



# A LIVING HOPE

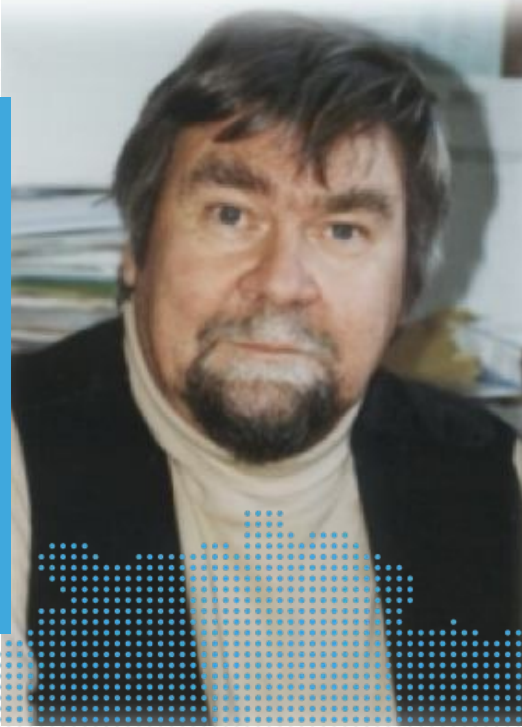
*Bringing light to hidden places — for over 40 years of quiet service.*

October 2025

**40 years**



Chaplain Pekka Viiree



## Founded in Bossey, Switzerland 1985

The Finnish chaplain Pekka Viiree took the initiative to a network of European chaplains.

During the first ten years, with Peter Rassow as president, IPCA worked a lot with expanding around the world. Alan Duce from the U.K. contacted the World Council of Churches and got names and contact information to prison chaplains around the world.

With financial support from the Correctional Services Canada (CSC) the numbers of participants of the conferences in 1995, 2000 and 2005 increased a lot and more than 300 chaplains from more than 70 countries participated

During his time in Vienna, the Protestant Reverend Pekka Viiree visited St. Stephen's Cathedral and saw a Painting of the Virgin Mary.

As he meditated, he saw Mary as the “Mother of the Sentenced Jesus” and this encouraged him to develop the vision of an international forum for Prison Chaplains as they seek to serve those serving their sentences.





During the first ten years, with Reverend **Peter Rassow** (Germany) as president, IPCA worked a lot with expanding around the world. Reverend Alan Duce from the U.K. contacted the Churches, the United Nations, Universities in Finland and the Netherlands, the World Council of Churches and got names and contact information of prison chaplains around the world.

From 1995, with financial support from the Correctional Services of Canada (CSC), under the presidency of Reverend Doctor **Pierre Allard** (Canada) the numbers of participants of the conferences in 1995 and 2000 increased a lot and in 2005, more than 300 chaplains from more than 70 countries participated.

In the 1995 conference the theme was “Reconciliation: the Challenge for Prison Chaplains”.

Quote from the conference declaration:

### To governments

“The conference is aware of the success of “Victim/Offender Reconciliation Schemes”.

It expresses the hope all Governments will put more resources in developing the reconciliation possible between victims and offenders.”



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PSALMS 60.2—62.6

2 Thou hast made the land to tremble; thou hast rent it: Heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh.  
3 Thou hast showed thy people hard things: Thou hast made us to drink the wine of staggerings.  
4 Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, That it may be displayed because of the truth. [Sē'lāh  
5 That thy beloved may be delivered, Save with thy right hand, and answer us.  
6 God hath spoken in his holiness: I will exult; I will divide Shē'chem, and mete out the valley of Sūc'cōth.  
7 Gīl'ē-ād is mine, and Mā-nās'sēh is mine; E'phrā-im also is the defence of my head; Jū'dāh is my sceptre.  
8 Mō'āb is my washpot; Upon E'dōm will I cast my shoe: Phī-lis'tī-ā, shout thou because of me.  
9 Who will bring me into the strong city? Who hath led me unto E'dōm?  
10 Hast not thou, O God, cast us off? And thou goest not forth, O God, with our hosts.  
11 Give us help against the adversary; For vain is the help of man.  
12 Through God we shall do valiantly; For he it is that will tread down our adversaries.

Confidence in God's Protection.

For the Chief Musician; on a stringed instrument. A Psalm of David.

