

# **CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY**

**for the International Conference of Reformed Churches  
held in the Refajah Church at Groningen, The Netherlands,  
from October 26 to November 4, 1982**

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## **Prayer Meeting**

On the evening prior to the Constituent Assembly a prayer meeting was held for the delegates to the Assembly and their guests in the Refajah Church.

The Rev. G. van Rongen of The Netherlands. read from the Scriptures Psalm 46 and Matthew 28:16-20. A meditation was held by the Rev. K. Brüning of Australia on Hebrews 13:8, and the Rev. D.W.H. Thomas of Northern Ireland led in prayer. From the *Book of Praise* of the Canadian Reformed Churches the following Psalms were sung: Psalm 124; 46:1,2,5; 103:4,5,7,18; 84:1,3,4,6.

# **PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES**

**Tuesday, October 26, 1982**

## **ARTICLE 1 OPENING AND ADDRESS**

On behalf of the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands, the Rev. G. van Rongen of The Netherlands opens the meeting and reads from the Scriptures Psalm 120 and Psalm 133. He asks the meeting to sing Psalm 133, and leads in prayer.

In his opening address he welcomes especially the brethren who have been delegated by their Churches to attend this Constituent Assembly. He then shows that the Churches are "in line with history" when on the basis of the Holy Scriptures and in accordance with the Reformed confessions they seek the unity of the faith and the fellowship in the Lord by means of a council or conference. He emphasizes that while the Churches which are represented here today may have adopted either the Westminster Standards or the Three Forms of Unity, they are on common ground. Both the Three Forms of Unity and the Westminster Standards submit unconditionally to the Lord as He has revealed

Himself in the Scriptures. The speaker expresses the hope that the Conference may be a blessing for the Churches of our Lord Jesus Christ in this world.

## **ARTICLE 2 MODERAMEN**

The Rev. G. van Rongen informs the meeting that the Dutch Committee. on Relations with Churches Abroad proposes that for this Conference the Moderamen<sup>1</sup> be as follows:

Chairman: Rev. G. van Rongen of The Netherlands;

Assessor: Rev. K. Brüning of Australia;

Clerk: Rev. M. van Beveren of Canada

The proposal is adopted.

## **ARTICLE 3 TIME SCHEDULE AND RULES FOR THE PRESS**

Upon the proposal of the Moderamen the following time schedule is adopted:

Morning sessions: 9.00 - 12.30

Afternoon sessions: 2.00 - 5.30

Evening sessions: 7.00 - 9.30

Some rules for the Press are adopted.

## **ARTICLE 4 INTRODUCING THE PARTICIPATING CHURCHES**

The delegates receive the opportunity to provide verbal information on the Churches that have sent them to the Assembly.

The following Churches are represented:

the Canadian Reformed Churches by Rev. M. van Beveren and Rev. J. Visscher  
the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland by Rev. D.W.H. Thomas  
the Free Church of Scotland by Rev. D. Lamont and Rev. J.N. Macleod  
the Free Reformed Churches of Australia by Rev. K. Brüning and Dr. S.G. Hur  
the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa: by Rev. K.J. Kapteyn and Elder  
J. Moes

the Presbyterian Church in Korea by Dr. K.S. Lee

the Reformed Churches on East-Sumba/Savu by Rev. J. Klamer and Rev. C. van  
Kalkeren

the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Taiwan, S.P. by Rev. J.Y. Lin

the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands by Dr. K. Deddens and Rev. G. van  
Rongen

The Dutch Reformed Church of Sri Lanka was not able to send a delegate.

The Rev. Thomas requests the prayer of the Conference for his brethren and countrymen in Northern Ireland as they are plagued by turmoil and violence.

## **ARTICLE 5 PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION ON DRAFT CONSTITUTION AND REGULATIONS**

The Draft Constitution and Draft Regulations as submitted by the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands are briefly discussed.

The delegates of the Canadian Reformed Churches submit a more detailed draft for discussion.

The discussion will be continued.

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<sup>1</sup> Editor: A Dutchism for Executive.

**ARTICLE 6 ADDRESS DR. L. DOEKES**

Dr. L. Doekes, professor at the Theological Seminary at Kampen, invited by the Dutch Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad as a guest speaker, addresses the meeting on "Harmony and Variety in Reformed Confessions".

**ARTICLE 7 BASIS OF THE CONSTITUENT CONFERENCE**

It is decided that the basis of the Conference is the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of Dort and the Westminster Confession of Faith.

