

## **Common Commitment** **- Towards Mutuality and Cooperation in** **Theological Education in Asia -**

The spirit of mutuality and cooperation or "working together" as Christians is grounded in the teachings of Christ. Since time immemorial Christians of every tribe and nation have found it challenging to resist being exclusive. Church history reminds us of the fierce competition churches and denominations have undertaken to claim and defend their turf all in the name of Christ. Even Jesus' disciples were not spared the competitive spirit. They complained about someone who cast out demons in Jesus' name: "we tried to stop him, because he is not one of us." But Jesus replied: "Do not stop him, for whoever is not against you is for you." (Lk. 9: 49-50). St. Paul also reminds us that we are many but one body in Christ. (I Cor. 12. 4-13, Eph. 4. 4-6).

It is in this cooperative spirit that we, the representatives of the Asia Pacific Theological Association (APTA), Asia Theological Association (ATA), Association for Theological Education in South East Asia (ATESEA), and the Senate of Serampore College, gathered together in Biblical Seminary of the Philippines, Manila on January 10-11, 2014, to discuss furthering mutual understanding and fellowship.

Toward this end, we the participants of this meeting commit ourselves to pursue these Strategic Directions for "Mutuality and Cooperation for Theological Education":

1. Critically cultivating mutual understanding and stronger fellowship
2. Exploring resource sharing
3. Collaborating, reviewing and improving accreditation practices

We will be considering the following:

1. Roundtable conversation to be hosted by the Senate of Serampore
2. Resources sharing such as faculty, student programs, and library
3. Reciprocal observation on accreditation activities
4. Research and documentation on the variety of accreditation practices in theological education in Asia

Participants:

Asia Pacific Theological Association  
Asia Theological Association  
Association for Theological Education in South East Asia  
Senate of Serampore College  
Foundation for Theological Education in South East Asia  
Association of Theological Schools in the US and Canada  
Ecumenical Theological Education of WCC  
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