1. The 5th Ordinary Meeting of the Secretaries-General of the National and Regional Episcopal Conferences of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM), took place from 18 to 23 April 2018, in Livingstone, Zambia. This meeting was initially scheduled for 2019 but was brought forward by one year due to the preparations of the Golden Jubilee of SECAM, whose opening is scheduled for July 2018. The following Regional Conferences were present: ACEAC, ACERAC, AMECEA, IMBISA, and RECOWA/CERAO.

2. The purpose of this meeting was to share information, experiences and good practices of each Conference with regards to the mission of accompanying the bishops, which is the main duty of the Secretaries General. The Opening Mass was held on April 19, 2018 at St. Theresa Cathedral of Livingstone Diocese; it was presided by the Right Reverend Moses Haamungole, Bishop of the Diocese of Monze. In his homily, as well as in his opening speech, he stated the essential tasks of the Secretaries General. The meeting had three main activities: the Report of the SECAM General Secretariat, the Reports of the Regional Secretaries and a Closed Session.

3. The Reports of the General Secretariat had the following main features:

- Re-affirmation of the Strategic Plan of SECAM (2013-2018), and its major strategic areas as well as highlighting the Operational Plan for the period 2017-2019;
- The report from the Commission for Evangelisation focused on the Small Christian Communities (SCCs);
- The Biblical Centre for Africa and Madagascar (BICAM) presented a new impetus to support evangelization, namely, the forthcoming establishment of the Pan-African Catholic Institutes which include the Institute for Translation and Interpretation, the Institute of Communication and Institute of Research in Social and Human Sciences;
- The Department for Faith, Culture and Development focused on the project of a consortium of cultural centres in Africa and Madagascar and on the need to reflect on the interreligious dialogue on the basis of the African cultural background of tolerance and hospitality;
- The Justice, Peace and Development Commission reported on the activities carried out on migration and human trafficking, good governance and the protection of the Congo basin;
The SECAM Liaison Office to the African Union, which has been functional for three years in Addis Ababa, has set for itself the objective of bringing the voice of the African Church to the heart of the political institutions of the AU; as well as access to the continent political institutions.

The SECAM Communications Office presented its new newsletter, and that one of its current priorities was the production of Golden Jubilee publications.

The Finance Department gave an overview of the levies, and highlighted the challenges of mobilizing financial resources for joint activities and special funding for the Golden Jubilee.

The Theological Committee (COMITHEOL) presented the preparatory document, adopted by the SECAM Standing Committee, for the celebration of the Golden Jubilee, the theme, the calendar of monthly activities during the Jubilee Year, publications to be done and the bodies to be mobilized (dioceses, apostolic Movements, academic institutions, etc.)

4. The presentation of the various regional conferences, in general, focused on the following areas:

- The strengthening of communication at all levels (diocesan, national, regional and continental;
- Migrants and refugees;
- The electoral process;
- Good governance;
- Child Protection;
- Self-sustainability;
- The owning of SECAM by the bishops;

5. The participants in this meeting expressed their gratitude:

- To the Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops;
- The Communication Office of the Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops;
- St. Theresa's Cathedral of Livingstone and the diocesan radio;
- The Partners, especially Missio Aachen and CRS Zambia; and
- The organisers of the meeting and supporting staff

6. The National and Regional Secretaries General of SECAM expressed their solidarity and spiritual proximity to the countries of Africa which are experiencing socio-political difficulties, namely Cameroon, DRC, the Central African Republic, South Sudan and Togo.
7. They unanimously addressed their prayer to the Father of all mercy and consolation; that he may grant to the bishops and the peoples of Africa the Holy Spirit to lead them on the paths of true peace. They entrusted them to the Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Africa so that she intercedes for all countries and families.

Signed in Livingstone, Zambia on Sunday 22nd April 2018

Rev. Fr. Joseph KOMAKOMA
Secretary General of SECAM