

African Catholic Parliamentary Liaison Conference 4-6 July 2017

**Hosted by: CPLO Southern African Catholic
Bishops' Conference**

Cape Town, South Africa

Presenters:

**Fr Peter-John Pearson
Adv Mike Pothier**

Conference Organiser & Logistics:

Ms Tonia Wyngaard

Scribe:

Ms Josephine Philemon

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. LISTING OF ACTIVITIES.....	3
1.1 SOUTH AFRICAN CPLO – ADV MIKE POTHIER	3
1.2 LESOTHO CPLO – FR CHARLES MATSOSO	4
1.3 ZAMBIAN CPLO – MR WILBROAD KANGALA.....	4
1.4 ZIMBABWEAN CPLO – FR EDWARD NDETE.....	5
1.5 SOUTH SUDAN CPLO – MR ISAAC KENYI.....	5
1.6 NAMIBIAN CPLO – FR WERNER AFUNDE	6
1.7 IMBISA (INTER-REGIONAL MEETING OF THE BISHOPS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA) JUSTICE & PEACE – FR CLAUDIO DOS REIS	6
1.8 DISCUSSIONS & QUESTIONS.....	7
2. GROUP DISCUSSION ON THE KEY SUCCESSES AND FAILURES	8
2.1 ZAMBIA.....	8
2.2 LESOTHO	8
2.3 NAMIBIA.....	8
2.4 SOUTH SUDAN.....	9
2.5 ZIMBABWE.....	9
3. POLITICAL CONTEXTS:.....	10
3.1 SYSTEMS.....	11
3.2. SITUATION DISCUSSION: What is it about the situation that makes the CPLO’s work more difficult?.....	13
3.3 CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSION.....	14
3.4 CHURCH CONTEXTS DISCUSSION.....	14
4. ORGANISATIONAL NEEDS DISCUSSION	16
4.1 DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONS	16
4.2 FUNDING & SUPPORT	17
4.3 THE WAY FORWARD	18
4.4 STRENGTHENING CPLOs.....	18
4.5 LIST OF FUNDING PARTNERS & OTHER POSSIBLE DONORS.....	20

**AFRICAN CATHOLIC PARLIAMENTARY LIAISON OFFICE (CPLO)
CONFERENCE, 4 – 6 JULY 2017
CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA**

DAY ONE: TUESDAY 4TH JULY 2017

PRESENT:

Bishop Kevin Dowling CSsR, SACBC, South Africa
Fr Peter-John Pearson, CPLO Director, South Africa
Adv Mike Pothier, CPLO Research Co-ordinator, South Africa
Fr Claudio Dos Reis, IMBISA Justice & Peace, Zimbabwe
Fr Edward Ndete, ZCBC Parliamentary Liaison Officer, Zimbabwe
Fr Charles Matsoso, Co-ordinator, Lesotho Catholic Bishops' Conference Parliamentary Office
Fr Werner Afunde, Parliamentary Liaison Officer, Namibian Catholic Bishops' Conference
Mr Isaac Kenyi, Parliamentary Liaison Officer, CPLO South Sudan
Mr Willbroad Kangala, Democracy & Governance Awareness Raising Program Office, Caritas
Zambia

FACILITATOR: Adv Mike Pothier

1. LISTING OF ACTIVITIES

The activities are categorised under three broad headings:

1. Work with Parliament / Ministers;
2. Work with the Church / Updates for Bishops;
3. Work with the public on seminars and lectures.

The question to address at present is: what have the CPLOs in the various countries achieved?

1.1 SOUTH AFRICAN CPLO – ADV MIKE POTHIER

The South African CPLO office started in 1997, and has been in operation for 20 years. The office has:

- Made about 100 submissions to Parliament / government departments / Law Reform Commission / in meeting with Ministers;
- Produced 434 Briefing Papers, which are the main mechanism to keep in touch with the Church;
- Written 35 Occasional Papers, and is publishing an average of 8-10 Responses annually;
- Produced Digests on a range of topics not covered in Briefing Papers;
- Organised an average of 15-20 Roundtable Discussions and Seminars per year.

1.2 LESOTHO CPLO – FR CHARLES MATSOSO

The Lesotho CPLO was established within the Justice and Peace Commission in 2009, and has been in operation for 8 years. It is trying to bridge the gap between the Church and Government. However, it should be noted that the Lesotho government has not been stable since late 2010, with the instability impacting on the Lesotho CPLO's ability to run smoothly. The Lesotho CPLO reports to the Lesotho Bishops Conference.

- The Lesotho CPLO has made four submissions to government, which mostly focused on controversial land issues, especially land which belongs to the Chiefs. In 2010 the land portfolio was removed from chiefs and allocated to municipal councillors. The Church owns huge amounts of land. Land submissions were accepted by the then-government regime.
- Religious schools are also affected by land issues. This issue is especially important in relation to the impact of education on our society, as the Church schools produce better results than government schools.
- The Lesotho CPLO made an input into the Schools Bill, submissions to the SADC Commission of Enquiry, as well as input on the development of the Elections Law.
- The office organised a Lenten and Christmas Mass for Lesotho Parliamentarians. It also provided training to Justice and Peace (J&P) members.
- The office organises one round-table discussion per semester, one for religious and one for the general citizens.
- Office-holders regularly speak on radio on issues affecting the Church and communities, and specifically focus on Catholic Social Teaching. They have also hosted discussions with government officials and Parliamentarians, which included interviewing the former Prime Minister.

