



AFRAM ZONAL COORDINATOR
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"We can't row the canoe fast with one paddle"
(African proverb)

AFRAM UPDATE 1002, February 28, 2010

Dear Fathers Provincials, Regional and Mission Superiors,

Warm greetings from the AFRAM Zone!

At this time we are all back to our posts, back to our usual preoccupations. Please don't forget to thank the confreres in your provinces, region and mission for their prayers intended for us during the 8th Zonal Assembly. As Father General said in our Thanksgiving Mass, we felt the presence of the Holy Spirit prompting us in our deliberations. There were *dialogues* going on during the sessions and many other important *dialogues* happening "in the corridors". May the same Spirit of the Divine Word give us the grace to concretize our vision and our recommendations for the next triennium. I thank each of you once again for your presence and your participation in the Zonal Assembly. We thank the Togo Province for the wonderful organization and hospitality. Many of us appreciated the possibility of visiting the mission stations and the beautiful sights and landmarks of Togo and Benin. I thank the outgoing members of the Execom for the mission well accomplished.

Last February 23, Fr. General Antonio Pernia wrote a letter to Fr. Thomas D'Mello, the outgoing Chairman of the Execom concerning the "Election results of the 2010 AFRAM Zonal Assembly. There were three things pointed out:

1. The reappointment of Fr. Xene Sanchez (CNG) as AFRAM Zonal Coordinator for the 2010-2013 triennium.
2. The confirmation of the election of Fr. Zeferino Zeca Martins (ANG) as the New Chairman of the AFRAM Executive Committee and of Fr. Tadeusz Grenda (ZIM) as Vice-Chairman. They make up the Executive Committee together with the Zonal Coordinator.
3. The notification of the election of the AFRAM Area Coordinators.

As we know the Area Coordinators are to be appointed officially by their respective provincials with the consent of their councils. So please, Fathers Provincials of ANG, CNG, GHA and TOG and Fr. Regional of MAD, please include this important item in your next Provincial/Regional Council. In the attached file you have a copy of the form D6a. Please notify the Generalate and give a copy to me. Only then could we announce in public our Area Coordinators when you give them the official appointment.

About AEFJN. One of the Recommendations of the Assembly was "that the AFRAM Zone seek ways to collaborate with AEFJN". Fr. Milan Bubák, SVD, the Generalate JPIC Coordinator sent us information about it last February 7, 2010. We were not able to open the file because of Internet problems during the Assembly. But here it is!

1. What is AEFJN?

AFRICA EUROPE FAITH AND JUSTICE NETWORK (AEFJN) is a Faith-based International Network present in AFRICA and in EUROPE, established in 1988. The first Generalate JPIC Coordinator Herman Whijtten, SVD was one of the founding members.

AEFJN promotes economic justice between **the European Union and sub-Saharan Africa** so that the poor of Africa may look forward to a better future. The AEFJN International Secretariat in Brussels (Belgium) coordinates the Antennae, does advocacy work and lobbies the European Institutions on issues affecting Africa.

The AEFJN ANTENNAE (national groups) create awareness among Christians and religious, do advocacy and lobby towards the **national governments**, on issues relevant to **Africa**. There are 13 Antennae in 12 European countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Spain (Madrid and Barcelona), Poland, Portugal, Switzerland, United Kingdom, **AEFJN lobbies** and does **advocacy** at different levels:

With other partners (civil society, NGOs, Church groups) working on the same issues and having similar concerns, AEFJN coordinates its activities at the European and national levels, joining in shared reflection on the issues and defining areas where common activities, such as joint statements, positions and conferences can be undertaken.

At Church level creating awareness among religious, missionaries and lay people on the impact of trade policies on the people of Africa. AEFJN works to change the unjust structures, which bring about impoverishment and inequality in the people and the countries of Africa.

At national level in collaboration with the International Secretariat, the **national AEFJN Antenna** works at national level, to create awareness and to make advocacy towards the national government, Parliament and Church groups.

At the EU level the International Secretariat is in contact different with DGs of the European Commission, with the European Parliament and with the Council.

At African level AEFJN is in contact with a number of groups in Africa working on economic issues.

AEFJN network reaches people of our congregations and institutions in Africa and in Europe. Nearly fifty Catholic Religious or Missionary Institutes present in Africa and Europe are AEFJN members. The Contact Person represents the congregation at annual AEFJN General Assembly.

2. Why did the Generalate renew our membership - could it bring us something good?

There many SVD confreres being active in the national antennae, especially in Holland, Portugal and Ireland. They feel that they can do much good for the African continent by being active in bringing the issues of African people to the attention of those who have power and possibilities to be of help. Unfortunately, still more of our confreres should be involved in this ministry in Europe. One of the reasons is it is not known enough among our members.

3. What do you expect us to do as provinces, as a Zone?

Since the *raison d'être* of the AEFJN existence is help to and solidarity with Africa, it is necessary, first, that our confreres in Africa become interested in it and, second, that they use it. Perhaps one of the best ways how to start is visiting the AEFJN webpage (www.aefjn.org) where everything could be found, but also establishing contacts with the International Secretariat of AEFJN in Brussels and with some of national AEFJN antennae in Europe.

We thank Fr. Milan for the precious information and for the answers to our questions. I hope that each one of us pay a visit to the AEFJN website or ask a confrere to pay more attention to it and be involved.

May this time of Lent draw us nearer to Jesus and to the Father. May the Holy Spirit guide us as we walk in the deserts of our lives.

Fraternally yours in the Divine Word,
P. Xene A. Sanchez, SVD
AZC