

It was also a triumph of potential ecclesiastical unity. The fact that the 1910 meeting of missionaries drew from more parts of the global Christian community than any previous meeting easily gave rise to the idea that, if the missionaries from highly diverse backgrounds could meet together, why not the church leaders?

Such optimistic thoughts failed to take into account the fact that missionaries don't usually argue about minute differences in the handling of the Eucharist (and such topics were, accordingly, not on the agenda in 1910). Thus, it took many years and many meetings before the Faith and Order, and the Life and Work movements could attract

anything like the breadth of unity that already existed on many mission fields and at Edinburgh in 1910. Finally, in 1937, merging the Faith and Order, and the Life and Work movements, the first faltering step was taken to found the World Council of Churches. Due to the Second World War the official ceremony did not take place until 1948. No one questions that the early inspiration of such a thing as the WCC was the 1910 meeting.

However, it is truly ironical that the resulting WCC may have found it difficult to achieve theological unity to the extent manifested in 1910, but was and is structurally unable to achieve or handle the structural background of the mission agencies

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A Case for Another Meeting of the Global Network of Centres for World Mission (GNCWM)

By Chong Kim

During GNCWM's heyday in the late 1980s, it had identified close to 40 such centers worldwide. At one such meeting in Singapore (hosted by the Singapore Centre for Evangelism and Missions), 33 representatives of 12 centers and 5 other organizations discussed how to bring synergy and to plan for the network's future. The 1986 "Singapore Statement on the Global Network of Centres for World Mission" defines a center for world mission as an "interdenominational, inter-mission organization working in a supporting role for the cause of World Evangelization and especially for the reaching of the unreached peoples." It also reads that a "Centre for World Mission" is intended to fill a gap not being filled by other mission organizations. The Statement also includes the aspiration to collaborate with the existing global entities such as the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization and the Missions Commission of the then World Evangelical Fellowship (now World Evangelical Alliance).

However, due to a lack of administrative oversight and various other factors, GNCWM fizzled out and ceased to function in the mid 1990s. This does not mean, however, that the centers for world mission ceased to function. In fact, a case can be made that there are new centers that have sprung up in the last decade or so. Naturally, a question emerges, "Is there a need for such a global network again?" Going by the Singapore Statement and the current world's needs and challenges around us, perhaps GNCWM

is more desperately needed now than ever before. Leaders of the centers for world mission will not know the answer with full conviction and clarity until the leaders come face to face and discuss whether GNCWM is worth rebuilding and thus begins to contribute to the cause of frontier missions again.

Once again, the Singapore Centre for Evangelism and Missions (SCEM) will play a crucial part in hosting the GNCWM Consultation April 20-23 of 2009. The planning committee includes Stanley Ow with SCEM, Chulho Han with Mission Korea, Robert Lopez with the Philippine Missions Association, Timothy Olonade with Nigeria Evangelical Missions Association, and Chong Kim with the U.S. Center for World Mission. Other than Ralph Winter's keynote talk, most of the schedule will revolve around group interactions highlighting fruitful case studies and sharing of specific resources reflective of the theme which is "A New Beginning: Challenge and Opportunity of the Centres for World Mission in the 21st Century." The Consultation will also seek to deal with challenges and opportunities in frontier missions in the 21st century and how centers can "fill a gap."

Thus, if you are a leader of a center for world mission, you are cordially invited to be part of the Consultation this April. Please write to Stanley Ow (Executive Director, SCEM) at stanley.scem@gmail.com for the invitation letter and other necessary documents. The registration fee is \$25 and the venue is set at the historic St. Andrews Cathedral. 