61 Hear my cry, O God; Attend unto my prayer.  
2 From the end of the earth will I call unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed:

<sup>1</sup>Another reading is, *me*. <sup>2</sup>Or, *laughter* for *cry*. <sup>3</sup>Or, *unto*. <sup>4</sup>Or, *who will lead me down*. <sup>5</sup>Or, *will not thou, O God, who hast cast us off and quest . . . hosts?* <sup>6</sup>Heb. *salvation* for, *faithful*.

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.  
3 For thou hast been a refuge for me.  
4 A strong tower to the enemy.  
5 I will dwell in thy tabernacle for ever: I will take refuge in the covert of thy wings. [Sē'lāh  
6 For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: Thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name.  
7 Thou wilt prolong the king's life; His years shall be as many generations.  
8 He shall abide before God for ever: Oh prepare lovingkindness and truth, that they may preserve him.  
9 So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, That I may daily perform my vows.

God alone a Refuge from Treachery and Oppression.

For the Chief Musician; after the manner of Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.

62 My soul waiteth in silence for God only: From him cometh my salvation.  
2 He only is my rock and my salvation: He is my high tower; I shall not be greatly moved.  
3 How long will ye set upon a man, That ye may slay him, all of you, Like a leaning wall, like a tottering fence?  
4 They only consult to thrust him down from his dignity; They delight in lies; They bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. [Sē'lāh  
5 My soul, wait thou in silence for God only; For my expectation is from him.  
6 He only is my rock and my salvation:

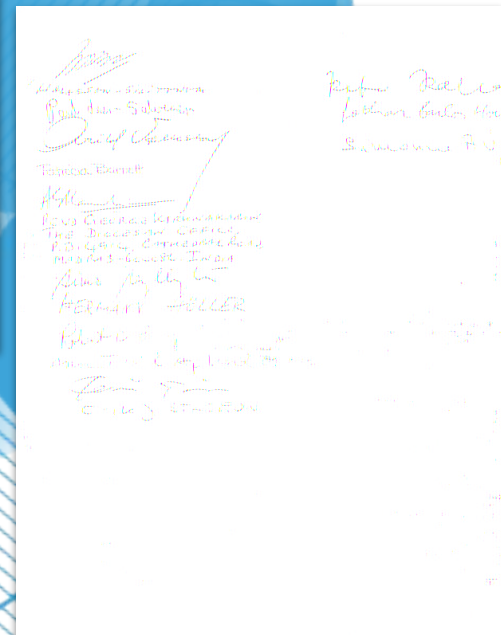
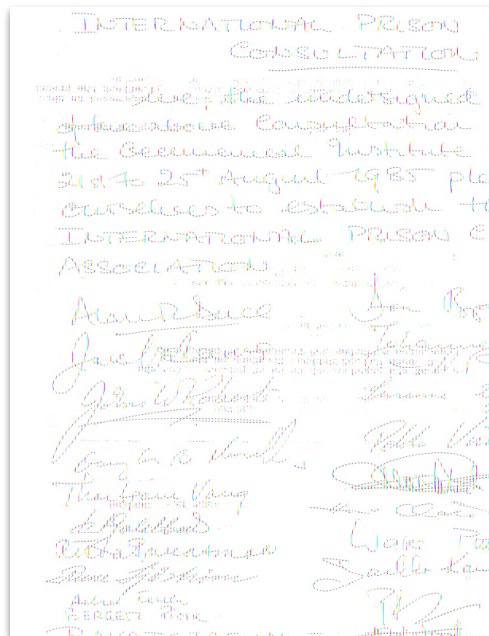
<sup>1</sup>Or, *a rock that is too high for me*. <sup>2</sup>Heb. *and*. <sup>3</sup>Or, *when a heralding unto those &c.* <sup>4</sup>Heb. *is silent unto God*. <sup>5</sup>Or, *as otherwise read, Ye shall be slain &c.* <sup>6</sup>Heb. *be thou silent unto God*.

“ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. ”  
— 2 Corinthians 5:18 (NIV)



22.8.1985 Thursday

- 8.15 Breakfast
- 9.00 Morning prayer Norway
- 9.30 Plenary Session: Topic 1:I-II.
- 10.30 Coffee break
- 11.00 plenary continues
- 12.30 Lunch
- 13.30 Group meetings: Topic 1: III-V (Victimes of crime Youth. crime and justice. Formulation and application of United Nations Standars and norms in criminal justice(Human Rights)Solitary confinements. Longs Term imprisonment challenge to theology)
- 15.30 Tee
- Group nseetinos continues
- 17.00 Plenary .session: Topic [II-V
- 18.30 Dinner
- 20.00 Evening seminar : Human rights a challenge to Prison Chaplains and theology. Introduced by Alan Duce
- 22.00 Evening liturgy Norway



Revised Program of  
The INTERNATIONAL PRISON ,CHAPLAINS CONSULTATION  
21-25.08.1985

The Ecumenical Institute, CHATEAU DE BOSSEY  
 CH-129S CELINGNY, Switzerland  
 Telephone: Geneva (022) 762531

PROGRAMME

21.8.1985, Wednesday

Arrival of participants  
 12.00-14.45  
 12.30 Lunch  
 13.30-14.45 Registration of participants  
 Ecumenical Institute

15.00 Opening Session

15.30 Tee  
 16.30 Formation of working groups  
 16.45 Group meetings: Topic 1: I-I (New Dimensions  
 ininiality and crime prevention in the context of  
 development: challenge for the future and theology,  
 Criminal justice processes and perspectives in a  
 changing world.  
 18.30 Dinner  
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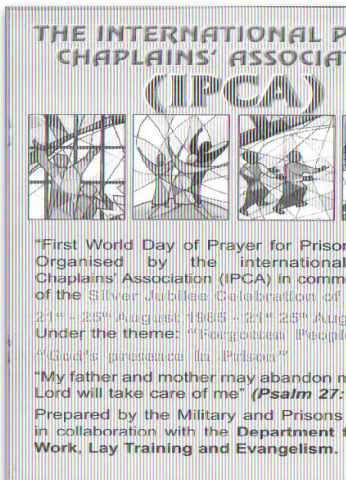
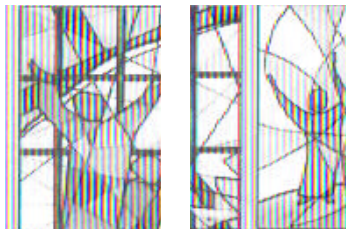
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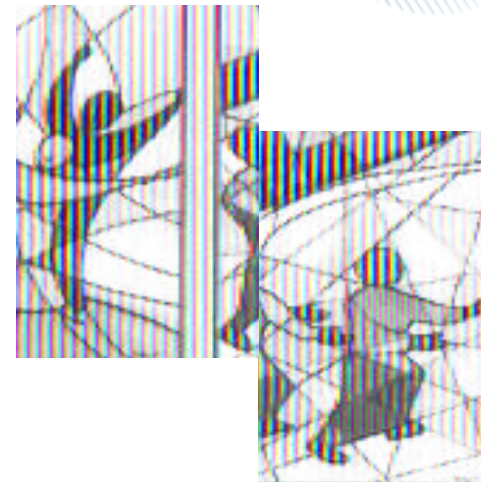
First World Day of Prayer for Prison Ministry  
Organised by the international Prison  
Chaplains' Association (IPCA) in commemoration  
of the Silver Jubilee Celebration of IPCA  
21st - 25th August 1985 - 21st - 25th August 2009

Under the theme: **"Forgotten People"**

"God Presence in Prison"

***"My father and mother may  
abandon me but the Lord will  
take care of me" (Psalm 27:10)***

Prepared by the Military and Prisons Chaplain  
in collaboration with the Department for Men's Work, Lay Training and Evangelism.



During a meeting in Manila in the Philippines in **November 2008** the steering committee decided to announce a yearly World Day of Prayer for all prison ministries including Prison Chaplains, volunteers, inmates, their families, victims etc. Hence every 25th August is the World Day of Prayer for Prison Ministry, which is the IPCA birthdate.

The symbol of **IPCA** depicts prison bars broken by the cross of reconciliation and intersected by rays of God's spirit comforting the world.



## **DAY ONE: 21ST AUGUST 2009.**

Launching of Activities with Worship Services in Prison:

Psalm 27:1-14

First Lesson: Isaiah 42:6-9

Second Lesson: Deuteronomy: 30:1-20

Text: John 14:1-6

God remains our light and Salvation in the darkness of prison. Our parents, relatives and loved ones may abandon us but He will take care of us.

While in prison we should ask Him what He wants us to do. Even those unjustly imprisoned should ask Him to lead them along a safe path because of their enemies who attack them with lies and threats. While in prison we should believe that we will live to see God's goodness.

