

World Missions Connection

Missions Commission

World Assemblies of God Fellowship
The Acts One-Eight Project



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Interview With Robert Jeyaraj

Last Frontiers Missions Congress—Southern Asia

Q: Tell us a bit how this historic congress came about and was birthed.

A: The idea was birthed at the Cancun congress. The Holy Spirit kindled the hearts of some of us from Southern Asia to think, *Why not do something like this in Southern Asia?* Then we prayerfully decided to have it in my region.

Q: What purpose and objectives did you have for this event, and do you feel they were achieved?

A: To create a missions awareness among the leaders and pastors in our churches and to make missions the basis of all ministries in my region and eventually throughout Southern Asia. I believe we achieved that goal.

Q: What were some of the highlights of the congress?

A: The papers presented by the departmental/district heads brought out the leadership potential available in our general council. There is a new confidence in the leadership to think that we can raise up a powerful missionary force from within my country and that money can be raised (for example, Brad's idea of save a tea every day/week/month).

Q: What was some feedback you received?

A: Many leaders confessed the Congress was an "eye-opener." Time cannot be wasted anymore. As much as we aggressively do evangelism and church planting within our context, we must think of sending missionaries cross-culturally and to Southern Asia countries soon. Time to see the need beyond!

Q: What is your vision for the future of missions for your general council?

A: My vision is to help every pastor/church in our general council to be a missionary pastor/church. Missions will have to be the basis of all ministries. Missions is the lens through which we should look at the challenge before us. I have requests from some district superintendents to hold such a congress for all their pastors.

Q: Tell us about the missions consultation scheduled for October.

A: My general council will host it, and Pastor Michael and Pastor Mohan will guide us. Since we have done one successfully, we will be able to offer help to make it even better.

Q: Any final thoughts or reflections?

A: A new team of energetic and passionate missions-minded leadership is emerging in AG Southern Asia today. I am glad to see that people have started talking about missions in a focused way.

Reflections | Last Frontiers Missions Congress

“ The Last Frontiers Missions Congress held in Southern Asia December 2-4, 2013, was truly a historic and important landmark event in that AGNI organized and conducted the first conference focused primarily on missions and reaching the unreached peoples of southern Asia! This AG missions pilot project was focused especially on the north, but more missions conferences for all of Southern Asia are planned for the future. The Last Frontiers Missions Congress was missiologically informative, helpful, and inspirational for me and for all participants! The primary resource people were especially helpful and inspirational: Brad Walz with great points facilitating emerging missions, S. D. Ponraj with encouraging information and challenge on the fruitful vineyard of Indian missions, and Michael Dissanayake with inspiring information and challenges regarding southern Asia missions. Numerous AG leaders also shared helpful reports and challenges. Well done!

—Mike Waldner
WAGF-Missions Committee

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“ This (congress) is the first of its kind for many of our leaders, who have never had an opportunity to be a part of such a meeting. Though it was a high-content-oriented congress with back-to-back sessions from 5 a.m. till 9 p.m., all the attendees gave full support and cooperation to me and expected to receive something new every time by attending all the sessions.

I think I achieved what I wanted to achieve in the congress by creating a missions awareness. Missions must be the basis of all we do in our ministries in the local church. Many left the congress satisfied to see something new happen in their own churches in the districts. I believe we purposefully decided to change the direction of our ministries toward missions.

New ideas were birthed by the Holy Spirit in my heart for India when I came to the Cancun conference. Your [Brad Walz's] experience in Argentina and the stories you shared about the Argentinian churches made our people sit up and think that now they can also do missions not only locally, but globally.

—Robert Jeyaraj
AGNI General Superintendent

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The Missions Committee being presented



Some leaders at the congress

Report | Last Frontiers Missions Congress

by Michael Dissamic

A report of the AGNI Last Frontiers Missions Congress held December 2-4, 2013.

Overview of AGNI

AGNI represent the 16 states of northern Southern Asia that are the most populous and unreached areas. With almost 82 million people to serve, there are only 1002 churches, 2384 house churches, 2510 pastors and workers, 72,810 members, and 22 Bible schools. There is great need and much to be done.

Leaders from all 11 AGNI districts as well as various department leaders and Bible college presidents participated. From the very first session there was an air of expectation and excitement and a great sense of God's presence.

Congress Objectives

The objective of the congress was highlighted in the theme, "The Last Frontier of Missions," with the outward-looking vision of missions.

