tremendous support from EAA members and partners, the EAA has ended 2013 with its solvency confirmed (in the form of a positive net worth balance at 2013 year-end). We wish to convey our special thanks for the financial and practical assistance in addressing the EAA's 2013 financial situation provided by the World Council of Churches and our members including Church of Sweden, Norwegian Church Aid/Church of Norway, ICCO Cooperation, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, The Primates World Relief and Development Fund (Canada),

Cordaid, World Vision International, Presbyterian Church in Canada/Presbyterian World Service & Development, United Church of Christ (USA), Prisma, and United Church of Canada, as well as by UNAIDS. We also wish to express our deep appreciation to members who have confirmed and even increased their support for the continuation of EAA's work in 2014.

The support that has been expressed by these and so many other members and partners has reaffirmed the importance of the diverse network and joint advocacy approach that the EAA has developed over the past 13 years.

SEEKING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

As noted in the December letter, and following the mandate given to the EAA in its 2013 General Assembly in August, the Board of Directors began discussions with the World Council of Churches and ACT Alliance regarding possible forms of integration, synergy and/or collaboration, that would enable this alliance to continue its important collaborative advocacy on HIV & AIDS, and on food security and sustainable agriculture.

Long-term member organizations will recall that before 2009, the EAA was housed administratively within the World Council of Churches (WCC). The WCC now has different structures for programmatic cooperation with a wider variety of church and ecumenical partners. Both EAA and WCC representatives see many possible synergies and opportunities for re-integrating the EAA into the legal and organizational structure of the WCC, particularly following the WCC's Busan Assembly and its articulation of an ecumenical 'pilgrimage of justice and peace'.

Against the background of these discussions, Peter Prove accepted appointment as the WCC's Director of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs. Peter began in this role as of 1 February 2014, and – by arrangement with the WCC and thanks to their support – is dividing his time evenly between the WCC and the EAA until the end of April. This provides a valuable opportunity to 'live into' the possibility of future structural integration of the EAA with the WCC. While the possibility of such integration continues to be explored, and pending implementation of any such arrangement that might ultimately be agreed, the EAA Board of Directors anticipates contracting an interim executive director for the period beyond April.

In the meantime, discussions on structural engagement between WCC and EAA will be intensifying through the leadership of the EAA's Executive Committee, comprising myself as Board Chair, Vice-Chair Dr Henk Jochemsen of Prisma/ICCO Cooperation, and Treasurer Msgr Robert Vitillo of Caritas Internationalis.

The EAA Board is very positive about the new opportunities this engagement might offer, and is highly appreciative of the strong practical and programmatic support that has been offered by the WCC General Secretary, the Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, and his staff.

We have in the meantime also explored with the ACT Alliance Executive Committee whether there might be an opportunity for the EAA's food campaign, with its broad ecumenical network, to be continued under ACT Alliance's auspices. As ACT Alliance's current membership criteria would exclude the full participation of a significant number of EAA's members, and since the financial commitments for the food campaign are not yet fully secured, the ACT Alliance Executive Committee declined to engage in further exploration of this matter. Nevertheless, we continue to appreciate the ongoing collaboration between EAA and ACT concerning our related focus issues of climate change and food/agriculture, and in contributing to discussions on the post-2015 development agenda.

SPECIAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND DISCUSSION OF EAA FUTURE DIRECTION

The Board of Directors has scheduled a Special General Assembly to be held electronically between 12-16 May 2014, anticipating the decisions that will need to be made as the Board fulfills its 2013 Assembly mandate to:

explore further collaboration and coordination with the World Council of Churches and the possibility of integration of the EAA in the structure and work of the WCC in such a way as to preserve the EAA's identity, unique constituency and working methods after developing a fuller picture of the EAA's financial requirements over the next program cycle, and reverting to the Assembly for appropriate action.

It is anticipated that before and during the week of the Assembly, online discussions will be scheduled to offer member organizations an opportunity to dialogue with board members on the key issues.

Formal notice of the Assembly will be issued by the end of March.

CAMPAIGN UPDATES

While these structural discussions are ongoing, our work in addressing HIV and AIDS and food security and sustainable agriculture continues unabated. The Board has appointed two new strategy groups that will be working over the next few months in developing goals, objectives and strategies for joint action. The members of the new Strategy Groups are listed at <http://www.e-alliance.ch/en/s/about-us/food-strategy-group/> and <http://www.e-alliance.ch/en/s/about-us/hiv-and-aids-strategy-group/>. See the articles later in this bulletin about the important work and events happening this year.

NEXT STEPS

We have felt blessed by the continuing strong messages of support and financial contributions that have affirmed the EAA's vital role as a valuable and unique instrument for broad and effective ecumenical collaboration in advocacy.

