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مجلس كنائس الشرق الأوسط

The Middle East Council of Churches

The Middle East Council Of Churches

M E C C

Final project research

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## Introduction

Our present time is marked by a strong belief of the importance of communication for a better understanding of each other. Christians in the Middle East have suffered from divisions for a long time. Many of the Christian denominations, if not all, are looking forward the unification of the word of Christians in the Middle East.

The year 1974 marked the starting of an ecumenical venture; the Middle East Council of Churches. It has been "a sign of hope for our churches in the midst of fear and despair caused by divisions in society and divisions within the body of Christ"<sup>1</sup>. The great challenge that the founders of MECC took upon themselves was to "maintain the MECC as an instrument through which the churches of the region could manifest together their hope in a better future through common prayers and deeds".<sup>2</sup>

## Personal objective

The ecumenical movement has always fascinated me. I feel I am involved in it as my parents belong to two different denominations. I never felt that there was any distinction and Christianity to me has been a pattern of life more than an argument.

I hope one day Christians all over the world would put aside their theological or organizational differences and concentrate on the real essence of Christianity; love, and its practice in real life.

The World Council of Churches (WCC) founded in Geneva has been working for the advantage of Christians in the world. Unfortunately, our region; the Middle East, has been somehow neglected - may be because Christians are a minority among other religions or because of organizational separation between Eastern and Western denominations.

In my point of view this should not be a reason for neglect, on the contrary, special attention should be given to Middle Eastern Christians for better relationships internally and externally.

The MECC has been founded for this reason. It works in collaboration with the WCC but has a separate organization. The religious value of the council of churches adds much to the symbolic value of the project.

I hope my contribution for the ecumenical movement will increase the intensity and work that has been initiated since the establishment of the MECC in 1974.

#### MECC - the scope

In May 1974 the Middle East Council of Churches was inaugurated. This new organisation brought together churches of the Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox and Protestant traditions. It was the culmination of a series of ecumenical endeavours begun in the early 1900s and which progressed to include the majority of Christians in the Middle East.

As early as 1902 the Ecumenical Patriarch Yoachim III, Patriarch of Constantinople, issued an encyclical in which he raised the issue of Christian unity and Orthodox relations with Roman Catholics and Protestants. In January 1920 another Patriarchal encyclical was issued entitled: "Unto the churches of Christ everywhere" based upon the text: "Love one another earnestly from the heart."

At the same time the movement toward Christian unity was developing within the Protestant world with the Missionary Conference of Edinburgh in 1910.

In the Middle East this movement first took expression with the establishment of a united missionary council in Jerusalem in 1925. It culminated with the establishment of the Near East Council of Churches in 1962 composed of and organised by the local Protestant Churches.

This trend toward unity developed parallel within the Orthodox and Protestant communities until 1964 when the Ecumenical Youth and Student Secretariat for the Middle East was established with Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant participation. This was supported jointly by the World Council of Churches' Youth Department and the World Student Christian Federation.

In 1965 negotiations started between the Near East Council of Churches and the Oriental and Eastern Orthodox Churches concerning "the possibility of finding proper ways for a richer and more effective expression of the ecumenical witness of the churches in the Middle East". These discussions bore fruit

in May 1974 at the inaugural assembly of the MECC in Nicosia, Cyprus, under the theme "Our common Christian Message today". The progress of ecumenical work still continues in that MECC has initiated a dialogue with the Catholic churches of the region with a view to their eventual membership in a council of churches.

The MECC, then, is on its way to becoming the meeting place of all the Christian traditions of the region. Today, more than ever before, the Christian traditions of the region are called upon to interact with and enrich this region with their thought and spirit. In addition, the Council is also a theological attempt to correct aspects of certain ecumenical and missionary movements which have in the past ignored the local Orthodox Church.

#### Basis

The Middle East Council of Churches is a fellowship of Churches of the Middle East which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour, according to the scriptures, and therefore, seek to fulfill together their common calling to the Glory of the one God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

#### Functions

As stated by the MECC itself the functions of the Council are:

- 1 - To promote the growth of fellowship and ecumenical consciousness and unity among the Churches.
- 2 - To provide ways and means of common study.

3 - To widen the field of cooperation by the churches in carrying out the mission of the church in the proclamation of the Gospel of Salvation.

4 - To undertake and coordinate priority services as expression of the common concern of the Churches for all people.

5 - To be a regional point of reference in the world-wide fellowship of the Christian churches: to establish and maintain relations with the World Council of Churches, with national and regional councils, with all the Christian Churches in the area and with other ecumenical organisations.

6 - A better communication with neighbouring religions.

### Role

The followings are guide lines for the role of the MECC organization:

1 - The MECC is a meeting place for the churches; a facilitator of their dialogue towards unity, and an instrument of their cooperation in witness.

2 - The MECC, in addition to being a meeting place and a facilitator, has also a complementary role to the ministry of its member churches. In this endeavour the MECC interprets their particular vocation and seeks to meet the needs and priorities of each individual church or family of churches acting as an instrument of their common response to common needs in the areas of church Unity, Witness and Service.

3 - While the MECC has a representative character, it does not replace the direct relationship and cooperation between the churches on any level. On the contrary, the MECC encourages and supports these relationships in ways determined by the churches concerned.

#### MECC versus WCC

The MECC is different from the WCC in:-

- a - Influence of different close by religions.
- b - Major influence of the Eastern Greek Orthodox Church.
- c - Presence of a heirarchical sect-Catholicism - as observer only (up till now).
- d - The membership of local denominations independant in organization.

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1 - Middle East Council of Churches, The Living Hope, a handbook for the MECC, 4th General Assembly, Ultralith Lithographers Ltd., Limassol, Cuprus, 1985, p. 2.

2 - Ibid

S P A C E      S T A N D A R D S

OFFICES

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Space	Net m <sup>2</sup>	Staff	Capacity
<u>Management</u>			
reception - waiting	30	1	
secretary - waiting	25	1	
general secretary + toilet	28	1	
3 presidents' offices	72	3	
meeting / Conference	35		20
<u>Administration</u>			
reception - waiting	30	1	
secretary - waiting	25	1	
vice president	24	1	
letter registry	12	1	
telephone operator	6		
accountant	24	1	
toilets	12		
lounge	20		

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Space	Net m <sup>2</sup>	Staff	Capacity
janitor	<u>9</u> 328		
20% internal circulation	<u>66</u>		
gross total	394		
<u>Departments</u>			
a - Education and renewal			
5 offices (for one)	75	5	
secretaries' pool	30	3	
b - Faith and unity			
2 offices (for one)	30	2	
1 ATIME	15	1	
Secretaries pool	25	2	
c - Life and service			
3 offices (for one)	45	3	
secretaries' pool	30	3	

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Space	Net m <sup>2</sup>	Staff	Capacity
d - Finance			
4 offices (for one)	60	4	
secretaries' pool	30	3	
e - Relief program			
4 offices (for one)	60	4	
3 offices (for two)	58	6	
engeneering office	88	5	
<u>Common Services</u>			
reception and waiting	30	1	
archives	12		
kitchenette	8		
lounge	40		
toilet	20		
janitor	9		
	<hr/>		
	666		
20% internal circulation	134		
	<hr/>		
	800		
20% balance area	240		
	<hr/>		
total area	1434		

DOCUMENTATION CENTER

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Space	Net m <sup>2</sup>	Staff	Capacity
lobby + control	45		
circulation	12	1	
card catalogue	18		
open stacks	100		
reference point	40		
study tables	40		16 persons
study carrels	25		10 persons
micro film reading	25		
general storage	20		
audio-visual projection room	40		
audio-visual collection	10		
head librarian	16	1	
assistant	16	1	
secretary	9	1	
acquisition	25		
catalouging	25		
bibliography + indexing	16		

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Space	Net m <sup>2</sup>	Staff	Capacity
archives	16		
binding + preparation	25	1	
mail room unpacking	16		
computer terminal point	15		
toilets	<u>12</u>		
	550		
20% balance area	<u>137</u>		
	687		

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PRODUCTION

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Space	Net m <sup>2</sup>	Staff	Capacity
a - Studio			
1 - recording facility			
studio	100		
control room	40	2	
equipment storage	75		
2 - technical support			
editing suite	45		
vidio tape and sound recording	30		
vidio storage	10		
3 - support facilities			
dark room	25		
dressing communal	60		12
dressing rooms	40		4
rehersal room	30		
Instrument storage	20		
	<hr/> 469		
20% balance area	94		
gross total	564		

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Space	Net m <sup>2</sup>	Staff	Capacity
b - <u>Publishing department</u>			
editor in chief	20	1	
assistant	12	1	
secretary	9	1	
general archives	20		
art director	25	1	
assistant	12	1	
storage	9		
toilets	6		
lounge	25		
work shop	<u>150</u>	2	
	288		
20% balance area	<u>58</u>		
gross total	346		

CAFETERIA

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Space	Net m <sup>2</sup>	Staff	Capacity
dining hall	264		
kitchen	70		
storage space	40		
toilets	<u>40</u>		
	414		
10% internal circulation	<u>41</u>		
total area	455		

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CONVENTION CENTER

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Space	Net m <sup>2</sup>	Staff	Capacity
lobby	100		
auditorium	400		
storage	30		
press room	20		
lecture hall	100		
conference rooms	70		
technical booth	4		
interpreters' booth	14		
	<hr/>		
	740		
15% balance area	<hr/>		
	111		
total area	851		

SLEEPING ACCOMODATION

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Space	Net m <sup>2</sup>	Staff	Capacity
30 single bedrooms + toilet	415		
20 double bedrooms + toilet	324		
janitor	12		
coffe shop + lounge	<u>70</u>		
	821		
20% circulation	<u>164</u>		
total area	985		

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CHURCH

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Space	Net m <sup>2</sup>	Staff	Capacity
prayer hall	220		
lobby	40		
changing room	12		
toilet	4		
general storage	<u>4</u>		
	280		

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MUSEUM

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Space	Net m <sup>2</sup>	Staff	Capacity
permanent exhibition space	250		
temporary exhibition space	100		
super intendent's office	12	1	
unpacking + distribution	40	2	
archives	12		
storage	40		
	<hr/> 454		
20% balance area	<hr/> 91		
total area	545		

BOOK SHOP/TRAVEL AGENCY

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Space	Net m <sup>2</sup>	Staff	Capacity
<u>Book Shop</u>			
shop	25	1	
storage	10		
toilet	4		
<u>Travel Agency</u>			
office	<u>16</u>	1	
	55		
15% balance area	<u>8</u>		
	63		
Net total	5845		

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SPACE ANALYSIS

Offices:

In June 1983, the Executive Committee of the MECC approved a new structure designed to facilitate the process of defining priorities and secure the co-ordination of ecumenical work in the region. It was proposed that the work of the Council be regrouped in the three domains of church unity, church renewal, and Christian service.

