



AMC 2017 participants pose for posterity.

CCA @ 60: in God's mission with greater dedication

The CCA was the first Regional Ecumenical Organization founded in 1957 at the Asian Church Leaders' Conference on the theme, 'the Common Evangelistic Tasks of Churches in Asia', which was held in Parapat, Indonesia and was jointly sponsored by the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the International Missionary Council (IMC) in 1957. When CCA enters into a new phase of its ecumenical journey, two historic events are taking place in Yangon, Myanmar from 11 to 17 October 2017- the Asia Mission Conference (AMC) and the Diamond Jubilee commemoration.

Ever since the preparations for the AMC

By Dr Mathews George Chunakara
CCA General Secretary

was started and during the past several months, the name "Yangon" has become so prominent in church and ecumenical circles in Asia and beyond.

It was recorded in 1957 that "Prapat will become one of the place names in ecumenical history and that it will be remembered along with places like Edinburgh, Amsterdam, Evanston and the like of its for ecumenical significance". Prapat conference was recorded as the first meeting of Asian Church Leaders in Asian soil with the leadership by Asians them-

selves. When the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) celebrates the Diamond Jubilee of its founding today in conjunction with the Asia Mission Conference in Yangon, Myanmar, the coming together of 600 representatives from various churches and ecumenical organisations in Asia as well as from other parts of the world has great significance. I am sure, the venue of the AMC-2017 and the CCA Diamond Jubilee events, "Yangon" will also be known and recorded in future ecumenical history.

During the past six decades of ecumenical witness and mission, the CCA demon-

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Significance of Prapat

The Batak congregation of 200 members at Panahatan, on the shores Lake Toba in the precincts of Prapat, brought the first contribution to the East Asia Christian Conference [EACC] as it drew to close in 1957. It was a small bullock, they brought in a boat across the lake, for the members assembled at the conference.

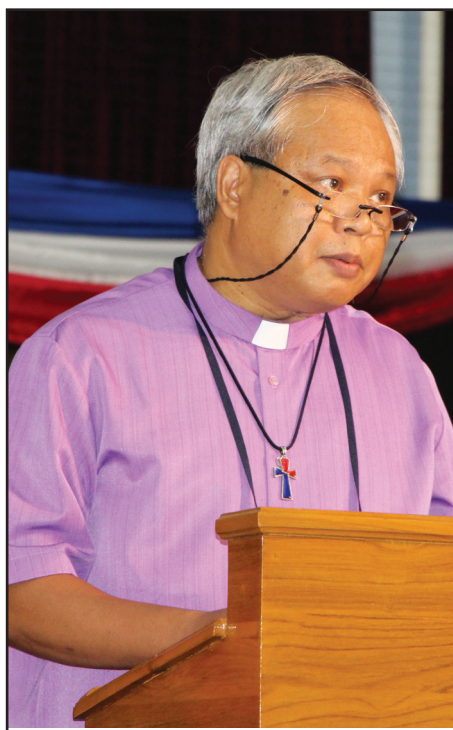
The beating of the drums and gongs along with the local dances distracted the young animal so much that Vice-Chairman Dr. D. G. Moses, responding on behalf of the delegates said, "The young calf, very much alive and kicking, portended well for the life of the organization established at the conference."

A gift coming from ordinary members of an ordinary congregation in an East Asian country symbolized the spirit of mutual sharing. Many at the conference hoped it would characterize EACC's future activities.

Officers representing two world bodies, the International Missionary Council General Secretary Dr. C. W. Ranson, and World Council of Churches General Secretary Dr. Visser't Hooft, Dr. R. Bilheimer his associate, and the Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees Director Dr. Leslie Cooke brought their contribution and ecumenical vision to the life and thought of the conference. The presence of consultants from America, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand further contributed to the ecumenical spirit of the conference.

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Bishop Reuel Norman Marigza.

'We can waltz together in God's time'

With CCA marking its 60th anniversary, we asked a member of the Executive Committee, Bishop Reuel Norman Marigza of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines to find out what he thinks is the continuing role of CCA revitalizing the ecumenical movement in the Asian region.

He cited a presentation he prepared for a CCA regional consultation in July 2017, where he directly addresses the challenges of Asian churches to "be the Church in Asia" and how to "witness together." His paper also reflected some of the points raised by Bishop Wesley Ariarajah in his Thematic Presentation: that churches need to change their colonial view of their mission theology and that they should draw on the experiences of

other religious traditions in Asia.

He also touched on the realities being faced by Asian people and therefore the churches in Asia as well, from migration to human trafficking, growing religious intolerance and extremism, extreme poverty in the midst of rapid development. All of these issues, he said, also presented challenges to the mission of the churches in Asia.

