

CONTRIBUTION OF THE CONFERENCE OF INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC ORGANIZATIONS (CICO)

Prof. Mag. Ernest König
President CICO
ernest.koenig@mildioz.at

Abstract

What is necessary to enable the development of a humane human society and what endangers this is described since at least 114 years, since Rerum Novarum, but especially in the time of and after the Vaticanum II, with Gaudium and Spes as one of the key documents. From this base the major challenges, emerging in the last forty years and being expected for the future will be analyzed and tied together; giving examples of resulting phenomena. Decisions taken in international institutions today will shape the society of tomorrow. The endeavours how and what the CICO tries to contribute to this humanity by having Christian Catholic values heard and taken into account in a world wide environment will be outlined. The background for this is its organization, its fundamental objective from 1997, the analytical approach between 2002 and 2003 and the decision at the end 2003 to become active in the field of specific key issues. The implementation is ongoing.

Text

How can or should we respond to the signs of our time will be the focus of this contribution. The intention is not to cover the whole specter but rather to identify key-issues.

Gaudium et Spes encompasses paramount principles which are as valid today as they have been forty years ago. To spread joy and hope:

- we all together in the church bear responsibility not only for ourselves but also for our world
- solidarity of the Church with the whole human family and
- we have the grace to draw our vigor, energy and confidence from the altar.

Herewith the church - that's we – signaled a promising breakthrough to the world.

Meanwhile the world has changed dramatically; these changes have to be taken into account, the new problems have to be identified and consequences have to be made operational.

Many of these changes and challenges have been foreseen in the document Gaudium et Spes, but not always in their speed, their density and their dimension, for instance related to threat, brutality and war.

Three **major changes** should be mentioned.

On top it is the technological explosion in literally all fields, especially in the domain of information- and data-processing respectively -transfer and bio-ethics with the assumed capability to “create life”; while philosophy and ethics leave the impression to be more or less stagnating or in a phase of being bewildered. It will be decisive whether this dynamic process will be based on a set of predominantly Christian values or on internal- , external- and world wide power projection, not answering the question whether this will be an action or a reaction. The threat of a symmetric, even total war between blocks and the intentions to hedge wars generally has been superseded by asymmetric wars in societies, between ethnic groups,

everywhere - also in societies with a relatively high standard of living - and with limited chances of control.

At the other hand an increased awareness for security can be identified especially in the just mentioned countries and regions, people may have to lose something!

Significant is the overwhelming predominance of profit, aggregation of power and influence as well as an inclination of “commercialization” of everything including common goods and human life from its origin till its end. The financial markets overrule the production of goods respectively services and both govern the value or worthlessness of labor which again is decisive for the destiny of individuals and families.

It is opposed by an increasingly spreading suspicion because of these developments and because of a tendency to codify rights, especially human rights in rather complex legal systems. But money and force are quite often decisive. In such a system responsibility of the conscience before a higher authority refers to non-pragmatic idealists.

The list of **challenges** would be numerous, but will be limited again to three. No ranking is intended, they are rather interlocked with the changes and with themselves.

For instance a less or more aggressive, sometimes irrational reaction against the so called neo-liberal way with its tendency to commercialize literally all fields of life between birth and death is obvious. This may not be the origin for opposing radical fundamentalist movements, but is for sure a hotbed. It happens not only between different cultures but also within societies. Winners and losers are countries, regions and continents but mainly people. Also in “winning” regions you will find groups, human beings, on the loser side.

Additionally a change in attitude of individual people, groups and societies closely related to this “commercialization” must be observed quite frequently; to consume is marketed as happiness, a traditional family with children is a burden, and the individual person is claimed to be in the centre; in consequence you will find little value orientation in democratic constitutions besides human rights. This leads to the next issue: A mental secularization is increasing. Life begins with birth, not earlier, and ends with the death, maybe pre-described and legally defined and nothing afterwards. Our ancestors’ life was maybe thirty years plus eternity, today we may have short ninety years, which have to be maximized in wellness, events, adventure and happiness, because this is all. Not surprisingly this way of thinking is a manmade product, often a result of marketing strategies, and does not match with the inner longing of the majority of people for something else - faith, religion? Also we Christians with few exceptions are inevitably influenced, even infected by this environment and common superimposed thinking.

Last but not least in consequence human beings may become objects of the system, in the world of economy as cheap labor at disposal. In a world of bio-ethics, directed by agnostic masters of life, who could decide over the beginning and end of life and a in digitized world of transparent human beings “of glass”; the circle to the world of economy and efficiency may be closed faster as expected, always being explained as progress for mankind.

Phenomena in world wide dimensions as unequal distribution of ample wealth or poverty, in consequence the desperate refuge in mega cities, accelerating other tendencies like interpersonal aggressions, even terrorism, environmental damage, dissolution of the family or the manmade human person have to be seen in their interdependency. They should be evaluated in the context of changes and challenges in order to end up with feasible strategies, the aim of vivid symmetries and before all in a change of mentality. Awe before life demanded Albert Schweitzer, make human society more humane are well-known key phrases, but how should they be implemented?

It is a truism that decisions in the international frame, taken today, will shape the global society of tomorrow - without or with taking into account our Christian Catholic values. It is up to us. The **Conference of International Catholic Organisations (CICO)** is one potential force multiplier to promote Christian inputs in these processes. Founded almost eighty years ago in Belgium it has developed to a global dimension. After the Vatican Council II, its Charter was based on the documents *Gaudium et Spes* and *Christi Fideles Laici*.

