

# NetACT Board

## Minutes of Annual General Meeting held at Hefsiba, Vila Ulongue, 1-3 August 2005

### Opening

The chairman, Dr D T Banda welcomes the meeting. He asks Dr Ron Hartgerink to pray. This is followed by the devotion led by Dr Saindi Chiphangwi, the vice-chairman. He will do so throughout the meeting. The theme for the first devotion is: "God sometimes takes us back to move us forward". The attendants are divided in two groups for discussions and prayers. Afterwards the Board approves daily programme as suggested by the chairman. The chairman encourages creativity in the discussions and planning.

### Constituting the meeting

#### 109.1 Voting rights

The following members of the Board are welcomed with full voting rights, representing the institutions as indicated in brackets:

- Dr D T Banda (Justo Mwale Theological College)
- Dr Saindi Chiphangwi (Zomba Theological College)
- Prof Jurgens Hendriks (Stellenbosch University; Executive Director, NetACT)
- Dr Ron Hartgerink (representing donors)
- Dr Hennie van Deventer (Nifcott)
- Rev Wilson Kasamba (Hefsiba)
- Rev Rangarirai Rutoro (Murray Theological College)
- Mrs Maggie Madimbo (African Bible College)

#### 109.2 Officials and Observers

- a) Mr Pieter van Santen is the Project Manager (PM) of NetACT, and will participate fully, though without voting rights.
- b) The Board also welcomes the following observers, who are welcome to participate, but will not be able to vote:
  - Dr George du Toit (delegate – Namibia Research Institute)
  - Rev Amorim Silambo (secundus for Hefsiba)
  - Rev Monica Banda (observer from JMTC)
  - Rev Kruger du Preez (observer – Hefsiba)
  - Rev Manase Matiquele (observer – Hefsiba)
  - Rev Chatha Msangaambe (observer – Nifcott)

### Adoption of minutes and reports

#### 110.1 Hefsiba announcements

- a) Rev Kruger du Preez explains some practical arrangements.
- b) The board is notified that the Hefsiba lecturers are busy with classes and will attend the meeting whenever they are available.

#### 110.2 Travelling claims

All claims are to be presented to Mr Pieter van Santen after lunch. All direct expenses in terms of fuel, border fees, etc, will be refunded.

#### 110.3 Attendance list

The PM circulates the attendance list of the previous meeting and asks the delegates to update the information. Any changes should be indicated, and especially new cell phone numbers should be recorded.

#### 110.4 Apologies

The Board takes note of the apologies received from Rev Ariko Ekitala (domestic reasons) and Dr Amon Kasambala (other commitments with new employer). It is also noted that the Angolan representatives will not be able to come for the meeting due to conditions in their country (it was in any case impossible to make any contact with them).

- 110.5 Minutes of Annual Board Meeting – Zomba 2004**
- a) The minutes of the previous AGM held at Chilema were approved by the Executive Committee at their first meeting following the Board meeting.
  - b) All matters arising from those minutes have been worked into the Annual Administrative Report, and will thus be discussed when that report is tabled.
- 110.6 Minutes of Executive Committee meetings**
- a) The Board receives the minutes of all the telephone meetings of the EC over the past year. Matters arising from those minutes are also included in the Annual Administrative Report.
- 110.7 Executive vacancies**
- a) The secretary's time of office expires at the end of this meeting. The ED informs the Board that the secretary can be renominated for a second term according to the constitution. All other delegates are also eligible (except those already in executive positions). The Board agrees that even absent board members, like Rev Ariko Ekitala, may be nominated. The Board further rules that the official representatives of institutions present at the meeting will be eligible, rather than the heads of those institutions who are not attending the meeting. The chairman asks that nominations be handed in by lunch time on Tuesday.
  - b) The Board also takes note of the suggestions in the Administrative Report about the position of the ED. Prof Hendriks explains that he will be retiring at SU in March 2007. He is willing to be full time ED/PM for NetACT from then on. It is proposed that the issue will be fully discussed at the end of the meeting. For further consideration Prof Hendriks supplies background information about the situation at SU. It is clear that it would help the SU Faculty of Theology if he could continue in a full time NetACT post, and still be available for services at the faculty.

