





for LIFE  FAMILY  FREEDOM 

CCI Newsletter September 2023



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Dear Reader,

Opposition desperately needed

Last month, CCI was again able to attend meetings of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva as well as the OSCE in Warsaw. During the annual discussion in Geneva on the Integration of a Gender Perspective and other meetings, it is striking that the position of women is in danger when the biological definition of woman is abolished. Western countries are leading the way in pushing for LGBT rights. Defenses and endorsements of marriage, family, and motherhood are rare and in urgent need of strengthening. CCI has the capabilities to do this and works well with like-minded organizations.

We are thankful for all the support that we received last months. However, in order to provide permanent supervision and to provide a Christian counterpoint, it would be desirable to expand our team. Unfortunately, the resources for this are lacking. Your lasting [\(financial\) support](#) is indispensable for this.

Bright spots

In the summer we were able to showcase our work in Canada during a Teachers Conference of the 'Netherlands Reformed Christian Educational Association', in Coalhurst, Alberta. Our board member John Van Der Brink was also present. Later in this newsletter he identifies bright spots in American policy regarding freedom of religion.

Päivi Räsänen

The support for the persecuted Finnish politician Päivi Räsänen was heart-warming. A Bible quote on Twitter would be hate speech, decision will be made no later than November 30. We were able to hand over 2,500 messages of support on your behalf, as you can see in the video below.

Family policy in Europe

At the invitation of President Katalin Novák, we attended [the Budapest Demographic Summit](#), with Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, among others. A very special meeting was with [Nick Vujicic](#), who also spoke during this summit. Grateful that this man without arms and legs was not aborted, but was given the chance to live and became an example to the world.

On behalf of the [CCI business network](#), organized by [Mr. Jan Konijn](#), I was allowed to present a Hungarian Bible to President Katalin Novák. The story about Michiel de Ruyter who freed 26 Hungarian preachers on February 11, 1676 was added as an appendix.

Even though we cannot always endorse everything a country advocates, Hungary's family policy is exemplary and we are happy to support it. This also applies to Poland, where I attended the ['Warsaw Family Policy Conference'](#) at the end of September. They can prevent unanimity in the EU on important moral issues.

EU ACP

We are also not sitting idle in Africa and our awareness campaigns continue. This quarter we mainly focused on important preparatory work for the various lobby activities surrounding the new [EU-ACP Treaty](#) that will take place in the last quarter of this year. We hope to be able to provide an important update in the next newsletter.

We ask you for prayers, especially for our lobbying work in Africa, where the current issue is whether or not the treaty, which includes the promotion of abortion and LGBTI, will be signed in its current form.

With warm regards,

Henk Jan van Schothorst

Directeur Christian Council International

Fields of Work

News from Europe

Thanks to the supporters of Päivi Räsänen



Helsinki, Finland, September 1, 2023


Thanks

On behalf of Päivi Räsänen, I would like to thank you very much for your support in connection with the appeal that was heard August 31st and September the 1st in the court in Helsinki, Finland. Prior to the trial, I had the opportunity to hand over 2,500 signatures of support on your behalf! Please watch the video above in which Ms. Räsänen also expresses her thanks:

"I am so thankful. I hope that you will send my gratitude. That I am so grateful for this support and for their prayers. That means a lot to me. Thank you so much and thank you for coming from the Netherlands".



Also the Finnish [media](#) paid attention to the campaign of support.



The number of signatures has now risen to over 2900. We hope for even more [support](#). The action continues as long as the process is running.

The Case

The charges concerned her tweet in 2019 of some Bible verses from Romans 1:24-27, with which she tried to dissuade her Lutheran church leadership from walking in the Helsinki Pride Parade. Also, a booklet she wrote in 2004 with the theme "Man and woman He created them" and a discussion of these issues during a radio broadcast was qualified as 'hate speech'.

It was striking that during the hearing the prosecutor long, fundamentally and intentionally put the principle of non-discrimination above freedom of expression and religion. These are free, as long as they conform to normalization of homosexuality. I found the defense against the charges (again) more than convincing. The verdict will follow at the latest by November 30.