Drawing from the Swiss theologian Emil Brunner, he defined mission work as one that "does not arise from any arrogance in the Christian Church" but that "mission is its cause and its life. The Church exists by mission, just as a fire exists by burning."

He also reiterated an earlier assertion that the "the ecumenical movement is not an addition or appendix, but an in-

tegral, organic part of the mission and witness of the Church."

He then highlighted the high points of CCA's existence in the past six decades which demonstrated how the ecumenical movement was focused on "being a person for others" and showed how "alive" and "dynamic" it was. After this, he outlined how the movement can be revitalized in order for it to "live out as being the Church in Asia and become the channel for vital witnessing together."

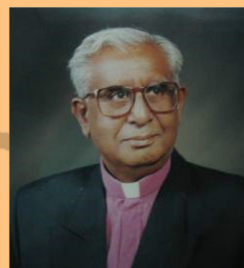
He suggested this approach to revitalization: to walk together (accompaniment), to work together (describe the ecumenical movement) and to wail together (serious critical reflection of past and present). Only after this, he said we can perhaps "waltz together," in God's time.



Christian Conference of Asia General Secretaries of CCA (1957 -



10. Dr. Mathews George Chunakara
2015 -
(India)



5. Bishop John Victor Samuel
1990 - 1995
(Pakistan)



4. Park Sang Jung
1985 - 1990
(South Korea)



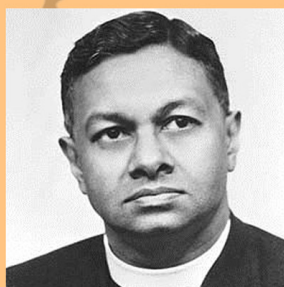
2. Professor U Kyaw Than
1968 - 1973
(Myanmar)



6. Dr. Feliciano Carino
1995 - 2000
(Philippines)



9. Rev. Dr. Henriette H. Lebang
2011 - 2015
(Indonesia)



1. Rev. D.T. Niles
1959 - 1968
(Sri Lanka)



3. Bishop Yap Kim Hao
1973 - 1985
(Singapore)



7. Dr. Ahn Jae Woong
2000 - 2005
(South Korea)



8. Dr. Prawate Khid-a
2005 - 2010
(Thailand)

Country	Name	Church or Council
	Rev. R. M. Luntungan	Protestant Church in Indonesia
	Rev. C. Ch. Kalanama	
	Dr. T. S. G. Mulia	N.C.C. Indonesia
Japan	Rev. K. Hirai	National Christian Council
	Rev. G. Okada	United Church of Christ in Japan
	Rev. Darley Downs	United Church of Christ in Japan
Korea	Rev. Ho Choon Yu	National Christian Council
	Rev. Ho Pil Soon Chun	Presbyterian Church of Korea
	Mr. Byind Hoon Park	
	Rev. Il Seung Kay	
	Rev. Chung Ryul Song	Korean Methodist Church
Malaya & Singapore	Rev. J. R. Fleming	Malayan Christian Council
	Rev. Canon Chiu Ban It	Anglican Church
Pakistan	The Rt. Rev. Chandu Ray	Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon
	Dr. A. Thakur Das	West Pakistan Christian Council
	Mr. N. S. Massey	United Church of North India and Pakistan
Philippines	Bishop Enrique C. Sobrepena	United Church of Christ in the Philippines
	Bishop P. A. Rodriguez	
	Rev. J. Yap	Philippines Federation of Christian Churches
	Bishop J. L. Valencia	Philippines Central Methodist Conference
Taiwan	Rev. W. T. Hwang	Presbyterian Church of Formosa
Thailand	Rev. Leck Taiyong	Church of Christ in Thailand
	Rev. H. Ryburn	National Christian Council

Country	Name	Church or Council
Burma	Thra Tun Shein	All Burma Baptist Convention
	Re. U Ba Hmyin	
	Dr. G. P. Charles	Burma Christian Council
	Rev. J. Maung Pe	Church of India, Burma, Pakistan & Ceylon
	Rev. U on Kin	Methodist Church in S. Asia
Ceylon	Rev. F. S. De Silva	The Methodist Church & National Christian Council
	Rev. D. T. Niles	The Methodist Church
India	The Rt. Rev. H. Sumitra	Church of South India
	The Rt. Rev. Thomas Mar Athanasius	Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar
	Rev. T. N. Kestey	Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar
	Rev. M. A. Thomas	Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar
	Dr. D. G. Moses	United Church of Northern India and Pakistan
	Bishop Manoj Singh	S. Asia Central Conference The Methodist Church (USA)
	Mr. K. Jacob	National Christian Council
Indonesia	Rev. F. Ukur	Church of Kalimantan
	Rev. J. J. Rotti	Church of Minahasa
	Rev. K. Sitompul	Batak Church, Sumatra
	Rev. T. Sihombing	Batak Church Sumatra
	Rev. P. T. Sarumpaet	
	Rev. B. Probowinoto	Javanese Christian Churches in Central Java
	Dr. A. M. Tambunan	Church of the Moluccas
	Rev. S. Marantika	

