

WUCWO ASIA PACIFIC REGION

A. Introduction

This report is the result from the Meeting of the Board members of the Asia Pacific Region held at Casa La Salle, Rome, Italy on Monday 21 October 2013 at 5pm.

The meeting was chaired by Susana Evening, Vice President Asia Pacific Region, and all Board members from the Region present. They are Ainise Sevele (Tonga, Pacific); Catherine Mc Grath (Australia, Pacific); Jennie Widodo (Indonesia, Asia); Fortunata O'Santos (Philippines, Asia); Helen Kyung Soo Kwon (South Korea, Asia)

Susana opened the meeting with prayer and greeted the ladies with warm welcome and she apologised for poor communication amongst Board members due to lack of finance, or some technical problems. She admitted the Asia Pacific Region is too big for just one WUCWO Region because of its geographical boundaries. She reminded the forum that she is from the Pacific and she has very little knowledge about Asia. She iterated that Asia and Pacific are two different Region in the Holy See, and Pacific Region is known as Oceania Region and have its own Conference of Bishops, and she recommended that the two Regions be divided in two and WUCWO should take this issue seriously for future growth of WUCWO.

B. Matters discussed;

- i) Member Organisations in the Region; Australia, New Zealand, Fiji Islands, Tonga, (Pacific) ; Philipines, South Korea, Indonesia, India (Asia)
- ii) Countries that have shown interests in WUCWO and need some motivations through visits. In the Pacific, countries like Vanuavatu, Solomon Island, Wallis and Fatuna, Samoa, Kiribati. In Asia; Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, Hong-Kong, Need to promote WUCWO in the Region through Conference of Bishops.
- iii) Common Issues ; Migration and Trafficking; Violence Against Women and Children; Conflicts; Drug Abuse; Climate Change; Natural Disasters; Unemployment; Economic Crisis; Poverty.

C. Report from Member Organisations;

- i) India – Associate Member. Informations sent through its monthly news letter via email and website.
- ii) Australia – Quarterly newsletter sent out to member organisation via email website
 - Recently conducted the Biennial conference at Townsville in North Queensland. Theme “Faithful to my call”.
 - CWLA Inc Research Officer have submitted paper on topic such as Euthansia, Abortion and Same Sex Marriage.
 - National International Secretary represent the Organisation at CSW in New York.
 - Continue raise fund for the Charity.
- iii) Indonesia; The ICWO actively participate in improvement of life and the quality of life by reducing poverty and violence.
 - Access to education

- Women & men have equal rights and opportunities
- Role of women in the church is increasingly larger include stewardship of the church.
- Role of women in societies and politics are increasingly chosen to take leaderships.

People in Indonesia still suffer from War, in areas of armed conflicts.

Church still continuously persecuted.

Human Trafficking and Child Labour.

Lack of Education, Premature forced marriages and High rate of mortality.

iv) Tonga ;

- Tonga women are blessed with a beautiful and peaceful country where Christianity is the only practiced religion.
- The Cultural & Tradition Status of Women in the family and society puts them in a pre-eminent position.
- Right to be educated is promulgated under the Constitution.
- Women do not own land in Tonga.
- Tonga has not ratified CEDAW.

v) Philippines; Continue Pro Life programme.

vi) Fiji Islands; CWL membership have grown and become an active organisation in the Nation. CWL was part of Fiji Govt delegation to the CSW in New York in 2011.

- Represented in the Minister for Women Advisory Committee of the Fiji Women Federation.
- Chair the Interfaith Women Environment Network and National World Day of Prayer Committee.
- Champion for Clean Pacific and Clean Fiji Campaign
- Peace and Security Building
- Advocate Civic Education, Wellness, Human Rights
- Contribute to the Formulation of the National Constitution
- Women in Fiji have adequate access to Education and literacy is high amongst Women in terms of Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Education.
- Sexual exploitation of children seen to be on the rise hearing rape cases & sexual abuse of young girls and boys.
- All people living in Fiji are to be known by a common name "Fijian" to promote unity and tolerance.

GENERAL

There is a concern raised that the WUCWO Board forum and WUCWO Secretariat don't know much about the Pacific and only clear knowledge about the Asia. It was proofed on Susana ID and file where her name printed as VP Asia. Most times during the meeting when reference made to Asia and not mentioning Pacific.

Pacific Region is classified in the Holy See as "Oceania" and has its own Bishop's Conference. And Asia has its own Conference of Bishops.

Susana continue to say that the “Pacific island countries are widely dispersed over an ocean that covers one third of the earth’s surface. These island states are separated by vast distances. Transport within and between Pacific Island Countries is a significant problem. The distances and difficulties in reaching small islands states are formidable, posing logistical, cost and time – related barriers.

In general, Pacific Islands Countries have fragile economies based on Tourism, some light industries, agriculture, forestry and fisheries. The small size of domestic markets and daunting distances from larger Pacific rim economies make the goods and services produced locally uncompetitive. While fisheries appear to offer some hope for economic development, most countries lack the resource for sustainable commercial exploitation.

Therefore it is recommended that the next WUCWO Assembly after Fatima Assembly 2014 be brought to the Pacific, preferably Fiji Islands.

Susana Evening
VP Asia Pacific