

Report
Committee
Relations
Abroad (CRB)



Synod of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands
Deventer 2023

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Summary

Herewith the report on the work of the Commission on Contact and Conversation (NGK) and the Deputation for Relations with Foreign Churches (GKv) for 2020-2023. The cooperation between the two organizations began already in 2020, continued to take shape, and as of May 1, 2023 we form one committee under the name: Committee Relations Abroad (CRB, we will also use this abbreviation in this report).

As a committee, our task is to represent our churches abroad and to inform our own churches in the Netherlands about churches abroad.

Shortly after our last Days on Foreign Affairs, January 2020, came the Covid-19 pandemic, and as you can imagine this had a great impact on our work: churches faced new challenges, personal meetings were not possible and we had to think how to fulfill our mission. Thank God, new opportunities arose and we were able to maintain contact.

Fortunately, in 2022 some trips could be made again and it was possible to have personal contact again, to really praise God together and to encourage each other, but the experience gained with digital meetings will certainly help shape the interpretation of our work.

1. Assignment

The assignments given to CRB by Synod Goes 2020, are listed and described by section later in the report.

2. Report of our activities

2.1 Organization of our work

The work in the committee is divided into 4 sections, with members liaising with their own area of interest. Each section meets 3 to 4 times a year, the last being Section 1, the moderation committee, and all section meetings are followed by a General Assembly. From the secretariat, available to the committee, all organizational work is coordinated and facilitated. Joke de Haan currently has an employment contract of 6 hours per week to do this work.

2.2 Overview of the report

After a general overview of developments within the country sections, we will walk past our work and developments based on the assignment we have been given.

2.3 Overview developments pro section

Section 2: Africa, Spanish- en Portugesespeaking countries

General and activities

There have been few developments within this section. Because of health problems among several committee members, contacts, especially in Africa, have been minimal and have been limited to a (digital) visit to the Synod of the United Reformed Church in Congo and a physical visit to the Synod of the Reformed Church in South Africa.

The planned visit to the synod of the Igreja Presbyteriana do Brasil had to be canceled on the day of departure because of a corona infection.

As indicated in the 2021 progress report, the Igrejas Reformadas do Brasil have terminated the sister church relationship. The Free Reformed Church in South Africa have maintained the relationship, but have indicated that the actual merger between NGK and GKV is a reason to end the relationship.

On the other hand, a request from the Igrejas Evangélicas Reformadas do Brasil, until 2008 a sister church of the GKv, to renew contact between the two churches and support each other.

A proposal to effect this can be found later in this report.

In May 2023, Brother Paul Limo of the RCEA was a guest in Kenya during the celebration of the unification of NGK and GKv. In doing so, the RCEA wanted to make visible its joy over the merger.

Schedules 2024-2026

For the coming period, it is good to particularly strengthen contacts in Africa and to look with the relations for opportunities to maintain contact. When looking for new members for the committee, it is good to have at least one member who is familiar with the cultural conditions in African countries.

From the Igreja Evangélicas Reformadas do Brasil came, through Pastor P. van de Kamp, a request to investigate whether contact can be restored. In 2008 GS Zwolle decided to end this contact because, mutually, little was being done. Within CRB, the content of any restored contact is currently being examined.

In the coming period it will also have to be considered whether the contact that exists with the ICPP in Portugal can still have substance. In the past period there has been no response to any letter from CRB.

Section 3: Europe, Northern-America en Oceania

General

The period 2020-2023 has been characterized for Section 3 by two developments.

First, it should be mentioned with sadness that a number of sister churches have severed ties with the GKv. In addition to the contacts mentioned in the progress reports, the Reformed Church of New Zealand and the Free Church of Scotland have also continuously decided to end the sister-church relationship. A number of churches that had already suspended the relationship before 2020 have not yet made a final decision.

Secondly, it can be reported with gratitude that also within this section the cooperation with members of the committee on contact and fellowship of the NGK has increasingly taken shape.