For further information on the Räsänen (and Lutheran bishop Juhana Pohjola, the editor of Paivi's booklet) case, please refer to [CNE.news](#).



IS THE BIBLE HATE SPEECH?

August 31:
Päivi Räsänen
is on trial

CCI
Christian Council
International

Sign for support

Budapest Demographic Summit Advocates for
'Traditional Family Values', Sept 14-15



For Life, Family and Freedom worldwide

In appreciation for your untiring dedication to support
the cause of life, family, and freedom and to promote
Christian values in politics we hand over this Bible.
Presented by the support base of Christian Council
International (CCI) to

Your Excellency Madame
Katalin Novák
President of Hungary

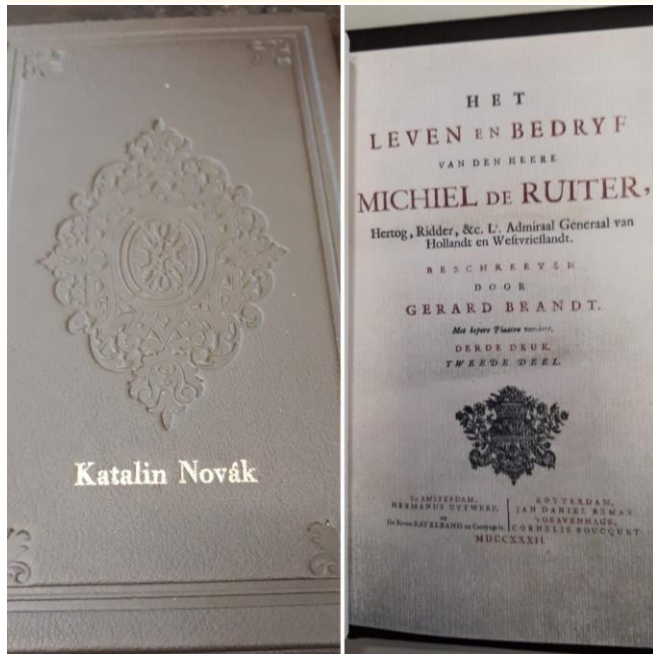
In recognition of the God of the Bible, Who will give
you the strength to fulfill your duty, we deliver this to
you.

The Netherlands, September, 2023

Henk Jan van Schothorst,
Founder and Executive Director CCI

Organized by Dutch businessman Mr. Jan Konijn, who
added a historic description of the liberation of 26
Hungarian pastors on 11 February, 1676 by Michiel de
Ruyter.

www.christiancouncilinternational.org



Henk Jan van Schothorst attended [the Budapest Demographic Summit](#). Speakers were, among others: Viktor Orbán, Katalin Novák and Giorgia Meloni. On behalf of the CCI business network, organized by [Mr. Jan Konijn](#), he was allowed to present a Hungarian Bible to President Katalin

Novák. The story about Michiel de Ruyter who freed 26 Hungarian pastors on February 11, 1676 was added as an appendix.



Henk Jan met Nick Vujicic : "What a joy and honor it was to meet [Nick Vujicic](#) again. 'Please, come closer to me', he said. What an exemplary preacher of the Gospel, blessed with a loving wife and 4 nice children. So grateful that he wasn't aborted, but got the chance to live, and became a blessing to the world.