**ARTICLE 8 ADJOURNMENT**

After prayer by the Rev. D. Lamont the meeting is adjourned till Wednesday morning.

## **Wednesday, October 27, 1982**

**ARTICLE 9 OPENING SECOND SESSION**

The Chairman calls the meeting to order and requests the delegates to sing Psalm 3:1 and 2. He reads from the Scriptures 2 Timothy 2:1-13 and leads in prayer.

**ARTICLE 10 APPOINTMENT COMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION**

After some discussion on the Draft Constitution and Regulations as presented by the Dutch Reformed Churches, it is decided to appoint the Revs. J.N. Macleod, D.W.H. Thomas and J. Visscher to make a new proposal for a Constitution.

The plenary session is adjourned till the brethren will be able to submit a proposal.

**ARTICLE 11 DISCUSSION NEW DRAFT CONSTITUTION AND REGULATIONS**

In the evening session the Committee appointed for that purpose presents a new Draft Constitution and new Draft Regulations.

**ARTICLE 12 ADOPTION ARTICLES I AND II OF THE CONSTITUTION**

The Articles I and II of the Draft Constitution are adopted.

The Chairman notes with thankfulness that the Conference could make the first and fundamental steps for the adoption of a Constitution.

**ARTICLE 13 ADJOURNMENT**

The Chairman requests the delegates to sing Psalm 56:3,4 and 5. The Rev. M. van Beveren leads in thanksgiving and prayer.

The meeting is adjourned till tomorrow morning 9.00 o'clock.

## **Thursday, October 28, 1982**

### **ARTICLE 14 OPENING THIRD SESSION**

At 9.00 a.m. the Chairman calls the meeting to order and requests the delegates to sing Psalm 3:3 and 4. He reads from the Scriptures 2 Timothy 3 and leads in prayer.

### **ARTICLE 15 ADOPTION ARTICLES III - VI OF THE CONSTITUTION**

The meeting adopts the Articles III, IV, V and VI of the Draft Constitution as submitted by the Committee *ad hoc*.

The Chairman expresses the thankfulness of the meeting for the fact that this Constituent Assembly was able to reach its goal of adopting a Constitution for the International Conference of Reformed Churches.

### **ARTICLE 16 ADOPTION ARTICLE I OF THE REGULATIONS**

The meeting adopts Article I of the Regulations

### **ARTICLE 17 ADJOURNMENT**

Since the delegates have been invited to visit the premises of the Theological Seminary of the Dutch Reformed Churches at Kampen this afternoon and evening, there will be no further sessions today.

After the singing of Psalm 72:1-8, the Rev. K. Brüning leads in thanksgiving and prayer.

The Chairman adjourns the meeting till Friday morning.

## **Friday, October 29, 1982**

### **ARTICLE 18 OPENING FOURTH SESSION**

At 9.00 a.m. the Chairman calls the meeting to order and requests the delegates to sing Psalm 123:1 and 2. He reads from the Word of God 2 Timothy 4 and leads in prayer.

### **ARTICLE 19 ADOPTION ARTICLES II, III AND IV OF THE REGULATIONS**

The Articles II, III and IV of the Regulations as proposed by the Committee *ad hoc* and amended by the meeting, are adopted.

### **ARTICLE 20 ADDRESS PROF. D. DEDDENS**

Prof. D. Deddens, professor at the Theological Seminary at Kampen, invited by the Dutch Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad as a guest speaker, receives the opportunity to address the meeting on "The Unity of Faith as Gift and Mandate, and its Significance for having various Forms of Church Government".

### **ARTICLE 21 ADOPTION ARTICLES V - X OF THE REGULATIONS**

The Articles V, VI, VII, VIII, IX and X of the Regulations as proposed by the

Committee *ad hoc* and amended by the meeting, are adopted.

The Chairman expresses the joy and gratitude of the Constituent Assembly for the fact that with joint effort the Regulations could be formulated and adopted.

#### **ARTICLE 22 NEW MANDATE COMMITTEE *AD HOC***

The Committee which served the meeting with a draft Constitution and draft Regulations receives the mandate to draft Interim Rules which are to be in force during the period between this Constituent Assembly and the first meeting of the International Conference.

#### **ARTICLE 23 ADDRESS REV. P. VAN GURP**

The Rev. P. van Gulp, minister in the Dutch Reformed Churches, invited by the Dutch Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad as a guest speaker, addresses the meeting on "The Unity of Faith as Gift and Mandate, and its Significance for the Reflection on Contacts and Rules with other Churches".

