

# Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe aisbl



## ***Future Relationship between the Ecumenical Youth Council Europe and the Conference of European Churches after the forced loss of membership as an outcome of CEC's 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly***

The General Meeting assembled in Brno (Czech Republic) has received the detailed report of the 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the Conference of European Churches. It expresses gratitude to EYCE's Delegated Representative to the Assembly for his efforts and steadfastness in promoting the interests of EYCE and other Associated Organisations in this delicate mission to prevent the loss of their time honoured legal status. The General Meeting regrets that the original decision taken by the Assembly to keep the legal status of the Associated Organisations later had to be revoked.

EYCE looks back on more than 40 years of fruitful cooperation with the Conference of European Churches during which the ecumenical youth movement has contributed substantially to the development of a better ecumenical understanding in Europe. The Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe, through its seminars and training courses, has prepared the way for numerous future church leaders of various denominations.

The Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe had been an Associated Organisation in good standing with the Conference of European Churches until summer 2013 and earlier a member of the European Ecumenical Commission for Church and Society (EECCS) until the merger of this independent organisation into CEC in 1999. Guarantees were expressed from the side of CEC at that time that the members of EECCS who were not churches in the narrow sense would keep their legal status as Associated Organisations in the Conference of European Churches instead. It was the trust in these promises that made EYCE accept giving up its legal status it had held according to Belgian law.

The Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe respects the decision to reinvent the organisational self-understanding of the Conference of European Churches taken by its 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly. For EYCE it is difficult to identify with this new network connecting the leadership of church structures and administrations and excluding ecumenical organisations that are not church in the narrow sense of the word. Also the new term of "organisation in partnership" in a CEC register as introduced by the 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly does not reflect the understanding of mutual respect needed for a co-operation amongst independent organisations on equal footing. The 39<sup>th</sup> General Meeting therefore decides to object the enrolment of EYCE to the named "register of organisations in partnership" as inappropriate.

As an independent ecumenical youth organisation, EYCE will continue its work for equipping young people across all countries and denominations in Europe with the necessary ecumenical and intercultural

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competences they will need to deepen the ecumenical development and co-operation in a diverse continent. Wherever the future leaders of the Conference of European Churches will find it appropriate to support EYCE in fulfilling this task of providing intercultural and ecumenical education and training for theologians and lay people on a European level they are welcome to contribute with their means to its achievement according to principles of equal and mutually beneficial partnership.

The 39<sup>th</sup> General Meeting is mandating the Executive Committee:

- to transmit this decision to the Conference of European Churches;
- to enter into negotiations with other ecumenical associations in Europe (particularly working on the fields of youth and education) in order to explore new forms of cooperation and networking outside the Conference of European Churches;
- to explore new forms of cooperation with churches and church networks inside and outside the Conference of European Churches;
- to keep the Conference of European Churches informed about EYCE's programme activities and training courses.

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