

### Role Description<sup>1</sup> – General Secretary

**Objectives:** The General Secretary is the Chief Executive Officer of the World Council of Churches (WCC Rules XII.2).

**Roles:** Leader, ecumenist, theologian (lay or ordained), coordinator, communicator, creative thinker, analyst, strategist, bridge-builder, mediator, fund-raiser, manager, motivator, team builder.

#### Competencies:

1. Knowledge of the ecumenical movement in its historical development, present situation and future possibilities.
2. Commitment to the visible unity of the Church and to the greater fulfillment of its life and witness in the world.
3. Ability to inspire, motivate and lead people and to discern and articulate a common goal and vision.
4. Ability to discern the needs, aspirations and concerns of all member churches as well as of creative groups within and across the churches.
5. Ability to help the WCC and its member churches to fulfill their prophetic, missionary, diaconal and other ministries in the world.
6. Ability to discern emerging global trends and to articulate analysis and theological reflection.
7. Commitment to be respectful of the convictions of the member churches even when they differ from his/her own.
8. Capacity to bring partners into dialogue and build trust.
9. Ability to lead in the formulation of ecumenical policy and in strategic planning.
10. Facility to communicate the WCC vision, programmes and priorities.
11. Facility to enable staff members to care for each other pastorally and to grow together spiritually.
12. Ability to bring out the creativity of the staff, promote study and reflection, and generate programme initiatives for the churches to consider and carry out.
13. Ability to work in a multi-cultural context, preserving sensitivity to other cultures.
14. Facility to lead and manage complex organizations.
15. Deep awareness of spiritual, social, economic, political and cultural dynamics globally.

#### Areas of responsibility:

1. Serve as Chief Executive Officer of the World Council of Churches. As such, he/she is the secretary of the Assembly, Executive and Central Committees, as well as the chief manager for the staff.
2. Organize WCC governing body meetings.
3. Direct the activities of the Council according to the mandates and policies of the governing bodies.
4. Implement policies and priorities established by the Executive and Central Committees and facilitate proposals to be submitted to them.
5. Conduct analysis of trends affecting the ecumenical movement.

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<sup>1</sup> This job description was approved in 2002 (cf. minutes of the fifty-second meeting of the central committee). In February 2008 the search committee and the central committee asked that it be distributed for feedback before the July meeting of the search committee.

6. Provide (and initiate) reflection on emerging issues in the ecumenical movement and in the world.
7. Project and promote the image of the ecumenical movement and of the WCC.
8. Represent and interpret the Council to member churches, ecumenical and other partners, secular bodies and authorities, mass-media and public at large.
9. Identify and define long-range and evolving strategic directions of WCC.
10. Lead the definition and implementation of fund-raising policies and guidelines.
11. Plan, identify and allocate human and financial resources with respect to all positions and programmes in line with the WCC objectives and programme priorities.

**Qualifications:**

1. Whole-hearted devotion to Christ; deep spirituality grounded in scripture and prayer; active participation in a worshipping Christian community which is a WCC member church.
2. Breadth and depth of vision for the future of the WCC and the ecumenical movement.
3. Demonstrated ecumenical commitment and familiarity with the life of the churches and of the ecumenical movement.
4. Proven experience in leadership positions.
5. Experience and skills to oversee and manage administrative implementation.
6. Excellent communication skills.
7. Clear commitment to the worldwide mission of the church today.

**Comments:**

“The normal terms of appointment for the General Secretary and for the Deputy General Secretary or Secretaries shall be five years. Unless some other period is stated in the resolution making the appointment, the first term of office for all other staff appointed by the Executive or Central Committee shall normally be four years from the date of the appointment. All appointments shall be reviewed one year before their expiration. Retirement shall normally be at sixty-five for both men and women and in no case shall it be later than the end of the year in which a staff member reaches the age of sixty-eight.” (Constitution and Rules of the World Council of Churches, Rule XII.6-7).