Based on the strength of our belief the **aims** are to know and to learn from each other, co-ordinated presence in International Organisations and co-operation within and beyond this community in order to be heard and accepted.

The **method** includes deriving key issues in an analytical process, deciding together with International Catholic Organizations (ICOs) on the most important ones which may change the world and starting projects including up to a dozen concerned ICOs in network-type groups, utilising their status in international bodies to be heard and recognised.

Key issues and ongoing main **projects** of today are:

“Economy and Solidarity” working on a common manifest as base for future actions,

Bio-Ethics – initiatives for life against Euthanasia are one issue,

“Family” used the UN Year of the Family plus 10 to position the Christian view in all four global conferences,

“Youth” is preparing a paper declaring the willingness to take responsibility for the world of tomorrow already today,

“Violence against Women” also in a Civil War environment sets initiatives and

“Education and Building Peace” is connected with the demand for an Ecumenical/ Inter religious Dialog; activities are foreseen in Sarajevo and in Jerusalem.

The **organisation**: The Conference embraces 40 ICOs from Boy-Scouts over farmers to teachers, women and Caritas or 12 youth-, 12 profession-, 6 education/ communication-, 4 female/male- and 8 functional organisations and should represent far beyond a Hundred Million faithful. More than 80 times they are accredited as advisors or consultants to international organisations. Besides some steering structures three International Catholic Competence Centres at the location of the UN in Paris, Geneva and New York and one Network are the bodies of the Conference. Regional networks exist in Asia, Latin America and to some extent also in Europe. It is a loose, flat structure; a network of networks, depending on the willingness of its members - and a huge potential of our church in the world, ready to be used.

In **conclusion** it seems realistic that the Vatican Council II with its key documents was overdue forty years ago. The fundamental direction is still valid. *Ora et Labora* was the motto of Saint Benedict in Medieval times. Today it is called spirituality and active solidarity in charity. It is the conviction to have the better answers, derived from the Sermon of the Mount and the Commandment focussing on love and governing all other Commandments, the result of thousands of years of human experience and the bridge to other religions - for a more humane society with the individual person in its centre understood as HIS image. Three hundred years ago Baruch Spinoza came to the conclusion that our religion is also a reasonable one, because it paves the path for viable solutions. The chance to contribute to a better world in case we have faith, charisma, dedication and initiative is realistic; also today and tomorrow.

Neither the consume-oriented, so called neo-liberal western way of life nor the different aggressive fundamentalist approaches can provide solutions. In a globalized environment they may become even more dangerous.

Complete immersion at the one hand, a tendency to relativism respectively resignation of the Christian Community at the other would be the wrong answers.

It has to be taken into account that technological changes, sometimes called progress, were less in the more than sixteen hundred years from the Council of Nicea till the Vatican Council II as compared to the forty years till today. In all probability this had and has an impact on this important document.

Therefore this Conference reflecting on Gaudium et Spes might not only serve as a highly intellectual anniversary but could be a starting point for an evaluation triggering a promising process, regaining the momentum – but only together!

Background

The **Conference of ICOs** (International Catholic Organizations) and the participating bodies:

CICO serves the permanent co-operation of ICOs. Established in 1927 as a conference of presidents, it has been recognised by the Holy See in its present form in 1957.

Its seat is in Geneva.

Basic purpose: To maintain relations among the organisations (ICOs), to contribute to the solution of basic problems, to create a Christian awareness, to perform common activities, to inform, to co-operate especially with international organisations and to contribute towards an enhanced presence.

Members: 36 full members, amongst others Caritas Internationalis, the International Catholic Women's: Movement, numerous international youth organisations, 4 associate members, and 5 invited organizations as well as 3 Catholic centres in Geneva, New York and Paris close to the UN bodies and 1 Network. These organisations represent about 150 million faithful.

The goals have been laid down in the Charter of Quito (See attachment). According to this document, dramatic changes are ongoing world-wide. People must become aware of the complex situation, solutions must be found in an analytical approach - the document "Orientation for the Future". Answers must be given to the challenges. If based on international and inter religious co-operation, and if concrete projects are pursued together, this may be successful.

Current projects are in the fields of Bio-Ethics – Euthanasia included -, Health, Violence against Women, Youth –the World Youth Day 2005, Family, Economy and Solidarity, Communication Education and Building of Peace. Beyond the ties to the UN, contacts will be intensified with the WTO, the WB and others. 26 of the 40 ICOs are more than 80 times acknowledged as consultants or advisors in international organisations. The ecumenical and inter-religious dialog will be emphasized; the General Assembly at the end of 2005 will take place in Jerusalem. The balance between individual activities of ICOs and the common weight to pursue key issues of general impact is important. We believe in the need of this mission. For achievements it is unavoidable to have a voice that is heard internationally, because today's decisions in international bodies shape the society of tomorrow – with or without us.