### **Messages of joy and sadness**

- 111.1** The Board congratulates Dr D T Banda on the attainment of his doctorate in Systematic Theology at the University of the Free State.
- 111.2** The Board takes note of the new status awarded to Hefsiba by the Mozambican government to serve as an institute for higher education. This development fills the Board with joy and pride.
- 111.3** The Board also conveys condolences to Hefsiba on the sudden death of Rev Fernando Cuboia, who had been appointed as principal (general director) just a month before his death. His tragic death is a great loss to the entire family of NetACT. The Board observes a minute of silence in remembrance of Rev Cuboia, and Dr Chiphangwi prays for consolation to all involved.
- 111.4** The ED reports that he sent a message of encouragement to Janet and Larry Brown on behalf of the EC. He received a reply from Larry very recently, indicating that Janet has stopped taking the cancer treatment, because it was making her feel so miserable. The Board is encouraged to keep on praying for the family in this time of hardship. It is also announced that another female member of staff at the ABC has been diagnosed with cancer.

### **Finances**

- 112.1 Financial report: Jan – Dec 2004**
- a) The ED draws the attention of the Board to the audited statements in the folder of all the NetACT accounts for the period Jan – Dec 2004.
  - b) The Board is reminded that the donations from the Elmer Hartgerink Trust will carry the work through to the end of this year, when it will be terminated.
  - c) In the light of the above, the Board notes the decision of the EC to send the chairman and the ED for a fundraising tour to the USA in October this year. The ED indicates that they will specifically attempt to connect donors to particular NetACT institutions, because they believe that to be the approach with the best chance of success.
- 112.2 Budget 2005**
- The Board once again asks Dr Ron Hartgerink to assist in drawing up the budget for the coming year by taking note throughout the meeting of items that will require funding.
- 112.3 Funding projects/proposals**
- The following possibilities for obtaining funds are noted:

- a) PEPFAR – a fund with billions of dollars promised by US president for AIDS relief. It is, however, extremely difficult to get money from this fund. Our only hope might be through the SU.
- b) The Church of Scotland was approached with an application to sponsor the publication of books, but the prospects do not seem to be good because of internal problems in that church.
- c) Discussions with Mr Arrie van der Poel of the Reformed Mission League (RML) have raised some hope for assistance. They have already donated R19 320 for the translation of “*Studying Congregations in Africa*” into Portuguese, and further assistance is anticipated for the book project concerning “*Preaching on AIDS in Africa*”.
- d) The NetACT office challenged DRC Congregations in South Africa to sponsor “*Studying Congregations in Africa*”. The response has been encouraging and so far the donations have reached about R50 000.
- e) Mustard Seed Foundation (MSF) – Mr John Took, the MSF representative in South Africa, approached NetACT to be distributor of bursaries for theological studies in Southern Africa. There is a strong hope that NetACT will obtain US\$30 000 from this source for scholarships. It is agreed that the MSF funds will be used even for current scholarships, and that the funds previously allocated to these scholarships will then be re-allocated to other NetACT activities.
- f) Raising the accommodation fees at NetACT house may become a source of income (if approved – see below).
- g) The Board fully realises that it is crucially important to get new sponsors/donors to ensure sustainability for NetACT.

#### **112.4 Annual membership fees**

- a) Pieter hands out accounts from SU for NetACT membership fees. Some have not paid in the previous year. Chairman encourages everybody to pay their dues. The amount is the same as in the previous year.

### **Strategic Plan**

- 113.1 Ron hands out the strategic plan prepared at the 2001 NetACT Board meeting in Lusaka. He explains the background for the document, and how it was formulated.
- 113.2 Delegates are challenged to reconsider all these objectives for the sake of Tuesday’s discussion on the strategic plan. In any case each item of the Strategic Plan has already been included in the Annual Administrative Report, and will thus be discussed as we proceed with that report.

### **NetACT office**

#### **114.1 Report**

- a) The Board notes that Pieter van Santen and Uma Onwunta are currently running the NetACT office. The ED and the PM testify that Uma has helped to deal effectively with all issues relating to NetACT house. One of the outstanding challenges is currently to meet the needs of students from all over Africa (even those not belonging to NetACT), and Uma has performed a valuable service in this regard.
- b) It is further reported that the NetACT office is now well-furnished with all the necessary equipment. Ron points out that we still have problems with communication, though things have improved drastically. The Board acknowledges that the problem is most often at institutions, not at the office.

#### **114.2 Decisions**

- a) Board agrees that office should continue to function as at present. For the budget: Salaries will obviously be needed, but no new equipment.