Parapat in action

Who have gathered in Parapat represent a wide group of East Asian Churches. We come from many Christian traditions and confessions found in 14 countries of the region. Brethren from churches in other areas of the world too are present here.

We have gathered here to seek new insight and strength that will enable us to discern the movement of God's Spirit in the events of our time and to fulfil in Asia and the world God's purpose in our day and generation. Our common Lord, who is Lord of the world the Church, has given us our common evangelistic task. We would commit ourselves in common obedience and fellowship to the dynamic pursuit of this divine mission. As a result of our meeting, we have come more fully to realize that the churches in Asia are eager and ready to share in the worldwide task of Christian mission. Particularly in the evangelistic task so insistently needed in our contemporary situation, and to engage in these tasks united, convinced that "we can do together what we cannot do separately."

This conviction of our need of one another and the decisive urgency of our participation in the mission has come from the joint efforts of the IMC and WCCC in strengthening the Christian movement in this part of the world through their secretariat for East Asia. Other factors have also contributed toward this new awareness: of responsibility and resource. They all, nevertheless, stem from the great ecumenical movement that has grown from strength to strength since 1910, expressing itself in its worldwide setting in the two ecumenical bodies, IMC/ WCC, of which we are, and seek ever to be a part.

The East Asia Secretariat was first envisaged at the IMC meeting in Tam-

Plan of future action adopted by the Eastern Asia Christian Conference at Parapat 18-26 March 18- 26, 1957.

baran, Madras, in 1938, and implemented by action of the first Eastern Asian Christian Conference held at Bangkok 1949 under the sponsorship of IMC/ WCC.

We are here once again at the call of the IMC/WCC and by the authority of our respective churches and councils to enlarge and strengthen the function and sharpen the relevancy of the instrument of the East Asian Churches, and to provide it a regional base for more effective, operation in the discharge of our ecumenical task. Therefore, to this end, we hereby resolve that:

Section I

1 This conference recommends to member churches of the WCC, and the NCC's which are constituent units of the IMC, situated in East Asia, that an Eastern Asia Christian Conference be constituted as an organ of the continuing co-operation among the churches and Christian Councils in East Asia, within the framework of the IMC/WCC.

Section II

This conference recommends that the structure and functions of the proposed EACC be as follows: The EACC will be composed in the first instance of those member churches of the WCC and those NCC's which are constituent units of the IMC which are situated in this area and which decide to come together in such a conference.

Section III

6. In as much as according to the formulation of the Bangkok WCC/IMC Consultation of March 1956 Plant 1 therein set out can be put into operation by the IMC/WCC on the recom-

mendation of this conference, it is resolved that:

(i) The functions of the E.A Secretariat of the WCC/IMC be enlarged to include:

a) Survey of the mission of the Church in East Asia to the end that the total available resources of personnel and funds may be directed to the fulfilment of this mission.
b) Consultation on issues of comity, missionary policy and other subjects of common concern among the churches in this area and the missionary societies related to them.

Elections

With due regard to the provisions made in the Plan of Future Action as adopted by the conference:

The following were elected as members of the Working Committee:

- 1 Bishop E.C. Sobrepena – Chairman.
- 2 Dr. D.G. Moses – Vice-chairman.
- 3 Rev. Leek Taiyong – Thailand.
- 4 Rev. K. Sitompul – Indonesia.
- 5 Bishop Chandu Ray – Pakistan.
- 6 Dr. Kyung Chik Han – Korea.
- 7 Dr. Takashi Muto – Japan.

The following were nominated for appointment by the WCC and IMC to serve as members of the EA Secretariat up to six months after the next conference:

- 1 Dr. D.T. Niles (Ceylon) Secretary.
- 2 U Kyaw Than (Burma) Associate Secretary.
- 3 Rev. A.A. Biash (New Zealand) Secretary for inter-Church aid.
- 4 Location of the Secretariat

Resolved that: For the present, the East Asia Secretariat of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council be located

PRAPAT ELECTIONS

With due regard to the provisions made in the Plan of Future Action as adopted by the conference.