Superintendent Robert Jeyaraj emphasized the vision in his opening address by stating that the congress was for the churches in his council to focus on missions at home, throughout the nation, and beyond. He challenged leaders to have a vision that goes beyond their local districts and emphasized that every church could pray, give, and send missionaries to the harvest field. He specifically mentioned the capacity and potential of southern Asia Christians in the global context, how they can be a significant missionary force, although the AGNI also had needs and challenges.

A video message from Rev. David Mohan was presented, since he was unable to attend. He encouraged leaders to embrace the missionary vision for their council so they can make a significant impact in Southern Asia and beyond.

Outcomes

The final outcome of this event was the awakening of AGNI leaders to the task of missions in their region and around the world, inspiring and motivating them with a missions vision. As a follow-up to this congress, all 11 AGNI districts were asked have their own missions event or to otherwise highlight the missions vision in their district conferences or other events.

We commend Rev. Jeyaraj for his visionary leadership, which made this event possible, and the AGNI leadership team that supported and encouraged the region to take up this missions vision. Also, the city leaders who received us under the leadership of Rev. Rajneesh Jacob did an excellent job of hosting the event and taking care of the physical arrangements.

We believe this congress will be a catalyst to raise up a mighty missionary movement from this region to fulfill the Great Commission at home and beyond.



Interview With Ricardo Joseph

Trinidad and Tobago

For ten years now, four leaders among four churches in the Southern Trinidad district have organized a missions convention each November. At the tenth year of that convention, one of the pastors involved gave his perspective on this annual missions event.

Q: As we read the testimony of the journey of the past ten years, what have been some of your greatest memories?

A: We have had some great experiences over the years. For example, we had the joy of receiving reports from missionaries that they were receiving their monies on time and could better concentrate on the task God had called them to. We have commissioned and sent out two missionaries from our district. There is also the gratification of seeing our congregations aligning themselves with the vision of reaching the world with their giving, active participation in our annual missions convention, and short-term missions trips.

Q: Some of the rewards?

A: As you read answers to the other questions, we believe you will see how rewarding this journey is for us. The greatest reward, though, is the peace we have knowing that we are walking in obedience to the command Jesus gave to the Church to make disciples of every people group. Because of this, we have decided to make His last command our first priority.

Q: We appreciate your vision to involve other churches in the country. Tell us how other churches are participating in the missions convention.

A: We have been working over the years to woo other churches to fully participate in the missions convention as well as to support missionaries on the field. To this end we have been taking the convention into different districts with the hope that it will catch on. We have held discussions with pastors and been to their churches to share on the church's responsibility to reach the world and the benefits of working with God's agenda. We have had some favorable responses from some. Others have given token responses; however, we look at this as positive, because it is a response they had never given before. We continue to press to sensitize pastors to the command of Jesus to His disciples, "Open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest" in the hope that this will motivate us in Trinidad to do our part in global discipleship.

Q: This seems to be one of the highlights for your churches each year. How has it impacted your churches?

A: We have seen a greater commitment and dedication among our members to evangelize our communities. This year we started on a five-year program to plant at least three churches. We believe that if we deepen and broaden our home base, we will be able to go further. We have experienced maturity among the membership and commitments from some of our university students to the mission fields.

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A 100-voice choir from four churches was a highlight of the convention

Interview With Ricardo Joseph *continued*

Trinidad and Tobago

(Continued from page 4)

Q: Each of you have talked of seeing God's blessings on your lives and churches after responding to faith-promise giving. Reflect on that.

A: The first year we did faith promises, that totally excited us as we experienced God's miraculous ability to provide when we get involved in what is His heartbeat. We saw money come in to do our projects locally while we supported those on the field. Our district improved from average giving of TTD\$50,000 (US\$7700) per year to presently TTD\$600,050 (US\$100,000). This has caused some enquiries from other districts and local congregations that want to employ this same method to raise missions giving. This figure is not even the entire district. It would be magnificent to see the entire district giving. We believe we can get to US\$500,000.

Personally, we have also benefited as we, too, experienced the holistic blessings of God in our lives. We and our congregations have experienced miracles of healings, protection, and financial and material provision. We have gained a broader understanding of what is meant by "...these signs will accompany those who believe."

Q: How would you like to challenge other countries or churches that are just beginning this process that you began ten years ago?

