Two World Councils: 
Same Mission, Different Focus

Recently, two major publishing meetings of significance within the world church were convened. They share the same mission, but their focus and function were different. They were:

The World Literature Ministries Coordinating Board 
March 24-27, 2008, at GC Headquarters

The delegation was comprised of Division Publishing Ministries Directors and Publishing House Managers from the world field.

The solemnity of the meeting was brought to bear right from the start with the inscribed E. G. White’s quotation: “Let every believer scatter broadcast tracts and leaflets and books containing the message for this time” (Publishing Ministry, p 349).

After the morning devotions, Elder Howard F. Faigao, General Conference Publishing Ministries Director, set the tone by reminding delegates that the purpose of convening the world’s division leadership at this mid-quinquennium was to review the progress made to date toward the goals set at the beginning of the period, and to make any adjustments needed in charting the course for the second half of the quinquennial period.

Progress reports by many categories were broken down by division territories. For example, one report reviewed the progress over the three-year period of 2005, 2006, and 2007. During this time the LE working force had grown by 3,500 workers in the world field, but it revealed what is needed for each individual Division to
achieve in order to reach the overall objective of 58,239 literature evangelists worldwide by the end of the quinquennial period. The 15,817 student literature evangelists actively deployed in 2007 shows that progress is apace, and that expanding by 2,000 more by 2010 the overall world goal in that category is reachable. Such information brings renewed focus to the immediate future. Incidentally, the South American Division currently leads with their combined report of 12,675 full and part-time literature evangelists, and they are closing in on their goal of 15,270 by 2010.

With a view to reaching the global goal of having at least one active literature evangelist in every church, a chart showing the actual ratio of literature evangelists to churches was studied by percentages, showing where this goal has or has not yet been achieved. The Euro-Asia Division reports 126 percent achievement of this goal reached.

Individual reports from each of the division publishing ministries directors were received and much appreciated. Most utilized PowerPoint enhancements.

Subjects like recruitment, training, writing, budgets, continuing education, student involvement, literature ministry seminaries, marketing, psychology and guidance, leadership development, missionary book of the year, ministerial training for utilization of publishing resources, LE institutes, multi-division gatherings, publications, deadlines, promotional methods, and other topics were addressed. New resolutions were taken. The minutes of the meeting were assembled completed and distributed promptly.

Of such character was the meeting of the World Literature Ministries Coordinating Board. With sights refocused, new vision and vigor were re-infused at midterm. The publishing ministry’s theme, “Keep the Vision Alive,” beats strongly in the hearts of this world team of Publishing Ministries Directors and Publishing House Managers.

The World Council of Adventist Editors
May 5-8, 2008, at Nampa, Idaho, USA

W hen editors of Adventist publications from around the world come together for a council, the flavor of the meeting is unique. Like publishing ministries directors, they are integral to the distribution of literature, but their roles are different.

Whereas the flavor a meeting of publishing ministries leaders is largely that of promotion and distribution, editors have other concerns to struggle with.

Editors are usually writers, and often they are the authors of books and articles themselves. Of course, they are frequently writing editorials in which they express their views for a readership to ponder. In their actual roles as editors, however, they are largely involved in both the selection and preparation of manuscripts for publication. Books and magazines cannot go to press without the work of editors who are skilled in adjusting, rearranging, and often restating writers’ thoughts to assist their clarity and readability. Editors are vital to the end products that find their way into print. The theme of this meeting was “WRITE A BOOK-TELL THE WORLD!”

The morning devotional were given by Elders Dale Galusha, President of Pacific Press Publishing Association; James Nix, Director of the E. G. White
Estate; and Ted N. C. Wilson, Vice-President of the General Conference. Each presentation verified the truth: “Solemn is the responsibility. . . . Those who edit the periodicals and prepare the books, standing as they do in the light of God’s purpose, and called to give warning to the world, are held by God accountable for the souls of their fellow men. . . . Ezekiel 33:7, 8 (Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 7, p. 140, 1902).

