

REPORT OF THE GENEVA CONSULTATION ON A PROPOSED  
ACTION/REFLECTION PROGRAMME ON TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS

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I. THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

Introduction

Historical reality can be understood as the result of interacting forces: God the creator and the redeemer of all things; creation itself with its several processes oriented toward fulfilment; and the forces which oppose God's will, misusing the freedom with which the Creator made reality. History thus becomes a force field in which, through dialogue and confrontation, through cooperation and struggle, peoples move toward human dignity, social justice and liberation. Churches and individual Christians have been and are related to all three forces.

Without any claim of an exhaustive, systematic approach to an understanding of economic, political and social activities, to which transnational corporations are related, we think that there are at least three theological lines which can help us to make an assessment of our involvement in economic life. The first concerns the role of economic activity in God's creation; the second is related to the way in which structures and powers can be theologically understood; and the third deals with the prophetic role which the people of God are called to play in history.

A. Creation and Economic Activity

Our belief in God as the Creator is also a belief that human beings are called to participate in the fulfilment of creation. In this sense the Bible enjoins fruitful economic activity. The original commandment to Adam and Eve was to settle on earth, to cultivate it and to take care of it (Gen. 1:26; 2:15). In this act, God sanctifies work and the economic order of which it is a central aspect. God gives human beings the responsibility for the stewardship of His resources and the development of His creation. These two factors - faithful and responsible stewardship, and loving development - lie at the centre of any discussion of economic matters. The Sabbath Commandment in the Decalogue also says "Six days shall you labour and do all your work". Economic activity is thus to be seen as an aspect of the will of God.

We also find in the New Testament many indications which justify economic activity. For example, Our Lord Jesus Christ made use of illustrations about it in some of his parables. Saint Paul emphatically wrote that he who does not work has no right to eat (2 Thess. 3:10), giving himself as the example of work with his hands, in order that he may not be a burden on

society but a contributor to it. In the Epistle to the Ephesians, the thief who unjustly appropriates the fruit of other people's labour belongs to the disintegrating Old Adam; whereas the New Man is to do honest work with his hands, so that he may be able to contribute to those in need. The motive for work here is certainly not profit for oneself, but the possibility of contributing to the common good, and through it to the fulfilment of creation.

Because work is so important for the furthering of development and the achievement of God's purpose, it is not possible to accept that injustices be done to workers. The Gospels give testimony that Jesus stated that "the worker deserves his keep" (Mt. 10:10; Luke 10:7; I Tim. 5:18), and James also speaks of the due wages of the labourers (5:4). It could not be otherwise, especially if we have in mind - as was stated previously - that, according to God's will, human beings participate in the creating and recreating work of God. To promote injustice and unevenness through economic activity may well also be a way to participate in forces which move against God's will in creation. These kinds of facts appeal to the churches to exercise their prophetic vocation.

#### B. The Kingdom and Structures

The realization of the values of the Kingdom of God requires not only the good will of individuals, but also the good organization of the structures of society. The hungry will have no food, the thirsty no drink if the socio-economic system works unjustly. The policies of production, pricing and distribution are intimately linked to the liberation of which Jesus spoke: "I have come to set the captives free, to break the chains of oppression". Today the growth of worldwide interdependence has made the structural relations in society even more significant - for good or evil.

The churches therefore are called to a critical evaluation of the systemic relationship within any society. The wider and deeper these relationships are, the greater the demands of corporate responsibility and accountability. The churches have to participate constructively in the shaping of society's structures in order to satisfy the basic and urgent needs of all. Paul's exhortation to the Romans to be subject to higher powers was given with the assumption that rulers are to be "not a terror to good works, but to evil". When "powers" are detrimental to society, then "powers" have a God-given duty to transform their behaviour. The Gospel imperative of love of neighbour cannot today be fulfilled if we neglect the operations of the social structures. The worsening condition of nearly 2,000,000,000 poor in the world and the widening gap between the rich and the poor make a serious evaluation of our socio-economic structures an essential and urgent responsibility of all people of good will.

