In Remembrance of the Late Professor
Dr. Kwame Bediako

Member of the Advisory Board of Exchange 1996-2008

Professor Dr. Cephas Omenyo
Dept. for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana

The untimely demise of the Reverend Professor Doctor Kwame Bediako is a great loss for Africa, the Church, and the academy. This loss brings to mind the Akan proverb which says: *Nea onipa pe na owu nso pe* (What man likes, death also likes). We mourn a truly famous man, whose life and work will be celebrated and recounted for a long time to come.

Born on 7 July 1945, Kwame Bediako had his basic education in Ghana. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Ghana, Legon in French. He pursued Masters and Doctoral degrees in French and French African Literature at the University of Bordeaux, France, in the late 1960s. While in France he had a dramatic experience with Christ which saw him being converted from atheism to a fervent Christian life. This experience led him to the conviction that intellectual life without Christ was futile. Consequently, he decided to spend his life in Christian ministry as a scholar. He therefore started formal theological studies at the London School of Theology from 1973 to 1976.

In 1978, he offered for the ordained ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. Directly afterwards, with permission of the church, he proceeded...
to Aberdeen, Scotland, to pursue doctoral studies in Theology with Professor Andrew Walls. Upon graduating in 1983 he taught for a year in the Department of Religious Studies, University of Aberdeen.

On his return to Ghana, Bediako served as the Resident Chaplain, Accra Ridge Church for three years. From his base in Accra Ridge Church, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana appointed him as part-time founding Director of the Akrofi-Christaller Centre for Mission Research and Applied Theology (now Akrofi-Christaller Institute of Theology, Mission and Culture) in 1985. In 1987 the Bediako family moved to work full-time in Akropong Akuapem, nurturing and enhancing the young Centre. By dint of hard work and with the co-operation of the Board of Trustees and staff the Centre has been transformed into a postgraduate degree awarding institute with both national and international recognition.

Bediako wrote and lectured extensively in his field. From 1986 to 1998 he was a visiting lecturer in African Theology at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, and from 1997, Honorary Professor in the School of Theology, University of Natal (now School of Religion and Theology, University of KwaZulu-Natal), Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. In recognition of his scholarly achievement, Bediako was elected to Fellowship of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1995. He also received a number of awards in Ghana for his Christian scholarship.

Bediako was a widely traveled man, whose expertise was sought by reputable organizations and institutions, both locally and internationally, the world over. He brought his quality work and knowledge to bear on international networks, agencies and institutions: International Fellowship of Evangelical Mission Theologians (INFEMIT, Vice Chairman & Chairman), and its daughter institution, the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, Oxford, UK; International Association of Mission Studies; African Theological Initiative (ATI, Chairman and Director); Board of the Nagel Institute for the Study of World Christianity at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI, USA; Anglophone West African Council of Langham Partnership International and National Accreditation Board of the Ministry of Education, Ghana. Bediako also served on a number of editorial boards of international journals, amongst which *Exchange*.

Professor Bediako was a formidable ecumenical Christian scholar with a keen interest in developments in African, Asian and Latin American as well as Western Christianity. Indeed he was committed to world Christianity. He was clearly one of the most outstanding Christian theologians Africa has given the world. He was well sought-after by Western institutions. In spite of the countless invitations to him to live and teach in prestigious institutions of higher