1.3 ZAMBIAN CPLO – MR WILBROAD KANGALA

The Zambian CPLO started in 2002, and has made more than 50 submissions to Parliament on many controversial issues that affect our society. Briefing Papers are prominent on land issues, and provide detailed 'state of the nation' analysis.

The office organises Roundtable Discussions and works with Caritas Zambia. It reports to the Secretary General of the Bishops Conference, who reports to the Bishops.

The office has:

- Published 60 Briefing Papers and presented Roundtable Discussions at Diocesan and national level under its governance programme;
- Participated at Catholic Bishops' Conference level on different structures and ecumenically;
- Developed a scorecard on parliamentarians' performances;

The office is looking at establishing CPLO offices in each constituency in Zambia. CPLO staff engage in one-on-one interactions with parliamentarians, and most of the submissions presented to parliament are taken into consideration when decisions are made on legislation.

1.4 ZIMBABWEAN CPLO – FR EDWARD NDETE

The Zimbabwean CPLO started in 2006, and is managed by a legal practitioner who is responsible for legal advice at Bishops Conference-level and manages the legal advice office too.

The office attends to legal issues and participated in writing the new national Constitution. In May 2013, the organisation aligned about 400 laws to the new Zimbabwean Constitution. They also audited laws that are not aligned to the new Zimbabwean Constitution.

They celebrate 12 Masses per year for Parliamentarians on the last Wednesday of the month. The Zimbabwean CPLO also has three meetings for Catholic Members of Parliament (MPs). MPs are invited to strategic meetings CPLO meetings.

The CPLO participated in the document "*The Zimbabwe We Want*," which is the guiding vision the new Constitution aims to fulfil. In June 2017, the Church completed the translation of this document into 5 out of the 16 languages spoken in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean CPLO also drafted a memorandum of understanding with the Zimbabwean government to adopt the translations and make use of them throughout the country.

The Zimbabwean CPLO is involved with the International Catholic Legislators Network, (ICLN). It has worked with many MPs on transformative politics from a Catholic perspective, and is spearheading an international gathering of MPs in Rome from 23 August 2017, where they will gather as the Universal Church, addressing issues from an African perspective.

Zimbabwe has 210 constituencies and 60 women MPs, all of whom benefit from the CPLO's legal advice and counselling. The office has worked with many of the MPs, with the objective of facilitating a mind-shift on issues of agriculture and land distribution.

1.5 SOUTH SUDAN CPLO – MR ISAAC KENYI

The South Sudan CPLO was launched in 2014, with a clear mandate to follow up on the peace process. As part of this work, it prepared Briefing Papers on all the processes relating to peace.

In 2015, an agreement was signed for the CPLO to do follow-up on work on the Constitution Amendment Bill, and to draft a new Bill that conforms with the terms of the peace agreement. The office follows up on all Bills in the National Assembly. The Church was critical about the South Sudan Media Act, and the CPLO was particularly influential in amending the Media Act to secure the autonomy of the media.

South Sudan has a parliamentary prayer group and the CPLO works closely with them. The office has planned training for MPs for the 15 – 16 July 2017 by Justice Africa, which will be facilitated by the CPLO.

The current situation in the country is dire. South Sudan has over 1 million refugees in Uganda and 2 million in protection camps within the country. The civil war makes the work of CPLO more difficult, but not impossible. Many civil society activists have fled the country, but the CPLO, and other staff of the Bishops' Conference, have remained.

1.6 NAMIBIAN CPLO – FR WERNER AFUNDE

The CPLO of the Namibian Catholic Bishops' Conference started in 2009, and serves as a bridge between the Church and State. The Office enables the Church to be a partner with democratic forces whose framework coincides with Catholic Social Teaching.

- The CPLO reports twice a year to the Namibian Catholic Bishops' Conference. It does submissions to Parliament, and has established a CPLO Advisory Committee. The latter consists of members with specific expertise to support the Office. The committee deliberates on societal issues and drafts documents for Bishops' Conference on their issues of expertise;
- The CPLO assisted in the drafting of the Conference Pastoral letter on the elections;
- The office made a submission on the 2016 teachers' strike, which was positively received;
- The CPLO enabled Catholic MPs to participate in the address of the Apostolic Nuncio;
- The office had three round-table discussions in Lent, and organised the annual Mass for MPs and ministers, which took place earlier this year, held annually at different parishes;
- The Namibian Prime Minister, who is himself a Catholic, called on all Catholic MPs and Ministers to contribute R1000 to the CPLO, and there has been a good response.
- Father Werner addressed the CPLO African Conference to help set out the Namibian terms of reference on establishing a working committee to assist the office. The terms of reference will be on a memory stick distributed with the rest of the papers for each delegate;

1.7 IMBISA (INTER-REGIONAL MEETING OF BISHOPS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA) – FR CLAUDIO DOS REIS

Representatives from Mozambique and Angola attended training in 2012, and a Bishop was part of the delegation to establish CPLOs in the latter countries. However, there has been no progress in setting up those CPLOs.