One of the central factors in any such evaluation is how wealth is used. While the New Testament enjoins just wages for the labourer (I Tim. 5:18; James 5:4), it also makes the express demand that we abjure the love of money (Heb. 13:5) since that love is the root of all evil (I Tim. 6:10). In

Luke the Pharisees are castigated for being "moneylovers" (16:14). Where the desire for wealth or the possession of it stands in the way of someone's following Jesus, he is asked to renounce it (the rich, young ruler), and where wealth is unjustly acquired, Jesus encourages the return of it to those from whom it was extracted (Zacchaeus). Clearly, the New Testament has a partiality for the poor, insisting that the Kingdom is theirs (Luke 6:20) and condemning the rich in no uncertain terms (Luke 6:24-25; James 5:1-6). Hence there is theological and Biblical justification for attacking economic structures which appear to inhibit the growth of social and economic justice.

### C. Struggle and Hope - the Prophetic Vocation

Throughout history, the identity of God with the struggle for human liberty from oppressive power has been a central motif in the perception of the church (often forgotten or buried under the self-interest of the institution, to be sure). The exodus of the people of Israel from Pharaoh's harsh rule established the identity of God with the oppressed and impoverished people, and set a covenant relation for the people of Israel as a sign among the nations - a sign of God's unrelenting demand for right and just relations among people and of hope for the final reconciliation of the peoples and structures of this earth into His Kingdom. The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ inform us most completely of the suffering and hope found in God's full identification with humanity.

The prophetic role of Israel among the nations and of the prophets in Israel's life was always carried out by means of acts which revealed God's demands and called for response leading toward freedom. The covenant and its related codes were intended for justice. This was perhaps best illustrated in the economic sphere by the concept of the Jubilee Year in which land was returned to its owners, slaves were set free and debts were forgiven. In the Jubilee, the Hebrews sought to deal with injustices in society in the light of Yahweh's call to be with and for the poor and oppressed. While never fully practised, the idea of the Jubilee persisted for centuries. Indeed, in his first sermon recorded in Luke 4, Jesus speaks of "proclaiming the acceptable year of the Lord", a clear reference to the Jubilee tradition. This is relevant to our present effort because the Jubilee was a finite, but significant human action designed to counteract injustices.

The prophetic task to discern structures that oppress and testify to God's demand for justice remains today, in the context of new Pharaohs and new Babylons. Where there is struggle for human liberation, God is present, transforming the structures that oppress into structures that support life. In attempting the prophetic role, the church must always be sensitive to the possibility that, like David, it is condemning injustice without acknowledging that it is itself ensnared in the evil it condemns. It must also look to those streams of theological insight which can guide and direct its action. Today that insight comes largely from the Third World, the theology of liberation from Latin America, Black theology from Africa and Afro-America, theology in action in Asia and the Caribbean. The crucial contribution of these theologies is they draw deeply on social, economic and political perspectives in their societies, and are allied to practical programmes for change.

#### D. Conclusion

Such a biblical and theological perspective has informed ecumenical discussions on this subject for the past 75 years. As early as 1925 in the report of the Stockholm Conference on Christian Life and Work, we read: "In the name of the Gospel we have affirmed that industry should not be based solely on the desire for individual profit, but that it should be intended for the service of the community. Property should be regarded as a stewardship for which an account must be given to God". Nor is an analysis of the responsibility of the politicians and economic managers of society a new effort. In a vision of the Responsible Society, the First Assembly of the WCC in 1948 declared: "Those who hold political authority or economic power are responsible for its exercise to God and the people whose welfare is affected by it". These insights are also found in Populorum Progressio: "A system has been constructed which considers profit as the very motive for economic progress, competition as the supreme law of economics, and private ownership of the means of production as an absolute right that has no limits and carries no corresponding social obligations. ... One cannot condemn such abuses too strongly by solemnly recalling once again that the economy is at the service of people".

In the service of God, the churches are also called to be in the service of people. We can begin this task as it relates to the power of the transnational corporation by:

- 1) repentance - recognizing that we in the churches stand in judgement for our past and present captivity to unjust economic structures and systems and are first called to repent and then to "bear fruits befitting repentance";
- 2) reflection - developing a serious theological perspective on the use and abuse of power in our time;
- 3) demythologizing - extracting the transnationals from their realm of power and presenting them to people as institutions whose precepts have been moulded by humans and can therefore be brought under human control;
- 4) taking action - joining together with those in every society who are responding to the need for national and international economic and social justice, particularly with respect to the activity of TNCs.

