

**INTERSERVE STATEMENT:
*CHURCH AND MISSION IN THE ARAB WORLD***

September 2009¹

1. The Holy Trinity is the model and inspiration for our communal life as Sending Church, Receiving Church, Interserve, and its Missionaries together.
2. Missionaries are part of the community of the Receiving Church. This Receiving Church should be enabled to help shape the strategic planning of Interserve, and to play a role in testing the call and suitability and the orientation of Missionaries. The Sending Church, Interserve, and its Missionaries, may contribute to the Receiving Church through their prophetic voice. The Missionaries, Interserve, and the Receiving Church may also speak with a prophetic voice into the Sending Church.
3. Missionaries need to be sent with a developed ecclesiology that accepts the validity of different Church traditions, including the ancient, the modern and the new (emerging MBB) churches, and engages respectfully with all traditions.
4. Missionaries need to be sent with a clear missiological understanding in order that they engage appropriately within the local context.
5. Missionaries need to be sent, trained and equipped to think theologically so they can effectively teach the Bible with their own gifts and within their own contexts.
6. Partnership should not be seen as pragmatic cooperation but as living in Christian community. The Receiving Church, Sending Church, Interserve, and its Missionaries work in community to support the God-given ministry of each other.
7. In places where there is a vital established local Church, our focus must be on sending trainers of disciplers, evangelists and other 'Body-building' ministries. Our role is more in equipping than in

¹ This paper is the outcome of a conference between representatives from Arab and other Churches, Interserve, and some other mission agencies. The participants agreed to these 17 items.

- doing. We take jobs that help build national Christians and leaders, not jobs nationals can do themselves.
8. In our mission, we recognize that Christians and Muslims need to live together and so engage respectfully with the other's sacred religious ideas, doctrines and rituals. Missionaries must grow their understanding of reconciliation and engage in ministries of reconciliation.
 9. Interserve is responsible for orientation that helps its Missionaries become integrated in local culture, society and Church and is vigilant against developing and living in a parallel culture to the dominant culture. Part of orientation is an awareness and appreciation of (mission) history in the region as well as the threat to the existence of the historic Churches of the Arab World
 10. Long-term ministry is urgently needed because all mission is relational; therefore people are needed who will build long-term relationships and who have the language and cultural ability to integrate and speak with wisdom and sensitivity. Short-term teams are a lasting part of the mission scene; Interserve ensures that short-term workers are part of long-term strategy, and the receiving Church seeks meaningful opportunities and engagement with short-term teams.
 11. Attrition rate among Missionaries can be reduced by them being integrated in local Christian community and this should be further researched.
 12. Interserve plays a role in supporting the development of sending and receiving Churches as missional Church.
 13. We recognize the importance of Interserve to 1) provide the link between the Sending Church and the Receiving Church by enabling the sending of Missionaries; 2) educate those Churches in mission matters; 3) enable these Churches to better deal with their own multicultural contexts; 4) encourage these Churches to educate one another.
 14. We recognize that we are all seen as representatives of our nations, including their culture, politics and influence. Meaningful and

long-term relationships are an important way of overcoming these stumbling blocks.

15. Interserve must help the Receiving Churches to understand major trends in Korean and US mission communities. These are mentioned because of the scale of their involvement. It must also help the international mission community to grow this understanding and develop appropriate tools to assist internationalization.
16. We recognize the need for serious mission research for the glory of God and the sake of reflection and strategizing. It should also help grow an articulate missiology.
17. We recognize that international mission is important in reflecting the beauty of our multicultural world as part of the Kingdom of God, both present and future.