

**APPENDIX G****PORVOO THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE – CONCLUDING DOCUMENT****REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Standing Committee on 23 January 2001 passed a resolution to set up a small *ad hoc* group to consider the recommendations contained in the Concluding Document of the Porvoo Theological Conference held in Durham in September 2000. A copy of these recommendations is attached.

The *ad hoc* group met in June 2001 to draw up a response to the recommendations set out in the Concluding Document. Due to the wide-ranging nature of the recommendations and the prospect of being overwhelmed by the task of attempting to address so many issues the group decided to concentrate on Section 3.3: “Youth Culture”. Rev Dr A McCormack, in his report on the Conference to Standing Committee in November 2000, stated that:

“...one of the exciting recommendations, that there should be a properly constituted study into the emergence of common youth cultures in north European Christianity, is an achievable aspiration of the greatest urgency and importance. I would myself be very keen to be part of such a study and offer my services to the Church of Ireland in this regard.”

The group discussed how such a project might be funded and executed. The following proposals were put forward as a suggested plan of action:

1. Conduct a literature search in order to establish what material there is currently available on youth culture. Some of the sources suggested for this search are: “state of the nation” papers from the government, CORI, youth departments/councils north and south.
2. Establish whether funding would be available for a study of youth cultures, eg EU funding, Priorities Fund.
3. Suggest at the next meeting of the Porvoo Contact Group that a symposium be organised to explore the interface of youth culture and the culture of the churches. Each church would be asked to complete the literature search suggested in step 1 prior to attending the symposium. The content of this search would form the raw material for the symposium with the aim of defining the objectives and *modus operandi* of a Porvoo church-wide study.
4. Explore the funding options available for conducting such a study.

The *ad hoc* group agreed that, notwithstanding the possible funding problems, this project was a worthy and even vital one for the Church of Ireland to pursue. It was felt that the future of the Church will be influenced by the trends identified by such a study.

Rt Rev WP Colton  
Rev Dr AW McCormack  
Rev DR Nuzum  
Ms CS Turner  
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31 July 2001

## THE PORVOO THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE

8-13 SEPTEMBER 2000

### SECTION THREE OF THE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT

#### RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PORVOO CHURCHES

##### 1. RESHAPING THEOLOGY

To continue theological discussion between the Porvoo churches with the aim of:

- (i) appreciating the integration of life and theology in a Christian context;
- (ii) providing an account of *communio* which supports diversity but which is also aware of the need to identify limits;
- (iii) promoting socio-ethical studies involving all Porvoo churches;
- (iv) directing attention to divisions and diversities related to race, gender, class, sexuality and spiritual culture within the church, helping each other overcome negative consequences for church and society.

##### 2. SHARING THEOLOGY

To encourage specific initiatives to:

- (i) promote the interchange of teachers, students and clergy;
- (ii) promote the interchange of ordinands through fact-finding projects for small groups representing the internal diversity of individual churches, to describe the other church in terms acceptable to the host church. The aim is to further self-understanding as well as intra-communion understanding;
- (iii) encourage the establishing of relationships between agencies, groups and individuals working in the field of *diakonia* and education;
- (iv) facilitate the exchange of literature between the churches;
- (v) offer theological tools, as already described in the Porvoo Common Statement, to address diversity in the local context.

##### 3. YOUTH CULTURE

Given the priority of this issue across the European churches, to commission a Porvoo study to look into youth cultures, with the following aims:

- (i) to find ways of facilitating the mutual interchange between 'church' and 'youth' cultures, between the resources of theology and the semantics of youth cultures;
- (ii) to contribute to the understanding of being Church within the new generation;
- (iii) to develop ministry in areas of concern distinctive to young people.

#### 4. DEVELOPING MEANS OF MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

To promote mutual accountability between our churches, by ensuring that

- (i) where a signatory church of the Porvoo Communion is in dialogue with churches outside the Communion, then other signatory churches within the Communion be invited to contribute to those consultations;
- (ii) where a signatory church of the Porvoo Communion intends to take an action which is likely to affect the boundaries of diversity within the Communion some structure of sharing information and concerns be established;
- (iii) the churches actively seek advice from each other on matters of liturgy;
- (iv) the churches promote ecumenical awareness among clergy especially in churches which have traditionally a majority position;
- (v) in the light of current economic circumstances, the churches continue to address questions of poverty and debt in our countries and overseas. Currently this implies energetic and urgent engagement in the Jubilee 2000 campaign.

#### 5. MISSION

To ensure that the diversities and divisions within our community do not hinder us from working together in mission in order to face the present crisis that the Christian churches of Europe face today by

- (i) studying the issue of a shared language/discourse between Christian and non-Christian in response to the stress on common mission contained in the Porvoo Common Statement;
- (ii) exploring how the gospel can be expressed in action and new ways of communication;
- (iii) studying the possibilities for new symbolisms to be ‘baptized’ and incorporated into liturgical practice as well as to link them to the narratives of the Christian faith;
- (iv) promoting the notion of *ecclesia domestica* (nurturing spiritual formation at home) in order to connect life, church and faith.