



**Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)  
- Leuenberg Church Fellowship -**

## **New World Reformed Communion: An Important Step for Church Unity**

**CPCE congratulates Jerry Pillay, the first President of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, WCRC. WCRC shares the theological conception of CPCE, says President Thomas Wipf.**

The President of CPCE, the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, Revd Thomas Wipf, offers congratulations today to the first President of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, Jerry Pillay, on his election. The WCRC came into being last Friday through the merger of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Reformed Ecumenical Council, and includes 227 churches with 800 million Christians in 108 countries.

"The new World Communion of Reformed Churches is an important step for the unity of the church", said Wipf. Its forerunner organizations had succeeded in uniting in a communion in spite of different theological conceptions. This fundamental conviction also carries the Leuenberg Agreement, the founding document of the CPCE.

The World Communion of Reformed Churches now stands before the task of filling the unity begun in Grand Rapids with life. The elected WCRC President and General Secretary of the United Presbyterian Church in South Africa, Jerry Pillay, has in the European perspective a "profiled team of experienced ecumenists" at his side, said Wipf. These include the Dutch Vice President Bas Plasier as well as the Executive Committee and CPCE council member Peter Bukowski (Germany), the Executive Committee member Cheryl Meban (Ireland) and the new Treasurer Gottfried Locher (Switzerland).

CPCE wishes to remain a reliable partner of the Reformed on the European level, added CPCE Secretary Michael Bünker. Good working contact had already been established with the European Area of the World Reformed Alliance. The churches in CPCE find themselves in "highly various situations between large state churches and tiny minority churches", said Bünker. "We are glad to share our experience of almost forty years of living together with different realities and confessions."

*Note: The General Assembly of the World Communion of Reformed Churches takes place from 18th to 28th June 2010 in Grand Rapids (USA). All information under [www.reformedchurches.org](http://www.reformedchurches.org)*

*Grand Rapids/Vienna/Berne, 24th June 2010*

*Contact*

*Thomas Flügge (press spokesperson)*

*Tel. +41 (0)79 640 1902, [t.fluegge@leuenberg.eu](mailto:t.fluegge@leuenberg.eu)*

\*\*\*

At present 105 Protestant churches in Europe (including five South-American churches originating from Europe ) belong to the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE). Lutheran, Reformed, United and Methodist along with pre-Reformation churches such as Hussites and Czech Brethren grant each other pulpit and table fellowship on the basis of the Leuenberg Agreement of 1973. The Secretariat is housed in the Severin-Schreiber-Gasse 3, A-1180 Vienna, office@leuenberg.eu, tel. +43.1.4791523.900, fax .110 The CPCE press officer is Dipl.theol. Thomas Flügge (Bern), tel. +41.31.3702502, t.fluegge@leuenberg.eu.