Activities 2020-2023

Because of the corona epidemic, there has been much less travel than planned in the past period. However, it was possible to visit the Synod of the sister church Evangelisch-Reformierte Kirche Westminster Bekenntnisses in Austria and Switzerland in 2022. Further visits were made to the Reformed Episcopal Church in Croatia and to the Chiesa Riformata in Lecce. Together with the pastors in Perugia and Milan, Rev. Vincenzo Coluccia is working on a denomination of five or six congregations. Visits have also been made to the Christian Reformed Church in North America and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in North America.

Besides disadvantages, the epidemic has also had a positive consequence: the members of Section 3 have gotten used to meeting digitally which saves a lot of time and reduces travel costs. There has also been much more digital contact with sister churches and contact churches than before.

Europe – new contacts

Section 3 has been in contact with Rev. Slava Viazovski in Minsk. He is pastor of a Presbyterian congregation in Minsk and has elaborate plans to establish several Presbyterian congregations. Rev. Viazovski is no stranger as he has contacts with the Evangelic-Reformed Seminary in Kiev which is supported by the (old) GKv churches in Gelderland and Flevoland. Because of the Covid epidemic and the tensions in Belarus it has not yet been possible to visit. However, there has been regular digital contact.

Furthermore, through the members of CCS (former NGK), UNEPREF churches have come into the picture. Also a gratifying development. This small French denomination is in contact in the Netherlands with the

CGK, the Gereformeerde Bond of the PKN and with the NGK. The NGK participates with the CGK in a support foundation, the SSGKF (St. Steun Gereformeerde Kerken in Frankrijk). Two support foundations existed within the GKv for the Faculté Jean Calvin in Aix-en-Provence; these merged in 2021. Once a year the so-called "Frans Beraad" takes place in the Netherlands, where all partners meet and inform each other about their work. UNEPREF President Jean-Raymond Stauffacher visited the Netherlands in February 2020, during which discussions were held with all partners. From the Section participated in the UNEPREF National Synods held online in 2020 and 2021. In 2022, for the first time, it was possible to participate again in National Synod 2022, taking place in Alès, followed by participation in the Convention Nationale. It was not possible to participate in Synod 2023 because it coincided with the reunification celebration NGK/GKv on May 12. On both sides, this meant that UNEPREF representation at this celebration was not possible.

There was also participation in the biennial congress of Evangile21 in Geneva (with Kevin DeYoung as speaker, among others). It was a place where hundreds of Christians from French-speaking countries met and exchanged on the grounds of the Institut Biblique in Geneva (IBG), where it was possible to follow developments in the French churches. Through this congress, contact can be maintained in a low-threshold way through networking French-speaking churches..

Northern America

The good contact with the CRCNA (sister church of the Dutch Reformed Churches) has continued. Their commitment to the NGK is evidenced by the presence of Rev. Zachary King, the General Secretary of the CRCNA, at the celebrations of the unification of the NGK and the GKv on May 12 and 14.

It was decided not to enter into new contact with the Evangelical Prebyterian Church. While the EPC does accept congregations with women ministers, in general their orientation is more toward denominations in North America and elsewhere, which have scaled back or severed their contacts with the NGK. **Oceanië** Buiten de gebruikelijke uitwisseling van informatie (kerkbladen, synodenieuws e.d.) is in 2023 er geen actief contact geweest met kerken in Australië en Nieuw Zeeland.

Schedules 2024-2026

Europe

West and Central Europe: In the coming period the contacts with the UNEPREF and the cooperation with the Foundation Support Reformed Churches France (SSGKF) will be continued. Concretely, this means if possible annual participation in the Synod cq Convention Nationale, as well as inviting on occasion a UNEPREF representation to the Netherlands. The latter preferably in coordination with the partners in the French Council. Furthermore, within the framework of the French Council, efforts are being made to strengthen the mutual cooperation between Dutch organizations with regard to France and the French-speaking regions worldwide.

It is planned to visit Evangile 21, a conference of The Gospel Coalition, in Geneva in 2024 and 2026.