1 - Education and renewal: the task of MECC is defined according to three objectives:

a - to support the particular programmes of each church by providing information and human and material resources whenever possible.

b - to facilitate the exchange of information and experience between the churches through consultations, seminars on particular issues, publications or exchange of leadership.

c - to assist the churches in dealing with matters considered objectively common concerns and which call for common response such as the Christian family; youth; women; religious education in schools; the church related schools; leadership development; the renewal of the parish life, etc.

2 - Faith and unity: the task of MECC is:

a - to support the efforts of each church towards unity in faith and witness with another or several other churches through needed information and human and material resources

whenever possible and needed.

- b - to facilitate dialogue between the churches through consultations, seminars, studies, and exchange of visits between church leadership on all levels.
- c - to help the churches in matters of Christian unity which are objectively common and which call for common response.

3 - Life and service: the task of MECC is to assist the churches in their particular endeavours by gathering resources and making them available to facilitate their common response and cooperation with regard to common social situations and problems.

#### Related bodies

- a - the Association of Theological Schools in the Middle East (ATIME): includes in its membership all theological schools of the Orthodox, Catholic and Evangelical Churches in the Middle East. Its main objective is to render subject studies more adequate to the theological training and to harmonize it with the general studies program. It has several projects among them a meeting for students and participation at study sessions and a comparative published theological research.
- b - The Family Book Shop Group: a commercial company for book shops and book distribution

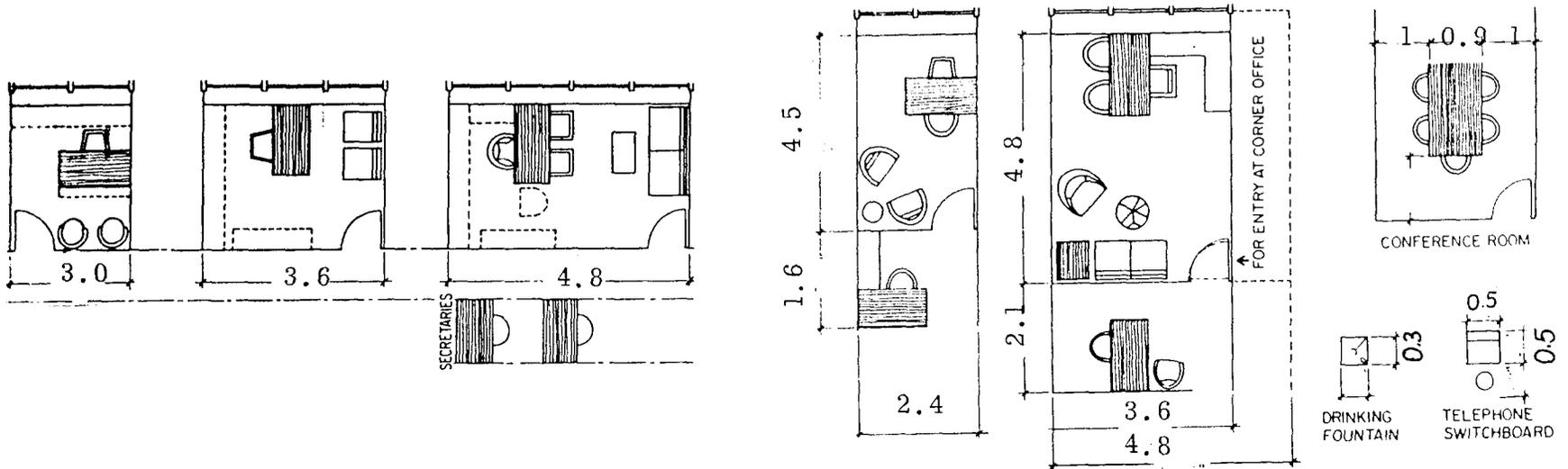
It is related to the publication department and book shop.

c - The Ecumenical Study Institute; a part of the Documentation Center.

Private Offices

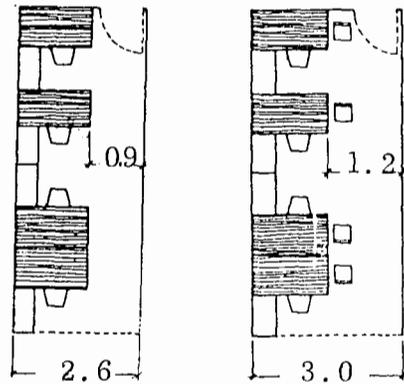
Provided for high ranking staff. It could accomodate one person and a minimum of one visitor.

Close by private offices will have a common private secretary and common rest rooms. The presidents' and general secretary's office will have a direct access to a conference room.

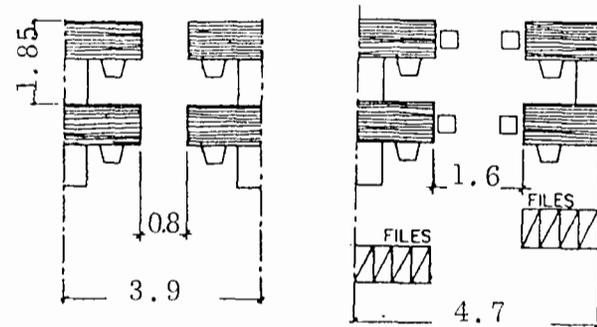


Semi - Private Offices

Provided for 2 or more people. Each department depends on common work procedure and the semi-private offices facilitates team work. The space will be partitioned or just segregated by furniture layout. The reception space will accomodate a receptionist lounge with seating for visitors. It should give access to rest rooms.



side aisle



central aisle

### Documentation Center

Helps in giving all interested a wider understanding of Christianity and a better focus on the relation ship of religions in the Middle East.

It serves professionals as well as non professionals in the field of theology. Upon paying a deposit, a researcher could use the facilities that the center provides. This excludes faculty and ordained people.

A semi-annual bulletin is published updating on the newly received topics. The bulletin will be of interest to theological schools and religious institutions.

The documentation center is classified as a specialized library and mainly for references and research.

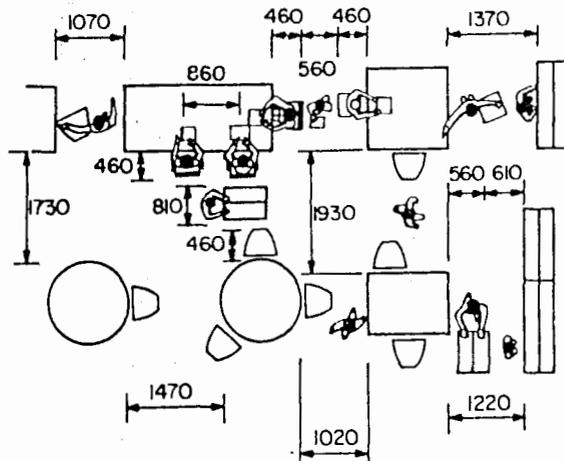
The present capacity of the department is about 10,000 volumes, 20 - 30 periodicals and other publications, reports, thesis, articles.

A convenient portion will be stored on visual and audio-visual means like microfilm, diskette, video and film projector.

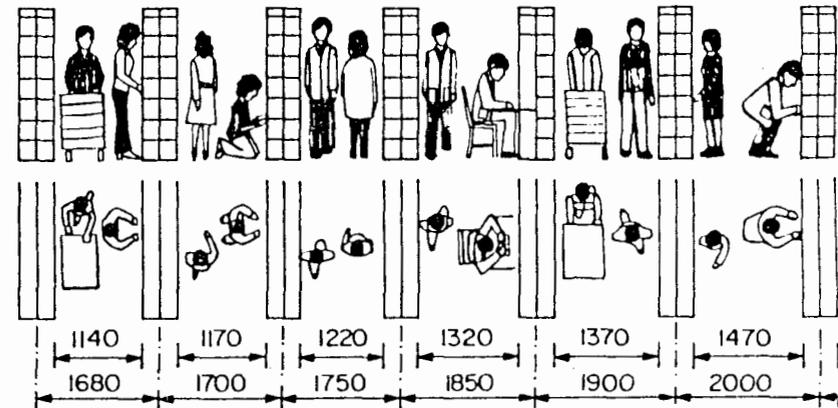
Entrance lobby: the documentation center has its own lobby which is separated from other functions. A bulletin is provided to announce new books, exhibitions, lectures, and other issues that are of interest to the user.

Reading area: since this library provides information for specialists and those interested in the field of religion, the reading area is specified as a serious study more than browsing.

There will be a main reading space.

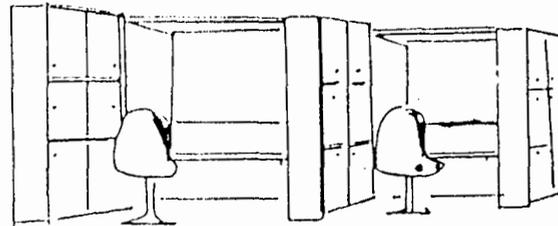


Open stacks: are an integrated part with the reading area.



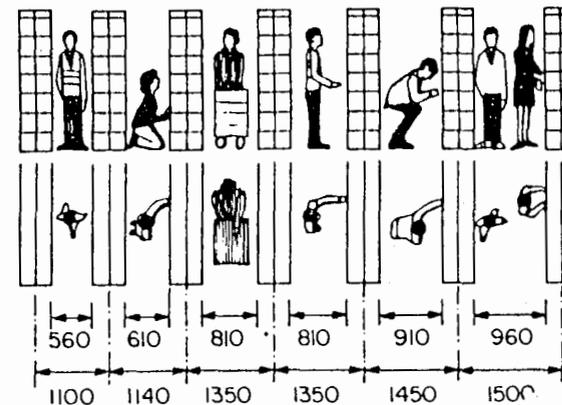
*Open stack - critical sizes*

Carrels: some long term users will require privacy. The library will provide 20 semi-closed cubicles with cose by storage lockers.



Also typing facilities are provided in the carrel area. If the audio visual means are needed, then the user has to move to the audiovisual section.

Closed stacks: this has a small book capacity in comparison to the total book number . The carrels are placed around these stacks.



*Closed stack - critical sizes*

## Production

### a - Studio

The studio is an important medium of communication. It prepares audiovisual production on matter related to the work of MECC - so could be classified as documentation - and related to the need of other Christian religious organizations. So most of the work is done outstation and studio work is limited.

