

**Statement
made by the participants of
Edinburgh 2010 Study Process for ASEAN & Sri Lanka
held at Seminari Theoloji Malaysia, Seremban, Malaysia
on 8-11 June, 2009**

The purpose of this document is to share the consensus reached and concerns raised arising out of our corporate reflections on the theme, "Mission as Reconciliation in Pluralistic Contexts." We hope that our efforts will contribute to Edinburgh 2010 and the global church.

1. Context

We acknowledge the unique differences arising out of our respective social locations, histories and experiences in Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Singapore, as well as friends from Germany, New Zealand the United States, and the United Kingdom.

At the same time we recognize there are common themes that draw us together. They include cultural plurality, religious extremism, and socio-political conflict. The degree of engagement and level of intensity in these areas varies among us and involves a complexity, both local and global, that needs to be addressed.

2. The Gospel of Reconciliation

We affirm all the major world faiths make universal truth claims that cannot be confined to a private "religious" realm without serious distortion. Reconciliation does not require the surrender of these claims, or their demotion to the status of mere 'opinions'.

Our understanding of the Gospel impacts the way we understand and carry out God's Mission. In the light of the study process, we affirm Mission as Reconciliation involves both vertical and horizontal dimensions. Reconciliation between God and humanity through Christ is inseparable from the work of reconciliation between fellow human beings and the whole of creation.

A Biblical theology of Reconciliation flows out of the gracious initiative of God. It grows out of the incarnation of God in Christ, Christ's work on the cross. This Gospel is made possible through the redemptive suffering of Christ and his resurrection. We believe that in the forgiveness extended in Jesus the Messiah crucified, we are invited into the forgiveness, reconciliation and peace of God. Our mission therefore needs to embrace the vulnerability and humility that Jesus displayed through his life, and death on the cross. This mission is empowered by the risen Christ through the Holy Spirit who leads his Church into situations of suffering and conflict as an agent of his peace.

3. The Church

We humbly confess that we are often the biggest stumbling block to people seeing the gospel of reconciliation, through our own lack of reconciliation within the Church. We confess the sins of the Church which include, denominational rivalry, divisions, and the use of manipulative methods of evangelism. We also confess our sins of prejudice towards people of other cultures and faiths, and the failure to speak up for the human rights of others, and to defend them and their communities when they have suffered wrong.

As recipients of the gospel of reconciliation, we recognize our own need for continual self-examination, confession, repentance and renewal within the Church in order to be credible witnesses to the transforming work of the Triune God.

In spite of our weaknesses and sins, we rejoice in God's grace working through us as his instruments of reconciliation. We share stories of encouragement as well as of struggles, and we are in solidarity with one another. We also learn from each other the need to embody reconciliation as a lifestyle.

4. The World

We affirm our calling to bring the good news of reconciliation to the world, and to do so through cultivating genuine relationships of trust and respect. We affirm the need for genuine dialogue and partnership with others, while commending the Good News of Christ. This involves an openness to listen to and learn from others.

We affirm the need to accept religious differences with maturity, which means that while we share our faith we acknowledge the right of the other to confess and commend their beliefs.

We acknowledge that reconciliation is costly. We need to be ready for suffering and still persevere. We realize that some communities will still choose to be alienated despite efforts of reconciliation being made by us. We, therefore, need to live with this tension until the final coming of God's kingdom.

Closing

Reconciliation is possible because of what God has done through Christ. The reality of his presence has been experienced in the here and now in the midst of conflict situations.

Indeed, it is our prayer and vision to see that "the whole church brings the whole Gospel for the whole person to the whole world in holistic ways with holistic motives" so that God's reign of peace, love, justice, light and joy will come upon the earth.

We believe Christ will bring the final fulfillment of his promise of the reconciliation of all creation when he comes again in glory!