



Christian Conference of Asia



ANNUAL REPORT
PROGRAMMES & ACTIVITIES

2025

“Enduring Faith and Embracing Unity”

FOREWORD

I am pleased to present this Annual Report 2025 once again in the tenth year of my tenure, as I conclude my two five-year terms as General Secretary of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), which began in 2015. From the first year of assuming this responsibility, I have tried to prepare and present detailed reports on the programmes and activities implemented throughout the year. These reports have been widely recognised as helpful tools for the constituency and members of the wider ecumenical family to understand and assess the work of CCA. The present report looks back on a year of headwinds and offers a snapshot of how CCA continued its ecumenical journey while responding to innumerable challenges in the world as part of our Christian witness and obedience to God's calling.

While trying to advance the goals envisaged at the beginning of the year, the agenda remained central to CCA's strategic programme plan and framework. Working closely with member churches and councils, and with the generous support and encouragement of various regional and international organisations and institutions, CCA tried to deepen its long-standing commitment to the people and communities across the region. This collaborative engagement strengthened our ecumenical commitments to all God's people in Asia and beyond.

Through four thematic programme areas, as well as within the framework of the General Secretariat, several new initiatives and ongoing programmes were implemented in 2025. This narrative report brings out details of all these activities carried out during the year despite many adversities. The report also serves as an indicator of how CCA tried to translate our shared values into meaningful action while responding to expressed concerns and journeying with all God's people in Asia.

Yours along the journey,



Dr Mathews George Chunakara
General Secretary



CONTENTS

I	<p>► General Secretariat ----- 5</p> <p>Liaison with Governing Board and Advisory Committee----- 5</p> <p>Church and Ecumenical Relations----- 7</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Visit of Church Leaders and Ecumenical Partners to CCA Headquarters----- 11</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Relations with Ecumenical Partners----- 11</p> <p>Communications----- 18</p> <p>Publications ----- 19</p> <p>CCA Staff ----- 19</p> <p>Youth Internship and Training----- 19</p> <p>In Memoriam ----- 19</p>
II	<p>► Mission in Unity (MU) ----- 21</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Commemoration of the 1700th Anniversary of the First Council of Nicaea---- 22</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">International Consultation on ‘Artificial Intelligence and Posthumanism: Ethical and Theological Perspectives’ ----- 23</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Asia Sunday ----- 30</p>
III	<p>► Ecumenical Formation (EF)----- 33</p> <p>Ecumenical Enablers’ Training in Asia (EETA)----- 34</p> <p>Asian Ecumenical Institute (AEI)–2025 ----- 35</p> <p>Good Governance, Stewardship, and Integrity Leadership ----- 41</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">National Workshop on Good Governance, Stewardship, and Integrity Leadership in Parish Ministry (Chennai, India) 41</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">National Workshop on Good Governance, Stewardship, and Integrity Leadership in Parish Ministry (Kolkata, India) 44</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">South Asia Regional Workshop on Good Governance, Integrity Leadership and Stewardship in Parish Ministry (Colombo, Sri Lanka)----- 46</p>
IV	<p>► Building Peace (BP) ----- 49</p> <p>Solidarity and Accompaniment----- 50</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">WCC-CCA Pastoral Visit to Myanmar ----- 50</p>

International Consultation on Emerging Geopolitical Reconfiguration in South Asia: Challenges to People’s Security and Peace with Justice -----	52
Ecumenical Women’s Advocacy Against Violence (EWAAV) -----	58
National Consultation on Empowerment and Collective Action to End Violence Against Women -----	58
Asian Ecumenical Women’s Conference-----	60
Young Ambassadors of Peace in Asia (YAPA) -----	64
International Inter-Religious Conference on Freedom of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities in Asia -----	67
Myanmar Ecumenical Solidarity Accompaniment Programme (MESAP) -----	74
International Conference on ‘Towards a Global Advocacy for People’s Security, Peace with Justice and Democratisation in Myanmar’ ----	74
<hr/>	
V ▶ Public Witness and Advocacy (PW) -----	79
Emerging Issues in Asia: Regional and Global Advocacy -----	80
International Consultation on ‘Combating Forced Migration, Human Trafficking, and Increased Cyber Crime in Asia’ -----	87
Ecumenical Diakonia Network in Asia (EDNA) -----	91
Asian Church Leaders’ Conference on Ecumenical Diakonia: Accompaniment, Solidarity, and Participation in God’s Mission -----	91
Action Together in Combating HIV and AIDS in Asia (ATCHAA) -----	96
National Capacity Building for Church Leaders -----	96
National Capacity Building for Young People in Indonesia -----	98
<hr/>	
Appendices -----	100
1. Communiqué -----	100
a. International Consultation on Combatting Human Trafficking, Forced Migration and Cybercrime in Asia -----	100
b. International Interreligious Conference on Freedom of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities in Asia-----	102
c. International Consultation on ‘Artificial Intelligence and Posthumanism: Ethical and Theological Perspectives’-----	105

d. Asian Ecumenical Women’s Conference on ‘Towards Upholding the Dignity and Rights of Women in Asia’ ----	107
e. Asian Church Leaders’ Conference on Ecumenical Diakonia: Accompaniment, Solidarity, and Participation in God’s Mission-----	110
f. International Conference on ‘Towards a Global Advocacy for People’s Security, Peace with Justice, and Democratisation in Myanmar’-----	113
2. Report of the General Secretary to the Executive Committee-----	116
3. CCA Programmes and Activities in 2025-----	127
4. CCA Executive Committee Members 2023-2028-----	129
5. CCA Programme Committee Members 2023-2028-----	129
6. CCA Finance Committee Members 2023-2028-----	130
7. Asian Ecumenical Committee-----	130
8. CCA Hong Kong Board of Directors-----	130
9. CCA Management and Investment Committee-----	130
10. CCA Foundation Thailand-----	131
11. CCA Staff Members 2025-----	131



► GENERAL SECRETARIAT

The General Secretariat of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) oversees and coordinates programmes across the four programme areas. In 2025, the General Secretary led the planning, coordination, implementation, and monitoring of all CCA programmes and activities, while strengthening church and ecumenical relations in Asia and beyond. Several programmes were organised in collaboration with member churches and councils, and the Secretariat accompanied member constituencies in capacity-building initiatives.

In carrying out its mandate, the General Secretariat strengthens relationships with member churches and councils, works closely with the governing board and advisory committees, engages with governments and intergovernmental organisations, and ensures the effective communication of CCA's work.

Liaison with Governing Board and Advisory Committee

CCA Executive Committee Meeting

19-21 November 2025 | Chiang Mai, Thailand

The meeting of the Executive Committee was held from 19 to 21 November 2025 at the headquarters of CCA in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The report presented by the General Secretary at the beginning of the meeting highlighted several pertinent issues and concerns in the emerging Asian context, as well as the programmes and activities implemented since the previous Executive Committee meeting. He also presented proposals related to major events that CCA will initiate over the next three years.

In his report, the General Secretary expressed concern over what he described as a growing trend of an “ecumenical archipelago” in Asia. He observed that a fragmented landscape, shaped by denominational and confessional interests, competing mission agendas of parachurches, and freelance evangelists, is hindering ecclesial unity and

CCA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Executive Committee Members with CCA staff in Chiang Mai, Thailand



Dr Mathews George Chunakara presenting the General Secretary's Report



Decision making process

ecumenical coherence in the region. He warned that rising denominationalism, aggressive missionary competition, and the proliferation of isolated ecumenical platforms risk weakening the collective witness and cooperation among churches in Asia. The General Secretary called upon Asian churches and councils to renew their commitment to shared ecumenical formation, collaboration, and solidarity. He also emphasised the need for an ecumenical response to ongoing and emerging issues, particularly conflicts in Asia, including those in Myanmar, the Cambodia–Thailand border region, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, the tensions between China and Taiwan, and the Korean Peninsula, all of which continue to pose threats to peace and security in the region.

The Executive Committee accepted the General Secretary’s proposal to organise the commemoration of the CCA’s Platinum Jubilee in 2027 and to organise major programmes in conjunction with the Platinum Jubilee celebrations, including an Asia Mission Conference (AMC) and the Congress of Asian Theologians (CATS-XI). It was decided that the AMC and the CATS-XI will be organised in April 2027 as part of a series of programmes leading up to the Platinum Jubilee commemoration and thanksgiving, marking 70 years since CCA’s founding. The Executive Committee also decided to schedule the 16th General Assembly in 2029 instead of 2028, allowing sufficient time for appropriate planning in

light of the major programmes to be held in 2027.

Furthermore, the Executive Committee approved the General Secretary’s proposal to initiate two key projects aimed at strengthening administrative efficiency: the digitisation of CCA’s historical documents, publications, and photographs, and the centralisation of core administrative functions through an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. The ERP system would help integrate data into a single platform, improve communication and coordination, and support more efficient planning and implementation across programme areas.

The Executive Committee also decided to commission the writing of CCA’s history by Dr Mathews George Chunakara following his retirement in June. The publication, covering the life and witness of CCA over the past seventy years, would be released during the Platinum Jubilee in 2027.

The Executive Committee elected Rev. Jung Eun Moon as the next General Secretary of CCA. An ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church of Korea, she has served CCA as a programme coordinator for the past 13 years.

The Executive Committee also appointed three new programme coordinators, Ms Arceli Pepito Bile (Ecumenical Leadership Formation); Mr John Paul Devakumar (Mission in Unity); and Ms Navya Dinah Saji (Communications and Publications).

Church and Ecumenical Relations

Church and ecumenical relations of CCA are primarily entrusted to the General Secretary who coordinates this specific area of activities including official visits and engagement with member churches and ecumenical partners.

- The General Secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC), Rev. Prof.

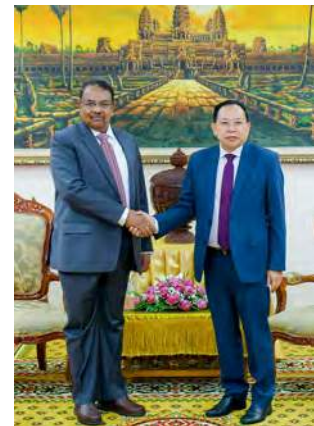
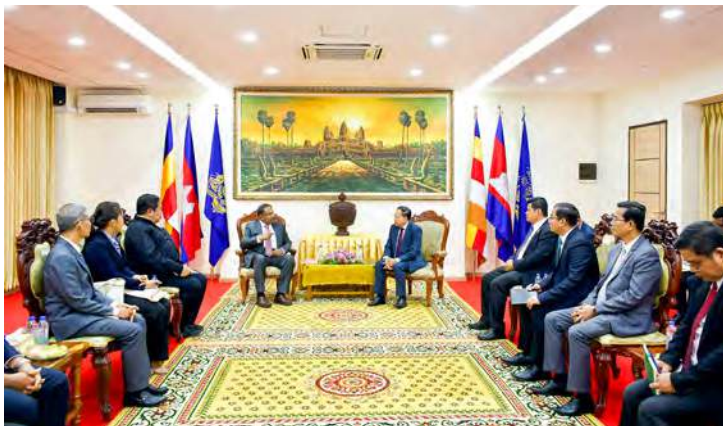
Dr Jerry Pillay, visited churches in the southern parts of India and attended the 130th Maramon Convention of the Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church, held in February 2025, a significant gathering for Christians worldwide focused on spiritual renewal, community building, and discussions on

pertinent social issues. Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay delivered the thematic address at the Convention. The CCA General Secretary was invited to be part of the WCC delegation during this visit and facilitated various meetings of the WCC and CCA General Secretaries during the Maramon Convention.

- The International Reference Group meeting of the Pilgrimage of Justice, Reconciliation, and Unity programme of the World Council of Churches (WCC) was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka in March 2025. CCA facilitated the meeting in collaboration with the National Christian Council of Sri Lanka. During his participation, the CCA General Secretary also met with the leadership of various churches and with representatives of

the National Christian Council of Sri Lanka.

- CCA member church in India, the Malankara Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church consecrated the head of the Church Catholicos His Beatitude Catholicos Aboon Mor Baselios Joseph. On behalf of CCA, General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara attended the enthronement ceremony and the Public reception of Catholicos Aboon Mor Baselios Joseph, which was held in March 2025 at the headquarters of the Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church at the Puthencruz Patriarchal Centre. He conveyed CCA's greetings to Catholicos Aboon Mor Baselios Joseph during the public meeting.



CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara meeting with the Minister of Cults and Religion of the Kingdom of Cambodia, His Excellency Chay Borin

- CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara visited Cambodia, accompanied by two staff members, and met with the Minister of Cults and Religion of the Kingdom of Cambodia, His Excellency Chay Borin, and other officials at the Ministry's headquarters in Phnom Penh on 1 April 2025. Representatives of CCA's member council in Cambodia, the Kampuchea Christian Council (KCC),

were also present at the meeting. The primary purpose of the meeting was to support Cambodian churches and the new leadership of KCC in their efforts to strengthen relations with the Government of Cambodia.

- The CCA General Secretary was invited as the Chief Guest at the Convocation Ceremony of the Malankara Syrian



CCA General Secretary as the Chief Guest at the Convocation Ceremony of the Malankara Syrian Orthodox Theological Seminary

Orthodox Theological Seminary (Udayagiri, Vettickal, Ernakulam) of the Malankara Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church. Dr Mathews George Chunakara attended the ceremony and delivered the keynote address on 30 April 2025.

- The CCA General Secretary, Dr Mathews George Chunakara, has been serving as Moderator of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the World Council of Churches (CCIA-WCC) since 2023. A meeting of the CCIA-WCC was held in Athens, Greece from 17 to 23 May 2025, at which he provided leadership in his capacity as Moderator.
- The Diamond Jubilee celebration marking 75 years of the faithful witness and service of the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI) was held on 30 May 2025. The CCA General Secretary delivered a virtual message of greetings and congratulations on the occasion.
- The Central Committee of the WCC was held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 18 to 24 June 2025. The CCA

General Secretary was invited to serve as an Advisor to the Central Committee and as a facilitator for the Asia Regional Meeting.

- In the context of the ongoing crisis in Myanmar following the military coup and the increased militarisation in the country, both the CCA and the WCC have continued to express their concerns in various ways and have been actively engaged in advocacy related to democratisation, human rights, and peace with justice in Myanmar.

CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara and WCC General Secretary Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay visited Myanmar from 10 to 12 October 2025 for pastoral and solidarity visits to member churches, the member council, and ecumenical organisations and institutions. The visit included meetings with most CCA and WCC member churches in the country, Christian and ecumenical organisations, the Roman Catholic Church, and interfaith organisations.



CCA General Secretary at the Sixth World Conference on Faith and Order of the WCC in Cairo, Egypt

(Picture Credit: WCC)

- On 14 October 2025, at a workshop facilitated by the NCC–Korea during the General Council of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George conveyed a message of greetings and delivered a presentation on the ecumenical response to the crisis on the Korean Peninsula.
- The Sixth World Conference on Faith and Order of the WCC was held from 24 to 28 October 2025 at Wadi El Natrun, Egypt, on the theme ‘Where Now for Visible Unity?’ CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara represented CCA at the conference and facilitated the Asia Regional Meeting.



Asian Ecumenical Institute alumni with the CCA General Secretary at the Sixth World Conference on Faith and Order in Cairo

Visit of Church Leaders and Ecumenical Partners to CCA Headquarters

- The Executive Committee of the Seoul Gangnam Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of Korea visited the CCA headquarters on 14 January 2025. The CCA General Secretary, Dr Mathews George Chunakara, welcomed the delegation and expressed his appreciation for their willingness to visit and to learn more about CCA and its activities.
- Participants of the Catholic Youth Leadership Academy (CAYLA) visited the CCA headquarters on 22 January 2025. The CCA staff team welcomed the 26-member group and provided an informative presentation on the CCA's history and its key programme areas.
- CCA General Secretary and senior staff members met with Mrs Sue Kinsler, President of the Kinsler Foundation (USA), in Chiang Mai, Thailand on 3 April 2025 during her week-long visit.
- Participants of the Asia Kachin Baptist Association (AKBA) Youth Empowerment Leadership Training Programme visited the CCA headquarters on 10 April 2025. The diverse delegation included students, young pastors, and youth leaders—active members of church youth departments and leaders within the AKBA. They engaged in dialogue with the CCA General Secretary and programme staff on peace and reconciliation.
- Rev. Dr Jong Goo Kim, a senior pastor and ecumenical leader from the Korean Methodist Church Seoul Conference, together with a three-member team, visited the CCA headquarters on 24 June 2025 and met with the CCA General Secretary and other staff members.
- Rev. Jung Hoon, the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Korea visited CCA on 22 October 2025.
- A group of pastors from the Presbyterian Church of Korea and delegates of the Presbyterian Women's Association visited the CCA Headquarters on 23 October 2025.

Relations with Ecumenical Partners

WCC General Secretary's Visit to the CCA and Gathering of Global Ecumenical Leaders

The General Secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC), Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay, visited the CCA on 15–16 October 2025. A fellowship dinner was organised by CCA in honour of Dr Pillay, welcoming him during his first visit to the CCA. The special gathering hosted by CCA provided an opportunity to welcome more than one hundred guests, mostly Asian church leaders belonging to CCA member churches, as well as representatives of global ecumenical partner agencies and churches who were attending the 27th

General Council of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC). Representatives of ecumenical partner organisations and churches attended from Europe, North America, the Caribbean, and Africa, alongside interfaith leaders and representatives of churches in Thailand.

Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay expressed his gratitude to CCA for the warm welcome and emphasised the importance of collaboration and unity in addressing today's global challenges. He also commended the CCA for its longstanding

Church leaders visit CCA Headquarters



Executive Committee of the Seoul Gangnam Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of Korea



Asia Kachin Baptist Association (AKBA) youth leaders



Rev. Jung Hoon, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Korea with CCA General Secretary



Delegation from Presbyterian Church of Korea

partnership with the WCC, highlighting the recent joint pastoral solidarity visit of the WCC and CCA General Secretaries to Myanmar as a meaningful example of effective cooperation. He said, “We are pilgrims and co-pilgrims, journeying together. WCC wants to be present with you: to struggle with you, to rejoice with

you, to support you, and to advocate alongside you. We want to amplify your voices and tell your stories so the world may know and listen. Where there is struggle, there must be unity, togetherness, and collaboration in serving God and God’s people.”

World Communion of Reformed Churches General Council in Chiang Mai

The 27th General Council of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) was held in Chiang Mai from 14 to 23 October 2025. The CCA General Secretary extended greetings to the delegates and participants of the General Council, which were delivered at the opening session by CCA Executive Committee member Rev. Prof. Dr Pradit Takerngrangsarit. The CCA General Secretary stated, “The theme of the WCRC General Council, ‘Persevere in Your Witness’, is most pertinent in today’s global context. It is indeed an opportunity to reflect on the enormous challenges we face as we continue to witness Christ, our Saviour, liberator, and sustainer.” Dr Chunakara also acknowledged the WCRC’s ongoing mission to strengthen unity among Reformed churches worldwide and to foster ecumenical collaboration beyond denominational boundaries.

During the General Council, the CCA General Secretary was invited to address the opening of two special sessions on peace on the Korean Peninsula and ecumenical responses, together with the General Secretaries of the WCC and the WCRC. These special sessions, held on the first and second days of the General Council, were organised and facilitated by the National Council of Churches in Korea in response to the emerging crisis on the Korean Peninsula.

The CCA General Secretary emphasised that the Korean Peninsula remains a significant geopolitical concern in Asia



CCA’s greetings extended at the General Council of the World Communion of Reformed Churches

and that peace advocacy should extend beyond the immediate subregional countries of Northeast Asia. He encouraged broader Asian solidarity and wider engagement by churches and the ecumenical movement. He further highlighted the steadfast and enduring efforts of Korean churches, together with the global ecumenical community, in promoting peace and reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula, particularly since the Tozanso Consultation organised by the World Council of Churches in 1984. Drawing on more than three decades of active involvement in ecumenical peace advocacy for Korea through his roles in both the CCA and the WCC, Dr Mathews George encouraged Korean churches to

WCC General Secretary Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay at CCA Headquarters



WCC General Secretary Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay with CCA staff at the CCA headquarters



WCC General Secretary addresses ecumenical gathering at CCA headquarters.
Left to right: WCC Asia President Rev. Dr Henrietta H. Lebang and Dr Mathews George Chunakara



Visitors at the CCA headquarters familiarising themselves with CCA publications



CCA General Secretary welcomes global ecumenical leaders to CCA



International Guests at CCA Headquarters



Fellowship dinner with WCC General Secretary Rev. Prof Dr Jerry Pillay and WCC Asia President Rev. Dr Henrietta Hutabarat Lebang at the CCA headquarters

engage all Asian churches in this work and urged them to invite the wider Asian Christian community to stand in solidarity and actively participate in promoting peace on the Korean Peninsula.

During its General Council, the WCRC celebrated its 150th anniversary on Sunday, 19 October 2025, which the CCA General Secretary also attended.



WCC General Secretary Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay and CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara at the NCCCK Workshop



WCC-CCA General Secretaries with the leadership of the Church of Christ in Thailand (CCT) at the CCT headquarters in Bangkok

CCA at the United Church of Canada Asia Consultation

The United Church of Canada (UCC) convened an Asia Partners Consultation on Decolonisation and Mutual Radical

Accompaniment in Partnership from 19–20 May 2025 in Manila, Philippines. Ms Arceli Pepito-Bile, CCA programme staff,



represented CCA at this consultation. The consultation sought to create a platform for conversation between the UCC and its partners in Asia, enabling the UCC to gain a deeper understanding of the lived realities, histories, and current contexts of its Asian partners. By engaging in collective reflection on decolonisation within the Asian context, the consultation aimed

to further strengthen the practice of Mutual Radical Accompaniment, fostering relationships marked by solidarity and a shared commitment to deconstructing colonial patterns of partnership. The meeting also served as an opportunity for the UCC and its Asian partners to envision pathways towards more faithful partnership and ecumenical solidarity.

CCA at United Nations ECOSOC

The Christian Conference of Asia has maintained its special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), granted in 2004, continuing to accredit the participation of Asian church representatives at UN events as needed and upon the request of member churches. CCA is also a member,

and continues to serve on the Regional Committee in Asia-Pacific (RCAP) of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CoNGO). During the year, CCA facilitated the accreditation of Asian activists to participate in the UN Human Rights Commission as part of its advocacy efforts.

Communications

In 2025, CCA continued to strengthen its digital presence and amplify its voice across platforms. Through consistent website maintenance and timely updates, the Communications team ensured that information on CCA programmes, activities, and developments remained current, accessible, and relevant to member churches and partners. To further broaden outreach, all CCA news releases were published on the website and distributed to the organisation’s extensive subscriber base of more than 5,600 contacts, ensuring timely dissemination of information to a wide network.

Communications efforts further deepened engagement with member constituencies and global ecumenical partners through the strategic use of social media platforms. Regular programme highlights were shared through photos and short video formats,

enhancing visibility and encouraging meaningful audience interaction. The popular “Monday Genesis” and “Midweek Gallery” campaigns continued to resonate with followers and were complemented by periodic interviews featuring programme participants. In January, a special weekly campaign, “Tuesday ArchiView,” was launched and continued throughout the year, showcasing the distinctive architecture of Asian Christian churches.

Overall, 2025 marked a significant milestone in CCA’s communications work, generating increased visibility, engagement, and media reach across platforms. Social media interactions grew steadily, enabling CCA to connect with broader and more diverse audiences while strengthening interest in its programmes and activities.

CCA Publications

CCA published the following reports, liturgical materials, and books in 2025:

- Asia Sunday – 2025 Liturgy
- Report of Programmes and Activities 2024
- Strategic Programme Plan 2025
- Report and Minutes of the 15th CCA General Assembly
- Echoes of Nicaea: Enduring Faith and Embracing Unity — a 482-page volume comprising academic papers presented during the Tenth Congress of Asian Theologians (CATS-X), held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- Papers and Report of the International Conference on “Towards a Global Advocacy for Democratisation, People’s Security, and Peace with Justice in Myanmar”

CCA Staff

New recruitments and appointments of programme and administrative staff members were made: Hnin Wai Thi Aung (Myanmar) was appointed as Programme Associate; Sineeporn Pongraveevongsa

(Thailand) and Nyaung Lin Kyein (Myanmar) were appointed as finance staff; and Netnapa Rattanjiamrangsri (Thailand) was appointed as staff for Administration and Office Management.

Youth Internship and Training

CCA continued to offer youth internships and training opportunities for young individuals from its member churches and councils. New interns recruited in

2025 were Bony N. Boby (Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church, India) and Ishan Malitha (Church of Ceylon, Sri Lanka).

In Memoriam

In 2025, several Asian church and ecumenical leaders who were part of CCA’s ecumenical fraternity passed away. CCA expressed its condolences on the sad demise of the following friends:

Harold Williams, a former Communications Secretary of CCA, passed away on 29 January 2025 at the age of 74. Mr Williams joined CCA in 1992 and played a significant role in strengthening its communications initiatives while the headquarters was based in Hong Kong, serving the CCA until 1996. Prior to this, he worked at the office of the Synod of the Church of North India as the Head of the Communications Department and editor of its monthly

journal, North India Church Review, along with other publications. He also served as Communications Secretary of The Leprosy Mission in India and later as Director of Programmes at the YMCA Greater Noida.

CCA extended its deepest condolences to the Roman Catholic Church on the death of **His Holiness Pope Francis**, Bishop of Rome and Head of the Roman Catholic Church, who entered eternal rest on 21 April 2025 at the age of 88. Pope Francis was both a spiritual leader and a statesman of rare moral authority, who inspired millions around the world and taught all to love one another, live faithfully according to the values of the Gospel, and care for the vulnerable and marginalised. A copy of



the CCA's condolence message was shared with the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC).

Most Revd Michael A. Baroi, former Moderator of the Church of Bangladesh (CoB), passed away on 17 May 2025 at the age of 80. Bishop Baroi was consecrated as the first Bishop of the Kushtia Diocese in 1990. Throughout his life and ministry, he remained deeply committed to sharing the Gospel, nurturing future generations of leaders, and fostering a spirit of unity and community among believers. Bishop Baroi participated in several CCA programmes in different parts of Asia.

Rev. Dr Elizabeth S Tapia, the first Women's Concerns Programme Secretary of CCA and a distinguished Asian theological educator, passed away on 5 June 2025. She was an ordained minister of the United Methodist Church in the Philippines. Rev. Dr Tapia served the World Council of Churches at the Bossey Ecumenical Institute as Professor of Mission and Contextual Theology. She taught widely in the fields of mission, contextual theology, and ecumenism at John Wesley College of Divinity and Union Theological Seminary in the Philippines. She also served as Director of Mission Theology at the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church in the United States of America.

Bishop Kenneth M Fernando, former CCA President and elder statesman of

the Church of Ceylon, passed away on 3 September 2025 at the age of 93. Bishop Fernando served as President of CCA from 1995 to 2000 and as the Secretary of the Diocese of Colombo from 1992 to 2000. He was widely respected for his unwavering commitment to reconciliation during Sri Lanka's decades-long civil war, courageously leading peacebuilding initiatives and seeking to bridge divides between warring ethnic and religious communities.

