



LtCol Michael JEDLIČKA
AMI Secretary General
Am Sportplatz 22, A-2191 SCHRICK
AUSTRIA

Tel. 0043 / 676 / 756 / 4132
Fax 00 43 / 2574 / 28480
E-mail: ami.jedlicka@aon.at or
secretarygeneral@ami-international.org

To the
Catholic Military Bishops

Schrick, 20. October 2008

To the Members and Friends
of the Apostolat Militaire International (AMI)

Your Eminence, Your Excellency, Most Reverend Military Bishop,
Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Members and Friends of AMI,

this year's General Assembly and Conference of the Apostolat Militaire International (AMI) was held at the conference centre Mennorode in ELSPEET, the Netherlands, from 05 to 12 September 2008.

For documentation of this Annual General Assembly all topics, presentations and results of all working groups and also a collection of photos will be attached on this DVD.

Best wishes - Yours in our Lord sincerely

Michael JEDLIČKA

Lieutenant Colonel
AMI Secretary General

Apostolate Militaire International (AMI)
Summary of the „General Assembly and Conference 2008 at the
conference centre Mennorode in Elspeet, Netherlands, 05 to 12
September 2008“

The Annual General Assembly 2008 was conducted in the Netherlands. We kindly thank our hosts from the Netherlands for their shown exemplary hospitality and their excellent organization of our conference.

We originally intended to go to Nigeria for the General Assembly 2008 but we had to change our plans and to commit ourselves to a new project- “AMI-General Assembly 2008 in the Netherlands”. During the whole time of preparation we enjoyed a very constructive, busy and fruitful cooperation between the organizing team of the Netherlands and the AMI Executive Committee. Our special gratitude has to go to **Mrs. Nelleke Swinkels** and to **Mr. LtCol (R) Gerard DYKERS**, both are the initiators and pioneers of the project “AMI-General Assembly 2008 in the Netherlands”. At the same moment we also need to honour **Jan VAN LIVERLOO** for a splendid preparation of the Liturgy and all other members of the NL organizing team for their support.

We also want to thank all the responsible representatives of the **NL Armed Forces**, of the **National Katholiek Thuisfront** and of the **NL Military Catholic Chaplaincy** for their distinguished assistance.

The president of ACOM, Mr. Jan KLEIAN, deserves our special gratitude. He established the preconditions to conduct our conference in the Netherlands with a well organised performance and the necessary financial support with his organisation.

I am sure that I can speak in the name of all participants of our Annual General Assembly. I want to point out that we were deeply impressed and excited about the warm welcome, the special hospitality and organization and also the wonderful arrangement of the supporting programme of this conference.

For the summary of contents subsequent information has to be mentioned:

The Annual General Assembly 2008 was highlighted with
**“Strengthening Christian Values within Armed Forces
Worldwide”**

1. Based on the following presentations, which were well prepared and carried out with enormous engagement by Professor Dr. Desireé VERWEIJ (NL Def Academy), Brigadier Cristoph AMMON (German Armed Forces) and Professor Dr. Karlijn DEMASURE (St. Paul University, Ottawa, Canada).

- **Ethics and Operations**
- **Leadership in Mission, demands on leader and leadership**
- **Post-traumatic spirituality and its effects on coping**

Separate working groups were implemented in order to deal with the ideas of his Excellency Bishop Burns concerning the current situation and the future of AMI. A new AMI overall topic for the next 3 years and new projects were discussed. WO II Andreas KOPPERS will lead the documentation project of the history of AMI until the jubilee in 2015 (AMI has been founded in 1965 in Santiago di Compostella, Spain).

2. It was unanimously agreed to establish a new **“Permanent Working Group”** throughout the next 3 years. This Working Group will be chaired by our ecclesiastical assistant bishop’s curate Monsignore Dr. Werner FREISTETTER and will be tasked with following topic:

“The declaration of the AMI General Assembly on 15. November 2000 in Rome: The Catholic Soldier at the beginning of the 3rd millenium”.

- Review of the declaration of Rome
- The declaration of Rome- guidelines for the Christian Soldier

3. At the 2006 conference in Switzerland we decided to establish a **“Project-Team”** which created a new AMI-folder. This **“Project-Team”** was chaired by Nelleke SWINKELS from the Netherlands and was supported by Army Chaplain Annie WALSHARTS (Belgium). A proposal was presented, discussed and unanimously agreed by all eligible to vote delegates. I want to thank Nelleke and Annie- they have done an excellent job.

4. Colonel (GS) KLOSS informed about the new design and development of our AMI-homepage. Sergeant Neil GALLOWAY (UK) gave us some useful suggestions which will be implemented immediately.