Eastern and Southern Europe: Regarding Europe, efforts will be made to maintain ties with ERKWB, the only sister church in continental Europe. The Ukrainian Evangelical Reformed Churches (UERC) will be urged to establish a sister-church relationship. Because of the Russian-Ukrainian war, it has not been possible in recent years to visit the Evangelical Reformed Presbyterian Church in Minsk, Belarus, which was founded in 2018. Hopefully there will be that possibility in the coming period. Furthermore, existing contacts will be maintained with special attention to Albania, Italy and Turkey.

Northern America

It is planned to visit the General Assembly of the CRCNA in the coming period. If possible, a visit will then also be made to the GA of the Presbyterian Church in America.

Developments in other denominations, including former sister churches and contact churches, will be monitored.

Churches in Oceania will not be visited. Where possible and where needed, there will be fellowship and contact.

Section 4: Asia

In the period 2020-2023, Asia was the focus area for Section 4. The Section consisted of two pairs of two members, Johannes Veldhuizen and Henk Venema, who focused on Indonesia, and Arjan Grashuis and Simon van der Lugt, who focused on India, Sri-Lanka, South Korea, Japan, Taiwan and the Philippines. At the meetings, in addition to Joke de Haan as note-taker, one of the Asia coordinators of DVN pushed in, as well as Ed van der Vlis as president of the Association "Support East Sumba," which maintains sister-church relations with the GGBST, Free Churches in East Sumba, on behalf of NGK. The cooperation between BBK GKv and CCS NGK thus took concrete shape during this period and was very pleasant.

Activities 2020-2023

Because of the corona epidemic, almost no physical meetings could take place in the past period. However, there was often online contact via What's App, phone and email, or through video messages.

As for **Indonesia**, in January 2020 - just before corona broke out - Johannes and Henk were able to meet in Zwolle with the delegation of the sister church Gereja-Gereja Bebas di Sumba Timur (GGBST), which was in the Netherlands for a visit to the LV NGK. In September 2022 Henk, together with Kees Haak, was able to attend the 3rd National Synod of the sister church Gereja-Gereja Reformasi di Indonesia (GGRI). The relationship with the KalBar and Papua regions continued. The NTT region announced that it had severed its relationship with the GKv.

Also with the Gereja Kristus Tuhan (GKT), which the GS Goes embraced as a sister church, there was and is regular contact, on numerous subjects, both practical-church and theological.

With the sister church Gereja-Gereja Reformed Calvinis (GGRC), there has been very little contact. This church unfortunately severed its sister church relationship with the GKv in 2022.

As for **other contacts in Asia**, the latest visits date back to the pre-Corona era: South Korea, Japan, Taiwan and the Philippines were visited in 2019. A planned visit to India in 2022 eventually did not materialize. In addition to these visits, there have been some video meetings with India, Philippines, South Korea and Japan.

Schedules 2024-2026

Indonesia

The **GKT** seeks to give substantial substance to the still fresh sister-church relationship with the (new) NGK. As part of this, the GKT particularly appreciates physical visits to its biennial Synod (the next one is scheduled for 2024). This fits with our desire as CRB to deepen and make more concrete existing relationships with our sister churches in the future, given the NGK's motto "Together on the road in God's world. On an earlier visit to the GKT, congregations, youth activities and schools were also visited, as well as the theological training program "Alètheia. The GKT also hopes to come again to our Synod's usual outward days, with eager visits to congregations and theological training as well.

The **GGRI** does not plan to hold another national synod until 2026. Until now, sometimes the regional synods were also visited, or the regions were visited outside of a synod (as in 2019). For the future, we will focus on - if possible - a physical visit to the national synod, but also continue to pay attention to the individual regions via digital media. The decision of the regional synod of the GGRI NTT to end the sister church relationship with the GKv already indicates, that the regions still operate independently and that the national synod has more the character of a conference. In any case, it would be good to visit the regions again in order to confirm and strengthen the sister-church relationship in a positive way (not talking again about the problem points, but about reciprocity regarding church life-in its own context).

Financially, the GGRI has never been in a position to attend an abroad week of our Synod. Nevertheless, it would be desirable to host the GGRI again. Possibly sponsorship is an option.

There has been regular contact with the **GGBST** (Gereja-Gereja Bebas Sumba Timur) from the Association Support East Sumba (SOS). As an introduction, it would be good to have a physical visit from CRB to one of the annual synods. And to host the GGBST in an abroad week of our synod.