Network of the CICO

OIC

CONFERENCE DES ORGANISATIONS INTERNATIONALES CATHOLIQUES

CONFERENCIA DE LAS ORGANIZACIONES INTERNACIONALES CATOLICAS

CONFERENCE OF INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC ORGANISATIONS

MEMBERS ORGANISATIONS (ICOs)

ACISJF	International Catholic Society for Girls
ACS	Association of Salesian Co-operators
AIC	International Association of Charities
AMI	International Military Apostolate
BICE	International Catholic Child Office
CI	Caritas Internationalis
CICIAMS	International Catholic Committee of Nurses and Medico-Social Assistants
CICG	International Conference of Catholic Guiding
CICM	International Catholic Migration Commission
CICS	International Catholic Conference of Scouting
CIJOC	International Co-ordination of Young Christian Workers
CVX	Christian Life Community
FIAC	International Forum of Catholic Action
FIAMC	International Federation of Catholic Medical Association
FIDACA	International Federation of the Catholic Associations of the Blind
FIHC	International Council of Catholic Men
FIMARC	International Federation of Rural Adult Catholic Movements
FIMCAP	International Federation of Catholic Parochial Youth Communities
FIPC	International Federation of Catholic Pharmacists
FIUC	International Federation of Catholic Universities
JECI	International Young Catholic Students
JICI	International Independent Christian Youth
MIAMSI	International Movement of Apostolate in the Independent Social Milieu
MIDADE	International Movement of Apostolate of Children
MIEC	International Movement of Catholic Students
MIIC	International Catholic Movement of Intellectual and Cultural Affairs Pax Romana
MIJARC	International Movement of Catholic Agricultural and Rural Youth
MMTC	World Movement of Christian Workers
OIEC	Catholic International Education Office
OMAEC	World Organisation of the Former Pupils of Catholic Education
SIGNIS	Association for Communication and audio-visual
SSVP	Society of Saint-Vincent de Paul
UCIP	International Catholic Union of the Press
UMEC	World Union of Catholic Teachers
UMOFC	World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations
VMI	The International Ascent Life

ASSOCIATED ORGANISATIONS

AIJA	ST Joan's International Alliance
IACK	International Alliance of Catholic Knights
ICRA	International Catholic Rural Association
JOCI	International Young Christian Workers

INVITED ORGANISATIONS

CCFD	Catholic Committee against Hunger and for Development
CIDSE	International Co-operation for Development and Solidarity
FAFCE	Federation of Catholic Family Associations
PCI	Pax Christi International
UNIAPAC	International Christian Union of Business Executives

INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC CENTRES (ICC), NETWORK

CCIC	International Catholic Centre for UNESCO, Paris
CCIG	International Catholic Centre, Geneva
ICOIC	International Catholic Organisations Information Centre, New York
Network	CRESCENDO

Charter of the Conference of ICOs'

I Preamble

- 1 The conference already has a long history since the foundation in 1927. It continues to develop, to extend and deepen its thinking and action at the service of its members, and, through them, of international life and of the Church's mission in today's world. Attentive to the orientations given by the Church and particularly those of Vatican Council II², the Conference responds to the challenge of „Christi fideles laici“: Open to the saving power of Christ the frontiers of States, economic and political systems, the vast domains of culture, civilisation and development.“ (No 34).
- 2 The Conference owes its long life to its desire to be attentive to every part of the world, and to ability to adapt to new situations while remaining faithful to its original aims: to gather together Organisations so that they can *harmonize their participation in international life* and witness collectively to what they stand for while respecting the autonomy and the specificity of each one.
- 3 The Conference includes both international Organisations of the laity, men and women, and international Organisations managed by lay or ecclesiastical people, recognised by the Holy See, whose priority is to *respond to the challenges facing humanity* in political, economic, social, cultural and spiritual fields, particularly by contributing to works carried out in those fields or works at international level.

In a universal vision of those problems, these organisations have the following responsibilities to their members:

- to make them increasingly *aware of the complexities* of the situations in which they live and work;

- to help them to grow in discernment and *critical analysis*;
 - to facilitate the search of solutions to concrete difficulties.
- 4 As Church's body, the Conference regroups in a unique way *different organisations*, which share *common beliefs*, notably a conviction of the importance of their presence in the world. The coherence with this vision guarantees its unity and gives dynamism to its policy and research.
 - 5 Member organisations of the Conference dialogue and act in conjunction with all the activists of the society. Working together for the transformation of the world, they announce the Good News, each in their own way.
 - 6 The Conference is open to any organisations which is acting and is involved recognisably catholic in its work in the international world, which accepts the present Charter, respects its principles in practice and adheres to its Statutes. The Conference witnesses to the organised presence of Catholics in the international world.

II Fundamental convictions

- their desire to announce Jesus Christ to the women and men of our time, and their vocation to serve the world, are indivisible; faith calls for action;
- their wish to contribute to the building of the Kingdom of God is demonstrated by solidarity with all women and men of good will;
- their desire for participation in decision-making in the Church in areas with concern their competence and in which they are involved.

Wherever their members live and work, International Catholic Organisations are on mission as signs of hope brought by the risen Christ.

III Common experiences

The experience of international catholic organisations shows that this form of Christian presence in the world requires:

- action which is at the service of *sustainable development* for all peoples;
- practice of being turned on all, of *ecumenical and their inter-religious dialogue* with nourished by the conviction that „the Spirit breathers on every person of right conscience“;
- absolute *commitment*, in the light of the Gospel;
- to and with *poor people*;
- to the values of *peace, mutual love, justice*;

- to the respect, defence and promotion of the *rights and dignity of the human person* and the safeguard of creation;
- ongoing collaboration with other kinds of organisations.