Rev. Dr Sharon Rose Joy Ruiz-Duremdes, a renowned ecumenical leader, theological educator, and former General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), passed away on 30 October 2025 at the age of 78. Rev. Dr Sharon served as a member of the General Committee of the Christian Conference of Asia from 2000 to 2005. She was the first woman elected to serve as General Secretary of the NCCP (2000–2007), leading the Council with courage and vision in its prophetic witness for human rights, gender justice, environmental stewardship, and the pursuit of just and lasting peace. She also headed an international delegation of church leaders and human rights advocates that presented reports to the US Congress, the Canadian Parliament, the European Union in Brussels, and the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva.



MISSION IN UNITY (MU)

OBJECTIVES

- To promote awareness of emerging issues in Asia and to strengthen the Church's mission and witness in contemporary post-colonial contexts and multi-religious contexts of Asia;
- To assist member churches and councils of CCA in engaging in mission and their roles in contemporary Asian social, political, economic, religious, and ecological issues for unity;
- To bring positive and constructive transformation in the light of revitalising and nurturing the unity of churches and the ecumenical movement in Asia;
- To develop relevant contextual theological undergirding for mission and witness while addressing emerging issues in Asia;
- To strengthen collaboration and cooperation among churches and various ecumenical actors in Asia and from other parts of the world that are engaged in mission and witness in Asia;
- To engage in interreligious harmony, making peace as a theological paradigm focusing on the peaceful coexistence of all Asian people;
- To initiate, facilitate, and strengthen ecumenical theological initiatives in Asia.

Commemoration of the 1700th Anniversary of the First Council of Nicaea

6-8 August 2025 | Dili, Timor-Leste



*Participants of the Commemoration of the 1700th Anniversary of the
First Council of Nicaea in Dili, Timor Leste*

The Centro Formacao Teologia (CFT-IPTL) of the Protestant Church in Timor-Leste (Igreja Protestante iha Timor Lorosa'e – IPTL), in partnership with the Superior Institute of Philosophy and Theology (ISFIT) of the Catholic Church in Timor-Leste, organised a landmark ecumenical commemoration to mark the 1700th anniversary of the Nicene Creed and the First Council of Nicaea (325 AD).

The three-day event, held from 6 to 8 August 2025 under the theme “Echoes of Nicaea” and the sub-theme “Flourishing Faith and Celebrating Unity in Diversity”, brought together more than 100 church leaders, theologians, clergy, seminarians and ecumenical partners from across the country to reflect on the historical and theological significance of the Nicene Creed in today’s context. CCA partnered in organising the commemoration, coordinated by its member church IPTL, and the event was attended by bishops

of the Catholic Church in Timor-Leste, senior clergy of IPTL, and theological educators from both institutions. Among those present were Rev. Domingos Alves, Moderator of IPTL; Rev. Miguel Ballo da Costa, General Secretary of IPTL; Rev. Moises A da Silva, senior clergy of IPTL and former CCA Executive Committee member; Rev. Francisco Maria de Vasconcelos, former CCA Presidium member (2005–2010); and Rev. Levi de Vasconcelos Pinto, Secretary of DFT-IPTL and member of the CCA Executive Committee.

In his welcome address, Rev. Levi de Vasconcelos Pinto underscored the need for a new generation of theological leaders formed through ecumenical collaboration, noting that this historic commemoration in Dili between CFT-IPTL and ISFIT represented a prophetic step towards building bridges of unity and a seed of deeper fellowship, bolder witness and renewed commitment to the one

holy, catholic and apostolic Church in the spirit of Nicaea.

The commemoration featured ecumenical liturgies, theological reflections, panel

discussions and community engagement, all centred on the enduring relevance of the Nicene Creed and its call to Trinitarian faith and visible unity in the body of Christ.

International Consultation on ‘Artificial Intelligence and Posthumanism: Ethical and Theological Perspectives’

1-4 October | Cyberjaya, Malaysia

“What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?” This resounding question, echoing Tertullian’s ancient paradox, set the tone for the international consultation organised by the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) at the Dashbox Hotel in Cyberjaya, Malaysia. Bringing together ethicists, theologians, scientists and

medical professionals from across Asia and beyond, the four-day consultation explored the complex relationship between Artificial Intelligence (AI), faith and human identity under the theme “Artificial Intelligence and Posthumanism: Ethical and Theological Perspectives”.



Participants of the International Consultation on “Artificial Intelligence and Posthumanism: Ethical and Theological Perspectives”

Held in Malaysia’s first smart city, the consultation marked the fulfilment of CCA’s vision to engage Asia’s churches in dialogue on the ethical, theological and missional implications of emerging technologies. With AI transforming every sphere of life, CCA sought to create an Asian ecumenical platform for critical reflection, ethical discernment and responsible engagement with technology. The international consultation aimed to foster theological dialogue grounded in

Asian Christian experience, identify the disruptions and opportunities posed by AI, and promote prophetic responses from churches in the region.

The consultation opened with words of welcome from Dr Anna Alisha Mathew Simon, CCA Vice-Moderator. In his opening address, Dr Mathews George Chunakara, CCA General Secretary, noted that AI has moved from futuristic imagination to daily reality, reshaping society at every level.



*Dr Mathews George Chunakara
General Secretary, CCA*



*Prof. Dr Takeshi Kimura
University of Tsukuba, Japan*



*Dr Judy Berinai
Sabah Theological Seminary, Malaysia*



*Prof. Dr Levi Mahonri Checketts
Hong Kong Baptist University*



*Dr Anna Alisha Mathew Simon
Council of Churches of Malaysia (CCM)*



*His Grace Bishop Daniel
Coptic Orthodox Church*



*Dr Latha Christie
Defence Research and Development
Organisation (DRDO) India*



*Rev. Dr Yoon Tae Kim
Presbyterian Church of Korea*



*Dr Selin Abraham
WCC Commission on Health
and Healing*



*His Grace Dr Zacharias Mar Aprem
Metropolitan
Senate of Serampore College (University)*



*Dr Erica M. Larson
National University of Singapore*



*Dr Jimmy Agung Pambudi
Paramarta Cardiovascular Hospital,
Indonesia*

He cautioned that while AI offers possibilities for advancement, it also brings complex ethical dilemmas and risks of alienation, inequality and job displacement. "AI is now present in every dimension of human experience," he observed, urging Christian communities to respond wisely and faithfully to what it means to live as beings created in God's image in an AI-driven world.

The first thematic address, "Artificial Intelligence and Posthumanism: Changing Global Contexts and Trends", was delivered by Dr Levi Checketts, Director of the Centre for Applied Ethics at Hong Kong Baptist University. Dr Checketts examined how transhumanist philosophies shape AI development, often influenced by powerful interests promoting morally questionable visions of human progress. He urged the Church to view AI through the lens of the marginalised, ensuring that technological innovation serves the common good. "Christians must witness to God's love for all, especially those despised by the world," he said.

The second session featured Prof. Dr Takeshi Kimura, Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Tsukuba, Japan, who introduced the theme "Humanoid Robotics and Artificial Intelligence: Impacts on Human Development". A leading scholar in the study of religion, society and technology, Prof. Kimura explored how the boundary between human intelligence and artificial intelligence is becoming increasingly blurred, prompting fresh reflection on what it means to be human. Drawing on his extensive research on robo-ethics, machine creativity and techno-animism, Prof. Kimura observed that societies must now redefine human identity in relation not only to divine figures but also to the technological ecosystems that shape daily life. He encouraged Asian scholars to ground their reflections in their

own cultural and philosophical contexts rather than relying solely on Western frameworks.

In the session on cyber ethics, Rev. Dr Bernard Wong, President of the China Graduate School of Theology (CGST) in Hong Kong, underscored the moral complexities of technologies that influence human habits, relationships and justice. He described cyber ethics as concerning "data privacy, online bullying and hate speech, addiction, misinformation, bias, the digital divide and the echo chamber effect", and warned that modern technology is never neutral. "This relentless pursuit of faster, bigger, sharper risks eliminating freedom, justice and wisdom," he cautioned. From a theological standpoint, Dr Wong called for resisting the idol of efficiency and recovering humanity's vocation to love God and neighbour, emphasising that technology must ultimately serve the building of just communities where peace and communion prevail.

In the panel on "Artificial Intelligence, Theology and Faith: Intersections", Dr Kelvin Chong of Singapore Bible College highlighted the ethical urgency of engaging with AI. He proposed an ascetic theology as a foundation for ethical AI design rooted in virtue and spiritual formation, calling for theologians, ethicists and technologists to collaborate in shaping moral frameworks for technology. Similarly, Fr Dr Rajesh Kavalackal CMI, Professor of Systematic Theology at Dharmaram Pontifical Athenaeum, reflected on the profound theological implications of AI, particularly concerning human identity and the *Imago Dei*. He warned of the idolatry of technology, while affirming AI's potential as an extension of human creativity and wisdom for the greater good.

Dr Latha Christie, a retired defence scientist from India, presented "Artificial Intelligence



*Dr Leonard Chrysostomos Epafra
Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies*



*Rev. Prof. Dr Bernard Wong
China Graduate School of Theology*



*Rev. Dr Frengki Napitupulu
Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP)*



*Kelly Oon Pek Kim
Seminari Theoloji Malaysia (STM)*



*Rev. Dr John G. Mathews
Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church*



*Dr Kelvin Chong Chun-ming
Singapore Bible College*



*Fr. Dr Rajesh Kavalackal CMI
Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram*



*Dr Manotar Tampubolon
Christian University of Indonesia*



*Rev. Prof. Dr Peter Singh
World Association Of Christian
Communication (WACC)*



and Digital Technological Advancements: Impact on the Church's Ministry". Highlighting how AI reshapes worship, pastoral care and mission, she warned that while AI can aid ministry through translation tools, analytics and creativity, it may also threaten human uniqueness in the *Imago Dei* if left unchecked. She stressed that "AI should not replace the Gospel message but amplify its reach", urging churches to ensure that AI remains a servant of humanity, not its master. Drawing from her scientific background, Dr Christie cautioned against idolatry of technology and the commercialisation of grief through AI avatars of the deceased,

contrasting such trends with the Christian hope of resurrection.

On the third day, deliberations opened with a theological reflection on "Artificial Intelligence and *Imago Dei*", led by Dr Judy Berinai, Dean of Studies at Sabah Theological Seminary, Malaysia. She posed a profound question: "Sooner or later, machines may invade the dignity of human beings who are created in the image of God. Does humanity, created in the image of God, embody a dignity that transcends the likeness of intelligent machines?" Rooted in Genesis 1:26–27, her reflection revisited traditional interpretations of the *Imago Dei* in light of



AI's expanding capabilities. She noted that although artificial intelligence may mimic reasoning or simulate empathy, it cannot embody the divine breath of life, and she affirmed that human uniqueness lies in relationality, love and communion with God and neighbour.

Following this reflection, a panel session on "Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare: Challenges to the Health and Healing Ministry" brought together medical professionals from across Asia. Dr Anna Alisha Mathews Simon, a practising

medical doctor in Malaysia, and Dr Jimmy Agung Pambudi, Director of Paramarta Cardiovascular Hospital, Bandung, Indonesia, presented thematic reflections moderated by Dr Selin Abraham, consultant physician and member of the World Council of Churches' Commission on Health and Healing. Dr Simon noted that AI is revolutionising healthcare delivery with speed, accuracy and efficiency, yet emphasised that healing is more than cure alone. Highlighting developments such as Malaysia's KPJ Healthcare Berhad's



Left to right: Rev. Fr Philip Thomas Cor Episcopa, (Orthodox Syrian Church, Malaysia), Rev. Fr Seraphim Choi (Russian Orthodox Church in Malaysia)



Participants at the Faculty of Artificial Intelligence and Engineering (FAIE) of Multimedia University (MMU) in Cyberjaya



Participants attend a session at the Faculty of Artificial Intelligence and Engineering at Multimedia University

AI chatbot and SpaceGut, the nation’s first AI-powered gut microbiome testing kit, she reflected on both the benefits and ethical concerns surrounding AI in healthcare. Speaking from the Indonesian context, Dr Pambudi explained how AI enhances diagnosis and hospital management but stressed that the best technology is that which protects human dignity. Dr Abraham concluded by emphasising

the irreplaceable role of compassion in healing, noting that medicine is both an art and a science and that, even as technology advances, the human heart must remain engaged alongside the mind.

The concluding thematic address, “The Role of AI in Churches and Christian Witness in Asia”, was delivered by Rev. Dr Yong Sup Song, Professor of Christian Ethics and Systematic Theology at Seoul



Participants interacting with TMOne Innovation Lab Scientists at Multimedia University (MMU)

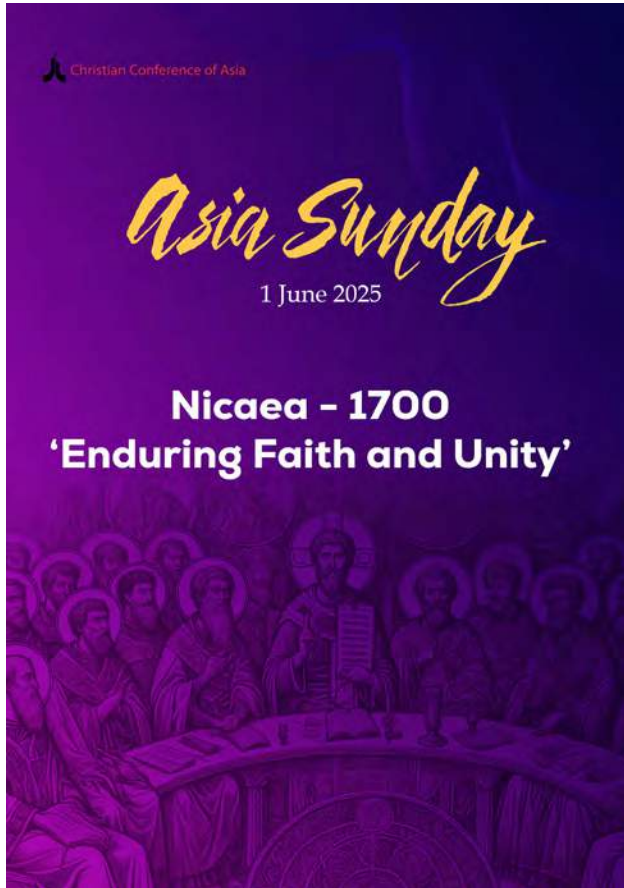
Christian University. He traced humanity's enduring quest for transcendence through technology, connecting medieval reflections to modern transhumanism, and called on Asian churches to engage with AI from within their own theological and cultural frameworks. "The moral character of future AI systems will mirror the ethical quality of their human creators," he stated.

A highlight of the international consultation was the on-site learning session at the Faculty of Artificial Intelligence and Engineering (FAIE) of Multimedia University (MMU) in Cyberjaya, hosted by Prof. Dr Mardeni Bin Roslee, Dean of the Faculty. Participants toured key facilities including the TMOne Innovation Lab and the Robotics Lab, gaining first-hand exposure to Malaysia's pioneering research in AI, robotics and digital innovation. At the TMOne Innovation Lab, they observed projects integrating AI with Internet of Things systems and cloud computing for smart city development and ethical data governance, while the Robotics Lab demonstrated humanoid and service robots designed for healthcare, education and industrial applications.

The visit also included the Digital Pathology Unit, where researchers demonstrated AI-powered diagnostic tools that enhance accuracy in medical imaging and early disease detection. Prof. Dr Mardeni highlighted MMU's commitment to ethical and socially responsible AI, emphasising that innovation must remain rooted in human values and the common good. The visit provided insights that further enriched the consultation's theological and ethical reflections on AI's implications for humanity, ministry and mission. Participants expressed deep appreciation for the consultation's interdisciplinary and intercultural approach, affirming the need for the Church to exercise theological discernment, uphold human dignity and shape AI ethically and responsibly.

The Cyberjaya consultation concluded with a communiqué, a forthcoming publication and a handbook compiling key insights. Follow-up initiatives were proposed to continue these discussions across Asia. Through this timely consultation, the Christian Conference of Asia reaffirmed its commitment to equip churches to respond to the moral and theological frontiers of an AI-driven age with wisdom, faith and hope.

Asia Sunday – 2025



Asia Sunday is observed annually on the Sunday before Pentecost by the member churches and councils of the Christian Conference of Asia across the region. In 2025, Asia Sunday fell on 1 June and focused on the theme “Nicaea-1700: Enduring Faith and Embracing Unity”.

In South Korea, Asia Sunday 2025 was observed at St Nicholas Orthodox Cathedral in Seoul, attended by representatives of the member churches of the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCKK), together with several Korean ecumenical leaders engaged in the CCA and the wider ecumenical movement. The service celebrated the diversity of ecclesial traditions and called upon the Churches to overcome social polarisation and rising intolerance in Asia, while affirming the rich religious and cultural pluralism of Asian



Asia Sunday observance in Seoul



societies. A special prayer and offering were dedicated to the victims of the earthquake in Myanmar. His Eminence Metropolitan Ambrosios of the Orthodox Metropolis of Korea and Moderator of NCKK, who delivered the homily, reflected that the Church is called to preserve unity in true faith and love, visible only when genuine faith and mutual love meet, and that unity is realised when love is embodied in daily life, workplaces and communities. He emphasised that true love is expressed through respect for the dignity of others and the embrace of difference.

Rev. Kim Jong Seng, General Secretary of NCKK, noted that in a society marked by

diverse cultures, politics, economies and religions, and in a context of deepening polarisation in Korea, this is a crucial time for the Church to pray for unity in the Triune God, who enables the faithful to affirm both faith and diversity in unity.

Asia Sunday was also observed at St Paul's Cathedral in Kolkata, India, on 1 June 2025, with a Holy Eucharist service led by Bishop Paritosh Canning of the Church of North India (CNI), attended by members of the cathedral as well as Christians from other denominations. In his homily, Rt Rev. Dr Paritosh Canning, Bishop of the Calcutta Diocese, explained that unity is not an abstract concept but



Asia Sunday observance in Chiang Mai



the fruit of virtues such as love, care, concern, integrity, service, sacrifice, discipline and obedience. He emphasised that when these values are lived out across denominational lines, they provide the foundation of genuine Christian fellowship. Basanti Biswas, member of the CCA Executive Committee, extended greetings on behalf of CCA, highlighting the significance of Asia Sunday as a shared ecumenical witness and a celebration of unity among churches in the region.

On the second Sunday of June 2025, the Payap Church of the Church of Christ in Thailand observed Asia Sunday in a service led by Rev. Teerapong Chaisri, with CCA staff in attendance. Dr Mathews George Chunakara, CCA General Secretary, reflected on the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, underscoring the call to unity that transcends theological and cultural boundaries and affirming the Nicene Creed as a guide for the Church's journey of faith through diverse cultural and social contexts.

“The theme, ‘Nicaea – 1700: Enduring Faith and Embracing Unity’, calls for a spiritual pilgrimage to revisit the foundational tenets that have unified and shaped the identity of the Church through the corridors of history, signifying a dual commitment – first, to anchor faith in the Triune God in this challenging epoch, and second, to cultivate a spirit of unity that transcends theological differences and cultural diversities.

The importance of the Creed in the liturgical life of the churches can be seen in its unifying factor. Every time we recite the Creed, we strengthen our beliefs and enrich our personal and communal identity with Christ. Asian Christians are challenged to forge a collective identity that celebrates diversity while nurturing a shared commitment to the essential tenets of the Christian faith.”

Dr Mathews George Chunakara



ECUMENICAL FORMATION (EF)

OBJECTIVES

- To accompany the ecumenical formation of a new generation of leadership in churches and ecumenical councils in Asia;
- To enhance the capacity of human resources committed to the renewal of ecumenical spirituality and to a deeper understanding of Christian traditions;
- To provide an ecumenical platform for sharing spiritual life among member churches and national councils in Asia.

Ecumenical Enablers' Training in Asia (EETA)

19 – 21 February 2025 | Phnom Penh, Cambodia



Participants of EETA in Phnom Penh

The Ecumenical Enablers' Training in Asia (EETA) 2025, jointly organised by the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) and the Kampuchea Christian Council (KCC), was held from 19 to 21 February 2025 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on the theme "Revitalising Faith, Mission and Unity: Equipping Leaders for Transformative Ministry in Cambodia". The programme sought to strengthen ecumenical leadership, deepen theological understanding and renew commitment to mission and service among Cambodian churches.

In Cambodia's complex socio-political context, where Christians remain a minority, the training provided a timely opportunity for 35 pastors, evangelists and church leaders to engage in contextual theological reflection and capacity building for ministry. The training opened with worship and a biblical reflection led by Pastor Lim Saroeun, Vice-President of KCC, based on Hebrews 9:12, Psalm 111:9 and Psalm 34:22, emphasising inner transformation through Christ's redemption. CCA and KCC representatives welcomed participants and highlighted the training's role in strengthening ecumenical cooperation.

The first session, facilitated by Pastor Kang Phaldaracheat, President of KCC, explored the biblical foundations of faith, mission and unity, encouraging a renewed and active faith (Revelation 2:4–5), a missional response to God's call (Isaiah 6:8; Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 1:8), and unity inspired by the Trinity (John 17:21; 1 Corinthians 12:12). Afternoon discussions, led by John Paul Devakumar, CCA programme staff, and Pastor Kang Phaldaracheat, traced the historical roots of the ecumenical movement and the CCA–KCC partnership. Sessions on transformative leadership challenged participants to move beyond traditional or transactional models towards leadership that promotes holistic social transformation. In a session on biblical stewardship, participants identified practical strategies for integrating stewardship values into ministry through group discussion and scriptural reflection.

The second day began with worship and reflection led by Pastor Him Sithet (Ephesians 4:11–16), affirming diverse callings united in God's purpose. Mr Devakumar facilitated a session on "Faith in Action: Advocacy for Justice, Peace and Creation Care", urging churches to engage



with Cambodia’s social, environmental and human rights challenges through diaconal mission. Pastor Sok Nev, General Secretary of KCC, led a session on mission in a pluralistic world, encouraging meaningful interfaith engagement while upholding the uniqueness of Christ. Afternoon sessions on youth and women as catalysts of change, led by Pastor Riem Samnang and Chhun Chandavy, drew lessons from biblical figures such as Joseph, Timothy, Ruth, Esther and Mary. Later, Mr Devakumar facilitated a reflection on the Church’s role in health and healing, highlighting the call for Christians to be agents of holistic healing and pastoral care within their communities.

On the final day, Pastor Eang Chhun reflected on Genesis 1–3, emphasising divine purpose and grace despite human failings. Mr Devakumar facilitated a

session on collaborative witness, focusing on building networks for holistic mission among Cambodian churches and within the wider CCA ecumenical fellowship. The closing session consolidated the learnings and commitments through an action plan for continued ecumenical engagement. Expressions of gratitude were extended to the CCA, KCC, facilitators and participants during the closing worship, which affirmed the collective resolve to advance faith and mission together.

Participants expressed strong appreciation for the training. Pastor Em Somon pledged to replicate the programme in his province; Ra Soy committed to sharing recorded materials with local leaders; Pastor Him Sithet emphasised the importance of unity and diakonia; and Pastor Sok Nev commended the initiative as timely and empowering.

Asian Ecumenical Institute (AEI)–2025

3 – 30 August 2025 | Chiang Mai, Thailand

The Asian Ecumenical Institute (AEI - 2025), the annual month-long ecumenical training programme took place from 3 to 30 August 2025 at the CCA headquarters

on the Payap University campus in Chiang Mai. Twenty-five participants from across Asia were selected to take part in the programme.



Participants of AEI-2025 with the CCA General Secretary

The theme of AEI-2025 was “The Nicene Creed: Enduring Faith and Embracing Unity”, emphasizing the nurturing of a spirit of unity that transcends theological differences and cultural diversity. As Christians worldwide marked the 1700th anniversary of the First Council of Nicaea in 2025, AEI-2025 focused on reflecting on the foundations of the Nicene Creed and reaffirming faith in the Triune God.

AEI’s academic sessions explored a wide range of related themes, including “Reflection on the Nicene Creed”; “The Nicene Creed – Its Ecumenical Significance Today”; “Visible Unity as a Sign of God’s Healing Love”; “The Nicene

Creed Towards Wider Ecclesial Unity and Wider Ecumenism”; “The Nicene Creed and its Impact on the Life and Witness of Christian Communities in Asia”; “Legacy of the Council of Nicaea: Revitalising the Ecumenical Movement”; “Power of Unity in Diversity”; “Unity in a Polarised and Fragmented World”; “Healing a Polarised World: A Call to Unity”; “Our Faith that Endures: Hopes Amid Uncertainty”; “Echoes of the Council of Nicaea: Living Our Unity and Our Struggle for Unity”; “Our Transformative Mission and Witness Towards Unity”; and “Trinitarian Foundation and Our Faith from Diverse Ecclesial Traditions.”





Rev. Prof. Dr M. O. John delivering the introductory thematic address at AEI-2025



Dr Andrej Jęftić, Director of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches



Group discussion



Group activity



AEI students in a session with Rev. W. P. Ebenezer Joseph

A team of prominent theologians and ecumenists with professional expertise at the international level served as the main resource persons. Resource persons of AEI-2025 included: Rev. Dr M. O. John (India), Professor at Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam; Dr Andrej Jeftić (Serbia), Director of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Geneva; Rev. Dr Eleazar Fernandez (Philippines), Professor at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, Minnesota, USA; Rev. Prof. Dr J. Jayakiran Sebastian (USA), Dean and H. George Anderson Professor of Mission and

Cultures at the United Lutheran Seminary, USA; Dr Oan Jaisaodee (Thailand), Professor at McGilvary College of Divinity, Payap University, Chiang Mai; Rev. Dr P. G. George (India), formerly Director of the South Asia Theological Research Institute of the Senate of Serampore College, Kolkata; Rev. W. P. Ebenezer Joseph (Sri Lanka), Minister and former President of the Methodist Church of Sri Lanka; Rev. Dr Paulachan Kochappilly, CMI (India), Professor at Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram, Bengaluru; Rev. Prof. Dr Pradit Takerngrangsarit (Thailand), former President of Payap University and Dean



AEI students interacting with Sikh religious leader

of McGilvary College of Divinity; Prof. Dr Rey Ty (Philippines), Professor at the Institute of Religion, Culture and Peace at Payap University; Rev. Dr Tabita Christiani (Indonesia) of Christian Education at Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana; and Dr Mathews George Chunakara, General Secretary of the CCA.

Rev. Prof. Dr M. O. John delivered the introductory thematic sessions on “The Nicene Creed: Enduring Faith and Embracing Unity”, setting the tone for the month-long training. Offering historical insights into the First Council of Nicaea,

he highlighted its role in shaping the Church’s first formal confession of faith and emphasised its enduring relevance for Christian unity today.

Dr Andrej Jeftić focused his sessions on the relevance of the Nicene Creed for the modern ecumenical movement, reflecting on its legacy in relation to conciliarity, the vision of the Church as One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic, and the call to a united Christian witness. He stressed that the Creed’s emphasis on ecclesial unity provides a framework for overcoming divisions and strengthening ecumenical collaboration.



AEI students in dialogue with Buddhist monks

Rev. Dr J. Jayakiran Sebastian, through virtual sessions, invited participants to reflect on the meaning of “enduring faith”, encouraging them to revisit, remember, re-centre and re-imagine their commitments in light of the Nicene tradition. He also offered further insights into the nature of the “one, holy, catholic and apostolic” Church based on the Nicene Creed.