Mozambique again requested the Standing Committee to explain to them how a CPLO is set up and run. However, those in authority did not respond to the request.

The Southern African countries without CPLOs are Mozambique, Angola, Botswana and Swaziland.

Swaziland is linked to Caritas, and works in conjunction with the Swaziland Coalition of Concerned Civic Organisations (SCCCO). They have contributed towards submissions in conjunction with the SCCC.

80% of the Angolan and 75% of the Mozambique populations are Catholic. The Mozambican Speaker of Parliament is also Catholic.

A short account of countries with CPLOs that were not present at the meeting:

- The CPLO in Kenya has been in operation for 10 years and has a strong track-record. It operates within the Justice and Peace Commission;

- The Uganda CPLO has been in operation for 6 years; it is also located within Justice and Peace.
- The CPLO in Liberia was set up in 2016, and the co-ordinator, Allison Pindarous, came to CPLO South Africa for training in that year.
- The CPLO in the DRC, led by Father Jean-Pierre Muhingisa, has begun to hold roundtable discussions, some of which have been very well attended by politicians. It has a strong regional component, and co-operates with Justice and Peace structures in the various provinces of the DRC.
- The CPLO in Malawi is led by Father Henry Chinkanda, who attended the CPLO training in Cape Town in 2011.
- The CPLOs in Ghana and Nigeria collapsed, but the Nigerian office has been restarted under the auspices of Caritas Nigeria. Two of its staff came to Cape Town for training in January 2017.

1.8 DISCUSSIONS & QUESTIONS

Bishop Kevin Dowling was asked to speak to the Bishop in Botswana about forming a CPLO there. (The Bishop of Gaborone has since resigned, so it is unlikely that there will be much progress in this regard for some time.)

SECAM (Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar)

SECAM has asked all African Bishops' Conferences to try to influence African leadership at the African Union (AU) level. It was noted that the voice of the Church is not fruitfully utilised at the AU level, and that there are two representatives from the Church at the African Union whose purpose is to do advocacy (one is from SECAM and the second from the All-Africa Council of Churches) who need to assist and lobby Heads of State.

Bishop Kevin Dowling asked for clarity on the SECAM representative's mandate at the AU - can an answer be sought from the SECAM secretariat?

2. GROUP DISCUSSION ON THE KEY SUCCESSES AND FAILURES

Participants were asked to highlight the key successes and failures of the CPLO in their respective countries. Members were asked to paint a picture of how the work is going in general terms. What were the greatest successes, the impact and the challenges /opportunities / support levels that were available or needed?

2.1 ZAMBIA

The CPLO in Zambia has continued with a new opportunity of collaboration with Justice and Peace to influence the National Assembly. Their effective engagement and dialogue resulted in policy influence, which has in turn led to government making informed decisions on the elections and the budget.

The challenges the CPLO in Zambia faces include access to funding, and the fact that the ruling party expects the Church to take sides in disputes among political parties.

2.2 LESOTHO

Lesotho is a predominantly Catholic country. It is also a Constitutional Monarchy.

The CPLO holds discussions with Members of Parliament, and the Church is listened to and, overall, government respects the Church's input. Lesotho has an upper and lower house and the chiefs are mostly Catholic.

The challenges of the Lesotho CPLO include a lack of funding, which hinders it from working on programmes.

The country has also had three different government regimes in five years, and this instability has resulted in the CPLO periodically needing to build relationships with new representatives in government.

Some government officials have the perception that the Church takes sides when there are disputes among political parties, while others even see the Church as hostile to their side.

2.3 NAMIBIA

One of the major challenges that the Namibian CPLO faces is an inability to undertake advocacy work due to a lack of staff. The challenges are highlighted by a lack of responses from government when the CPLO petitions government, or MPs fail to show up at CPLO-hosted functions. This is also shown by Bills in Parliament not being made available to the Church for review and comment, and Bishops are left out of the discussions and not granted the opportunity to comment on such Bills.

The Church used to have a more collaborative relationship with the Namibian government, as compared to the present relationship with government structures. When the Church needs to be critical, it is perceived as being hostile towards government, not as a trusted stakeholder

with a vested interest in the proceedings. Thus, the Church has become wary of being too outspoken for fear of upsetting the relationship between the Church and the State.

Opportunities: The concept of the CPLO presents an opportunity to make the Church visible within government and society, especially in view of the fact that many citizens of Namibia are Catholic.

Successes: The CPLO has hosted many successful round-table discussions. It also has an Advisory Board made up of members who can offer a variety of expertise. Board members also underwent training.

Comment: The Church must register with the State as a stakeholder so that it automatically has access to Bills when the Bills are being distributed to stakeholders for review before discussions get underway.