IV A unique spirituality

In its desire to live fully its faith in Jesus Christ, the Conference stresses:

- the need to be rooted in reality, through a relationship with God lived out in the world;
- an experience of community nourished by group sharing and exchange;
- openness to the international dimension, validated by experiences at local level to which it gives meaning;
- adaptation to federate human groups and to different sensibilities;
- the witness of Christian freedom to initiate, as well as willingness to live in „solid and strong communion“ with the Church;
- desire to serve the universal Church through insertion in the local churches by respecting diverse pastoral programmes, but also to *participate* in major events in the life of the universal Church.

V A specific international dimension

Many member organisations of the Conference are accredited by statute of official international organisations³.

Basic Reasons for the Absence of Peace⁴

A rather critical philosopher once stated that an optimist is basically a pessimist, but with lack of relevant information. Probably this is too simple.

To go deeper three approaches from different directions, three analyses will be compared with the intention to end up with a more complete, unfortunately also more complex view.

The first analysis based on rather reliable statistics looks forward to a man-made better world for the future. The second sobering analysis on the other hand sketches a man-made endangered world. After the bloody class struggle the Cold War, its final stage, was peacefully settled, thirdly surprising tendencies are indicators for a more violent future world unless....

Let us look first at the statistics based analysis: It should be proven how basic requirements for human life really develop.⁵

The result is that the material conditions for life will improve for most of the people in most of the countries for most of the time. A hundred, maximum two hundred years from now all nations and the majority of mankind will have reached the western standard of living and beyond, the man made better world. Nevertheless many will maintain that conditions for life deteriorate. But no apocalypse is seen on the horizon.

The proof is based on ample, reliable statistics. Let me mention some examples: According to these the average global life expectation grew from 46 years in 1950 by 41 % till 2000 and should be 75 years by 2050.

Or: In Asia the calories per capita for nutrition in 1960 were only 1850 cal, by 1985 2500 cal which means an increase of 35 %.

Or: The world wide grain production amounted to 800 Mio tons per year in 1960. The expectation for 2010 is 2.400 tons per year, which means a three times increase over a period of 50 years.

This does not mean that no problems exist. For instance water, but according to this analysis this is mainly a management challenge. For the costs of a war one may build dozens of salt water purification plants. The pollution is a challenge, but many of the investments tackling with this issue are questionable as related to the improvements.

Poverty must be reduced, but this does not imply equal distribution of wealth.

The main hindrance to come to the best solutions is seen in the “litany”, the permanent repetition of convincing but distorted half truths, selective and even wrong information. The influence of the media is extremely high as well as the engagement of specific groups and organizations out of sometimes completely different motives.

Politics has to react on the mainly fear-based reaction of the public, often in a short time because the bill will be paid in the next elections.

A model to support reason-based solutions are statistics showing the cost in Euros or Dollars to save one year of life. One Euro will be sufficient to achieve this by vaccinating against childhood diseases. 120.000 Euros are necessary to install air bags in cars instead of belts to save this year. Extremely costly are emission control measures ending up with x Millions of Euro for one year of life.

Even deviances of 100 % don't change this message in principle. The promoters are realistic enough to take into account that this can not be a binding priority list, but only a means on the way to more efficiency, to a process of optimization. The basic idea is that the available resources are 100 %. If one spends too much for too little success other cheaper and more efficient programs will be hampered, education for instance.

What is the conclusion for us: While we are aware that an impact on many of our activities is obvious, we must not believe it as it is, but we have to take it into account.

Good intentions, for instance to be against an organization or the implementation of a program is not necessarily good.

We must be professional and objective but also we must base our decisions and activities on ethical principles, and then we will be heard.

May we state that basically everything is at least on the right track?

2. With this the more sobering analysis comes into the picture, the man made endangered world.

The development is breath taking. A hundred years and one week ago, the Wright brothers have performed their first flight, having constructed their air plane in a bicycle shop. To use a completely different comparison: The world has changed more in the time from the Second Vatican Council till today, than in the 16 Centuries from the Council of Nicea to the Second Vatican Council.

It has to be kept in mind that technology, technique, society, state, war and the concerned human beings are intertwined in mutual influences. Synergetic effects, networks, are unavoidable. They may be positive ore negative.

Selected examples may explain the “How”.

Technology and technique per se are neutral. It is decisive how they will be used.

Communication may be extremely helpful in a Red Cross deployment, but is also very efficient for organized crime.

Miniaturization permits surgery which was unthinkable one decade ago, but makes also a cruise missile more dangerous. And biotechnology may support the creation of Einsteins as well as of a homo sapiens brutalis, a terrorist. Aldous Huxley was reflecting on that 75 years ago.

Like it or not, societies are influenced by the western way of life. Henry Ford's moving belt, labour sharing, Free Market Economy – grow or be swallowed up -, the stronger become stronger – the weaker disappear, everything is business -- all are characteristics of this way of life. The roots for this development go back 500 years. In Geneva Calvin promoted a theological philosophy expressing that God likes the rich. It looks like a success story, the United States being more efficient than the Europeans and others. The reason is an almost perfectly linked system of technology, economy, finances, information, media and military combined with the conviction of being made for leadership and less for partnership. The consequence is a tendency to unilateralism.