Sessions led by Rev. Dr P. G. George addressed socially urgent issues affecting vulnerable communities in a polarised world, including human trafficking, migration and cultural diversity in Asia.

He described migration as a circular and unending movement shaping human history and identity, and portrayed culture as dynamic, evolving continually through interaction and exchange. He suggested that this vision of interconnectedness calls humanity to recognise its shared journey and collective responsibility in healing divisions.

Dr Rey Ty encouraged participants to reflect on the realities of people affected by militarisation, ethnic conflict, racial injustice and human rights violations, using social analysis as a framework. Students presented pressing concerns from their

respective contexts and expressed their commitment to being agents of transformation in their communities.

Rev. W. P. Ebenezer Joseph delivered sessions on harmonious interfaith living and ecumenical diakonia in Asia's diverse context. Drawing on biblical teaching and personal experience, he urged participants to practise service, understanding and love, and to embrace diversity as they embody Christ's reconciling presence in a fragmented world.

Dr Tabita Christiani explored the legacy of Nicaea through the lenses of gender justice and disability, affirming diversity as

an essential expression of God's creative purpose. She emphasised the importance of inclusion within the life of the Church and encouraged participants to work for holistic unity that encompasses all creation.

Rev. Dr Eleazar Fernandez reflected on the challenges of fragmentation, polarisation, radicalism, authoritarianism and ecological crisis in the contemporary world, calling for responses rooted in the spirit of Nicaea. He emphasised the Council's Christocentric vision and its model of Trinitarian unity, urging the Church to embody these principles in today's context.



AEI students at the Russian Orthodox Church in Chiang Mai

Dr Paulachan Kochappilly introduced key theological themes of the Nicaea Council from a Catholic perspective, highlighting their implications for transformative mission. He encouraged participants to approach mission through acceptance, care and love, emphasising that Christians are already one in Christ and are called to live out that unity. Dr Oan Jaisaodee guided participants in developing Christ-like leadership rooted

in servanthood, compassion, truth, integrity, empowerment, collaboration and contextual awareness.

In addition to the academic sessions, AEI-2025 participants visited mission schools, a mission hospital and the theological seminary of the Church of Christ in Thailand, as well as inter-religious centres, engaging in dialogue with religious leaders. They also took part in workshops



on “Living Out Our Faith”, making the programme a holistic experience in ecumenical formation and spiritual reflection.

At the closing of the month-long ecumenical formation and leadership development programme, CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara stated that the ecclesial identity of churches worldwide has been significantly shaped by the ecumenical movement at national, regional and global levels over the past century, with churches

embracing and nurturing the values and ethos of ecumenism in manifold ways. He urged AEI students to embrace diversity and inclusivity, and to strengthen the engagement of churches, communities and individuals in creating unified responses and joint actions as part of authentic Christian witness and mission, particularly in a fragmented world. The AEI students affirmed that they will continue to offer active contributions and embrace roles of leadership in the ecumenical movement and in their own local contexts in the future.

Good Governance, Stewardship, and Integrity Leadership

National Workshop on Good Governance, Stewardship, and Integrity Leadership in Parish Ministry

28-30 May 2025 | ICSA Paripurna Centre, Chennai, India

The Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), in partnership with the Inter Church Service Association (ICSA), organised a national-level workshop on Good Governance, Stewardship and Integrity Leadership in Parish Ministry from 27 to 30 May 2025 at the ICSA Paripurna Centre, Chennai. This ecumenical formation programme, designed for emerging theological leaders, gathered

20 final-year students from seminaries affiliated with the Senate of Serampore College (University), representing diverse denominations across southern India. The workshop aimed to nurture theological consciousness, ethical leadership and pastoral accountability in preparation for transformative parish ministry within the Asian context.



The programme opened with worship and prayer, followed by greetings from CCA and ICSA representatives. Dr Mathews George Chunakara, CCA General Secretary, presented leadership models across global and Asian ecclesial and ecumenical traditions, emphasising contextual, participatory and justice-oriented

approaches that inspire transformation beyond institutional frameworks. He underscored the importance of transparency, participation and integrity in church governance, highlighting the need for a strategic vision that strengthens good governance and diaconal integrity in Asian churches.



*Rev. Asir Ebenezer
General Secretary, National Council of Churches in India*



*His Grace Yakob Mar Elias Metropolitan
Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church*



*Dr Vethakani Vedhanayagam
Gurukul Lutheran Theological College and Research Institute*



*Dr Moses P. Manohar
Executive Director, Inter-Church Service Association (ICSA)*



His Grace Yakob Mar Elias Metropolitan of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church offered a theological reflection on stewardship, describing it as a sacred vocation rooted in humility, relational faithfulness and responsibility towards both God and the community. Dr Moses P. Manohar, Executive Director of ICSA, traced the history of ecclesial governance in the Indian ecumenical movement, urging participants to resist corruption and to model leadership grounded in Gospel values.

Rt Rev. Sharma Nithyanandam, Bishop of the Church of South India (CSI), explored biblical principles of governance and stewardship, drawing insights from covenantal leadership and prophetic accountability. Rev. Dr J. M. Sharath Souseelya, a presbyter of the CSI, revisited stewardship through the lens of women's leadership, economic justice and creation care, broadening the pastoral vision to include social and ecological dimensions. Returning to address pastoral ministry in the twenty-first century, His Grace Yakob Mar Elias reflected on the challenges of digitalisation, migration and ethical shifts,

calling for leaders who remain spiritually rooted yet contextually adaptable.

Rev. Dr Abraham Mathew, former Executive Secretary at the National Council of Churches in India (NCCI), presented on integrity and pastoral witness, underscoring the formation of character as both personal virtue and public testimony.

Rev. Dr Vincent Rajkumar, the Vice President of WACC-Asia, shared practical approaches to conflict resolution within parish contexts, advocating restorative dialogue and empathy as instruments of peace.

Bringing a contextual lens, Rev. Dr Asir Ebenezer, General Secretary of NCCI, proposed indigenised management principles drawn from local wisdom and community-based models, encouraging churches to move beyond Western managerial frameworks towards inclusive and sustainable practices. Discussions that followed helped participants connect theological reflection with practical challenges in parish administration.

On the final day, Dr Vethakani Vedhanayagam, Assistant Professor of

Biblical Studies at the Gurukul Lutheran Theological College and Research Institute, offered a biblical reflection on the parables of stewardship, highlighting spiritual accountability and the ethics of entrusted service. Rev. Dr Abraham Mathew then explored the pressures and expectations associated with integrity leadership within church and ecumenical institutions, emphasising spiritual disciplines as the sustaining force of authentic vocation.

In the concluding session, participants reflected on their learnings and proposed

ways forward for embedding good governance and integrity within their future ministries and seminary formation. The workshop closed with a vote of thanks and a service of worship, affirming the collective commitment to faithful and accountable pastoral service. The national workshop strengthened emerging church leaders through theological formation, ecumenical fellowship and practical training, reaffirming the commitment of CCA and ICSEA to equip responsible and contextually rooted leaders for the Church in Asia.

National Workshop on Good Governance, Stewardship, and Integrity Leadership in Parish Ministry

31 May to 3 June 2025 | Seva Kendra Calcutta, Kolkata, India

The Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), in collaboration with the Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College (BTESSC), organised a three-day national-level workshop on “Good Governance and Stewardship in Parish Ministry” from 31 May to 3 June 2025 at Seva Kendra, Kolkata. The programme brought together 19 final-year Bachelor of Divinity students from 13

theological institutions affiliated with the Senate of Serampore College (University), representing diverse church traditions across India’s North, Northeast, West and East regions. This workshop formed part of CCA’s ongoing initiative on Good Governance, Stewardship and Integrity Leadership, aimed at promoting ethical leadership, responsible stewardship and accountability among emerging theological leaders in Asia.



Participants of the national-level workshop on “Good Governance and Stewardship in Parish Ministry” in Kolkata

Participants joined the Asia Sunday Ecumenical Worship at St Paul’s Cathedral (CNI), Kolkata, celebrating the unity and witness of Asian churches. The workshop

officially commenced with worship and words of welcome. Rev. Dr Rodinmawia Ralte, Secretary of BTESSC, welcomed the participants and underscored the need



for ethical and theologically grounded leadership in today's churches.

The keynote address was delivered by Rev. Dr Limatula Longkumer, Registrar of the Senate of Serampore College (University), on "Being God's Stewards in Pastoral Ministry". She reminded participants that true stewardship begins in a right relationship with God and must be understood as a covenantal and relational act rather than merely administrative management. Rev. Dr Sunil Caleb, Principal of Bishop's College, Kolkata, spoke on "Good Governance and Integrity Leadership in Indian Churches", addressing issues of financial mismanagement, institutional decay and lack of transparency, while calling for Christ-centred discernment and integrity in pastoral administration.

Biblical reflections on stewardship were led by Rev. Anand Peacock, who drew on scriptural teachings about faithfulness and accountability. Rev. Dr Andrew H. Laltlanliana explored the theology of

Christian leadership, emphasising *kenosis* (self-emptying) and *diakonia* (servanthood) as essential models for ministry. John Paul Devakumar, CCA staff, presented an overview of leadership models in different ecclesial traditions, urging contextual rootedness and openness to ecumenical learning. Rev. Dr Robinson Nelson Christian addressed "Pastoral Ministry in the 21st Century: Challenges and Opportunities", identifying secularism, digitalisation and institutional distrust as key contemporary challenges, while affirming growing opportunities for prophetic and resilient Christian witness. Rev. Dr C. Vanlalhruiia discussed indigenised management principles, highlighting how local wisdom traditions can strengthen transparent and community-oriented governance in Indian churches.

On the final day, Mr Devakumar reflected on Mark 12:17, warning against the misuse of church funds and urging stewardship that honours God. Rev. Moody Allan Wood Lyngkholi, a lecturer at John Roberts Theological College, Meghalaya, spoke

on “Pastoral Shepherding and Witness in Digital Spaces”, encouraging responsible and theologically grounded engagement in digital ministry. Rev. Dr Roger Gaikwad, former General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in India (NCCI), led sessions on “Pastoral Leadership for Conflict Resolution in Church Administration” and “Integrity Leadership in Church and Ecumenical Organisations”. Drawing on his extensive ecumenical experience, he emphasised humility,

integrity and accountability as hallmarks of credible leadership, summarising his message with, “We enter to serve, we leave to serve.”

The workshop concluded with reflections, thanksgiving and prayers of commissioning. Participants expressed gratitude for the theological depth and practical relevance of the sessions and committed themselves to applying principles of good governance and faithful stewardship in their future ministries.

South Asia Regional Workshop on Good Governance, Integrity Leadership and Stewardship in Parish Ministry

30 August to 3 September 2025 | EISD, Colombo, Sri Lanka

A four-day South Asian regional workshop on Good Governance, Integrity Leadership and Stewardship in Parish Ministry was held from 30 August to 3 September 2025 at the Ecumenical Institute for Study and Dialogue (EISD) in Colombo, bringing together twenty-two final-year theological students from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and India. Organised by the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), the workshop formed part of the CCA’s ongoing efforts to nurture integrity leadership within Asian

churches and to strengthen principles of good governance and stewardship in pastoral ministry through regional capacity-building initiatives. Through interactive sessions, theological reflections and group discussions, participants were equipped with practical tools and theological insights for responsible and effective church leadership, while discerning their vocation as future pastors and stewards of God’s mission in their respective contexts.



CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara delivering the opening address

In his opening address, Dr Mathews George Chunakara, CCA General Secretary, offered a critical reflection on the pervasive trends of corruption and degeneration among pastors and church leaders across Asia. Warning against the alarming rise in unethical practices, he observed that the growing number of denominations does not signify the growth of the Church but reflects a troubling pattern of fragmentation accompanied by poor governance and mismanagement.

Rev. W. P. Ebenezer Joseph, member of the CCA Programme Committee and former President of the Methodist Church in Sri Lanka, delivered the thematic address on “Being God’s Stewards in Pastoral Ministry”. He highlighted the global crises confronting pastoral ministry and noted that while the Church may have many pastors, it lacks stewards. He reminded participants that true pastoral stewardship is rooted not in position but in Christ-like humility and service. Drawing from Scripture, he reflected on the model of stewardship, “The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve” (Mark 10:45), and recalled the faithful witness of Sri Lankan pastors who ministered alongside their people during the civil war, affirming that authentic stewardship is embodied through presence amidst suffering.

In a second presentation on “Biblical Foundations on Good Governance and Pastoral Witness”, Rev. Joseph traced the leadership journey of Moses, acknowledging his human frailty while commending his obedience to God’s call. Linking these insights to the divine governance of the Triune God, he underscored the centrality of the Lamb of God as a model of sacrificial, just and life-giving leadership.

Among the resource persons was Rev. S. J. Kathiresapillai, one of the senior-most pastors of the Methodist Church in Sri Lanka, who shared reflections on integrity leadership and pastoral stewardship. Drawing on his long pastoral experience, he exhorted participants not to yield to the powers of the world, reminding them that as God’s stewards they are called to shepherd His flock faithfully during their time of service.

Rev. Fr Andrew Devadasan of the Church of Ceylon led a session on integrity in church finance, emphasising accountability and transparency as essential elements of presbyteral ministry. Rev. Nadarajah Arulnathan, Principal of the Theological College of Lanka, facilitated sessions on pastoral leadership for conflict resolution in church administration, and on strategic



Participants of the South Asian regional workshop on Good Governance, Integrity Leadership and Stewardship in Parish Ministry



planning and managing church resources with integrity. He stressed that pastoral leadership must always be exercised with wisdom, patience and accountability, and affirmed that conflict in the Church is not a sign of failure but an opportunity for reconciliation, healing and renewed witness.

Rev. Malitha Andrady, a young Baptist pastor and theologian, reflected on pastoral shepherding and witness in the digital space, raising ethical and theological questions surrounding artificial intelligence and robotic technologies. He cautioned that while such developments may shape ministry practices, they can never replace the spiritual and relational dimensions of human pastoral presence.

In his presentation on “Pastoral Ministry in the 21st Century: Challenges and

Opportunities”, Rev. Ramesh Schaffter, founder of the only Sri Lankan Christian television channel and Chair of the Trustees Board of the Church of Ceylon, shared insights from his experience as a non-stipendiary minister, encouraging creative and faithful responses to contemporary pastoral challenges. Rev. W. P. Ebenezer Joseph also led a session on integrity leadership in church and ecumenical organisations, emphasising that good governance in churches is not merely an internal administrative concern but an essential expression of the Church’s prophetic and public witness.

The workshop concluded with participants committing to integrity, accountability and faithful stewardship, reaffirming CCA’s vision to strengthen ethical and responsible leadership within Asian churches.

***“Good governance in churches
is not merely an internal administrative concern
but an essential expression of the
Church’s prophetic and public witness.”***



BUILDING PEACE

OBJECTIVES

- To analyse the context of conflicts and develop methodologies for churches' participation in peacebuilding; and,
- To assist churches in their initiatives in responding to conflict situations and to raise awareness through interreligious platforms, enabling them to contribute to the building of sustainable and peaceful societies

Solidarity and Accompaniment

WCC-CCA Pastoral Visit to Myanmar

11-12 October 2025 | Yangon, Myanmar

CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara and WCC General Secretary Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay visited Myanmar for pastoral and solidarity visits to member churches, the member council and ecumenical organisations and institutions. During the visit, they met with the leadership of the Church of the Province of Myanmar (Anglican), the Methodist Church of the Union of Myanmar (Lower Myanmar), the Myanmar Baptist Convention (MBC), the Myanmar Council of Churches (MCC), the Myanmar Institute of Theology (MIT) and the Mary Chapman School for the Deaf.

A meeting at the Myanmar Ecumenical Centre brought together leaders from thirteen member churches and eighteen ecumenical organisations and institutions of the Myanmar Council of Churches. The WCC General Secretary engaged in dialogue on peace, reconciliation, visible unity, climate justice and ecumenical leadership development, affirming that unity and justice must go hand in hand and that justice for people deprived of dignity and opportunity will not be denied forever by God.

While highlighting key historical milestones in the mission and witness of churches in Myanmar, including their deep engagement in social development, pioneering ministries in diakonia and humanitarian assistance in conflict-affected areas, the Myanmar church leaders also described the life-threatening situations faced daily by those serving in rural regions, particularly in communities living amid ongoing conflict and violence.

Rev. Prof. Dr Pillay stressed that, as followers of Christ, “we need to live with faith and hope amidst despair as hope brings resilience”. He acknowledged that when the Church in Myanmar exists as a minority, and Christians in many parts of the country face traumatic experiences, it becomes difficult to speak prophetically without fear or victimisation. Nevertheless, he affirmed that the Church remains a place for sharing hope and for serving as an agent of hope.

In Yangon, the two General Secretaries visited Cardinal Charles Bo, Archbishop of Yangon of the Roman Catholic Church in Myanmar. Responding to Cardinal Bo’s concerns for peace and stability



WCC-CCA General Secretaries at the Myanmar Council of Churches (MCC) during the pastoral solidarity visit to Myanmar



WCC-CCA General Secretaries at the Methodist Church of the Union of Myanmar (Lower Myanmar)



WCC-CCA General Secretaries at the Myanmar Baptist Convention (MBC)



WCC-CCA General Secretaries with Cardinal Charles Bo, Archbishop of Yangon of the Roman Catholic Church in Myanmar



WCC-CCA General Secretaries at the Myanmar Institute of Theology



WCC-CCA General Secretaries at the Mary Chapman School for the Deaf



WCC-CCA General Secretaries attending an Ecumenical Sunday Worship Service in Yangon

in the country, Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay emphasised the growing need for joint engagement among churches in promoting peace and unity amidst conflict, noting that this is an integral part of proclaiming the Good News and must extend beyond social action, theological dialogue and prayer.

Dr Mathews George Chunakara reflected on the ministry and witness of churches in Myanmar despite the innumerable troubles they have faced amid decades of turmoil since 1962. He expressed

deep appreciation for the churches and their diverse ministries, which continue despite danger, fear, anxiety and countless hardships, including the lack of basic necessities. The CCA General Secretary reaffirmed CCA’s commitment to continue its solidarity and accompaniment with the people of Myanmar.

Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay’s visit marked the first time a WCC General Secretary had visited Myanmar’s member churches since 2003 as part of a pastoral and ecumenical solidarity accompaniment mission.

International Consultation on Emerging Geopolitical Reconfiguration in South Asia: Challenges to People’s Security and Peace with Justice

13-14 March 2025 | Colombo, Sri Lanka



Participants of the International Consultation on Emerging Geopolitical Reconfiguration in South Asia

Against the backdrop of shifting power dynamics and rising security challenges, the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) organised an international consultation on “Emerging Geopolitical Reconfiguration in South Asia:

Challenges to People’s Security and Peace with Justice” in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 13-14 March 2025 to examine the evolving geopolitical landscape of South Asia and its impact on regional security and peace.



Dr Mathews George Chunakara



Rev. Karin van den Broeke



Dr Zahid Shahab Ahmed



Left to right: Rev. Dr Abraham Mathew, Rev. Sujithar Sivanayagam



Shreya Gautam



WCC Commission Moderators

*Left to right: Rev. Prof. Dr Stephanie Dietrich (Faith and Order),
Rev. Michael Blair (Mission and Evangelism), Archbishop Julio E. Murray (Climate Justice)*



Organised in conjunction with the World Council of Churches (WCC) Pilgrimage of Justice, Reconciliation, and Unity (PJRU) Reference Group Meeting, and in association with the National Christian Council of Sri Lanka (NCCSL), the consultation brought together a diverse group of 40 scholars, religious leaders, journalists, civil society representatives, as well as members of the WCC's Reference Group.

The consultation opened with worship led by the NCCSL, followed by words of welcome from Rev. Sujithar Sivanayagam, NCCSL General Secretary, and Rt Rev. Nishantha Fernando, NCCSL Chairperson and Bishop of Kurunagala. Rev. Karin van den Broeke, Co-Moderator of the WCC Reference Group from the Protestant Church in the Netherlands, expressed hope that the consultation and pilgrimage encounters in Sri Lanka would deepen participants' understanding of South Asian and Sri Lankan contexts and inform the future direction of the PJRU.

Dr Mathews George Chunakara, CCA General Secretary, outlined the framework of the consultation, describing it as an opportunity to strengthen understanding of the complex geopolitical realities shaping South Asia. He noted that the region's emerging trends have global implications and that situating the Reference Group's work within this context is vital to addressing the socio-political challenges the region continues to face.

Over the course of presentations throughout the day, the consultation highlighted how South Asia's future will be shaped by strategic realignments, regional stability, and the interplay of major powers. Dr Zahid Shahab Ahmed, a scholar specialising in peace and security in South Asia and the Middle East, delivered the thematic address on "Emerging Geopolitical Reconfiguration in South Asia: Challenges to People's Security

and Peace with Justice." He discussed the region's historical and contemporary dynamics, highlighting the India-China strategic rivalry and its impact on security, trade, and diplomacy. Dr Ahmed noted that South Asia's future will hinge on strategic alignments and regional stability but cautioned that rising nationalism could undermine cooperation. He emphasised the need for stronger regional integration and security frameworks to ensure lasting peace and growth.

Country-specific insights from experts representing Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka highlighted both shared and distinct regional challenges. Md Muktadir Rashid, a journalist from Bangladesh, reflected on the nation's political landscape, noting Sheikh Hasina's prolonged rule and the growing influence of youth-led movements advocating democratic reform and stability. Nepali lawyer Shreya Gautam discussed Nepal's efforts to balance relations with China and India while confronting climate vulnerabilities and youth unemployment.

In his analysis of Pakistan, Dr Zahid Shahab Ahmed identified political instability, corruption, economic dependency, and social inequality as key national challenges. Dr Mathews George Chunakara examined India's evolving diplomatic strategies, its complex relations with neighbouring nuclear powers, and its aspirations for greater global influence.

In examining emerging trends in Sri Lanka, former Member of Parliament and President's Counsel M. A. Sumanthiran provided a critical overview of the nation's ongoing political and economic crises. He noted, however, that unlike in other parts of the region, religious extremism has not taken deep root in Sri Lanka, with existing safeguards remaining resilient. Dr Ramindu Perera, Senior Lecturer at the Open University's Faculty of Law, analysed the country's foreign policy amid growing



Md Muktadir Rashid



Rev. Dr. Meehyun Chung



Rev. Romella Robinson



Christopher Adhikari



Javid Yusuf



M. A. Sumanthiran



Dr. Ramindu Perera



*Ven. Galkande
Dhammananda Thero*



Rev. W. P. Ebenezer Joseph



*Ven. Panadura Vishuddhika
Viharani Theri*



Rev. David Nigel Perry Brohier



Rev. Dr Joshua Peter



Rev. Lilian W. Karinga



Left to right: Bishop Dhiloraj Canagasabey, Tyrol Ferdinands



global polarisation and assessed regional and international responses to Sri Lanka's strategic choices.

A central theme of the consultation was the role of faith communities in addressing security threats and shrinking civic spaces. The panel discussion on "Rise of Religious Extremism in South Asia and its Impact on People's Security" highlighted the growing vulnerabilities of minority communities and the erosion of their fundamental freedoms in the region. Speakers, including Javid Yusuf, Attorney-at-Law of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka and former ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Rev. Dr Abraham Mathew (India), Rev. Romella Robinson (Pakistan), and Christopher Adhikari (Bangladesh), emphasised the urgency of interfaith solidarity to counter intolerance and violence, as well as the dangers of exploiting religious differences for political gain.

On the second day, the consultation explored how global powers shape South Asia's security policies and economic engagements. In the session "External Interventions in South Asian Countries and Security Challenges – Role of the USA, China, and India," Tyrol Ferdinands, a veteran advocate for justice, peace, and conflict transformation in Sri Lanka, examined the roles of the United States, China, and India in influencing regional stability and strategic decisions. He discussed the shifting perception of the USA's reliability in contrast to China's consistent presence and India's looming proximity to Sri Lanka.

The final session, "Moving Beyond Conflicts: Interfaith and Ecumenical Responses to Crisis Situations," underscored the role of interfaith dialogue in promoting peace and social harmony. Venerable Galkande Dhammananda Thero of Sri Lanka emphasised nonviolence and coexistence rooted in Buddhist philosophy, while Rev. Dr A Joshua Peter of the United Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India shared his experience in interfaith engagement through the QuoVadis Interfaith Dialogue Center in Tiruvannamalai.

Rev. Ebenezer Joseph, former General Secretary of NCCSL and ecumenical stalwart from Sri Lanka, closed the session with acknowledgement of the need for sustained engagement on geopolitical issues within ecumenical and faith-based communities, highlighting that the international consultation marked a step forward in aligning ecumenical efforts with the region's evolving realities, reaffirming the church's role in promoting a just and peaceful future.

In the closing session, participants expressed appreciation for the timely organisation of the consultation. They emphasised that interfaith collaboration and ecumenical engagement remain vital for conflict resolution, people's security, and harmony in the region, particularly amid a rapidly changing geopolitical context. The vote of thanks was delivered by Navya Dinah Saji, CCA Programme Associate and organiser of the consultation.

Ecumenical Women's Advocacy Against Violence (EWAAV)

National Consultation on Empowerment and Collective Action to End Violence Against Women

27-29 May 2025 | Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Jointly organised by the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) and the Kampuchea Christian Council (KCC), the National Consultation on “Empowerment and Collective Action to End Violence Against Women” brought together forty women and men from KCC member churches to deepen awareness, build

capacity and strengthen faith-based advocacy to end violence against women (VAW). As part of CCA's Ecumenical Women's Action Against Violence (EWAAV) programme, the national consultation was held from 27 to 29 May 2025 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.



Participants of the National Consultation on Empowerment and Collective Action to End Violence Against Women

The consultation opened with a welcome address by Pastor Kang Phaldaracheat, President of the KCC, who underscored the Church's imperative role in responding to VAW. Arceli Bile, representing the CCA, welcomed participants and expressed gratitude to the KCC and its Women's Ministry, led by Chhun Chandavy, for co-organising the programme. She affirmed the value of ecumenical cooperation in amplifying efforts to address gender-based violence. Opening worship and a Bible study led by Pastor Phaldaracheat grounded the consultation in its spiritual foundations. He emphasised

the vital role of women in the life and ministry of the Church, affirming their God-given dignity and calling for its protection and honour.

The keynote address was delivered by Sotheavy Srey, Executive Director of the Alliance for Conflict Transformation (ACT). She highlighted the persistent challenges facing women and the biblical and social imperatives for the Church to address VAW. Ms Srey emphasised the responsibility of the Church to uphold values of dignity, equality and justice, and also facilitated a session examining root causes of violence, including patriarchy, gender stereotyping,



Sotheavy Srey

religious misinterpretation and power imbalances.

Lim Sambo of Ang Metret Church reflected on the situation of women in Cambodia, noting progress but stressing that deeply embedded social norms continue to perpetuate gender inequality and limit women’s opportunities in



Lim Sambo

education, employment, leadership and decision-making.

Ms Bile facilitated a workshop on the different forms of violence—physical, emotional, economic, sexual and structural—emphasising the importance of recognising and naming violence as the first step towards addressing it. Through



Participants at the EWA AV National Consultation

group discussions, participants reflected on how violence affects women in their communities, churches and families. The session concluded with a call for churches to actively integrate gender awareness into their ministries.



