

SECRETARY GENERAL'S REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2014- JUNE 2016

On assumption of office in September, 2014, I was faced with the usual initial problems of settling down and familiarization with the demands of the office. This however did not pose many problems because my predecessor, Ms Geraldine Mcsweeney, was always there to guide and to advice where the need arose. Big thanks to Geraldine.

CICIAMS GENERAL SECRETARIAT:

One of the initial challenges was the relocation of the CICIAMS secretariat from Dublin to Rome, as agreed at the last General Council meeting in Dublin. Negotiations between CICIAMS and FIAMC were intensified. Sr. Anne John and Geraldine, who were at the head of the negotiation for CICIAMS, visited Rome. During the visit, FIAMC agreed to sublet CICIAMS and provide an office secretary who would work two hours a week for CICIAMS. With many correspondences by Geraldine, Sr. Anne John and me on the issue, it was possible for Geraldine to transfer CICIAMS documents from Dublin to Rome. A memorandum of Understanding (MOU), between CICIAMS and FIAMC was drafted and when it was approved, it was signed by the President of FIAMC for FIAMC and Sr. Anne John for CICIAMS. Effective date was 1st May, 2015. The MOU was to last for two years and is renewable. It spelt out the fees to be paid by CICIAMS to FIAMC and to Ms Silvija Vasilj, the office Secretary. Office days for Ms Vasilj, was agreed to be Wednesdays and Fridays and two hours a week.

The office is located at pallazo San Calisto (Piazza San Calisto) 00120, Vatican City. Phone: +390669887372. Schedule of duty was given to the office secretary by the Secretary General. The Secretariat is generally functioning well. We however need a filing cabinet for filing of CICIAMS files and other documents. This was agreed by the Executive Board meeting held in February 2016.

EMAIL ADDRESS/ WEBSITE:

On assumption of office, I was to use a new email address for CICIAMS as the former one (eircom) was almost coming to an end. Unfortunately, the new g-mail address became very difficult to access and was therefore suspended. Thanks to Geraldine who reactivated the eircom address which is currently in use. I am sorry about the inconveniences this development caused some who used the g-mail address without success or reply.

All the necessary changes and inclusions were effected on the CICIAMS website, courtesy of our web manager, Mary Farnan, who has always been prompt in doing this.

PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR LAITY/ CICIAMS STATUTES

Following the amendment of the draft CICIAMS statutes at the last General Council meeting in September 2014, it was sent back to the Pontifical Council for laity in October 2014, by Geraldine Mcsweeney. Following this submission, a letter dated 3rd November, 2014, was sent to CICIAMS conveying the decision of the pontifical Council for laity to award the Pontifical decree to CICIAMS as a recognized international association of Catholic faithful.

The letter further added that with the award of this decree, the Pontifical Council would therefore approve the appointment of CICIAMS Ecclesiastical Assistant. The presentation of the Decree to Sr. Anne John for CICIAMS took place at the Dicastery of the PCL on the 26th March, 2015. It was watched by members of CICIAMS Executive Board and the Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Health Care workers, Msgr Jean- Marie Mupendawatu, among other staff of the council.

PIUS XII FOUNDATION:

A letter was received from His Excellency, Msgr Angelo Becciu, the Secretary of state, informing us of a donation of \$7000 to CICIAMS from the Pius XII foundation. Geraldine, on behalf of CICIAMS sent an acknowledgement/ appreciation letter to the Secretariat of State for this donation and also used

the opportunity to introduce the new CICIAMS Secretary General. However, a new guideline concerning application for funding in 2015 was also given by the Secretariat of State. In line with the new guidelines, a request for financial assistance was forwarded to the Papal Foundation (new name for Pius X11 foundation), Rome, in May 2015 through CICIAMS office Secretary, Ms Silvija Vasilj. The reply to this appeal is still being expected.