I The Prapat assembly elected the following as Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the EACC:-

Bishop E.C. Sobrepena, The Philippines - Chairman

Dr. D.G. Moses, India - Vice Chairman

MEMBERS ELECTED TO THE INTERIM COMMITTEE

- 1 **Bishop E.C. Sobrepena - Chairman**
- 2 Dr. D.G. Moses – Vice Chairman
- 3 Rev. U Ba Hmyun – Burma
- 4 Dr. D.T. Niles – Ceylon
- 5 The Rt. Rev. Sumitra – India
- 6 Rev. S. Marantika – Indonesia
- 7 Dr. Takashi Muto – Japan
- 8 Dr. Kyung Chik Han – Korea
- 9 Rev. Canon Chiu Ban It – Malaya
- 10 The Rt. Rev. Chandu Ray – Pakistan
- 11 Bishop J.L. Valencia – Philippines
- 12 Rev. Leck Taiyong – Thailand
- 13 Rev. V. Coombes – Australia
- 14 Rev. Alan A. Brash - New Zealand
- 15 Rev. W.T. Hwang – Taiwan
- 16 Dr. W.A. Visser't Hooft - WCC
- 17 Dr. C.W. Ranson - IMC
- 18 Mar Athanasius - India

in Rangoon, with the expectation that it will be located at Singapore when the Secretariat is wholly constituted. This decision, if necessary, be revised by the Working Committee if important developments necessitate such an action.

Nuclear Weapons

Attention was called during the Conference to the deep and widespread concern among the Asian churches regarding the possible effects of the experimentation in nuclear weapons, and it was decided to refer the study of the implication of this measure and the associated problems to the ecumenical commission of the WCC, which deals with these issues of modern warfare, for deliberation and action on behalf of all the churches and Christian councils.

Develop lay leaders and boost media work: Woong

Ahn Jae Woong, former CCA General Secretary from 2000-2005 reflected on the growth and achievements of CCA. He specifically recalled that the creation of the CCA came at a time when Asia and other developing regions were pushing for their voices to be heard at the international level. He also said that the most important thing at that time was for Asian churches to come together and support one another as they serve as witnesses of the Gospel.

He looked back at what he thought were some of the main achievements of CCA such as reading the Bible through Asian eyes, implementing urban and rural missions where they “act to serve the marginalized and the voiceless,” conducting ecumenical consultations on Church and Society and empowering the youth through leadership formation.

When asked about how CCA should move forward, he shared the following ideas:

1. Peace - addressing the challenges to the region's peace and development and on how to build communities of peace in Asia
 2. Caring for the people – various epidemics, new diseases, aging and other health concerns that jeopardize the welfare of the people, so we have to care for the people
 3. Fostering leadership – developing church and lay leaders and empowering the youth to take on leadership roles
 4. Helping churches keep up with new technologies and its challenges
 5. Strengthen publication and media work
- How far has it gone in terms of furthering its mission and the goals it has set since it was established?



Ahn Jae Woong... CCA must spread councils and churches in Asia.

For me, as I reflect on the past 60 years, I think the ecumenical movement is very much changing from the beginning of the CCA up to now. The creation of the East Asia Christian Conference came two years after the historic Bandung assembly in 1955, which brought together Asia and Africa.

The churches in Asia also felt they needed to establish our Asian organization thus it was created during the Prapat meeting. I think the most important thing was they supported the witnessing together on the Gospel, which is the main thing for Asian churches. After that, the CCA organized many things mostly focused on leadership formation, revitalization of the ecumenical movement and how to support each other. This was reflected in how the organization and programs were organized.

During that time, the churches needed to consider how to create Asian Christian identities based on pluralities in Asia. It also needed to contend with how to witness to other religious traditions when it was in fact a minority religion.

What are the achievements of CCA, looking back at its life the past 60 years?

One big achievement during my time at CCA was various ways of reading the Bible through Asian eyes. As a result of this initiative, several local theologies which are more or less contextual theologies were grounded on this slogan. We also made use of Asian literature to help interpret the Bible the Asian way.

We also had initiatives on urban and rural mission, where we act to serve the marginalized and the voice-

less. It is through this empowerment of others that we were able to show true Christian witness. Youth and student leadership was a very important element from the beginning of the CCA and up until now. CCA also organized very important consultations around Church and Society issues together with the WCC.

What is the significance of this Asia Mission Conference?

Through mission conferences and other CCA activities, such as the General Assembly which happens every five years, we are able to look back and evaluate programs, and to look forward. In between there are very important ecumenical consultations such as those on Church and Society.

The past General Secretaries made their own breakthroughs such as inviting non-Asians in consultations. There was a belief that this is the time to include the perspectives of non-Asians for inclusiveness.