## II. HISTORICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONS FOR ACTION

### Introduction

The attempt within a Christian framework to evaluate and offer an adequate response to the reality of TNCs must be a radically new approach to the political and economic structures of society and demands liberation from the present unjust international economic system. There is a growing realization that current patterns of so-called 'Development' are totally inadequate. TNCs are major pillars of a Western development that is inappropriate for much of today's world, for it leads to a massive concentration of wealth and power that aggravate the conditions of the poor and oppressed in both so-called 'developed' and 'developing' countries. Inequality, social injustice, massive unemployment, uncontrolled urbanization, repressive

governments and a growing gap between rich and poor are disturbing facts of our own time to which TNCs contribute. Nevertheless, TNCs exist, they have enormous influence, some say control, over the global economy and it is extremely difficult to affect them. Hence an ecumenical programme of action and reflection on the nature and implications of this reality is both timely and necessary.

We need therefore (A) to understand how the present situation has come into being, (B) to note the claims made by TNCs and the questions raised by their operations, (C) to identify current trends and goals for action, based on a re-interpretation of the New International Economic Order (NIEO), and (D) to develop a practical programme.

#### A. Historical Development

TNCs are by no means new on the world scene. They have their origin in the expansion of trade which began from Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries. Nationally-based companies from Britain, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands and France, such as the East India Company, Hudsons Bay Company and the Merchant Adventurers, spearheaded the economic penetration of Africa, Asia, the Americas and the Pacific. Their amassing of surplus, from plunder, slaving and unequal exchange, enhanced European wealth and power, and undermined the self-reliance of peripheral economies, paving the way for subsequent colonial expansion.

This section cannot be an exhaustive description of the development of TNCs, but it can present certain facts. The 17th, 18th and 19th centuries saw the primitive accumulation of capital which enabled industrialization first in Europe, then in North America and Japan. The nationally-based companies became the arm of the colonial governments in the territory they controlled. Such companies secured agricultural and mineral resources for the benefit of the colonial power. They controlled investment, shipping and primitive technology, and they even imported slave and indentured labour.

These proto-TNCs developed the main features of contemporary TNCs - the concentration of economic and financial power, the internationalization of production and trade and the international division of labour. After the Second World War there was explosive growth in the developed economies, which led to considerable surplus capital seeking profitable markets in which to invest. This was the period during which nationally-based companies rapidly developed into international entities. Pressures contributing to this included the growing need for raw materials in developing economies, the internal dynamics of companies needing growth, the increasing competition for foreign investment and the parallel development of an international financial system. In a relatively short period of time, a quantitative and even qualitative change occurred in the old nationally-based companies of the first half of the 20th century.

The increasing power of TNCs caused distinct problems. In the ex-colonies rapid change was made easy and smooth by the ready and selfish cooperation extended to the TNCs by the feudal-capitalist classes in many 'developing' countries. In a number of situations, TNCs have actively opposed genuine independence for former colonies. Whilst relinquishing direct control through colonial domination, to adapt to political pressures for national independence, they have consolidated their economic hold on the territories where they operate by their control of investment capital, credit and technology, and have thus established new relations of dependence frequently described as neo-colonialism. Particularly in the earlier part of this process, but also less overtly in the later part, the Western Church participated, often encouraged, and certainly gained financially in the colonialist period. Christian texts were used to provide a moral justification of unequal capitalist development and theology was heavily influenced by the secular imperatives of that system. Thus one of the first reactions by Western Christians to the present international economic order must be repentance.

In the industrialized countries, the international nature of their operations has put them in the position to carry out uncontrolled transfers of capital and production facilities and has given them the power decisively to affect national economies on the basis of TNC needs and priorities. In this way, unprecedented growth of TNCs has been accompanied, in the industrialized countries, by inflation and unemployment, which has crippled the economies of countries such as Britain and Italy, and may similarly affect others in the near future.