### **NetACT house**

#### **115.1 Report**

- a) The Board registers its gratitude for the improvement of facilities at the house over the past year (computers, telephones, etc).
- b) With concern the Board notes the facts about the decline of income at the NetACT house in 2004 and 2005. This seems to be the result of decisions made at the 2003 Board meeting in Stellenbosch to the effect that nobody should be allowed to stay in the

house for longer than 3, maximum 4 months. (Doctoral students in any case need more time). It is agreed that we will have to devise a system in which NetACT students can be accommodated consecutively (according to a programme negotiated by the candidates), while making room for more full time occupants. The Board realises that it is especially important for the financial sustainability of NetACT itself.

#### **115.2 Decisions**

- a) The possibility of redirecting students for M Th to Justo Mwale Theological College should be taken seriously.
- b) NetACT students will given priority when booking for the NetACT house, provided that they do reservations for the next year by November of the previous year.
- c) Bookings can even be done provisionally (when students are not sure of registration or bursaries), and later be cancelled.
- d) The Board approves the recommendation that four of the six rooms upstairs be occupied by interested full-time students from the second semester of 2005.
- e) The Board decides that the fees be adjusted to the following: R35 per night for a single room; R30 per night for a double room.
- f) The Board extends a word of thanks to the Onwunta family for the valuable services they are rendering. The Board asks the Secretary to write a letter on behalf of the Board.

### **Communication/Computers**

#### **116.1 Report**

- a) RITT – voice communication has improved much through cell phone. The PM confirms that the phone donated to RITT has the capacity to receive email. This matter will be taken up with Ariko Ekitala, the principal of RITT.
- b) Hefsiba – is receiving email through radio contact. It is further noted, though, that they now have direct cell phone contact. One can therefore send a message by email, and later check by cell phone if messages have been received.
- c) MTC – is receiving email through Rev Henry Murray's cell phone. Also had email in Masvingo (ordinary line). A new telephone sub-station was placed at Morgenster, but that was struck by lightning. Negotiations for repairs/new lines are taking place.
- d) Angola – last year it was decided to give them new equipment to be kept in the General Secretary's office; they promised to provide a quotation and wanted the money to be paid into their account. No communication was possible for the last few weeks due to problems with the telephone cables to Angola (undersea). Students could also not come to Stellenbosch because of the Marburgh virus and fever. They will, however, be coming to Stellenbosch soon. The matter will then be re-opened.
- e) ABC – it is suggested that all communication should go to the official email address, attention Maggie Madimbo (even copied to her personal email address)
- f) ZTC – email to be sent to the principal; only one email address. The school now has its own IT centre for the students, and even a new computer in each staff office. Students may use extra computers for library services.
- g) JMTC – contact the principal for NetACT business ([dtbanda@zamnet.zm](mailto:dtbanda@zamnet.zm)). Also expecting to have separate IT centre.
- h) Nifcott – same address. Also hope to establish a computer centre.
- i) Stellenbosch – correspondence to be sent to the NetACT office.

#### **116.2 Decisions**

- a) Encourage representatives to realise that they need to respond immediately to email messages. If it is a difficult assignment, just indicate in a short reply that the message has been received and will be attended to as soon as possible.
- b) No real new requirements for the budget.

### **Lecturer Exchange**

#### **117.1 Report**

The following exchanges did take place:

- a) Hefsiba – Marilda de Oliveira and Johannes Malherbe
- b) MTC – Prof Jurgens Hendriks
- c) Nifcott – Prof H Bosman of SU
- d) Angola – not yet used due to fever; still to be done if situation improves.

- e) JMTC – did not take place, but still to be done next year.
- f) Prof Chris Greyling visited a number of NetACT institutions; the response was very positive.

#### **117.2 Available lecturers**

- a) Mr Rodney Tshaka (will probably go to assist MTC for one year)
- b) Dr Cas Wepener (Homiletics and Liturgy at SU) – available for a whole month in the winter of 2006.
- c) Dr Roger Tucker – Presbyterian minister in Cape Town (Practical Theology)
- d) Dr Christo Thesnaar – Huguenot College, Wellington (Specialise in Youth Work) – available in second semester of 2006.

#### **117.3 Assistance for lecturers busy with doctoral studies**

- a) Lecturers at NetACT institutions need to be given more time for studies when they are busy with doctoral studies. They require at least one, or even two periods of six months study leave at a time.
- b) Replacements will obviously be needed at the institutions during the time of their absence. The Board welcomes the idea of creating relationships with congregations in the USA, SA and other countries, who will sponsor well-qualified replacement lecturers from their own church. This will also help to build bridges between those congregations and the local institutions.
- c) JMTC indicates that they will need a lecturer in OT during 2006. So too MTC wants someone for Community Development in addition to Rev Rodney Tshaka (possibly Rev Kallie August). Hefsiba would like to invite Dr Gerrit Olivier. ABC may need someone to help with Dr Larry Brown's classes. Nifcott is negotiating with Ben Conner, and hope to invite him next year (he will probably get own sponsors).