Led by the GC Publishing Director, the session exchanges among this group were animated. A few of the matters discussed and some of the recommendations created were: An adult devotional book for 2013 to be translated and printed in each division—a book highlighting the use of literature in soul winning. 2013 is designated “The Year of Literature Evangelism.” Each division establish a missionary magazine; expand the production of E. G. White’s books; involve editors more fully in the decision-making processes of book planning; major publishing houses to consider printing one trade book a year for smaller houses without charge; provide internships for developing new young editors; develop a handbook of Adventist editing; establish course-work for “Publications Specialist” in our universities; reprint two books on writing; develop a plan for continuing education for editors.

It was noted that the editors were very enthusiastic about the opportunity to confer with one another at the world level. They were also highly pleased and felt blessed by the session presentations of Dale Galusha, Russell Holt, Richard Tooley, James Nix, Dionne Parker, Roy Adams, Nikolaus Satelmajer, Marvin Moore, and Rajmund Dabrowski.

Some delegates’ comments were heard, such as that of Aileen Sox of Pacific Press who serves as editor of Our Little Friend and Primary Treasure. She stated, “I very much enjoyed meeting fellow editors from around the world and learning from them. No matter how many years a person has been an editor, there is always something more to be learned. The reminder that we editors are God’s people doing God’s business resounded throughout the council.”

J. K. Chun, Editor of the Korean Publishing House, said: “It afforded me the opportunity to better understand the publishing work of another country. I got some good information about book design, and I picked up some good ideas about procedures others are using. I was very happy to see the organized work of Pacific Press during our scheduled tour of their beautiful plant facility.”

Melvin R. Lyon, Editor
The Literature Evangelist Magazine

Indonesia: Administrators Uphold Missionary Book Project

The Bi-Union Indonesian Publishing Leadership and administrative Seminar was held June 16-20, 2008, in Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The theme, “Keeping the Vision Alive,” was introduced during the opening program by Pastor Noldy Sakul, East Indonesia Union President, Pastor Y. S. Bindosano, Union Secretary, and Mr. Herry Sumanti, Union Treasurer.

More than 130 delegates filled the auditorium of the Losari Metro Hotel. They came from 17 local missions and/or conferences.
thirty delegates from the Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SSD), the Northern Asia-Pacific Division (NSD), and the Southern Asia Division (SUD) gathered for a combined meeting at the Comfort Inn Marina Towers, Chennai, India, from June 23 to June 26, 2008.

The delegates were led by the division publishing directors, Pastor Vivencio R. Bermudez, Pastor Dae Sung Kim, and Pastor A. J. Tito, respectively.

The council commenced with a devotional, entitled “Books and Judgment,” as delivered by Pastor A. J. Tito, Publishing Director of SUD. Other inspiring devotionals were presented by Division Publishing Directors Vivencio Bermudez and Dae Sung Kim. The final devotional was presented by Dr. M. C. John, General Vice President of SUD, Pastor S. Sundaram, President of the Southeast India Union, and the SUD Publishing Director extended cordial welcomes and mementos to the visiting delegates.

Elder Howard Faigao, Publishing Director from the General Conference, actively led out in the whole series of meetings. The planning sessions were characterized by animated discussions of various ways to enhance the impact of the Publishing Ministry throughout the tri-division territories.

May God continue to bless all of our publishing leaders, so we may reach the goal for 2006-2010, “Keeping the Vision Alive,” and to especially strive to prepare people for heaven.

Pastor J.B. Banjarnahor, Publishing Director
West Indonesia Union

All-Asian Publishing Directors Convene in India

All-Asian Publishing Directors Convene in India
“Challenging Your Limits!” was the vibrant theme of the 2008 Literature Evangelists’ Congress of the South Mexican Union. It was held at the Rio de Janeiro Camp Meeting site in the State of Chiapas, Mexico, on February 21-24. More than 300 literature evangelists, local field administrators, and publishing leaders assembled. The South Mexican Union was represented by Pastor Villaney Vazquez, and Pastor Freddy Alvarado, Union Executive Secretary and Publishing Director, respectively. Pastors Tomas Torres and Iran Molina, administrators from the Mexican Publishing House also graced the congress.