Where do you see CCA moving forward?

I believe that the two dimensions of CCA's work: the biblical-theological and the ecumenical-missiological must continue to be grounded and spread to member councils and churches in Asia.

In terms of new initiatives, CCA must consider making new ones on:

6. Peace - addressing the challenges to the region's peace and development and on how to build communities of peace in Asia
 7. Caring for the people – various epidemics, new diseases, aging and other health concerns that jeopardize the welfare of the people, so we have to care for the people
 8. Fostering leadership – developing church and lay leaders and empowering the youth to take on leadership roles
 9. Keeping up with new technologies and its challenges
 10. Strengthen publication and media work
- Ahn Jae Woong was General Secretary of the CCA from 2000 to 2005. He is currently the Chair of the National Council of YMCAs of Korea.

Build capacity of Asian churches says Khid-arn

Former General Secretary Prawate Khid-arn shared his thoughts on how CCA has grown in its mission and purpose, since it was established in 1957 at the meeting in Prapat. He said that the churches who were gathered at that meeting realized that the Gospel needed to be proclaimed in the context of the Asian region. Based on this original mission, the CCA developed three principles for its work with member churches – that churches in Asia have to be self-governing, self-propagating and self-supporting.

Moving forward, he said that CCA must work harder on building ownership of the mission by the member councils and churches. He cited, “As you build capacity among Asian churches, then their contribution will grow. It is also their way of showing how much they value the role of the regional church organization in furthering the mission of the church in Asia.”

With regards to the historic Asia Mission Conference, he said that the main challenge of the conference to the churches is how the churches will become a light among the people and



what truth or message will be shared to the people. He shared that he had high hopes that after this conference, the participants will have the “self-confidence to bring light and to bring the truth to their countries and churches.”

Interview with Former General Secretary Prawate Khid-arn

Interview with Prawate Khid-arn, former General Secretary of CCA, Church of Christ in Thailand (2005-2010)

What is your feeling as CCA marks 60 years of its existence?

It is an epoch making moment for CCA as it celebrates the diamond jubilee. We praise God for that. The Asia Mission Conference-2017 is not only a physical gathering but also a benchmark of spiritual assembly. This serves as an impetus in Asia for all member churches to give life and truth to proclaim the Gospel as a beacon of hope, joy and justice to all people, especially to the least, lost and last. It is those marginalized communities who are exploited, neglected, forgotten and pushed to the periphery of society--be they women and children, farmers, migrant workers, refugees, religious, ethnic and linguistic minorities and others who are excluded in every sense of the word. They need to be the focal of our service in every church and society. They deserve our attention and service to witness the gift of Gospel in truth and life, while making efforts to transform and change the social struc-

tures for better world for which CCA would be a ripple effect and a drop in an ocean to make a difference.

Why do you say that the poor should be the focal point of CCA's work and attention?

It is the poor who are crying and earning for peace and have better quality of life. They are crying for social justice and better participation for communion of communities in this world.

What do you look at the 60 years of journey of CCA?

It is a proud moment to preach the Gospel for all and its member churches in this Asian continent. It is a beginning for the future. We have succeeded in many ways for last six decades, but more to be done in future. There is no room for complacency, but a clarion call to engage ourselves to address serious issues and concerns of people such as extreme poverty in the region, growing intolerance, human rights violations, freedom to preach and practice religion, promotion of sustainable development and many pertinent ways to build a healthy society. We pledge to continue with hope in order to craft and frame a

Women and men always partners in mission

I feel nostalgic today. I fondly recall that I got chance to serve CCA's 9th General Secretary from 2010 to 2015 and was the first woman general secretary. During the past six decades of existence, CCA has always valued, promoted and continually patronized the role, importance and contributions of women in society and church.

There is always a distinct feature the manner women work and contribute in many ways for society and church. They provide a genuine approach to life and mission with grace and elegance. Such reality we need to recognize and accept with greater optimism. Most importantly, there is a growing awareness in CCA and its member churches to tap the all types of gifts, leadership and contribution of women in more productive and meaningful manner as a complement component along with those of men for common good. Women cannot be limited or subjected to only domestic sphere but also in public sphere.

CCA has ensured that there is no competition between women and men in real sense or making efforts in that direction at least. All need to believe and practice that women and men are always intrinsic partners in mission to become credible witnesses of God's love, justice and peace in truth and light. This is a crucial message that needs to be

CCA always valued the importance and contribution of women women recollects ninth General Secretary Dr Henriette T Hutabarat Lebang

permeated in every family, church and society. The idea of women being subservient to men has to be addressed in a healthy way that might exist in one or other forms in a given society or church in different parts of the world. All of us are vessels of God's love, respect and dignity in equal manner, and thus need to become catalysts and authentic and radical witness to His goodness for all.