We should Trust in the Lord, Have Faith and not Despair.

God has called us to prison ministry and given us power to see that justice is done on earth. Through our ministry He makes a covenant with all people: inmates, prison administrators and the community of God's people. Through our devotion and commitment to seek and do His will, he brings light to the nations to open the eyes of the blind and set free those who sit in dark prisons.



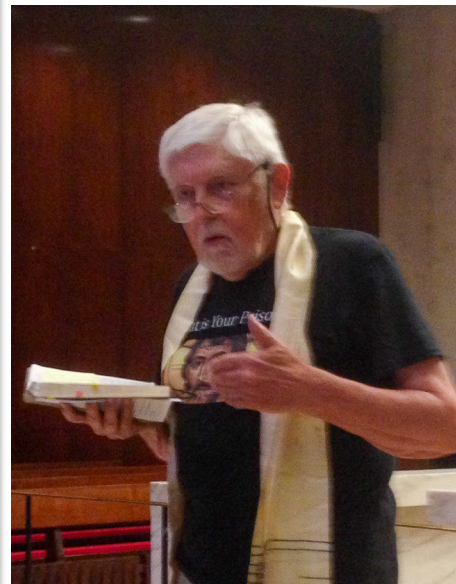
“Justice Reflections” – an important IPCA project as part of the IPCA Mission, under the leadership of Pierre Allard.

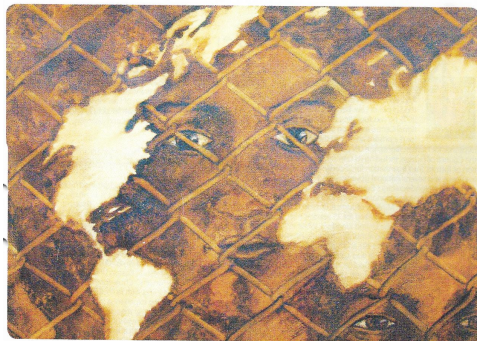
In conjunction with Queens University Theological College in Kingston, Canada an International Diploma in Restorative Justice was created and every summer a number of prison chaplains from different parts of the world – mostly from the developing countries - were at the University to take part in three weeks of intensive training.

Present Steering Committee/  
Regional Representatives

 Birgitta Winberg Sweden IPCA President 2005-2010	 Dwight Cuff Canada Vice President, Repr. North America	 Hennie Human South Africa Vice President, Repr. Africa		
 Rodolfo Diamante, Philippines Repr. Asia	 David Major New Zealand Repr. Oceania	 Malachy Keegan England Repr. Europe	 Samuel Novoa El Salvador Repr. Latin America	 Heinz-Peter Echnmeyer Germany Repr. ICCPPC
 Tom O'Connor USA Ass. Repr. North America	 Rodney Moore, Australia Ass. Repr. Oceania.	 Jean-Didier Mboyo Boko RD Congo Ass. Repr. Africa	 Kunjamon Chako India Ass. Repr. Asia	 Ricardo La Serna Peru Ass. Repr. Latin America
 Kieran Garvey New Zealand Senior Adviser	 Johan Lindén Sweden Presidents' Adviser	 Doris Bernhardson Sweden Project Manager Conference Coordi- nator.		

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# Forgotten People

IPCA VI  
Stockholm  
20-25 August 2010

At IPCA IV in South Africa in 2000 one of the biggest concerns was health of inmates.

Quote from the conference declaration:

## To Governments

“The conference asks all governments to show more concern about the dramatic spread of tuberculosis and AIDS. It urges them to improve welfare provision for those afflicted with these diseases.”

But it was also a very unique year!

## IPCA President Report 2005 - 2010

*My name is Birgitta Winberg. I am a priest in the Church of Sweden, and the President of IPCA since 2005. Before that I was a steering committee member at large for five years, and also the European representative.*

*The IPCA office was moved from Canada to Sweden after the latest world conference. The main interested parties in Sweden, as well as financiers, have been the Prison and Probation Service of Sweden and the Church of Sweden, and the Christian Council of Sweden.*

*My experience of this system has proven to be cumbersome and difficult for me. I have been employed by Church of Sweden, but I have staff and finances at Christian Council. Also the transfer from Canada to Sweden became very costly and took a long time.*

*To establish new structures for a project in Sweden also took a lot of time. We created a new website, based in Sweden, which was costly in money as well as in time.*