Pastor Howard F. Faigao, our esteemed world Publishing Ministries Director, along with our Inter-American Division Publishing Director, Pastor Mirto Presentacion, honored us with their presence.

The occasion celebrated the victories and the great blessings of God upon the Publishing Ministry in this union during 2007. We gave thanks to the Lord for the 900 literature evangelists who bravely meet the public from day to day, sold US$22,438.39 worth of literature, and led hundreds of souls to Christ.

Union sales champion, Pedro H. Lopez, was recognized for his meritorious service resulting in the baptism of 132 of his contacts over the year past. Praise God!

God is also to be praised for the achievement of great victories in the field. He is the Enabler of our accomplishments! It is also recognized that there is much more to be done and that God is yet able to do exceedingly greater things through His servants. Indeed, wonders far beyond our own limitations! That is the reason for the inspiring theme of the congress, “CHALLENGING YOUR LIMITS,” a theme that urges literature evangelists to allow God to extend their influence and their enlarge successes much farther than what has been seen to this point.

It was wonderful to experience the presence of the Holy Spirit as He touched the hearts of his workers through each class and each praise service. Pastor Howard F. Faigao inspired the hearts of each literature evangelist to reach beyond their present achievements and explore territories and spheres of influence as yet unattained. He urged that we bravely embrace the books that present the Savior and share them with the world.

Pastor Mirto Presentacion was also used by God when he presented the poignant concept of “Powerful Mental Seeds” that are based upon the Word of God and capable of bursting the bonds of self-imposed limits.

Pastor Felix Cortés-Antonio, a famous author and servant of God, shared with attendees much valuable material on his latest book Sex with Love, The participation of Dr. Pedro Morales, from Colombia, added to the richness of our program.

The Lord showed us an example of what it means to “Challenge our Limits” by having among us Maria Magdalena, a young lady who is deprived of both her voice and hearing. But she knocks upon doors, makes presentations, and is capable of transmitting the message with sign language as guided by the Holy Spirit. With the undisputed language of love, Maria makes herself understood, and she shares the Gospel message. Here again, we saw clearly THERE IS NO LIMIT for those who place themselves humbly in God’s hands for service.

We thank God for this event that filled each one present with new motivation, new faith, and new enthusiasm to do the work of the Lord!
On April 15-20, 2008, Pastor Howard F. Faigao, General Conference Publishing Ministries Director, and the Associate Director, Pastor Wilmar Hirle, had the privilege of attending the Tri-Africa Division Union Publishing Directors’ Council in Nairobi, Kenya.

This was the first of many publishing councils to be held this year. During 2008, a Publishing Directors’ Council will be held on every continent as we reach out to encourage, teach, and inspire our publishing leaders at the division and union levels. We seek to involve and educate all of our union directors throughout the world in the strategic plan voted by the World Literature Ministries Coordinating Board (WLMCB). In order to accomplish this, we:

1. Carefully review all details of the strategic plan as voted by the WLMCB. We are extending enablement training to assist them in reaching the objectives set forth.
2. Request each Union Publishing Director to share report on what their field is currently doing to increase the number of LEs, to enhance the circulation of literature through selling and sharing, and to enhance the missionary outreach activities.
3. Ask about the needs and sense the problems and challenges they face in each union and conference—and then help them find solutions.

At the Tri-Africa Division Union Publishing Directors’ Council, April 15-18, 2008, four division publishing directors were present: Pastor Jules K. K. Lumbu from East-Central Africa Division (ECD), Pastor Oyeleke A. Owolabi from West-Central Africa Division (WAD), Pastor Super Moesi from Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division (SID), and Pastor Michael G. Hamilton from Trans-European Division (TED). They were joined by all of the union publishing directors from each division on the African continent.