The Studio: is of average size:  $100 \text{ m}^2$ . The minimum height to the ceiling grid dictated by

lighting is 4.5 m. An additional

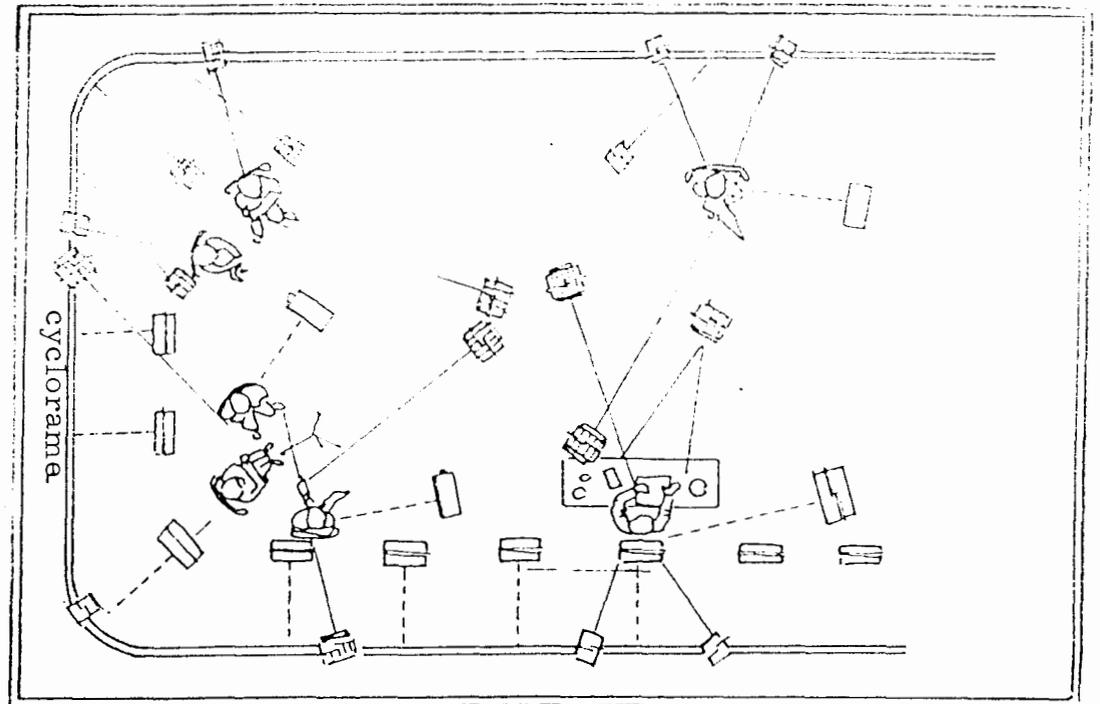
2.5 m should be provided

between the bottom of the lighting grid and the ceiling.

A cyclorama track is required.

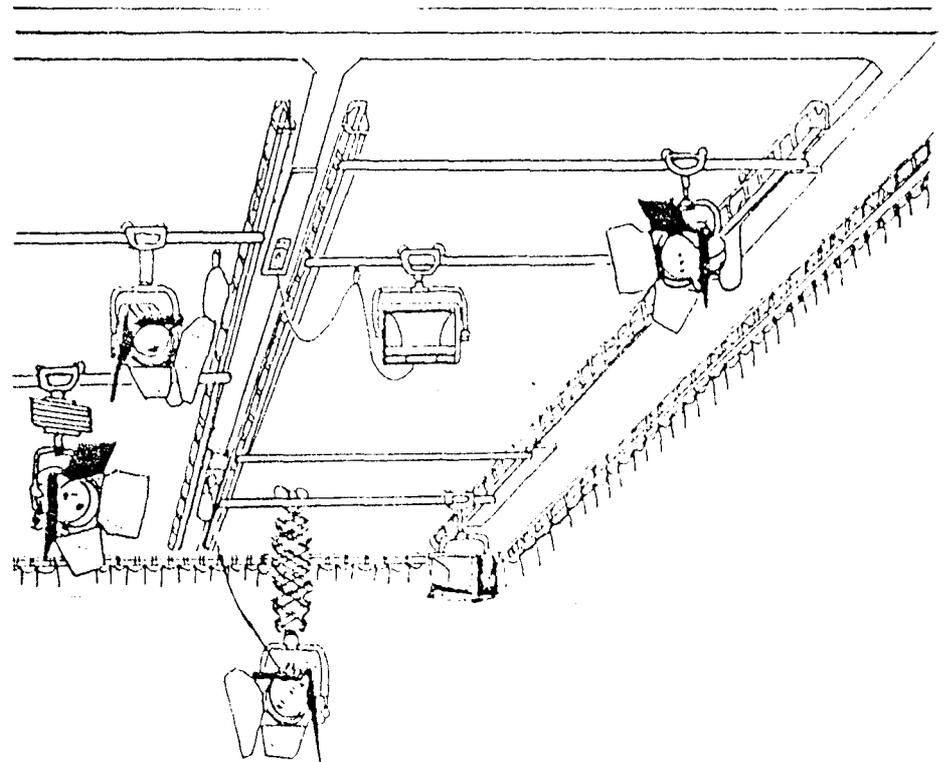
It is a curtain which provides

a back drop to scenery.



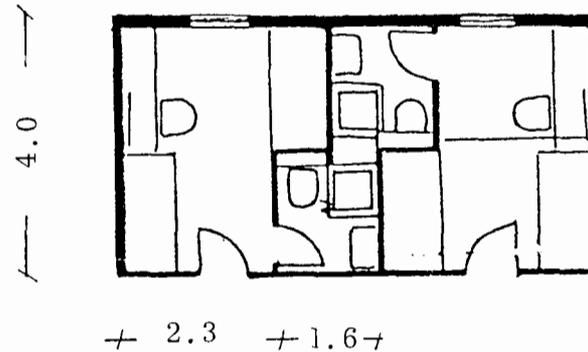
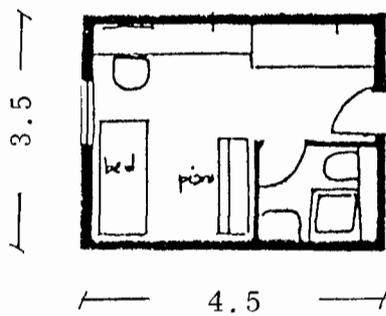
Lighting: the track and barrel system: this small studio with its limited height is suited to the track and barrel system. This comprises pairs of tracking mounted directly to the studio ceiling. The barrel is fitted with a roller carriage at each end which runs in the tracking enabling the barrel to be moved along the length of the studio.

The luminaires are mounted on the barrel by means of a roller carriage which allows them to move the length of the barrel or on a pantograph which gives the additional facility of individual height adjustment. It can be seen that this arrangement provide a very high degree of flexibility in positioning the luminaires and enables the minimum number of luminaires to be installed.



Studio support facilities:

- 1 - rehearsal rooms: kept away from studio to minimize sound problems.
- 2 - dressing rooms: the layout of dressing rooms allows adequate facilities for performer to put on their costumes, store their normal clothing and personal items.



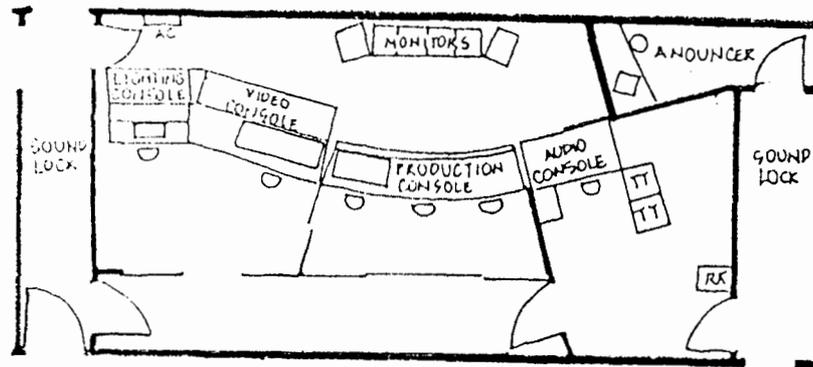
There is provision for hand and face washing and convenient access to toilets.

- 3 - ready scenery storage room.
- 4 - green room or talent lounge for performers and staff. Recommended provision of a kitchenette.
- 5 - storage for cameras, microphones, lighting equipment.

6 - control rooms: they contain electronic equipment for monitoring and controlling the studio output. They may have separate compartments for sound, picture and lighting control.

In addition, the production console which shows on T.V. monitors the output of each individual camera in the studios, may allow for direct editing.

The control rooms must be accessible to the studio which they serve. It is preferable to leave direct contact yet not necessary depending on operating practices. Acoustically, it is a dead room.



b - Publication Department

A very important medium of communication. It is an essential facility for it economizes both time and money.

The MECC is responsible for printing a certain number of books, periodicals, and bulletins each year.

Several Christian institutions require the publication of certain theological books. They have the privilege of using the facilities that MECC offer.

Rarely does the MECC publish books for itself. In addition, the MECC publishes monthly periodicals in Arabic and English that update the reader with information on the theological matters - ecumenical movements, debates, announcements, . . . - in the Middle East as well as the world.

Handouts are printed whenever needed. They vary in size and importance from a simple announcement to a full report on general assemblies.

The publication department is of medium size and constitutes of the following functions:-

I - type setting

a - punching key boards

Hand written information will be translated to computer language on 5 cm thin paper roll in a

process similar to type writing. Net area  $8 \text{ m}^2$ .

It is a noisy activity, thus acoustic treatment of walls is needed.

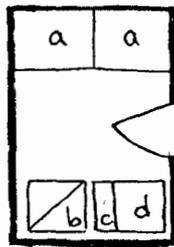
b - Computer room:

The paper rolls will be fed to the computer which will in turn give a 30 cm large special film roll. Later the film roll will be produced in an adjacent dark room.

The computer room needs air conditioning and it is separate from the main computer center.

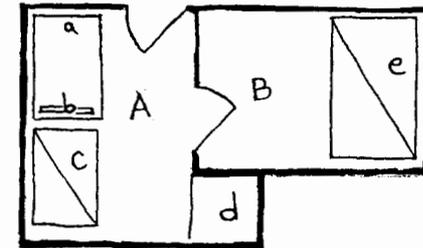
c - Page making and layout

The processed films are cut into needed paragraphs and glued - with the waxing device - on pages of the same size as the book. Net area  $6 \text{ m}^2$ .



Pagemaking room

- a - light table
- b - photocopy machine
- c - waxing device
- d - table



- a - table
- b - hand rolling device
- c - computer
- d - chemical storage
- e - processor

- A - Computer room
- B - Processing room

## II - photography and montage

### a - photography

This department is constituted by 3 adjacent dark rooms. The film will be photographed, processed and finally shifted from negative to positive in the contact cabinet. Net area 18 m<sup>2</sup>

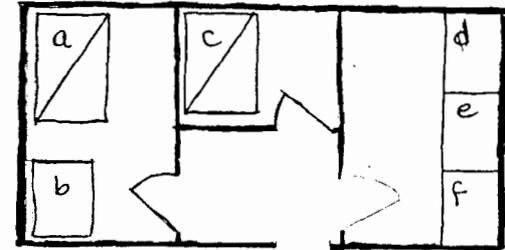
The processing cabinet needs water inlet and outlet.

