

The purpose of the Religious Liberty Partnership (RLP) is to encourage and nurture partnering and collaboration among Christian organizations focused on religious liberty. The RLP will more intentionally work together in addressing advocacy and in raising the awareness of religious persecution globally.

RLP Purpose Statement

The Religious Liberty Partnership (RLP) and 2008 Update

Member Guidelines

1. Members of the Religious Liberty Partnership (RLP) are **primarily** involved (that is the majority of their time, personnel and resources) with ministry on religious liberty issues in whatever context and strategy.
2. Members of the RLP come from organizations who are globally, regionally, country or project focused in their efforts.
3. Members of the RLP agree to the statement of faith in the Lausanne Covenant (<http://www.lausanne.org/>)
4. Members of the RLP agree to abide by the Code of Best Practices drafted by the Religious Liberty Partnership and the Wesley Guidelines (see below).
5. New members of the RLP are to have the unanimous approval of the RLP Leadership Team.
6. The Leadership Team of the RLP shall come from and be elected by its member organizations. Only one member per association or organizational family shall be represented on the RLP Leadership Team. Leadership Team members will serve two year terms and elect their own Chairperson.
7. Each member organization is to pay whatever it can within the Euro 500 - 3,000 range of annual RLP membership contributions. These fees cover the operation of the partnership, including facilitation, working group coordination, communication, and leadership team expenses.

Wesley Guidelines

1. We will not listen to or even ask about bad things concerning each other.
2. If we do hear anything bad, we will not believe it.
3. As soon as possible, we will tell the other person what we have heard.
4. Until we have done that, we will not say a word about it to any other person.
5. Even after we have done that, we will not mention it to anyone.
6. We will never make an exception to these rules unless our consciences force us to do so.

Drafted by John Wesley, Charles Wesley, Thos. Maxfield, J. Downes, et. al.

RLP Leadership Team 2007/08

- Mervyn Thomas, Christian Solidarity Worldwide, (UK) (RLP Chairman)
- Johan Candelin, World Evangelical Alliance Religious Liberty Commission (Finland)
- Johan Companjen, Open Doors International (Holland)
- Glenn Penner, Voice of the Martyrs (Canada)

- Brian O'Connell, RLP Facilitator (USA)

March 2008 NEWS: The Religious Liberty Partnership

The Religious Liberty Partnership held its 2008 conference in Zurich, Switzerland, this past March. The conference participants addressed key advocacy issues, approved "Best Practices for Ministry to and with the Persecuted Church," and agreed to make a joint declaration (entitled the *Zurich Statement*) calling for the support of the appeal of Christian brothers and sisters in China to pray for the nation of China, and the Chinese Church at large in this Summer Olympics year.

In addition, the RLP members explored possible work together relating to India, Central Asia, the care of persecuted church workers, mediation and peace building, the flow of money internationally, and working better with more traditional missionary organizations on the promotion of religious freedom. Invited resource speakers at the conference included Dr. Brent Fulton, CEO of ChinaSource; and Dr. Joseph D'Souza, President of the All India Christian Council.



Brian O'Connell is the President of REACT Services, a non-profit organization which guides and equips Christian ministries to harness the power of partnership for more effective impact, primarily among people least reached by the gospel. He also serves as facilitator of the Religious Liberty Partnership, a collaborative effort of Christian organisations focused on religious liberty. He can be reached at: Brian@REACTServices.com

The purpose of the Religious Liberty Partnership (RLP) is to encourage and nurture partnering and collaboration among Christian organizations focused on religious liberty. The RLP commits to more intentionally work together in addressing advocacy and in raising the awareness of religious persecution globally.

Current RLP members come from over 10 countries and represent most of the major Christian religious liberty and persecuted church organizations. Members of the RLP

are primarily involved (that is the majority of their time, personnel, and resources) with ministry to persecuted Christians and/or on religious liberty issues in whatever context and strategy.

“One of the primary goals of the partnership,” says Mervyn Thomas, CEO of Christian Solidarity Worldwide in the UK, and Chairman of the RLP Leadership Team, “is to promote working together rather than competing with one another. We believe that is God’s heart and will produce real

synergy in all we do.” Other members of the RLP Leadership Team include Johan Candelin of the WEA Religious Liberty Commission, Johan Companjen of Open Doors International, Glenn Penner, of Voice of the Martyrs in Canada, and Linus Pfister of HMK, Switzerland.

For a copy of the Zurich Statement or more information on the work of the Religious Liberty Partnership, contact: Brian@REACTServices.com <<

Religious Liberty Organizations Call for

Global Prayer for China

March 28, 2008

ZURICH, March 2008 - In a historic move, key organizations that work with the persecuted church around the world launched a global campaign calling for prayer for China. In what is called “The Zurich Statement,” the Religious Liberty Partnership (RLP), with member organizations that include Open Doors International, Christian Solidarity Worldwide, the Voice of the Martyrs (Canada), and the Religious Liberty Commission of World Evangelical Alliance, have called the worldwide Christian community to pray for China during this Summer Olympics year.

The Zurich Statement acknowledges some important progress made in China over the past few decades and raises the hope that this will translate into the removal of remaining obstacles to the full expression of faith and an end to serious violations of religious freedom. In addition, the Statement recognizes potential of the Chinese nation as a sig-

nificant political and economic force for the furtherance of regional and global peace.

“The call for prayer is rooted in the fact that the RLP felt it was time to acknowledge some progress in China’s attitude toward religious liberty and also the part Christians play at all levels of Chinese society,” stated Mervyn Thomas, CEO of Christian Solidarity Worldwide, UK, and Chairman of the RLP leadership team. “There is still a very long way to go and religious freedom is something very alien to many Christians in China. However Christians all over the world have been praying for their Chinese family for many years and I believe we are beginning to see the impact of those prayers today.”

“What a change we have seen in the nearly 30 years since my first visit to China,” said Johan Companjen of Open Doors International in Holland and a member of the RLP leadership team. “In spite of many obstacles, the Church in China has

multiplied. What seemed impossible in the past has happened because around the world we joined the Chinese Christians in prayer and our Chinese brothers and sisters have been willing to pay the price for following Jesus. If we continue to pray, we may be surprised by what God will do in the coming 30 years.”

The Religious Liberty Partnership (RLP) is a collaborative effort of Christian organizations focused on religious liberty. The RLP seeks to more intentionally work together in addressing advocacy and in raising the awareness of religious persecution globally. The current membership of the RLP is listed on the Zurich Statement.

For more information about the Religious Liberty Partnership or the Zurich Statement, please contact Brian O’Connell:

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