A: There are going to be many opportunities for disappointment, frustration, pride, and bitterness because you feel that only you are doing the thing that is worth doing, and you can resent those who are not following your lead. These are dangerous attitudes to adopt that can eventually change the scope of what began as a God vision to a mere carnal exercise, which is nothing more than building with wood, hay, and stubble; the fire will prove your motive was wrong.

Patience will be the hallmark of this journey! You may have to encourage yourself at times. The work of global discipleship may seem beyond you, but God empowers and provides for you to accomplish the task. We do not lack money or people; we lack wholesale obedience to the Word of God (Luke 10:2). Do not grow weary in doing well! Global discipleship is a great work.

Q: What is your vision for your churches and for Trinidad in the next ten years?

A: It is or hope to have at least 50 missionaries on the field fully supported by our churches. Added to this, we want all our pastors and churches involved in an annual missions convention. This, we believe, will spark life and a greater degree of sensitivity to the Great Commission and the value of the task we are called to.



Pastors and spouses who organized and participated in this year's event

Interview With Ivan Vrachev

Chairman, Pentecostal Union—Bulgaria

Q: Tell us a little about the Pentecostal movement in Bulgaria.

A: The official name of our denomination is Pentecostal Assemblies of Bulgaria (PAOB). The Pentecostal movement in Bulgaria started in 1920 through the ministries of Russian-Ukrainian ministers Dionisiy Zaplishni and Ivan Voronaev. Both lived in the States and were filled with the Holy Spirit there. They and their families stopped in Bulgaria on their way to the Soviet Union and started to preach the Pentecostal message. Thus started the first Pentecostal groups and local churches. The PAOB was then founded in 1928 by Nikolay Nikolov, a Bulgarian who lived in the United States and was ordained by the American Assemblies of God. He came back to our country and united some of the existing churches and groups. The PAOB started to grow. It survived Communism. Now, in spite of the wounds from Communism, it continues to grow and is now the biggest Protestant denomination in our country, with about 500 local churches and 20,000 believers.

Q: You mentioned a revival in the early '90s and that you pray for another revival.

A: The Iron Curtain fell at the end of 1989. About a year before, there was real spiritual awakening in some churches. From 1990 to 1993 Bulgaria had great revival. The gospel was preached in open areas, in the streets, and in stadiums, and the number of born-again Christians grew about ten times. Now many believers, including me, pray for a next wave of revival.

Q: If countries have missionaries with a burden for Eastern European nations, what are some of the needs here?

A: We need help with teachers and finances for the Bible school so missionaries can be trained. We need a council for organizing the sending agency and a relationship between this agency and the local churches. We need prayer for God's wisdom and guidance and His call upon future missionaries.

Q: You and others we have met are determined to help Bulgaria transition to become a sending nation, and no doubt you will. Tell us about your vision for that.

A: We believe we live in the days of the world's last spiritual harvest according to Matthew 24:14. We believe this is our last call to participate in the worldwide spread of the gospel. Our movement was born by missionaries. Now is the time for us to send missionaries. But we don't know how to do this; we are learning and we are working to develop a missions sending agency. Our activities are in the following directions:

1. The national board of the PAOB appointed a working group to develop a missions agency.
2. We are in contact with different sending organizations and observing their experience.
2. A Kairos course is now being held in our country.
3. We are working to develop a study program for missionaries.
4. We are working with pastors and local churches to spread the vision of sending missionaries to other countries.
5. Our first national missionary conference is planned for March 2014.

Q: What are some of your current plans to see that happen?

A: We will probably start with short-term mission projects in the next year.

Q: Any final thoughts or reflections?

A: Jesus said, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field" (Matthew 9:37-38, NIV). The most important is God's call upon the workers of the harvest. When God calls people from our country for His harvest, we *must* be ready to send them and support them.



Leaders who met for planning and consultation in September



Part of the group meeting September 20, 2013

Interview With Ina Hrisca

Director, CRST Missions Training School—Constanța, Romania



Brad with Gheorghe Ritan, founder of the school

Q: Ina, I was privileged to be here and feel the vision, pulse, and spirit of your missions training school here in Constanța by the Black Sea. How long have you been director?

A: November 1, 2007, was the official date I accepted the great responsibility to lead the Romanian Centre of Cross-Cultural Studies (CRST). I also consider it a wonderful privilege given to me by God, and now, after six years of intense ministry, I am honored to look on different mission fields and find graduates who are reaching the unreached.

Q: Tell us about the history of the school.