*An independent office somewhere in the world has been one of the main issues for the steering committee during these five years - I will come back to that. Another big financier has been the Correctional Service of Canada.*

*The Steering Committee has been convened once a year. The committee consisted of the representatives who were elected in the conference 2005:*

*Tobias Müller-Morning, representing Europe; Dwight Cuff, representing North America; Samuel Novoa representing Latin America; Rodolfo Diamante, representing Asia; Hennie Human, representing Africa; Ester Smart representing Oceania. In addition there is a permanent representative for IC-CPPC, as it has also been in earlier committees. For this period it has been Heinz-Peter Echtermeyer.*

*Quite soon I made the decision to engage a personal adviser, father Johan Lindén.*

*We had a consolidating steering committee meeting directly after the conference. In this meeting, and in our first real meeting in Sweden springtime 2006, the chairman of IPCA Europe was also present.*

*In the meeting in Sweden, some guests were participating. These included a representative from the ministry of foreign affairs, the general secretary of Christian*

*Council of Sweden, and the director general of Swedish Prison and Probation Service. During this meeting we discovered that a majority of the steering committee members had a problem to justify their participation in the steering committee in their regions. Nobody had heard about IPCA, they said, or financial level in prison/correctional service or churches. What level of organization was it? What was our mission? Did we have any bylaws? Where were we registered? And so on.*

*We were also starting to experience the effects of tighter financial control by the prison/correctional services and churches - those who are our main financiers. This brought us to a deepened discussion in the steering committee, about IPCA's future in our period of mandate, but also for the future. We felt a need of consolidation and to give more stability to IPCA. We worried about the survival of IPCA. We had the network and we all thought IPCA was one of the most important organizations in the world and therefore must remain.*

*So we turned to our elder sister organizations, PFI and ICCPC. They both had NGO status in UN for many years, and felt that was a factor in strengthening credibility.*

*So I travelled to Geneva with my adviser. We visited the representative of Prison Fellowship Europe in Lausanne; the World Council of Churches, the Franciscans International and the Quakers, organizations with goals and purposes close to our own. We did this to acquire knowledge from them, and to find the way into the UN, and to an application of consultative status.*

*After this we continued in Sweden by searching for bylaws in IPCA's archive, which we later transferred to statutes in the steering committee. We, the steering committee and the administration in Sweden, also started to create a members' register and tried to find out who in our network wanted to be members. Most of you probably thought you were members already, and were happy to confirm your membership.*

*The steering committee developed and published rules for elections. This was done in cooperation with Kieran Garvey from New Zealand, a former committee member who we co-opted as an expert on election procedures and formalities.*

*There were several defections from the steering com-*

## To Governments

“The conference notes that this is the Millennium Year. It invites leaders to make this a year of hope for prisoners by making every possible legal provision for amnesties. This could apply to prisoners serving less than twelve months and to women who have dependent children.”



Professor Andrew Coyle CMG

Andrew Coyle is Professor of Prison Studies in the School of Law, Between 1997 and February 2005 he was founding Director of the International Centre for Prison Studies in the School. He is a prisons adviser to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN Latin American Institute, the Council of Europe, including its Committee for the Prevention of Torture, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe and several national governments. He is a member of the UK Foreign Secretary's Expert Committee against Torture. Since 2000 he has been Honorary Professor in the Academy of Law and Management, Ministry of Justice, Russian Federation. Before coming to King's he worked for 25 years at a senior level in the prison services of the United Kingdom. While in the Scottish Prison Service he was Governor of Gretnock, Peterhead and Shotts Prisons. Between 1991 and 1997 he was Governor of Brixton Prison in London. He was appointed a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George in 2002 for his contribution to international penal reform. He is a Fellow of King's College.



Baroness Vivien Stern

During the 1990s Vivien Stern was Secretary General of Penal Reform International, a non government organisation promoting penal reform throughout the world. An acknowledged expert and commentator on alternatives to prison, Vivien has visited many countries to advise on penal reform, presented papers at numerous international conferences, and written and edited several books on the subject. Baroness Stern is Senior Research Fellow at the International Centre for Prison Studies. Her published books include "A Sin Against the Future: Imprisonment in the World", "Imprisoned by our Prisons and Bricks of Shame", "Britain's Prisons", "Deprived of their Liberty", "Alternatives to Prison in Developing Countries", and "Sentenced to Die? The problem of TB in prisons in Eastern Europe and Central Asia". She has been awarded honorary degrees of Doctor of Laws by Bristol University and by Oxford Brookes University and is an Honorary Fellow of USLSE. She is a Life Peer and sits in the House of Lords as a Crossbencher.



