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Note on Membership Matters

1. Inactive members

The number of inactive member churches will have increased from 30 to 51 by the end of 2007. This is 15% of total WCC membership. This very fact will be dealt with by the secretariat which, in a first state, would:

- Prepare letters to 21 newly declared inactive churches
- Prepare list of inactive members as of 22 January according to the 2007 financial closing of accounts.

However, the central committee meeting also may have to be used to engage the members of the regions concerned to take action, ideally, the issue could

- be highlighted in GS report,
- appear on the nominations and finance committee agendas,
- be placed on the regional meeting agendas and
- be put on the agenda of the WCC presidents.

2. Central committee members not eligible for subsidies*

Churches that have not paid 2007 membership fees are ineligible to receive subsidies to attend the central committee. Currently there are 44 of 150 central committee members who normally receive subsidies, but are NOT eligible to receive one for February 2008. These churches are not among the inactive churches mentioned above.

In October, a letter was sent to each church concerned, indicating the impact on CC participation. The letters were copied to the relevant CC members. The deadline for responding/paying is 11 December. It is expected that half of the churches concerned will pay by year end.

This situation requires serious consideration by the Officers. At this stage, a decision by the Officers to either lift the ban or enforce the ban on subsidies for these members, seems to be necessary for organizing the central committee meeting properly.

* In 2003 the Central Committee approved the recommendation that churches which have not maintained an annual membership contribution since 1998, nor written to explain why, would be considered inactive members. An inactive member church "is not eligible to send representatives or delegates to WCC governing body meetings, committees and the Assembly, and is not eligible to receive subsidies for other WCC meetings or events" (CC minutes 2003 p. 131). Without eligibility for subsidies, many churches are therefore not able to participate in WCC programme sponsored events.