As we mark CCA's diamond jubilee, all need to bear in mind that we are living in a world which is increasingly becoming complex and complicated due to



Dr Henriette T Hutabarat Lebang.

many forces that dominate and influence people's actions and attitudes both in positive or negative way. There is so much discord and distrust in society. Amidst these stark realities of human life, we are called to transform societal forces in every nook and corner of the world with God's truth and light as a prerogative of everyone without any compromise but with deep conviction.

At this juncture, we are fortunate that our celebration reminds us that we need to collaborate with people of other faiths and religions to witness and translate God's truth and light in socie-

ty. Any church cannot and must not live and work for its members only. There cannot be a principle or vision «Christians are for Christians or churches are for Christians.» Rather there has to be Christians and churches for others. We have to work for and with everyone irrespective of religions, creed or any other human or social categories. This is the universality of our churches' boundaries and narrative should be as dominant sphere--all need to be partners of faith for social justice, fraternity and solidarity especially in Asian context.

I wish to reiterate that youth are our future and hope. We need to mentor and guide them now and in future to carry out the legacy of mission to the ends of earth. The time we live is different than our youthful days. The world has been transformed and transcends with technology and advancement of science for which many adults are not able to keep pace with them, but youth do. So church has duty and obligation to accompany them for prophetic witness so that they become great partners with us here and now for common good.

Finally, may the blessings of CCA's diamond jubilee celebrations be upon us that we may commit ourselves to promote, strengthen and foster its ideals in our hearts to journey together with and for others, obviously for God's greater glory and salvation of humanity.

.....Continued from page 4

new narrative of liberation, freedom, solidarity of every society and nation. It is a life-time commitment to the Gospel and the poor.

What are the issues CCA needs to address?

In this AMC 2017, we have carefully identified and discussed at length. The need of the hour now is to take those insights to concretize in local churches at the grassroot level together as a common responsibility and mission. That remains as a biggest and greatest challenge and task. Every member church of CCA

needs to own it up. It is a collective and individual mission to proclaim the Gospel in the region.

What is the way forward for CCA now?

Let the celebration of CCA be another starting point of proclaiming the Gospel as flame of fire with commitment, compassion and competence.



Rev Richard Dawson.

'We come with a humble heart to serve and sing with the churches of CCA'

Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand Moderator Rev Richard Dawson shares his view on CCA

What a joy to be at the Asia Missions Conference of the CCA in this special 60th anniversary of its existence. I know that my colleagues from both New Zealand and Australia feel especially privileged to be invited to a part of this great gathering because we realise that we are Asian, in one sense at least, by invitation only!

And so, to be given a seat at the table we count as a real privilege and we hope that we may be a blessing to you, our brothers and sisters, here at this meeting and, certainly, within the local Asian contexts we are able to visit and work more closely with.

Of course, these are limited by our size and

resources but we offer what we can and we enjoy the vigour and strength of the member churches of the CCA very much. What, then, can we offer?

Certainly not the kind of overweening control or guidance of an age past when we represented a mother church caring for her children. Nor have we the financial resources to provide the material needs of the CCA. We do, however, have this... we have the painful experience of watching our own confident understanding of the Church's future in our context undermined completely by assumptions that should never have been made about 1. The Gospel and 2. The culture we served. And because

we've been through this we believe that we come now with a much more humble heart both to serve and to sing with the churches of the CCA.

We come to serve because we know we can no longer presume that our answers are your answers for our answers have been shown up as inadequate for this new age. We come to serve because we have found that prior to everything else the fellowship of Christ is necessary for the Church to move forward. And we come to serve because we have discovered that only through service do we truly learn and it is time we learned from you.

We come to sing for we are made one in worship.

We come to sing for Christ is made manifest in worship and we come to sing because to sing is to say and to say is to learn your language and to learn your language is to truly get to know you.

What a joy it is to be with you for you are our friends and we believe that this is the best way to grow together. Perhaps together we will solve the great missiological puzzle that is before us and particularly that we face in the West. That, at least is our hope. Apart, we have failed. Our great hope is that together we will find a Way – Christ's Way.

Will you walk with us – forgive our former ways – be our brothers and sisters in Christ. We know we cannot do it alone.



Dr I-to Loh leads the praise and worship session at AMC 2017 in Yangon, Myanmar.

Worshippers rock as choir excels under CCA composer I-to Loh

Led by CCA's veteran singer and music teacher Dr I-to Loh, the choir raised the bar of praise and worship during the five-day AMC conference and CCA diamond jubilee celebrations.

