



**“Correct Me If I'm Wrong”**  
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**The 7th International  
Lausanne Researchers' Conference**

*Participant's Survey Report*

The Seventh International Lausanne Researchers' Conference was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia May 24-18, 2015. The first such Conference was held in Amsterdam, Holland, in April 1987, the second in Hoddesdon, United Kingdom, in February 1996, the third in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in September 2001, the fourth in Limassol, Cyprus, in April 2005, the fifth in Geelong, Australia, in April 2008, and the sixth in São Paulo, Brazil, in April 2011. Each has been

attended by between 40 and 60 delegates from around 20 countries. A small international committee of up to six people organises each one.

The seventh such Conference was no exception in terms of numbers of delegates or countries represented. Someone came from every continent. This particular Conference was unlike the others in that we were joined for the morning plenary sessions by a contingent from AsiaCMS who then held their own mini-Conference in another room but who joined us for meals. Deliberately the programme of both was shared and delegates were free to go to either as they wished, a format which worked, was appreciated and might well be repeated in future Conferences.

A simple survey was distributed to the non-AsiaCMS delegates asking for their reactions to this seventh Conference. Thirty-one survey forms, out of a possible total of 40, contained complete and partial responses. This is a report on its findings. (For simplicity the answers are expressed in percentages, even though based on small numbers.)

**When should the next Researchers' Conference be held?**

The goal has been to host these Conferences every three years. In which year would participants be most likely to attend the next International Researchers' Conference? The preferred year was 2018 (71% of respondents).

The participants were also asked to choose (a) month(s) which would be most convenient. The preferred months were May, June, April and August (22%, 17%, 13% and 13% respectively).

**Reactions to the 2015 Researchers' Conference**

Participants were then asked to rate different aspects of the Conference. Devotions were the poorest element, while the Aloft Hotel itself scored very high points, along with the meeting rooms and dining arrangements. The Plenary Sessions and Seminars were judged of equal merit, somewhere between “good” and “very good”. For most participants the Conference reached a very acceptable standard.

Written comments revealed that some participants would have appreciated more prayer, music, and a taste of local worship. While the majority clearly appreciated the quality of the hotel, some made the point it was rather expensive and might thus have deterred others from coming. Dining arrangements, especially when altogether, were appreciated. The technical problems experienced in one of the meeting rooms were also cited. One person wrote, “I would prefer that there were not competing seminars. It is discouraging not to be able to hear the work that others have prepared and disheartening to speak to a smaller group.”

**What could be changed?** Suggestions for improvement included:

- Time set aside for reflection and prayer
- Invite more younger researchers (under age 35) and non-Westerners
- Discussion groups dealing with various research methods, topics, challenges
- More printed papers
- More time for dialogue

## Final comments

- The diversity is fantastic
- I missed the African presence (2 people)
- Go to more affordable venues to encourage more to come from lower income countries
- Partnership with Asia CMS was fantastic
- Report or summary of key highlights from each track
- Relationship of research to operational metrics
- Show how research was used to encourage researchers – decisions made, structures altered, programmes re-designed, etc.
- Raised many questions, but didn't answer very many
- The Conference was excellent! Many, many thanks (2 people)
- I enjoyed a very warm welcome to this my first Researchers' Conference
- Location and facilities were very good
- Twinning with another Conference may be a good way forward
- This was my third Researchers' Conference, and the best yet. Congratulations and thanks for creating a time and space for us to become collaborators and friends with other researchers, old and young



*by Peter Brierley*

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## Reflections on the Lausanne Researchers Conference

The highlight of the 7th Lausanne International Researchers Conference in Malaysia was the networking and listening opportunities. Being with some of the world's top researchers is always a blessing and a place to learn. The excursion to the Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies (IAIS) was exceptional as we listened to a world-class scholar respond to questions regarding interfaith dialogue between Christians and Muslims.

The presentation of how National Church Life Survey in Australia is used was enlightening and challenging to see the cultural and ethnic diversity within cities. Dr. Brierley's presentation about global demographic trends challenged us to identify and track the work of the Church to respond and adapt to these changes.

Listening and talking with fellow participants encouraged me and deepened friendships. Getting to know the research and interests of others stimulated my own creative juices to explore new areas of thought and discovery. As a result of new relationships, a couple of new research projects might emerge.



**Steve McCord**



**Chris Maynard**

Was it going to be worth it? I don't mean the money. Intercontinental trips take so much time, and time is all I have to offer my Lord! But by the end of the first day I was happy to get back to my room and say to myself, "Yes. Thank you, Lord. It has been worth it already." It was worth it to have lunch with my friend and co-worker "V", who lives in South East Asia and whom I have never met face to face – in 10 years. It was worth it to hear Rob Hay lay out the challenges of leading in a complex world. Wow, we do have some problems! It was worth it to meet the Lausanne Communication Team, working on training materials for leaders. It was worth it to hear Asian leaders talking about their challenges for the sake of the gospel. Asia, of course is where 50% of the people and 80% of the non-Christians are today, so mission in Asia is mission to most of the world. I am glad this conference was in Asia. Thank you Asia CMS!

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## See You There

One or more of us will be attending the Brazilian Missions Researchers Consultation September 29 to October 2, 2015, in Atibaia, São Paulo, Brazil.