2.4 SOUTH SUDAN

Challenges: One of the major challenges that the CPLO in South Sudan faces is the presence of war and the need to work towards a peace process in the region. Also, the Evangelical Churches divide the voice of the Ecumenical Churches. For example, when the Catholic Church speaks out against evil, government perceives the Church to be against it, casting itself in the role of those the church is preaching against.

A lack of funding is a challenge for the CPLO in the country. This affects the Church's efforts to work for peace and its advocacy work, which requires movement and different approaches.

Opportunities: The Church has good structures at an international level, which the government fears. This gives the Church a strong position in the country, so that government officials are forced to show caution in their interactions with the Church.

Key successes: Citizens have a strong confidence and belief in the Church. Individual government officials have previously said the Church gives them hope. The Church speaks the truth and makes use of pastoral statements.

Comment: When the Church became critical of government in South Sudan, the relationship between the Church and Government became 'lukewarm'.

2.5 ZIMBABWE

Successes: There is a healthy relationship between the Church and State. The CPLO is still in operation after 20 years and the office is respected by all political parties.

The CPLO faces a lack of resources, which includes funding and personnel. These impact on the activities that it can undertake.

Failure: The CPLO does not always know how to identify Catholic MPs. The parishes are not aware if some of their members are MPs or not.

Challenges: The polarisation in Churches in Zimbabwe filters through to the Bishops' Conference, affecting the structure's ability to work together through consensus. Also, following up on tasks is very difficult for the Church.

The Zimbabwe CPLO faces the challenge of a lack of funding. This means that the scope of its programme of activities might be reduced due to a lack of sustainability.

Opportunities: People understand how the Church works and they depend on the teaching of the Church. Many Zimbabwean people now do research on the teachings of the Church and follow those teachings. There is also an opportunity to build relationships with Zimbabwean MPs. A lunch, scheduled for the 7/8th July 2017, could be used as an opportunity to get to know the Parliamentarians.

WEDNESDAY 5TH JULY 2017

3. POLITICAL & CHURCH CONTEXTS:

Understanding how each country's political system and current political situation affects CPLO work.

Points to consider:

Different Electoral Systems: South Africa has a pure Proportional Representation (PR) system; Zimbabwe and Zambia have strong Constituency Systems; Lesotho has a Constitutional Monarchy; and The Democratic Republic of Congo has a Presidential System.

Mike Pothier opened the session stating that the political situations in most of the countries are stable and peaceful, but some, like South Sudan, are not. The Constitutional contexts were also part of the politics and were important. Some Constitutions lay down that their country's legislatures and assemblies must be open to the public and civil society, while others do not do so.

Delegates then divided into groups to discuss these issues. The aim of the exercise was to describe the political context of the various countries so others could understand it; to explain the political factors that were favourable to CPLOs in the various countries; and to explain the factors that made it difficult for CPLOs to function. The discussion also aimed to bring out the most significant points that were supportive of and opposed to CPLO work in the political system and the political situation of the different countries.

The report-back was divided under three headings:

1. **Systems:** This includes elections, parliamentary systems, and how parliament relates to the presidency and the executive; whether that system is good or bad; and why it is so.

2. **The situation:** How the systems are affected by corruption, civil war, or a government that is non-responsive to input from others and in its engagements with civil society.

3. **The Constitution:** Some countries are embarking on new Constitutions while some have well-established Constitutions, which may or may not be favourable to CPLO work.

Report-back on political contexts:

3.1 SYSTEMS

3.1.1 Lesotho: Has 80 constituencies, operating under a mixed-member constituency system. The problems with this system include that bigger parties with a greater number of votes are negatively affected when smaller parties form coalitions. The bigger parties' representation decreases and they find themselves outside government. Lesotho is presently undergoing Constitutional reforms.

Situation: Lesotho has a new government and Father Charles Matsoso has observed that people are very happy that Prime Minister Mosisili, who has been serving for 21 years, lost the elections. There was a motion of no confidence against Prime Minister Mosisili. However, according to the Lesotho Constitution, he had the right to ask the King for new elections. The elections took place and he lost.

Comments: The problem with a pure PR system, as seen in South Africa, is that individual MPs are not linked to an actual constituency where they should explain themselves to actual voters they represent. Their allegiance is to their party, not to their constituency.

In a Constituency system, the one who wins the constituency goes to Parliament, then the votes are counted for a second time to award votes to Parties, who gain the relevant number of MPs through their representation of voters.

Some countries have a mixture between the Constituency and PR systems, and in some countries, it is an either-or scenario.

Countries that operate on both systems, like Lesotho, are considered to have hybrid systems, which include "First Past the Post," where constituency votes are first counted (even if there is a difference of only one), and all the votes are then combined to award seats to a political party based on the total number of votes it received. The latter was described as a very good system.

In comparison, the extreme of a pure Constituency system or a pure PR system both have big disadvantages.