Day two began with prayers and a Bible study by Heng Tol, former KCC Women’s Secretary, focusing on biblical portrayals of women and Jesus’ healing, dignifying and empowering interactions with them. Srey Nak, Gender and Advocacy Coordinator at

Bantay Srei, led a session on collaboration and partnerships for advocacy, highlighting the importance of mutual accountability between women and men and encouraging cross-sector engagement for gender justice. Heam Vanna of the KCC spoke on “The Role of the Church in Creating a Gender-Just Society”, emphasising

the Church’s responsibility to speak out against gender-based discrimination and to create inclusive spaces where women and men are treated with equal dignity.

The final day opened with prayer and a Bible study led by Rev. Sok Nev, KCC General Secretary, reflecting on Judges 4



Participants engaged in group discussion

and the leadership of Deborah and Jael. He encouraged participants to affirm women’s strength, agency and spiritual calling in both Church and community life, and to uphold the dignity of life regardless of gender.

Participants then made individual and collective commitments to strengthen the Church’s role in gender justice advocacy, to support survivors of violence, to challenge harmful norms and to build partnerships with community organisations and NGOs for future collaboration.

Asian Ecumenical Women’s Conference

12-14 November 2025 | Chiang Mai, Thailand



Participants of the Asian Ecumenical Women’s Conference

The Asian Ecumenical Women's Conference (AEWC) 2025, organised by the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), was held from 12 to 14 November 2025 at Payap University in Chiang Mai, Thailand, on the theme "Towards Upholding the Dignity and Rights of Women in Asia".

Eighty women delegates from CCA member churches and councils, ecumenical bodies,

theological institutions and civil society organisations across Asia gathered for the three-day conference. The AEWC provided a platform for theological reflection, critical analysis and collective discernment on the pressing challenges women face in the region, while reaffirming participants' shared commitment to advancing gender justice and strengthening women's participation in all spheres of life.



In his opening remarks, CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara highlighted the resurgence of authoritarianism and militarisation that continues to silence women and girls, noting that fundamental freedoms and human dignity are increasingly under

threat. He stressed that women's full and equal participation is essential for building just and peaceful communities, and that advancing women's rights remains a decisive pathway to achieving genuine equality across Asia.



The Thematic Address was delivered by Vernie Yocogan-Diano of the Episcopal Church in the Philippines. She described contexts shaped by land dispossession, exploitative labour conditions and shrinking democratic spaces under authoritarian and militarised systems. She identified the interlocking forces of globalisation, militarism and fundamentalisms as reinforcing patriarchy and exacerbating socio-economic inequalities, while commending the courage of Asian women defending human rights and dignity under increasingly difficult conditions.



Biblico-theological reflections provided spiritual and moral grounding for the conference discussions. Rev. Dr Darwita Hasiani Purba reflected on Esther 4, connecting the biblical narrative with the lived realities of Asian women and highlighting how deeply rooted patriarchy continues to cause oppression and dehumanisation. On the second day, Rev. EunJoo Lee led a *Lectio Divina* on John 4:7–26, emphasising the Samaritan woman’s transformative encounter with Jesus through presence, dialogue, compassion and truth, which restored her dignity and



Group discussions

agency. On the third day, Dr Shiluinla Jamir affirmed that claiming women’s rights and dignity aligns with God’s will, framing this pursuit as a path to holiness, participation in God’s transforming work and living as true children of God.

The conference undertook in-depth analysis of the socio-political realities shaping women’s lives across Asia. Deekshya Illangasinghe, Executive Director of South Asians for Human Rights (SAHR), presented a regional overview of political turbulence and its implications for women’s rights. She described how democratic backsliding in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal; shifts in governance in Indonesia and Timor-Leste; and increasing demands for accountability in India, Pakistan and the Philippines are reshaping political landscapes in ways that often silence or marginalise women. Illangasinghe stressed

that the intersecting nature of political, social and economic inequalities requires an equally multidimensional response.

In a thematic session on the feminisation of labour and forced migration, Glorene A. Das, Executive Director of Tenaganita (Malaysia), presented the stark realities confronting migrant women workers in Southeast Asia. She noted that nearly 70 percent of the region’s migrant workforce consists of women, many of whom are employed in domestic work, caregiving, agriculture, manufacturing and hospitality, where exploitation remains widespread and systemic. She further highlighted that domestic workers continue to be excluded from full labour protections, leaving them particularly vulnerable to abuse, while judicial processes remain slow and shelters inadequate. The criminalisation of migration and the mistreatment of women



Group discussion

during raids and detentions further expose deep failures within existing systems.

Eiga Kenny, human rights activist and Co-Director of Centre for Legal Aid Assistance and Settlement in Pakistan, discussed the crisis of forced conversions, abductions and misuse of blasphemy laws disproportionately affecting Christian and Hindu girls. She noted that weak judicial systems, state inaction and discriminatory legal interpretations leave minors unprotected and families without recourse.

Another central area of concern discussed on the second day was technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV). Kartini Sunityo, Partnership Manager at Asia Centre, explained how digital spaces have become new frontiers of abuse. Online harassment, image manipulation, cyberbullying and sextortion disproportionately target women, journalists, activists and others who challenge traditional gender norms. Sunityo emphasised the need for multistakeholder, values-based interventions that prioritise digital safety, promote survivor-centred support and strengthen digital literacy.

The crisis in Myanmar was another thematic focus of the conference. Poe Po of the Women's League of Burma (WLB)

and General Secretary of the Karenni National Women's Organization (KNWO) described the devastating consequences of the 2021 military coup, which escalated displacement from under half a million to more than 3.5 million people. From 2010 to 2014, WLB documented 104 military-perpetrated rapes, including 47 gang rapes. According to Poe, since the 2021 coup, over 1,000 cases of conflict-related sexual violence have been reported. Although over 60 percent of pro-democracy human rights defenders are women, they are also among the most targeted—imprisoned, tortured, killed, or subjected to sexual violence and trafficking.

The crisis in Myanmar was also highlighted. Poe Po of the Women's League of Burma (WLB) and General Secretary of the Karenni National Women's Organization (KNWO) described the devastating consequences of the 2021 military coup. Displacement has surged from under half a million to more than 3.5 million people, while conflict-related sexual violence has escalated sharply, with over 1,000 cases reported since the coup. Although more than 60 percent of pro-democracy human rights defenders are women, they are also among the most targeted—imprisoned, tortured, killed or trafficked.

CCA Programme Coordinator Rev. Jung Eun Moon and Rev. Mounita Biswas of



Group discussion

the Church of North India underscored the need for collaboration between women and men in advancing gender equality. They emphasised the importance of ecumenical advocacy, urging churches to examine their institutional cultures and to address gender-based violence with greater intentionality and transparency. A panel on “Women’s Rights Are Human Rights: Legal Guarantees for Access to Justice” addressed structural barriers to equality and the need for stronger laws, policies and systems capable of confronting discrimination and rights violations.

Rev. Glofie Gonzales Baluntong of the United Methodist Church shared her experience as a human rights defender in the Philippines, highlighting how laws are increasingly weaponised to criminalise dissent and suppress activism. Despite facing false charges and intimidation, she affirmed that solidarity from churches and ecumenical partners continues to strengthen her resolve. Advocate Deepa Joseph, a human rights lawyer at the Supreme Court of India, outlined the



Participants during the opening worship

persistent challenges women face despite legal reforms. She urged participants to strengthen legal awareness, promote economic independence and advocate for legal reforms that ensure equality across faiths and social contexts.

Towards the end of the conference, participants adopted a communiqué calling on churches and faith-based organisations to become spaces of empowerment and liberation by cultivating women’s leadership, challenging patriarchal norms and promoting gender justice. The communiqué urged governments across Asia to combat domestic violence, trafficking and sexual harassment; promote women’s leadership; ensure access to education and healthcare; close the gender digital divide; protect women human rights defenders; and uphold international human rights commitments. Participants further encouraged churches, communities and ecumenical partners to undertake concrete actions to safeguard women’s dignity and rights.

Young Ambassadors of Peace in Asia (YAPA)

7-13 September 2025 | Chiang Mai, Thailand

The Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) organised the Young Ambassadors of Peace in Asia (YAPA) – 2025 training programme from 7 to 13 September 2025 in Chiang Mai, Thailand, under the theme “Sustaining Peace in Asia through Religious

Cooperation (SPARC).” The 2025 edition marked the fifth YAPA training programme, reaffirming the CCA’s commitment to strengthening youth leadership in peace and reconciliation across the region.



Thirty young peace activists from South, Southeast and East Asia took part in the training, representing diverse cultural, social and religious backgrounds, including Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Indigenous spiritualities and agnostic perspectives.



YAPA-2025 opened with an interfaith worship service and an address by CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara, who emphasised the vital role of youth in shaping the future of peace and justice in Asia and encouraged participants to nurture empathy, respect, and active engagement.



The week-long programme combined interfaith worship, thematic lectures, exposure visits, workshops and interactive group activities. Facilitators included Prof. Dr M. P. Mathai, Dr Le Ngoc Bich Ly, Dr Rey Ty, Dr Mon Mon Myat, Dr Suphatmet Yunyasit, Claudine Haenni and Dr Mathews George Chunakara. The



thematic sessions addressed peace with justice, conflict transformation, emerging geopolitical realities in Asia, hate speech and social media, religious tolerance, youth leadership and human rights-based peace education.

Prof. Dr M. P. Mathai introduced a holistic understanding of peace rooted in justice,



Group discussions



YAPA-2025 participants at Mahachulalongkorn Buddhist University in Chiang Mai



YAPA-2025 participants at the Gurudwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha in Chiang Mai

inclusion and long-term commitment, drawing on Gandhian principles to show that lasting peace requires both personal transformation and collective ethical action. Dr Rey Ty examined shifting geopolitical dynamics and their impact on regional peace, urging youth to engage critically in these contexts and highlighting rights-based peace education as essential for dignity, participation and accountability.

Dr Mon Mon Myat explored the influence of social media, noting how hate speech and misinformation fuel division, while also recognising digital platforms as tools for peace advocacy. She underscored responsible communication and digital literacy as key competencies for young peacebuilders. Dr Mathews George Chunakara highlighted the shared values of peace, compassion and justice across religious traditions, underscoring the responsibility of faith communities to promote dialogue, counter extremism and

work together for reconciliation in Asia's diverse societies.

Sessions on conflict transformation, facilitated by Dr Le Ngoc Bich Ly, explored distinctions between conflict management, resolution and transformation, drawing on Buddhist, Christian and Confucian approaches. Dr Suphatmet Yunyasit examined intolerance, inequality and the political manipulation of religion, highlighting interreligious dialogue as essential for peace. Workshops on youth leadership by Claudine Haenni strengthened skills in self-awareness, resilience, emotional intelligence, team-building and responsible citizenship.

Through country-sharing sessions, participants presented personal experiences and contextual realities from their respective countries, exploring strategies to promote peace, human rights and social justice. Workshops guided them in developing actionable local initiatives



YAPA-2025 participants with the CCA General Secretary

addressing hate speech, social division and interreligious understanding, linking theoretical learning with community-based interventions. Participants then formulated community-focused action plans that will contribute to a sustainable network of Young Ambassadors of Peace across Asia, fostering continued regional collaboration and mutual support beyond the training.

Participants also visited the Mahachulalongkorn Buddhist University and Gurudwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha in Chiang Mai as part of exposure visits, gaining first-hand insights into the peacebuilding roles of religious communities.

YAPA-2025 aimed to empower young people as active contributors to peacebuilding, encouraging them to serve as catalysts for justice, harmony and inclusivity in their communities. It equipped participants to address human rights violations, discrimination and hate

speech, and promoted respect across ethnic, religious and cultural divides. Emphasis was also placed on collaboration with faith-based organisations, civil society and educational institutions, and on strengthening the capacity of youth from conflict-affected and marginalised settings. Through a blend of theoretical and practical learning, participants developed skills in conflict transformation, intercultural communication, interfaith dialogue and promotion of human dignity.

The week-long programme concluded with a reflective closing service that reaffirmed participants' commitment to peace and reconciliation, alongside evaluation sessions in which participants expressed gratitude for the transformative experience. YAPA-2025 reaffirmed the vital role of youth in promoting peace, reconciliation and interfaith understanding across Asia.

International Inter-Religious Conference on Freedom of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities in Asia

16-20 September 2025 | Jakarta, Indonesia

An international interreligious conference on Freedom of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities in Asia was organised by the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) in collaboration with the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI) from 16 to 20 September 2025 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The three-day conference brought together eighty-four participants from

across Asia. The programme commenced with an interfaith prayer service at the Grha Oikoumene Auditorium located in the PGI headquarters in Jakarta on Wednesday, 17 September 2025. Religious leaders representing various faith traditions offered prayers and reflections for peace, justice, and the well-being of humanity amid growing challenges of hatred and religious intolerance.



Opening interfaith prayer service

Inaugurating the conference, His Excellency Prof. Dr Nasaruddin Umar, Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, stated that the greatest threat to peace does not come from religion as such, but from the abuse of religion, when sacred teachings are misinterpreted for political or personal gains. He emphasised that when religion is used as a tool for exclusion rather

than unity, societies face disorder and disharmony. Prof. Dr Umar called for the promotion of education rooted in love as a means to prevent prejudice and violence.

The thematic overview on “Freedom of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities in Asia: Challenges in an Emerging Global Context” was delivered by CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara,



Dr Mathews George Chunakara and Rev. Jacklevyn F. Manuputty greeting His Excellency Prof. Dr Nasaruddin Umar



His Excellency Prof. Dr Nasaruddin Umar, Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia



Left to right: CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara, His Excellency Prof. Dr Nasaruddin Umar, PGI General Chairperson Rev. Jacklevyn F. Manuputty



Left to right: Rachpal Singhsrisethi, His Grace Bishop Daniel, H.G. Most Rev. Dr Joshua Mar Ignathios, H.G. Dr Zacharias Mar Aprem Metropolitan

who provided a comprehensive analysis of the state of religious freedom and the rights of religious minorities in Asia. Dr Chunakara highlighted that the challenges faced by religious minorities in Asia intersect with broader issues of minority protection and freedom of religion. He emphasised that the sensitive and multifaceted nature of religious freedom in Asia calls for strengthened solidarity and sustained interfaith cooperation to advance advocacy efforts in effective and collective ways.

During the session on “Upholding the Values of Human Dignity and Human Rights,” panellists representing Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism

affirmed that multi-faith collaboration and cross-cultural understanding are vital for protecting human rights and religious freedom in Asia.

Rev. Jacklevyn F. Manuputty, General Chairperson of the Communion of Churches in Indonesia, presented a Christian perspective grounded in *Imago Dei* and *Missio Dei*, urging interfaith cooperation to promote dignity, state neutrality, and solidarity. Swami Gururethnam Jnana Thapaswi from India, representing the Hindu faith, stressed that dignity is recognised, not conferred, warning against the politicisation of religion and calling for dialogue rooted in respect.



Eiga Kenny
Pakistan



Justice Dato Varghese George
Malaysia



Dr Suchart Setthamalinee
Thailand



Ash-Sheikh S.H.M. Faleel
Sri Lanka



Dr Khan Khon
Cambodia



Pratiwi Febry
Indonesia

Prof. Musdah Mulia of Indonesia drew on Islamic principles of *khalifah fil-ardh* and *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, advocating inclusive interpretations that uphold women's rights and pluralism. Venerable Napan Thawornbanjob of Thailand emphasised Buddhist values of compassion, tolerance, and mindfulness as foundations for equality and freedom. Representing the Sikh faith, Rachpal Singhsrisethi, President of the Chiang Mai Interreligious Association in Thailand, highlighted Guru Nanak's vision of one humanity and *Langar* as a living symbol of equality and freedom of belief.

In the final session on 17 September and throughout 18 September, representatives

of diverse religions presented on the state of religious freedom and the rights of religious minorities across Asia, highlighting ongoing challenges and proposing pathways for dialogue, mutual understanding, and social harmony.

Shedding light on the situation in India, religious leaders emphasised growing threats to freedom of religion and minority rights. Bishop Dr Joshua Mar Ignathios described escalating persecution of Christians, including attacks, arbitrary arrests, and forced reconversions, noting that broad anti-conversion laws in ten states criminalise basic religious practice. Prof. Dr P. K. Hussain Madavoor called for

dialogue and compassion over dogma and cautioned against the politicisation of faith. From Bangladesh, Rev. John Karmakar highlighted communal tensions and discrimination affecting Christians, while Venerable Bhikkhu Sunandapriya and Gobinda Chandra Pramanik warned that Hindus, Buddhists, and Christians are increasingly vulnerable during political instability. Panelists from Pakistan expressed concern over misuse of blasphemy laws, forced conversions, social discrimination, and organised attacks. Bishop Leo Rodrick Paul and Aroon Kumar urged legal enforcement, inclusive policies, and protection of minority communities.

Archbishop Dato Dr Simon Poh Hoon Seng from Malaysia, representing the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) outlined rising Islamisation and shrinking spaces for non-Muslims, while affirming continued commitment to interfaith dialogue and harmony. From Timor-Leste, Rev. Levi Vasconcelos Pinto noted strong constitutional protections yet persistent discrimination, calling for education, interfaith collaboration, and a theology of human dignity. Speaking on Myanmar, Rev. Mahn Palmerston and Kyaw Myint highlighted growing intolerance and discrimination against minorities, urging

collaborative action from faith leaders, scholars, and government authorities.

Rev. Prof. Dr Pradit Takerngrangarit from Thailand discussed challenges faced by the Christian minority. Prof. Dr Suchart Setthamalinee highlighted rising Islamophobia and initiatives such as the Wasatiyah Institute to promote peace. Mike Gabriel and Ash-Sheikh S.H.M Faleel from Sri Lanka noted that constitutional protections often fail in practice, with majoritarian politics and religious nationalism impacting minorities. Khan Khon highlighted bureaucratic obstacles and unequal government support affecting religious minorities in Cambodia, emphasising the need for fair application of the law. Almahdi G. Alonto focused on discrimination and development challenges affecting Muslim minorities in Mindanao, Philippines, stressing inclusive approaches for peace and stability.

Panelists from Indonesia highlighted interreligious cooperation and ongoing challenges for minorities. Dr Aloys Budi Purnomo (Christianity), Dr I Nyoman Sarya (Hinduism), MIn. Syed Taha Anwar (Ahmadiyya Islam), Prof. Dr Philip K. Widjaja (Buddhism), Xs. Budi Santoso Tanuwibowo (Confucianism), and Engkus



Panelists of "Rights of Religious Minorities in Indonesia – Interfaith Perspectives"



*Prashanta Barua
United Kingdom*



*Archbishop Dato Dr Simon Poh Hoon Seng
Malaysia*



*Aroon Kumar
Pakistan*



*Rev. Darwin Darmawan
Indonesia*



*Vijula Arulanantham
Sri Lanka*



*Gobinda Chandra Pramanik
Bangladesh*



*Tahir Bashir
Pakistan*



*Harkirtan Kaur
Indonesia*



*Rev. Kekirawe Sudassana Thero
Sri Lanka*

Ruswana (Indigenous faiths) emphasised dialogue, education, and legal protections to sustain Indonesia’s tradition of religious harmony.

On the final day, 19 September, the panel on “Role of the Judiciary in Upholding Constitutional Guarantees on Freedom of Religion and the Rights of Religious Minorities in Asia” examined the judiciary’s pivotal yet constrained role in safeguarding religious freedom and minority rights. Justice Dato Varghese George, retired Judge of the Court of Appeal of Malaysia, stressed that courts must act as “bulwarks against abuse.”

Prof. Dr Faizan Mustafa, Vice-Chancellor of Chanakya National Law University, India, observed that state laws restricting

conversions, such as “Freedom of Religion” or “love jihad” laws, have undermined constitutional neutrality. Dr Faustina Pereira, practicing lawyer in the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, warned that efforts to remove secularism from the Constitution’s preamble could deepen persecution of minorities. Vijula Arulanantham, Attorney-at-Law, Sri Lanka, noted that constitutional preference for Buddhism often limits protections for other faiths. Adv. Tahir Bashir, Lahore High Court, Pakistan, representing the Centre for Legal Aid Assistance and Settlement (CLAAS), highlighted ongoing misuse of blasphemy laws and mob violence. Dr Zainal Abidin Bagir, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia, concluded that litigation alone is insufficient, calling for broader



Religious leaders in conversation

advocacy involving communities, religious groups, and government actors. Across the region, panellists agreed that political and social pressures continue to weaken judicial enforcement of religious freedom.

In the session “Towards Effective Advocacy for Religious Freedom through Collaborative Efforts in Asia,” Eiga Kenny (Pakistan), H.G. Bishop Daniel (Australia), and Elga Sarapung (Indonesia) emphasised the importance of interfaith collaboration, mutual support, and a commitment to

justice reflecting compassion, equality, and human dignity. The panel stressed the need for civil society to remain critically engaged with government institutions and security forces, while continuously promoting exemplary practices by communities, schools, universities, and governments as models for advancing religious freedom in Asia.

On the final day of the conference, participants visited both Istiqlal Mosque, the largest mosque in Southeast Asia

and Indonesia’s national mosque, and Jakarta Cathedral, a historic Roman Catholic church in Central Jakarta. The visit included passage through the “Tunnel of Friendship”, which directly connects the two places of worship and serves as a powerful symbol of religious tolerance and unity.

The conference concluded with a closing interfaith worship, reflecting the participants’ shared commitment to fostering peace, advancing religious freedom, and protecting the rights of all in Asia. The participants also adopted the “Jakarta Communiqué,” reaffirming their commitment to human rights, religious freedom, and interreligious harmony.



Participants of the inter-religious conference at the “Tunnel of Friendship” in Jakarta

Myanmar Ecumenical Solidarity Accompaniment Programme (MESAP)

International Conference on “Towards a Global Advocacy for People’s Security, Peace with Justice and Democratisation in Myanmar”

26-28 November 2025 | Chiang Mai, Thailand

Building on the outcomes of the 2024 International Consultation in Bangna, Thailand, the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) continued to strengthen the Myanmar Ecumenical Solidarity Accompaniment Programme (MESAP) through sustained advocacy, accompaniment and collaboration. In this context, CCA organised the International Conference on “Towards a Global Advocacy for People’s Security, Peace with Justice, and Democratisation in Myanmar” from 26 to 28 November 2025 in Chiang Mai, Thailand, as a follow-up initiative to deepen ecumenical cooperation, strengthen joint advocacy strategies and identify practical collective actions in

response to Myanmar’s ongoing political, humanitarian and social crisis.

Recognising the urgency of the situation in Myanmar, CCA reaffirmed its ecumenical responsibility to stand in solidarity with communities affected by violence, injustice and displacement, with MESAP as a key framework for coordinated, people-centred advocacy and accompaniment. The conference brought together over seventy participants, including representatives of churches, ecumenical bodies, civil society and faith-based organisations, youth networks, academic and research institutions, humanitarian actors and Myanmar communities from



Participants of the International Conference on “Towards a Global Advocacy for People’s Security, Peace with Justice, and Democratisation in Myanmar”

within the country, the diaspora and the wider international community. The diversity of ethnic, faith and generational perspectives, and the presence of people with lived experience of conflict and displacement, strengthened the relevance and credibility of the discussions.

Over three days, participants engaged in plenary inputs and panel discussions analysing Myanmar’s rapidly evolving crisis and exploring strategic pathways

for coordinated advocacy across political, humanitarian and faith-based dimensions. In his opening address, CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara situated the conference within CCA’s broader Myanmar advocacy, highlighting worsening conditions since the 2021 military coup, including intensified armed conflict, mass displacement, economic decline, shrinking humanitarian space and systematic human rights violations.



CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara delivering the opening address at the International Conference



Left to right: Dr Rey Ty, Dr Dustin Barter

The General Secretary also reflected on ongoing resistance, calls for a federal democratic system, the plight of Rohingya refugees and the need to counter misleading international narratives, urging churches and partners to sustain principled advocacy through MESAP.

The first day included sessions on armed conflict, humanitarian needs and prospects for local peacebuilding, alongside a panel titled “Listening to the Ground: Voices from Grassroots, Civil Society, and Displaced Communities.” These discussions centred the experiences of communities affected by violence and displacement and underscored the need to ground advocacy in local realities, respect community agency and reflect community priorities accurately. Attention was given to community-led initiatives, local peacebuilding and the resilience of affected populations.

The second day focused on emerging political risks and inclusive approaches to leadership and peacebuilding. Sessions included “Myanmar Elections in December 2025: Concerns on Legitimacy, Emerging

Risks, and Advocacy Challenges” and a panel on inclusive leadership involving women, youth and ethnic communities. Participants expressed concerns about the legitimacy and implications of elections planned under conditions of repression and conflict. Discussions recognised the significant role of women, youth and faith actors in resistance, humanitarian response and peacebuilding, and stressed inclusive leadership and interfaith cooperation as foundations for any future political settlement. Sessions on faith and resilience further explored the moral and spiritual dimensions of accompaniment in Myanmar’s protracted crisis.

On the final day, participants considered forward-looking advocacy strategies. Sessions included “A Roadmap for Advocacy: Moving Beyond Conflict in Myanmar”, “Churches and Faith Communities Responding to Myanmar’s Crisis” and “How to Build Effective Global Advocacy Engagements through Multilateral Organisations and Civil Society”. Deliberations focused on shaping a shared advocacy roadmap linking immediate humanitarian concerns



Left to right: Zar Chi Oo, Rev. Dr. Jin Yang Kim



Rev. Dr. A. Roy Medley

with longer-term commitments to peace with justice, people’s security and democratisation.

A major outcome was the drafting and adoption of the MESAP–2025 Communiqué, which expressed shared commitments, condemned ongoing injustices and called for sustained international advocacy and ecumenical solidarity with the people of Myanmar. Participants also developed coordinated

advocacy messaging concerning the planned December 2025 elections, equipping partners to advocate collectively for non-recognition of an illegitimate process.

The conference further strengthened regional and international solidarity networks initiated in 2024 through informal exchanges, group discussions and collaborative planning. These interactions deepened trust among participants from

within Myanmar, the diaspora and the international community, and identified opportunities for joint initiatives and coordinated advocacy.

Held amid continued political instability, conflict, economic hardship and restricted civic space in Myanmar, the MESAP–2025

International Conference provided a timely platform for dialogue, strengthened advocacy capacity and reaffirmed CCA’s role as a convener of ecumenical solidarity and collective action for peace, justice, people’s security and democratisation in Myanmar.



Left to right: Dr Ashin Pyin Nyaw Bhatha, Trenton Martin, H.G. Dr Yakoob Mar Irenaios Metropolitan



Religious leaders at the International Conference



PUBLIC WITNESS AND ADVOCACY (PW)

OBJECTIVES

- To empower Asian churches to be competent in responding to social, economic, and political issues through acts of prophetic witness at times of brokenness and human needs; and,
- To coordinate and facilitate ecumenical advocacy at the national, regional, and global levels on emerging issues in Asia, while expressing solidarity, as well as upholding human rights for human dignity.

Emerging Issues in Asia: Regional and Global Advocacy

International Women's Day - 2025

8 March 2025

The CCA General Secretary released a statement on International Women's Day reaffirming the CCA's commitment to upholding the dignity and rights of women and girls, and calling for urgent action against persistent injustices including domestic violence, human trafficking, workplace discrimination and systemic marginalisation.