#### **117.4 Decisions**

- a) The Board gives the assignment to the chairman, ED and Ron to pursue contacts with congregations during fund raising tour in October 2005. Dr Banda emphasizes that it is extremely important to build relationships with congregations rather than individuals.
- b) The Board fully endorses the request that people who are invited from churches abroad should be properly sensitized about issues that are controversial for the church in Africa. Such lecturers should be warned not to come to Africa on a mission to "convert" or change the church overnight.
- c) The Board further agrees that the money allocated to a particular institution for lecturer exchange could also be used to invite lecturers from other NetACT institutions, for instance Justo Mwale inviting someone from Nifcott (specific example of inviting General Secretary of Nkhoma Synod, Dr W R Kawale, for classes in Old Testament. That would not only build the relations between the institutions, but even increase the goodwill between the churches).

### **Scholarships**

#### **118.1 Mustard Seed Foundation**

- a) The South African representative for the "Mustard Seed Foundation" (MSF), Mr John Took, approached the NetACT office with an offer to distribute bursaries on their behalf. The indication is that a considerable amount of about US\$30 000 might be available per year.
- b) The various NetACT institutions are asked to supply information needed by NetACT office to complete an application to MSF on behalf of all the institutions. This must be done during the board meeting.
- c) Funds will be transferred to NetACT account under SU. NetACT could use the funds to replace the existing NetACT scholarships, thus refunding the money already used for those scholarships.

#### **118.2 Budget for Scholarships**

- a) The Board estimates that R40 000 will be needed for an M Th and R50 000 for D Th. It is suggested that we need to budget for at least two such bursaries. (For the final decision of the Board, see the budget approved at the end of the meeting, and attached to the minutes).

### 118.3 Applications

- a) The NetACT office indicates that two new applications for scholarships have already been received. The first is for Rev Rutoro to stay for six months at Stellenbosch to complete his doctorate. The other is for an Angolan to study English.
- b) JMTC notifies the Board that they will soon send in another application.

## HIV/AIDS Project

### 119.1 Report

- a) The Board takes note of the fact that Dr Amon Kasambala and Dr Janet Brown have not been able to drive the project due to personal circumstances.
- b) It is also reported that the ED and Dr Kasambala have made several attempts to get money from PEPFAR. It seems evident, though, that chances are very little for NetACT to qualify. We simply do not have the capacity required by PEPFAR. The only possibility would be if SU would make a major proposal of which NetACT may be part. However, to be realistic we may have to accept that we won't get money from this source.
- c) What is going on at institutions with regard to this pandemic? To what extent is the issue addressed in curricula? From reports it appears that most institutions are carrying on with some form of training for the future pastors. At some institutions a course on AIDS is offered as a separate module (often presented in a period of a week or two), at others it is actually a full time course.

### 119.2 Planning

- a) The Board agrees that it would be wise to accept our limitations by acknowledging that we will not be able to do the job of training local leadership on congregational level. Yet we can still play a significant role in terms of the training of trainers. The institutions identify the following people who may continue the work of Dr Janet Brown and Dr Amon Kasambala: Louis Mwanamvekha (at Zomba), Grace Banda (at ABC), Dr Laban Chiphwatanga and Mrs Nolipher Moyo (doing a doctorate at University of Pretoria) – in Lusaka; Rev Venancio Patrique (appointed full time in a project fighting AIDS in Mozambique and stationed at Vila Ulongue); Dr Hennie van Deventer at Nifcott. Dr Amon Kasambala will still assist whenever he is available.
- b) The Board endorses the plea that material should be produced to serve as a text book for a theological course on this issue. It may probably be done by expanding the book on *“Preaching about AIDS in Africa”*.
- c) It is confirmed that the material produced by Christo Greyling for NetACT is indeed available to institutions. The Board asks the PM to send an electronic copy to all the NetACT institutions.

