

**APPENDIX G**

**CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN CHURCHES  
THIRD ECUMENICAL ASSEMBLY**

1. Church of Ireland representation at the Third European Ecumenical Assembly held at Sibiu, Romania, from 5-9 September was as follows:

Most Revd Richard Clarke, Bishop of Meath and Kildare  
Rt Revd Richard Henderson, Bishop of Tuam  
Canon David Crooks  
Ms Andrea Wills  
Dr Kenneth Milne

2. The assembly was huge: several thousand delegates in a vast tent; and the resources, both of the venue and the organisers were stretched to the uttermost, possibly overstretched. One of our group, who had attended the previous assembly at Graz in 1997 compared the Sibiu experience unfavourably with that of Graz, both in terms of the opportunity provided for contact with members of other delegations, and also for meaningful participation in the proceedings. [Our party's involvement was much inhibited by the non-arrival of our luggage until early in the morning of the third day and the consequent inroads made on our time.]

3. The theme of the Assembly was 'the Light of Christ shines upon all', and this theme was examined in three modes: the Light of Christ and the Church (unity, spirituality and witness), the Light of Christ and Europe (with special emphasis on migration) and the Light of Christ and the World (creation, justice and peace being the sub-themes). Within the programme there were some very elaborate presentations, but the number of set speakers was so large that even at sessions of the smaller 'fora' discussion from the floor was minimal.

4. Outside the main programme of 'plenaries' and 'fora' there were, each evening, acts of worship according to different Christian traditions. Of the two Anglican services, one was conducted by our group and was well attended. Printed materials from many of the participating churches were displayed at an 'agora', and we had on show the *Book of Common Prayer 2004* (English and Irish language versions), the *Church Hymnal*, the APCK leaflets on the Church of Ireland, publications from Church of Ireland Publishing, and some Hard Gospel literature.

5. Since our reconstitution as the Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue we have sought to convey to the Church of Ireland our conviction that if the work of the various ecumenical instruments, including large and expensive assemblies such as Sibiu, are to justify their existence they must impact on the parishes. We believe that Sibiu has provided us with an appropriate programme for ecumenical action in the form of the *Charta Oecumenic : guidelines for the growing cooperation among the churches in*

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*Europe*, a document first published jointly by the conference of European Churches and the Council of European [Roman Catholic] Bishops Conferences in the year 2000, and which was a foundation document for the Assembly.

6. Taking together the *Charta* and the main recommendations made at the end of the Sibiu Assembly, it would appear to us that we need to promote ecumenical activity in Ireland in the following directions:

- (a) formulating a theology of baptism through co-operation in Christian education, theological training, continuing education and research;
- (b) maximising the part that Christian migrants can play in the life of the Church and of society;
- (c) safeguarding the creation by promoting a lifestyle free of consumerism and informed by accountability and sustainability, and supporting ecumenical networks in their efforts for the safeguarding of the earth;
- (d) Strengthening our sense of community with Judaism and cultivating relations with Islam.

*Dr Kenneth Milne*