



## Columban General Council Guidelines for Society JPIC Policies and Actions

The General Council, as an expression of its leadership of the Society's commitment to JPIC offers the following as Guidelines for issuing Society JPIC Policies, Public Statements, Sign-On Letters, Action Alerts, Financial Assistance and convoking Days of Prayer.

### **Society JPIC Policies**

Society JPIC Policies can be both internal and external in nature used to guide the mission and life of the Society including but not limited to:

- individual and communal lifestyle;
- Society Investments
- Advocacy
- Formation and Ongoing Education

JPIC Policies should be developed by the Society's JPIC team and in consultation with RMU leadership, IRD Network, members, CLMs, and Coworkers as appropriate. All JPIC Policies should be presented to the General Council by the Central JPIC Coordinator for final approval.

### **Public Statements**

When there is a need for timely communications on significant events (e.g. awards to Columbans, a situation of crisis or natural disaster) the primary affected RMU leader or his/her delegated communications team will send information as quickly as possible to the communications person, delegated by the Superior General, giving an update on the event or situation, for him/her to send to all RMU contacts as an initial press release. It is understood that this person will normally be the member of an RMU Communications Office/Team, which has its own processes of sustainability and accountability. He/she will also prepare a General Council statement, which once approved by the General Council, will also be released by him/her to all RMU contacts. The initial press release and General Council statement will also be sent to the Columban intranet so that the Society Communications Centre of Service Team can continue the conversation, and help design RMU appeals etc., with the persons or RMU primarily affected by the event.

The General Council may wish to issue a subsequent public statement on the issue or any other issues making reference to Scripture, Catholic Social Teaching, relevant Society positions and/or expertise as appropriate.

RMUs are encouraged, not just in times of crisis, to utilize Society Statements for Advocacy and Education purposes as well as share these with key Society supporters such as donors, local diocese where Columbans are present, partner organizations and networks. If there is concern as to the possible inter-faith implications of such statements, consultation with the IRD Network is advisable.

### **Letter Sign-Ons, and Action Alerts**

As an international missionary Society, we work in collaboration with the local and international Church as well as faith-based and secular organizations and networks. These relationships present opportunities to join our voice in solidarity with the efforts of a wider community. The General Council



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will consider endorsing a sign-on letter and action alerts, guided by but not limited to Society JPIC priorities and locations. The General Council will work with the Central JPIC Coordinator to determine appropriate actions and the Central JPIC Coordinator will be responsible for dissemination of letters and

Action Alerts to RMUs for either informational purposes or requested action as appropriate. Care needs to be taken to investigate the sponsors and promoters of such campaigns, i.e. who we actually are aligning ourselves with. This is particularly the case with sensitive geopolitical and interfaith issues e.g. extremism, the so called 'War on Terror' etc.

### **Days of Prayer**

Recognizing the centrality of prayer in our lives as missionaries, we believe in the power of prayer as a force for justice, peace, reconciliation, hope and love. The General Council may convoke Days of Prayer as a way to bring the Society into communion across RMUs and with the world. The Society may choose to highlight established international Days in the Church such as Day for World Peace on January 1 and other days such as International Migrants Day on December 18. The liturgical calendar also offers a useful framework for organizing Days of Prayer when connecting with JPIC issues. The Society JPIC Plan of Action will work to incorporate Days of Prayer so as to give time for proper planning and implementation. However, there will be occasions which unplanned Days of Prayer are convoked in response to humanitarian crisis and natural disaster.

### **Financial Assistance**

In some situations such as in the case of natural disasters or emergency humanitarian crises, the General Council may choose to offer financial assistance as an expression of the Society's solidarity. Priority should be given but is not limited to countries and situations in which Columbans are involved, which includes giving priority consideration to Columban structures, projects, ministries etc that are related to the crisis at hand. Donations to advocacy related ministry that addresses root causes of crisis should be considered as a valid option for donations. The General Council makes final determination as to where and how much is given with consideration to recommendations made by the Central JPIC Coordinator and RMU leaders as appropriate.

For donations outside of Society structures, the Central JPIC Coordinator will maintain a list of relevant partner organizations to which donations can be directed such as: Caritas Internationalis, Jesuit Refugee Service, and Pax Christi International. Consultations with groups such as USG-UISG, local bishops, and RMU leaders, can be helpful in determining where support can be directed. The Central JPIC Coordinator will work with the Chief Financial Officer/Bursar General to facilitate the donation. Similarly, the Central JPIC Coordinator will work with the CFO to gather needed reports for accountability once a donation has been made. Frequency of Reports from recipients would be dependent on the amount given by the Society.

### **Internal Communication**

- When General Council issues any of the above, they should be communicated by the Central JPIC Coordinator with the following groups: GA, CA, LMCLT, RMU leaders, JPIC Personnel, Formators, Fundraising and Communications teams.
- In the case of Public Statements, target goal is to release statements within 72 hours of determining statement is desired.



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- RMU leaders are encouraged to circulate the statement to all RMU personnel (ordained, LMs, Coworkers)

### **External Communication**

- General Council Public statements, convocations for Days of Prayer etc., should be posted in full on all Columban websites, preferably home pages for the duration of a week. Target goal is to post within 24 hours of receipt.
- Central JPIC Coordinator will circulate as appropriate to international partners
- RMU JPIC Coordinators will circulate as appropriate to RMU partners and media contacts
- General Council will circulate to Vatican contacts as appropriate
- A JPIC tab will be added to GC website with authorization given to Central JPIC Coordinator to manage.

### **Inter-Departmental / Ministry Collaboration**

- Dialogue with Communications and Fundraising teams to determine how statements / actions can be incorporated long term in to respective ministries' plans e.g. Publication in magazine, communication with donors etc.
- Dialogue with Formators and CLMCLT to determine how the above can be integrated into Society Formation programs