Ambassador Hans Corell

Former Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and the Legal Counsel of the United Nations. Hans Corell (Sweden) was Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and the Legal Counsel of the United Nations from March 1994 to March 2004. From 1962 to 1972, he served in the Swedish judiciary. In 1972, he joined the Ministry of Justice where he became Director of the Division for Administrative and Constitutional Law in 1979. In 1981, he was appointed Chief Legal Officer of the Ministry. He was Ambassador and Under-Secretary for Legal and Consular Affairs in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs from 1984 to 1994. Since his retirement from public service in 2004 he is engaged in many different activities in the legal field, inter alia as legal adviser, lecturer, and member of

## Speakers of the conference

different boards. Among other, he is involved in the work of the International Bar Association, the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life at Brandeis University and the Hague Institute for the Internationalisation of Law. He is Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law at Lund University, Sweden.



Rev Dr Chulepran Srisoontorn-Perons

Rev Dr Chulepran Srisoontorn-Perons, Chiang Mai, Thailand, is an ordained minister of the Church of Christ in Thailand. She's also a member of CCA-FMU (Christian Conference of Asia, Faith, Mission and Unity) and work active for ecumenism. As a professor at The Institute of Religion, Culture and Peace, she holds degrees in philosophy, theology and psychology of religion, counselling and world religions at Payap University, where she's also a member of Payap University Executive Committee. Her own PhD thesis at Boston University was on 'Religion, Culture and Personality'. Chulepran is actively involved in counselling people living with HIV/AIDS. She considers her time with them a learning experience on true forgiveness, valuing life and on the deeper meaning of happiness. Chulee feels that among CCAs challenges today are the need for peace and reconciliation, gender justice and the need to conduct programs that build up community. She is involved in prison chaplaincy, with a focus on hill tribes who often in Thailand don't have a citizenship, and are Thailand's most forgotten people. Like many other minority people in the world, To be able to give them more help, she has study law and she follows them to court to be their helper. She also works to get churches more involved in prison ministry, a hard task in a country with 1-2% Christians.



Rev Lauran Bethell

The Rev. Lauran Dale Bethell, an international advocate for exploited women and children, has worked for more than 20 years caring for women and children who have been exploited as well as those who are at risk of exploitation. She has also been an advocate for public education on exploitation. She was the first director of the New Life Center in Thailand, which has been recognized worldwide for its work with exploited women and children. 2000 she moved to the Czech Republic. There, she founded Project Hope, which ministered to women forced into prostitution on the streets of Prague, by beginning a prayer walk through the streets of Prague, literally looking for a way to connect to others walking the streets for a different reason. She talked with some of the young women on Prague's streets and found that many of them were from Bulgaria, working to support children or elderly parents back home.

Lauran Bethell is a Global Consultant, based in the Netherlands. She serves as a consultant to encourage and facilitate Christ-based ministries that address the exploitation and abuse of women and children. In 2005, she was presented the Human Rights Award of the Baptist World Alliance and in 2007 was given the Courage Award by the Whitsitt Society. She has also testified in the U.S. Congress on trafficking legislation.

## Report from IPCA Secretariat 2005-2010

### OFFICE

When IPCA moved to Sweden after the conference in Canada 2005, it was incorporated in the department for Prison Chaplaincy in Christian Council of Sweden, with the chaplain generals as the administrative supporters for the first 1½ years. From 2007 it was changed to a more independent project in Christian Council of Sweden, but still working close to the prison chaplaincy department.

### STAFF

Fall 2005 Rev. Kjell Mazetti, Chaplain General  
2006 Rev. Lars-Gunnar Skogar, Chaplain General, and assistant Gunnel Nasfors  
2007-2010 Rev. Doris Bernhardson, Project Manager  
1/1-30/6 2008 Rev. Nils Rönnbäck, Conference Planning  
1/3-31/8 2010 Mrs Inger Carnbo, Conference Administration

### MEMBERS

A new register has been constructed, with follow ups of old contacts and completing with new members. News has been sent out the all members via E-mail and a lot of communication has been going on with members around the world. Thanks to the register, it has been possible to give contact information for twinning between members from different parts of the globe. A few newsletters have been sent via E-mail. Invitation to the conference was sent both with E-mail and postal letter.