## Curriculum Development

### 120.1 Report

- a) The Board again notes that Hefsiba got recognition from the government to be an institution for higher education.
- b) Good decisions were made at Stellenbosch (August 2003) about the way forward with curriculum development. In particular it was suggested that we should be working from the bottom up. Therefore the question is: What would be the standards required by the different institutions? Dr Chiphangwi, the chairman of the curriculum committee, reports that he enquired in September last year through email about progress. Unfortunately there was no response.
- c) Rev Du Preez enrolled with SU for a doctorate on curriculum development in the NetACT institutions. He presents a provisional research proposal to the Board, inviting members to participate in the effort. The proposal is also challenging institutions to reconsider the issue of curriculum development, particularly from the perspective of Problem Based Learning (PBL)

### 120.2 Request from MTC

- a) Murray Theological College applied for assistance from NetACT for registering with ACTEA for accreditation. The amount needed is US\$ 1 500 (R10 500)

### 120.3 Decisions

- a) Chairman of the Curriculum Committee (Dr Chiphangwi) will liaise with Rev Kruger du Preez to collect the information. Eventually the curricula should rather be forwarded to

Rev du Preez, who will study and evaluate the curricula in terms of international standards. This may then be followed up by a thorough discussion on one of our future meetings.

- b) The Board therefore strongly pleads with all NetACT institutions to cooperate with Rev du Preez in this study, which will be to the benefit of all.
- c) International institutions do regular quality tests. This is indeed also very much needed by all our institutions. It seems to be an excellent idea to do it from a real academical study.
- d) This approach does not imply cancelling the vision to acquire ACTEA accreditation. The same standards will still be required. Therefore institutions are encouraged to do both. ACTEA does not only consider the curriculum, but does a holistic evaluation of all aspects of the institution.
- e) The Board agrees to go back to the original intention to assist all institutions to embark on acquiring accreditation from ACTEA. MTC will be the first to be assisted.

## Publications

### 121.1 Studying Congregations in Africa

- a) It is reported that the English version of "*Studying Congregations in Africa*" is sold out. A reprint of 500 copies is suggested
- b) The Board confirms that the book will be provided only to first year students at NetACT institutions. Actually the books can be sold to them at a reduced price. Each institution is to decide about the price and the use of the money (library purposes). MTC sold the book also to ministers at a higher price.
- c) It is noted that the first Portuguese translation was not successful. Dr Marilda de Oliviera disqualified the translation. Rev Venancio Patrique is doing a retranslation. The Board agrees that 800 copies of this translation be printed.

### 121.2 Preaching on AIDS in Africa

- a) A project proposal from Dr Johan Cilliers is presented to the Board. The Board decides to add two suggestions: The theological background to the issue must be expounded before tackling the issue of preaching, and a section must be included on counselling.
- b) The Board notes that ten representatives will be needed to assist with the book. The ED suggests that Anglicans could also be included (also for the sake of funding), and even people outside the institutions (experts on AIDS and/or Preaching). The project proposal (Addendum 3) could serve as an explanation to outsiders. All institutions will send names after consultation with their own faculties.
- c) Malawian, Namibian and Angolan institutions have to choose only one candidate to represent them on the committee. Malawi – Maggie to initiate, Namibia - George
- d) Funding: possibly from the Reformed Mission League (RML). The ED can now send the proposal to the RML to get the Euro 2500 which was promised for the project. The Anglicans could also help to sponsor if they are involved.

**Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2005.**

### Opening:

Dr Chipangwi provides study material on the theme: "**God's resources are more than sufficient for our needs**". Discussions and prayers again take place in two groups.

### Revision of Strategic Plan

Dr Ron Hartgerink leads the discussions about the revision of NetACT's strategic plan, which was formulated at the 2001 Board meeting in Lusaka, and has not been altered in the meantime.

### 122.1 Major challenges at different institutions

The delegates get the chance to share the major challenges they are facing at the various NetACT institutions and the following list emerges (with repetitions included):

Sustainability – financially (partners struggling)  
Inadequate supply of ministers  
Provision of new programmes – capacity building  
Church to "own" seminary – take responsibility

Leadership of institutions - demanding  
 Lecturers inexperienced; inadequately qualified  
 Communication – internet, computers, email, etc  
 Academic infrastructure – library resources  
 Leadership – indigenous (opportunities for training – fear they may not return)  
 More and better partnership with local churches  
 Financial sustainability – own efforts to raise income  
 Inadequate supply of Staff  
 Staff development  
 Pressure to grow – cannot supply enough ministers.  
 Increase facilities  
 Gap between institution and churches  
 Contextualising theological training – meeting the needs of the church  
 To produce competent church leaders  
 Doing research on behalf of the church – both existing and new ways  
 In-service-training of ministers  
 Financial sustainability  
 Shortage of staff  
 Denominations trying to establish universities  
 Leadership representing stakeholders  
 Ability to transform – adapting to the current situation in congregations and society  
 Honouring the identity of the stakeholders  
 Transforming attitudes in the church  
 Ecumenical cooperation  
 No separation between administrative and teaching responsibilities – overloading leaders/lecturers  
 Provision for retirement – leading to lawsuits