A delegate argued that despite the hybrid system being described as the best model, he has experienced that the problem comes when smaller parties have seats in Parliament and partner with another party which, for example, gained 40% of the vote, and form a coalition. Then the party which, for example, gained 45% of the votes, finds itself excluded from government, even though it won more votes individually than other parties.

The facilitator asked what is it about the countries' individual systems that make CPLOs work easier or more difficult and how does it help or hinder CPLO work?

3.1.2 Zambia: Mr Kangala reported that Zambia has a pure constituency system, and suggested that a PR system would be more advantageous. He explained that there is a provision in the Zambian Constitution which states "when Parliament is dissolved the President still remains in power as the President". If the President dies, the Cabinet does not convene.

In a PR system, MPs are not as directly accountable to the electorate as they are in a constituency system. In Zambia there is a close link between the National Assembly and the various constituencies, and each MP is given an state-funded constituency office to operate from.

Zambians have experienced a situation when the President died and the person who took over as acting President then became the new President. The delegate raised the following questions: Which Cabinet sits? In the absence of a cabinet, as it has been constitutionally dissolved, who is going to rule the country? The delegate felt that the President had too much executive power, but reported none the less that the system is working well enough.

The facilitator reported on his experience when he visited the Zambian CPLO, and recalled a discussion he had about the importance of the role of the National Assembly staff who work in constituency offices. He was informed that constituency officers are Parliamentary workers, that they do not work for political parties, and can therefore respond to requests and demands in a neutral, non-partisan way. This system impressed the facilitator and he remarked that this is what is lacking in South Africa.

He further explained that, in comparison, the ANC and DA appoint their own MPs, who have constituencies, but these are not official constituencies, they are unofficial and are organised by the parties. In some instances, MPs spend a lot of time in those areas and try to help people, but in others MPs do not offer any assistance and are seldom to be found in their constituency offices.

3.1.3 South Sudan: South Sudan has a Presidential system and, while there are a number of political parties, one of them – the Sudan People's Liberation Movement – accounts for almost 90% of the vote. MPs are loyal to the party, not the electorate.

Question: What about the CPLO staff member interactions with Parliament?

Response: MPs, although controlled by one system, only show respect to the Church. Mr Kenyi reported that when he attends Parliament he has found that MPs listen to him, more so than to any civil society group. This is helpful and makes it easier to mobilise MPs.

3.1.4 Namibia: Namibia has a PR system consisting of a National Council of Regions (totalling 120 regions), and The National Assembly totalling 96. SWAPO, which has governed since independence in 1990, won the most recent elections with about 90%. The country has a two-chamber system, with geographical representation in the National Council of Regions.

Mike Pothier commented that the Namibian scenario raises a systematic question. Both Namibia and Sudan have 90% of the Assembly coming from one party, which gives a different dynamic to Parliament, compared to a situation where, for example, one party has 45%, another 40%, and a third has 15%, resulting in a real battle for control, whereas in the former there is no such thing.

3.1.5 Zimbabwe: Zimbabwe has a hybrid system, consisting of both Constituency and PR elements. The delegate explained that MPs of the ruling party are normally nominated directly by the President. There are two constituencies that have independent MPs.

The delegate explained that the hybrid system means the MPs must listen to their party and their constituency, and attempt to balance the interests of both stakeholders. It also means political parties can recall their MPs and fire them, although the MPs are voted for directly.

The facilitator asked if this hybrid system is favourable for CPLOs or civil society work. Fr Edward Ndetete reported that the system is very favourable for the CPLO because the more votes a political party has the more MPs that party gains, and no votes are thrown out because every vote counts. Therefore he felt that it made the work of the CPLO easier. It is no longer a complete PR system, and it also meant that the people in the constituency made decisions on issues. The MPs, similarly had two roles: answering to their constituency, and to their political party.

Father Ndetete further reported that the political party can also recall MPs if they lose their constituency. However, a by-election must take place, and he reported that this is an advantage for the CPLO.

3.1.6 Mozambique: Fr Claudio dos Reis reported that he was not sure about the type of system in place in Mozambique and whether it is a hybrid system, because it is confusing. Fr Edward Ndetete commented that Mozambique has constituencies and that MPs are voted in, but no political party can recall MPs.

3.2. SITUATION DISCUSSION: What is it about the situation that makes the CPLO's work more difficult?

3.2.1 Zimbabwe: The polarisation of political parties has made the work of the CPLO in Zimbabwe very difficult. The inter- and intra-party violence, that is, violence between and within political parties, also made CPLO's work difficult. Fr Ndetete reported that poverty is linked to corruption, and this means they have a few extremely rich people, but that 99% were poor; and the country had no pro-poor policies.

3.2.2 Zambia: The political instability in Zambia dates to the 2016 elections, when the opposition did not accept the outcome of the vote. The opposition party contested the elections, but this was dismissed by the Constitutional Court and High Court. The Speaker also suspended 47 opposition MPs, accounting for a third of the MPs in Zambia, which created further tension. Fifteen Bills are currently under discussion in the absence of most of the opposition party MPs, which makes the CPLO's work more difficult.