#### **ARTICLE 24 ADJOURNMENT**

The Chairman requests the delegates to sing Psalm 23. He leads in thanksgiving and prayer. The meeting stands adjourned till Monday November 1st at 2.00 p.m.

## **Monday, November 1, 1982**

#### **ARTICLE 25 OPENING FIFTH SESSION**

At 2.15 p.m. the Chairman opens the meeting. He requests the delegates to sing Psalm 100 reads Psalm 100, and leads in prayer.

#### **ARTICLE 26 INTERIM RULES ADOPTED**

Interim Rules as proposed by the Committee *ad hoc* and amended by the meeting, are adopted.

#### **ARTICLE 27 ADJOURNMENT**

The Chairman requests the delegates to sing Psalm 34:1-4. The Rev. D. Lamont leads in thanksgiving and prayer.

The meeting stands adjourned till tomorrow morning.

## **Tuesday, November 29, 1982**

#### **ARTICLE 28 OPENING SIXTH SESSION**

The Chairman requests the delegates to sing Psalm 87. He reads from the Scriptures Psalm 87 and leads in prayer.

#### **ARTICLE 29 ADDRESS REV. M.K. DROST**

The Rev. M.K. Drost, lecturer in missiology at the Theological Seminary at Kampen, invited by the Dutch Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad, addresses the

meeting on “Reformed Mission Work in the Eighties”.

### **ARTICLE 30 ADJOURNMENT**

It is announced that tomorrow the delegates will be received by the Mayor of the city of Groningen.

The Chairman speaks words of farewell to the Rev. D.W.H. Thomas, who can no longer attend the Conference.

After the singing of Psalm 1, the Rev. Thomas leads in thanksgiving and prayer.

The meeting is adjourned till Thursday 9.00 a.m.

## **Thursday, November 4, 1982**

### **ARTICLE 31 OPENING SEVENTH SESSION**

The Chairman requests the delegates to sing Psalm 100. He reads from the Scriptures Acts 1:1-11, and leads in prayer.

### **ARTICLE 32 ADOPTION COMMUNIQUE**

A communique to be issued to the press is adopted.

### **ARTICLE 33 APPENDICES TO THE PROCEEDINGS**

It is decided to add the following appendices to the Proceedings:

- Opening Address of the Chairman
- Constitution and Regulations
- Interim Rules
- Communique for the Press
- Closing Address of the Chairman
- List of the various Committees on Relations with Churches Abroad

### **ARTICLE 34 ADOPTION OF THE PROCEEDINGS**

The Proceedings of the Assembly are read and adopted.

### **ARTICLE 36 CLOSING ADDRESS**

The Chairman delivers his Closing Address.

The Assessor thanks the Chairman for the way he has led the Assembly.

The Rev. D. Lamont and Dr. K. Deddens express their gratitude for the rich blessings which were experienced during the days of the Assembly.

### **ARTICLE 36 CLOSING**

The Chairman requests the meeting to sing Psalm 150. He leads in prayer of thanksgiving and closes the Assembly.

NOTE: The Psalms mentioned in the Articles 17, 24, 30, 31 are from the Hymn Book of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland. The other Psalms are from the *Book of Praise* of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

For the Constituent Assembly,  
(M. van Beveren), clerk

## **ADDRESS LIST**

Of Churches participating in the Constituent Assembly for the International Conference of Reformed Churches held at Groningen, The Netherlands, October 26 - November 4, 1982

***Canadian Reformed Churches:***

Rev. J. Visscher,  
18080-57 A Avenue,  
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***Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland:***

Rev. D. W.H. Thomas,  
40 Cairnshill Park,  
Belfast BT8 4RG Northern Ireland

***Free Church of Scotland:***

Prof. C. Graham,  
Principal Clerk of the Assembly,  
15 North Bank Street,  
Edinburgh, Scotland

***Free Reformed Churches of Australia:***

Rev. K. Brüning,  
P.O. Box 12, Armadale 6112,  
Western Australia

***Free Reformed Churches in South Africa:***

Mr. G.de Jong,  
Bloemstraat 7, Boston,  
Bellville 7530, South Africa

***Presbyterian Church in Korea:***

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P.O. Box 190,  
Busan 600, Korea

***Reformed Churches on East-Sumba/Savu:***

***Gereja Gereja Greformeerd, Sumba. Timur-Sabu,***  
d.a. Sdr. P.Hawu, Melolo, Pos, Waingapu,  
Sumba, N.T.T., Indonesia

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***Reformed Churches in The Netherlands:***

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