A revised 2014 programme plan and budget will soon be shared with all EAA members, and I would urge you to consider the tangible financial and practical support your organization could provide to uphold the ongoing work of this alliance and for our shared faith-inspired witness for justice and human dignity and rights. In addition, proposals for a new contribution scheme for supporting the work of the Alliance will be shared for consultation.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact either myself (rfee@presbyterian.ca) or Peter Prove (pprove@e-alliance.ch).

Although we are all facing challenging economic times, we are encouraged by the commitment, support and opportunities we see, and look forward to a positive future for our witness together.



Rev. Dr Richard Fee
Chair, EAA Board of Directors

LIVE THE PROMISE CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Dynamic activities are continuing into the new campaign cycle.

FAITH EVENTS AT AIDS 2014 – MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

The program and logistics for “Stepping up in Faith: The Interfaith Pre-Conference to AIDS 2014” are being finalized by the Global Reference Group in coordination with the Local Host Committee. Registration will be open at the end of March. The Conference will take place at the Catholic Leadership Centre in Melbourne starting the afternoon of 18 July and running through 19 July. The main International AIDS Conference is being held 20-25 July.

An Interfaith Prayer Room and Chaplains program is also being organized, as well as an interfaith service planned by the Local Host Committee for Tuesday, 22 July at St. Paul’s Cathedral, to precede the candlelight vigil associated with the main conference.

Action alerts will be sent out when pre-conference registration is open. You can also visit www.iacfaith.org for further updates.

FRAMEWORK FOR DIALOGUE BETWEEN RELIGIOUS LEADERS AND PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV

A country-to-country sharing meeting was held 13-14 December in Nairobi, with representatives from the pilot projects and related networks in Malawi, Ethiopia, Uganda and Kenya. The meeting was an opportunity for sharing key successes and results so far, identifying challenges and possible “solutions”. Concrete outcomes of the country dialogue process include sermon guidelines affirmed at the highest level of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and a faith-based work policy on HIV non-discrimination in Malawi, which is being used in awareness courses. Most of all, many institutional links between networks and religious communities have been made, and the faith-based approach has shifted to better include people living with HIV and their identification of their needs.

The Framework for Dialogue continues with a country dialogue process proposed in Kenya in May 2014. A guide to the Framework for Dialogue process is in the design stage, and a monitoring and evaluation tool is in development.

For more information see
www.frameworkfordialogue.org

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This bulletin is located online:
[www.e-alliance.ch/en/s/resources/
bulletins](http://www.e-alliance.ch/en/s/resources/bulletins)

The Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance is a broad international network of churches and Christian organizations cooperating in advocacy on food and HIV and AIDS. The Alliance is based in Geneva, Switzerland.

The LINK is intended to connect members of the Alliance and to keep them up-to-date with events, activities and new developments at the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance. We hope you find this Members Bulletin useful and enjoyable, and would value your feedback via our e-mail address for members:

members@e-alliance.ch

For more information, see:
www.e-alliance.ch/

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HIV, HUMAN RIGHTS AND THEOLOGY COLLOQUIUM AND PUBLICATION

The Live the Promise campaign on HIV and AIDS is undergirded by a strong human rights-based approach that recognizes that denial of these rights, and discrimination that undermines our essential human dignity, increase vulnerability to HIV infection and are major drivers of the pandemic.

Churches and church-related organizations have had an historic and long-standing involvement in human rights and in raising the voices of the victims of violations. However, fully integrating human rights in churches' witness for justice has at some times and in some contexts proved difficult, including in relation to the HIV challenge and response. Different perspectives on human rights have themselves sometimes presented significant obstacles in ecumenical relations and cooperation.

Therefore the EAA has been promoting and facilitating dialogue between theologians and ethicists, human rights practitioners, and HIV experts to explore the intersections between theology and human rights in the context of HIV, to develop a mutual understanding of the common values underlying human rights, and to articulate practical consequences for further and deeper collaboration in the struggle against HIV. Consultations held under Chatham House Rules to permit a full and frank discussion were held in 2011 and 2013.

An editorial committee is now being formed to organize a colloquium and eventual publication to address the most critical issues in this timely debate.



STAFFING TRANSITIONS

After four years of masterful coordination that has taken the HIV campaign to new levels in addressing root causes of vulnerability and fostering dialogue and action across many sectors, HIV Campaign Coordinator Ruth Foley is moving on to new challenges with the Department for World Service, The Lutheran World Federation. We will greatly miss her leadership and expertise, but certainly wish her well in her new endeavors.