Delegates agreed that Speakers have enormous power in terms of suspending MPs, how they allow votes, and how they allow questions to ministers. Participants agreed that Speakers are meant to be neutral. Mike Pothier suggested that the system of the Speaker in the House of Commons in Britain is one of the best, because the person is elected and remains Speaker until the person retires, resigns, or there is a move undertaken to replace the Speaker. To preserve the neutrality of the Speaker, no-one stands against the Speaker in their constituency whenever there is an election. Often the Speaker is not from the ruling or majority party.

The Facilitator suggested that this system should be adopted in South Africa, because the current Speaker is also the chairperson of the ruling party and she must pretend to be neutral, which is not possible. Fr Ndete commented that Zimbabwe made history once when the ruling party elected an opposition MP as Speaker, who served for a five-year term.

3.3 CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS

3.3.1 Zimbabwe: Fr Ndete highlighted that Zimbabwe's new, more progressive Constitution, which was enacted in 2013, makes the work of the CPLO in that country very easy. Portfolio Committee meetings are open to the CPLO, except for Intelligence and Defence. Judges are appointed after public hearings, where it is easy to interact, and are scrutinised by the public.

3.3.2 Namibia: Fr Afunde reported that Namibia has a participatory democracy and the public has access to the National Assembly. Standing Committees are also open to the public. The whipping system, whereby a chief whip is appointed by each party in Parliament to help organise their party's contribution to parliamentary affairs, works well.

3.3.3 South Sudan: Mr Kenyi reported on the polarisation and violence that has blighted politics in South Sudan almost since independence in 2011. South Sudan's transitional Constitutional Agreement was signed in 2015, but it has failed to bring peace and stability. This situation saddens all who have worked for constitutional democracy in the country.

3.3.4 Zambia: Mr Willbroad Kangala reported that Zambia does not have a full Bill of Rights in place. However, as far as the legislature is concerned, the public can attend Parliamentary proceedings but not speak. The country does have public hearings on some legislative and policy matters.

3.4 CHURCH CONTEXT DISCUSSIONS

3.4.1 South Africa: The facilitator commented that both the political and church contexts are important and proceeded with the South Africa report. He reported that 9% of the South African population are Catholics; there are 27 Bishops, some of whom strongly support the CPLO while others appear less interested. The CPLO receives good support from the structures of Bishops' Conference. It has good relations with international partners and associate bodies of the Bishops' Conference. The office receives less than 5% of its financial support from the local church, but it is provided with valuable office space at a very low rate.

3.4.2 Zimbabwe: The country has eight dioceses and seven bishops, and approximately 35% of the population is Catholic. The office has mixed support within the Church, but enjoys

good support from funding partners including Misreor, CAFOD, Trocaire, and Catholic Relief Services. The office has not openly experienced opposition from within the church, as most support is affirming. The office collaborates with the Justice & Peace team of the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference.

3.4.3 Lesotho: Lesotho has four dioceses, and 80% of the population is Catholic. The four Bishops meet together regularly. The CPLO desk is based within the Justice & Peace office. Fr Matsoso reported that the CPLO has a good relationship with Justice & Peace office; it collaborates on submissions and engages with the Justice & Peace research desk. Catholic Relief Services is their only donor. Father Matsoso is generally accompanied by one of the Bishops to make submissions at Parliament.

3.4.4 Namibia: Namibia has three Bishops, and Catholics account for 25% of the population. The office receives 100% of its support from the Namibian Bishops' Conference, which has also provided it with office space. The office has an annual meeting to discuss programmes, and organisations involved are the Social Commission; the Justice & Peace Commission; and the Catholic Health, Education, Caritas and Media offices.

The CPLO also has an advisory committee, and enjoys good support from Catholic MPs. It hosted a round-table for the religious congregations in order to raise awareness about its work.

3.4.5 South Sudan: Mr Kenyi reported that South Sudan has seven dioceses and that 70% of the population is Catholic. The CPLO receives strong moral support from the President of the Sudan Catholic Bishops' Conference, but no financial support. Its donors are USAID and Catholic Relief Services.

The CPLO is located within the Justice & Peace Commission, has strong links to the Catholic radio network, and a task-force of professionals from the University of South Sudan and other groups. It has strong ecumenical relationships, and a strong civil society group. The office does joint submissions with other civil society organisations. However, the lack of funding support is a constraint.

3.4.6 Zambia: Mr Kangala reported that Zambia has 11 dioceses, 11 Bishops, and one auxiliary Bishop. He noted that 40% of the Zambian population is Catholic, and that the CPLO enjoys good support in the Church. He does submissions with the Secretary General of the Bishops Conference in Parliament. All dioceses have Catholic radio programmes. Caritas Zambia is the CPLO's co-operating partner. The CPLO is funded by CAFOD, GIZ and USAID Child Protection Fund, but receives no monetary support from the local church.

The CPLO operates under Caritas Zambia, and it has CPLO offices in all 11 dioceses. Some offices are staffed by full-time personnel, while others are staffed by volunteer staff. All the offices are all independently funded. All submissions and research are based on the Social Teachings of the Church. 90% of priests support the CPLO, and the CPLO enjoys good relationships with stakeholders. The CPLO in Zambia collaborates with the Justice & Peace Commission and the CCD Office on Democracy and Governance.