The General Secretary stated that the Church must be a refuge for those who are marginalised, a prophetic voice for justice and a place of hope, and that congregations must provide safe and nurturing spaces where women can speak, lead and flourish

in their God-given callings. He further stressed that by embodying the values of rights, equality and empowerment, the Church must model the just and equitable world it seeks to build and serve as a witness to the Gospel's call to justice, compassion and equality.

As International Women's Day serves as both celebration and call to action, the CCA urged its member churches and councils to reaffirm their commitment to gender justice and work towards a future in which the rights and dignity of all women and girls are fully recognised and protected.

CCA expresses deep sorrow over Myanmar earthquake

29 March 2025

CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara expressed deep sorrow over the devastating 7.7-magnitude earthquake that struck Myanmar on 28 March 2025. The earthquake, which originated 17 kilometres from the city of Mandalay, caused extensive destruction and loss of life. The tremors were felt beyond Myanmar, reaching Kunming and Dali in China's Yunnan Province, and causing noticeable shaking in Bangkok and Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Dr Mathews George Chunakara conveyed grief for the lives lost and concern for those injured, missing or trapped, calling for prayers for their rescue, healing and strength. He urged CCA member churches and councils to pray for the people of Myanmar, Thailand and surrounding regions, and expressed hope that ongoing rescue efforts would bring timely relief and support. The General Secretary also encouraged CCA member churches and councils to mobilise financial and human resources to extend humanitarian aid and support to affected communities.

World Health Day - 2025

7 April 2025

On World Health Day 2025, CCA called for renewed commitment from churches and communities across Asia to prioritise the health and well-being of mothers and newborns. The theme, "Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures," highlighted

the urgent need to reduce preventable maternal and newborn deaths and ensure that every child is welcomed into the world with dignity and care.

In a statement issued on 7 April 2025, CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George

Chunakara noted that Asia and the Pacific remain far from achieving health-related Sustainable Development Goals. He stressed that faith, health and healing are deeply interwoven in the Christian understanding of wholeness, and that healing is not solely a medical outcome but a sacred process of restoration that calls the Church to advocate, support and walk alongside those facing health challenges,

including mental health concerns. The statement further called on churches to adopt a holistic approach to health and healing by prioritising the well-being of mothers and newborns, advocating for accessible healthcare, fostering safe community spaces and empowering faith groups to engage in health promotion and policy advocacy.

CCA expresses concern over persecution of religious minorities in South Asia

22 April 2025

CCA expressed concern over the alarming rise in religious extremism and persecution of religious minorities across South Asia, urging governments to take immediate action to safeguard their rights and freedoms. Distressing incidents in Pakistan, Bangladesh and India highlighted a troubling surge in the persecution of religious minorities across South Asia, underscoring the urgent need for protection and justice.

adding to a pattern of attacks including the desecration of temples and assaults on homes and businesses. In India, on 31 March 2025, Christian pilgrims and two priests were assaulted in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, a state with stringent anti-conversion laws where Christians comprise only 0.27 percent of the population. The incident formed part of a broader pattern of anti-Christian violence reported across the country.

On Good Friday, 18 April 2025, a court in Faisalabad, Pakistan sentenced Pervaiz Alias Kodu Masih to death for alleged desecration of the Holy Qur'an—an accusation that had previously triggered violent mob attacks in Jaranwala, where churches and Christian homes were destroyed and thousands displaced. In Bangladesh, violence against minority communities continued to escalate. On 17 April 2025, Bhabesh Chandra Roy, a Hindu community leader from Dinajpur district, was abducted and murdered,

CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara condemned the rise in religious extremism in South Asia and the violent acts committed against religious minorities, urging governments to take concrete measures to protect vulnerable communities. He also noted growing anxiety among Asian churches, particularly where Christians are a minority, over the erosion of communal harmony and increasing threats to peaceful coexistence among people of all faiths.

CCA calls for de-escalation of conflicts and dialogue between India-Pakistan

8 May 2025

CCA voiced deep concern over the escalation of conflicts between India and Pakistan following a deadly terrorist attack in India-administered Kashmir and the subsequent retaliatory strikes. On 22 April 2025, a terror attack near Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir claimed the lives

of twenty-six people, including several tourists. In response, the Indian military launched targeted strikes across the Line of Control on 7 May 2025.

CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara stressed that any



further escalation posed grave risks, particularly in a region where millions already lived in vulnerable conditions on both sides of the border. He emphasised that the possession of nuclear weapons by both nations heightened fear and anxiety, as each act of aggression carried the potential for wider and catastrophic consequences.

He urged the governments of India and Pakistan to return to peaceful dialogue, uphold their responsibility to protect the life and dignity of people across the borders and ensure that civilians were not made to suffer as a result of political or military agendas. He stressed that restraint, wisdom and a shared commitment to humanity were essential.

World Refugee Day - 2025

20 June 2025

In a statement released to mark World Refugee Day, CCA expressed solidarity with refugees, forcibly displaced persons, and stateless communities.

The CCA General Secretary highlighted the growing humanitarian challenges facing the region, drawing attention to the plight of more than 17.2 million people across Asia and the Pacific who had been displaced due to conflict, persecution, political instability, military occupation and the escalating impacts of climate change. The statement noted concern over the rising number of people displaced by climate-related disasters in vulnerable, low-lying areas, including Bangladesh’s coastal districts, the Sundarbans delta, the Maldives and parts of Indonesia,

the Philippines and Vietnam. It also highlighted the ongoing displacement of minority and Indigenous communities in countries such as Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Thailand and Malaysia, often driven by systemic discrimination, legal precarity and environmental degradation.

The General Secretary affirmed the Church’s responsibility to stand in solidarity with those forced to flee because of environmental devastation, conflict and exclusion, and emphasised that churches must serve as sanctuaries of welcome and centres of advocacy, challenging systems that perpetuate displacement while accompanying affected communities with compassion and resilience.

CCA condemns escalation of war in Iran

23 June 2025

CCA condemned the escalation of war in Iran following the US-led precision airstrikes targeting Iranian nuclear facilities. These strikes, carried out after Israel’s earlier attacks on 13 June and Iran’s subsequent retaliation, marked a serious intensification of the conflict and resulted in significant loss of life.

In a statement released on 23 June 2025, CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara denounced the acts of aggression as violations of international law and a deepening of an already volatile

regional crisis. The statement highlighted concern over the role of powerful external actors in fuelling the conflict in West Asia, noting that such interventions threatened national sovereignty, territorial integrity and the lives and dignity of millions. Dr Chunakara called on all parties involved in the conflict to agree to an immediate ceasefire, pursue meaningful dialogue and prioritise people’s security. He urged external actors to refrain from actions that inflamed tensions and to commit instead to diplomacy, peace with justice and reconciliation.

World Day Against Trafficking in Persons - 2025

30 July 2025

On World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, the Christian Conference of Asia called on Asian churches and faith communities to stand united against the organised crime of human trafficking. The 2025 campaign theme, “Human Trafficking is Organised Crime – End the Exploitation,” underscored the urgent need to dismantle trafficking networks and strengthen justice systems across the region. While awareness has grown, responses remain fragmented. Survivors continue to face barriers to protection and justice, and weak law enforcement enables traffickers to operate with impunity.

The CCA General Secretary highlighted the diverse but interconnected nature of trafficking across Asia, noting that it remains one of the most pervasive and

highly organised criminal enterprises in the region. He drew attention to the ways transnational syndicates exploit legal loopholes, migration routes and digital platforms to recruit, control and abuse vulnerable individuals, coercing victims into labour, sexual exploitation and criminal activity while often evading accountability. The General Secretary urged churches to renew their commitment to justice and compassion by supporting trauma-informed and survivor-led approaches, amplifying survivors’ voices and collaborating across borders to advocate for policy reform. He emphasised that advocacy against human trafficking is a moral and spiritual responsibility requiring collective action from churches and faith communities.

CCA expresses concern over unrest and violence in Nepal

10 September 2025

The Christian Conference of Asia expressed grave concern over the tragic loss of life and escalating violence that occurred during Gen Z-led protests in Nepal in September 2025. The unrest, triggered by a government-imposed social media ban and widespread frustration over corruption and economic hardship, rapidly intensified and threatened peace and the safety of civilians across the country.

The CCA General Secretary urged all parties to exercise restraint and emphasised the importance of addressing grievances through peaceful dialogue rather than

destructive actions. He stressed the need for accountability for all acts of violence and called for the rapid initiation of meaningful dialogue among government authorities, protest leaders, and other stakeholders to safeguard the rights, dignity, and safety of citizens. The General Secretary also appealed to CCA member churches and national councils to pray for peace and stability in Nepal, and called for immediate de-escalation of tensions and for collective efforts to restore harmony, ensure the protection of human life, and enable the safe return of everyday life for the people of the country.

CCA condemns violence against indigenous ethnic minorities in Khagrachhari, Bangladesh

29 September 2025

CCA condemned the violence in Khagrachhari District, Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh, which resulted in

several deaths, numerous injuries and the destruction of homes, businesses and places of worship belonging to

Indigenous minority communities. The unrest, reportedly triggered by the alleged gang rape of an Indigenous eighth-grade schoolgirl, escalated into vandalism, arson and violent clashes. Reports indicated at least three deaths within minority Indigenous communities and multiple injuries, including among security personnel.

In a statement released on 29 September 2025, the CCA General Secretary urged

the Bangladesh authorities to take immediate and impartial action to restore peace, ensure justice for victims and hold perpetrators accountable. He also called on the government to guarantee the safety and protection of ethnic and religious minorities, emphasising that safeguarding their rights and dignity is essential for building peace, reconciliation and social harmony in Bangladesh.

Statement on the earthquake in Central Philippines

3 October 2025

The Christian Conference of Asia expressed deep sorrow and solidarity with the people of the Philippines following the devastating 6.9 magnitude earthquake that struck the coast of the central Philippines on 30 September 2025. The powerful earthquake, centred between Cebu and Leyte, caused widespread destruction during the night when communities were most vulnerable.

In a statement released on 3 October 2025, CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews

George Chunakara conveyed condolences and expressed prayers for comfort for the bereaved families, healing for those injured, and strength for the individuals and agencies engaged in ongoing rescue and relief efforts. Dr Chunakara urged CCA member churches, councils, and partners across Asia to uphold the affected communities in prayer, to accompany them with pastoral care, and to mobilise financial and human resources to extend humanitarian aid and support to survivors.

World Mental Health Day - 2025

10 October 2025



In a statement issued on World Mental Health Day, the CCA General Secretary emphasised that caring for people experiencing upheaval and crisis due to mental health challenges is a vital expression of solidarity and respect for human dignity. CCA urged churches to integrate mental health and psychosocial support into their diaconal ministries and humanitarian response initiatives, recognising such care as an essential component of holistic ministry.

The General Secretary highlighted the particular vulnerability of Asia and the Pacific, noting that the region is the most disaster-prone in the world. Climate-related events displace one person every two seconds and affect an estimated 142

million people each year. The growing scale of environmental disruption, coupled with ongoing ethnic and religious conflicts, continues to deepen psychological distress, displacement, insecurity, and trauma for millions across the region.

The statement emphasised the moral and pastoral responsibility of churches and faith-based organisations to respond to these realities. CCA affirmed that churches can serve as sanctuaries of hope by providing spiritual and emotional care alongside other forms of assistance, and stressed that mental health must be recognised as an integral dimension of the Christian mission of healing, justice, and the protection of human dignity.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women - 2025

25 November 2025

On the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, CCA called for urgent and coordinated action to address the rapid rise in violence against women and girls, particularly in digital spaces.

CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara expressed deep concern over the persistence and escalation of gender-based violence across Asia, emphasising that technology-facilitated violence has become one of the fastest-growing forms of abuse, driven by rapid digital transformation and insufficient regulation. Women and girls are increasingly subjected to online harassment, image-based abuse, stalking, hate speech and deepfake manipulation—digital violations that cause serious

psychological harm and often spill over into physical violence.

Dr Chunakara urged governments to strengthen legislation by criminalising technology-facilitated violence, enhancing privacy and data-protection frameworks and ensuring accountability for perpetrators. He also called on technology companies to adopt stronger safeguards, remove harmful content swiftly and operate with greater transparency and responsibility. The General Secretary also encouraged churches and faith communities across Asia to provide safe spaces for survivors, offer pastoral and practical support and promote equality, dignity and respect within their communities.

CCA's expresses concern over natural disasters across Asia

28 November 2025

CCA expressed deep sorrow and concern over the severe disasters across Asia in November, which resulted in significant loss of life, widespread displacement

and extensive damage to homes and infrastructure.

Across the region, communities faced the effects of floods, landslides, fires



and typhoons. In Indonesia, flooding and landslides in several provinces affected large numbers of families, causing multiple deaths and leaving many missing. In Hong Kong, a major fire in a high-rise public housing complex resulted in heavy casualties and widespread destruction. Severe rains and flooding also impacted Vietnam, Malaysia and Thailand, leading to numerous deaths, large-scale displacement and extensive property damage. Sri Lanka experienced heavy rains and landslides that caused further fatalities and disruption, while Typhoon Kalmaegi struck the Philippines with devastating effect, illustrating the growing toll of extreme weather across the region.

In a statement released on 28 November 2025, CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara affirmed solidarity

with churches, national councils and partners engaged in relief efforts and acknowledged the suffering of bereaved families and communities awaiting news of missing loved ones. He stressed that the increasing frequency and severity of these disasters, intensified by extreme weather and climate change, underscored the shared responsibility to care for creation and protect vulnerable communities, and highlighted the need for coordinated regional and global action to address climate change and environmental degradation. The General Secretary called on member churches, councils, ecumenical partners and the international community to uphold affected communities in prayer and extend humanitarian support as the region continued to face severe and widespread disasters.

World AIDS Day - 2025

1 December 2025

On World AIDS Day, CCA called for global solidarity and renewed commitment to strengthening the HIV response at a time when decades of progress are increasingly at risk. Reflecting on the 2025 theme, “Overcoming Disruption, Transforming the AIDS Response,” CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara noted that the HIV response across Asia had reached a critical juncture. He emphasised that reductions in international funding were placing hard-won gains at risk, straining healthcare systems and community-led programmes essential for reaching those most vulnerable. He highlighted how these pressures were deepening inequalities, particularly for key populations who

continued to face stigma, discrimination and legal barriers limiting access to essential services.

Dr Chunakara stressed that churches and other faith communities have a significant responsibility in dismantling stigma and discrimination faced by people living with HIV and AIDS. He underscored the importance of supporting culturally sensitive awareness initiatives, encouraging voluntary testing, linking communities to vital services and mobilising resources to strengthen local HIV programmes. He affirmed that advocacy, education and accompaniment remain essential to ensuring that no one is left behind.

World Human Rights Day - 2025

10 December 2025

On World Human Rights Day, CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara reflected on the 2025 theme,

“Our everyday essentials,” emphasising that human rights are not abstract ideals but fundamental conditions that shape

daily life by ensuring safety, opportunity, belonging and freedom. He highlighted the shared responsibility to stand in solidarity with one another and uphold the common good, noting that human rights unite people across differences and provide grounding in times of uncertainty.

Dr Chunakara expressed deep concern over growing threats to human rights across Asia. Political turmoil, militarisation, repression and armed conflict continued to inflict fear and suffering on millions. Human rights defenders and media workers faced surveillance, arbitrary

detention and persecution, while violence and discrimination against women, girls, Indigenous peoples and minorities persisted across the region. He also drew attention to large-scale humanitarian crises exacerbated by climate change.

The General Secretary called on CCA member churches and councils to strengthen their role as advocates for justice, defenders of human rights and protectors of human dignity, urging churches to serve as a voice for the voiceless and a refuge for the vulnerable.

International Consultation on Combating Human Trafficking, Forced Migration and Cybercrime in Asia *13-15 August 2025 | Bangkok, Thailand*



*Participants of the International Consultation on Combating Human Trafficking,
Forced Migration and Cybercrime in Asia*

In response to the intensifying humanitarian crises of forced migration, human trafficking and cybercrime across Asia, the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), through its Asian Ecumenical Migrant Advocacy Network (AEMAN), convened an international consultation in Bangkok, Thailand, from 13 to 15 August 2025. The consultation brought together thirty-five participants from more than fifteen countries, including

representatives of churches, ecumenical councils, grassroots migrant organisations and non-governmental organisations. It provided a platform for examining the complex realities driving displacement and exploitation in the region and for discerning the role of faith communities in responding to these challenges.

The consultation was initiated in response to the rising number of young, educated

individuals—many with technological and multilingual skills—being trafficked across borders and coerced into operating cybercrime scams. Recruited under false promises of employment, victims are confined in guarded compounds and forced to commit digital fraud under threat of violence. This convergence of

forced migration, human trafficking and cybercrime has created a transnational crisis that requires urgent, coordinated and faith-rooted responses. Recognising the unique role of churches, the CCA convened the consultation to equip faith communities for advocacy, pastoral care and collaborative action.



Panel discussion on “Experiences in Combatting Human Trafficking, Forced Migration and Cybercrime”
 Left to right: Dedy Herbinson Lazarus Faah, Joanna Concepcion, Bishop Sameer Issac Khimla, Rev. Chris Frazer

The consultation commenced with a thematic address by CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara, who highlighted the alarming rise of cyber-enabled trafficking operations, particularly in the Mekong subregion. He emphasised that human trafficking for criminal exploitation has become one of the fastest-growing criminal enterprises globally, with Asia increasingly affected, and called on churches to strengthen ecumenical coalitions and collaborate with civil society and multilateral organisations.

Presentations by Andrew Wasuwongse (International Justice Mission, Thailand) and Dr Ricky Raymon (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) offered insights into the scale of trafficking syndicates and the conditions faced by victims forced into scam centres. These operations, transnational and highly organised,

exploit economic vulnerability and thrive in contexts of weak governance and corruption. Victims are subjected to forced criminality, confinement and violence, often after being trafficked across borders under deceptive recruitment schemes.

Sessions led by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Thailand examined case studies on forced migration and digital exploitation, highlighting the evolving nature of trafficking trends and the need for technology-driven countermeasures. William Gois of Migrant Forum in Asia analysed socio-economic and environmental drivers of migration, including climate change, economic inequality and digital transitions, noting that migration is frequently a survival strategy shaped by systemic injustice.

Legal expert Christina Papazoglou provided a critical analysis of gaps in protection

Hotel Royal Benja, Bangkok, Thailand



*Opening Address by CCA General Secretary
Dr Mathews George Chunakara*



*Andrew Wasuwongse
International Justice Mission, Thailand*



*Jimarie Snap Mabanta
National Council of Churches
in the Philippines*



*Rev. Prof. Dr P. G. George
Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian
Church in India*



*Rev. Dethsacda Aphayamath
Lao Evangelical Church*



*Ricky Ramon
United Nations Office on Drugs
and Crime*



*Rev. John Nischal Kumar C.
Church of South India*



*Among Pundhi Resi
International Organization
for Migration*



*Rev. P. R. Hmuaka
Presbyterian Church of India*



*Christina Papazoglou
Expert in Migrant and Refugee Law*



*Ashley William Gois
Migrant Forum in Asia, Philippines*

frameworks, calling for survivor-led policy engagement, decriminalisation of irregular migration, and harmonised regional cooperation. She stressed the importance of culturally sensitive victim identification and the need to empower civil society and faith-based organisations in shaping legal and policy responses. A theological reflection by Rev. Prof. Dr P. G. George grounded the discussions in biblical ethics, reminding participants of the Christian imperative to uphold human dignity and stand with the oppressed.

The final day featured testimonies from church-led initiatives across Asia and the Pacific, showcasing models of pastoral care, rehabilitation, and advocacy. These included safe houses and survivor support programmes led by the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP),

the Evangelical Protestant Church of West Timor (GMIT), the Church of North India (CNI), and Migrante International. These initiatives demonstrated the potential of faith-based responses rooted in compassion, justice, and solidarity.

The consultation concluded with the adoption of a communiqué affirming the Church's prophetic and pastoral role in addressing forced migration and trafficking. It called on churches to conduct awareness campaigns, equip clergy and lay leaders, support survivor-led advocacy, and collaborate with civil society and government agencies. The communiqué also urged churches to document migrant experiences, mobilise volunteers, and forge interfaith alliances to strengthen accountability and ensure access to justice.



Participants reaffirmed their commitment to translating theological convictions into concrete action, recognising that the church must be both a sanctuary and a voice for those who suffer exploitation and

displacement. The consultation marked a significant step in building ecumenical capacity to respond to one of the most urgent moral and humanitarian challenges facing Asia today.

Ecumenical Diakonia Network in Asia (EDNA)

Asian Church Leaders' Conference on Ecumenical Diakonia: Accompaniment, Solidarity, and Participation in God's Mission

21-24 November 2025 | Chiang Mai, Thailand



Participants of the Asian Church Leaders' Conference on Ecumenical Diakonia

The Asian Church Leaders' Conference, organised by the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), gathered representatives from churches, national councils, and ecumenical organisations across the region to reflect on diakonia as accompaniment, solidarity, and participation in God's mission. Over four days, participants engaged in theological reflection, shared contextual testimonies, and discerned strategic directions for strengthening ecumenical diakonia in Asia.

CCA General Secretary Dr Mathews George Chunakara delivered the thematic address affirming that diakonia is not peripheral but integral to the Church's mission, alongside worship and witness. He emphasised that authentic diakonia must move beyond charity to embody *kenosis*, justice, and solidarity with the vulnerable, grounded in biblical and early church traditions. Bishop Dr Samuel San Myat Shwe offered a biblical-theological reflection on John

13, reminding participants that diakonia is central to the identity of the Church and rooted in Christ's self-emptying love, calling for fearless, sacrificial service in contexts of crisis.

CCA Moderator Bishop Reuel Norman Marigza addressed "Reclaiming Diakonia as a Theological and Missional Mandate," underscoring the need to reclaim diakonia from a narrow understanding of charity and to rediscover its biblical meaning as commissioned ministry. He urged churches to confront systemic injustice, empower marginalised communities and integrate ecological stewardship into their mission.

Building on these theological foundations, national councils and churches shared how diakonia is embodied in their contexts of crisis and transformation. Bishop Dr Myat San of the Myanmar Council of Churches (MCC) underscored that churches remain signs of God's presence amid conflict,



*Bishop Reuel Norman Marigza
CCA Moderator*



*Bishop Dr Samuel San Myat Shwe
Church of the Province of
Myanmar (Anglican)*



*Minnie Anne Mata-Calub
National Council of Churches
in the Philippines*



*Rev. John Gilmore
National Council of Churches
in Australia*



*Rev. Kingsley Weerasinghe
Methodist Church in Sri Lanka*



*Bishop Dr U Myat San
Myanmar Council of Churches*



*Joshua Rathnam Chinthala
Church of North India*



*Rev. Eldarton Simbolon
Huria Kristen Batak Protestan
(HKBP), Indonesia*



*His Grace Cyril Mar Baselios I
Malabar Independent
Syrian Church, India*

displacement and economic collapse. MCC's ministries include humanitarian aid, trauma healing and safe spaces for dialogue, affirming diakonia as both a way of life and prophetic witness.

Rev. Etika Saragih of the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI) outlined diakonia across Indonesia's vast archipelago, responding to multiple intersecting "poly-crises" such as ecological degradation, nationalism, educational challenges and digital disruption. PGI prioritises advocacy for justice and peace, socio-ecological sustainability and empowerment of women, children, Indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities. Rev. John Gilmore, President of the National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA), highlighted more than seventy-five years of diaconal engagement, including refugee advocacy and humanitarian response through Act for Peace and the Church Agencies Network (CAN) and its disaster operations arm, CAN DO.

Minnie Anne Mata-Calub, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), described diakonia as both mercy and justice, integrating humanitarian response, climate resilience, human rights advocacy and peacebuilding. NCCP emphasised the need for diakonia that links immediate relief with structural transformation, grounded in ecumenical collaboration. Pastor Kang Phaldaracheat of the Kampuchea Christian Council (KCC) highlighted diakonia expressed through relief work, social justice, care for vulnerable groups and the empowerment of women and youth.

Rev. Levi de Vasconcelos Pinto of the Igreja Protestante iha Timor-Leste (IPTL) emphasised diakonia rooted in Timorese culture, addressing poverty,

stunting and illiteracy through education, food sustainability and community empowerment. Rev. Nguyen Quoc Dung of the Justified Baptist Church, Vietnam, shared ministries of compassion including blind schools, provision of wheelchairs for persons with disabilities, the "Blessings Kitchen" and disaster response initiatives. Rev. Dr Saw Cyrus Sein of the Myanmar Baptist Convention (MBC) described diakonia in a context of political instability and humanitarian crisis, combining earthquake relief with psychosocial care under the motto "Service and Sacrifice." Saw Tee Toh of the Kawthoolei Karen Baptist Churches (KKBC) highlighted diakonia among refugees along the Thai-Myanmar border, providing schools, hostels and emergency relief and embodying resilience and hope amid statelessness.

Other churches across Asia also shared their diaconal witness through ministries of reconciliation, healthcare, education, advocacy and ecological stewardship. They described work with refugees and asylum seekers, empowerment of women and children, HIV/AIDS ministries, disaster response and interfaith collaboration. These testimonies demonstrated that diakonia in diverse contexts is both compassionate service and prophetic witness, confronting systemic injustice while nurturing communities in hope, dignity, and resilience.

His Grace Geevarghese Mar Barnabas offered a biblical theological reflection on James 3:13-18, reminding participants that diakonia must be rooted in divine wisdom, sown in righteousness, and borne as the fruit of peace. He affirmed that ecumenical diakonia in Asia is a shared journey of faith and solidarity, where the Church walks alongside the poor and vulnerable, cultivating justice and wholeness for all creation.



*Canon Andrew Khoo Chin Hock
Diocese of West Malaysia
(Anglican Church)*



*Rev. Etika Saragih
Communion of Churches
in Indonesia*



*H.G. Dr Geevarghese Mar
Barnabas Metropolitan
Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church*



*Rev. Levi de Vasconcelos Pinto
Protestant Church in Timor- Leste*



*Dr Joyanta Adhikari
Bangladesh Baptist Church Sangha*

During the conference, participants worshipped with six congregations in Chiang Mai: Grace Church (Burmese), Church of Christ Denpraporn, Church of Christ Nong Nuoasam, Chiang Mai Chinese Church, Church of Christ Thammaprteep and Wunpawng Christian Church (Kachin). Greetings were conveyed on behalf of the conference by Dr Chunkara at Grace Church and by Bishop Marigza at the Chiang Mai Chinese Church. Fellowship meals strengthened relationships through cultural exchange and mutual encouragement.

Molina Karmaker, Director of the Social Health and Education Development (SHED) of the Bangladesh Baptist Church Sangha (BBCS), highlighted accompaniment and solidarity with vulnerable communities through early childhood centres, women's empowerment, support for the visually impaired, hostel ministries and disaster response. SHED employs approaches such as asset-based community development, trauma-informed care and youth volunteer networks, affirming diakonia as both immediate relief and long-term transformation.



Panel Discussion on "Journeying with Communities in Crisis"

Farida Pasiwen-Cawatig of the Episcopal CARE Foundation (E-CARE) emphasised a shift from needs-based aid to empowerment, using Asset-Based Community Development and the Receivers-to-Givers practice. E-CARE's programmes include livelihood support, land acquisition, disaster recovery and creation care, with a commitment to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030. Its work reflects sustainable

diakonia in which communities become active agents of their own transformation.