If you are attending this gathering and would like to share a meal or just chat over coffee, then please drop us a note at [cmiw@worksmail.net](mailto:cmiw@worksmail.net). We realize that many of our readers don't speak Portuguese and will not be there, but we as a Community want to encourage mission research among non-English speakers as well. Please do pray for this important and strategic event.

Maybe you are attending a function in September 2015 or onwards where you expect other information workers will be present. If you would like to meet them face-to-face, please also let us know. We'll feature your event in our next bulletin.

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### Who's Who in Missions Information

*Special Profile: Gerry Gutiérrez*

1. [CMIW] **Please tell us about yourself and your family.** [GG] I am child of missionary parents, grew up in Oaxaca, Mexico and I have medical degree from the University of Mexico. I was a medical missionary in Oaxaca for 35 years, and from medical investigating, I moved into the investigation of people groups of the state of Oaxaca. There are a million indigenous people in 155 ethnic groups, it is the most ethnically diverse area in all the Americas. My husband David Gutierrez got involved in Gospel Recordings (now Global Recordings) 30 years go. Dave and I have been married 40 years, and we have 4 children-- 2 sons and 2 daughters. Both of our sons are our biological children, and our daughters were adopted from the Zapotec tribe. Our younger daughter, Esperanza, was blind, deaf, and never walked or talked, but her life touched hundreds of people before her death at 10 years.



2. [CMIW] **What is your current ministry?** [GG] I'm the language tracking coordinator for the Global Recordings Network. I work with the worldwide organization, tracking languages and dialects for the directors and recordists. The recordists producing 400 new recordings from all over the world each year, my team helps them understand what language and recording to make so as to avoid duplication.

3. [CMIW] **What are the contributions you have made to world missions that have brought you the greatest satisfaction?** [GG] The books that I have been able to produce. "Alcancemos Las Etnias de México" (Reaching the Ethnic Groups of Mexico) was a joint effort with 20 mission agencies-- everybody who works with tribal groups. The first edition was published in 2004, under the direction of Moises Lopez, and it was the first book of research produced for the church on the ethnic groups of Mexico. It contains missiological articles as well as ethnographic studies of each of the ethnic groups in the country. It describes the agencies that work in Mexico among indigenous groups, and has mobilized the Mexican church for missions. The third edition came out in 2004.

In 2006 David & I made a visit to South and Central America with Global Recordings, as we had 500 recordings that were not being used. I was so surprised that no other country had a comparable book on their ethnic groups, of missions at a national level, except Brazil.

Our most recent book is entitled "From America to Los Angeles", done in collaboration with the Baptists and the US Center for World Missions. It begins with a brief history of the Americas and the history of religion in Southern California, and explains the migration of people from all over the Americas to the city of Los Angeles. For example, many Hispanics are coming from Central America over land, but there are few South Americans on the west coast. Between Columbia and Panama there exists a 200 km gap called the Darien Gap which makes overland travel impossible, so people wanting to leave South America must fly. Panama can barely defend its sea boarders, and an overland route would be difficult to patrol, so neither Panama nor the US wants to promote the creation of such a highway. Thus, a

natural barrier exists that effects the South American diaspora into LA.

This book is Volume 1 of a series, volume 2 is entitled “Arabia to Los Angeles” and volume 3, “South Asia to Los Angeles” and will be printed in July, 2015. We want to cover all the diaspora to LA, eventually putting it into one volume in order to more effectively mobilize the church in LA to reach these immigrants. All our books are user friendly. They are of the sort where you can just sit down and get a clear idea of what you want to know for ministry.

4. [CMIW] **What dreams do you have for your next ten years of ministry?** [GG] For the next five years we want to continue classifying the number of dialects in the world. There are currently approximately 7000 recognized languages but I'm not sure of how many dialects there are. Global Recordings is the steward of dialects so we want to determine an accurate count for each country.

The other thing I would like to do is to travel from Alaska to Argentina with a mobile office to promote the resources available for ethnic groups-- not just GR's resources but everybody's resources. We know that there are many people in America that work with migrants and have no idea that there are resources available. My husband I want to do more research, finding out more about migrants, and then try to connect them to local churches that care about them.

5. [CMIW] **Is there some way you'd be willing to help the CMIW community?** [GG] I am not an academic scholar, but I would like to make information intelligible and digestible--useful to ordinary church people. Within my own sphere of influence I can share my own material, giving the results of our research to the local church in the Los Angeles and elsewhere. If any of that would be useful on a larger level, I certainly would be willing to help.

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### Information from the Word

Within the few opening sentences of the Bible God uses numbers (“*first day*”, “*second day*”, *etc.*). There are more than one hundred numbers in the first eleven chapters of Genesis. Why are they here in God's account of creation? Are numbers fundamental to the world He created? Could it exist without them? God's revelation to us uses numbers. So we will probably need numbers to describe and understand the world that he has created.

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#### Final Details:

- This bulletin is produced by the Community of Mission Information Workers Task Force comprised of Larry Kraft, Stephanie Kraft and Chris Maynard. Please send any suggestions of issues to discuss or any other ideas to “[cmiw@worksmail.net](mailto:cmiw@worksmail.net)”.
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