THURSDAY 6TH JULY 2017

4. ORGANISATIONAL NEEDS DISCUSSION

This aim of this session was to facilitate strategic planning, sharing of ideas, and cooperation between CPLOs.

Adv Mike Pothier said it was important to look at other CPLO's ideas and introduced Namibia's idea of an Advisory Committee to help with strategy, which has been successfully implemented in that country.

Father Werner Afunde gave the background to the Advisory Committee and how the CPLO started in Namibia, which was devised due to a lack of staff and no funding. He asked the Bishop for guidelines, and identified ten people according to their professional expertise.

They did inductions and invited Adv. Pothier to Windhoek to do a short workshop on CPLO on a Friday evening and a Saturday. The Bishops approved terms of reference for the Committee. The expertise of the people appointed includes funding, law, health policy, land issues, education, political science and children's rights. There are also three Members of Parliament on the Committee. A sub-committee focuses on organising roundtable discussions. The appointments are for a period of three years.

The Function of the Advisory Committee is to:

- Give advice and insight;
- Assist the office;
- Serve as a sounding-board and provide feedback;
- Conduct fund-raising;
- Facilitate internships;
- Address key concerns;
- Facilitate information-flow and operate as a network e.g. informing the office when a Bill is appearing before Parliament.

The office has already developed an action plan but still need an office assistant.

4.1 DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONS

Fr Charles Matsoso supported the idea of setting up an Advisory Committee, because the liaison officers are sometimes overburdened with work.

Fr Edward Ndete asked about Namibia's working relationship with the Justice and Peace Commission and Social Communication Office. He also commented that the Association of Catholic Professionals are comprised of individuals from every sector, and wanted to know how they feed into the CPLO. He proposed that CPLOs use best-practise from different countries to support each other. He reported that he visited different countries' CPLOs to see how the different models are operating.

Fr Afunde responded that Social Communication is a new organisation and that the Justice and Peace Commission was closed for a time in that country, but has now been revived and is focusing on the "healing of memories". He also reported that the different ministries meet

once a year and share about their work. He responded that the Association of Catholic Professionals does advocacy work for professional members.

Mr Kangala reported that in Zambia two church commissions - the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) (which was very active) and the Diocesan Development Commission were lumped together as Caritas Zambia. They have a Bishops director who co-ordinates the two, and nationally there are two directors who meet quarterly and focus on policies and reforms, which touch on all aspects of life.

He asked if it might not compromise CPLO and some of the issues it addresses if MPs are included on the Advisory Committees? Another delegate further commented that MPs are politicians and their purpose is to win elections and influence people.

Fr Afunde responded that the people appointed were serving on the Advisory Committee as Catholics, not as MPs. They would thus be fulfilling dual roles for the 3-year period. The Namibian CPLO will re-evaluate the situation after this period.

Adv Mike Pothier responded that he shares the concerns expressed by delegates, though it is an advantage that the MPs bring inside knowledge to the CPLO and assist with information. It could be very helpful to a CPLO to have first-hand knowledge, from within Parliament, about what legislation was being contemplated, and what policies were being put forward. Fr Charles Matsoso responded that the MPs might compromise the Church's stance as, when in Parliament, they support their parties. Fr Edward Ndete also cautioned against working too closely with MPs.

4.2 FUNDING & SUPPORT

(A list of donor organisations currently supporting CPLOs in the different countries appears at the end of this report).

It was noted that Caritas International has one channel to do appeals, and that all CPLOs could apply to them for financial support. It was also suggested that CPLOs could ask for an annual collection to be taken in all parishes in their respective countries. It might be helpful, in this regard, to remind Bishops' Conferences that the last African Synod had resolved that all African Episcopal Conferences should work towards setting up CPLOs.

Apart from direct funding, some organisations were prepared to cover certain operational costs. The German political foundations, for example, such as the Hanns Seidel, Konrad Adenauer and Heinrich Boll Foundations, were willing to pay the costs of roundtable discussions and some specific research projects.

The Zambian CPLO had done a regional proposal and received good funding as a result. Zambia also advised that the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa (AMECEA) supported collaborative funding, and suggested a collaboration between CPLOs from different East African countries, or a group proposal on an issue that would assist everyone, and to organise this with one voice.

Mike Pothier raised the issue of training and requests from other countries to establish and assist with CPLO offices. CPLO South Africa had received such requests for 2018 from Kenya,

and possibly Swaziland, Chad and Cameroon. The Bishops in various West African countries were also encouraging the formation of CPLOs.

Fr Ndete proposed inviting other, existing CPLOs to the training, since this would expose the trainees to different models of CPLO work.

Mr Isaac Kenyi noted that the training course he had attended in Cape Town in 2014 had been very good. He suggested that CPLO South Africa continue to offer their training, and that the Zimbabwe CPLO could also conduct training.

