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## Global Connections National Conference 4-6 November 2009

# Mission and Risk Summary Report

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'Mission and risk' is clearly an important subject. Participants in this group were often experienced practitioners, many of them mission leaders, and their concern was expressed by the high degree of engagement in the discussion. Despite the good length of time allocated for presentation and discussion (nearly seven hours in total) the subject was by no means exhausted. A brief summary of outcomes, together with recommendations, follows.

- Risk is an inevitable part of mission, indeed part of discipleship with its challenge to accept a vocation that includes suffering.
- Risk can and should be evaluated and managed, but not in an over cautious spirit. We must avoid the traps laid by a risk averse society.
- Choosing risk may also mean that others who have not chosen it will be put at risk. Children are the obvious example. Their special needs require special attention.
- Preparation for situations of risk must be taken seriously. There is training etc. available but people are not always aware of this.
- There is a need for more Biblical and theological reflection in this area, including a theology of suffering.
- The world is becoming an increasingly risky arena. We need a more sophisticated understanding of global issues and a renewed emphasis on the universal church (theology of the one body).
- Emerging mission partners and Westerners may have different attitudes to risk.
- Handing over power and responsibility is still a challenge for Western mission agencies and one that has considerable attendant risks.
- The environmental crisis remains 'the elephant in the room' for many mission agencies. It is huge but nobody wants to talk about it.
- Economic risk is an increasing feature of the world and will also need managing.
- While there are arguments for and against a risky 'incarnational' lifestyle, the idea must not be dropped from the mission agenda.
- For God's power to be truly displayed mission must be done in weakness.

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