The growing production and trade and financial involvement of TNCs in partnership with the governments of centrally planned economies has given them access to new markets, cheap labour and secure production facilities in a stable political context. This development has strengthened the movement toward the interdependence of centrally-planned and market economies. There is a danger that this process may contribute further to the dominance of the TNCs in their role of organizers of world production and trade.

The unprecedented power of the TNCs in the present-day world and its uncontrolled use, frequently in conflict with the needs and priorities of the vast majority of the world's population, has led not only to widespread alarm and concern, but also to widespread resistance.

Such resistance has come from peoples living in colonial or neo-colonial situations, from workers employed and otherwise affected (rendered unemployed) by the TNCs, and from many sectors of public opinion. It has been expressed through liberation movements, trade unions, and national states wherever these are responsive to popular needs or where they represent the interests of elites conflicting with those of the TNCs.

In the face of growing opposition, many TNCs have adopted patterns of conduct calculated to disarm such opposition, present less vulnerable targets and overcome resistance. Such techniques include the extension of franchising arrangements and management contracts which do not involve outright ownership and are therefore not equally vulnerable to expropriation and blur the

lines of responsibility; increasing joint operations in partnership with national governments which place the TNC concerned under government protection; the cooptation of local elites which blunts the edge of nationalist sentiment; the acceptance of certain forms of consultation with labour which create an illusion of participation in decision-making whilst not affecting any basic policy options. Techniques of adaptation for survival should not, however, be confused with the acceptance of social responsibilities or a change of priorities.

The basic issue, in the eyes of a majority of the world's population remains: who shall have the power to make the decisions which affect their lives, that is, the decisions which determine their access to the basic necessities: food, shelter, clothing, education, freedom. Therefore the struggle for new patterns of development, for liberation, for control of decision-making at every level, for self-management, and for a New International Economic Order, has gathered strength.

#### B. Positive Aspects and Questions

In the light of this theological, ethical and historical analysis, the rise of transnational corporations presents us with a challenge. Despite the self-understanding of the TNCs in terms of

- a) their contribution to efficient and large-scale production of wealth,
- b) their role in the transfer of capital, technology and skills,
- c) their creation of some employment,
- d) their transcending of national barriers, and
- e) their contributions to education and culture,

the existence and operation of TNCs raise problems in the following ways:

- 1) They now represent a vast accumulation of wealth and power comparable to that of many nations, without adequate control by and responsibility to the people affected.
- 2) By virtue of their transnationality these corporations can often escape the regulatory authority of individual nation states.
- 3) They contribute to uneven development and to the creation of empty consumerism in both developing and developed countries.
- 4) Their products are sometimes lethal (armaments) and often ill-designed to meet the basic needs of the masses of people; they sometimes create false needs and then cater to them for the sake of their own quick profit.
- 5) The funds allocated for research and development are not always related to the basic needs of the people; the potentials of scientific knowledge and technology are thus deflected from serving the people, towards the interests of easy profit for a few.
- 6) They have a preference for capital-intensive technology which aggravates the unemployment problem, whenever it exists.
- 7) They hold the power and influence to manipulate wage and price structures, and the terms of trade of the countries where they operate. This often leads to further distortion and widening of inequalities.

- 8) They can exercise undue influence upon the governments of nations and can interfere with the freedom of a people to choose their own form of government.
- 9) They reinforce patterns of ownership and control cumulatively developed during the period of colonialism and imperialism.
- 10) Their vast wealth gives them power to influence the mass media, to control the spread of information, to create myths and to obscure the truth, and to remould the culture and its values in the interests of industry and business.
- 11) They can use their wealth to promote corruption and bribery.
- 12) They can be indiscriminate, irresponsible and wasteful in the use of scarce resources.

For all these reasons, we cannot be oblivious to the ever-increasing role which TNCs play in the world economy.

C. TNCs and an International Approach to a Just, Participatory and Sustainable Society (JPSS)

The present international economic order tends to aggravate economic injustice, frustrate self-reliance and oppose progress toward a Just, Participatory and Sustainable Society. The goals of such a society, and the radically new process of development and liberation necessary to achieve them, must have the following included in their general thrust:

- (a) social justice
- (b) desirable forms of economic growth, based firmly on collective self-reliance
- (c) sharing rather than competitive economics
- (d) the freedom to organize and just returns for labour
- (e) the mobilization of the people, less developed countries' greatest resource
- (f) the community ownership of resources.