The choir sang songs in different languages accompanied by pianist, guitarists, and percussionist. Their melodious singing touched the participants' heart string as the Lord's worshiper says in Psalms 95, "Oh come, let us sing to the LORD;

let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

2 Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;

let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

3 For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

Most participants interviewed by CCA reporters said, "spiritually and emotionally uplifting songs set the tone for

presentations and discussions and journey so far of churches in Asia and the way forward".

The choir truly rocked for Jesus under the baton of Dr Loh who has composed over 300 songs for CCA. He first published 'Sound The Bambo', a trial version of 185 hymns in different languages in 1990. "My collaborators and I

The choir rocked for Jesus under Dr Loh's baton. He has composed over 300 songs for CCA. He first published 'Sound The Bambo', a trial version of 185 hymns in different languages in 1990.

completed the final edition of the hymnal in year 2000 that comprises 315 hymns in 45 languages," told CCA News.

Dr Loh taught Ethno Musicology [Asian Church Music] in Manila in 1982. His significant contribution to praise and worship in Asian context is composing song using five full tones without the two semi-tones in a scale.

"I wanted to compose something different from the traditional western music scale. So I did not use any half tones in a Cantata I composed called 'The Prince of Peace'. There were no half tone progressions in the 20 minute Cantata," said Dr I-to-Loh who hails from Tamsui in northern part of Taiwan.

"However some people did not like this style that used no dominant note, no tonic and no sub-dominant. Most people are used to western style of composing music."

On the trend of multi language trend of praise and worship in CCA, Dr Loh said, "Along with four other liturgists and musicians we turned around the concept introduced by American George Todd. He suggested that in World Council of Churches could be sung in native languages. It was

tried at an earlier WCC Mission Conference in 1980 held in San Antonio, he said.

Regarding the popularity to five tone scale, Dr Loh said, "The unhemitonic penta scale Do, Re, Me, Fa, So is popular in Asia, in the West, southern United States, Scotland, Indonesia, Japan and Taiwan. One of the classic hymns based on this five tone progression is Amazing grace how sweet the sound," he said in conclusion and added that it is always his joy and honour to lead worship services, specially at AMC and CCA events.





Stewards serve the Lord by assisting AMC delegates

Christian youth played an important role in CCA's Asia Mission Conference in Yangon as stewards assisting over 600 international and local delegates of the conference. Forty-five young people from different Asian countries got their dose of Christian servanthood as they helped in the day to day activities of the conference.

The team of stewards did many tasks such as guiding participants to their groups for the Bible studies and group discussions, distributing materials during the plenary sessions, assisting in the worship services and assisting the conference media team.

In the midst of it all is Boonyarid Prom-suttipong, better known as Ling. He started working with CCA in 2000 as a youth intern in CCA Hong Kong while doubling as a youth delegate of the Church of Christ in Thailand in that year's General Assembly. Even if he

is no longer a member of CCA staff, he still continued his life of serving others as a Youth Steward program organizer.

He said that, "working with young people is challenging because they come with commitment but they lack experience in dealing with different cultures and backgrounds." He has learned in his years of working with youth stewards that young people not only need learn about working with other cultures but also need to be challenged frequently.

"The best thing that I learned in working with young people is to challenge them. Most of the young people now are not interested in social issues and are distracted by so many things." For the youth stewards of the AMC, he told them to take time to talk to the people and listen to them. This is also anchored on his belief that the youth will learn more from actual experience.



WCC General Secretary joins journey

WCC General Secretary, Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, joined the Asia Mission Conference to deliver a message of support and unity, and to celebrate the 60 year mark of CCA's founding.

"The CCA is - and has always been - a vital partner of WCC. Asian churches in many ways have helped us better understand mission", said Fykse Tveit.

Such experiences laid ground to one of the WCC's most important documents: "Christian Witness in a multi-religious world", which was largely inspired by the Asian mission context and it was finalised in a meeting held in Asia in 2012.

"Most churches in Asia have always operated in multi-religious societies, where they have represented a minority as Christians. That has given them a different perspective on mission, which we can learn from, Fykse Tveit pointed out.

He underlined the importance of unity, and its correlation to mission, which cannot be separated from one another, and the mutual accountability, where we all are accountable to God.

"We are accountable to each other as churches, to the poor and needy, and to believers in other religions, he explained.

The CCA gathering in Yangon and its theme; 'Journeying Together: Prophetic Witness to the Truth and Light in Asia', is also an excellent expression of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, according to Fykse Tveit.

Furthermore, the AMC is an important and well-timed pre-event to the World Mission Conference in Arusha, Tanzania, in March next year, where "Transforming discipleship" will be the theme.

