

Parapat Statement

on the 2nd UEM International Partnership Conference

July 7-15, 2012

Introduction

An International Partnership Conference was held in Parapat, North Sumatra. We have noted that “Parapat” means in Batak language “come closer”. This conference follows from the Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania Conference in 2007. Twenty-three delegates from Africa, Asia and Germany gathered under the theme, “On the Way to Strengthen our Faith.” We thank the UEM member churches in North Sumatra as host.

The participants studied together the Bible, critically analyzed the situation and context of each region, evaluated the Partnership Guidelines, identified and grappled with issues impacting on our partnership relationships.

The participants acknowledged that partnership is grounded on the UEM Constitution and Corporate Identity . The participants, inspired by the theme, would like to solicit the commitment of the entire UEM community to the following:

A. On the way

In the 4 years (2008-2012), we have discovered and learned the various strengths and weaknesses, threats and opportunities of our partnership work in the three regions (see Appendix 1)

There are long-standing partnerships existing and much has been achieved at various levels of development. However, partnerships are challenged by poor or lack of communication, low level of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME). The Partnership Guidelines were not widely disseminated at the grassroot level. Triangular and South-to-South linkages already exist in small numbers but no formal partnerships are in place yet.

B. Strengthening

We have critically analyzed key issues and challenges to strengthen bilateral and trilateral partnership work , including but not limited to:

1. Improving our communication
2. More participation of women and youth in decision-making bodies and structures

3. Burning Issues for Ecumenical learning (ecological/climate justice, poverty, corruption, conflict and injustice)
4. Standard Procedures for Projects
5. Regional structure for Africa and Asia
6. Implementation of Partnership Guidelines

(See Appendix 2)

C. Our Faith –

In order to further enrich our faith journey as a UEM family, we recommend to all partnership groups to confront and address pressing issues of poverty, corruption and JPIC in a holistic and multi-dimensional manner. In the process, we shall be strengthened in carrying out God's mission. And in a particular way, greater emphasis should be focussed on the UEM Corporate Identity to implement the goals and activities of partnership work.

In this regard, action plans were developed and recommended to address the six identified key issues for the next five years. (see Appendix #3)

We recommend the next International Partnership Conference to report and evaluate the implementation of the proposed action plans. For monitoring, the UEM partnership officers are expected to produce annual progress reports.

Conclusion

The on-going journey to strengthen our faith should lead us to a more focussed and intensified implementation of partnership work at all levels.