A: CRST was founded in 2001 by Pastor Gheorghe Rițișan (*pictured at left*), who, alongside other leaders, sensed a new season for Romania. After 1989 when Communism failed, the Pentecostal church experienced exponential growth. However, Romania had no missions training centers or sending structures. Another reason to start CRST

was that in southeast Romania, besides large ethnic diversity, 50,000 Muslims (Turks and Tatars) needed to be reached with the gospel, but the approach could not be the same as the one used to reach Romanians.

CRST started as a small project within Lighthouse Pentecostal Church, and until summer 2007 all academic activity was taking place in the church building while students were hosted in two rented apartments. In February 2008 activity moved to the new campus in Agigea, Constanța. Here students have classes, access to the library and media room, three meals daily, and a dormitory that can accommodate up to 35 students.

Q: How does the school relate with the missions sending agency Pastor Rițișan directs?

A: Before the missions sending agency APME (Agenția Penticostală de Misiune Externă) was founded, our graduates faced a real challenge. Some went to the field without being related to a sending structure but only to a local church; others looked for foreign agencies or just waited in the country longer. Today there is a privileged relationship between APME and CRST, and our work is complementary. CRST is training the future missionaries. One strategy CRST has is called “proper transfer,” which takes into account the importance of connecting the students with a sending structure before they graduate. Therefore, in 2009 we took it a step further and introduced the class *The Missionaries’ Orientation*, taught by the APME board, presenting students with the opportunity of being accredited and sent as missionaries by APME to different fields. Therefore, before graduating students know exactly the work philosophy of APME, and this is good.

Q: How many students have graduated?

A: A recent statistic showed that 97 full-time students have graduated CRST.

Q: Do you have any idea how many are serving on the field and in how many countries?

A: A total of 20 graduates are already serving overseas: 2 in Afghanistan, 5 in Turkey (4 among Turks, 1 with Iranian refugees), 1 in Bulgaria (among Turks), 1 in Kazakhstan, 4 in Macedonia, 1 in North Africa (at the point of leaving), 2 in Namibia, 1 in India, 1 in Albania, and 2 in Ukraine. Serving in the country are 8 graduates working among the Turks from southeast Romania and 12 directly involved in church planting in other southeast Romania villages and towns. We expect that soon many other graduates will join APME and leave for the field. In addition, 13 other missionaries sent by APME took modular classes in our school, such as the classes on Islam.

Q: How does the school’s two-year program work?

A: The two-year training program is ideal for our school. Theoretical training and English classes are completed with a spiritual emphasis that helps our students grow in their relationship with God, understanding their spiritual gifts, and operating with the power of the Holy Spirit. Also, great emphasis is given to practical ministry; therefore, our students are invited to experience hands-on ministry with weekend placements, short-term mission trips, and a two-month internship. At CRST the process of instruction is spread over two years in the form of day classes in block courses of 1–2 weeks.

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Interview With Ina Hrisca *continued*

Director, CRST Missions Training School—Constanța, Romania

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The First Year

The first year emphasizes the molding of every student's character and developing his or her abilities and spiritual gifts in order to prepare for serving efficiently. This year's courses are taught about biblical foundations with an introduction to missions, such as *Introduction to the Old Testament, Introduction to the New Testament, Personal Development of the Spirit, Church History, Missions History and Theology, Introduction to Missions, Acts of the Apostles, Biblical Doctrine, Evangelism and Church Planting, Exegetics, Homiletics, and Hermeneutics*, among others. We also provide English classes.

The Second Year

The second year focuses on students' preparation for cross-cultural missions and orientation toward specific missions fields. (Graduates of other Bible schools may apply directly for the second year.)

This year's courses are specifically about missions, with an emphasis on the essential Christian message in context. Among the courses offered in the second year are

Introduction to Islam, Folk Islam, Serving in a Muslim Context, Approaching Islam Theologically and Practically, Cross-Cultural Communication, Introduction to Hinduism and other Oriental Religions, Bivocationalism, Leading Workers and Working in a Team, Signs and Wonders in Missions, Spiritual Warfare, and Missionary Orientation, among others.

A large emphasis is put on combining theoretical preparation with practical experience, so much so that both first- and second-year students are involved in a project among the Muslims from southeast of Romania, coordinated by local churches. At the end of the first year every student participates in a summer missions trip (10–14 days) in a country such as Albania, Turkey, or Kosovo. The purpose of this trip is to expose students to another culture and to confirm or contradict their calling to serving cross-culturally. For the students' assurance of a theoretical and practical teaching of excellence, CRST cooperates with the evangelical churches of Romania, known missions organizations worldwide, and theological institutions of accredited teaching in order to bring in top-quality professors.

