

# Communicating peace is the solution to world wars

By Redemtor Atieno, Uganda

The WACC Congress 2008 ended 10 October with the installation of a new President of the WACC Board, vice-president, treasurer and a board secretary.

Outgoing WACC President , Musimbi Kanyoro, installing new president, Dennis Smith (photo by Erick Coll, Cuba).

In a colourful and soul-touching closing ceremony, Dennis Smith of Guatemala was installed as the new President in a symbolic gesture where he was draped with a white stole by the outgoing president , Musimbi Kanyoro of Kenya.

In his speech, the new president said he was honoured to serve WACC for the next term. He said WACC has served as his professional association and his window onto the rich world of Latin America communication theory and practice. WACC has also been a place where he has learned about communication rights, public policy and theologies of communication.

Smith said WACC will continue to be present in the struggle to have the right to communicate recognized as a basic human right.

He regretted that the world had become engulfed in so much violence for so long. He wondered how the world can restore the balance. "How do we re-build self-respect?" he asked. "What is the glue that helps us piece together our integrity?" He added that many people have been seduced by power and consumerism and are hollow and hurting inside.

Smith challenged the participants to go forth and be bearers of peace. "The struggle to build the world imagined by God must continue. But we must know that the struggle will consume us. In our brokenness we will become even more broken," he said.

The closing ceremony also featured remarks by WACC General Secretary Randy Naylor. Naylor said he hoped that Congress 2008 will be part of the participants' continuing journey--that will determine whether Congress was worthwhile. He said the world has spent many years in writing about war and now was the time to write about peace.

"As people of the world we are called to bring peace. War has had enough airtime to serve as a solution to the world's problems. It is time to give peace a chance," he emphasized.

Naylor said Robben Island in South Africa, where Mandela had been jailed for 18 years, was a stunning example of how people can choose peace over war, love over violence and love over death.

He urged the participants to continue communicating messages that promote peace and deliver content that touches life. "As dedicated people of faith it is the message that counts, inspires and changes lives," he said. "As Christians we are not called to be successful, but to be faithful."

Naylor reiterated WACC's commitment to peace, gender and media justice in a world that is increasingly

anticipating for a vision for living life

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