### WEBSITE

A new website has been created and has been used as the main tool for information. Some consists of the presentation of steering committee, portraits of members, photos from different events, prayer

room, educational material, book reviews, regional reports and articles, guest book, members' forum, and of course information about the conference.

### PRODUCTION

Information material has been produced; pamphlet for member's recruitment, presentation for fundraising, information sheets and roll up for conferences etc. Thanks to volunteers some of the material has been translated to French, Spanish and Arabic.

### GLOBAL DAY OF PRAYER 25 AUGUST

A global day of prayer for prison ministry was held for the first time 25th August 2009, with a program prepared in the African region of IPCA. An icon of Peter's release from prison is painted for IPCA, and is used as a symbol of the global day of prayer. The program was published at the website and a message sent out about it. Many members around the world gave feedback from their local prayer gatherings. This year the prayer program is prepared in the European region of IPCA. The choice of 25th August for the global day of prayer is of course because it is the day of inauguration of International Prison Chaplains Association.

### STEERING COMMITTEE

The project manager has been co-opted to the steering committee, preparing for the meetings and keeper of the minutes. The Oceania representative and the project manager carried on trip to Washington DC in April 2009, with the purpose of fundraising, and found out that IPCA first must be registered in the US, after that it is possible to fundraise there. The trip also included meetings with prospective partners of cooperation for the future.

The Stole that we are using as the IPCA Presidential stole is passed from one president to the other during the commissioning of the new IPCA President. On this picture it is being put on Rodney Moores shoulders by Dwight Cuff.

There are a couple of different stories about how the stole came into IPCA's possession, but so far none is fully confirmed.





## Quinquennial meetings

- 1985 IPCA I, Switzerland. Elected president Peter Rassow, Germany
- 1990 IPCA II, Switzerland. Peter Rassow was re-elected.
- 1995 IPCA III, Canada. Elected president, Pierre Allard, Canada.
- 2000 IPCA IV, South Africa. Pierre Allard was re-elected.
- 2005 IPCA V, Canada. Elected president was Birgitta Winberg, Sweden.



## Quinquennial meetings

- 2010 IPCA VI, Sweden. Elected president was Dwight Cuff, Canada.
- 2015 IPCA VII, Australia. Elected president was Rodney Moore.
- 2020 No conference due to the pandemic, but David Buick was elected president as a member of the steering committee.

# UN Team



The whole idea of IPCA was influenced by the UN.

Even the reason why the first meeting was held in Bossey, Switzerland was due to the UN.

Many chaplains were attending the 7th UN Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders at that time.





The UN has upheld the work of prison chaplains for a long time and during the years it has been discussed to seek NGO-status. The actual work started in 2007.



2014: IPCA got advisory status with ECOSOC, within the UN

The IPCA UN-team was founded in 2015

During the years 2005-2010 the financial support from Correctional Services and churches started to decrease, making it harder to get funding for participants in conferences and IPCA projects.

So, to focus on becoming an NGO was therefore more important and with the help of organisations with similar goals, that already was NGO:s - International Commission of Catholic Prison Pastoral Care (ICPPC) and Penal Reform International (PRI), a work to strengthen the credibility of IPCA took place.



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During the UN CSocD62 in the UN HQ in New York in 2024, IPCA held a much appreciated side event. It was titled "A Human Dignity and Faith Perspective on the Eradication of Poverty as one of the Main Root Causes of Incarceration in the World".

It tells an important story about the work IPCA does. Pointing at the main problems like poverty, leading to medical and mental health problems, unsafe neighborhoods, substandard school, lack of job possibilities, poor housing conditions and so on. All together there are huge problems with stigmatization even before they end up in the prison system.



The goal of the UN team is to meet people working within the Alliance of other NGO:s with advisory status in the UN. To help pinpoint problems like the ones mentioned and doing so from a grass root perspective.

We do not have a head office, with people that come to the UN conferences. And others that visit the prisons. All members in the UN team work on the prison floors and listen to the inmates' stories on a daily basis.

That is the strength of IPCA!





“The conference notes that this is the Millennium year. It invites leaders to make this a year of hope (Tsepo) for prisoners by making every possible legal provision for amnesties. This could apply to prisoners serving less than twelve months and to women who have dependent children.”

# EXHIBITION OF IPCA 40 years 1985 2025

Edited by Marie-Louise Norozi  
Design by Wiston CHERY