4.3 THE WAY FORWARD

It was agreed that the way forward should focus on opportunities to work together, to help and inform Catholic advocacy on legislative and policy matters.

It was important to communicate closely with SECAM and to put forward ideas concerning the development of CPLOs elsewhere in Africa.

Fr Claudio dos Reis advised that lobbying and advocacy is important and that the African Bishops' awareness of this needed to be raised. Mozambique in particular was missing a big opportunity.

Mr Isaac Kenyi asked about the activities of the Justice & Peace Commissions, since there was an increase of problems in the world. He also asked whether issues from CPLOs' perspective were raised with SECAM, and how was that done? He asked who would coordinate the CPLOs, and how to make SECAM speak on their behalf.

Fr Werner Afunde asked if the Church leaders were convinced of the importance of CPLOs, and if there was a conviction that CPLOs could make a difference? Mike Pothier responded that there was still a need for awareness-raising among Church leadership. The Church did not really understand CPLOs and their work, because only 12 out of the 46 Conferences in Africa had a CPLO.

Fr Charles Matsoso asked whether IMBISA could assist with advocacy work, as well as whether Fr Claudio dos Reis could raise the question at IMBISA level. Some Bishops understood the need for CPLOs but others did not.

It was further suggested that communication and social media be more effectively used, and that it might be worthwhile to create a WhatsApp group of CPLOs for communication purposes.

4.4 STRENGTHENING CPLOs

Fr Claudio dos Reis volunteered to initiate an approach to propagate CPLO work and to include the members of IMBISA in the discussion.

Question: Mike Pothier asked what AMACEA's understanding of CPLOs was.

Response: Almost every AMACEA member-country has a CPLO. Some work within Justice & Peace Departments, others within Caritas.

Question: Why are some CPLOs hosted by other departments, such as Justice & Peace and Caritas?

Response: It is often the case that Bishops' Conferences do not have the resources or funds to start a CPLO from scratch; it is easier and more cost-effective to house a CPLO within an existing department, at least at the beginning. For example, in 2009, there was a circular from Rome to establish CPLOs in countries like Botswana, Mozambique and Angola. The Conferences responded that they do not have the personnel to facilitate the establishment of CPLOs in those countries. Perhaps they could consider having a 'CPLO desk' in their Justice & Peace or Caritas departments.

Networking: It was suggested that those involved with land issues – which affect so many African countries – network and exchange ideas, documents and useful research papers. They can communicate and share documents via WhatsApp.

It was said that the CPLOs could also establish an email group, so that everyone could receive documents and learn from each other. Information is power and members can empower each other. Mr Isaac Kenyi suggested that the information be classified under relevant headings, e.g. peace, requests for solidarity, advocacy, etc.

Opportunities: It was suggested that CPLO representatives refer each other to relevant donors and funding opportunities. This could also be done via an email group, but it must be regular and organised. It was suggested that the email idea on sharing information be tried for at least a year.

Mr Isaac Kenyi further suggested to share on a quarterly basis what is happening in their areas, including quarterly papers, submissions, and round-table reports, and to translate the documents to English, French and Portuguese. Mike Pothier cautioned that a budget was needed to make translations possible. It was suggested that SECAM be involved to assist with translations, because many Sub-Saharan countries do not speak English. A joint budget between CPLOs for translations was also suggested.

Questions: Fr Werner Afunde asked about delegates' commitment to the proposed way forward.

Response: Commitment should be shown when CPLO members have seminars and meetings with a minister to share it and to advertise events well in advance as it might be an opportunity for someone from a neighbouring country to attend.

Email group: Fr Claudio Dos Reis will contact Joe Komakoma of SECAM. It was suggested that whichever country he visits, members should invite him to the CPLO to discuss their objectives and programmes; to lobby for his support; and to offer their help in the establishment of further CPLOs.

4.5. LIST OF FUNDING PARTNERS & OTHER POSSIBLE DONORS

Delegates were asked to name the main donors supporting CPLO activities in their countries;

Catholic Relief Services (CRS, America)

IMBISA, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Lesotho, South Africa

CAFOD (UK)

Zambia, Zimbabwe, IMBISA, Swaziland

GIZ (Germany)

Justice & Peace salaries in Zimbabwe and Lesotho

Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Entwicklungshilfe (AGEH, Germany)

Zimbabwe (sends out personnel and funds office equipment)

TROCAIRE (Ireland)

Zimbabwe.

CORDAID (Netherlands)

Justice & Peace in Zimbabwe

MISEREOR (Germany)

South Africa, Zimbabwe, IMBISA, Kenya, Uganda

DKA (Austria)

South Africa

CCFD (France)

South Africa

MISSIO (Germany)

IMBISA

CHURCH IN NEED (Germany)

IMBISA

USAID (America)

Zambia

CHILD FUND (UK)

Zambia

Konrad Adenauer, Heinrich Böll, Frederich Ebert, Hanns Seidel and Rosa Luxemborg Foundations (Germany)

All support a variety of pro-democracy and good governance activities

USCCB (US)

Supports pastoral programmes