#### **122.2 Characteristics of a “Good” Mission Statement**

Captures the essence of:  
     Why do we exist  
     How are we different  
 b) Is easy to remember  
     Will then be used  
     Guides our strategies and decisions  
     Can be used to “tell” others about NetACT

#### **Key Items for the NetACT Mission Statement**

The facilitator asks the members to draw up a list of key items to be included in NetACT’s mission statement. The result is the following:  
 We serve the theological institutions – so that they will be able to serve the congregations  
 We serve congregations – through the leaders trained at the seminaries  
 Networking  
 Promote congregational theology  
 Protestant/Reformed tradition  
 Upgrading of academic standards and institutional capacity building  
 Theological development – contextualisation, holistic  
 Sustainability  
 Production of literature  
 Leadership development (training of trainers) – preparing leaders for ministry  
 Liaising with Lay Training Centres  
 Quality of leaders: integrity, servanthood, compassion

#### **Visit to Mphatso congregation**

After lunch the Board goes to visit the Mphatso congregation of the “Igreja Reformada em Mocambique” (IRM). This is the place where Rev A G Murray established the first mission station of the Dutch Reformed Church in the northern part of Mozambique way back in 1908. The visit helps the delegates to get a proper historical perspective on the work done at Hefsiba. Returning to Vila Ulongue, the Board fails to continue with business due a power failure, which lasts until 21h00. However, the Hefsiba choir entertains the group by the light of a gas lamp. The day’s activities are closed with a session of prayer.

**Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 2005.**

**Opening:**

The vice-chairman once again guides the meeting in a handout for Bible study on the theme: “**What is the Name of my God?**”. The discussions in the two groups are really helpful to the participants, and they testify to this when we gather together.

**NB 123 Continuation of Strategic Plan revision**

**123.1 Proposals for a Mission Statement**

After a short revision of the discussions of the previous day, the Board receives and considers the following proposals for a NetACT mission statement:

NetACT aims at promoting congregational theology and producing quality leaders for the church through networking and capacity building of its member institutions and seminaries

NetACT is helping member institutions to prepare leaders for ministry in missional churches (T-shirt version!)

NetACT is a network of theological institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa focussed on working together in developing their academic infrastructure and sustainability in order to provide leadership for missional congregations

NetACT is an affiliation of seminaries in Southern Africa created and directed by the member seminaries to assist them in their mission to prepare effective and compassionate leaders for the church. The mission of NetACT is to facilitate the upgrading of seminaries through the power of networking.

NetACT aims at leadership development for the grassroot level of African congregations by empowering theological institutions to train church leaders who are competent in a holistic ministry. Through networking NetACT will assist the seminaries to improve their curricula, to get accreditation, to build their infrastructure and capacity, to produce contextual theological literature, and thus become truly relevant to the churches and the society.

The mission of NetACT is to serve the seminaries so that they can serve the congregations and to help equip the seminaries to be able to prepare church leaders.

**123.2 Formulating the mission statement**

The Board asks Dr Chiphangwi to select one of the above mentioned proposals for a mission statement, and then refer it to Dr Hartgerink and Prof Hendriks for refinement. He picks the statement recorded in #123.1a) above.

**123.3 Reconsideration and evaluation of objectives in NetACT’s vision statement**

The Board reconsiders all the objectives listed in NetACT’s vision statement of the Lusaka 2001 meeting, and evaluates the network’s performance in the attainment of those goals. Following are the goals as formulated in the original statement, with the evaluation added in brackets, in italics:

