

# „Social Justice in a globalised World“

## Study Days of the Conference of European Justice and Peace Commissions (27 and 28 October 2003 in Geneva, Switzerland)

Dedicating this year's Study Days (27 and 28 October) to the issue of 'Social Justice in a globalised World', the Conference of European Justice and Peace Commissions aimed to face the complexity of the current socio-economic realities and take on the resulting challenges. The world order as we know it up to now, building on geographic criteria and the borders of nation states, is getting replaced with a world organised in networks. Within these networks different cultures are mixed and economic power gets increasingly important.

Three topics set the tone of the Study Days, attended by 18 Justice and Peace Commissions and chaired by the newly elected Conference President Josef Bieger, of the Swiss National Justice and Peace Commission.

Referring to the failed WTO negotiations of Cancún in September, the participants of the Study Days pointed out that worldwide social justice couldn't be provided with the currently available tools. Conflict management strategies of WTO, presented by Gabrielle Marceau (WTO), are exclusively focused on commercial issues. They are not including Human Rights and environmental rights. A global institution able to push through sustainable development policies as a priority in international negotiations is lacking. The debate on the Colombian reality with participation of Father Alejandro Angulo (sj, CINEP, Bogotá) and representatives of Nestlé and Novartis Foundation, showed how difficult it is in a country shaken by crisis, to bring together private companies and social actors, searching for political conflict management solutions. Their priorities differ considerably and so do their expectations. Nevertheless, the necessity of a dialogue including all social forces of Colombia remains urgent.

The third part of the Study Days was dedicated to the diversity of the cultures and experiences.

Anthropologist Isabelle Schulte-Tenckhoff demonstrated how migration has caused mixing of cultures. Cultures are no longer limited to fixed region.

Historic, but also recent experiences do not facilitate the perception of poverty on a global scale in Central and Eastern Europe (Lecture of Piotr Cywinski, KIK, Warsaw). A debate on this issue and activities resulting of this debate in the West and the East of Europe are necessary. This way, social networks can be strengthened, locally (integration within multi-cultural societies) and globally (concrete declarations of solidarity with the poorest parts of society).

In his closing words, Father Dominique Peccoud (sj, ILO) invited the Conference of European Justice and Peace Commissions to join the efforts of ILO to create a Security Council for Economic and Social Issues.

---

### Josef Bieger-Hänggi: new President of the Conference of European Justice and Peace Commissions

At the Annual Assembly of the Conference of European Justice and Peace Commissions, a change within the Swiss Presidency took place. President Jeanine Kosch resigned out of professional reasons. Theologian and Sociologist Dr. Josef Bieger-Hänggi from Basel took over her position. He will preside the Conference until 2005. The General Secretariat in Berne remains under the direction of Sonja Kaufmann.

For further information (e.g. complete list of lecturers) please contact: Sonja Kaufmann, General Secretary, phone: +41 76 347 46 55.

Berne, 31 October 2003

Source: Justice and Peace Europe, 28.10.2003