The originally more or less sovereign state undergoes tendencies to rather less than more sovereignty. In western societies this is due to the above mentioned concentrations combined with privatization. The turn over, the sales of some companies are already higher than the GNP of medium sized countries.

Other countries in the southern hemisphere mainly but not only there, suffer in their development under the history of interference from outside. Cultural breaks, small elites, corruption weakness are hindrances on the way to stable entities.

On the other hand NGOs like Green-Peace or Global 2000 exert more and more influence. , but also Microsoft, British Petrol or Al Quaida are non governmental and pretty influential. Connected with this phenomenon many boundaries have a tendency to fade away, not only between states and unions but also between peace and war.

Actually, we don't have wars in the classical sense any more, but Civil Wars influencing neighbouring more stable countries and Global Political Violence; more about its reasons will be mentioned in the next chapter.

On the surface one has to realize that it becomes hard to discriminate between so called combatants and so called civilians, their number of victims is dramatically increasing. Because of this it is not easy and often impossible to detect the enemy. And in the near future it might be possible to kill people without throwing bombs.

Everything influences everything and – if we are honest, also our behaviour.

The challenges are the world wide net with all its advantages and disadvantages, the vulnerability of high tech societies, and with this an increasing uneasiness.

This uneasiness, maybe bewilderedness is mirrored in philosophy already beginning in the 19th Century and in paintings, writings, music etc from the 20th Century on. Often we don't like it, believe it to be ugly, but it reflects how artists see the world.

Without God everything is possible, even the worst, was the opinion held by Tostojevsky. Conclusion for us: - be attentive. It is tricky and may grow into undesirable dimensions, slowly or very fast.

What can be done? On an operational level contribute to damage limitation in Civil War scenarios, connected with all versions of violence, with child soldiers for instance. On a strategic level be part of a process intending to change the presumably as unchangeable accepted patterns of behaviour.

But the Cold War is over, the better system was successful, or?

3. Almost overlapping Surprising tendencies, not excluding an even more violent future world, arose on the horizon.

André Malreaux believed that the 21st Century would be the Century of the Religions or it will not be. According to another version he questioned whether we will be happy with it. Before dealing with this challenge a glance back to the 20th Century may be of help. Historically, as a cohesive period, it lasted from 1914 till 1991. Within the frame of the political economy the main issue was how the societies organized their production. Karl Marx stands for one side, for “Equalism”, many on the other for Liberalism, some in between. And the father’s name of both was Friedrich W. Hegel, The almost deadly struggle of the classes ended with an impressive victory of Liberalism with almost no blood shed. Based on these overwhelming events Fukujama believed in the “End of History”; in 1989.

To characterize Liberalism with a few words is not so easy. Something was said before. At the top is an the individualism with a tendency to Nilhilism, an interest- and need to consume oriented, a “non heroic” attitude and a legitimization in itself, painful for the faithful.

Additionally it opens space for radical ideologies and activities.

Already 1993 Samuel Huntington described the reasons for a “Clash of Civilizations”. With this the “retheologization” of politics was widely recognized. It started already in the Seventies with the murder of Anwar al Sadat and with Homeini’s revolution in Iran.

As compared to Liberalism – what are the characteristics of Islamism, the fundamentalist Islam? First of all it is the identity of church and state, then the fundamentalist way of thinking, the inability to modernize and the antagonism against Zionism.

Parallels, maybe not as dangerous can be found in fundamentalist versions of other religions. The fiction of Hobbes state of Leviathan, the United States fighting the Demon, the Evil is an example.

Some significant tendencies can be recognized: We must see a remilitarization of religions, but we can see also a reprivatization of war – everywhere.

Unleashed it may end up with a clash, leaving the struggle of classes of the 20th Century far behind and bringing us back in history to the time after 1648. Important is the word “unleashed” because every action creates reaction and with this new situations.

Additionally Geopolitics was redetected. Obviously the economic predominance is not reliable enough.

Strategic triangles should provide support for decisions. With three players, for instance the Russian Federation, the Peoples Republic of China, and the Democracy of India it can be grasped. But adding the United States, Japan, Pakistan and the Philippines you end up with 35 combined triangles. Why is this detailed? Because it demonstrates the complexity of the world illustrated along one single string.

And why are so many Asian countries included? Because in all probability the future will be decided there. One can see the priority which is allocated to Central Asia; countries formerly known by almost nobody are in the daily news papers. Additional concern is rectified if one takes into account that no regional order is established yet.

What conclusions can be drawn for us? It is necessary to be alert to the danger. Nobody has a recipe for terrorism, only differing explanations.

Europe with its reasonable development for more than fifty years dealing with security- and economic issues might be a good example for other regions. The draft of a treaty for a European Constitutions with its Common Foreign- and Security Policy stands for this. For faithful the banalization of that we believe in, based on an over exaggerated individualism and sometimes fundamentalist liberalism, having God, aspirin and wellness positioned on a similar level – to feel better, is a concern.

And we must not forget, we the Christians are a part of this game between religions.

Back to the “-ism” we must keep in mind that “bad things were and will be done in the name of God, but for sure not in His spirit”.

Permit me some final remarks. No one of the three options, the better world, the endangered world or the violent world will probably come as described. The reason is that decisions in the international arena today will shape the society and with this the world of tomorrow, taking into account these tendencies. We have promising cases like the aforementioned European Union.

And we have a chance to contribute, but only together. The key word is We, the clergy and the laity - together; with all of good will.

