

Africa Host Lausanne III Congress on World Evangelization

Africa was host for the Church Council of our time, the third Lausanne Congress held in Cape Town South Africa October 16-25, 2010. The Lausanne Movement is a global network of 'reflective practitioners' who share a vision for world evangelization.

The movement began in 1974 through the vision of Billy Graham who convened the International Congress on World Evangelization in Lausanne, Switzerland. John Stott was the chief architect of the historic Lausanne Covenant which issued from the Congress. The seed planted by the original 1974 Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization led to both the Second Lausanne Congress in Manila, Philippines (1989), and to Cape Town 2010: The Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization was held in collaboration with World Evangelical Alliance.

Over 4,000 leaders from 197 countries were together in Cape Town to confront current critical issues and the future of the Church and world evangelization - Diaspora People, Mega-Cities, Children, Orality; developments in the Global Anglican Communion; Ziya Meral's fresh thinking with respect to Islam; an eagerness for a global Kingdom equilibrium as articulated by David Ruiz and Patrick Fung; and a meeting with World By Radio Leadership.

Over the eight days delegates were able to study Ephesians using an inductive Bible Study approach, participate in daily multiplex sessions on diverse topics, share with other like-minded brethren in daily dialogue sessions on thematic issues and focus on specific continents over the course of each day. The theme of the Congress was "God in Christ reconciling the World to Himself".

Each of the days started off with resounding Praise and Worship as did the pageantry of

Opening Celebration and the foretaste of heaven experienced in the holy and majestic celebration of the Lord's Supper during the Closing.

Thematic sessions were held in different parts of the Conference Center i.e. the Women's Café as well as the Younger Leaders meetings. "Perhaps the most exciting meeting I participated in was with the Younger Leaders. Organizers had planned



on 250 people for the Friday evening gathering. However when I arrived in the ballroom a half an hour after it started, there were nearly 900 younger leaders there. The vibrancy and enthusiasm in the room was electrifying! I stayed until I could barely stay awake, talking with leaders keen to learn how they could be involved in the future of Lausanne".

Each day the Congress highlighted different Continents taking time to pray over specific issues i.e. Asia - praying on the suffering Church and religious freedom;

- Praise God for how He is moving and for the Christians there.
- Pray for the least-reached groups in Asia.
- God's strength for the suffering/persecuted Church globally.

At the Closing Ceremony Archbishop Henry Orombi and Lindsay Brown presided over the Holy Communion in which thousands of delegates participated in.

Scope

Time indeed marches on! 2010 commenced with much anxiety in the AEA; anxiety about state of affairs and direction of the movement. Praise God we end the year with much assurance and hope for the future as we see the tremendous potential of the movement in its service to the bride of Christ in Africa and globally. Space will not allow us here to count our many blessings and name them one by one. It is enough to keep in touch and remind you and encourage your hearts that the church is marching on and offer our prayers for a blessed Christmas and Christ-centered 2011.

PRAYER CONCERNS

- The Sudan Referendum January 9-15, 2011. That the referendum will take place peacefully and the international community will assist the country through the post referendum issues.
- The political impasse in Ivory Coast and other nations in the region preparing for national elections.
- Programme plans for 2011- for resources for implementation.

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In his Closing remarks Arch-bishop posed the question “As Lausanne III comes to an end, what will be its legacy? My brother and sisters, the legacy is up to us! There are many challenges that face us daily as we embrace Jesus’ command to make disciples of all nations”.

He urged delegates to remember that most of the challenges in the task of world evangelization are spiritual including greed. He drew a correlation to the East African Revival whose sweeping transformation was a result of deep conversion. The Church he noted has a prophetic role in relationship to good governance and holding leaders accountable. Equally important is the task of preaching, evangelism and discipleship.

The climax of the Lausanne Congress is always the covenant statement which seeks to reflect the mind of God and as reflected in the Holy Scripture for contemporary understanding and praxis.



The draft of this for the deliberations of the third Congress was shared and the final document is being published. This is a call of the worldwide church to live, work and pray, through the power of the Holy Spirit, so that the glorious and eternal gospel of Jesus Christ will be

proclaimed among all peoples on earth, demonstrated in the transformed lives of His followers, and defended in the public arena and in the realm of ideas, until He comes in glory.

Evangelical Re-Awakening

Call it social re-awakening and I will add through the prevailing intervention of the Holy Spirit; for we have our being and move in Him. Since the visit of the General Secretary of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa with his counterpart in the World Evangelical Alliance to Southern Sudan in early October this year the evangelicals have not been the same. The cry of the Sudanese church and indeed the people of Sudan have jolted the evangelicals out of their comfort zones into some kind of immersion in social engagement which many of us thought was the preserve of worldly systems and at best other traditions of the church. Any form of social engagement was seen as snare to undermine our adherence to biblical orthodoxy.