### b - montage

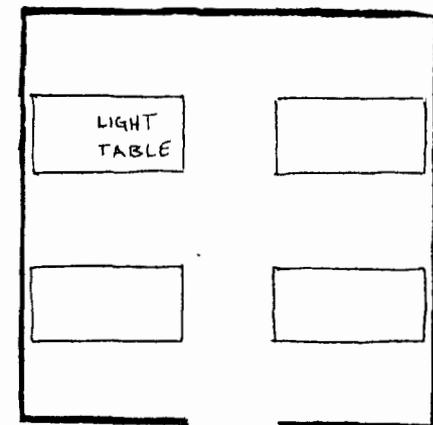
Afterwards each 16 pages will be assembled on one large unit sheet called signature in the montage room.

The montage procedure requires the use of light tables .

Net area 27 m<sup>2</sup>



- a - camera
- b - storage
- c - contact machine
- d - developer basin
- e - water basin
- f - fixer basin

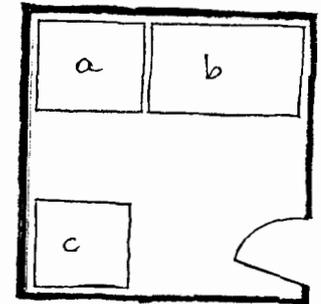


montage room

c - plate making

In the plate making cabinet, which is a yellow light room, the signature will be used to make print on a sensitive metal plate usually Aluminium. One signature and one plate with an emulsion coating will be placed in the plate making machine which exposes it to light. The exposed plate will then undergo various treatments before it is ready for use as a printing plate. Net area 14 m<sup>2</sup>.

Ventilation and water inlet and outlet are required.



- a - table and plate storage
- b - plate making machine
- c - developing basin

III - Printing

The metal plates will then be wrapped around the cylinder of a printing press that can thus be used for printing by rotary methods.

This department contains two offset and one typo printing machines. All operations described in sections I and II which are known as photolithography are the concern of the two offset machines. For the typo printing machine, hand typesetting methods will be allowed.

#### IV - Finishing

##### a - folding

The printed paper sheets at the end of process III is constituted each by 16 normal pages of the book to be printed - 8 pages on each side of the large sheet.

The printed unit sheets should be folded in the folding machine at the size of one normal page.

Net area 14 m<sup>2</sup>.

##### b - bundling

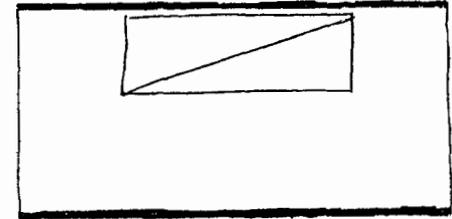
The folded sections of the book should then be bundled in the bundling machine to make them lie flat by removing the air between the leaves; this makes them easier to be handled during following operations.

Net area 6 m<sup>2</sup>.

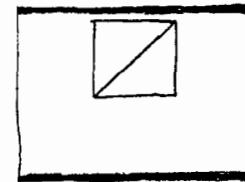
##### c - storage and gathering

The different sections of each book will then be gathered and stored.

Net area 12 m<sup>2</sup>.



folding machine working area

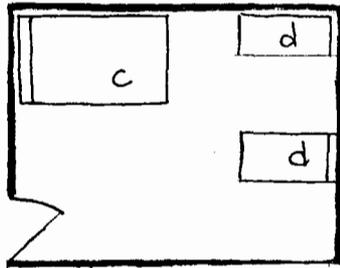


Bundling machine

Two composition banks and one storage table with a working top will be needed for this process. Three workers will operate the three printing machined. One of them will work as a compositor. He will set types - a small length of lead alloy about an inch high and with a raised letter (or other character) at one end - in a metal composing stick to form the sentences of the matter to be printed. A storage place is needed.

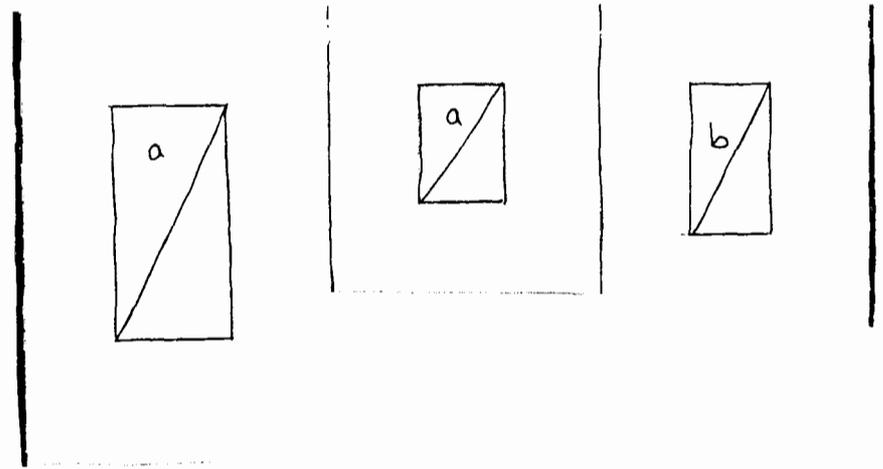
Net area 73 m<sup>2</sup>.

Ceiling height larger than 4.2m.



Hand typesetting area

- c - storage table and working top
- d - composition banks - 2



Printing machines working area

- a - offset press (one small one large)
- b - typo press

d - binding

The books can then be bound either in the glueing machine or in stitching machine.

Net area 32 m<sup>2</sup>.

V - Cutting and storage

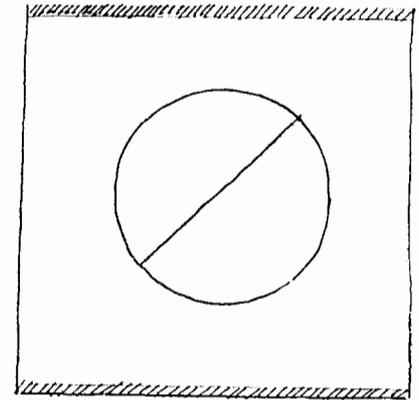
a) cutting

The edges of each book will then be cut in the cutting machine - the guillotine - which should be accesable not only at the end of the finishing process but also at the beginning of the printing process. area = 12 m<sup>2</sup>.

b) storage

Two storage areas must be provided one for printed books and another for raw materials.

books	12 m <sup>2</sup>
material	<u>25 m<sup>2</sup></u>
	37 m <sup>2</sup>



glueing machine

The Cafeteria

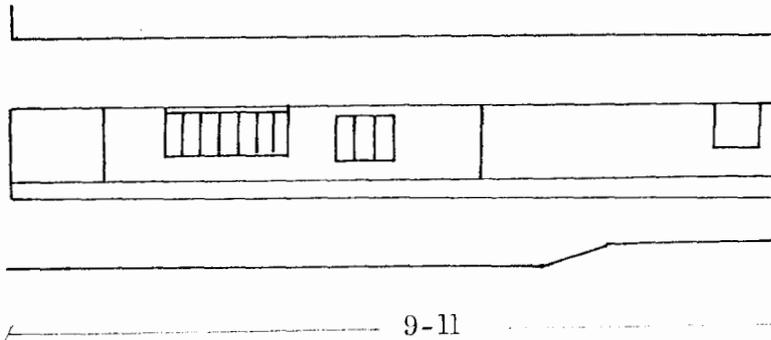
Is to serve mainly breakfast and lunch meals to the staff. In addition it serve as a coffee shop for both staff and visitors.

On special occasions - assemblies and retreats - the cafeteria will serve lunch meals in two stages. Since the dining hall will be used with the convension facilities during assemblies ( or other occasions) it is essential to have a movable partition to hide the service counter.

Kitchen: is divided to areas of:

- a - cooking, frying, grilling, and preperation of soups and vegetables, and cold buffet (salads fruits, sweets, and dessert).
- b - wash up area.
- c - serving.

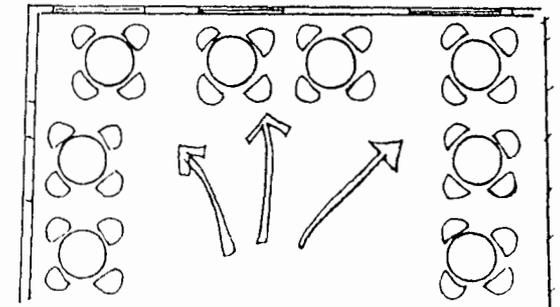
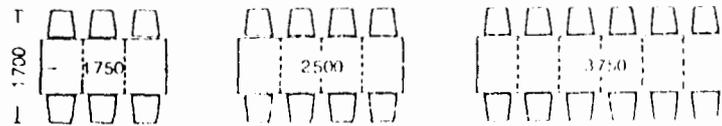
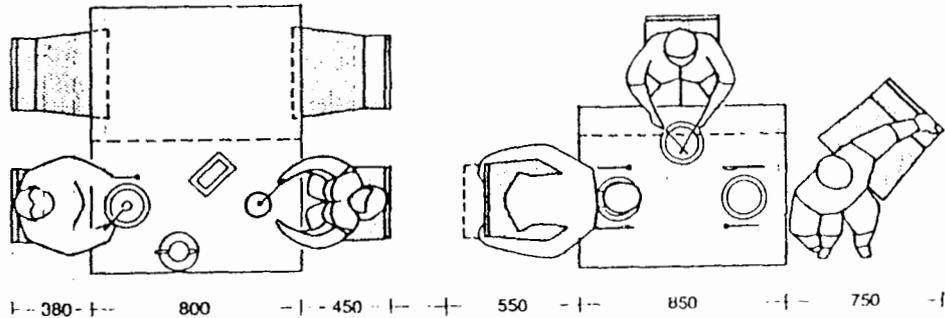
The kitchen is at the same level as the serving.



Typical self service counter

Dining room: circulation for diners is one way only. This could be achieved by correct disposition of tables and sitting of columns at corners of tables to avoid waste of space.

Ample storage of furniture is required in case the space will be used for other functions.



### Convension Center

A very important element where the ecumenical assemblies, the peak of which is the general assembly held every 4 years, occur.

There are other smaller meetings held more frequently. In addition the center serves other functions like a meditation hall during church retreats held every year or a seminar room or an extension for the museum of dinning hall.

Thus the convension hall has to cater for a wide range of different requirements.

The centor consists of a large convension hall with its auxiliary functions; press, technical, ... lobby, conference rooms, and a lecture hall. In addition, other rooms could be integrated like the dinning hall and the temporary exhibition space and be used as part of the convensions.