Rev. Shibu Samuel of the Christian Agency for Rural Development (CARD) of the Mar Thoma Church, India, outlined a holistic mission encompassing child support, rural education, tribal development, agriculture and food security, health and disability care, vocational training and disaster management. Despite challenges such as restrictive laws and funding limitations,



Panel Discussion on "Diakonia as Prophetic Witness in Contexts of Crisis"

CARD reaches more than 50,000 families annually, integrating education, health, livelihood and advocacy as expressions of prophetic diakonia. Adeel Rehmat of the Pak Mission Society (PMS), Pakistan, described its evolution from humanitarian response to a triple nexus of aid, development and peacebuilding. PMS ministries include disaster response, leadership development, education, livelihood, health, WASH and climate initiatives.

Rev. Asir Ebenezer, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in India, introduced EDNA, which was adopted by the CCA Governing Board, as a framework for coordinated regional diakonia. He emphasised the need for sustainable structures, theological resources, and accountability, reminding participants that a church without diakonia is not truly in mission. EDNA envisions Asian churches collaborating more intentionally, mobilising underutilised capacities, and



reclaiming diakonia as both compassionate service and prophetic witness.

The conference communiqué affirmed diakonia as accompaniment, solidarity and participation in God's mission. It called on Asian churches to embody prophetic

witness, confront systemic injustice, care for creation and strengthen ecumenical collaboration. Participants committed to mobilising local capacities, developing theological resources and walking alongside the marginalised with hope and resilience.

Action Together in Combating HIV and AIDS in Asia (ATCHAA)

National Capacity Building for Church Leaders

20-22 May 2025 | Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

The Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), in collaboration with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malaysia (ELCM) and Malaysian CARE, organised a national capacity-building programme from 20 to 22 May 2025 at the Lutheran Hall, ELCM, Kuala Lumpur, with thirty-eight participants from across Malaysia.

The opening worship was led by pastors from ELCM, followed by welcome remarks from Bishop Steven Lawrence. Po Siew Lin of Malaysian CARE also addressed participants, highlighting the ongoing partnership between ELCM and Malaysian CARE in responding to HIV in Malaysia following their participation in the CCA

programme held in Bangkok in 2023.

Participants included pastors, church and youth leaders, and caregivers from children's homes representing various denominations and actively engaged in HIV and AIDS ministries. Malaysia continues to see rising numbers of new HIV cases, particularly among men who have sex with men (MSM) and intravenous drug users. While progress has been made in eliminating mother-to-child transmission, new infections remain high among key populations, especially young people aged 15 to 24.

During the biblical and theological reflection, Jasaleen from Seminari Theoloji



Participants of the national capacity building programme for church leaders

Malaysia (STM) invited participants to engage with the gospel story of Jesus and the little children, encouraging reflection on its relevance for children living with or affected by HIV in Malaysia.

CCA Programme Coordinator Dr Ronald Lalthanmawia led a participatory discussion on current trends and developments in HIV. The session helped participants understand the basic science of HIV and recent treatment advances while addressing common myths and misconceptions. The current HIV situation in Asia, and particularly in Malaysia, was examined using data from the latest UNAIDS report, noting rising infections among key populations and continuing challenges in treatment access for marginalised communities.

On the second day, Pastor Jeffrey led a biblical reflection on the healing of the lepers, linking the passage to the experiences of people living with HIV (PLHIV) and children living with HIV (CLHIV) in Malaysia. This was followed by sessions on “Upholding the Dignity and Rights of Children and Teens” and “Addressing

Vulnerabilities: Gender Justice and Asian Realities,” emphasising the need for safe, inclusive and supportive environments for children and young people, and addressing high transmission rates among MSM.

A session on the SAVE approach, which stands for Safer Practices, Access to Treatment, Voluntary Counselling and Testing, and Empowerment, encouraged participants to adopt a holistic strategy for HIV prevention and response. The concepts of Stigma, Shame, Denial, Discrimination, Inaction and Misaction (SSDDIM) were also introduced to help participants understand and address the multiple dimensions of stigma surrounding HIV and AIDS.

Malaysian CARE, Mercy Home and Oasis Home shared their experiences working with PLHIV and CLHIV, highlighting challenges and best practices in community-based support. An interactive discussion followed the presentations.

On the final day, Bishop Steven Lawrence led a biblical reflection on the parable of the Good Samaritan, encouraging



participants to consider the gaps between church and society in addressing the needs of PLHIV and to explore ways the church can break barriers and build bridges. Participants then developed action plans aimed at raising awareness within church communities and improving engagement with young people vulnerable to HIV. Many noted that HIV remains insufficiently discussed within church contexts and

emphasised the need for greater attention to this growing concern.

The closing session provided time for reflection and reaffirmation of commitments. Several leaders working with children's homes expressed their intention to adopt integrated approaches that create more inclusive environments for children living with HIV in Malaysia.

National Capacity Building for Youth Leaders in Indonesia Talk-show on "From Stigma to Solidarity"

13 December 2025 | Jakarta, Indonesia

In collaboration with the Youth Bureau of the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI), United Evangelical Mission and Temu Kebangsaan Orang Muda, the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) organised a talk show marking World AIDS Day and Human Rights Day. Held in Jakarta on 13 December 2025, the event brought together around twenty-five young people representing diverse faiths, backgrounds, genders and abilities. Moderated by Isyatami Aulia, the discussions focused on the stigma experienced by marginalised groups.

Satrio Rahargo of Wahana Visi Indonesia (WVI) explained that children experience four types of wounds in both everyday life and in crisis situations: physical, emotional, social, and spiritual. In the context of HIV/AIDS, children born with HIV or those who have parents living with HIV experience layered and more complex forms of suffering. Social wounds are often the most significant, arising from discriminatory attitudes that lead to labelling, loss of identity and barriers to essential services such as healthcare and education. Rahargo observed that spiritual wounds are frequently overlooked, despite their impact on children's sense of hope, meaning and belonging. Rahargo further added that children living with HIV are

often the lowest priority in healthcare and social services, and that their meaningful participation in designing HIV programmes remains largely absent.

Rev. Ritson Manyonyo, founder of the Elsafan Foundation and an advocate for people with disabilities, referred to Indonesia's Law No. 8 of 2016, which defines disability through three key elements: limitations, barriers, and difficulties. He noted that people living with HIV are often treated socially as if they were persons with disabilities, despite being medically able to live fully productive lives when accessing proper treatment. He raised concerns about the compounded suffering of children with disabilities who also live with HIV, who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Rev. Manyonyo criticised persistent stigma that frames HIV as a curse or moral punishment, reinforcing exclusion and dehumanisation, including within religious institutions. He stressed the importance of inclusivity within faith communities, affirming that all people living with HIV have the same right to dignity, hope and faith.

Speaking from a gender-diversity perspective, Anggun Pradesha explained that transgender people face heightened



Left to right: Isyatami Aulia, Satrio Rahargo, Rev. Ritson Manyonyo, Anggun Pradesha, Aan Rianto

vulnerability to HIV due to systemic marginalisation. Family and societal rejection frequently push transgender women into high-risk informal work. She observed that rejection—by family, by society and ultimately by oneself—is often the deepest wound, limiting access to sexual-health education, HIV-prevention services and healthcare. She emphasised that gender identity must never become a barrier to dignified and equitable healthcare and called for a more human-centred approach in accompanying transgender people living with HIV.

Aan Rianto described the cumulative stigma experienced by people living with HIV, drawing on the insights of previous speakers. He noted that social constructs often marginalise people living with HIV “as if they were disabled,” despite their ability to live fully productive lives. He

highlighted persistent myths, such as the belief that HIV is incurable and inevitably fatal, which reinforce fear and discourage people from testing.

Mr Rianto also noted ambivalence within religious institutions, where support is sometimes conditional on perceived moral acceptability, while individuals associated with certain identities or occupations face rejection. He stressed that silence and whispered conversations allow stigma to persist, calling for open, factual dialogue on HIV and current medical developments. Mr Rianto concluded with a reminder that people living with HIV are simply asking to be treated with the same dignity and rights as everyone else.

The talk show concluded with a musical performance by the Elsafan Foundation’s music group, followed by a communal meal shared by all participants.

APPENDICES

I. **Communiqué on Combatting Human Trafficking, Forced Migration and Cybercrime in Asia**

We, the 35 delegates from over 15 countries across Asia, representing churches, ecumenical councils, grassroots migrant organisations and non-government organisations, gathered in an international consultation to discuss the growing and worsening humanitarian crisis of forced migration and human trafficking in the region, with an aim to develop the church's proactive responses to protect vulnerable populations, uphold the dignity and rights of victims, and combat human trafficking, forced migration, and cybercrimes.

During the three-day consultation, we discussed the social, economic, and political factors that force millions of people to leave their families, communities, and homelands. From economic insecurity, underdevelopment, and widening inequalities to political conflicts, human rights violations, militarisation, and climate change, countless people in Asia are displaced, often finding themselves in vulnerable, inhumane conditions and at heightened risk of trafficking and exploitation.

We deepened our understanding of the emergence and expansion of highly organised and lucrative cybercrimes in Asia, operated by transnational criminal syndicates who deceive and recruit thousands of individuals from Asia, Africa, and other countries under fraudulent promises of employment and high wages. We learned about the inhumane and harsh conditions in which victims are forced to live in camps and cybercrime operation centres across Southeast Asia. The victims of human trafficking and forced migration, primarily from various Asian countries and Africa, are subjected to forced criminality, labour exploitation, violence, and abuse, often targeted specifically by these organised cybercrime syndicates. We also learned about the ongoing challenges faced by NGOs and institutions, advocates, law enforcement agencies, and authorities of different governments in combatting increased human trafficking and cybercrimes.

Throughout the consultation, biblical-theological reflections reminded faith leaders of the gospel's call to uphold human dignity, which demands both pastoral ministry and prophetic witness. Drawing on biblical and theological undergirding and affirmations, we were reminded that churches are uniquely positioned to offer their voice and extend various forms of support to trafficked persons in distress.

Human history is replete with narratives of migration. The narratives found in the Old Testament testify to this reality. This migrant perspective — woven into both the story of the Bible and the story of the human race — invites us to identify deeply with migrants. These stories highlight the vulnerabilities of migrants and include divine commands to show special care for the foreigner and the sojourner.

The New Testament continues to reflect the difficult situations faced by migrants. The narratives of the Holy Family, of Jesus and his disciples, and of the early Church are marked by movement and displacement. The parable of the Good Samaritan centres on people in transit and vulnerability, reminding us to stand with migrants in times of crisis.

Thus, biblical teachings and Christian values provide an imperative for us to address the challenges of migration and human trafficking.

While we recall the ongoing commitment of CCA member churches and councils in journeying with migrants, refugees, internally displaced, and stateless people, we recognise that our efforts remain inadequate and incomplete. We are reminded that we must continue to evolve in our response to trafficked persons who are coerced into participating in escalating cybercrimes and subjected to exploitation.

We affirm that:

- the inherent dignity and human rights of all migrants and trafficked persons must be protected, upheld, and defended;
- our faith calls us to promote and protect the rights of all those who are victimised, and to demonstrate compassion, mercy, and justice to all migrants, and those trafficked and forced to engage in cybercrimes, who suffer oppression, exploitation, discrimination, and persecution;
- churches are called to listen to the voices of migrants, accompany and support them throughout their vulnerabilities and their struggle for justice, and join them on their journey of healing and empowerment;
- forced migration and human trafficking are grave injustices and denials of human rights, deeply rooted in fundamental inequalities, and their root causes must be addressed.

We urge and encourage CCA member churches, national councils, and other ecumenical partners to:

- conduct awareness-building campaigns in every congregation and local community on forced migration, human trafficking, and increasing level of cybercrime;
- initiate local and national-level ministries to prepare pastors and lay leaders to support victims of human trafficking and forced migration, including those caught up in cybercrime camps, and respond to their needs for wellbeing and survival, such as psychosocial counselling, shelter, food, and transportation;
- capacitate and equip clergy and lay leaders with the knowledge and sensitivity required to identify and respond to all forms of human trafficking and systemic drivers of forced migration;
- actively support and collaborate with grassroots networks, survivor-led campaigns, and advocacy initiatives to combat human trafficking;
- encourage and support migrant workers, including those trafficked and placed in labour camps in Arabian Gulf countries and elsewhere, helping them to voice their concerns;
- forge national interfaith alliances and enhance collaboration and coordination to address various concerns and needs of victims of human trafficking and forced migration;
- enhance the capacities of local churches to coordinate with government agencies and officials, legal entities, and civil society organisations to respond to cases of human trafficking and forced cybercrime activities;
- call for stronger government interventions and practical applications to ensure regulations and accountability measures safeguard the dignity, rights, justice, and



protection of all those who are persecuted and victimised due to human trafficking and forced cybercrime in Asia.

II. **Communiqué on Freedom of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities in Asia**

More than eighty participants of this conference, representing different religions and beliefs, gathered in Jakarta under the auspices of the Christian Conference of Asia and the Communion of Churches in Indonesia, in collaboration with partner organisations. The participants included representatives of churches, religious communities, government bodies, and non-governmental organisations.

Guided by our understanding on our religions and beliefs, we, the participants belonging to Buddhist, Christian, Confucian, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Taoist, and Indigenous religions in Asia, reaffirm our commitment to the universality of human rights and to the right to freedom of religion for all people, especially in accordance with Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We consider that our meeting together in Jakarta, Indonesia will strengthen more interreligious cohesion on human dignity, justice, and peace.

Current Situation in Asia

The positive developments we observe from different Asian contexts include:

- Governments and communities, in general, profess, protect, and practice religious freedom and mutual respect.
- Freedom of religion is affirmed in countries' constitutions and foundation documents.
- Religious communities share a commitment to the well-being of people and the betterment of society.
- There is a recognition that all religions share a desire to care for people, both their adherents and others.

However, the negative developments that are evident in different situations include:

- Despite protection under the rule of law, there are consistent and flagrant patterns of violation of freedom of religion and the human rights of religious minorities in various parts of Asia.
- Religious intolerance, and the misuse of blasphemy law, is on the rise.
- Religion is increasingly politicised and weaponised, and adherents are subject to the actions and control exercised by state agents.
- Increasing violent extremism is a menace to peace and security for all. It undermines the human dignity of religious minorities across Asia.
- In several countries in Asia, religious nationalism is on the rise.
- Both blasphemy and anti-conversion laws intensify discrimination against, and the persecution of, religious minorities.
- In many instances, there is impunity in the perpetration of violations of the right to freedom of religion.
- Women and youth are underrepresented and lack meaningful participation in interreligious collaboration.

The wide range of challenges we have to face in Asia include:

- The contravention of the right to the freedom of religion weakens social cohesion, development, and peace.
- Religion is being misused to advance gender inequality, sectarianism, political agendas, hatred, and violent extremism.
- Religious minorities lack sufficient protection under domestic law so that they can thrive.
- Education curriculum in some countries assists in the growth and spread of fear, prejudice, and hatred of minority religions and communities.
- Peaceful coexistence among people of different religions and beliefs is undermined due to the lack of interreligious understanding and collaboration.

As we firmly believe that we must work together on Four Fronts – Natural Law, Dialogue, Protest Action, and Legislative and Judiciary Deliberation – we strongly affirm that:

- All people share the same human rights, and we recognise that we were all naturally born naked and equal.
- Religious minorities need open and safe opportunities to engage in dialogue with other religious communities and have the right to religious freedom.
- When security forces violate human rights and restrict religious practice, people protest and seek justice and respect for their rights.
- When governments deliberate and dialogue occurs, legislation is prepared that promotes and protects the right to freedom of religion and the rights of religious minorities.
- We believe that the independence of the judiciary in its ongoing work is vitally important.

Moving Forward

We appeal to Governments

- To make real the relevance of Article 18, common to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, that affirms people’s freedom of religion, including their freedom to commit to a religion, to change their religion or to not have a religious identity.
- To repeal discriminatory laws and not impose restrictions on the freedom of people to practice and live out their religion and belief.
- To guarantee the accountability of law enforcement agencies for their treatment and protection of religious minorities groups including through improved legal protection mechanisms.
- To ensure that blasphemy laws do not limit religious freedom.
- To advance civic and interreligious education to overcome prejudice and discrimination and for governments to create platforms for ongoing interreligious dialogue.
- To train the police and security forces in interreligious awareness and understanding so that all people are treated with respect.

We urge Religious Leaders and Religious Entities

- To strengthen interreligious collaboration and create opportunities for shared contact and relationships with people of other religions and beliefs.



- To affirm that people have full religious freedom.
- To ensure that conversion practices respect the rights of people to make religious and belief decisions for themselves.
- To denounce hate speech and religion-based discrimination.
- To advocate for the human rights of ethnic minority groups including the protection of their freedom to worship.

We request the Civil Society

- To resist the politicisation of religion.
- To allow the practice of religion and permit the construction of places of worship and other facilities.
- To initiate interreligious grassroots collaboration and affirm and share the results of the collaboration.
- To monitor and address violations of religious freedom and to address the root causes of the violations.
- To hold accountable those who violate the religious freedom of others.
- To support survivors of violations of religious freedom including their freedom to practice their religion and belief.
- To celebrate religious, linguistic, and cultural diversity to build bridges and not barriers.
- To reject intolerance and discrimination in all its forms.
- To promote pluralism and grow in respect for the understanding of other religions.
- To ensure that media in all its forms, electronic, published, and social, contribute to the building of interreligious dialogue, understanding and respect.
- Strengthen bodies already involved in interreligious work and activities.

We appeal to Scholar-Practitioners

- To conduct collaborative research on important current religious matters and provide guidance to Civil Society bodies and State Actors so that their understanding can grow.
- Through research to challenge the misuse of religious concepts, and the growth of intolerance and discriminatory practices.
- To actively promote interreligious understanding and awareness, and modify academic curriculum to create tools, resources, and actions to promote interreligious understanding.
- To provide training for community leaders so that the marginalised experience freedom and respect.

The Christian Conference of Asia calls on ecumenical bodies and interreligious entities to

- Establish and adopt an Asian Interreligious Agenda on the Freedom of Religious and Minority Rights.
- Establish an Asian Interreligious Observatory to monitor the promotion, respect, and violations of religious freedom and the rights of minorities, and publish the results in an annual report, including monitoring of the effectiveness of interreligious education.

- Ensure the active involvement of women and youth in interreligious networks.
- Develop actionable recommendations to support the protection and preservation of the rights of religious minorities.

As we believe that freedom of religion provides protection to individuals, groups, and communities, not religions, we urge the adherents of all religions to uphold diversity as one basis of peace in Asia and in the world in general. We pledge collaborative efforts across diverse religions, countries, and segments of society to defend, advocate for, and protect religious freedom for all.

III. Communiqué on ‘Artificial Intelligence and Posthumanism: Ethical and Theological Perspectives’

Introduction

The Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) convened an International Consultation on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Posthumanism – Ethical and Theological Perspectives in Cyberjaya, Malaysia, from 1–4 October 2025. The Consultation brought together about thirty-seven theologians, ethicists, scientists, and church leaders from across Asia to reflect on the theological, ethical, and pastoral implications of artificial intelligence for the Church and society.

AI, as an emerging technological force, is transforming human life at an unprecedented pace. It enables machines to perform tasks once reserved for human intelligence—composing language, recognising patterns, making predictions, and automating decisions. These developments carry profound implications for medicine, education, economics, and ministry. The Consultation recognised that while AI can serve as a valuable tool for human flourishing, it also poses existential questions about what it means to be human, particularly as we move toward what many describe as a posthuman era (a worldview suggesting that technology may extend or even transcend human biological limits).

For the Asian Church, this moment is both a challenge and a calling—to discern how faith can guide human creativity so that technology remains a servant of life, justice, and community, not a master over them.

Impacts of Artificial Intelligence

Participants observed that AI is reshaping societies in both subtle and striking ways. In healthcare, it enhances accuracy and diagnosis; in education, it personalises learning; and in daily life, it influences communication, employment, and even religious practice. In some churches, AI-generated sermons and translations of Scripture are already in use, signalling the need for pastoral discernment about authenticity, creativity, and the human touch in worship and ministry. At the same time, AI deepens existing inequalities. Rural and economically marginalised communities risk being excluded from digital progress. Language and cultural biases embedded in data further disadvantage Asian and non-Western perspectives. The consultation cautioned that technological development driven by global corporations and elite users may widen the social gap, creating what some call a “useless class” of people displaced by automation.

The participants also noted that AI influences how humans relate to one another. As society places increasing trust in machines, genuine human relationships may weaken. The I–Thou relationship risks being replaced by impersonal interactions with systems that mimic empathy but lack soul and embodiment.

Thus, the Asian Church must discern how to affirm relationality—the truth that we are created for communion with God and with one another—in a world increasingly mediated by algorithms and devices.

Theological and Ethical Concerns

The Consultation affirmed that AI must be understood as a product of human creativity rather than as a being with moral agency or divine likeness. Unlike humans, AI does not bear the *Imago Dei* (image of God), which signifies humanity’s unique worth, dignity, and relational vocation. This distinction guards against techno-idolatry—the tendency to ascribe divine or salvific power to machines.

Participants highlighted how AI challenges traditional theological anthropology. Concepts of embodiment, consciousness, and community are strained by visions of “digital immortality” or human enhancement. Theologies of creation, salvation, and eschatology must therefore engage with these new realities without surrendering the Christian conviction that true transformation comes through Christ’s resurrection, not through technological evolution.

Ethical discernment is needed to ensure that efficiency and productivity do not override compassion and justice. Overreliance on AI may dull moral judgement, reducing complex ethical reasoning into algorithmic decision-making. This “mathematisation of morality” risks eroding virtue and moral character. In response, the Church is called to nurture moral imagination—forming disciples capable of spiritual contemplation, critical reasoning, and wise engagement.

The Consultation also explored the temporal implications of technology. AI accelerates life into what the Greeks called *Kronos*, demanding constant speed and performance. The Church must recover *Kairos*—moments of grace, reflection, and communion—to balance technological efficiency with spiritual presence.

Call to Action

The Consultation urged the Asian Church to adopt a dual posture: innovative yet cautious, open to the benefits of AI yet firmly rooted in the Gospel’s call to stewardship of life. The Church’s engagement with technology should be guided by discernment (spiritual judgement grounded in faith and reason), justice (ensuring equitable access and protection for the vulnerable), and collaboration (partnership among theologians, scientists, and policy-makers).

Churches and theological institutions are encouraged to:

- integrate theological and ethical reflection on AI into their curricula and ministries;
- equip young people to engage technology with wisdom, compassion, and responsibility;

- promote interfaith and interdisciplinary dialogue on AI's moral and spiritual dimensions; and
- advocate for just and inclusive technological policies that serve human dignity and the common good.

Participants also underscored the importance of maintaining incarnational (embodied) and inter-carnational (relationally interconnected) approaches to ministry in the digital age, ensuring that love, empathy, and solidarity remain central to Christian witness.

Conclusion

The Consultation concluded that the advance of AI represents a theological Kairos—an opportune and decisive moment for the Church's witness in Asia. This is not a time for fear or uncritical acceptance, but for prayerful discernment and prophetic engagement.

The Church must reclaim its mission to affirm human dignity, resist the idolatries of technological perfectionism, and ensure that innovation serves the flourishing of all creation. Our ultimate hope is not found in algorithms or digital immortality, but in the living God revealed in Jesus Christ, the true and perfect image of God. AI, when subordinated to the values of justice, compassion, and stewardship, can become an instrument of grace. Under the Lordship of Christ, technology may yet serve the Gospel—helping humanity flourish in communion with God, neighbour, and creation.

IV. Communiqué on 'Towards Upholding the Dignity and Rights of Women in Asia'

We, more than eighty delegates from countries across Asia, representing the member churches of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), as well as civil societies in Asia united in our diversity of languages, cultures, and traditions, and generations, stand together as one body in Christ. Strengthened by our faith, we are challenged and committed to live out the Gospel imperative to uphold and protect the God-given dignity and rights of all women.

Gathered at the Payap University in Chiang Mai, Thailand for the three-day Asian Ecumenical Women's Conference 2025, we witnessed the painful and unjust realities confronting women across our region. In prayer, reflection, and dialogue, we have grounded our discernment in the biblical and theological affirmations of women's empowerment as an expression of God's justice and love, and by sharing and listening to testimonials, we have confronted the entrenched power structures and patriarchal systems that continue to oppress, silence, and marginalise women, recognising them as contrary to the will of God. We have been inspired by the prophetic witness of women who rise in faith to defend life, justice, dignity and rights of women and the well-being of communities.

The Context

We live in an Asia marked by political turbulence; authoritarian and populist governance that weaponises power and suppresses dissent; conflict within and among countries; militarisation; socio-economic injustices; corruption; weak institutions; fundamentalisms



and extremism; and a lack of political commitment, all of which often limit the implementation and realisation of gender equity.

As Asian Christian women, we name the root causes and realities that traumatise and wound the body, mind, and spirit of our sisters:

1. The violation of women's dignity and rights under patriarchal/kyriarchal systems that silence voices, commodify bodies, limit bodily autonomy, and deny equal participation in family, church, and society; together with ableism and normalism, which marginalise women with disabilities.
2. Cultural and ethnic tensions that divide communities, exploit differences, reinforce harmful gender norms, and expose women to multiple and intersecting forms of oppression and discrimination.
3. Economic disparities that deepen poverty, perpetuate unequal access to resources, and drive the feminisation of labour, forcing women into precarious, underpaid, and unsafe working conditions, often away from their families.
4. Security threats and militarisation that displace communities, normalise sexual violence, and endanger the lives of women and their children.
5. Climate injustice devastates homes, livelihoods, and ecosystems, with women, children, and other vulnerable communities bearing the heaviest burdens, while those in positions of power and influence drive the policies and practices that worsen environmental destruction.
6. The growing menace of digital gender-based violence, exacerbated by the gender digital divide, which extends patriarchal control into technological spaces and exposes women to online harassment, surveillance, and exploitation.
7. Intersectional discrimination based on caste, class, ethnicity, migration status, age, ability, sexuality, and religion, which intensifies the vulnerabilities of indigenous women, migrant women, displaced women, and women with disabilities.
8. Inadequate access to comprehensive healthcare, including reproductive and mental health services, and insufficient survivor-centred support systems for women confronting domestic violence, sexual abuse, and other forms of gender-based violence.

From Amen to Collective Action

As Asian women of faith, we affirm our commitment to resist these injustices with courage, compassion, and collective care. We stand in solidarity with all who struggle for equality, justice, and peace. Therefore, we call upon churches and faith-based organisations to:

1. Transform themselves into spaces of liberation and equity, reflecting God's justice and love, where women's voices are heard, valued, and empowered to participate fully in the life of the church and community.
2. Affirm the sacred dignity of women, girls, and gender and ethnic minorities by promoting full participation and leadership of women in church, community, and society, and by challenging all patriarchal theologies, traditions, and structures that perpetuate inequality and silence.
3. Ensure gender equality and inclusion within church structures and policies, especially within decision-making bodies, and support inter-generational leadership of women.