Asia

So far, we have always tried to combine travel as much as possible. We would like to continue this way. In 2019, the RCJ (Reformed Church in Japan) has expressed its desire to cooperate with the GKv/DVN in the area of mission work. We hope to discuss this further when the RCJ hopes to visit us during the upcoming Synod.

From the various contacts in Asia we will make choices: what do we invest more in by visiting and what do we invest less in. The RCJ will have preference in this given their request for help. In addition, contact and encouragement is especially appropriate with the RCJ because the RCJ moves as a very small minority in the mostly anti-Christian Japanese society.

Visits to another contact in the region will be considered if there is a clear reason for this, or if it can be combined with a visit to the RCJ. In the context of regionalization, a visit to the Indian RPF (Reformed Presbyterian Fellowship) is appropriate: many of our contacts meet there. As a rule, the RPF meets once every 2 years. Possibly a combination with a visit to Sri Lanka can be made.

2.4 Overview based on the assignment GS Goes 2020

1. *deputies inform churches and church members in the Netherlands of Christ's church-gathering work abroad and call them (also in concrete situations) to prayer and thanksgiving;*

In order to fulfill this task, we regularly post news items on our website or in the Newsletter. In some specific situations, we have been able to send a message to the scribes of the church congregations, requesting them to pay attention to the specific situation of (one of) our sister churches in the divine service and prayers.

A careful start has been made to also draw attention to the work via social media, but it appears to be difficult to do this on a regular basis.

In the coming period extra attention will be paid to updating the website.

2. *they allow foreign churches and church members to sympathize with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands; they do their work using the BBK office and the facilities of "Verre Naasten."*

In addition to the personal moments of contact that exist between committee members and members of the church relations, in 2021, 2022 and 2023 we sent the Spring Letter to the church affiliations with whom we have contact. Through this we bring them up to date on the developments that are going on within our Dutch churches. In addition, a New Year's greeting was recorded and sent in 2021 and we informed our sister churches of, and invited them to, the celebrations surrounding the official merger of our churches in April 2023. Unfortunately, each time we have to note that we receive very little response to these actions.

Up to and including 2022, service and work facilities for Joke de Haan were housed at Verre Naasten, as of January 1, 2023 this was taken over by Steunpunt Kerkenwerk by mutual agreement, partly because of the changed way of working (mostly working from home) and reducing costs.

3. *they consult with and cooperate with the Deputies of Foreign Churches of the Christian Reformed Churches;*

There was another meeting with the Deputies Abroad of the CGK in 2021, which allows us to keep each other up to date on developments going on. At the suggestion of Deputies Abroad, it was agreed to

schedule a maximum of one meeting per Synod period in the future.

4. *they cooperate with the CCS Abroad of the Dutch Reformed Churches, work together as much as possible and coordinate in order to be able to function as one committee when the churches are unified;*

As stated in the introduction to this report, the cooperation between the two committees has already turned into a merger and we hope to continue the work together in good harmony.

5. *they report to the next General Synod on changes in relations with foreign churches and indicate the implications of these for the work of deputies;*

The result of this assignment is before you.

6. *they look for ways to stay in touch with churches that have severed relations with the GKv or are about to make such a decision, building on what unites us;*

No specific actions have been taken to fulfill this mission in the recent period. However, during visits there have been contacts with delegates from churches that have broken off the relationship, but during those contact moments a clear distance was felt.

7. *they consult with churches that have suspended the sister church relationship, and wait to see what their further decision is;*

Some churches that indicated in the run-up to GS Goes that they had suspended the relationship have recently made known that they consider the relationship as ended. Other churches have been asked how the relationship is now viewed, but there have been no responses (yet).

8. *they seek contact and cooperation with organizations from within the GKv that work for churches/communities abroad, namely Yachad, SSRO and Fundament;*

Contact with Yachad is minimal, no personal contact.

With SSRO there has been contact around a trip to Austria/Switzerland in 2022.

Contact with Fundament is difficult and is a point of attention for the next period.