You are able to visit this homepage by using these addresses:

- ami-international.org
- apostolatmilitaireinternational.com

Please note that there are two e-mail addresses for the AMI-President and the AMI-Secretary General:

- president@ami-international.org
- secretarygeneral@ami-international.org

We want to link the AMI-homepage with the homepage of your national organisation. We need the address of your homepage. In case you did not give us the address of your homepage please send it to the mentioned address above. We would be grateful if you could provide us with any suggestions in order to improve our website.

5. LTC JEDLIČKA informed comprehensively about his attempts to get the NGO-status and his request for this NGO- Legal Status at the Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs. During the last 3 years the Headquarters of AMI have been located in Austria. In order to get the NGO-status AMI has to undergo the valid Austrian Law. According to the Austrian Federal Law a NGO, which fulfils the Austrian Legal Basic requirements, can concede the Legal Status of an organisation by notification of the Secretary of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Unfortunately, our application has been rejected because we had no proof for a cooperation with other international organisations like UN or OSCE in Vienna. I did not have enough time to start a second effort or to intervene.

The ExCom has originally decided that we will start a new application with the new AMI General Secretary in 2009. A final consensus about this intention could not be achieved because some countries told us (especially Kenya, Great Britain and Spain) that there are objections of their Military Bishops against the intention to get the NGO-status. It was agreed to inform all AMI member countries about this project until the next conference for a final decision.

6. HIV/AIDS poses an unprecedented development and human challenge, especially in Africa. In many countries, the epidemic has cut life expectancy and robbed society of millions of people in their prime working years. It has dimmed the hope of living full and productive lives for unimaginable numbers of infants, children, and young adults. Because of the problems in their countries concerning HIV/AIDS, **Kenya and Malawi** asked all delegates to support their efforts to help people affected by the consequences of HIV/AIDS, with focus on the care of orphans. All AMI member countries and associated member countries are requested to clarify within their national organisations if there are any possibilities to support our friends from Kenya and Malawi with their endeavours to assist for charitable projects concerning HIV/AIDS.

AMI General Secretariat requests for answers until:

15. January 2009.

7. The delegation of Slovenia has asked to support their ambitions and their work to establish a Catholic lay organisation within the Armed forces of Slovenia.
Especially they would like to learn from the know-how and the experiences of other countries. All AMI member countries and associated member countries are requested to clarify within their national organisations if there are any possibilities to support our friends in Slovenia.

AMI General Secretariat requests for answers until:

15. January 2009.

8. The Financial report 2006/2007 was presented by the Secretary General. The Executive Committee was unanimously discharged by all eligible to vote delegates.
9. Because of the end of the election period of the AMI Presidency and the AMI Secretary General in December 2008 we elected the AMI-Presidency and AMI-Secretariat General:
- **Germany** - with the agreement of the Military Bishop - applied for the AMI **Presidency** 2009 - 2011. Candidate is Colonel GS Reinhard KLOSS.
 - **The Netherlands** - with the agreement of the Military Bishop - applied for the AMI **Secretariat General** 2009 - 2011. Candidate is Mrs. Nelleke SWINKELS

The following AMI Members present at the General Assembly had the right to vote: Austria, Belgium, Germany, Kenya, The Netherlands, Spain, United Kingdom.

Results: Germany was elected unanimously by open ballot for the AMI Presidency and the Netherlands were elected unanimously by open ballot for the AMI Secretariat General.

As successors of LTC PREUSS from GERMANY and MAJ AERTS from BELGIUM, LTC Michael JEDLIČKA (Austria) and LTC Andreas PREUSS (Germany) have volunteered to take over responsibilities as auditors. All eligible to vote delegates have unanimously agreed for this personnel decision.

LTC Michael JEDLIČKA (Austria) was elected unanimously by open ballot to be the new liaison officer to the Forum of Catholic-inspired NGOs for the next 3 years.

Austria will organize the upcoming AMI Annual General Assembly. It will take part in the Catholic conference centre St. Georgen am Längsee near the capital of the province Carinthia- Klagenfurt -, between **10.-16. October 2009.**

Topics for our conference in 2009 should be nominated until to the Secretary General:

15. January 2009.

10. According to a suggestion from Kenya at our conference in Switzerland it was commonly agreed that in some cases (this includes for example the African countries) invitations for the next conference should be sent first to the official addresses of the armed forces of each member country and of the associated countries. Therefore the team of the AMI Secretariat General needs these addresses as soon as possible. Please send your answers per e-mail to the Secretary General until

15. January 2009.

No answer until the above mentioned date means that your country does not need special invitation letters for the official addresses of the armed forces.

One more time I want to express my personal gratitude for the excellent cooperation during the last 3 years. I enjoyed my function period as Secretary General of AMI very much and I am looking forward to remain within the ExCom as liaison officer to the Forum of Catholic-inspired NGOs.

Best wishes - Yours in our Lord sincerely

Michael JEDLIČKA

Lieutenant Colonel
AMI Secretary General