Q: What is your vision for the school in the next five years?

A: Our vision for the next five years includes the following:

- To continue training but at the same time place greater emphasis on students considering becoming missionaries to unreached ethnic groups.
- To see graduates decide to go on the mission field immediately after graduation, choosing APME as the sending structure.
- To mobilize young people from our churches to commit themselves to missions and come to CRST for training. We are considering visiting new Romanian churches every year to this end.
- To motivate churches to give and pray for missionaries. My dream is to see each Romanian Pentecostal church sending at least one missionary to the unreached world.



The Romanian Centre of Cross-Cultural Studies (CRST), a missions training school

Events Calendar

14th Latin American Missions Consultation (MEC)

Santiago, Chile

March 31–April 4, 2014

Africa WMC Missions Consultation

Nairobi, Kenya

April 23–24, 2014

World AG Congress & U.S. AG Centennial

Springfield, Missouri, U.S.A.

August 7–10, 2014, with a preconference
Global Church Planting Summit August 5–6

Southern Asia Missions Consultation

Asia

October 6–10, 2014

San José 2015

*A consultation on the national church and
unreached peoples*

San José, Costa Rica

April 13–17, 2015

Latin America Missions Leaders Summit

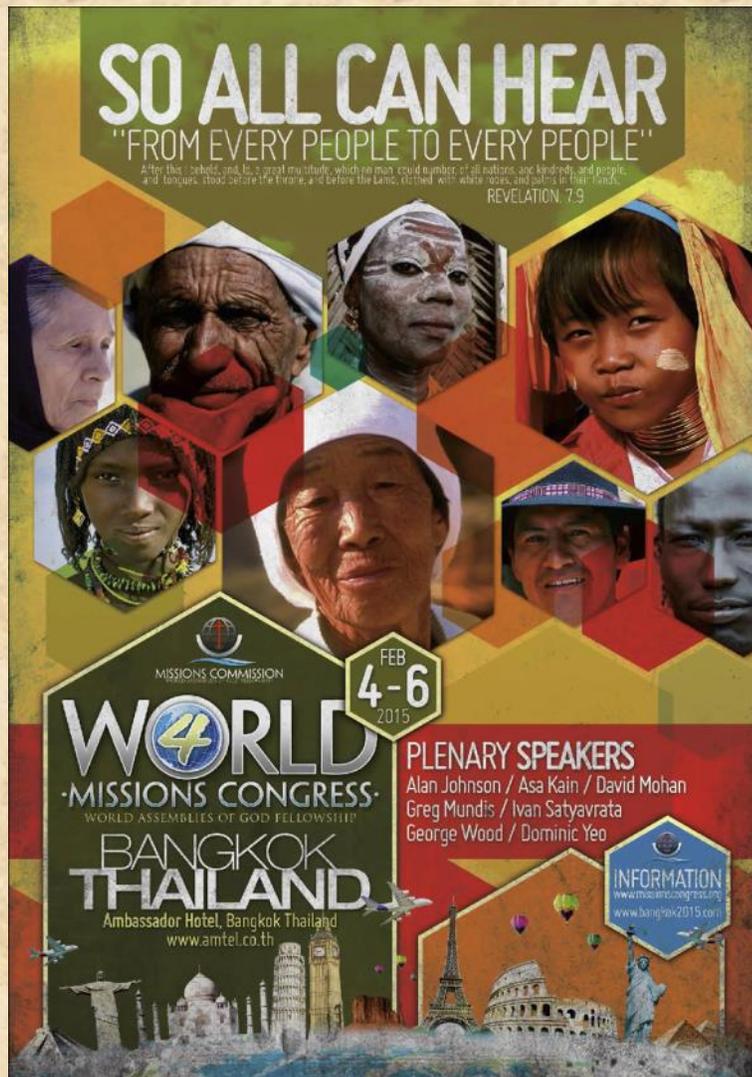
San José, Costa Rica

April 20–24, 2015

WAGF 4th World Missions Congress

Bangkok, Thailand

February 2–6, 2015



The website for the congress will be

bangkok2015.com.

We'll let you know as information is updated.

Check out the the WAGF website and missions page:
worldagfellowship.org/ and worldagfellowship.org/missions/