How may we do so? Not the hunt after the guilty, but the search for the deeper causes may help to an unbiased attitude.

Mandatory is that we come from a firm base, our faith.

The aim should be to support every activity which reduces violent power, intolerance, injustice, prejudice, egocentrism and fosters human dignity, mutual esteem, an objective approach and openness. .

Violence versus love does not mean flower power, it is pragmatic. A hot heart and cool brains is often unusual for us. We have the tendency to leave it to others.

The “Orientation for the Future” is not the answer, not yet. It is just a step to become more concrete and efficient. We have to amend them together.

But they might be a frame for our resolutions in this General Assembly, structured resolutions with aim, lead, team, resources, timeframe and reporting system if CICO mandated our orders to the Coordination Committee – and to us.

Orientation for the Future ⁶

“Grow Together”

This outline comprises identified intentions for the foreseeable future. Many of them have been derived from Resolutions, Recommendations and Motions of the General Assemblies (GA), founded on the results of the recent years and amended with the experience of the responsible. Before being implemented they need the basic approval by the GA and the operational decisions within the Coordination Committee (CC), if not already covered. Fully aware that within two years one should mainly implement feasible projects and undertakings, for an organization, existing since 75 years, a careful future oriented approach seems to be advisable. The already in contours visible direction in accordance with the “Declaration of Quito” from 1997 has to be the medium- and long-term aim for us (Encl A (reference in brackets)). Nevertheless besides the worldwide breathtaking especially bio-, medico- and general technical progress the undesirable impact of financial predominance and sometimes not too promising especially security- and social oriented developments and its urgent challenges ask for acting in time, which might become very short. “Today” in numerous international organizations and activities the “Tomorrow” of our globe will be shaped.

The Basis of all our activities must be our conviction, our belief, trust and love in God. We are aware of the revolutionary Orientation for the Future of our Lord “*You shall love your next as you love yourself*”, which is of paramount importance in the world of today and tomorrow. This is our mental fundament. We all in the Church must act *together*, in a common spirit, with mutual understanding. With this we can contribute to the better of the world.

“*The World is Changing, We - the ICOs - are Moving*” motivated us from Bangkok on. Beyond that we need goals which we all have in common. “*Awe before Life*” might be the capstone with the issues “*Human Dignity*” related to our God’s image and the “*Responsibility for the entrusted Environment*”. Each of our organizations can find its doings within these goals and with this itself in common with the others. If we “*Grow Together*”, come closer, this could lead to a “*we grow stronger together*” in the community of our church and beyond. This spiritual dimension and - on top of this our praying (1) - has to frame our daily work and to accompany each of our being together, the exchange of experiences concerning the application in the individual ICOs pastoral and theological education as well as the testimony for our confession - one body in one spirit is the secret of our church (Encl. B).

The Organization has to support these basic goals, therefore – within a decent timeframe of 4 to 6 years
include ICOs still outside in the CICO-community, this means more flexibility in the statutes.
Utilize the potential of *synergies*
especially with the *Holy See* and his consolidated intentions, only together the church can fulfil its mission. This means clear relations in the sense of the CC 83, also for the CICO. And with the *International Catholic Centres (ICC)*, Knowing about the key issues on the international agenda
define common objectives, derive common projects and act together. This means intensify the cooperation with the CCIC Paris, and the CCIG in Geneva, set up an agreement with ICIOC New York. (This process was revitalized in Jan 03).

(1) to (5)
cooperate in the *ecumenical* domain in the spirit of the Christian heritage and with other *religions* because of the common responsibility as concerned to ethic standards and values acting from a firm platform of roman-catholic conviction with the aim to be better represented and have an increased influence in important international bodies (3), - and with this on the future of the global society.

Necessary is therefore an up do date management (4) with clear-cut *responsibilities* for the GA, presidency, CC, projects, functional networks, financial administration, regional networks, individual ICO,
a permanent secretary, and a physical centre or a solution close to that according to the possibilities of funding, allocation and regular update of responsibilities within the CC,
a modernized internal and external *information-flow* with the aim to be visible,
a facilitated decision-process, which means deregulations in the statutes and in the by-laws (Encl A/II-IV), and an
improved *economic base*, the subventions of one Eurocent for 20 CICO members does limit the possible activities, f.i. the common projects with the ICC, to a minimum. This is a mandatory prerequisite to match the demands, which leads to the

Content: To some extend it is already defined by the GA (5). The CC has to tackle the issues of
Education, the base for the future
Communication, on the agenda of the UN and a must to exist
Violence against women, especially in war torn societies, trafficking included, as phenomenon of religious fundamentalism and as consequence of discriminations, stressing the sufferings of the Dalits in India
The *ageing* generation – a project became part of the system
The conversion of debts in the poorest countries into *counterpart funds* as basis for a sustainable development, combined with an understanding about the ethical use of funds.

This makes close cooperation with the ICC and between ICOs mandatory anyway and paves the way for further common activities, concerning information management as well as burning issues, because the Charter from Quito and with this Orientation for the Future go beyond this and demand

- that the key trends are systematically categorised and

- that after this step those contributions by organisations of the CICO are identified which have priority, are feasible and intended:

Contours of clusters and themes can be recognized, some of them are already treated in projects and networks

Make Human Society more Humane

Christian Values Leading

from Violence* to Peace

could be the general theme.