UN/ DPI:

Following the appeal made to the NACN- USA, at the last General Council meeting for volunteers to attend UN briefing sessions on behalf of CICIAMS, four nominees who reside in New York were sent to CICIAMS together with their CVs. They were: Patricia Sayers, Maria Arvonio, Patricia Staley and Marian Nowak. Members of the Executive Board approved their nominations by email messages. The nominees were duly informed of their acceptance in October 2014 and requested to send an estimate of the expenses they intended to incur in carrying out this function for CICIAMS. A total cost of \$1356.48 for monthly representation and \$2712.96 for biweekly representation, covering transportation for all of them for one year was submitted. The monthly representation was approved by the Executive Board members through emails.

To enable them attend the needed sessions of the UN they needed a UN ground pass and to have this ground pass, CICIAMS needed to send a report to the UN as a criterion to maintain her position/ status with the UN. The report was sent though not without some difficulty and they were registered for ground passes which they obtained in January 2015. They were registered to attend all the UN sessions that needed registration of delegates particularly the 48th session of the commission on population and development where they presented a statement on behalf of CICIAMS. They communicate regularly with the Secretary General and Executive Board and send reports and proposals of their activities from time to time for approval of the Executive Board All notices of meetings, invitations and other correspondences from the UN are usually forwarded to them and Mrs

Theresa Cheong, CICIAMS official representative to the United Nations. The alternate representatives also presented a statement on behalf of CICIAMS this year. They were duly registered for ground passes for 2016.

WHO:

A letter was sent to the WHO informing them of CICIAMS new delegate to the WHO, Ms Mary Dolan. Meanwhile, a new collaboration plan 2015- 2018, has been drawn up with the WHO through Ms Dolan. The new plan has to do with two activities embarked upon by two CICIAMS member associations namely; Basic Health care to the Chazanga compound in Zambia by the Zambian Catholic Nurses and the St. Theresa Clinic, Manzini, run by the Catholic nurses of Swaziland. Ms Dolan was also registered by the Secretary General to attend all the WHO sessions which needed her presence. E.g. the 69th World Health Assembly held on May 23,2016.

CICIAMS NEWS:

Request for submission of articles and reports for the 2015 CICIAMS News were sent to the member associations and Executive Board members in June 2015. One article was received with others being reports from the regions. With these, the 2015 edition of CICIAMS bulletin News was published and posted on the CICIAMS website. The 2016 edition would be published after the General Council meeting in August.

CRESCENDO:

On the 15th of October, 2015, an email was received from Mrs Annemarie Vlaemnyck, informing CICIAMS that her tenure as CICIAMS Official representative to the Board of Crescendo had elapsed. She however informed CICIAMS that the Board of Crescendo can allow her go for a second term if re-nominated by CICIAMS. It became necessary again to seek the opinion of the Executive Board members through emails. The Executive Board members responded in support of her re-nomination. In view of this, she was re-nominated. Annemarie's re-nomination was communicated to the Secretary of the board of Crescendo on the 7th of November, 2015 and copied to her. To be approved by the General Council at its next sitting in August 2016.

CICIAMS WORLD CONGRESS 2018

The prospective host of this congress, Catholic Nurses Guild of Malaysia, initially sent information through the Asian Regional President, Mrs Cheong, and later the National President, Mrs Francisca Malantin, emailed me asking for CICIAMS assistance in choosing a theme. This request was emailed to the professional committee on the 8th of May, 2016. When I got no reply, I forwarded same message on the 14th to members of the Executive Board. Only one member, Geraldine, replied, suggesting a theme that would focus on the relationship of CICIAMS and the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. Hopefully, a theme will be chosen at the next Executive Board meeting in Swaziland. On the 9th of June 2016, the President of the Malaysian Catholic Nurses Guild, Mrs Francisca Malantin, emailed me and informed me of their Archbishop's approval and acceptance to host the congress. However, she was asked to come to Swaziland with an updated report on their state of preparedness for the congress.