"That is closely related to being a prophetic witness"



in what we are, say and do", Fykse Tveit added.

His attendance at the AMC and the CCA jubilee is a token of strong support and appreciation of the work of the CCA and the churches all over Asia.

The sheer size in terms of number of members of the Asian churches makes them influential globally, despite their minority status in most Asian countries.

"We are talking about some of the largest churches in the world", Fykse Tveit said.

A particular issue which must not be forgotten is the threat to peace and security in Asia where churches all over Asia must show solidarity with people live in conflict situations, according to Fykse Tveit.

Finally, he expresses his warmest thankfull-

ness of being in Yangon to take part in the Diamond Jubilee of CCA, which he sees as a reason to celebrate and to be proud of everything that has been accomplished in the past, but also to look forward to a continuous journey together, where many challenges remain.

"The CCA has successfully been a vital voice for Asian churches, which has an important role to play in today's world, where strong forces against justice and equality have gained ground.

"We must stand united and prevail in our Christian beliefs and convictions. It is our human duty as churches to protect and defend diversity and the rights to be different, the WCC General Secretary concludes.

Nababan recollects Prapat 1957

Eightyfour-year-old Soritua Nababan from Indonesia is the only living member of the CCA who had taken part in the 1957 Parapat Conference. He is a former pastor and Archbishop of the Batak Protestant Christian Church. In an interview, he gave his views on many relevant issues.

You were at the first conference of CCA in Indonesia. What theological shift do you see in the missionary and evangelising method then and now?

First of all, 60 years ago the understanding of the gospel itself was quite exclusive and focussed on winning souls. Over the years, the churches have become aware that the gospel means more than that. Gospel also means freedom, human rights, justice, and welfare of the people. It is not only spiritual but also physical.

Secondly, at that time because of the situation the churches were more concerned about themselves. Then they learnt that they cannot live alone and that they have to live with people of other faiths. Therefore, we have to find a way of living together and doing things together that benefits all the people. This is not a question for Christians or Muslims or Hindus alone. They also like to see that justice is being distributed equally.

There are a lot of things that changes in 60 years. Now the problem is whether all people in the congregation levels are aware of this. It is the responsibility of church leaders to attend ecumenical meetings and share the experience and



knowledge in ecumenical movements with the people of the congregation.

What should be CCA's priorities?

The churches in their respective countries must set their own priorities because the challenges are different in each country. One cannot say the priority for all churches in Asia is the same but there are similarities - for example, the economic injustice around the world, the impact of globalisation or neo-liberal capitalism affects all countries. There the churches may have common challenges. They have to decide what is priority.

What is your critical assessment of

CCA?

At the moment I have no criticism. My criticism is about the member churches. How serious are they in supporting CCA, particularly Australia and New Zealand. In 60 years they have not been able to to host an Assembly and talk about financial considerations when poorer countries like Sri Lanka and India have held Assemblies. What is wrong there? At some point, they should give explanation about how serious they are in belonging to the Asian fellowship of churches.

Is CCA's activities helping common people?

Oh yes. Many activities of the CCA deal with the common people, the neglected, the disabled etc. The reason why the CCA was expelled from Singapore was that the CCA was concerned about the poor and marginalised there. The Singapore government was of the opinion that CCA should not involve politically.

What is the way forward for CCA?

I think churches around Asia and CCA must give special attention to the life of young people. Regular youth leadership training courses and meetings must be held. Because if they start young, they can do better things than the present generation.

Is CCA reaching out to the youth?

I still believe in the youth but I must say the present millennial youth living in the digital age should control their time and age. They shouldn't be disillusioned. They must be firm in confessing Jesus Christ.

CCA @ 60: in God's mission with greater dedication

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strated its distinct role as a strong pillar of the Asian ecumenical movement with the active participation and support of its member churches. Today, CCA is spread around a vast geographical region starting from Iran in West Asia to Japan in East Asia; from Nepal in the North to New Zealand in the South.

On this occasion of thanksgiving and commemoration, CCA and its leadership gratefully acknowledge the accompaniment, solidarity and support of all member churches, councils, ecumenical organisations in Asia as well as all ecumenical organisations and churches around the world.

During the past four days of experiences clearly indicate that the AMC has become a platform for genuine discussions on and profound analysis of the theological and missiological issues that should be addressed seriously in today's Asian context.

These two historic events - AMC and Diamond Jubilee commemoration will be remembered as significant milestones in ecumenical and ecclesial history. It is our sincere prayer and hope that the outcome of Yangon events will help and guide us to participate meaningfully in God's mission with greater dedication when a new cycle of life begins @60.