

Press release – 25 April 2008

The World Conference of Associations of Theological Institutions (WOCATI) holds its fourth world congress from 31st May until 7th of June in Thessaloniki, Greece. WOCATI was inaugurated in a global conference in June 1989 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia in cooperation with the ETE programme of WCC. The world forum of associations and accrediting organizations of theological schools from all over the world will discuss key issues of the future of ecumenical theological education in the 21st century under the theme “Theological Education – A Radical Reappraisal”. Organized by the president of WOCATI, Prof. Petros Vassiliadis from Theological Faculty of Thessaloniki, and the Programme on Ecumenical Theological Education of WCC in Geneva (Dr. Dietrich Werner, ETE Global Coordinator) the congress will bring together more than 50 participants from Asia, Africa, Pacific, Caribbean, Europe, Latin America and the US. For the first time also the Chinese Christian Council is represented. Key speakers for the congress will be (Prof. Dr. Ulrich Duchrow, University of Heidelberg; Prof. Dr. Isabel Phiri, University of KwaZulu Natal, Pietermaritzburg South Africa, Prof. Dr. Huan Po Ho, Chan Jung Christian University Tainan and Prof. Ioan Sauca, Ecumenical Institute of Bossey). During the conference also the 50th anniversary of the programme on Ecumenical Theological Education of the WCC which was founded as Theological Education Fund (TEF) at the world missions conference of the International Missionary Council in Accra, Ghana 1957/1958 will be commemorated. Several former staff members like Prof. Dr. Ross Kinsler and Prof. Dr. John Pobee will address the conference at this occasion. The WCC will be presented also by one of its Presidents, Prof. Ofelia Ortega from Matanzas Theological Seminary in Cuba. The conference is expected to set new priorities for international cooperation and dialogue for ecumenical theological education, for promoting funding in theological education as well as for WOCATI as an umbrella organization. The conference is also seen as a strategic contribution for the Edinburgh 2010 process which in one of its focal areas aims at bringing together new perspectives for theological education in the 21st century. More information on WCC and WOCATI websites.