In the interim, three people will be sharing responsibilities for different aspects of the campaign:

Anne-Laure Jan (aljan@e-alliance.ch) will coordinate the Framework for Dialogue process (www.frameworkfordialogue.org) and support the general work of the EAA's new HIV Strategy Group.

Sara Speicher (sspeicher@e-alliance.ch) will take forward the EAA's activities on HIV, human rights and theology.

Becky Johnson (bjohnson@e-alliance.ch) is coordinating the EAA's work ahead of and during the upcoming International AIDS Conference in Melbourne, including the Interfaith Pre-Conference.

FOOD FOR LIFE CAMPAIGN UPDATE

The Food for Life campaign continues to build momentum as issues of nutrition, sustainable agriculture, and rights of small scale food producers become even more highly-charged political issues.

ENSURING ADEQUATE NUTRITION THROUGH A RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

Appropriate and effective ways to tackle the double burden of undernutrition and obesity are becoming hotly debated. While no one questions the vast need to address micro-nutrient deficiencies, we need global action to switch from product-based nutrition to programming aimed at improving diets based on local foods. The EAA is working with other partners in ensuring meaningful participation of faith-based representatives in both setting the agenda and participating at the Second International Conference on Nutrition, to be held in November 2014. The EAA is providing input into a draft "Nutrition report" highlighting the concerns of civil society organizations attempting to bridge the health and agriculture communities on these issues. The Food Strategy Group is now also considering comments to the Zero Draft of the Political Outcome Document, currently known as 'The Rome Accord'.

Additional information on the process can be found at <http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/forum/discussions/ICN2-political-outcome> or by contacting Christine Campeau, EAA's Food Campaign Coordinator, at ccampeau@e-alliance.ch.



Christine Campeau/EAA

REDUCING FOOD WASTE AND PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION

EAA's "Fast for Life" Lenten Challenge encouraged individuals to strive for zero food waste with 10 practical actions. While the 10 daily challenges has been issued, people are encouraged to continue to strive for zero food waste as individuals, families and communities throughout Lent and beyond.

The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) will hold a roundtable on Food Waste at its 41st meeting in October. The EAA encouraged members working on food waste issues to comment on the Zero Draft of the High Level Panel of Experts report, "Food losses and waste in the context of sustainable food systems" and to brainstorm potential actions for the CFS meeting.

EAA RESOURCES

Check out these highly regarded publications for more information on key issues in eradicating hunger.

Seeds for Life – Scaling up Agro-Biodiversity (EAA, The Gaia Foundation, The African Biodiversity Network) – *now available in French, Spanish and Portuguese through support from Bread for the World – Protestant Development Service (Germany).*

English: <http://tinyurl.com/seedsforlife>
French: <http://tinyurl.com/frenchseedsforlife>
Spanish: <http://tinyurl.com/spanishseedsforlife>
Portuguese: <http://tinyurl.com/portugueseseedsforlife>

Whose Alliance? The G8 and the Emergence of a Global Corporate Regime for Agriculture (EAA & CIDSE)

English: <http://tinyurl.com/englishwhosealliance>
French: <http://tinyurl.com/frenchwhosealliance>
Spanish: <http://tinyurl.com/spanishwhosealliance>

Nourishing the World Sustainably: Scaling up Agroecology (EAA)

English: <http://tinyurl.com/Scaling-Up-Agroecology>

CONFLICT, POPULATION DISPLACEMENT AND LAND TENURE

The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) supported EAA in delivering a side event on “Conflict, Population Displacement and Land Tenure” at the 64th Session of the UNHCR Executive Committee on 6 March. Case studies from World Vision International, Lutheran World Federation and UN-Habitat explored the potential for applying the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the context of national food security in a humanitarian setting.

RIGHT TO FOOD AND NUTRITION WATCH

This annual publication analyses trends in policies and practices that impact the right to adequate food and nutrition, and presents national case studies demonstrating the impact of policies and practices on local and national communities.

EAA serves on the Watch’s Editorial Board, which has been shaping the theme for the 2014 publication. EAA will be contributing two articles on seed related issues and on climate change and agriculture.

FOOD WEEK OF ACTION - SAVE THE DATE!

Churches Week of Action on Food, 12-19 October 2014, will focus on the importance of sustainable agricultural practices, empowering small-scale farmers and their communities and ensuring their access to natural resources, such as land, water and seeds. These three pillars are essential to enhancing food security and increasing farmer resilience in the face of climate change. Mark your calendar to focus on this theme in worship and action. ■

For more information or to find out how you can be more involved in the campaign, contact Christine Campeau, Food Campaign Coordinator, ccampeau@e-alliance.ch