The convension hall: The hall will need to accomodate different sizes of meetings, together with their particular platform arrangement, audio visual aid equipment and display. To enable the hall to be adapted for different purposes, the space may be decreased, seating may be re-arranged and a partly equiped stage may be installed.

Hall design: the hall will be of a rectangular plan with flat floors being easily changed in use and easily divisible by partitions into smaller halls. Arrangement for access to the divided areas can

simply be provided by a link from the entrance lobby.

The hall is flexible with loose chairs, tables, and movable stages. The height of the hall will not be less than 5 m. and there will be a minimum of 2 exit doors.

Hall capacity: maximum capacity of the hall is 300 seated persons. Such a number of attendants will only occur once or twice per year.

Seating: there are 2 types of layouts of movable seating needed in the hall (during general assemblies):-

a - auditorium like layout which requires seats of typical dimensions:-

depth 0.45- 0.55 m.

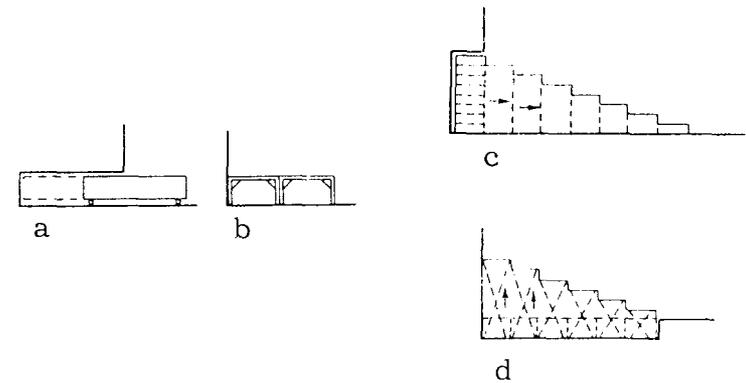
height of back 0.81 m.

width 0.50 - 0.53 m.

Stepped seating is formed from either retractable bleacher or hydraulically operated plat forms . In the first case, a large storage space is needed.

b - conference type ( see conference rooms).

Stage: the stage will be removable to accomodate for other funcions. Hence it could be either retractable or made up from movable plat forms.



a- retractable stage  
b - flexible stage  
c - retractable bleacher  
d - hydraulic seating

Movable partitions: there are 3 types of movable partitions:-

a - portable walls: used to separate small meeting rooms requiring frequent change. The system includes a frame assembly of ceiling and floor channels, post and connections which hold wall panels in place.

b - operable individual panels: individual panels suspended on wheels running along a dual aluminium track fixed into the ceiling can be moved to stack on one side or directly to storage.

c - folding partition: hinged panels suspended from an overhead track can be installed.

Furniture storage: will have a close access to the hall. Doors will be large enough to accommodate for the large sets or furniture which may be required. It should be well lit and ventilated with a high standard of fire resistance because of the large fire load.

Services for the conversion hall: -

1 - Simultaneous interpretation room

2 - Projection room

3 - Technical booth

4 - Press room

1 - Simultaneous interpretation

there are 2 types that could be used.

- a - induction loop system : uses transmission by magnetic field generated by a looped wire around the hall. Each participant is provided with a small portable monitor. It is fairly flexible in seating layout however it is subjected to transmission interference from adjacent rooms.
- b - infrared system; modulated infrared radiation from a number of sources in the room is used to transmit signals at different channel frequency. Receivers are portable , battery powered and connected by plug - in leads to head phones.

Booth:

is elevated and built at the back or side of the hall to allow an unobstructed view of the persons speaking or projection screen. They are grouped to enable interpreters to communicate visually through side windows and have easy, quick, and safe access between booths. They are entered from outside the hall through an area not normally used by delegates or members of staff.

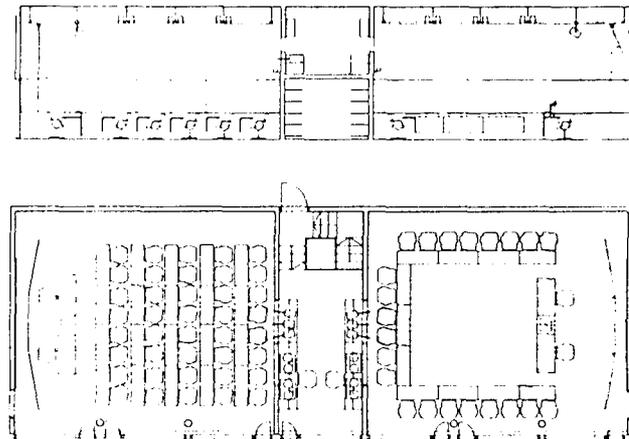
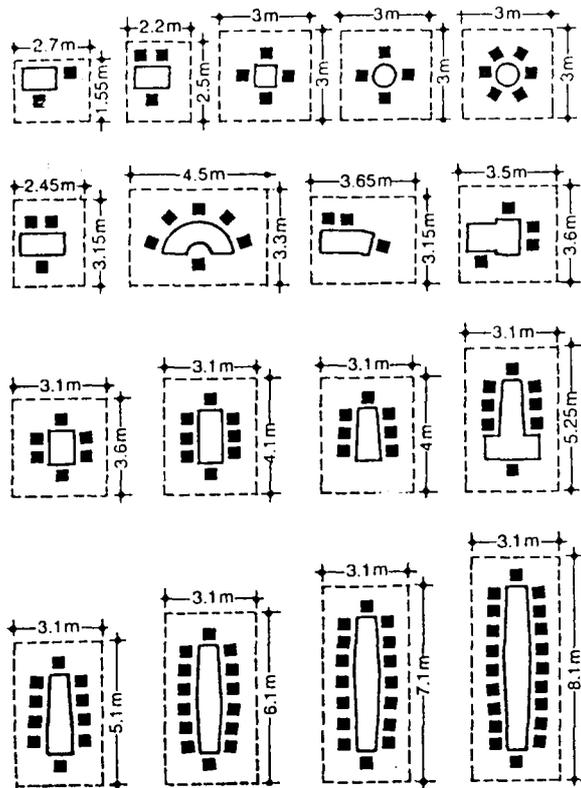
2 - Projection room :

has 2 locations

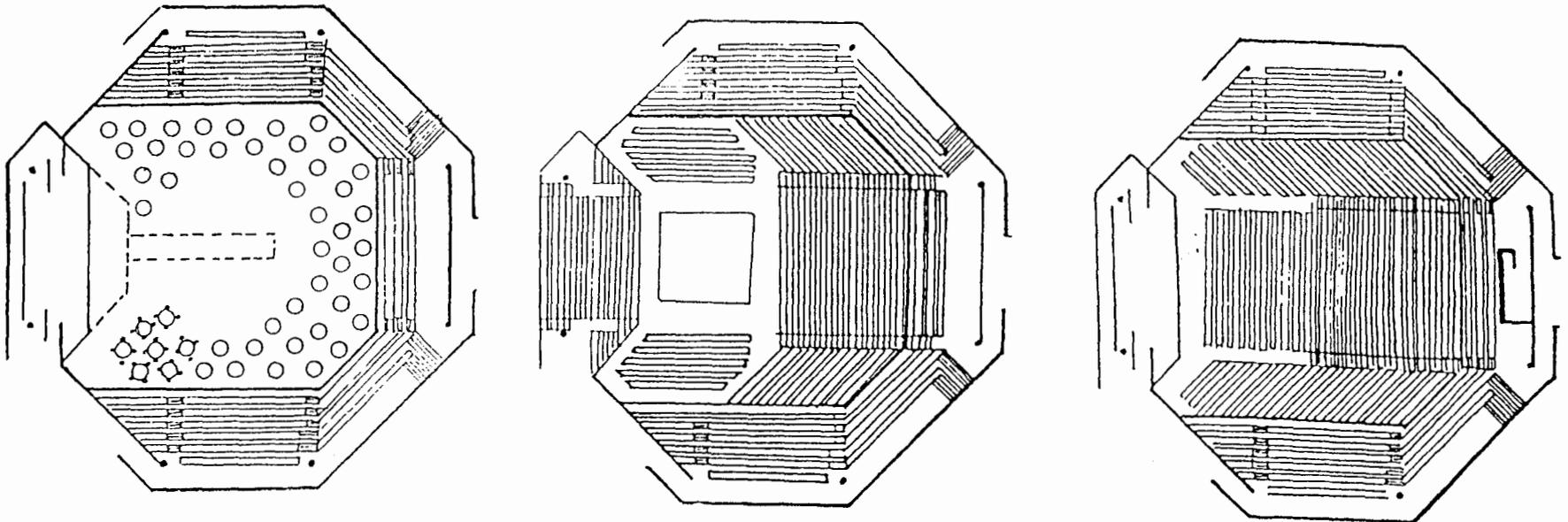
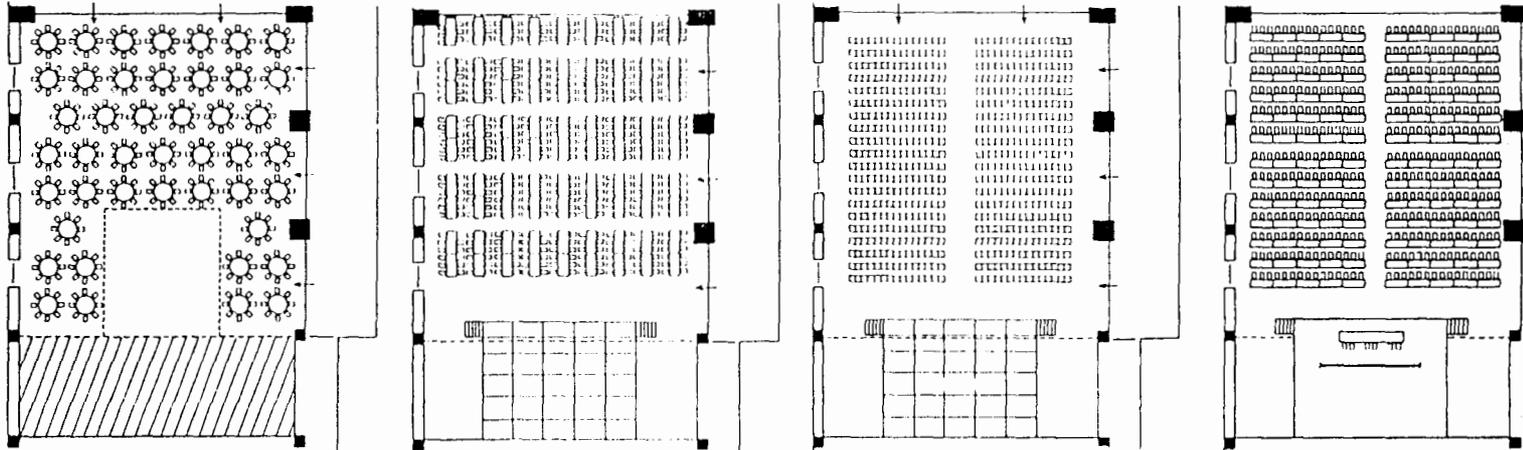
- a - rear of the hall: using direct projection. The light is projected through the space of the hall and requires clearance above head level. Projection axis should be normal to the screen as possible to avoid distortion of image.