54th session of the Human Rights Council Geneva, Sept 25

Van Schothorst was present at the annual discussion on the Integration of a Gender perspective in the Human Rights Council in Geneva. The position of women is in danger with the abolition of the biological definition of woman, mainly advocated by the West. Reference or recommendation of marriage, family and motherhood were missing.

| 25 September | 2 October |
|--|---|
| ANNUAL DISCUSSION ON INTEGRATION OF A GENDER PERSPECTIVE (HRC res. 6/30) | |
| ITEM 4 D with Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine (oral update) | ITEM 6 UPR adoptions (Tonga, Romania, Mali) |
| 10.00 – 13.00 | 13.00 |

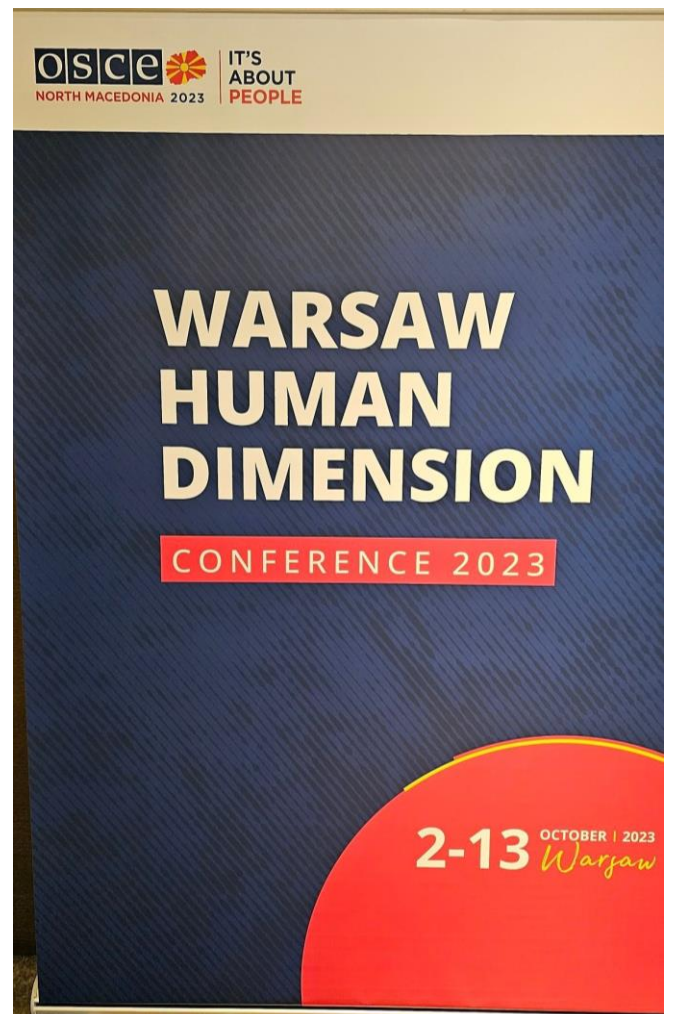


Warsaw Family Policy Conference, Sept 28-30
In the area of family policy, Poland, like Hungary, is exemplary. They perform a crowbar function, as "last men standing," to prevent unanimity in EU on important moral issues.



OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), Oct 2

After fruitful meetings with people from [ADF International](#) and [Instytut na rzecz Kultury Prawnej Ordo Iuris](#) at the opening of the [#warsawhumandimension](#) conference 2-13 okt from [OSCE – The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe](#), [OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights \(ODIHR\)](#), filled with statements from participating member states. Main themes: democratic constitutional state, fundamental freedoms and non-discrimination.



News from America

A Few Bright Spots

By: John Van Der Brink

We often take for granted the religious freedoms we still enjoy. The freedom to live and worship according to the dictates of our conscience has always been a part of our national heritage. Will that freedom still exist tomorrow? There are forces alive today that seem to want to take away those freedoms. But there are also people who are becoming aware of this threat and are letting their voices be heard. Even in the halls of Congress and in our nation's courtroom, a voice is being raised in defense of religious freedom. Amidst all that opposition, there are also some bright spots. May the Lord give strength, energy, and concern to our leaders who have a desire to maintain the morals and values of God's Word.



The upcoming presidential election cycle seems to be filled with candidates that will largely restrict or extend the religious freedom we still have. We would encourage everyone to be vigilant in researching what each candidate stands for and to vote for those who seem best qualified to defend our religious freedoms.