With Stichting Steun Gereformeerde Kerken in Frankrijk (SSGKF) there has been regular contact in the past period, which will be continued in the coming period.

The intention in the coming period is to schedule an annual contact (moment) with organizations in the Netherlands that maintain contact with churches abroad.

9. *they maintain contacts with the Reformed College "Viaa" in Zwolle and the Theological University in Kampen;*

There has been contact with TUK in preparation for a trip to one of our sister churches. With Viaa there are fewer (substantive) interfaces and there have been no contacts.

10. *they formulate further proposals on participation in church networks, in relation to maintaining contacts and relationships with individual churches;*

These proposals are included in this report.

11. *they adhere to the General Arrangement for establishing and maintaining relationships with churches abroad.*

Over the past period, we have participated in the reflection in the drafting of a revised General Order, which guides the work of our committee.

Not included in the mission of GS Goes, but an essential part of the committee's work are ICRC membership and contact with Verre Naasten|Mission.

2.5 Membership ICRC

In 2017, at the ICRC meeting in Jordan, Canada, the GKv membership had already changed to observer status. No longer a member in full rights and duties, but welcome as a visitor, pending the decision-making of GS Goes 2020, especially in the area of Man/Woman.

During the Namibia 2022 conference, postponed by Covid-19, in an atmosphere perceived as harsh and cold by the delegates from the Netherlands, it was decided by vote to permanently expel the GKv as a member. Current developments within the GKv are seen as un-Biblical and sinful, and not in keeping with the ICRC statutes.

The delegates of the GKv still tried to be able to have a substantive conversation as well by sending a letter in advance to all delegates and by a lecture during the conference, but there was little to no attention to this.

Besides one abstention, it was decided unanimously to terminate the GKv's membership as a full member of the ICRC.

In response, a letter was sent from CRB to all contacts present, asking what their decision to vote in favor of expulsion meant for mutual relations. Only a few responses were received to this. It was stated several times that the decision to vote for expulsion lies in the fact that the developments within the GKv do not correspond with the ICRC statutes, but that this decision does not have to have any effect on the relationships between the contacts.

2.6 Contact whit Verre Naasten|Mission

There was consultation with Verre Naasten because a contact person from Verre Naasten was regularly present at the section meeting, and in some cases a trip abroad was made together with a representative of Verre Naasten. Reports of trips made are made available back and forth.

In the past period there has been limited contact between the board of Verre Naasten and members of Section 1.

CRB's policy regarding trips to churches with which Verre Naasten also maintains contact is that we try to coordinate the instructions and whether it makes sense for one of us to make the trip. The contacts are so different per country that it is difficult for us to make a general rule for this.

3. Proposal decisions

We propose that Synod Deventer 2023 make the following decisions:

Decision 1:

regarding the broken relationships:

- a. to note with sadness the news that a number of sister churches have severed or suspended their relationship with us.

The sister church relation has been broken by:

1. Reformed Churches of New Zealand
2. Free Church of Scotland continuing
3. Igreja Reformadas do Brasil

4. Gereja Gereja Reformasi Calvinis
5. Gereja Gereja Reformasi di Indonesia NTT

The suspended relationship has been continued by:

1. Evangelical Presbyterian Church Ireland
2. Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England and Wales

- b. For each relationship, explore whether we can maintain contact, and in what form, with those churches that decided in recent years to end the relationship or still consider it "suspended".

Decision 2:

With regard to maintaining sister-church relationships:

- a. in accordance with the General Rules for Relations with Churches Abroad (as stated in Art. 1.1) to maintain contacts with the following sister churches, according to the agreements made with each of these churches individually, in order to learn from each other, support each other and praise Christ's name together:
 1. African Evangelical Presbyterian Church (in Kenia) (AEPC)
 2. Christian Reformed Church of Northern America (CRCNA)
 3. Christian Reformed Church of the Philippines (CRCP)
 4. Christian Reformed Church of Sri Lanka (CRCSL)
 5. Evangelisch-Reformierte Kirche Westminster Bekenntnisses (ERK-WB)
 6. Free Church of Scotland (FCS)
 7. Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika (GKSA)
 8. Gereja-Gereja Bebas Sumba Timur (in Indonesia) (GGBST)
 9. Gereja Gereja Reformasi di Indonesia (GGRI KalBar, GGRI Papua)
 10. Gereja Kristus Tuhan (in Indonesia) (GKT)
 11. Iglesia Reformada en Venezuela (IRV)
 12. Kosin Presbyterian Church of Korea (KPCK)
 13. Nongu u Kristu u i Ser u shar Tar (in Nigeria) (NKST)
 14. Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (PCEA)
 15. Presbyterian Church of Uganda (PCU)
 16. Presbyterian Free Church Council (Kalimpong) (PFCC)
 17. Presbyterian Free Church of Central India (PFC(CI))
 18. Reformed Church in Japan (RCJ)
 19. Reformed Church of East Africa (in Kenia) (RCEA)
 20. Reformed Presbyterian Church of India (RPCI)
 21. Reformed Presbyterian Church of North East India (RPCNEI)
 22. Reformed Presbyterian Church Taiwan (RPCT)
 23. Sudanese Reformed Church (SRC)
 24. United Reformed Church in the Congo (URCC)
 25. Vrije Gereformeerde kerke in Suid-Africa (VGKSA)

Decision 3:

Regarding church contacts:

- a. In accordance with the General Rules for Relations with Churches Abroad (as stated in Art. 1.1 and 4.2 mentioned above), maintain contacts with the following churches and agencies with which a relationship has been established in the past. Depending on the nature of the contact and mutual agreements, we maintain the relationship in order to learn from each other, support each other and praise Christ's name together:
 1. Baltic Reformed Theological Seminary en de Gereformeerde gemeenschappen in de Baltische Staten (BRTS)

2. Christian Reformed Churches of Australia (CRCA)
3. Église Réformée Confessante au Bénin (ERCB)
4. Église Réformée Confessante au Congo (ERCC)
5. Evangelical Reformed Churches of Russia (ERCR)
6. Evangelical Reformed Presbyterian Church (Wit-Rusland)
7. First Evangelical Reformed Church van Singapore (FERC)
8. Hongaarse Gereformeerde Kerken (HGK) en andere gereformeerde groeperingen (Hongaars taalgebied);
9. Isa-E Church in Bangladesh (ICB)
10. Iglesias Reformadas de España (IRE)
11. Igreja Cristã Presbiteriana de Portugal (ICPP)
12. Igreja Presbiteriana do Brasil (IPB)
13. Independent Reformed Church of Korea (IRCK)
14. Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC)
15. Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), via Mission to the World
16. Presbyterian Church of Korea (Hapshin) (PCK (Hapshin))
17. Presbyterian Theological Seminary (Dehra Dun, India) (PTS)
18. Protestantska Reformirana Krscanska Ckrva (PRKC)(Kroatië)
19. Reformed Presbyterian Fellowship in Myanmar (RPCFM)
20. South Indian Reformed Churches (SIRC)
21. Ukraine Evangelical Reformed (of Presbyterian) Church (Oekraïne)
22. Union Nationale des Églises Protestantes Réformées Évangéliques de France (UNEPREF)

Decision 4:

With regard to the contact in Croatia:

the Reformed Episcopal Church of Croatia (formerly the Protestanska Reformirana Krscanska Ckrva (PRKC)) to be removed from the list of churches contacted.

Grounds:

1. after the initially good contacts, the interest from the churches in Croatia in church life in the GKv has faded away;
2. in addition, the current bishop has expressed very negative views on the developments within the GKv (women in ministry) which made it hardly impossible to gain for re-approachment.

Decision 5:

to adopt the English language naming for the committee as: Committee for Relations Abroad (CRA) of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands (RCN).

Decision 6:

regarding participation in networks of Christian churches:

in accordance with the General Arrangement for Relations with Churches Abroad (as mentioned in Art. 1.1 and 4.4) to use opportunities, by organizing or attending conferences or network meetings, to have contact with churches worldwide. In particular, also seek networking opportunities within the European region.