Conference rooms: These are an essential part in the conversion center. Parties of the assembly will meet alone and prior decisions are made there.

Conference rooms - on a large scale - could be used also for general meeting any time. Internal partitions are used to divide the large conference rooms to smaller ones.



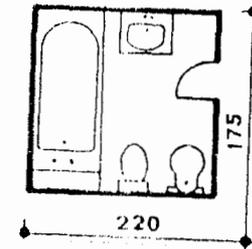
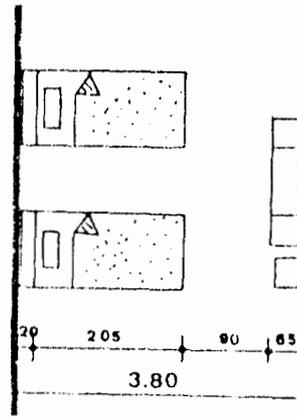
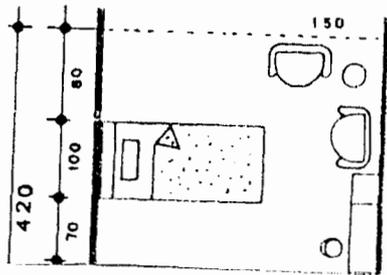
alternative arrangements for conference seating



### Sleeping Accomodation

Bedrooms are of two categories: single and double. Their orientation is preferable to the south so as to receive the maximum sun exposure during the day. All rooms shall have beds of 205 x 100 cms seperated in the middle (in case of double bedrooms) by a 70 cm wide central aisle. In front of the bed is a 155 cm passage way which contains along the wall of the room a dresser with drawers and a luggage stand of 50 cm width with a mirror on the wall.

Two bedrooms whether single or double will share one toilet.



## Church

It is an important reflection of the image of MECC. It is ecumenical by the fact that it does not have a specific denomination. This will not deprive it of religious characteristics; on the contrary, the prayer hall will have a blend of various architectural elements related to the three basic denominations in the Middle East - Orthodox, Catholic, and Evangelical churches.

In addition, the presence of the ruins of the Presbyterian church which is found on the site, adds to the symbolic importance of the proposed church.

The previous church, especially the belfry, will be integrated with the design taking into consideration its architectural features .

Usage: the prayer hall, whether church or chapel, will serve the staff daily for an hour except on Sundays. Also on weekly basis, it will be occupied for two hours or more for two days, total of four hours for youth gatherings. During church retreats of both ordained and non-ordained and during assemblies, the hall will be extensively used.

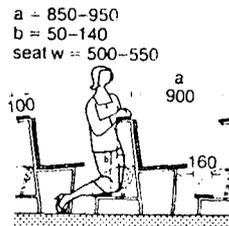
### Church planning data :

Altar: the climax of church interior for all denominations. It will be placed at the east end or axial center of the church.

In Catholic and Orthodox churches, the high altar is of a permanent character consisting of a stone table joined by stone to the floor. The chapel altar is similar and may be fixed or portable. The design

should allow for the space on which ever side the priest is standing.

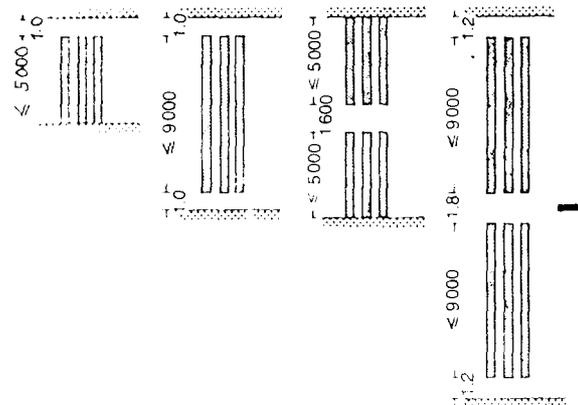
Seating: conformist churches require kneeling provision while non-conformists do not. Since the church will not have areas segregated for each denomination, all seatings should have a kneeling rail.



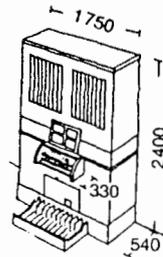
Aisles: since this is a small church, central aisles are not necessarily wide.

main passage ways minimum width 1.54 m.

side passage ways minimum width 0.91 m.



Musical instrument: the church requires a simple organ of 15 stops with no special emphasis on acoustics. The organ will not be seen directly by the congregation as other denominations do not use it in the mass .



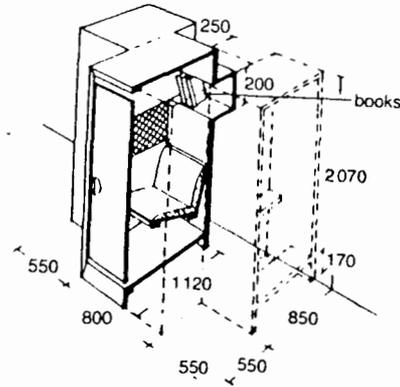
Entrance to the church: the Orthodox church still retains the entrance direction - towards east. This orientation is preferable for other conformist churches (Catholics and Anglicans), meanwhile not necessary for other churches.

Natural lighting: Side walls are most adequate for placement of windows. Natural light is admitted without disturbing the congregation.

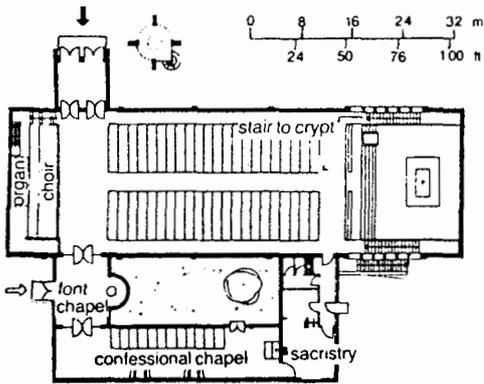
Behind the altar, windows should be avoided unless very high so will not cause glare.

Other distinguished elements in conformist churches (Catholic and Orthodox):

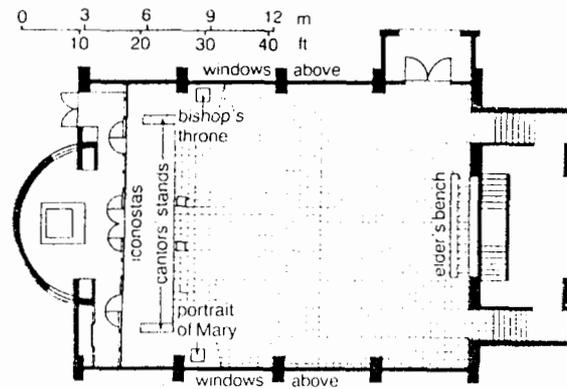
Confessional box: (Catholics) best placed in aisles. There is a need for separate compartments for the priest and penitent.



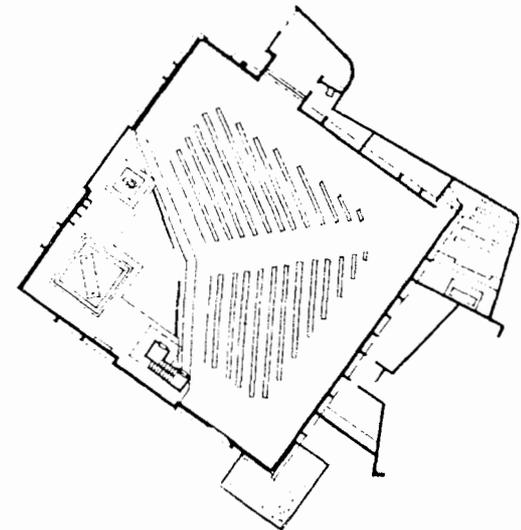
Iconostasis: a very distinguished feature in the Orthodox church. It is a screen or partition with doors and tiers of icons that separate the bema from nave.



Catholic church



Orthodox church



Evangelical church

## Museum

The museum has a strong integration with the goal of the MECC. It is a special kind of museum where it shows through procession the physical differences in church architecture and will produce at the end an ecumenical church - which is in itself a separate entity.

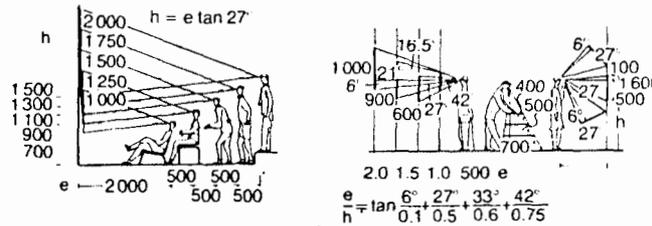
The museum is a vital element as it reflects the image of the council of churches to Christians as well as non - Christians whose knowledge of the ecumenical movement is limited.

The display area is of two parts temporary and permanent. The temporary part could be used with other facilities, like conversion. It will exhibit works related to religions, education, or documentation.

Except for the church which is open all day, the museum will have specific opening and closing hours.

Entrance hall: the museum shares its entrance hall with the church. Thus it has an important symbolic function. On the one hand it is the first and usually last museum space seen. So it will suggest the whole flavor of the display inside. On the other hand it leads to the ecumenical church the climax of the essence of the MECC.

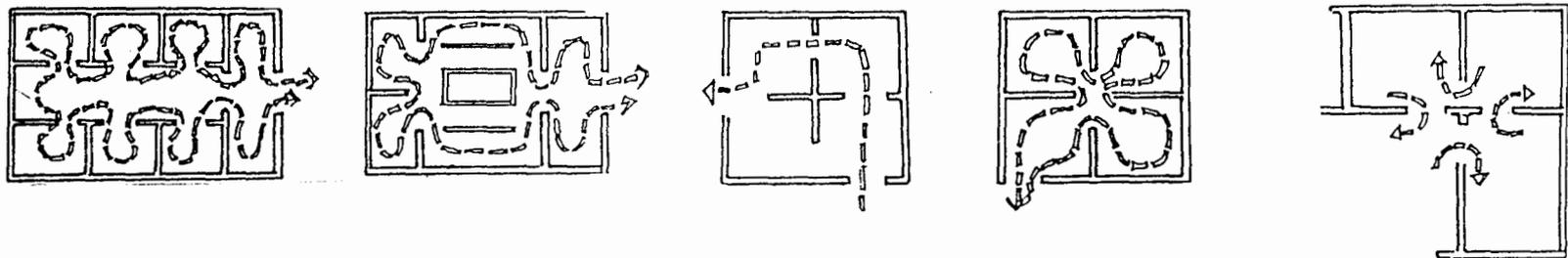
Vision: normal human angle of vision 54 or 27 up from eye level will be achieved with well lit pictures 10 m away = hanging height of 4.9 m above eye level and about 0.7 m below it.