While there are many concerns, we would like to highlight some positive events related to religious freedoms. In the last few years, there have been those who have resisted the trends, challenged rulings in courts, and have been surprisingly successful in promoting religious freedoms. A few of them are listed below.

1. Recently the Supreme Court ruled in favor of a US Postal worker who was dismissed from his job because he refused to work on Sunday. His dismissal violated the employer's requirement to make reasonable accommodations for religious beliefs. This should help our young people

when faced with similar situations in the work world.

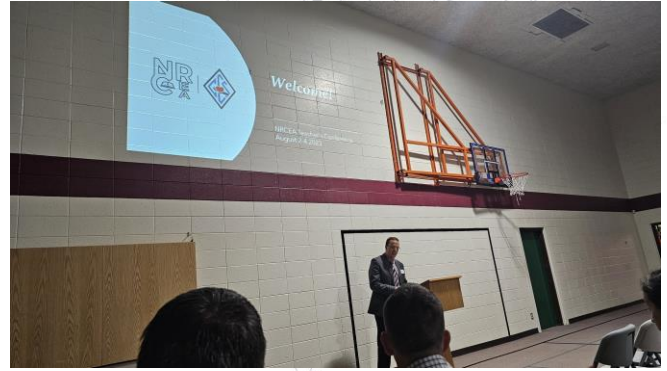
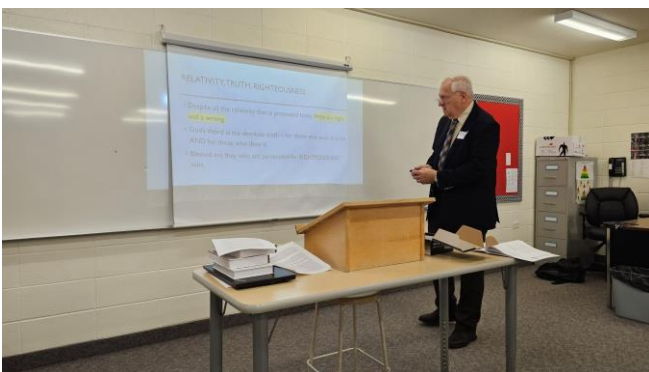
2. In 2021 *Tandon v Newsom*, the Supreme Court of the United States reversed a lower California court decision that forbade church services of more than three families while at the same time allowing larger gatherings for other purposes. This decision clearly was in favor of extending religious freedoms to churchgoers.
3. In 2022 *Fulton v City of Philadelphia*, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of a religious organization that placed children in adoptive homes to refuse to place them in the home of same-sex couples. This case reinforced the rights of organizations to make and follow policies that are consistent with their religious beliefs.
4. The concept of School Choice is extending across America, especially in states run by Republican governors. These programs provide tax relief to parents who choose to send their children to religious-based schools. Tuition is sometimes tax deductible, and in some cases, private schools are funded similarly to public schools.
5. Of course, we all know the long sought-after but unexpected reversal of the infamous 1973 *Roe v Wade* decision which legalized abortion nationwide. Who could have thought that there would come a time when this awful decision would be reversed? But elections have consequences, and in God's providence, it was the justices appointed by President Trump who dared to take a stand against this awful law. And although abortion is still practiced in many places, many politicians who oppose abortion have dared to speak out, and they are being elected to office. May the Lord grant further reforms in our country.

6. Finally, the Supreme Court also ruled in 2022 that the State of Maine which provides tuition assistance to nonreligious private schools must also provide equal assistance to nonpublic religious schools.

All the above serve as examples that the concerns that we have about Religious Freedoms are also felt by a growing number of others in our society. Some are speaking up and being heard. And while Christianity is shrinking in America and atheism is growing, there still are a small group of people, even among our leaders, who desire to hold on to the principles and values of a former generation. May God remember our nation and be with the upcoming generation.