As mentioned decisions in international bodies today will determine the society of tomorrow.

We, in the Conference, should try to influence this development according to our values.

To be successful, cooperation is mandatory, therefore – in the already mentioned first step – the key topics have to be identified and then our capacity within the community of ICOs to contribute, which will be detailed later.

These key topics could be the following. In a common effort they must be scrutinized and reduced to a feasible number. A General Assembly is the unique opportunity to do so

Because of transparency reasons these potential key topics for the first step are “collected” in baskets:

(cursive letters – ongoing activities)

* Human dignity, *human rights*:

Migration, Displaced,

Violence (against Women especially in war-torn societies and Trafficking)

Health, AIDS

...*Bioethics*,

Gene technology,

Human Genome,

Euthanasia

Torture

* Social Concerns,

Underprivileged (*Dalits*)

Youth (World Youth Meeting)

...*Children in Wartime, Children Soldiers*)

Family

3. Generation (Crescendo)

* Security

Terrorism

...Civil War

* Economy and Commerce:

Order of Influence, WTO, WB etc

Sustainable Development- Hand- book for donors and recipients

* Finances:

Micro-financing,

Conversion of debts,

* Ecology and Environment.:

Water,

gene manipulated. Food

* Culture, Education

education-programs
* *Information Communication*
UN-Year 2004

* Religions, Churches
common Initiatives,
Violence

The Selection of the issues to be treated is decisive ⁷.

All activities have to be understood under the guidelines of the relevant documents of the Holy See.

Contacts and Cooperations:

Exist respectively are intended within the Conference, between some ICOs or ICCs with ICOs, with institutions of the Holy See and other organizations like:

* UN-SubOrg, i. a. UNDP, UNHCR, UNESCO, FAO

* Civil Society, : NGOs: Third World Network,
World Watch, Commission of International Judges, AI, Human Security
Network, OMTIC (Torture), Green Peace.

* World Trade Organisation, World Bank

* World Council of Churches, European Bishops Conference

Final Remarks

The mandatory activities to be successful are obvious:

Creating a trustful atmosphere utilize the potential for synergies between the Holy See, the CICO and the ICC

Enhance effective Management for example through the ICC and by using the principle of subsidiarity – ICOs or ICC act within a mandate of the Conference, followed by an evaluation of results and follow up decisions

Provide the *economic base* – to enable the following

Create functional networks for large process-oriented projects with cooperation beyond the frame of the CICO

Focus result-oriented by means of improved regional networks

Be visible, be present and cooperate in the ecumenical, inter-religious and international community – *open doors* and

Have educated, dedicated, open minded people in the forefront

to be able to contribute to the most important issues of the above listed aims – the content.

We are living in a time of an incredible worldwide transformation, an unprecedented so called technological and scientific progress, unpredictable social changes and unbelievable threats of global dimensions. Mutual influence is characteristic. A further tendency is to forget the vulnerability especially of – as many believe – developed societies and to forget the Lord. The consequences might be - carefully spoken - undesirable.

Following the Quito - Declaration we are charged with the responsibility to *understand* this development, to *inform* worldwide about the probable consequences, to offer our *solutions*, to *alleviate* hardships within the field of individual ICOs, and to avoid misleading developments. Our religion is deeply emotional, based on the rule of love by our Lord. But it is also thoroughly reasonable, because by doing so it is tailored to *contribute* to a humane future of mankind rooted in a heritage according to *our* understanding; and - there is no real alternative to this “Orientation for the Future”.

Grow Together within the Family of ICOs, the CICO could enable the fulfilment of our mission.

Resolutions and recommendations⁸

Human dignity, human rights

4)⁹ Violence against woman AIC¹⁰

Creation of audio-visual material in order to reach the illetrate and isolated woman who have no access to a written documentation. Creation also of a booklet.

10) Bio-ethic FIAMC

Information of the concerned ICOs about the today bio-ethic issues and elaboration of concrete actions proposal for tne next G.A.

3) Heath plate-form CICAMS, CCIG

Consultation and exchanges between concerned ICOs in order to carry the position of those ICOs in the HWO.

Social concerns

2) Collaboration for the WYD 2005 MIEC

Promotion of the Youth ICOs and of their specific mission during the WYD. Elaboration and dissemination of a common statement of the youth ICOs

8) International Year of Family + 10 AIC

to be defined Presence of the ICOs in the 10th anniversary of the IYF: concertation among the ICOs amd others partner or associated organisations

Economy and Trade / Finances

1) Economy in solidarity MIAMSI t

o promote within and outside the ICOs a reflection, an awareness, common and individual alternative actions (+training)

To collect and share the existing experiences and to create synergies

Culture and education

5) Education and building peace OIEC

to be defined. To continue from the conclusions of the present GA the reflections and actions initiated by the former working group

Information and communication

9) CICO policy of communication SIGNIS, CCI Geneva

to be defined Development of the website of the CICO with the creation of Intranet Amelioration of the communication of the ICOs and CICO. Training

The following recommendation were also proposed :

A)internal.....

B) To encourage and develop the inter-religious dialogue within the CICO and in relation with the concerned Dicasteries

Performance till 2005¹¹

General remarks: We in the Coordination Committee believe that our ongoing activities are in the interest of our church, unique and in the given situation of the worldwide development mandatory. This report should contribute to make our endeavours known and accepted.