Only with large pictures is there need for the eye to travel from bottom of frame up above angle of vision.

Circulation: as mentioned, circulation pattern is greatly dependant on the theme of the project.

Normally a museum is composed of a series of spaces not disturbed by structural walls which could be divided by movable low panels either suspended or free standing which can be manipulated and arranged to meet the carrying demands of changing exhibitions.



Lighting: as ultra-violet light will deteriorate most items on display in a museum with the exception of metals, stone, and glass, it is important to work with the lowest possible illumination levels to make certain that these are maintained for the shortest possible time.

This means that measures should be devised to adapt the eye to progressively lower levels of light in the transition from outdoor to indoor.

Never the less, day light should not be excluded totally. The opening admitting light should be designed so that light is graded and glare avoided by excessive contrast of dark objects with light. Openings should also be placed in such a position or screened in such a manner so that the eye would adjust itself to the lower levels of illumination found inside. It is advisable to filter all day light and light from fluorescent tubes. Filters which may be either a transparent sheet or a varnish applied to glass must be placed between the light source to the object to be protected. In practice, this must be placed between the light source and the object to be protected. In practice this means the filter is over the light source or behind the glass of a show case, or the glass over a picture.

Over head lighting, whether natural or artificial can be modified or totally excluded by movable louvers. Artificial light sources are usually placed below the roof glazing so that they may on occasion reinforce daylight, but can be positioned outside the building.

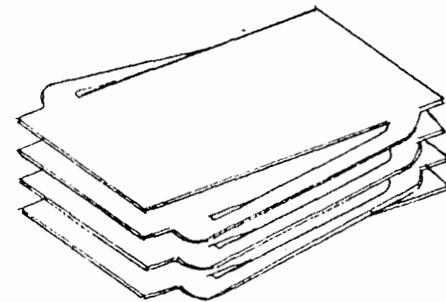
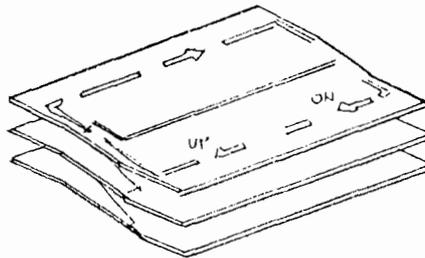
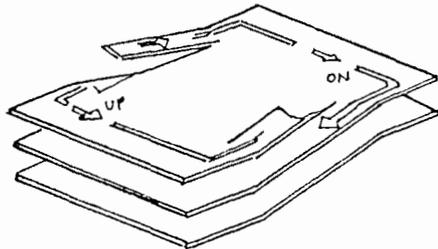
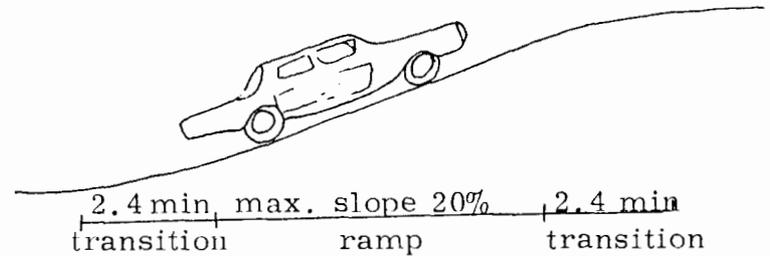
Walls, panels and cases: these three elements of museum display put the object to be seen within the field of vision of a standing observer who may be either an adult or child. They may also serve to protect the exhibits, to subdivide spaces, and to carry lighting.

Supports: These serve a variety of functions especially as the category really includes all methods of holding up an object. Normally these provide stability at a desirable level.

Storage: occupies a considerable proportion of the total floor area. Some of this storage is to be in the form of study collections accessible to those interested and is connected to the Documentation Center.

## Parking

Being in an urban site, where the car is dominating the pedestrian, an underground parking is mostly adequate where at the ground level major activities and landscaped areas will be located. The parking should be easily accessible and visible by any visitor. Separation should be made between the administration, staff, and technical crews' parking on one hand, and the visitors' parking on the other. It is taken into consideration that the public bus stop is very close "Riyad al Soloh square", therefore it is estimated that visitors may take the bus to get to the council.

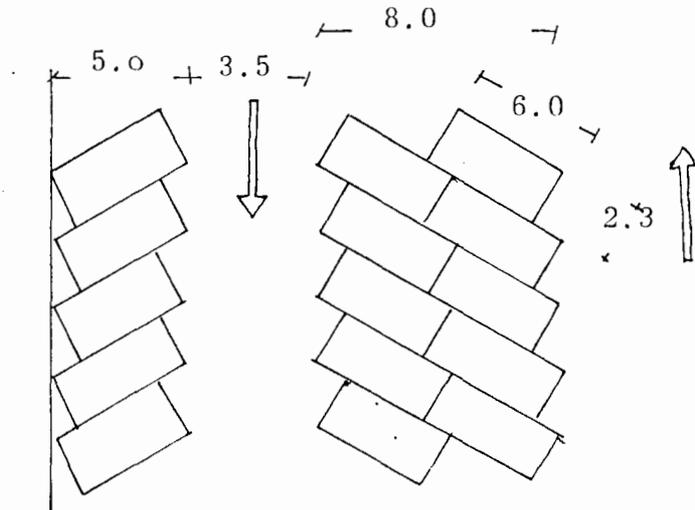
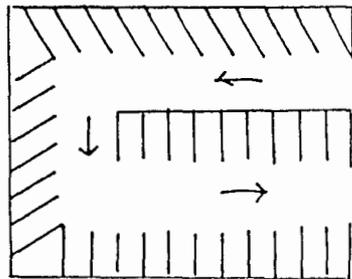
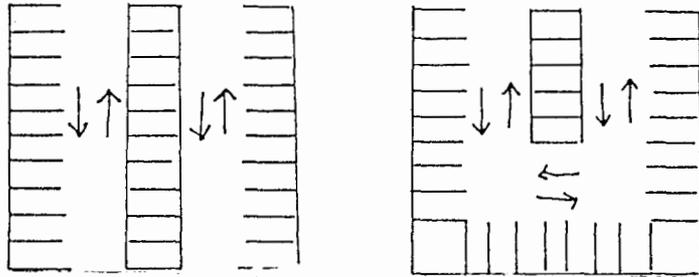


An average estimate of car parking is 100.

$$100 \times 30 \text{ m}^2/\text{car} = 3000 \text{ m}^2 \text{ total area of parking.}$$

Elevators or vertical circulation should be accounted for linking directly with the main lobby or distribution areas.

Off-station filming vehicles ( $9 \times 2.5 \text{ m}^2$ ) are to be accommodated close enough to the studio.



S I T E    A N A L Y S I S

## Site Analysis

### Choice of site

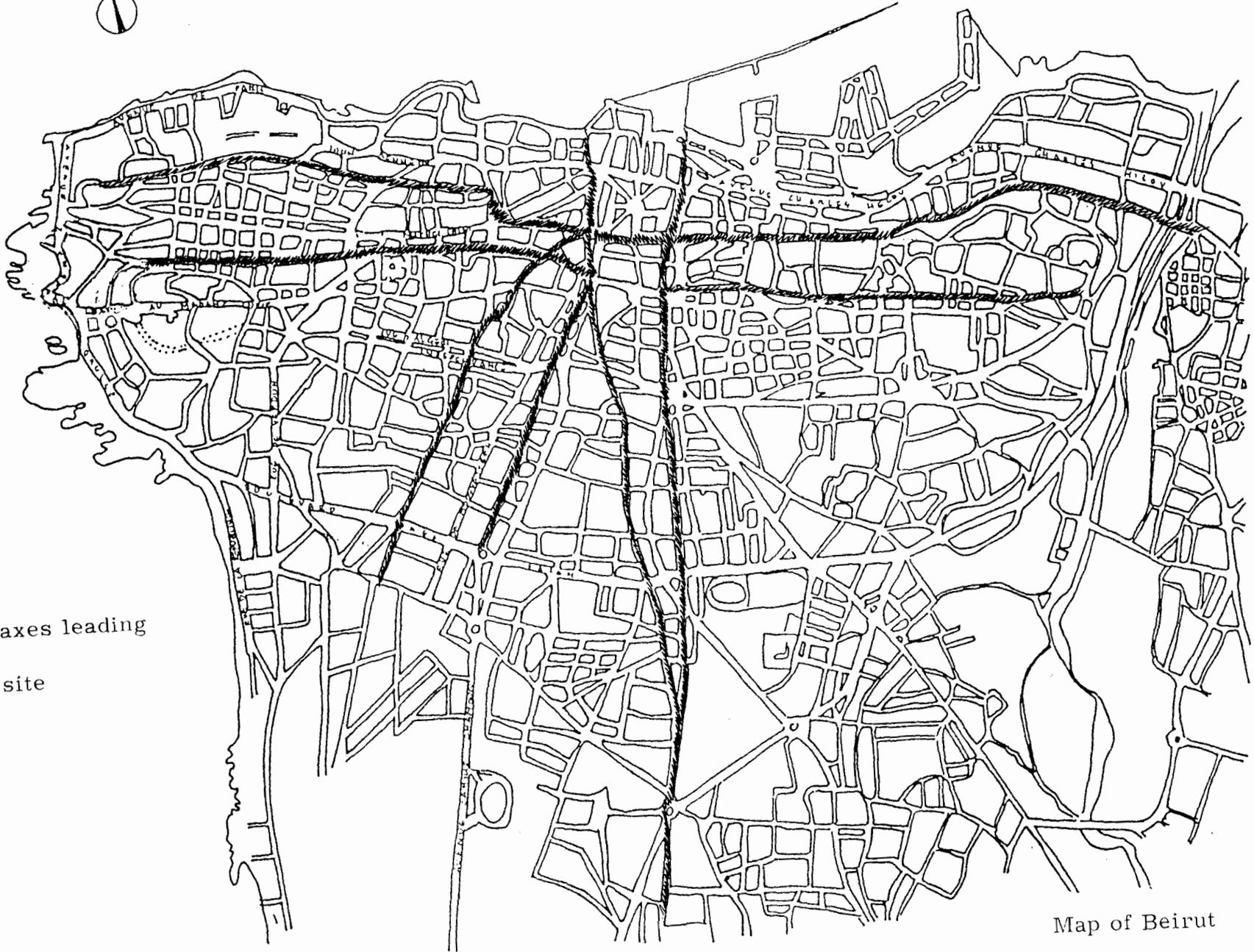
The site has been chosen after a full comprehension of the essence of the existence of the MECC. The characteristics of the proposed site are in harmony with the objective of the Council.