4. Make conscious efforts to raise awareness on gender justice, critically examine and reinterpret theology that has been used to justify patriarchy, and highlight liberating narratives of women in the Bible.
5. Work collectively with civil society organisations, rights groups, and academia to promote and protect women, their rights and dignity, and to accompany women on the move — including migrants, refugees, displaced persons, and women with disabilities — by creating a network of care, advocacy, and sanctuary that restores safety, dignity, and hope.
6. Amplify climate and eco-justice, recognise women’s ecological wisdom, defend land and water defenders, restore our kinship with creation, and call for accountability from governments and corporations for ecological destruction, carbon colonialism, and the interconnected crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, known as the triple planetary crisis.
7. Develop digital ethics and safety in combating gender-based violence, including building digital justice and literacy, equipping women and girls to navigate online spaces safely, counter misinformation, and use technology as a tool for empowerment and solidarity rather than oppression.
8. Foster interfaith and intercultural collaboration and solidarity to dismantle discrimination and heal divisions rooted in ethnicity, class, caste, and religion, affirming the beauty of Asia’s diversity as a source of peace rather than conflict.
9. Develop and implement gender-responsive budgeting within church structures and programmes, ensuring that resources are allocated to support gender equality and the empowerment of women.
10. Revisit church constitutions and policies to remove barriers to women’s full participation and leadership, and to embed principles of equity, inclusion, and justice.

Using the prophetic ministry of the church to advocate for policies that protect women’s rights, address climate injustice, and challenge corrupt and authoritarian practices, we urge governments and international bodies to enact and enforce gender-just policies, end impunity for perpetrators of violence, and ensure the realisation of women’s human rights in every sphere of life.

We call upon our governments to:

1. Take immediate action to prevent and respond to domestic violence, sexual harassment, trafficking, and other forms of abuse, ensuring that survivors have access to justice, protection and reparations.
2. Promote women’s leadership and empowerment in decision-making at every level, and remove barriers to women’s participation in politics, business, and public services.
3. Provide quality education for girls and ensure all women have access to comprehensive health care, including reproductive and mental health services.
4. Close the gender digital divide, protect women from online violence and exploitation, and include women’s voices in environmental and climate policies.
5. Advance economic justice by supporting women’s cooperatives, fair trade, and sustainable livelihoods; opposing exploitative labour practices and corporate greed; and advocating policies that ensure living wages, labour rights, and land rights.



6. Review discriminatory laws and customary practices, ensuring that legal frameworks uphold gender equality and protect women's rights, and promote the formulation of laws and regulations using feminist and gender perspectives to address systemic inequalities.
7. Protect women's rights defenders and organisations, safeguarding their physical, legal, digital, and political environment.
8. Uphold the rights and freedoms guaranteed in national constitutions as well as international conventions such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.
9. Mainstream gender-responsive budgeting in public policies and government programmes to ensure resources are allocated to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

In the face of these urgent realities, we, the women of Christian faith from across Asia, affirm our sacred responsibility to act. The Bible and the teachings of Jesus remind us that justice and peace are inseparable, and that faith without action is dead. We therefore call upon ourselves, our churches, our communities, and our partners in the broader ecumenical movement to join us in concrete, transformative action.

Finally, we commit ourselves to continue walking together as a communion of women in faith and action, strengthened by our shared hope, love, and vision, sustained by our collective struggle, and guided by the Spirit of Life.

V. Communiqué on Ecumenical Diakonia: Accompaniment, Solidarity, and Participation in God's Mission

*"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ."
(Galatians 6:2)*

We, fifty participants representing churches and national councils of churches across Asia, met for the Asian Church Leaders' Conference, convened by the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), on the theme 'Ecumenical Diakonia: Accompaniment, Solidarity, and Participation in God's Mission'.

Held from 21–24 November 2025 at Payap University, Chiang Mai, Thailand, the conference provided space for reflection on ecumenical diakonia in the Asian context, with deliberations grounded in biblical, theological, and missiological perspectives on diakonia in contemporary Asia.

Beginning with a reflection on the meaning and dimensions of diakonia, participants of the Asian Church Leaders' Conference reiterated that recognising and acknowledging the needy as our neighbour is a lesson taught by Jesus in the parable of the Good Samaritan. The prophets of the Old Testament often spoke as advocates for widows, orphans, and the alien among us (Deuteronomy 10:18-19; Isaiah 1:17). Authentic diakonia involved more than giving money or providing services, or even sharing resources and personnel. It required taking upon oneself the suffering of others and setting aside any sense of self-sufficiency, embracing instead the vulnerability and need of those being served, yet without any sense of superiority (Philippians 2:3-4).

Through a recounting of the history and development of the concept of Ecumenical Diakonia in an Asian context, we were reminded that the principles of ministry and service, expressed as diakonia, and the practice of transformative and prophetic witness of Christ's love, including advocacy, remained at the heart of the Christian message (John 13:14-15). Following Christ authentically, rooted in love, involved serving all God's people in their suffering and brokenness through a ministry that encompassed practising compassion, seeking justice, caring, sharing, healing, and reconciliation.

During the four-day deliberations, we were challenged and inspired to 'reclaim' the concept and context of Ecumenical Diakonia, which had, in recent times, appeared to be in retreat. Tracing the concept of diakonia in Scripture, from both the Old and New Testaments, we were reminded that it lay at the heart of the Christian message (Mark 10:45), highlighting the need for a fresh understanding and renewed expressions of diakonia that embrace sacrificial service, social justice, and the empowerment of the marginalised as essential expressions of God's mission in the world (Luke 4:18-19). In this regard, diakonia is not an optional extra or a secondary ministry, but an integral part of Christian discipleship. It is incumbent upon all churches, not merely the responsibility of specialised agencies or organisations. Reclaiming diakonia as a missional mandate requires moving beyond emergency relief and acts of compassion to embrace a transformative and prophetic role in the world.

The five thematic plenary sessions further enabled us to explore the understanding and practice of Ecumenical Diakonia. Voices from different parts of Asia shared diverse experiences and challenges in diakonal ministry, as well as their various engagements with communities in crisis. The thematic presentations and subsequent discussions helped us identify several shared insights and affirmations.

A renewed transition in the understanding of Christian charity was noted, shifting from a purely philanthropic activity to a profound expression of service to fellow human beings (1 John 3:17-18) and to the nature embodied in the concept of diakonia. We affirmed that diakonia represents the outward manifestation of Christian faith and therefore differs fundamentally from ordinary social service. As faith enacted in love, diakonia encompasses social service, advocacy, and collaborative engagement aimed at transforming unjust structures and fostering peace, hope, and reconciliation. Authentic diakonia calls individuals and institutions to nurture communities rooted in solidarity, compassion, and responsible stewardship (1 Peter 4:10). Just as the liturgy celebrates faith, diakonia finds its origin and interconnectedness within the liturgical life of the Church, continuing as an extension of that celebration expressed through acts of service beyond the altar. In this sense, diakonia is rightly understood as "Liturgy after the Liturgy," carrying the spiritual experience of worship into daily life through acts of service, mission, and love in the world.

While listening to the realities and experiences of Asian churches and their diakonal engagements in their respective contexts, we benefited tremendously from the deeper exposure to the circumstances, challenges, and opportunities highlighted, especially given that Christianity remains a minority religion in all Asian countries except the Philippines and Timor-Leste. We were particularly struck by the breadth of ecumenically-led diakonal ministry and witness extended by Asian churches in their local and national contexts to diverse communities in need, and by the churches' participation in addressing a wide

range of issues across Asia. The sharing of experiences and engagement in diakonia reminded us to reiterate our commitment to affirm that “diakonia is not a charity project; it is a way of life.”

The need to focus the Asian churches’ diakonal mission in multiple areas was underscored: to identify with and accompany the most vulnerable, including the poor, persons with disabilities, indigenous communities, internally displaced persons, refugees and asylum-seekers, and those threatened by climate injustice and ecological imbalance, acknowledging that diakonia does not always remove suffering but often involves sharing in the pain and walking alongside the afflicted. The challenges facing children and youth, as well as the growing geriatric crisis in many ageing societies in Asia, were also identified as urgent areas warranting Asian ecumenical diakonia.

The Conference affirmed that diakonia must aim to ensure justice, human dignity, sustainable social transformation, and the empowerment of marginalised communities within a landscape of intentional inclusivity and interdependence (1 Corinthians 12:24-26). It also underscored the importance of integrity, leadership, and stewardship in the implementation of diakonal ministry, supported by professionalism, transparency, and accountability in the use of funds and resources at all levels. At every stage of the deliberations, the Conference reiterated the essence of the Church’s ministry of diakonia, which stands firmly on three foundational pillars: accompaniment, walking with communities in humility and compassion; solidarity, identifying with and sharing in the suffering of others; and participation, empowering grassroots communities to actively shape their own futures and their role in God’s mission.

We closed the conference by committing ourselves afresh to upholding these pillars in thought, word, and deed. We affirmed our responsibility to carry back to our organisations, home churches, and communities the imperative to deepen the theological understanding of diakonia, broaden the Church’s reach in tending to human needs, and walk the extra mile in transforming inequitable and unjust structures within society. This includes heightened engagement with governments, decision-makers, thought-leaders, and community organisers, while remaining consistent and focused on the ministry and service to God’s creation, for which diakonia is the outpouring of His love.

The Conference reaffirmed the Church’s enduring capacity and potential to carry out effective diakonia, countering pessimistic perceptions that it is neither proactive nor prophetic in its mission, as well as repeated accusations that churches are inefficient in implementing diakonal ministry. While nongovernmental organisations may cease their work when external funding ends, the Church’s diakonal service continues through the steadfast commitment of its faithful members.

The Conference welcomed the decision of the General Assembly and the Executive Committee of the Christian Conference of Asia to assist Asian churches in enhancing their capacities for diakonal ministry and to facilitate the creation of a platform for information sharing, networking, and mutual support in times of need, particularly for the ecumenical sharing of resources among CCA member churches. CCA’s initiative to establish the Ecumenical Diakonia Network in Asia (EDNA), aimed at supporting churches across Asia to better utilise their resources for diakonia and to strengthen inter-church networking

on the continent, was affirmed as a priority for reinforcing the diakonal ministry of Asian churches. As part of the commitment to support ongoing ministry and enhance capacities for effective engagement, the Conference encouraged the development of improved models of cooperation between Asian churches. We hope that the EDNA initiative of CCA will strengthen the capacities of Asian churches to carry out their diakonal ministries effectively and with appropriate coordination across the region.

We are reminded: “Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.” (Galatians 6:2)

VI. Communiqué on ‘Towards a Global Advocacy for People’s Security, Peace with Justice, and Democratisation in Myanmar’

Building on the commitments made during the international conference on “Towards a Global Advocacy for People’s Security, Peace with Justice, and Democratisation in Myanmar” held in Bangna, Bangkok, Thailand, the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), the regional ecumenical organisation which has consultative status with UN ECOSOC, organised a second international conference as part of the Myanmar Ecumenical Solidarity Accompaniment Programme (MESAP). The conference, held from 26 to 28 November 2025, brought together 70 participants, including representatives from churches and ecumenical bodies across Asia, North America, and Europe, as well as NGOs, civil society groups, international partners, and scholar-practitioners. The International Conference was held at the Payap University Campus in Chiang Mai with a shared commitment pertinent to the current context of Myanmar and part of our common commitment to the people and communities in the conflict-ridden Myanmar, and seek the global community’s accompaniment towards international cooperation, federal democratic governance, people’s security, and peace with justice.

The conference resulted in several key outcomes: a shared analysis of the ongoing situation in the country, the initiation of advocacy among intergovernmental and multilateral bodies, a roadmap for building a global ecumenical advocacy network on Myanmar based on justpeace; strengthened collaboration among ecumenical partners, civil society, and policy experts; and the initiation of advocacy priorities and action plans for future engagement, including responses to the humanitarian needs in earthquake-affected areas and as well as the prospects of the December 2025 elections in Myanmar.

Current Situation in Myanmar

The international conference was convened in the context of ongoing crises in Myanmar, especially the escalating armed conflict, growing humanitarian crises, a recent earthquake, continued instability in ethnic minority-controlled areas, and the upcoming elections scheduled for 28 December 2025 onwards. The military coup in February 2021 further undermined democratic governance, increased impunity for violations of human rights and international humanitarian law and intensified the systematic closing of civic space in areas under junta control. The civilian population in the country continues to face insecurity and widespread displacement. While humanitarian assistance is urgently needed for both human-made and natural disasters, current efforts remain insufficient. Human dignity and human rights continue to be violated with impunity. Meanwhile, international attention

to the situation in Myanmar is declining, lacking both a united global response and strong action by ASEAN, the United Nations, and other multilateral bodies.

Given the current situation in Myanmar today, we express our deep concern about the following: the lack of protection for civilians, especially women and youth, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and displaced people, ongoing threats to peace, security, and lack of federal democratic governance, the risk of legitimising non-inclusive elections, and the growing danger of political instability.

We, the participants, reaffirm our commitment to social transformation that promotes justice, social cohesion, and human rights. Strengthening collaboration among churches, ecumenical bodies, the diplomatic community, civil society, NGOs, and scholarpractitioners is essential. The Myanmar Ecumenical Solidarity Accompaniment Programme (MESAP), initiated by CCA as per the recommendation and subsequent decisions by CCA since the international conference in November 2024, provides a unified platform for the coordination of Myanmar ecumenical solidarity, advocacy, and accompaniment.

In order to reach the objectives of MESAP, our strategies will include: implementing context-sensitive programmes of accompaniment, advocacy, humanitarian assistance, and decolonial peacebuilding that prioritise locally led initiatives across all ethnic communities in Myanmar; strengthening the ecumenical advocacy movement to advance the needs and further promoting interests for peace-building among these communities; expanding advocacy efforts within ASEAN, the United Nations, and other multilateral bodies; disseminating verified information from affected communities; and ensuring that the situation in Myanmar remains visible on the global policy agenda.

Our Commitments

We commit to working with our governments, the UN, and ASEAN to take stronger measures to protect civilians, women and youth, ethnic minorities, and displaced communities, and to ensure unrestricted humanitarian access and safe corridors for aid delivery. At the same time, within our churches and other faith-based communities, we commit to being engaged in advocacy that strengthens international solidarity and coordinates global advocacy and accompaniment efforts.

We commit to working with United Nations agencies to ensure monitoring of human rights situations in Myanmar, and work towards unhindered humanitarian access to the affected communities. We commit to supporting faith-based organisations in acting as peacemakers and engaging in diplomatic efforts to advocate for an inclusive transition to democracy and the positive transformation of society within the framework of a federal democratic governance structure.

We commit to actively partnering with member churches, national ecumenical councils of the CCA, and the World Council of Churches (WCC), and international ecumenical partners from different parts of the world to engage with local churches and faith-based organisations in Myanmar and neighbouring countries for their deeper engagement on working towards peace with justice, reconciliation, humanitarian and development efforts, and response to mass-displacement including statelessness, while providing steadfast solidarity and advocacy efforts.

We commit to working with civil society and non-governmental organisations to disseminate credible information aimed at promoting and protecting civilian lives and property. We commit to supporting scholar-practitioners in conducting data-driven and evidence-based studies on people's security and human rights situations in Myanmar.

We urge ASEAN to uphold a people-centred security approach that prioritises meaningful engagement with civil society in Myanmar. We commit to engaging regional organisations to facilitate humanitarian corridors and provide effective disaster response support. We call for steps to ensure the elections in December 2025 are conducted transparently and credibly; to continue advocacy addressing the humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding of Myanmar's diverse ethnic communities. We commit to protecting civilian populations, ensuring access to humanitarian services, supporting a democratic process led by all ethnic groups in Myanmar, rejecting recognition of central authority lacking inclusivity and legitimacy, and sustaining long-term international solidarity and engagement.

We commit to pray for the people of Myanmar, and churches who live amidst vulnerable situations, especially in the conflict-affected areas. As we enter the Advent season, we live with the hope of the promise of "Peace on Earth".

We encourage all participants of the international conference on Myanmar to engage continuously with all ethnic communities, advancing peace with justice, and long-term transformation in partnership with local communities and global ecumenical networks. We pledge steadfast support for dignity, justice, and inclusive governance for all people in Myanmar.

Grounded in hope, we believe that a federal democratic governance structure will soon emerge in Myanmar. We trust that the enduring spirit of compassion will turn sorrow to joy, aggression to friendship, despair to hope, and anxiety to calmness. We uphold the dignity and rights of all people in Myanmar and look towards a future where people of Myanmar will be able to live in safety, well-being, and in a situation where lasting peace will prevail.

Report of the General Secretary to the CCA Executive Committee Meeting

19-21 November 2025 | Chiang Mai, Thailand

One year ago, at the end of October 2024, our Executive Committee meeting took place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This is the tenth year that I am presenting a report of the General Secretary to the Executive Committee, and the third time during the tenure of the current Executive Committee. The CCA General Secretary's report presented at the Executive Committee meetings is a snapshot that summarises the organisation's work, highlights key achievements, and outlines future priorities. It provides an overview of activities across various areas, sharing information on the activities undertaken during the immediate past months. The General Secretary's report to the Executive Committee is a key resource for Executive Committee members to understand the CCA's accomplishments within a given period, as well as the challenges ahead. At the same time, in undertaking the exercise of writing such reports, I receive the opportunity to reflect on, analyse, understand, and assess the work of the CCA and the challenges before us.

Let us once again engage in an introspection, and I am pleased to share with you an overview of how the CCA has been performing during the past year, especially since November 2024. While I am sharing some of the most relevant updates about the CCA, you may have several questions in mind and may wish to seek more clarity on certain aspects I am reporting to you.

Emerging context

The "context in which we live and work" is an important factor when we reflect on our work, our mission and witness. Such contextual situations refer to the surrounding circumstances, conditions, and interconnected systems that shape individuals, communities, societies, our nations as well as the contexts in which the churches and the ecumenical movement exist and bear witness. A wide range of factors, such as social, cultural, economic, political, and technological realities, are deeply intertwined and constantly evolving, and these factors influence and impact our churches and ecumenical surroundings.

The world today is shaped by a complex interplay of ongoing conflicts, trade wars, socio-economic challenges, and climate change, which are often interconnected and exacerbate one another, creating widespread humanitarian needs and global instability. In many cases, American politics and foreign policy influence emerging situations worldwide. Analysts have observed that 2025 marked the end of an old global order. Zanny Minton Beddoes of *The Economist* notes that President Donald Trump dismantled decades-old norms and institutions while reshaping the White House, asserting unprecedented executive power. His tariff policies disrupted the multilateral trade system, and cuts to American funding affected international diplomacy and aid. Long-standing security alliances were transformed into transactional relationships that monetised American military and economic influence. Tom Standage, editor of *The World Ahead 2026*, describes the current era as "Donald Trump's world — we are all just living in it". Trump has been labelled the "disruptor-in-chief" and recognised as a major force shaping global affairs in 2025. His approach caused turmoil in trade but also achieved diplomatic results, including in Gaza. Analysts debate whether the world is entering a new Cold War between the US and

China, or whether a “Trumpian deal” might divide the globe into American, Russian, and Chinese spheres of influence. Some suggest Trump may be more effective than China in dismantling the American-led order.

Although China faces economic challenges, including deflation and slowing growth, Trump’s “America First” policy creates opportunities for Beijing to expand its influence, particularly in the Global South. China is pursuing trade agreements and initiatives such as the “Global Governance Initiative” to establish rules on finance, AI, climate, and space, including a proposed global compulsory-licensing scheme for rare earths. Political analysts warn that China may consider military action against Taiwan in 2026 or 2027, raising serious regional security concerns. Political instability in the US could embolden China, increasing the risk of crises with global repercussions. While full-scale war is unlikely, the Taiwan Strait, South China Sea, and areas of unrest in South and Southeast Asia remain potential flashpoints. US intelligence suggests that President Xi has instructed the People’s Liberation Army to be capable of invading Taiwan by 2027, coinciding with the Communist Party’s next five-yearly Congress, when succession questions will be critical. China reportedly has the support of around 70 countries for reunification “by all means”, and any escalation could trigger a regional arms race, particularly in the Trump era.

Russia, another powerful nation with significant influence in Asia, primarily through its security and economic roles, and its military and energy ties with Southeast Asian countries, can also pose geopolitical imbalances in the region. Russia has deepened economic ties through energy deals and other trade agreements with ASEAN nations. Russia’s increased engagement is partly a strategy to challenge US dominance, build a more multipolar world order, and expand its influence. Russia continues to focus on military and energy sales, particularly through arms sales to countries like Vietnam, Myanmar, and Indonesia.

China’s political and strategic influence in various Asian countries has been growing over the decades. China is now viewed as the most influential strategic power in Southeast Asia. It uses strategies like cultural diplomacy and educational programmes, such as Confucius Institutes, to increase its political influence and foster favorable perceptions of China. Many observers have been raising questions about what a resurgent China means for the region. Over the past four decades, the once impoverished communist country has emerged as the world’s second-largest economy, transforming the image of the Chinese people from famine-stricken to major consumers and investors. Due to the immense size of its economy, its vast population, and its enigmatic authoritarian government, China’s intentions towards the region remain a significant question for Asian countries. The impact of non-state actors operating in China has become a major issue now. These non-state actors are responsible for illicit economic activities in Southeast Asia, as well as influencing host societies through outbound migration and its socio-economic impacts. A typical example is the rapid growth of the online casino economy, which has been closely linked to Chinese capital seeking investment opportunities in Southeast Asia. Closely associated with this are online scamming operations that specifically target ethnic Chinese communities across national boundaries. Weak state regulation and widespread corruption in parts of the region have enabled the expansion of such illicit activities by Chinese criminal networks. These trends were examined in one of the CCA consultations we organised this year, focusing on ‘Combating Human Trafficking and Increased Cyber Crimes in Asia.’



India's strategic role in Asia is also growing due to its expanding economic and diplomatic partnerships, and a shift in its foreign policy. India's economic and military might make it the preeminent regional power, although its dominance is increasingly challenged by China's growing influence. In terms of South Asia's geopolitics, the subregion is undergoing significant transformation, with shifting alliances, economic dependencies, and strategic recalibrations reshaping the regional balance of power. India, traditionally the dominant actor in its neighbourhood, now faces increasing challenges in maintaining its influence as China deepens its economic and security engagements with countries like Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh. The emerging geopolitical trends and ecumenical responses to them were analysed and discussed at a two-day consultation organised by CCA in conjunction with the World Council of Church's Pilgrimage of Justice, Reconciliation, and Unity Reference Group meeting held in Colombo, Sri Lanka in March 2025.

The ongoing conflicts in Asia, including those in Myanmar, the Cambodia–Thailand border region, India, and Pakistan, and most notably the tensions between China and Taiwan, as well as on the Korean Peninsula, continue to linger and pose potential threats to peace and security in the region.

Ecumenical response to ongoing and emerging issues: Implementation of programmes

Since the beginning of 2025, we have been following the new Strategic Programme Plan (SPP) with four main programme areas – MU, EF, BP, PW – and Communications. From the end of 2024 and continuing through 2025, we have organised 22 programmes, including the International Conference on Advocacy for Myanmar, the month-long Asian Ecumenical Institute, Young Ambassadors of Peace in Asia, Good Governance and Stewardship Training in Sri Lanka, Chennai, and Kolkata, International Consultation on Combating Human Trafficking, Forced Migration and Cybercrime in Asia, an international consultation in collaboration with WCC on Ecumenical Response to Emerging Geopolitical Trends in South Asia, the International Inter-religious Conference on Freedom of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities in Asia, and the Asian Ecumenical Women's Conference (AEWC-2025). Before the end of this year, we will hold two more major programmes, each with more than fifty participants: the Asian Church leaders' conference on Ecumenical Diakonia and the International Conference on Myanmar.

Some of the most pertinent issues of our contemporary times were addressed by CCA in 2025. The most prominent among those was an international study consultation on 'Artificial Intelligence and Posthumanism: Ethical and Theological Perspectives' held in Cyberjaya, Malaysia from 1 to 4 October 2025. As we live in an era where Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping the world at every moment, what was once imagined as a futuristic possibility has now become a present reality, and AI is transforming industries, institutions, and even the rhythms of daily life. Thirty-five participants, including scientists, technologists, theologians, missiologists, ethicists, social scientists, jurists, medical professionals, and academics, attended the consultation held in Malaysia's Cyberjaya near Kuala Lumpur. The consultation emphasised that in a time when digital technologies are redefining the identities of individuals, communities, and authority, the Church in Asia must engage in Christian witness with ethical responsibility, prophetic courage, and theological conviction. A study document and the full report of the consultation are being prepared and will be published soon.

Another important area of concern addressed most recently was the issue of freedom of religion and rights of religious minorities in Asia. An international interfaith conference, organised jointly by CCA and the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI), was held from 16 to 20 September 2025 in Jakarta. It brought together representatives of Buddhist, Christian, Confucian, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Taoist, and Indigenous religions from across Asia. More than eighty participants from across Asia attended the International Inter-religious Conference on ‘Freedom of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities in Asia’ and adopted the “Jakarta Communiqué,” which reaffirmed their shared commitment to human rights, religious freedom, and interreligious harmony. The Communiqué called on governments to protect religious freedom, repeal discriminatory laws, ensure accountability, and promote interreligious education; urged religious leaders to strengthen collaboration, affirm religious freedom, denounce hate speech, and advocate for minority rights; encouraged civil society and scholars to resist politicisation of religion, monitor violations, conduct research, and provide training; and invited ecumenical and interreligious bodies to establish an Asian Interreligious Agenda and Observatory to advance actionable recommendations for protecting minority rights.

The Asian Ecumenical Women’s Conference (AECW-2025) was another important activity of CCA this year. In 2019, CCA organised the Asian Ecumenical Women’s Assembly (AEWA) which was attended by more than 250 participants from across Asia. Five years later, we organised AECW-2025 last week with more than 80 participants from countries across Asia, representing member churches of the CCA as well as civil society organisations. AECW-2025 deliberated on the theme “Upholding Dignity and Rights of Women in Asia”. United in their diversity of languages, cultures, traditions, and generations, the participants committed to standing together as one body in Christ. Strengthened by their faith, they embraced the challenge and committed themselves to living out the Gospel imperative to uphold and protect the God-given dignity and rights of all women.

It has been encouraging to receive feedback from participants and member churches on how much they benefit from each CCA activity and programme. Our constituencies are appreciative of CCA’s work, and the positive remarks and responses we receive after every programme are a great source of encouragement for us.

Myanmar – a serious concern

In our last Executive Committee meeting, I reported on the worsening situation in Myanmar. Since then, the country has faced another major disaster. On 28 March 2025, a 7.7-magnitude earthquake struck near Mandalay, exposing more than 37.2 million people to violent shaking and resulting in over 3,000 deaths, some 3,900 injuries, and hundreds missing. The shockwaves extended over 1,000 km to Bangkok and other parts of Thailand.

At that time, I highlighted that the conflict situation in Myanmar remained one of the most pressing issues requiring CCA’s response. In this context, we organised an international conference on ‘Towards a Global Advocacy for Democratisation, People’s Security, and Peace with Justice in Myanmar’ in Bangna, Bangkok, Thailand, from 22 to 25 November 2024. The conference was attended by sixty participants from Asia, North America, and Europe, including representatives of Myanmar’s diaspora, faith-based and ecumenical organisations, civil society, ethnic regional groups, human rights organisations, peace

activists, and journalists. The conference called for global action to address Myanmar's humanitarian crisis and prospects for peace with justice. Over four days, it explored options for international engagement in advocacy, reconciliation, and peacebuilding. A full report is available on the CCA website, and printed copies will be shared with members. The conference adopted a proposal to initiate a special programme of ecumenical accompaniment and solidarity for Myanmar, to be known as the Myanmar Ecumenical Solidarity Accompaniment Programme (MESAP). As a follow-up, we are now organising a second international conference from 26 to 28 November 2025, aiming to develop concrete action plans for CCA's engagement.