The less developed countries have referred to several of these goals in their search for a genuinely New International Economic Order, but it must be made clear that what the developed countries mean by an NIEO is largely another device to keep the poor hoping, with only minor adjustments to prevent the more outrageous aspects of economic injustice. The JPSS is a preferable description of economic and social goals.

The central concern of the less developed countries is not so much to ensure that the whole system moves ahead faster as it is to ensure that those parts which have so far been left on the periphery are enabled also to move, but in their own way. This implies new 'rules of the game' in which national or international corporate enterprises can make a constructive contribution to the JPSS.

The representatives of TNCs argue that their companies are dynamic and effective new instruments of development: they do research and produce new technology; create employment for large numbers of people who receive comparatively high wages; contribute to culture and education. They also claim that the separation of ownership and management in TNCs today has shifted major control from



individuals and families, and has even shifted the foci of industrial power, decentralizing them to wherever the corporations operate.

However, analysis of the philosophy and activities of TNCs shows that they do concentrate enormous economic, technological and financial power within comparatively few industrial and financial institutions based in the dominant industrialized countries. They exploit the natural resources of many parts of the world in a process in which they, and the countries in which they are based, are the major beneficiaries. They have become increasingly oligopolistic, a process in which a handful of corporations can control a commodity or resource. They have utilized their flexibility to exploit cheap labour and have moved their operations to where they can achieve the greatest profit, regardless of local consequences. Their presence has often led to the underdevelopment and stagnation of Third World economies. They have in fact evolved a new 'transnational identity' which requires a response which is also transnational. The WCC is transnational in membership and therefore should seek to provide part of that response.

#### D. Basic Considerations for Action

The struggle for a new and just economic order demands an unyielding human spirit which must be itself at the service of the spirit of God who is at work in the world. God's presence both within and beyond this struggle will be the source of our hope. But hope without strategies to incarnate it is an illusion. In this common struggle, the strategy will vary from place to place and situation to situation, but all should be kept within our fellowship of concern. We should have some understanding of the role of those within TNCs called upon to make decisions which affect the lives of millions, but we must be more directly concerned for the victims of TNCs - those who are able to engage in limited dialogue, those who have no choice but confrontation, and those who suffer without a voice. We will experience power in its many manifestations, and we will need to reflect theologically on this, being especially sensitive to what new theologies may contribute to this work. In addition to the necessary theological task and the pastoral concern for those who suffer, we are also being called by God to a prophetic stance vis-à-vis these largest concentrations of economic power in human history. We must be about all these things, if we are to be the Church in the face of this challenge.

1. There is a need for further critique and analysis of the world economic system in which TNCs are a major factor, and from which churches in Western countries continue to benefit a great deal.
2. There should be a seeking for alternative models which incorporate some or all of the elements necessary to create a Just, Participatory and Sustainable Society, and an examination of the future of TNCs in the light of these.
3. It will be necessary to gather information on the actions of TNCs world-wide, the nature of their 'strengths' and 'weaknesses', and any abuses arising from their activities.

4. Crucial is the encouragement and support of movements and organizations, including the churches, which emphasize human dignity, self-reliance and social justice as the values which inform an adequate response to the TNC view of 'development'.
5. Also important is the clear social responsibility of the churches at national and international level to develop and implement a conscientization programme for all those whose lives are affected by TNCs - those who benefit, those who suffer, those who work in management and labour, and those who are attempting to combat their unacceptable effects.

With these considerations in mind, specific issues such as the following require special analysis and action.