Visiting Southern Sudan actually got the two leaders immersed in the struggle of the Sudanese people when they participated as special guests in a three day meeting between the Government of Southern Sudan and the Sudan Council of Churches Sudan

dubbed “Kejiko 2” as a sequel to Kejiko 1 held in 1997. The theme of the Church/Government dialogue on Peace and Reconciliation was “**Let us Start Rebuilding**,” taken from a Bible text in Neh. 2: 18. The deliberations of Kejiko 2 included:

- Vision of a new Sudan regardless of the outcome of the referendum
- Nation building and national reconciliation

This was an opportunity for the two leaders to learn and understand the complex nature of the Sudanese issues and listen to the church leaders and people of Sudan and their call for assistance from the rest of the world. The Churches specifically requested the leadership of the AEA and WEA to assist in the following areas:

- To provide a team of election monitors as part of an international impartial community to lend credence to the referendum process
- To foster acceptance of the outcome of the referendum by the international community
- To support the development of Southern Sudan in the new dispensation following the end of the interim period and the referendum

In the WEA Secretary General’s statement there was commitment to do as much as possible in response to the request from the Church and people of Sudan. Since then the AEA and WEA have been busy articulating their response to specific actionable points and mobilizing the global church for action for peace in Sudan. These include prayer, advocacy, plans for election monitoring (referendum), humanitarian assistance, peace building and sustainable livelihood initiatives etc for at least one year.

The last several weeks since the visit has seen the two movements engaged in a lot of advocacy and behind the scenes diplomacy. Other regional evangelical alliances have fully embraced this. The AEA counterpart in the Caribbean has written a letter to all the governments in the Island asking the heads of governments to express their support through appropriate diplomatic channels and at the United Nations their support for the referendum process and be ready to recognize and support the outcome of the referendum in January 2011.

The AEA Office in Nairobi has set up a coordinating forum and a Secretariat as a rallying point for evangelical mission agencies and development NGOs operating in Sudan. The coordinating Secretariat is charged with the responsibilities of coordinating information on agencies in Southern Sudan, disseminating new information to member organizations, identifying gaps where partners need to engage and facilitating the monitoring team to be in Sudan in January 2011.

Report from BEST, Central Africa Republic on the visit of the General Secretary of AEA

The Association of Evangelicals in Central Africa Republic (AEC) felt highly honoured by the visit of the new General Secretary of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa. Mr. Aiah Foday-Khabenje, the AEA General Secretary was the guest of honour at the AEC 12th General Assembly, November 10-17, 2010. It is right to say that this was an unprecedented visit because since the founding of the Association of Evangelicals in CAR (AEC) in 1974 and the launching of Bangui Evangelical School of Theology, AEA's first project in 1977, this was the first time that a General Secretary of AEA came to CAR.

The visit of the General Secretary was a special event not only because of what it meant to AEC and BEST as indicated above, but also because the GS' visit brought visibility to AEC in the nation. The GS was received at the airport by the official protocol and driven to the VIP lounge where the President of the AEC, Rev Nicolas GUEREKOYAME and the President of BEST, Dr NUPANGA Weanzana were waiting for him. After a short exchange, the GS made an interview with journalists from the national television broadcasting station. The interview was broadcast that evening on national TV which aroused a lot of interest in the capital, Bangui because of the excellent statement about AEC and BEST/FATEB, underscoring the strategic importance of the school as centre of excellence for the French speaking world not only in Africa but the world at large.

It was a privilege for BEST to host the General Secretary of AEA. It sounded like the home coming of the father being received by his first born. Shortly after his arrival, the GS attended the General Assembly of the AEA which was held in a Baptist Church located in the north part of the capital city Bangui. About 140 representatives from 35 denominations which are members of the AEC were gathered there for the 12th General Assembly. The GS greeted the delegate and later returned back to BEST for rest after a four hour flying time to Bangui.

For the following two days, the GS addressed the General Assembly. He called attention of the delegates to the importance of the AEA and the new strategic plan that has been endorsed by the General Assembly of AEA in Mombasa last August. He also mentioned the central role of BEST which is the first project of AEA, but also its importance for the service of the whole Francophone Africa.

