



# Challenge and Opportunity

## *for the Global Network of Mission Structures*

YONG CHO

It has been a privilege to serve as the first International Director of the Global Network of Mission Structures (GNMS). As we have begun to promote the GNMS within Asia, I see more and more the need and potential for such a structure to be developed; it is essential. From our Korean perspective we are growing to appreciate the need for better coordination in the global mission movement at every level. But not only here, around the world strong momentum is building to see international collaboration to finish the assignment our Lord gave us almost two millennia ago. Indeed, as we approach the 2000-year anniversary of the Great Commission, just 15-20 years away, it is fitting that we give our all to reach the remaining peoples and places that are still without a disciple-making movement in their midst.

Although the Church in Korea is not growing as fast as it once was in the 1970s and 1980s, the Korean missionary movement is growing faster than perhaps any mission movement in history. Other non-Western church movements are growing quickly; most peaked in their growth rates around a decade ago — the result of massive church-planting for many decades in unchurched regions. Now something amazing is happening: as these churches have grown stronger internally, a new generation of pioneers is being raised up to take the gospel beyond their borders.

What this means is that the great strength of the non-Western church in the global mission movement is just beginning to be felt. The national goal of the Korean church is to send out 100,000 missionaries in the next 20 years; the Chinese church and Filipino church have similar goals. We are witnessing an enormous shift in the center of gravity of foreign mission sending.



*Dr. Yong Cho is the International Director of the Global Network of Mission Structures.*

In the last two centuries, foreign mission sending has been the domain of the Western world. For the most part, the non-Western mission movement has primarily been contained to domestic missionary deployment. Even throughout the 1980s and 1990s non-Western cross-cultural missionaries serving outside of their country represented just a fraction of the foreign mission total. But that is changing — rapidly! The day will come when even the majority of personnel serving with international missions of Western origin will be made up predominately of non-Western cross-cultural missionaries.

While this transition confronts us with many challenges, the exciting news is, if we all work together, there are more than enough missionary personnel to finish the task. The issue is not a lack of resources to reach the remaining unreached peoples. It is simply a matter of better coordination. Therefore, it is imperative that we continually confront ourselves with some basic, challenging questions in order to effectively plan for the next decade. First and foremost, where are the highest priority places to send the next generation of foreign missionary personnel? What is the role of the expatriate mission force in today's world with so many national churches emerging in what used to be former mission fields? How can we work together more effectively between expatriate and national mission forces, and not at cross-purposes? More importantly, could a new wave of expatriate missionary deployment actually cause more harm than good in some areas? As we are witnessing even now, the over-deployment of missionaries to some fields is actually setting back the independence and growth of the indigenous church.

The time has come to begin to address these issues at the global, regional and national levels in dialogue with every major mission sending country and

agency. It is our hope that this conversation will continue following the Tokyo 2010 Global Mission Consultation. Might we for the first time in history develop a global strategy with wide inter-mission cooperation to finish the task? Can we work together to recruit, train and place 100,000 additional missionaries among the least-reached peoples in the next ten years? What's it going to take? What things do we need to change? What structures need to be overhauled? Are new wineskins required?

The first assignment of the GNMS was to get this conversation going by organizing this historic gathering of mission agency leaders, commemorating the 1910 meeting in both spirit and purpose. For the last several years we have been putting all our effort into this historic gathering. The process itself of bringing together an international coalition to organize this meeting has served to strengthen the GNMS in many ways, forging important ties and alliances with regional and national networks and mission leaders.

Almost all of the top leaders of the largest mission associations were represented at Tokyo 2010, and they have agreed to begin meeting together regularly. In addition to these leaders, many international mission directors and regional field leaders were also present. A good number of these gathered together for the Global Coordination Task Force at Tokyo 2010, which looked at how to better tackle the issue of the unengaged and under-engaged, unreached peoples at the regional level. Here at this gathering, the leaders of Campus Crusade for Christ made a commitment to help organize engagement task force

meetings in every country in the world that requires such effort.

The Edinburgh 1910 World Missionary Conference is remembered primarily for what emerged from the conference. For example, the International Missionary Council helped the mission movement network for many decades and facilitated the development of strong national churches with indigenous leadership, of which Korea is a shining example of success. We are the fruit of healthy mission cooperation going back over a century.

One result from the Korean example of inter-mission cooperation was that when we began to send missionaries from Korea, we sought to work together on the field level as well. The Korean World Missionary Fellowship, which I served as its former general secretary and chairman, represents almost every Korean missionary on the field, with both national and regional field counterparts. Despite our denominational differences and various Christian traditions, we have been able to come together for the sake of fulfilling the Great Commission. It is my hope that we might see similar forums develop that will enable the entire global mission movement to interface on national, regional and global levels, to the end that indigenous churches might flourish in every nation, tribe, people and language in our generation. 🌐

*More information about Tokyo 2010 follow-up and the Global Network of Mission Structures can be found at [www.gnms.net](http://www.gnms.net).*

## *Statement from the Hindu Peoples' Task Force, Tokyo 2010*

The challenges involved in engaging the Hindu world with the gospel of Christ are vast and complex. The small group focused on that challenge at Tokyo 2010 could not produce a great plan or strategy or network. Many triumphalistic claims and grandiose efforts in the past have failed to impress, in fact have offended and hardened, our Hindu friends. We hereby call the church of Jesus Christ to embrace deep humility in relationships with Hindus as the only foundation for engaging the Hindu world.

We wrestled at length with issues related to caste, a deep and intractable problem. We acknowledged the ongoing problems of caste in the churches of India, as well as the fact that for each of us caste is like a wound in a secret place that we ourselves cannot see and certainly would never show to anyone else.

We embrace the dynamism of 21st-century India and the transmutations of caste happening in the modern world. We regret that Christianity too often and too easily appears to Hindus as just another caste group or separate community.

As the gospel impacts caste networks, we affirm our willingness to allow the Holy Spirit to work out the complexity of caste matters through Hindus who surrender to Christ. We will resist the temptation to offer our "Christian" solutions to new followers of Christ who might wish to maintain with integrity their relationships in caste-based communities, if and as people movements to Christ develop among unreached peoples/castes among Hindus. Our one concern is the glory of Christ in the Hindu world. May the word of the Lord spread rapidly and be honored among Hindus (2 Thessalonians 3:1).