- a) The extent to which the role and operations of TNCs have inhibited the emergence of a desirable process of development.
- b) The role of transnational capital supporting social, economic and political situations in which people's rights are violated, as e.g. the system of apartheid in South Africa.
- c) The nature of the transfer of technology to underdeveloped countries by TNCs and the effect which this has on self-reliant development.
- d) The reasons for which transnational investment is made, geared primarily to private accumulation and only peripherally concerned with problems such as unemployment, pollution, the production of basic human necessities, and cultural values.
- e) The way in which capital reinforces trends that establish uneven growth and development, to which TNCs contribute.
- f) The extent to which the churches have contributed to this whole process, and also benefitted from it.
- g) The form which an international action-reflection network of communication and action between those critically active on TNCs should take.

The biblical, theological and socio-economic justification for a programme concerning TNCs is therefore quite clear, so is the form needed for a practical response. This matter demands the concern and participation of the whole church, at local, national and international level.

### III. THE PROPOSED PROGRAMME

#### Introduction

It is increasingly recognized that solidarity and joint effort are essential to effective action relating to TNCs: for congregations and action groups, for national churches and national church councils, for regional church councils and for the WCC. Solidarity is a form of community, a means to valid interaction and sharing in support of a common goal. Only through outreach and interaction can Christian concern lead to action in solidarity with and in the service of the exploited, the excluded, the poor, the oppressed. Joint efforts are needed to facilitate communication based on common concern among Christian groups in different countries as a necessary step leading to shared perception and action. The role of the WCC's programme on

TNCs in the deepening of sharing and communication leading to community and common action among concerned groups is basically catalytic, initiatory and supportive. The development of that role must build upon the ongoing experience and interaction of concerned programme sub-units: Programme to Combat Racism (PCR), Urban Industrial Mission (UIM), Christian Medical Commission (CMC), Church and Society, sub-unit on Women, Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS), Communications, Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA) and the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development (CCPD). The networks of contact, exchange of information, common concern and joint action which these sub-units have built with Christian and other concerned groups are the instrument for the WCC's programmatic contributions.

An organized programme of reflection/action at the world level must build upon the plurality of approaches by groups in different regions. In the Third World, two strands - struggle against the abuses of particular TNCs and reflection on alternative social and economic structures - are of critical importance. In industrial capitalist economies the concerns have concentrated on domestic issues of exclusion of minorities and women, labour abuses, environmental destruction, consumerism and militarization of the economy, and on the debilitating impact of TNCs on Third World development. The differing but potentially complementary positions of concerned groups in each major area relative to the power of TNCs have led to a plurality of approaches which should be respected by the WCC programme. Each of these approaches, however, needs to be challenged in terms of its adequacy in coping with the systemic as well as the symptomatic issues. The WCC programme should play a critical as well as a supportive role.

### Programme

- A. WCC's programme can be meaningful only if it is integrated with and serves to communicate and catalyze local, national and regional action. The action programme in respect of TNCs must be seen as WCC-wide. It cannot be seen as the exclusive responsibility of any one Unit or sub-unit nor as supplanting their ongoing action, but as complementing and adding to as well as building on and supporting the coordination of existing efforts.
- B. Reflection and action are inextricably linked. The excluded, oppressed and exploited cannot wait. Reflection, if not paralleled by present action, is not true solidarity with their needs. Thus, realism and credibility require action now. In this context major issues of global concern such as the New International Economic Order, the release of South America from neo-colonialism and the liberation of Southern Africa are important. They provide foci around which to organize education by and of the churches and solidarity among churches, Christian action groups and others committed to change and they illustrate the interaction between TNCs and other systemic elements, including repressive states, local predatory elites and racism.
- C. In the quest for justice in history the basic organizing principle is struggle. Its aim is the transformation of society. Transforming society is a process in which long term strategy must

interact with and be served by short term tactics and struggle against abuses. These short term tactics are often built on alliances with those - including ourselves - of imperfect perceptions and concerns. However, entrenched power cannot be defeated or transcended except by a new counter power, based on solidarity.

- D. A major role of WCC is to facilitate and support communication regionally and globally by putting churches and action groups in touch among themselves.