John Van Der Brink, director of the Netherlands Reformed Christian School in Pompton Plains, New Jersey, and a member of the Board of Directors of Christian Council International (CCI)

Teacher's Conference North America, Aug 2-4
With hundreds of participants, and CCI-US Boardmember John Van Der Brink, Henk Jan van Schothorst contributed to the educational Teacher's Conference North America of the Netherlands Reformed Christian Educational Association, in Coalhurst, Alberta: "For Life, Family and Freedom (of religion and education) @ UN, EU, AU and Member States".



News from the CCI team

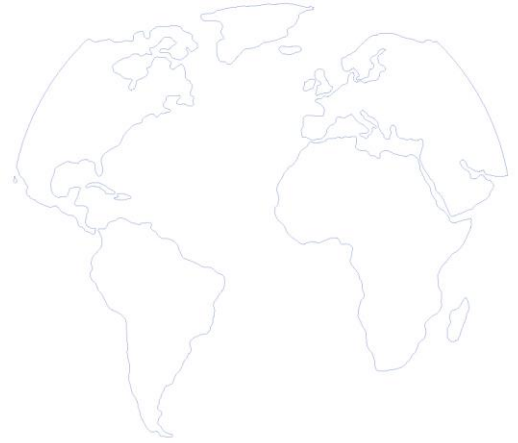
July 3-4:

The [Christian Council International](#) team had a unique day together and a nice meeting with MEP [Bert-Jan Ruissen](#) in Brussels. With our office Reps. from Europe, USA and Africa standing together for Life, Family and Freedom. Celebrated [#IndependenceDay](#) God bless America and the peoples of the world!



July 17:

Together with the Christian Council International (CCI) Africa Office representative, with her child, we had a useful and extremely trusted networking meeting with Diederik van Dijk, member of the Senate for SGP and director at @NPV - Care for life. Standing together and taking care of #life!





Christian Council International in a nutshell



LIFE

What's at stake:

The EU wants to standardize abortion laws, LGBT promotion and sexualizing education internationally, here in a binding trade treaty with a group of 79 African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries, more than 1 billion people. But education and health are matters which belong to national competencies. By pressuring these nations, the EU is subverting sovereignty and Christian values.

What we do:

We alert key leaders in ACP countries and in the EU so that complying with this pressure is prevented. Freedom to enact own legislation must be preserved.

FAMILY

What's at stake:

Western countries are trying to use the UN to add a new term to categories protected by nondiscrimination policies. This term is "sexual orientation and gender identity" (SOGI). Proponents would like to define gender as a feeling, a self-chosen identity, and not as a biological distinction. This new gender ideology denies the Biblical creation order.

What we do:

We participate in public discussions at the UN and lobby for worldwide respect for Biblical directives on marriage and the family.

FREEDOM

What's at stake:

Freedom of education, of religion, and of speech is under increasing international pressure, especially in the EU and the United States. Finnish Christian politician Päivi Räsänen is on trial for inciting hatred because of her expressed Biblical views on homosexuality and marriage. In a similar vein, Hungary is also under attack over its child protection laws.

What we do:

We stand up and publicly defend these freedoms. We provide moral and informational support to individuals and countries under attack for their Christian beliefs and culture.

What we achieve:

ACP-EU Treaty

National Sovereignty Secured

1. Due partly to our efforts to alert EU and ACP member states about serious content problems, the signing of the EU-ACP Treaty has been delayed, already for 2 years.
2. We spoke in the European Parliament to identify problems that would result from passing the Treaty. We also drafted written questions for the European Commission to answer.
3. Through our African office, we supported ACP Members of Parliament by asking critical questions during the EU-ACP Parliamentary Assembly.



President of Malawi with Henk Jan van Schothorst

United Nations

Norm Creation Order Maintained

1. Through our consultative status, we bring a Christian voice to the United Nations meeting rooms and actively monitor the ongoing agenda.
2. We managed to work with supporters to keep sexual orientation, gender identity, sexualizing education, and LGBT promotion out of norm-setting resolutions.
3. We help to prevent abortion from becoming an international human right.



