

Report on Europe-Africa Reconciliation Process Conference in Berlin, Germany – 18th & 19th November 2005

We are so grateful to you for your prayers and to God for bringing us to a fulfilment of the *Europe-Africa Reconciliation Process* in Berlin earlier this month. It was a little under 7 years since we began to search God's heart for something to grasp in the Spirit to unravel the sinful history of Europe. Few of us Europeans understood anything then about the *Berlin West Africa Conference* of 1884/5 – of how it is a symbol in Africa of the greed and arrogance of colonial Europe. What a journey it has been since then! Our Berlin conference was a very moving occasion where we had representatives from around 20 European and 25 African nations present committed to prayer and reconciliation.



The focus of the event was a “solemn assembly” where we re-enacted the posture of the conference in 1884-1885 with its focus on the carving up of Africa by Europe. We set out at large auditorium with a table in the centre and national delegations set all around – but this time we sought to come in the opposite spirit. Delegates from 14 European nations were at the table – from Austria (modern representatives included Austrians, Hungarian

& Czechs), Belgium (Flemish & Walloon), Denmark, France, Germany (our hosts in Berlin poured themselves out in servanthood), Great Britain (English, Welsh & Irish), Holland, Italy, Portugal (sadly no-one came from Portugal, but my wife Charlotte who grew up in colonial Angola as a beneficiary of white rule there was more than adequate as a representative), Russia, Spain, Sweden (which then ruled Norway – a delegation came with a letter of confession from some Christian MPs in Sweden), Turkey and USA (“Western” if not strictly European, and present because the delegates were witnesses in the 19th century conference).

In contrast to 1885, we had African delegates there too. They came from Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Algeria, Congo (Kinshasa), Angola, Ethiopia, Uganda, Senegal, Togo, Kenya, Tanzania, Lesotho, Rwanda, Ghana, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Gabon, Benin, South Africa, Burundi & Sierra Leone (and I might have missed some others!) More would have come if their visas had been granted. We cleared the decks of any other business at this conference and made space the whole of Saturday for declarations of

confession, repentance and forgiveness. It took the whole day and it was a deep thing – we felt something shift for sure, although even at the end, we recognised this was but a new beginning and we would have to show fruit of repentance.



But this event does not stand alone. The wonderful Holy Spirit of God is giving us light to liberate the church from the Spirit of Empire – this means that as a post-colonial nation and continent we may find fresh grace to shake off the wicked legacy of our sin and begin to find a redemptive future. As we approach the end of the 12 years since Toronto broke (for many of us this season has been mainly about repentance and reconciliation) we can see times beginning to turn. It is incredible to me that in the last 6 weeks of this year God is bringing to a conclusion two 7 year cycles of repentance. For so shortly after Berlin, I travel with my daughter later today to Arkansas and then Oklahoma to see another 7 year prayer journey concluded. Some faithful souls have been working to cleanse the land of the holocausts of the Native Americans on the Trail of Tears in the Midwest of USA and have tracked the roots back through Ireland to the Spirit of Empire in England. So here we go again – please cover us in prayer for this stuff is real. Sue Mitchell and other praying souls from these islands will join us later. All this is happening while there is a bill on the floor of the Senate calling for a National Apology to the Native Americans and while good old Steve Lowton is slogging on his walk through Italy – from Whitby to Rome. I will join a group to help him into Rome – 21st December (3 sevens?) and the shortest day!

For those who are interested, I attach the British and Portuguese statements of confession from Berlin:

British Statement to the Conference Table – Berlin, 19/11/05¹

We as the nations of Great Britain & Ireland confess and repent of the sins we have committed against Africa and Africans from many nations, and against the Living God – Father, Son & Holy Spirit. We repent with a deep sense of guilt and shame of the following:

1. Competition with our fellow European nations for imperial domination in the world that contributed to the Scramble for Africa and the Berlin West Africa Conference of 1884/5
2. The imposition of the Empire Spirit upon Africa carrying as it does racial, cultural and linguistic superiority, the will to rule and an exclusive spirit
3. Taking rather than giving – we greedily pillaged the nations, taking the riches and resources of the lands of Africa such as gold, silver, copper, diamonds, oil, rubber and cash crops like cotton, coffee, tea, cocoa and ground nuts
4. Dehumanising and degrading Africans, treating them as goods, calling them “black ivory”, perpetrating the evil of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, failing