On Friday 11th, the GS was received by the Prime Minister. During this time, the GS explained to the Prime Minister the work of AEA and called the Prime Minister's attention for the search for peace in Africa. He pointed to the Sudanese problem and the role

of the church in that situation and the need to have all states in that region ensure a successful referendum in Southern Sudan on January 9, 2011 so that Sudan does not go back to war. The visit ended with a word of prayer by the GS.

On Sunday 14th, the GS attend the service at Elim Church where Rev Nicolas serves as pastor. The GS built his sermon from the book of 1 Kings 3:16-28. He called the attention of the people of God about the necessity to remain awake because the devil wants to take life from us. About 70 people responded to the call after the sermon.

On Monday 15th, the GS made a "tour" of BEST. He was accompanied by the President of BEST and the Chaplain. He visited the administrative building, the primary school, the Byang Kato Library, the women's school, the kindergarten and the college. He also took time to discuss with the President of BEST his expectations of AEA and also to make known the expectations of AEA. The same day, the GS was received by the Secretary of State House, in the Office of the President of the Republic. The GS made similar statement as he did in the Prime Minister's office and called for the intervention of the government of CAR along with the neighbouring states and the African Union for a peaceful referendum in Southern Sudan.

Tuesday afternoon, the GS met with the members of the Board of BEST. He thanked them for the work that they have done during the last ten years. He then called their attention about their responsibilities for the future of the school. A dinner was organized on Tuesday night in honour of the GS. This was attended by the Board members, students and staff of BEST. The President of AEC was also one of the honoured guests in attendance. In the morning on Tuesday, the GS addressed the BEST community during the chapel. He brought the word of the Lord from Leviticus 10:1-5. Students and staff were reminded to avoid bringing an unauthorized fire before the Lord.

The GS also connected the AEC with brother Jonas Robert SAWADOGO, Regional Advocacy Director of Compassion International who joined the GS on Sat 13th. The Compassion Director held a two day conference with 70 church leaders on Holistic Child Development. This was described by many of the participants as an eye opener in ministry direction for the church in this end times.

Early in the morning on Wednesday 17th, the GS left Bangui to Nairobi. Only one discordant sound, the GS arrived on



Wednesday 10th without his checked luggage. Finally it arrived on Saturday 13th. Glory to the Lord!

AEA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 6TH & 7TH DECEMBER 2010

It was meant to be a prayer retreat, and the environment couldn't have been more perfect. The Resurrection Gardens at Karen, Nairobi Kenya, a prayer & retreat facility run by the Roman Catholic Church was the venue for the first full meeting of the AEA Executive Board. Complete with Mary praying from every corner and a crucifix over your head at bedtime, no theme other than prayer could be on anyone's mind. (If you are asking why did we go to a catholic facility, you may wish know that that Evangelicals do not really have many such facilities, and that it's about time that they did). And although we did pray quite some, a lot of business was transacted as well, and we all left the meeting certain that things are indeed looking up for AEA. And they are!



In his closing remarks the AEA President alarmed us with the announcement that we all owed a debt. But as it turned out, it was a debt that everyone in AEA owes; a debt to make AEA known. He shared the challenge that I share with you now, that we must make AEA known in our own spheres of influence because the message of AEA is really the message of Christ.

Coming from this meeting then, the stage looks set for AEA to soar. It is indeed time for Africa to take the lead in spiritual affairs of the world. And as each part of the body plays its role – the Board, the Governing Council, the Secretariat, the Commissions, the Projects, the NEF's, then AEA will be one big happy family, spread across the entire continent, a big army marching forward for Jesus. Then it shall be as in the words of Psalm 133, 'how good and pleasant it is when brethren dwell together in peace ... and there the Lord shall command His blessing, even life forever more.

Christmas Thoughts and Greetings

Among the highlights of the 2 day meeting was a press conference held by the AEA board and which was attended by more than 7 media houses – TV, Radio and Newspapers. The Board expressed its commitment to address, through its commissions, projects and NEFs, the various challenges that African nations are experiencing. It was a significant step for AEA, considering our relative silence in the media over the last many years. Apart from this the Board made decisions that will significantly impact the operations of AEA and make it truly a continental voice.

For 2 days before the meeting and at the same venue, the General Secretary held meetings with the heads of commissions. It was, in his own words, the most fruitful meeting that he has had with the



commission heads since he reduced to 2011 C. E (Common Era). Whatever this means came into office. Common Era is not the last word!

They all left the meeting with a renewed zeal and a son for the season. Let me take the opportunity to unashamedly, unapologetically, intentionally and lovingly wish you a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. If there is a 2011 it is because God has willed it and it is certain He will continue to work His purposes out. Christ is persistently knocking on the door of every heart and pray He will gain entrance to many more hearts this Christmas and the coming year.