Mark Den Hollander
CCI US representative to UN

Hungary - Finland - USA

Defense of Christian Freedom Supported

1. By supporting Hungary's defense of Christian values, we help to prevent the EU from reaching European and international consensus on pro LGBTQ+ and gender ideology.
2. Through our support of the Finnish politician Päivi Räsänen, awareness has been raised in the EU and member states that the Bible is on trial.
3. With our CCI branch in the US, a policymaker network is being formed for the defense of freedom of education and of religion.



CCI in Finland at Päivi Räsänen's court case

Urgent financial support needed for CCI

In order for CCI's work to continue and expand, a steady flow of funds is necessary. To get an idea of what the project plan looks like for the next three years, see the picture below or [click here](#). It is an ambitious plan, but every contribution helps us!



Sponsorship plan



CCI Program January 2023 - December 2025

Ambitious three-year program aiming to return Christian perspectives to the very center of public debate in North America, Europe and worldwide.

The Program "For Life, Family and Freedom at UN, EU, AU, US and its Member States" protects Christian values and freedoms at a time when the Christian basis for these achievements is crumbling.

How?

- By using CCI's consultative status at the UN, EU, and AU, and its full-time presence in the US, to strengthen the protection of Christian values and freedoms and national sovereignty.
- By mobilizing a network of like-minded decision makers, parliamentarians, the media, and CSOs to jointly raise awareness and influence the policy makers to protect Life, Family and Freedom.



150,000
USD per
year

1. Project United States

- Location: Washington DC
- Permanent monitoring and action on the day-to-day affairs in US politics and US Congress.



150,000
USD per
year

2. Project United Nations

- Locations: New York, Geneva
- Permanent monitoring and action on the day-to-day affairs at the UN Headquarters, the UN Human Rights Council, and WHO Office.



150,000
USD per
year

3. Project Europe

- Locations: Brussels, Strasbourg, Warsaw, Vienna
- Permanent monitoring and action on the day-to-day affairs at the EU Institutions and the OSCE.



250,000
USD per
year

4. Project ACP

- Location: Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)
- Permanent monitoring and action on the day-to-day affairs at the African Union (AU) and its member states, and the Caribbean and Pacific countries (with voting rights at the UN).



CCI's main activities across the four different project locations

- Contribute with oral and written statements to influence strategic policy- and decision-making meetings that threaten national sovereignty and Christian values and freedoms regarding life, family and freedom.
- Organize strategic side-events and awareness raising conferences.
- Maintain strong partnership relations with like-minded policy influencers.
- Organize regular online planning sessions to develop joint intervention strategies with key allies.
- Conduct research, gather and share information on concerning international policies / treaties, and write policy briefs and media articles.

Use this sponsorship opportunity to showcase your stand for our shared Christian values and freedoms!

Expected results

- Harmful policies / treaties blocked or amended in favor of life, family and freedom.
- A high-level international policy network established and effective in influencing policy at the US, UN, EU, and ACP level.

Key policy focus areas

- Dangerous policy key words threatening life, family and freedom:
 - Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) - sexualizing children
 - Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) - abortion rights
 - Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity (SOGI) - LGBT promotion
 - Safe Abortion - in relation to the rights of women as victims
- Current international policies that contain the above-stated dangerous keywords:
 - The new 20-year binding EU - ACP Agreement (not yet signed)
 - Eastern and Southern Africa Ministerial Commitment
 - AU Safety and Social Security Protocol
 - WHO TreatyAnd more is likely to come....

Special project

November 2022 - January 2024

Support lobby Africa to clean up ideological and neo-colonial EU-ACP Trade Agreement

EXPECTED RESULT

More than 1 billion people will be spared for 20 years from being forced to accept CSE, Abortion, and LGBT / SOGI as promoted in this treaty

\$ 265.000

Donate to Christian Council International (CCI)

CCI is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charity with tax deductible status for donations.

Checks can be sent to:

Mr. John Van Der Brink, 243 Garside Ave
Wayne, NJ 07470, USA

<https://www.christiancouncilinternational.org/donate>

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