As each division presented a report about the work in their unions, it was truly thrilling to see how God is guiding through the various problems they face.

One of the best actions taken at this event was to create a small set of three books which will be translated into each local language.

The price will be determined according to the factors within the local economy, and the contents of the books will be adjusted to reflect the local cultures. These local changes will help an average family to better afford a purchase of the set. Also, during our meetings, it was proposed to create an Africa Publishing Coordinating Board to be in charge of this project.

A workshop on the Literature Ministry Seminary Training Program followed the council, conducted by Pastor Howard F. Faigao. This workshop was aimed at training the union leaders on how to establish a strong Literature Ministry Seminary Training Program in each union.

At a division worship period, a dedication service was conducted for the Missionary Book of the Year 2008.

On Sabbath, all the leaders were assigned to visit churches in Nairobi, and they found group of church leaders striving to do their best, ready to learn, and eager to be used by God to do His good work. This willing spirit was what we found in our African Divisions during this trip. Praise God!

Wilmar Hirle, Associate Director
GC Publishing Ministries Department
The Caucasus Union Mission recently held its second Literature Evangelist Congress under the leadership of Pastor Alexey A. Kropinov, Union Publishing Director. The Caucasus Union territory includes eight regions in southwestern Russia and the three countries of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan.

The Russian city of Stavropol, where the congress was held, has a rich history for our church. In 1887 the General Conference sent Pastor Lui Conrade to establish the first Seventh-day Adventist church in Stavropol. More than 140 top literature evangelists were able to attend the 2008 LE Congress, representing all the fields within the Caucasus Union territory. The theme of the congress was: “Proclaim God’s Glory.” It was inspired by the text in Psalm 95:3, “For the Lord is the great God, the great King above all gods.” Indeed, proclaiming God’s glory through the printed page is the great privilege of our literature evangelists. Moreover, we find it is one of the most effective and natural means of sharing God’s glory.

Our guest, Elder Wilmar Hirle, who is the Associate Publishing Director for the General Conference, taught classes and encouraged our LEs to continue working until Jesus comes. Pastor Lev Bondarchuk, General Manager for the Source of Life Publishing House at Zaoksky, in the Tula Region, introduced several new books. He shared with the delegates the publishing house plans for literature development, and he listened carefully to the suggestions from the LEs. Pastor Pavel I. Liberanskiy, Union President and his staff, helped coordinate the program and held several motivational classes for the LEs. Most of the local conference administrators also attended the event.

The high point of the congress was the several excellent testimonies given by the LEs. One of our LEs, Sister Minakov Valentine Nikolaevna, sold more than 1,800 copies of The Great Controversy in less than one year. Another, Sister Didus Svetlana Romanovna, told about being stopped by the police. The officer demanded to know who gave her the authority to do this type of work. She told him that God gave her the authority and because of that divine directive he should respect her and God’s work. The officer let her go free. Later the same officer invited Sister Romanovna to his office where he purchased several books.

The representatives from Azerbaijan described the situation in their country. In order to print literature in the local language, they are required to get permission from the government. But obtaining permission in this predominantly Muslim country is quite a challenge. They asked the participants to help create a fund to buy a press to print the literature. By the end of the day, they collected more than US$3,000! It is amazing to witness the good will and faith of our LEs.

At the end of the congress, the Missionary Book of the Year was introduced. This book is about the Second Coming of Jesus. Our LEs decided to give a copy of this book to every client. Some of them set a goal of ten books per day, others planned for five books per day, and the rest promised to share at least one book per day.

Judging by the enthusiasm I saw on the face of each LE and each leader, I think we need to hold this event every year. During the last eight months, we have held a congress in Moldavia, Ukraine, and now in the North Caucasian Union. My dream is to repeat this motivational and spiritually uplifting experience in each of our ESD Unions.