Meanwhile, the WCC General Secretary and the CCA General Secretary visited churches in Myanmar from 10 to 12 October 2025 as part of our pastoral solidarity. The joint visit was warmly appreciated by CCA and WCC member churches in Myanmar. It provided an opportunity for both CCA and WCC to express solidarity with the churches and communities as they continue to struggle. The Myanmar churches emphasised that the international community must accompany them during these most vulnerable times, highlighting the need for international humanitarian assistance to mitigate the suffering of displaced communities. During the visit, church and ecumenical leaders repeatedly stressed the importance of strengthened global support to achieve a stable and sustainable democracy where peace and justice prevail.

The second international conference on Myanmar, being organised next week, will address urgent issues of human rights, democratisation, and people's security. The goal is to assist the people and communities to achieve justice, sustainable peace, and stability in Myanmar, especially as the country approaches a general election. If decided, the conference will concretise the original proposal for the creation of MESAP which is expected to serve as a global ecumenical platform with focus on Myanmar advocacy.

Future of CCA's headquarters base and possibilities for relocation

I have previously shared information about the practical difficulties of maintaining CCA headquarters in Thailand due to visa restrictions and increasingly stringent rules for obtaining visas and work permits. During the latter period of the previous Executive Committee, particularly in the post Covid-19 era, we discussed this problem several times. I also reported on it at the 15th General Assembly and at the last two meetings of the Executive Committee held in Chiang Mai in January 2024, and in Kuala Lumpur in October 2024. The General Assembly's proposal to investigate the potential relocation of the CCA headquarters is still on the table. However, as outgoing General Secretary, I have not taken practical steps to follow up on the matter, and the task group constituted by the Executive Committee has not yet convened. It would be more appropriate for the new General Secretary to take this forward.

Meanwhile, I wish to express appreciation that an Executive Committee member and President of the CCA Thailand Foundation, Rev. Dr Pradit Takerngrangsarit, has initiated discussions with the Church of Christ in Thailand (CCT) leadership to secure missionary visas for CCA staff from CCT's visa pool. Let us hope that there will be some fruitful results for his efforts. At the same time, I have received a message again from the GKI, Indonesia that they would be able to offer a space at their headquarters.

CCA at 70 in 2027 – Platinum Jubilee

CCA will complete 70 years of its existence in March 2027. In the past, the number seventy was associated with human lifespan. At a time when life expectancy was lower and infant mortality higher, reaching the age of seventy was considered a significant achievement. Similarly, CCA reaching seventy years of existence marks a new benchmark in its witness and mission over the past seven decades. Celebrating this milestone is significant, as seventy is traditionally regarded as an age of longevity in many Asian cultures. The number carries various symbolic meanings: in Korea, a person turning seventy was traditionally called a “ghoul”; Chinese poet Du Fu wrote, “But it has ever been rare for man to live to seventy.” Confucius, in *The Analects*, reflected on seventy years as a stage of life: “The Master said, ‘At fifteen I set my heart upon learning; at thirty, I took my stand; at forty, I no longer suffered from perplexities; at fifty, I knew what were the biddings of Heaven; at sixty, my ear was attuned; at seventy, I could follow the dictates of my own heart; for what I desired no longer overstepped the boundaries of right.’”

Seventy years is a transitory moment in the long history of humanity, yet it is a period marked by experience, resilience, and enduring values. When we consider seventy years of CCA as an international ecumenical organisation with its membership now spreads across a vast geographical region from Iran in the West to Japan in the East and from Central Asian Republican countries to New Zealand in the South, we have every reason to commemorate and celebrate our witness together with our member constituencies. Like a human life, this milestone is not an end but a new passage. While CCA has accomplished so much, there is still much to do. Experience cannot be bought. The ecumenical journey of CCA has taught us many lessons. It is therefore important to reflect on these experiences. Funding agencies often ask, “How do you measure impact of your work? How is it visible the effectiveness at the end of your programme?” Over the past ten years, I have repeatedly explained to them how an ecumenical organisation and a fellowship of churches in Asia operate, and how the fruits of our labour are realised in various ways. Their questions align with their assessment standard based on SMART framework – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timebound. I have had to convince them that it is impossible to measure the value of the work and its effectiveness instantly for an ecumenical organisation like CCA; they cannot use the same yardstick by which they measure the performance of a development NGO in Bangladesh or Cambodia.

As we approach seventy years in 2027, we must ask: what have we achieved, and how do we measure our impact? This calls for a process of self-auditing or self-assessment. We need to undertake the task of self-auditing or a self-assessment. As the members of the Executive Committee, you have to undertake this task for which you need to start the preparations from now.

CCA at 70: an occasion to reflect on our Mission and Witness in Asia

I would not advocate that CCA should organise a large festival to commemorate the 70th anniversary. Rather, it should be an occasion for serious reflection on the mission and witness of CCA in the emerging Asian and global context. That should be the real celebration. On this occasion of the commemoration of the 70th anniversary, the Platinum Jubilee, CCA should take the initiative to organise another Asia Mission Conference (AMC). When CCA was born in 1957, it was an outcome of the Asian Church Leaders’ Conference

on 'Our Common Evangelistic Tasks in Asia'. The 1957 Prapat Conference focused entirely on the mission and witness of Asian churches. The two sponsoring bodies of the Prapat Conference, the World Council of Churches (WCC), and the International Missionary Council (IMC) deliberately chose the theme under mission and evangelism perspective to unite the churches and national councils of churches under a broader ecumenical umbrella.

In 2017, to commemorate CCA's 60th anniversary, the Diamond Jubilee, we organised a major event in conjunction with an Asia Mission Conference. If we consider the Prapat 1957 Conference as the first AMC, only three more were held between 1957 and 2017: in Cipayung, Indonesia (1989); Seoul, South Korea (1994); and Yangon, Myanmar (2017). The Yangon AMC was regarded as a historic milestone in the ecumenical movement. I propose that this Executive Committee take a firm decision to plan the next AMC in conjunction with CCA's 70th anniversary, to be held in 2027.

Publication of 'History of CCA': an unfinished task I have initiated

When reflecting on why an organisation's history is important, several factors come to mind: understanding the identity and purpose of its founding, tracing its evolution to the present, recognising its credibility, contributions, and core values, and appreciating the resilience and inspiration it has provided over the decades. Seventy years of CCA's history should be documented, shared, and preserved for future generations, who can learn from the challenges faced and the ways the organisation has navigated difficult periods. The CCA's history project should remain as a key objective of the 70th anniversary.

The history of any organisation should be properly recorded, encompassing its genesis, key milestones, growth, vision, values, and responses to challenges. For CCA, this history would not merely recount events but also reflect the broader contemporary context and how CCA engaged with emerging issues over the decades. CCA has published only one historical account, produced in 1995 for the Colombo Assembly. This was essentially a skeletal history, covering the period from 1957 to 1994. The former General Secretary, Bishop Yap Kim Hao, who served CCA as its General Secretary from 1973 to 1985, was commissioned to write it within a short span of time. Although Bishop Kim Hao had a wealth of knowledge and experience to draw upon, he had to complete the work in haste, as some previous attempts by CCA leadership to produce a history on time had been unsuccessful.

I have tried to entrust the tasks of collecting relevant data to two persons – a theological teacher, initially with the hope that he will write the history, as well as an intern, who was recruited to work with us. However, their efforts require further work and revision in order to produce a proper historical account of CCA covering the past several decades of work. As a person who has been directly part of CCA – as a staff of CCA and WCC starting from 1993, and earlier as a participant of various programmes, an intern, as well as being involved in CCA's programmes in various ways since 1981 – I was hoping to take the responsibility of contributing to the process of writing the history of CCA based on the preliminary data gathered and other first-hand resources yet to be made available for completing this task. However, it has not been possible for me to spend time amidst my hectic work load. I am now thinking that I may be able to accomplish this task of writing the history of CCA after my retirement from CCA, when I settle down in India soon. If the plans work out well, it could possibly be released on the occasion of the 70th anniversary.

General Assembly 2028

The fifteenth General Assembly of CCA was held in 2023, instead of 2020. This was mainly due to the COVID-19 situation. The constitutional mandate to hold the Assembly is normally once in five years. The next General Assembly of CCA, the sixteenth, is due in 2028. The Executive Committee must begin planning for this event, and adequate preparations should be initiated well in advance. This process should start with the formation of an Assembly Planning Committee, which will oversee key tasks such as identifying the venue, securing resources, and determining the Assembly theme.

Digitisation of CCA's documents

CCA's historical documents are not systematically documented. Some time ago, when CCA was based in Singapore in the early 1980's, certain documents were stored at the Trinity College Library in Singapore. Later, arrangements were made to keep some CCA records at Yale University Archives in the USA. Today, the exact status of these documents is unclear. We have quite a lot of documents in our small library while many more remain in a storeroom, still in unpacked boxes, moved from Hong Kong to Chiang Mai nearly twenty years ago, in 2006. We have begun digitising old photographs from the EACC period, but lack the technical expertise to proceed fully. It is now high time that we digitise our historical documents, publications, and photos. Converting paper-based documents into digital formats through scanning and optical character recognition (OCR) technology is time consuming and costly, and we will need to identify appropriate resources to support this effort.

Centralise the core administration of CCA through ERP System

In a similar way, CCA needs to introduce a centralised core administrative system through an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, which can serve not merely as an administrative tool but as a strategic asset to integrate and streamline the CCA's core operational pillars: membership, donations, financial stewardship, publications, and conferences. We introduced part of this process during the last General Assembly for Assembly-related registration and operations, etc. The advantage of this system is such a system will be helpful to consolidate all data (financial, donor, programmes, human resources etc.) into a single database. This helps to eliminate data silos, reduces duplication, and ensures everyone is working with the most up-to-date and accurate information. Instead of manually transferring data between different software for accounts, fund collection, and other programs, an ERP automates these processes. This reduces administrative burden, saves time, and minimises errors. For example, a donation recorded in the fund collection module would automatically update the accounting records and the donor's profile.

It is also helpful for improved communication and collaboration. With all relevant information in one place, different departments, and teams within the CCA can access and share data seamlessly, leading to better coordination and decision-making. Non-profit ERPs are specifically designed for fund accounting, making it easy to track restricted and unrestricted funds, manage grants from application to reporting, and ensure compliance with donor requirements. This is crucial for organisations like the CCA that manages diverse funding sources. Other advantages include improved visibility of financial matters, accurate reporting, automated generation of financial reports (e.g., Statement of Financial

Position, Statement of Functional Expenses), simplifying compliance reporting to finance committee and executive committee, improved Donor and Fundraising Management. This also helps us follow better stewardship with clear reporting on how funds are used. Ultimately, the CCA can demonstrate greater accountability to its donors, strengthening trust and encouraging continued support.

The other advantages are introducing an optimised programme management, lower administrative costs, data security, data protection, centralising data on a secure platform. In essence, by adopting an ERP system, CCA can move from a fragmented, labour-intensive approach to a unified, efficient, and data-driven operation. This move is particularly justified given our current use of multiple, disconnected software applications. The integration of various functions into a single, unified platform would not only rectify existing inefficiencies but also streamline operational processes and ensure a cohesive approach to administrative management.

If it is decided to introduce this system, we would need to spend USD 1,000, annually for Managed Cloud Secure Hosting, Implementation, and Consulting Services (One-Time) would be US \$ 10,000 – US \$15,000, and Annual Support and Maintenance US \$3,000.

Finance

Last year also I reported to the Executive Committee on CCA's financial situation. Frankly, we are in a hand-to-mouth position, as we have not been financially stable enough to fully meet CCA's requirements, with grants and contributions from non-Asian churches and ecumenical partners declining. However, it is encouraging that several Asian churches have been generously supporting CCA, especially through in-kind support, by covering the local expenses when we organise programmes.

When the first General Secretary of EACC/CCA, Rev. Dr Niles, presented his report after completing 11 years in office in 1968, he reported on the financial situation at that time. "From the beginning, the decision was that for its programme, the EACC would depend on its member churches and councils for 25 % of the cost. It was a source of satisfaction when we discovered at our Assembly last time, that our Churches and Councils had found 33.3 % of the total expended." During the first decade of its existence, from 1957 to 1967, CCA's finances were supported for 33.3% of its expenses. But later it became between 5 to 10 percent income within Asia. However, during the past 10 years, CCA has been able to raise substantial income from Asia, which is an average of 42% annually. This includes membership contributions from churches and councils, special support for programme implementation through sponsorship of hosting programmes, individual contributions to CCA work, and a small income occasionally received from investments.

Today, our income generation from Asia has increased considerably. It is gratifying that more and more churches and national ecumenical councils are taking responsibility for sponsoring programmes and covering programme implementation costs. Recently, PGI Indonesia hosted an international conference organised by CCA jointly with the PGI, which was held in Jakarta with eighty participants. An ecumenical organisation in India, ICSEA, Chennai, covered a major part of programme costs when we organised the Good Governance and Integrity Leadership Workshop for final-year theological students. The

Senate of Serampore also covered part of the programme implementation costs for a similar programme we organised in Kolkata, India this year in May.

It is imperative for CCA to generate more financial and human resources from CCA's own constituencies in Asia. We need to develop a culture of churches and ecumenical councils taking responsibility for covering travel costs of participants attending CCA programmes, either fully or partly.

Funds and grants that we generously received from Western churches or agencies ten to fifteen years ago are no longer available. Every year the non-Asian fund is decreasing. At the same time, Asian churches who can afford to contribute more have been reluctant to increase their support for CCA, which is rather disappointing. In fact, the same member churches or councils in these countries often showing more interest in hosting or sponsoring WCC programmes in their countries. I do hope that this trend will change and CCA will be able to generate more Asian support in future.

Human Resources in CCA

In a closed-door session, we will later discuss the staffing situation and appointments of new programme coordinators. In the last meeting, I reported on the shrinking human resources as we are currently unable to meet the financial requirements for staff costs. Nevertheless, in the long run, we need to find new ways to recruit staff, including through staff secondment by member churches, covering their own staff costs, a practice that has been followed by the WCC or other ecumenical organisations for many years. CCA has several young staff members who form the backbone of programme implementation. We are now managing all our programmes with limited staff capacity of three programme associates and one programme coordinator. The General Secretary has to oversee every single programme at each stage of planning, implementation, as well as monitoring and until the time of final reporting; this is an additional task under the full responsibility of the General Secretary as the CEO is responsible for every aspect of CCA's overall work in many other areas.

Membership and New Applications for membership

Over the past ten years, some existing members have withdrawn from CCA including the Quaker church in New Zealand, the Methodist Church in Taiwan, the North East India Baptist Church Council, and others. The main reason they cited was limited capacity to pay annual membership contributions. At the same time, some new churches have expressed interests in applying for CCA membership. They are the Russian Orthodox Church, which has a large number of diaspora congregations across Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, South and North Korea, Australia, etc; and the Believers Church in Myanmar, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. As per the CCA constitution, new members are normally accepted only at the time of the General Assembly. However, we may be able to start the process now to assess the eligibility of these churches for membership.

It is also a matter of concern that some current member churches and councils are experiencing internal disputes and conflicts, including member churches and member council in Pakistan (NCCP), member council in Cambodia (KCC), NCC Nepal, and NCC Bhutan.

Ecumenism in Asia: Challenges ahead

About six or seven years ago, I shared with the Executive Committee my frustration that Asia was developing as an “ecumenical archipelago.” I now find myself expressing the same concern to the new Executive Committee, highlighting one of the ongoing weaknesses of ecumenism in Asia. During the Asian Church and Ecumenical Leaders’ Conference in 2023, I shared this concern with many heads of churches who were present. I outlined several challenges facing the Asian ecumenical movement, including increasing denominationalism, resistance to the call to wider fellowship, a tendency to revive and promote specific ecclesial or confessional groupings and identities, the multiplicity of ecumenical organisations and structures, a lack of vision and commitment on part of Asian leaders to promote ecumenism, and a lack of interest in the ecumenical formation of the younger generation. I highlighted how the replication or duplication of efforts by numerous ecumenical organisations addressing similar concerns within the same constituencies, without coordination or information sharing, undermines intended outcomes and weakens the coherence of the movement. I termed this trend “archipelago ecumenism,” where externally driven bodies or ecumenical coalitions often contribute to disunity rather than strengthening conciliar unity. Some mission agencies, particularly those that have amassed substantial funds from property sales in Asia and now operate their headquarters in the region, promote luxurious ecumenical events in Asia. Some others form new ecumenical networks in Asia. Here you can see how they are engaged in parachuted ecumenism and creating ecumenical archipelagos in Asia. Another key issue I raised with Asian church leaders was the rise in unnamed churches, para-churches, and freelance aggressive missionary evangelism, causing further fragmentation of the Asian ecumenical movement and giving rise to ‘missionary battlefields’ with ‘aggressive evangelisation tactics’ promoted in several Asian countries. I would suggest that the next mission conference of CCA should address some of these concerns too.

As I conclude my decade of service as General Secretary of CCA, and more than three decades of service rendered continuously to two international ecumenical organisations, both CCA and WCC, there are additional key issues affecting the spirit of ecumenism and the Asian ecumenical movement that I could share. However, I refrain from listing them and describing all at this stage. Let us hope that Asian ecumenism will remain renewed, revived, and revitalised, and the ecumenical renewal of the churches will continue on a process based on increased consciousness of their members. As Ernst Lange, a former WCC staff member who wrote in his book *And yet it moves: Dream and reality of the ecumenical movement*, “Ecumenism can no longer be toyed with as a mere possibility. It has become the test case of faith.” Let ecumenism grow as an organic segment of Church’s life and witness, not as an addendum occasionally used for decoration. Let us hope and pray that ecumenism will remain in Asia as the test case of our faith and hope in action.

Mathews George Chunakara
General Secretary, CCA

19 November 2025

Appendices

CCA Programmes and Activities in 2025

No.	Programme/Activity	Date and Venue	No. of Participants	Ref. Number as per 2025 Programme Plan
1	Ecumenical Enablers' Training	Phnom Penh, Cambodia 19-21 February 2025	35	EF1.2
2	International Consultation on Emerging Geopolitical Reconfiguration in South Asia: Challenges to People's Security and Peace with Justice	Colombo, Sri Lanka 13-14 March 2025	40	BP1.1
3	ATCHAA- National Capacity Building for Church Leaders	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 20-22 May 2025	38	PW/ATCHAA
4	National Consultation on Empowerment and Collective Action to End Violence Against Women	Phnom Penh, Cambodia 27-29 May 2025	20	BP1.4
5	National Workshop on Good Governance, Stewardship, and Integrity Leadership in Parish Ministry	Chennai, India 28-30 May 2025	33	EF2.1
6	National Workshop on Good Governance, Stewardship, and Integrity Leadership in Parish Ministry	Kolkata, India 31 May – 3 June 2025	19	EF2.1
7	Asia Sunday – 2025	1 June 2025		MU4.1
8	Asian Ecumenical Institute – 2025	Chiang Mai, Thailand 3-30 August 2025	25	EF1.1
9	Commemoration of the 1700 th Anniversary of the First Council of Nicaea	Dili, Timor-Leste 6-8 August 2025	100	MU1.1
10	International Consultation on 'Combating Human Trafficking, Forced Migration and Cybercrime in Asia'	Bangkok, Thailand 13-15 August 2025	35	PW1.2



11	South Asia Regional Workshop on Good Governance, Integrity Leadership and Stewardship in Parish Ministry	Colombo, Sri Lanka 30 August- 3 September 2025	22	EF2.1
12	Young Ambassadors of Peace in Asia (YAPA)	Chiang Mai, Thailand 7-13 September 2025	30	BP1.2
13	International Inter-Religious Conference on Freedom of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities in Asia	Jakarta, Indonesia 16-20 September 2025	84	BP1.3
14	International Consultation on Artificial Intelligence and Posthumanism: Ethical and Theological Perspectives	Cyberjaya, Malaysia 1-4 October 2025	37	MU2.1
15	WCC-CCA Pastoral Visit to Myanmar	Yangon, Myanmar 11-12 October 2025	2	BP2.1
16	Asian Ecumenical Women's Conference	Chiang Mai, Thailand 11-15 November 2025	80	BP1.4
17	CCA Executive Committee Meeting	Chiang Mai, Thailand 19-21 November 2025	16	GS2
18	Asian Church Leaders' Conference on Ecumenical Diakonia	Chiang Mai, Thailand 21-24 November 2025	55	PW3
19	International Conference on 'Towards a Global Advocacy for People's Security, Peace with Justice and Democratisation in Myanmar'	Chiang Mai, Thailand 26-28 November 2025	78	BP1.3
20	National Capacity Building for Youth Leaders in Indonesia Talk-show on "From Stigma to Solidarity"	Jakarta, Indonesia 13 December 2025	25	PW/ATCHAA

CCA Executive Committee Members (2023–2028)

Officers

Moderator

Bishop Reuel Norman O. Marigza, United Church of Christ in the Philippines

Vice Moderator

Dr Anna Alisha Mathew Simon, Council of Churches of Malaysia

Treasurer

Rev. Chan Kwok-Keung, Hong Kong Christian Council

General Secretary

Dr Mathews George Chunakara, Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church in India

Members

Basanti Biswas (Methodist Church in India)

Rev. David Anirudha Das (National Council of Churches in Bangladesh)

Rev. Dethsacda Aphayamath (Laos Evangelical Church)

Archbishop Dikran Sebouh Sarkissian (Armenian Orthodox Church of Iran)

Dymeas Sovy (Kampuchea Christian Council)

Hannah Manickyam Cassandra Mesa (Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia)

Rev. Jacklevyn Frits Manuputty (The Communion of Churches in Indonesia)

Rev. John Gilmore (National Council of Churches in Australia)

Rev. Levi Vasconcelos Pinto (Igreja Protestante iha Timor Lorosa'e)

Nant Ruth Shwe Sin Nyein Aye (Myanmar Council of Churches/ till October 2025)

May Thinzar Khine (Myanmar Council of Churches/ from October 2025)

Rev. Dr Pradit Takerngrangsarit (Church of Christ in Thailand)

Su-Hong Lim (Presbyterian Church in Taiwan)

Tiurida Hutabarat (Protestant Christian Batak Church)

Rev. David Nigel Perry Brohier (Church of Ceylon)

Dr Youngmi Cho (Presbyterian Church of Korea)

Zion Chung (Korean Christian Church in Japan)

Dr Kuriakose Theophilose Metropolitan (Malankara Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church/
Chairperson of Programme Committee)

CCA Programme Committee Members 2023–2028

Metropolitan Dr Kuriakose Theophilose, Chairperson of Programme Committee
(Malankara Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church)

Rev. Ebenezer Joseph (Methodist Church of Sri Lanka)

Rev. Jimmy M Immanuel (Protestant Church in Western Indonesia)

Rev. Keita Hotere (Methodist Church in New Zealand)

Ma Kay Cathrine Almario (National Council of Churches in the Philippines)

Rev. Minji Kim (National Council of Churches in Korea)

Nandita Biswas (National Council of Churches in Bangladesh)

Rev. Oshima Kaori (National Christian Council in Japan)

Rev. Reuben Qamar (National Council of Churches in Pakistan)

Rosiana Purnomo (Communion of Churches in Indonesia, PGI)
Rt Rev. Steven Lawrence (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malaysia and Singapore)
Dr Suk-Yi Pang (Hong Kong Christian Council)
Dr Sureka Goringe (Uniting Church in Australia)
Dr Wellorich Sohkhet (Presbyterian Church of India)
Rev. Dr Yoontae Kim (Presbyterian Church of Korea)

CCA Finance Committee Members 2023–2028

Rev. Chan Kwok-keung (CCA Treasurer, Hong Kong Christian Council)
Tiurida Hutabarat (Protestant Christian Batak Church)
Nuttee Kunlacharnpises (Church of Christ in Thailand)
Bishop Melzar D. Labuntog (United Church of Christ in the Philippines)
Patrick Yuen (Hong Kong Council of Churches of Christ in China)
Dr Mathews George Chunakara (CCA General Secretary, Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church in India)

Asian Ecumenical Committee

Bishop Reuel Norman O. Marigza (CCA Moderator/ United Church of Christ in the Philippines)
Rev. John Charles Gilmore (National Council of Churches in Australia)
H.G. Dr Abraham Mar Seraphim Metropolitan (Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church)
Rev. Jung Eun Grace Moon (CCA Programme Coordinator/ Presbyterian Church of Korea)
Dr Mathews George Chunakara (CCA General Secretary/ Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church in India)

CCA Hong Kong Board of Directors

Rev. Chan Kwok-keung (CCA Treasurer, Hong Kong Christian Council)
Rev. Eric So (Hong Kong Council of Church of Christ in China, HKCCCC)
Rev. Po Kam Cheong (Hong Kong Council of Church of Christ in China, HKCCCC)
Bishop Reuel Norman O. Marigza (CCA Moderator/ United Church of Christ in the Philippines)
Dr Anna Alisha Mathew Simon (CCA Vice Moderator/ Council of Churches of Malaysia)
Dr Mathews George Chunakara (CCA General Secretary/ Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church in India)

CCA Management and Investment Committee

Rev. Chan Kwok-keung (CCA Treasurer, Hong Kong Christian Council)
Dr Fung Siu-hung Simon (Hong Kong Christian Council)
Bishop Thomas Soo (Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui)
Rev. Po Kam Cheong (Hong Kong Council of Church of Christ in China, HKCCCC)
Rev. Eric So (Hong Kong Council of Church of Christ in China, HKCCCC)
Patrick Yuen (Hong Kong Council of Churches of Christ in China)
Dr Mathews George Chunakara
(CCA General Secretary/ Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church in India)

CCA Foundation Thailand

Rev. Dr Pradit Takerngrangsarit (Church of Christ in Thailand)
 Supaporn Yarnasarn (Church of Christ in Thailand)
 Dr Sompan Wongdee (Church of Christ in Thailand)
 Dr Prawate Khi-arn (Church of Christ in Thailand)
 Rev. Thaworn Sutyka (Church of Christ in Thailand)
 Janejinda Pawadee (Church of Christ in Thailand)
 Dr Mathews George Chunakara
 (CCA General Secretary/ Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church in India)

CCA Staff Members 2025

General Secretary

Dr Mathews George Chunakara

Programme Staff

Rev. Jung Eun Grace Moon
 Dr Ronald Lalthanmawia
 Arceli Pepito Bile
 John Paul Devakumar
 Navya Dinah Saji
 Hnin Wai Thi Aung
 Sha Mgwe La Ah Tha Pa
 Yu-Ting Chiu
 Jacob Trent Ngileb
 Bony N. Bobby
 Ishan Malitha
 Nathi Schumann
 Sineeporn Pongraveevongsa
 Nyaung Lin Kyein
 Della Lee
 Netnapa Rattanajiamrangsri
 Arpa Yai-Chid

CCA PROGRAMME STRUCTURE (2024-2028)