**NetACT** wants to have realised the following goals by 2007:

- a) At least one programme/curriculum for training of congregational leadership in African Congregational Theology has been developed, has been distributed and is in the process of being implemented in a substantial number of congregations linked with the participating institutions. (**Evaluation:** *Partly accomplished by some institutions; Difficult for NetACT to handle; can be removed from the new strategic plan*).
- b) Church leaders at all levels, including women and youth leaders, are targeted and included in the continuous training programmes. (**Evaluation:** *Not accomplished; is the business of the institutions, should not be a NetACT goal, though it should be promoted by NetACT*)
- c) A programme for upgrading and further theological training of lecturers at the participating institutions, as well as other pastors, has been established. (**Evaluation:** *Largely accomplished, though we should be reminded that other pastors need to be identified and trained as future lecturers*)
- d) Handbooks on African Congregational Theology have been produced and are used at the participating institutions. (**Evaluation:** *Accomplished; other contextual theological*

*handbooks urgently needed; high priority for the future. Kachere Series can be considered as publisher for future publications)*

- e) Participating institutions have computer facilities and are linked through email and internet. (**Evaluation:** *Partly accomplished; to be continued; networking to be improved and maximized*).
- f) An effective system of mutual consultation, lecturer exchange and networking among the participating institutions is in place (**Evaluation:** *Accomplished and developing; could perhaps become less one way*).
- g) All institutions (as far as applicable) have taken measurable steps towards accreditation by upgrading academic standards and institutional capacity building. (**Evaluation:** *All institutions busy with upgrading and capacity building; specific requests for assistance with process of accreditation; different kinds of acknowledgement eg government recognition for Hefsiba; improvement of libraries – new option for books on CD Rom, etc*)
- h) At least one course on curbing the spread and the effects of HIV/AIDS has been identified and/or developed, distributed and taught, and is in the process of being used in a substantial number of congregations linked with the participating institutions. (**Evaluation:** *Much accomplished; material produced and used; facilitators trained; institutions continuing the work; yet the Board judges that it may perhaps not be a direct objective of NetACT to focus on this work; rather to liaise with other facilitators like CABSAs to strengthen training; NetACT still to show concern about the issue – it remains a top need in the society*)
- i) An adequately staffed co-ordinating office for NetACT has been established. (**Evaluation:** *Office well-established, though perhaps not adequate for the needs due to financial constraints. Remains crucial for proper functioning of the network*).

## **New Members and Constitution**

### **124.1 Namibian Research Institute (NRI)**

- a) The Board takes note of the fact that we are still waiting for written confirmation that the NRI accepts the constitution of NetACT. The Board confirms the decision of the meeting at Chilema to approve the NRI (as umbrella organisation for Paulinum and NETS) for NetACT membership, provided that the constitution would be formally accepted in a letter.
- b) In line with the decision concerning the Angolan theological institutions, the Board stipulates that even for Namibia only one board member will be appointed to represent the different institutions. The PM will get the names of the representatives suggested by the institutions in the two countries, to be formally registered as members of the NetACT Board.

### **124.2 Other parties interested in membership**

The Board is informed about the interest expressed by various institutions to join NetACT – notably the African Centre for the Great Commission (Nairobi, Kenya), the Reformed Theological College (Kampala, Uganda), as well as the new campus of the African Bible College (in Uganda). The ED further reports about a number of Nigerian institutions that have shown keen interest. With regret the Board declines membership to all these institutions at this stage, due to the financial constraints NetACT is currently facing, and to avoid becoming too big an organisation, which may eventually lose the original focus of the network. The Board nevertheless assigns the task to the EC to consider new possibilities of participation.

## **Annual Meeting 2006**

### **125.1 Proposal**

The ED proposes that, if money is available by that time, the next Board meeting can take place in August 2006 in Windhoek, Namibia. Paulinum is identified as possible venue for the meeting. The Board empowers the EC to take the final decision about the next meeting.

## **Assistance Required by the institutions**

The Board reminds all the institutions to provide information to be used by the ED, the chairman and Dr Hartgerink on the fundraising tour to be undertaken in the USA in October this year. All the relevant information should be forwarded to the ED as soon as possible.

## **Budget 2006**

### **127.1 Vote of thanks**

The Board extends a vote of thanks to Mr Frik Kruger who did a great service to NetACT, at a very reasonable charge, by preparing the financial statements (actually for the last three years). The Board asks the secretary to write a letter to express our appreciation.

### **127.2 Financial report**

- a) Mr Pieter van Santen, the Project Manager, presents the reports for the previous year (Jan-Dec 2004; audited) and the first six months of 2005 (provisional; unaudited). He answers some questions from the Board.
- b) The Board accepts the report with a vote of thanks to Pieter for a job well done.