Andrei Arfanidi, Publishing Director
Euro-Asia Division
On Sunday May 17, 2008, the Southern Africa Indian-Ocean Division (SID) held a special dedication service for the Missionary Book of the Year: The Ten Commandments. The service was conducted by General Conference Vice-President Ted N. C. Wilson.

In his address, Elder Wilson cited Psalm 68:11 as a media ministry text: “The Lord announced the word, and great was the company of those who proclaimed it.”

There are whole classes of people, he reminded us, who will only be reached through literature. Holding up a copy of the book, The Ten Commandments, he declared, “These books announce the second coming of Christ and teach people to prepare for His coming.”

At the end of the presentation, SID Publishing Ministries Director, Super Moesi, shared the distribution plans for the books. During his appeal, he reiterated that this type of ministry is one in which 100% of our church members can participate. Then all the union presidents and division officers were invited to kneel around the altar of books as Elder Wilson prayed for a blessing upon these books, that these specific books would touch and change lives for the kingdom of God.

Remarkably, by the end of the day, all 700 copies of The Ten Commandments had been sold. The committee members planned to leave one copy in their hotel room and take another copy to share with someone they would meet during their trip home.

Sister Antoinette du Pont, a committee member from Swaziland who works in the hotel industry, purchased 200 copies. She will place one copy in each hotel room in Swaziland, and pledged to buy 100 copies every month to replace the copies that travelers take with them.

Sister Roselyn Tsoka, from Zimbabwe, told Pastor Moesi that her church was excited by the idea of the Missionary Book of the Year project. At one Sabbath afternoon program, the literature evangelists who were visiting her church divided the audience into ten groups. They assigned each group to read a chapter in The Ten Commandments. After reading the chapter, each group was to return to the auditorium. The reports were captivating. Sister Tsoka described the book as a “very easy read which goes straight to God’s instructions: The Ten Commandments.”

“This is a book we can use to revive a reading culture,” she said.

The LEs urged church members to remember the slogan, “999 Mark of Service: nine books to nine people in nine days.” Church members were encouraged to buy ten copies: one to keep, and nine to distribute to nine families. One recipient later told Sister Tsoka that the book “cuts right through to the important matters of life; it is brief and to the point.”

One SID worker told of his experience in sharing a copy of the book with the bank teller. The next time he was in the bank, the teller mentioned how touching the book was—so much so, that he shared his copy with another colleague. The SID worker immediately asked for more copies of the book when he returned to the office.

It is true, “. . . More then one thousand will soon be converted in one day, most of whom will trace their first convictions to the reading of our publications” (Colporteur Ministry, p. 151).
Emphasis was given to the objective of attaining at least one active literature evangelist for each and every church in harmony with the inspired statement: “God calls for workers from every church among us to enter His service as canvasser-evangelists” (Colporteur Ministry, p. 20). Another focus given attention was to involve all church members in evangelism through the circulation of literature in response to the counsel of E. G. White: “...Every believer [must circulate] tracts and leaflets and books” (Colporteur Ministry, p. 21).

To accomplish these goals, the delegates decided to conduct Literature Evangelism Awareness Seminars in three levels:

1. Union-wide Publishing Administrative Seminars to be participated by union and conference/mission administrators, including college theology department head and hospital chaplains.
2. Conference-wide seminar for all conference/mission department directors, district pastors, and academy Bible teachers.
3. Conference-wide or district-wide seminar for local church publishing coordinators

Each Union’s publishing director presented progress reports showing evidence of God’s continued leading.

Evenings were characterized by special counseling and personal interchanges between delegates. A special dinner was arranged by the hosting division for all the delegates and also a sight-seeing tour of Chennai, as hosted by Pastor N. C. Vincent, Publishing Director of the Southeast India Union.

A. J. Tito, SUD Publishing Director
Jerry Fernandez, CPUC (SSD) Publishing Director