The following aspects deserve serious consideration:

- 1) The elements of paternalism still present in action group programmes of the industrialized nations are rarely informed by the perceptions of the excluded, exploited and oppressed. The WCC must avoid such paternalism and assist these churches and other groups to recognize and to eliminate it.
  - 2) Often groups in industrialized countries unwittingly abuse the time and energies of the Third World action groups through excessive and uncoordinated visits. Also the flow of visitors has been primarily from the industrialized countries to the Third World, and that of information in the other direction.
  - 3) Groups from industrialized nations must be assisted to understand that they are part of the TNC system. This system oppresses, excludes and exploits in the industrialized nations as well as in the Third World. Solidarity in struggle must take place at home as well as abroad.
- E. Action is located within specific contexts, of history, time and place, and is effective according to people's potential, and their level of consciousness. It is imperative to listen to the experience of the victims as a basis from which to build a programme. However, action must lead to reflection and to the interaction of experience needed for broader and deeper further stages of action. WCC should seek to provide, and to encourage and assist regional Christian councils in providing channels and fora aimed at producing more understanding of causative economic structures, with the goal of organizing for action. An integral part of such reflection and action is the building up of a more genuinely global theology of liberating change (not defence of order) centred on the challenging of the present secular order and therefore in conflict with it rather than domesticating Christians and churches into that order.

- F. WCC's programme should include:

- 1) raising consciousness, including theological, economic and political awareness that leads to action. Consciousness-raising has multiple dimensions, among them: deepening church and individual Christian awareness that political economic issues are of integral concern to them as churches and as Christians, building perceptions of churches, Christian action groups and other bodies committed to liberation that they share common concerns logically requiring joint action, continued dialogue with and challenge to Christians who are in leadership positions in TNCs.
- 2) aiding in channelling resources in response to requests for support of action consistent with the broad strategic guidelines outlined above.
- 3) facilitating the flow of information and human communication regarding TNCs.

- 4) strengthening communications systems outside the domination of the present TNC-based global news and information systems.

G. The following types of supportive, initiatory, or catalytic action are stated as examples:

- 1) support for organizing efforts of workers, unions, peasants, women, slum dwellers and other groups, by means of dissemination of information, including statements to relevant power bodies (e.g. United Nations, TNCs, governments), support of legal reform, assistance to organization of demonstrations, strikes and boycotts, e.g. UIM through the Asian Committee for People's Organization (ACPO).
- 2) use of public hearings to mobilize potential supporters, raise public consciousness, build up countervailing power.
- 3) response to requests from groups to strengthen their programmes of mobilization and information, e.g. furnishing material support as the PCR has done in its relation with liberation movements and the CMC has done with groups opposing drug and baby formula abuses.
- 4) promotion of responsible use of invested church funds by means which might include shareholder resolutions, pressure on corporate managers or the decision to withdraw or alter patterns of investment.
- 5) provision for exchange of experience as a means to inform and strengthen churches and other groups and national and international action. Of particular importance is the exchange of experiences by women affected by TNCs in the context of both industrialized countries and the Third World.
- 6) assistance to churches in developing programmes of consciousness-raising for their members leading to a greater breadth of Christian concern with the impact of TNCs and the nature of the TNC system.
- 7) initiation of action in respect of issues perceived as critical but unlikely to result in locally-based programmes without catalytic work by WCC.
- 8) initiation and promotion of a study programme on alternative socio-economic models reflective of a just, participatory and sustainable society. This would involve a critique and analysis of world economic systems as part of the search for a New Economics. The Consultation endorses the recommendations for a programme along these lines which is being proposed to Central Committee by CCPD.

H. To implement and articulate the ongoing programme over an initial period of five years, we recommend that:

- 1) The Staff Task Force continue and be expanded to include the Communication Department and the sub-unit on Women, thereby providing a coordinating focus. The Task Force should seek guidance from a small Advisory Group composed primarily of persons who are excluded, oppressed, exploited and secondarily of those who have demonstrated their solidarity with them. This Advisory Group is perceived as a group of persons capable of helping to deepen, develop and provide expertise on the struggle for justice.

- 2) Budgetary support for new programme elements be supplied by CCPD. The Staff Task Force to prepare draft five-year programme cost projections.
- 3) The Central Committee ensure the services of at least one full-time staff member to be based in CCPD.
- 4) Member Churches of the WCC be asked to express their concern and commitment by contributing to the budget of WCC programmes and to the budgets of involved groups within their own countries.