### **127.3 Budget – August 2005 to August 2006**

- a) A provisional financial projection for the period August 2005 till August 2006, prepared by Dr Ron Hartgerink and Mr Pieter van Santen, is presented to the Board. It is kind of a crisis or interim budget, in the light of NetACT's current financial constraints. It only works with funds that are definitely available, not funds we only hope to obtain. It is expected, of course, that the fundraising tour of the chairman, the ED and Dr Hartgerink will bring in some additional resources, in which case the budget can be adapted in future. The Board prunes the budget to within a difference of R10000 between income and expenditure. (Pieter offers that R6000 be cut from his salary, due to a promise from his mother-in-law to sponsor him with R1000 per month for six months. The Board appreciates the offer but chooses not to cut Pieter's salary in any way. The donation from Pieter's mother-in-law will be accepted with gratitude, but should not be a provision for the payment of Pieter's salary).

## **NetACT's Long Term Prospects**

### **128.1 Telling the NetACT story**

- a) The Board discusses the importance of giving a face to what the institutions are about. For this purpose striking pictures and moving stories are very essential. Such information would be crucial in the fundraising efforts. Real life stories would make a lasting impression on prospective donors.
- b) The ED stresses the need to focus on particular institutions. Many donors these days do not really like to work through the middleman. However, we also need to realise that NetACT has objectives that may be attractive to donors. If people would for instance be willing to give for books, why would they not be interested in scholarships for lecturers, so as to empower the various institutions? Therefore it is suggested that it might be a good idea to include pictures of people who obtained higher qualifications – with a paragraph on what this meant to them.
- c) The Chairman proposes that the fundraisers should circulate questions that may challenge institutions to tell the kind of stories that will help them on the upcoming tour. Ron is given the task to send such questions.
- d) The use of Powerpoint presentations will certainly also strengthen the appeal. Existing material could be a good starting point.

## **NB 129 Approval of minutes**

### **129.1 Corrections**

Since the minutes could not be completed during the meeting (partly due to the power failure on Tuesday), the Board agrees that the secretary should send the minutes as soon as possible directly to all delegates for corrections. After doing the corrections, all the replies should again go directly back to the secretary.

### **129.2 Approval**

The Board empowers the EC to approve the minutes at its first telephone conference.

## **NB 130 Election of Executive Committee members**

### **130.1 Election of secretary**

The chairman announces that two people have been nominated, namely Rev Wilson Kasamba and Dr Hennie van Deventer. With the permission of the Board no further voting is done, seeing that the latter has already gained the majority of votes in the nominations. Prof Hendriks and Dr Hartgerink give Dr Van Deventer a special handshake on his election as secretary for the next three years (and also on account of his birthday on the 5<sup>th</sup> August). Rev Monica Banda presents a birthday gift on behalf of the group.

### **130.2 Position of Executive Director as from 2007**

- a) The Board enthusiastically agrees that Prof Hendriks will be an excellent person to have as full time Executive Director in the NetACT office, and sincerely appreciates his offer to continue serving NetACT in such capacity even in retirement.
- b) The Board however expresses doubt as to whether he will be able to handle the Weidenhof house administration together with the duties of the Project Manager and the Executive Director.
- c) The appointment will of course depend on the position of NetACT at that time, which will also determine the kind of contract that can be offered to him.
- d) The Board therefore in principle approves the suggestion that Prof Hendriks be appointed in a full time post in the NetACT office, but will finalise the contract closer to the time, outlining the job description, financial implications, and effecting changes in the constitution if necessary.

## **NB 131 Mission Statement**

Ron Hartgerink and Jurgens Hendriks suggest the following reformulation of the mission statement, which is provisionally accepted by the Board, pending further refinement in future:

“NetACT is a network of theological institutions in Sub Saharan Africa created and directed by these institutions to assist them in preparing leaders for missional congregations.

The mission of NetACT is to facilitate the upgrading and sustainability of its member institutions.”

### **Closing:**

Dr Chipangwi says thank you to the chairman for the very efficient way in which the entire meeting has been conducted. Dr Banda then reads James 4:13-17. In particular he reflects on the statement: “Instead, you ought to say: ‘If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.’” He explains that this is not an appeal to give up planning. It is rather a warning that we should not be guided by our own intentions. Instead we should rather be guided in our planning by the will of God. If we are walking according to His intentions, we will succeed, because He is in control. This message actually links with our morning devotions: God may take us backward to move us forward. His resources are sufficient for our needs. We should understand who He really is (his Name). In our difficulties we should be guided by these principles; by this faith. In unison the whole group closes the meeting with Lord’s prayer.