Since the General Assembly (GA) in Bangkok 2001 the system how we work together has dramatically changed, a Planning- Programming- Budgeting System with regular feedbacks was introduced in 2004 after being accepted by the GA Rome Dec 03. The philosophy behind is that decisions taken in international bodies today will shape the global society of tomorrow; our Catholic values must be introduced; doing so, we must concentrate on the essentials. Starting from our strategic long range paper Charter 97 (Annex) the strategic mid term paper “Orientation for the Future” (Annex) was derived. In nine “baskets” from Human Dignity to Religion and Church 25 key issues were allocated. Seven were depicted almost unilaterally by the GA03 due to their importance for all International Catholic Organizations (ICOs), Working Groups (WG) were established following the criteria of a project with Mission, responsibility, financing and time schedule.(see below). The GA Jerusalem 05 will have to decide whether WGs should proceed in the spirit of continuity and sustainability or stop, because they have accomplished their mission or they lack efficiency or another priority prevails and introduce new WG with new resolutions; altogether it should be not much more than half a dozen. That’s one of the reasons why the participation of the ICOs’ - and the Centres’ top responsible at the GA Jerusalem 05 is so important, even more demanding is our presence at this holy and shaken place, the centre of spiritual and political gravitation. Key issues and ongoing main projects (WG) of today are: “Economy and Solidarity” working on a common manifest as base for future actions, “Bio-Ethics” – initiatives for life against Euthanasia are the issue, “Family” used the UN Year of the Family plus 10 to position the Christian view in all four global conferences, “Youth” is preparing a paper declaring the willingness to take responsibility for the world of tomorrow already today, “Violence against Women” also in a Civil War environment sets initiatives and “Education and Building Peace” is connected with the demand for an Ecumenical/ Inter religious Dialog; activities are foreseen in Sarajevo and in Jerusalem. Information services were provided f. i. to fund raising and Canon Law.

An underlying tendency to separate activities to same issues may result in suboptimal achievements. The aim is to optimize existing capacities through Cooperation. Its implementation was characterized this year by enhanced inclusion of the International Catholic Centres (ICCs) with the result that the three ICCs agreed on a closer working together relationship. The connexion with and the inclusion in the WG and Crescendo was established. The next circle of cooperation was opened through direct contacts with the World Council of Churches, UN DP, -AIDS and-ILO, the ConNGO and the World Bank.

Naturally not everything is perfect. The most significant challenges result from the resources. All twelve members of the board and the WG responsible are volunteers, being engaged in other activities within our church or tied in their profession. The finances are more than limited, the demand for and the interest in cooperation is high and the world wide developments make our contributions mandatory. Little time remains for marketing. This report should contribute to make our activities better known, accepted and hopefully supported. Conviction, charisma, willingness and being organized are prerequisites to contribute to the endeavours in our church.

¹ 32nd General Assembly in Quito, 1997

²Vatican II – G&S.no 90/1: The role of Christians in international institutions. For Christians, an excellent kind of international activity is without any doubt what they bring, individually or in group, to the institutions which aim at extending international collaborations, be it existing institutions or institutions-to-be. Moreover, the

different international catholic associations are doing multiple services for the building of a peaceful and brotherly world community. It is necessary to strengthen those associations by giving them a more numerous and well-trained staff, increasing the material means they need, and coordinating harmoniously their strengths. Indeed, nowadays, the efficiency of the action and the necessity of a dialogue ask for collective initiatives. Furthermore, such associations widely contribute to the increase in the meaning of the universal, which fits Catholics without any doubt, and to the birth of the consciousness of a real worldwide solidarity and responsibility

³ The importance member Organisations of the Conference attach to the acquisition of **Civil Status** is not due to the fact that this given them legal recognition; being officially accepted as partners by an international body means that the specific contribution they have to make is acknowledged and considered by civil society as useful and even necessary for today's world.

⁴ CICO General Assembly in Rome, Dec 2003, Study Session

⁵ The Sceptical Environmentalist, Bjorn Lomborg, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2001, translation into German – Apocalypse No, zu Klampen, Lüneburg, 2002

⁶ approved by the CICO General Assembly in Rome, Dec 2003

⁷ This process could be an essential part of the General Assembly, prepared concerted between the Prospective Committee and the Study Commission for instance in a Colloquium or in the Cooperation Committee, followed by an information to all members within the Conference and finalized in thematic Working Groups during the GA.

In general terms it could include four steps. This has to be detailed by the rules of procedures in a separate document:

Step 1: **Expand**, evaluate and select the most important issues for the future world-wide society, in common for many ICOs and ICCs in functional study-groups during the study-sessions, for instance “Bio-ethics” or “Environment”

Step 2: **Identify** capable/possible Lead-Organizations for functional networks
ICOs, ICCs, others, also Experts from “outside”

Step 3: Match issues to capacities (Step 1, 2) and propose **priorities**

Step 4: Decide on the Priorities during the General Assembly by **Resolutions** etc. Detail the aim, the responsibilities, the time-frame and the resources. If they should act in the name of the CICO, they must be well defined and a follow-up has to be established

⁸ General Assembly of the CICO Rome – December 2003.

⁹ Number of Resolution taken in this GA; decisions related to internal issues are not on this list

¹⁰ Lead ICO. See further up - ICO members

¹¹ Activity Report 2004/05, Introduction; full report web-site <www.oic-ico.org>