As a result of the termination of ICRC membership, an important opportunity for meeting within an international network has been lost. CRB wonders whether membership in another international organization makes sense. There are several in this area, consider a WRF (World Reformed Fellowship, <https://wrf.global>), or WCRC (World Communion of Reformed Churches, wrc.ch). In the coming period the CRB intends to reflect on these options, and in this exploration to draw in part on knowledge and experience of sister churches, such as a CRCNA, which are already part of various organizations. At next synod, the CRB will come up with a proposal and its (financial) consequences.

Decision 7:

regarding organizations and institutions:

at least once a year to have contact with and, where possible, to cooperate with organizations from within the NGK that are committed to churches/communities abroad (namely, French Council, Fundament, SSGKF, SSRO and Yachad).

Decision 8:

regarding cooperation with the CGK:

continue cooperation with deputies of the CGK (DBK) by keeping each other informed.

Decision 9:

discharging members of CRB.

Decision 10:

members CRB to be appointed. A daily board will be formed within the committee, within which the secretariat will be managed by Joke de Haan-Douma.

Decision 11:

to give the following instruction to the members CRB:

1. members inform churches and church members in the Netherlands of Christ's church-gathering work abroad and call them (also in concrete situations) to prayer and thanksgiving;
2. they make foreign churches and church members sympathize with the Dutch Reformed Churches;
3. they do their work using the CRB secretariat and the facilities of "Verre Naasten" and Steunpunt Kerkenwerk;
4. they shall consult and cooperate with the Deputates Abroad of the Christian Reformed Churches;
5. they report to the next synod about changes in the relations with foreign churches and indicate what the consequences are for the work of deputies;
6. they maintain contacts with the Reformed College "Viva" in Zwolle and the Theological University in Kampen|Utrecht;
7. they formulate further proposals on participation in church networks, in relation to maintaining contacts and relationships with individual churches;

Decision 12:

To provide an amount of € 103,050 to members CRB for their work for the years 2024-2026. A summary of expected expenses is visible in the attached budget.

Additional report

Accountability

In the run-up to the start of GS Deventer, there have been some developments regarding the relationships we maintain with churches abroad, which have not been mentioned in the official report, but which we would like to make known.

We would also like to hereby make a proposal for appointments of (new) members of CRB for the coming period.

Hence this additional report.

Proposal additional decisions

Supplement to decision 2:

With regard to the list of sister churches:

To remove the Free Reformed Churches in Suid-Africa from the list of sister churches with which CRB will maintain contact in the coming period.

Grounds:

1. It was decided by Synod Belhar 2021 to consider the sister church relationship with the GKv as terminated after the merger with the NGK, on May 1, 2023;
2. In response to CRB's invitation, to attend the merger celebration in Utrecht, it was expressed through a letter that Synod Belhar's decision would have its fulfillment on May 1, 2023;
3. In response to the invitation to attend the Foreign Days of GS Deventer, this decision was still confirmed.

Supplement to Decision 3:

Regarding the list of churches and organizations with which contact is maintained:

To remove the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in North America from the list of contacts.

Grounds:

The 89th General Assembly of the OPC (2023) decided to terminate the relationship with the GKV, due to the decisions made by GS Meppel and GS Goes on the subject of M/F and ministry.

Explanation to decision 4

In spring 2008, Rev. Jasmin Milic from Osijek contacted BBK with the request for further acquaintance. In autumn 2008, two members of BBK paid a first visit to the Reformirana Protestanska Ckrva in Tordinci. This first and subsequent visits were encouraging thanks to mutual recognition as churches of Christ according to the Reformed confession. Because there was no somewhat stable church relationship, the deputies BBK did not propose a sister church relationship. Disappointed by this, Rev. Jasmin Milic placed herself under the jurisdiction of Reformed Episcopal Church and soon became a bishop. That Rev. Milic joined Reformed Episcopal Church with his congregation(s) was not a reason for BBK to sever contact. After all, the Episcopalians were also present at the Synod of Dordrecht 1618-19. Nevertheless, since then there has been separation and no reciprocity. On the last visits, Bishop Jasmin Milic fiercely criticized the GKv.