

## **Foundational letter**

### **Background**

In 1987 three Catholic Communication Organizations: UCLAP, OCIC-AL and UNDA-AL, in their Latin America and the Caribbean version, decided to develop their work, complementing each other within a Joint Plan, maintaining its specificities.

In the succession of periods, that decision became more powerful and organized the structure for this joint effort. They decided to have only one Secretary, and in practice, a collegial form of leadership was established. Under this scheme, who had management positions in each one of the three Organizations, formed a collective, which took the decisions collegially.

Thus, in practice, the aforementioned Catholic Communication Organizations started act as a "Federation", with a Council with members from each one of these organizations.

At the joint Assemblies that took place in March 1998, in Santa Cruz, the members of the organizations decided to make formal this factual situation, by preparing a pronouncement. It was also intended that this model of "Federation" could be assumed in each country by the communication organizations. It was considered that national affiliates were national federations. The Assembly estimated that even if everything was reasonable, it was better to wait until the joint Assemblies, so that the members could reflect on the subject in order to be more committed to the initiative.

So, once what has been said was fulfilled and considering that every day it becomes more necessary to sanction and strengthen what has been practiced by way of fact, in the V Continental Joint Assembly of the Catholic Communication Organizations, held in Curitiba, in January 2001, after the study and its approval in separate assemblies of each organizations, the agreements that are formulated in this document have been approved.

In this way, the Assembly held in January 2004 in Santo Domingo has verified that the former UNDA-AL, UCLAP and OCIC-AL organizations initiated a process that has given life to a single operational organization, OCLACC, to which have been invited other persons and institutions not belonging to the founders. Therefore, nowadays, OCLACC is more than the sum or union of the aforementioned Organizations.

In the interior of OCLACC the various specialties: Cinema, Radio, Television, Internet, will be organized according to their specificity.

OCLACC is the regional structure for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Catholic international communications organizations SIGNIS and UCIP.

Its actions and working plans will be guided by "commitments" considered as basic along with "agreements" taken as "norms".

## **The Commitments**

Catholic communicators feel the commitment to coordinate our work in order to provide, as appropriate to faithful organizations in the Church, a better communication service in Latin America and the Caribbean and to unite efforts and resources facing needs of communication in the field, and at the same time maintaining the dynamic engagement with their own organizations worldwide.

For the above mentioned we consider that they are called to be part of our Organization all who express their will and commitment to:

- Communicate, implicitly or explicitly, the message of God inviting everyone to communion with Him and with others for their full realization, following the guidelines of Medellin, Puebla, Santo Domingo and other documents of the Church in Latin America or the Universal Church.
- To work on the bases of truth, justice and good for development, freedom and respect for the dignity of each person in every communication practice.
- To contribute as communicators for the construction of a harmonious and solidary coexistence, where each person can grow as such in the encounter with others, understanding that this coexistence is possible with the participation of all in the "table of life". This must be maintained from the recognition of the fundamental option of a commitment, especially with the poor and the marginalized of society.
- To support communication as a way for communion, observant to the evolution and the transformation of cultures, contributing to the genuine growth of human beings without destroying their cultural identity in an authentic and non-discriminatory coexistence. Rejecting injustice and anything that undermines the dignity of every woman and man.

*Document approved in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, during the Assembly of OCLACC in January 2004.*