

IV. Implementation

The Twentieth General Synod requests the Office of Communication to be responsible for coordinating the implementation of this Proposal for Action and requests a report be made at the next General Synod on the actions taken and results achieved.

Note: Subject to the availability of funds.

8. RESOLUTION ON "GLOBAL COMMUNICATION FOR JUSTICE"

Continuing the report of Committee Two, Mr. Perez indicated changes on page two of the printed resolution. He then moved, on behalf of Committee Two, the adoption of the Resolution "Global Communication for Justice." There was no discussion.

95-GS-44 VOTED: The Twentieth General Synod adopts the Resolution "Global Communication for Justice."

RESOLUTION "GLOBAL COMMUNICATION FOR JUSTICE"

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STATEMENT

God is a communicating God, communication is one of God's gifts to humanity, a gift that binds individuals together into communities and communities into one human family. The abuse of communication is one form of humanity's alienation from God and neighbor. The consequences of this alienation can be deadly.

The church is called to resist when any force subjugates the spirit, mind, will and voice of people to the dictates of any worldly power. The media industry today is such a worldly power.

WHY SHOULD SYNOD ACT?

The churches of the world are a global communication system. Through them the voices of those rendered voiceless because they lack access to the media can be raised to question societal trends that may be antithetical to justice, freedom and human dignity. The various settings of the United Church of Christ acting together can bring about change related to the issues addressed below.

WHEREAS the media increasingly shape consciousness and define the quest for the meaning of life;

WHEREAS citizens of developed and developing nations alike live in a global information context where information is a commodity that currently rivals factors such as control of natural resources, capital and industrial production as an important determinant of global power;

WHEREAS the media play an ever more important role in such events as political campaigns, the overthrow and creation of governments, and in the way wars are planned, fought and interpreted;

WHEREAS a very few media conglomerates (probably no more than a dozen) dominate the struggle for hundreds of millions of minds in the global community via control of television and radio, magazine and book publishing, newspapers, movie production, cable and record companies;

WHEREAS global media establishments are more and more driven by the needs and demands of world markets and less and less driven by national or cultural needs and interests of their own people;

WHEREAS people in every nation have become consumers of the values embodied in the entertainment and advertising supplied by their own or "foreign" societies; and

WHEREAS commitments to public service obligations, once part of a social contract between the government, its citizens, and the media industries, have been abrogated in the United States in favor of marketplace regulation, a concept now being exported to other nations as well.

THE GENERAL SYNOD OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IS, THEREFORE, RESOLVED TO:

- A. Place ourselves on the side of the social, cultural, economic, and spiritual development of all peoples, recognizing that such development must be based on a strong cultural identity and autonomy through which peoples define themselves, their situations and their needs;
- B. Recognize that issues of justice in local and national development cannot be addressed without a consciousness of the role of communication, nor can any group do so without access to media with which to make their views known. Such media includes, but is not limited to, broadcast communications, print, computer technology and telecommunications; and
- C. In faithful response to God and the mission of the church to call upon the United Church of Christ in all its settings to:
 1. Affirm and support uses of media that promote peace, understanding, cooperation and multi-culturalism and oppose those uses of media that encourage violence, factionalism, militarism and ethnic strife;
 2. Urge United States cable and broadcasting networks and stations to carry more programming

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from and about other nations, particularly developing nations, such programming to encompass artistic and entertainment programming as well as news and information;

3. Support freedom of movement for journalists of every nation, so that they may report freely and from first-hand observation;
4. Urge Conferences and Instrumentalities to work with U.S. companies through such groups as the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility on share holder actions to persuade U.S. Companies to respect nations' attempts to protect their cultural sovereignty;
5. Integrate sustained work for global communications justice into current peace and justice advocacy agendas, particularly those of the Board for World Ministries and the Office for Church and Society;
6. Enable the Board for World Ministries working with partner churches and ecumenical agencies to study the impact of global communications on developing nations and to develop joint strategies to counter negative effects of such impacts;
7. Request the Office of Communication, the Office for Church and Society, and the Board for World Ministries to provide research and information to citizen advocate groups on the process for participating in governmental proceedings, public policy development and rule-making in the communications arena; and
8. Request the Board for World Ministries to urge partner church bodies, as well as UNESCO, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and other similar groups to place more emphasis on funding, on training and on technical assistance for communication in developing nations.

Subject to the availability of funds.

9. RESOLUTION OF WITNESS ON "UNITED STATES OBLIGATION TO CLEAN UP HAZARDOUS WASTES AND TOXIC CONTAMINATION AT FORMER MILITARY BASES IN THE PHILIPPINES"

Moderator Taylor called on the Rev. Bob Sandman to present the work of Committee Eleven. Mr. Sandman thanked a number of committee members and called the attention of the delegates to the appropriate packet of information. Mr. Sandman spoke of the work of Committee Eleven and moved the adoption of the Resolution of Witness "United States Obligation to Clean

Up Hazardous Wastes and Toxic Contamination at Former Military Bases in the Philippines." Mr. Sandman spoke in support of the resolution and discussion followed.

Ms. Laura Draffen (MO) moved the previous question and the Twentieth General Synod voted to close debate.

95-GS-45 VOTED: The Twentieth General Synod adopts the Resolution of Witness "United States Obligation to Clean Up Hazardous Wastes and Toxic Contamination at Former Military Bases in the Philippines."

RESOLUTION ON "UNITED STATES OBLIGATION TO CLEAN UP HAZARDOUS WASTE AND TOXIC CONTAMINATION AT FORMER MILITARY BASES IN THE PHILIPPINES"

Background

Fact Sheet

Hazardous Waste and Toxic Contamination At Former U.S. Military Bases in the Philippines'

1. The U.S. maintained a military presence in the Philippines from 1898 until 1992. The presences of U.S. military bases in the Philippines was authorized by and subject to the military bases agreement of 1947. The Philippines' unique geography made the bases key to U.S. military's forward deployment of its military operations in Asia. The two major U.S. military bases in the Philippines, Subic Bay naval and Clark air bases, together accounted for more than 250 square miles of land. Clark air base was the biggest U.S. military facility outside the United States.
2. Originally for 99 years, the bases agreement was amended in 1966 and the term reduced to 25 years to end in September 1991.
3. In 1991, when the basing agreement was to terminate, the U.S. renegotiated with the Philippine government to continue its military and naval bases operations for 10 more years with a new basing agreement. However, the Philippine Senate rejected the U.S. proposed new bases treaty on the ground that it violated constitutional anti-nuclear provisions and the conduct of an independent foreign policy.
4. The major eruption of Mt. Pinatubo hastened the withdrawal of the U.S., leaving a badly damaged Clark air base and stripping Subic of infrastructure that could have facilitated its conversion to a civilian ship repair facility.
5. However, before the final U.S. withdrawal in November 1992, the U.S. and Philippine militaries signed an access agreement which allowed the U.S. port visits by its nuclear-capable warships and for joint training exercises, despite the anti-nuclear provisions of the Philippine Constitution and the rejection of the bases