CICIAMS EURO BANK ACCOUNT:

The decision to open a Euro Bank account for CICIAMS in Rome which was reached at the Executive Board meeting held on the 7th of March, 2015, could not be actualized due to logistics problems. However, moves to open the account started about four months to the next General Council meeting and elections of new officers. Since the project was to be concluded about two months to the election, I suggested to the Executive Board that the process be suspended until after the elections, just in case new officers who would be signatories to the account are elected, and to forestall change of signatories immediately after the elections. Majority of the Executive Board members endorsed the suggestion.

ELECTION:

Positions for election into the Executive Board of CICIAMS were published in a letter dated 8th and 9th February, 2016, which was sent to all national Presidents and executive Board members by emails and to some by post. Accompanying this letter were the following: - Nomination forms for elections into the Executive Board, Application form for election into the executive board, delegation of voting power form, General council meeting participation form, among other necessary documents for the General Council meeting.

Completed nomination and application forms for election according to the letter, were to be returned to the General Secretariat by the 24th of May, accompanied by CVs of nominees. Unfortunately, many did not heed the closing date and this compelled the extension of the closing date in collaboration with committee on statutes to 6th of May 2016.

LETTER TO WEAK MEMBERS:

Following the decisions reached at the Executive Board meeting in February 2016, a letter of inquiry was emailed as well as posted to some member associations on the 26th of April 2016 expressing how worried CICIAMS is about their continuous absence from CICIAMS activities. The letter also sought to know what their problems were and if there are ways CICIAMS could assist. No replies have been received so far and none of the mails have been returned as undelivered.

NOMINATION TO MEMBERSHIP OF CICIAMS COMMITTEES:

National Presidents of member associations were again emailed on the 23rd of June to send in nominations in collaboration with the Regional Presidents for membership of CICIAMS committees. None responded even after the dateline of 30th June.

RESIGNATION:

We received an email from Mrs Reiko Joh, on the 27th January, 2015, informing CICIAMS of her resignation as the President of Japan Catholic

Nurses Guild on health grounds. She also introduced her successor, Mrs Shoko Nishimura.

Other member- associations which notified CICIAMS of their leadership change are:

Zambia through the Regional President, Mrs Nwazuruoke: The new President is Mrs Stella Chisunka. Elected on 27 September, 2015.

India: Through Mrs Cheong, Asian Regional President: Rev. Sr. Sarla Buncuan was formally elected last year 2015 during their national congress

Hong Kong: Cheung Sok-ye, Gloria, is the new President

NACN, USA: Jane Cardea PhD, is the new President

Nigeria: Mrs Rosalyn Okobo was re- elected President of the Catholic Nurses Guild for a second term.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP:

Application was received from Janet Munday, a member of the NACN- USA, seeking to be registered as individual member of CICIAMS. She was informed that as an individual and member of a National Association that has voting rights at CICIAMS General Council meeting, she is a full member of CICIAMS, and that individual membership is for people in countries where there is no CICIAMS Association and such members are Associate Members with no voting rights.

REFLECTION BY THE INTERNATIONAL ECCLESIASTICAL ASSISTANT:

As promised at the Executive Board meeting in February, Fr. Thomas Nairn, the International Ecclesiastical Assistant has sent in two reflections on the Jubilee year of mercy in relation to CICIAMS. The first was in March 2016, and the second was in June 2016. They were sent for publication on the CICIAMS website.

National Presidents were emailed to send the names of their national chaplains to the Secretary General for onward submission to the international Ecclesiastical Assistant who would use the addresses for purposes of

communication and exchange of ideas with chaplains. Only few countries responded.

INTERNATIONAL YEAR BOOK:

CICIAMS status was updated in the international year book for 2015 and 2016.

USE OF CICIAMS ARCHIVES:

Applications for permission to use CICIAMS archives in Louvain, for research were received from one Thomas Schlessler and Lara Jamar, through KADOC. Permission were accordingly granted.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT:

It has been observed that responses to mails by members of the Executive Board and National Presidents are poor. While some respond late to mails, others do not reply at all. These sometimes make the work of the Secretary General difficult and somehow frustrating. A positive change on this would be better for CICIAMS and for all of us. Thank you.

Donatus M. Akpan

Secretary General