¹ *Drafted by British & Irish delegation to the Europe-Africa Reconciliation Conference 18-19 November 2005; edited by Brian Mills, Roger Mitchell & Chris Seaton; presented to the conference by Chris & Brian*

- adequately to judge and reform slaving within Africa and categorising Africans as inferior people
5. Robbing Africans of their destiny and identity through an ideology of superiority which was carried through education, government and employment opportunities
 6. Covenant breaking as we lied and deceived African leaders into signing away their rights and their lands for trivial returns
 7. Allowing our nation to be a seedbed for a global demonic spirit that today through globalisation in Africa perpetuates the locking up of the destiny of nations
 8. Shedding innocent blood through wars of conquest, economic and social displacements and unjust governance
 9. Imposing concentration camps in South Africa which created the ground for apartheid and was recycled by the Nazis
 10. By the roots of our arrogance and selfish ease, we gave room to the fruits of freemasonry & the occult that we were already approving in our own lands.
 11. Creating unjust trade patterns: taking primary resources from Africa and selling them back as manufactured goods to the detriment of the balance of payments in African economies
 12. Corrupting the agricultural patterns of African nations so that instead of growing food for its people, we encouraged cash crops to be grown for European markets
 13. Cultural domination through the imposition of the English Language in education, politics and all areas of life
 14. Inflicting the unresolved spiritual wounds of our own islands upon Africa through our damaged children, e.g. Henry Morton Stanley and Frederick Luggard
 15. Presenting the gospel to the African peoples without separating adequately the unholy alliance of the Church from the Empire and the Empire Spirit, which included imposing denominations and failing to recognise that God had opened Africa to Britain for the expansion of the Kingdom of God

“We have plundered many nations, shed innocent blood and built our realm by unjust gain. We have plotted the ruin of many tribes and peoples. We have piled up stolen good making ourselves wealthy by extortion and have by deceit and treachery made false covenants.” Habakkuk 2:6-10

Portuguese Statement to the Conference Table – 19/11/05²

On behalf of Portugal, I confess and repent of the sins we have committed against Africa and Africans from many nations, and against the Lord. I repent of the following:

² *Drafted by Charlotte & Chris Seaton (after dialogue with brothers present at the conference from Angola) and presented by Charlotte to the conference on behalf of our Portuguese cousin on 19th November 2005*

1. Being the leading European nation to colonise Africa with all its evil consequences
2. Being the first nation to bring slaves from Africa to Europe, holding slave markets in Portugal and transporting African slaves to the Americas
3. Enjoying an abusive trading role with Africa for centuries, including being the last European nation to abandon the Transatlantic Slave Trade and the last to abolish slavery in our possessions
4. Treating Africans with great cruelty and inhumanity, including taking women for ourselves, killing Africans with little conscience and disregarding African culture and identity
5. Behaving wickedly in Africa with pride, arrogance, cruelty, greed, jealousy and hatred
6. Imposing our language not just as a lingua franca but as a replacement for all African languages spoken in our possessions, calling your languages, "the language of dogs"
7. Denying the value of African distinctiveness in their identity, culture, history and language and brutally robbing you of these things
8. Coveting the riches of Africa and treating Africa as a source of wealth for ourselves, including the large immigrations of the 20th century, where we rushed to your lands to make ourselves rich
9. Bringing a spirit of division to the people and to the land
10. Competing with and coveting against the modern European nations as they scrambled for Africa, causing more division
11. Wrongly preaching the gospel by encouraging Africans to stay poor whilst we continued to rob you
12. Arrogance in the education systems we created in Africa, teaching only Portuguese history and glorying in past conquests
13. Presenting the Africans with the option of assimilation as the only way of acceptability
14. Vindictiveness as we left Africa without any satisfactory means of social, economic or political stability and security leading to civil war and appalling poverty



We ask you to stay in prayer for this process until we can truly say that Europe and Africa are healed.

Chris Seaton
Bognor Regis
28th November 2005