These characteristics are as follows:-

- a - ease of accessibility: the downtown, which is the nucleus of the city of Beirut has always acted as a meeting and linking space of Greater Beirut. The site is at the west-south peripheral end with the public bus stop around 50 m. away (Riyad al Solh square).
- b - the blend: the MECC is working for a "better understanding of one another" not only among Christians, but among various religions of the region and not to one status but to all.

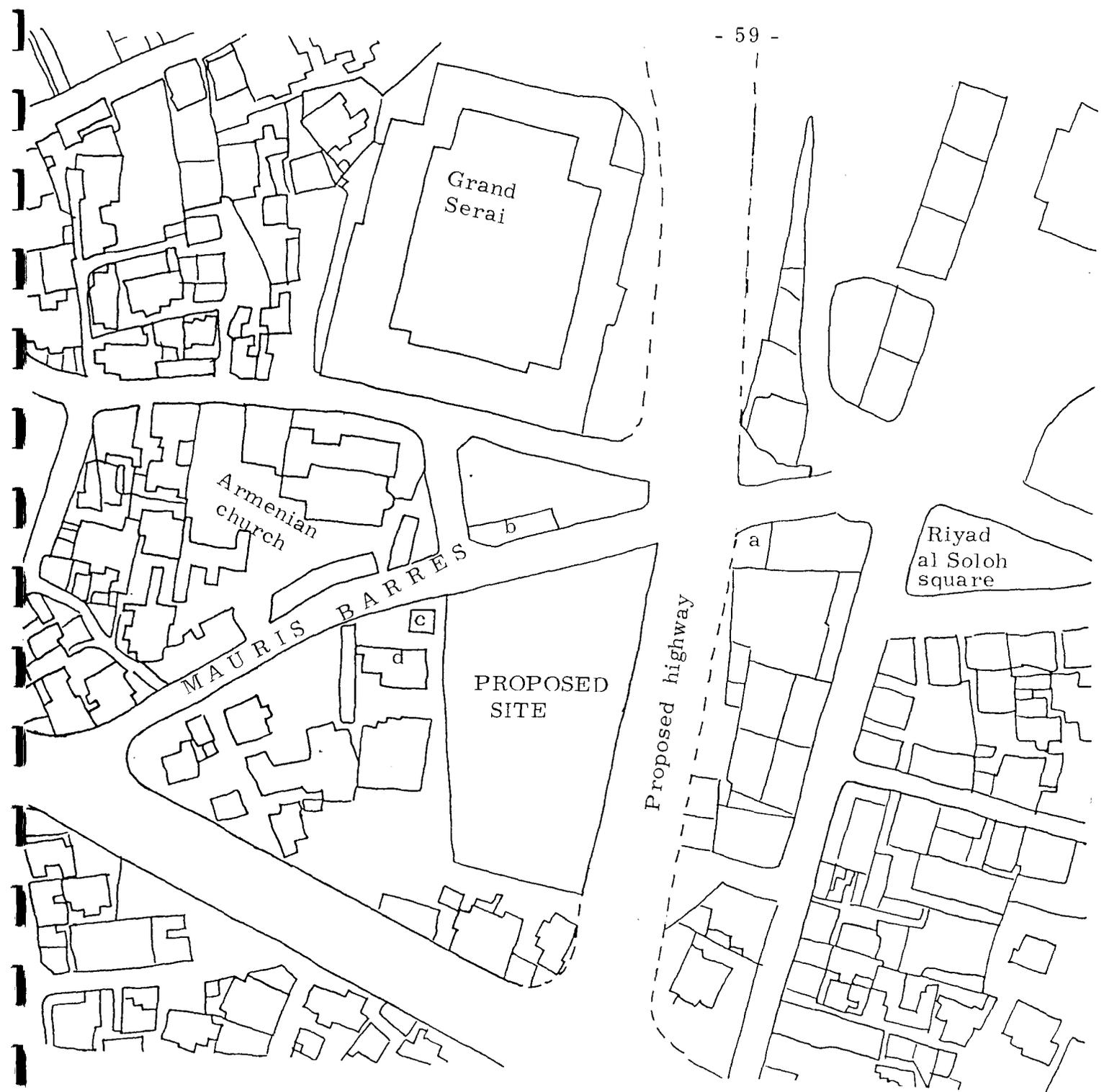
The site lies in an active part of the city with a blend of users of various economic status, religions, and education.

- c - symbolic value: an ecumenical project will be filled with symbolism that could be extracted not only from the nature of the project, but from the symbolic importance of the site as well. The old building of the Near East School of Theology has occupied the site for a considerable period of time. Unfortunately, nothing of it remains today. Nevertheless, the Presbyterian



Map of Beirut

Major axes leading  
to site



church which has been functioning in connection to the school of theology still stands. The church has lost its ceiling, but the belfry is still intact.

Discription of site

The proposed site is located at the southern boundary of the governmental serai in a strip of land bounded by two roads, an existing one from the north, the Mauris Barres street and a proposed high way from the east.

The accessibility is facilitated by a close net work of high ways and ring roads. The site has an average length of 710 m and average width of 70 m. This gives a total area of about 7700 m<sup>2</sup>.

From the existing street, the site follows a steep down slope forming a 6 m difference in level 90 m, the length of the northern border.

The proposed high way has a mild slope of 3 m drop over a length of 120 m.

It is worth noting that at present, with the lack of standing buildings on the site, a panoramic view of the eastern part of Beirut and a small portion of the western is seen from various standing points on the site.

The proposed site, as stated before, has be occupied by the old building of the Near East School of Theology.

The belfry has its own entrance, different from that of the church. The door is a pointed arch with a three dimension motif.

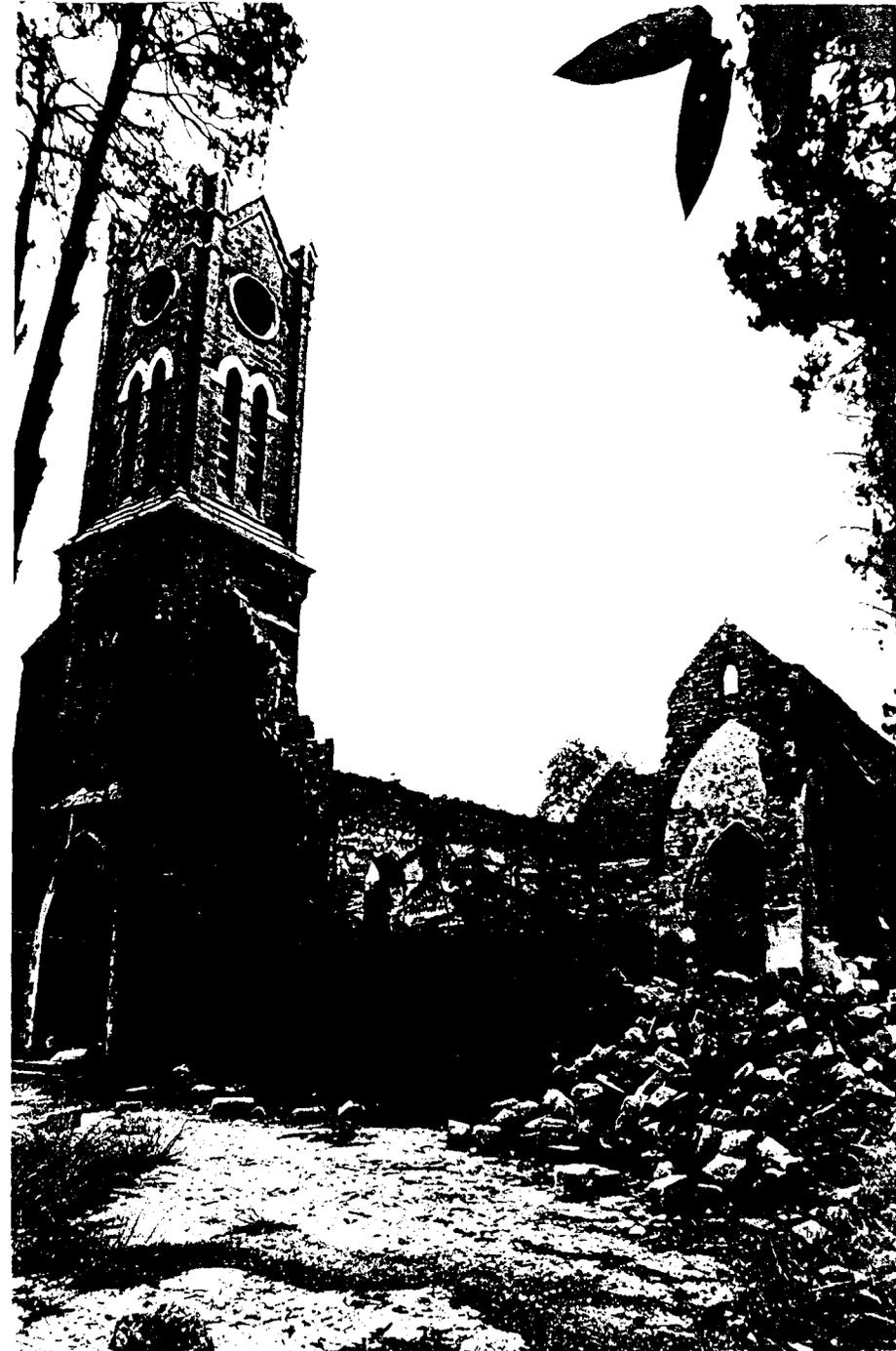
Ubove the door a rectangular recess carries two narrow windows with pointed arches.

The upper part has two narrow windows similar to the ones below. Ubove them a circular window and a pointed motif hide the bell inside.



The church with its pitched roof stand close by. It has openings (doors and windows) with the pointed arch feature.

At present only the southern and eastern facade are still standing. Other parts are in ruin.



### Architectural Characteristic

Buildings have started to fill the area as early as late 18th century. The dominant features at present are attributed to the traditional houses and yellow high rise (6 - 8 floors) buildings.

Corner building at (a) is of 6 floors. It is typical of the late 40's apartment building with a multi; purpose usage (apartments, offices and shops).

Building at (b) is of a later period where glass became a dominant feature in design. The building is massive and grayish in color.

Buildings at (c) and (d) are of traditional elements. They are white washed of 3 - 4 floors.

Close by there are two buildings of important architectural characteristic.

a - grand serai which is very dominant in both size and feature. Although in ruins, it still stands as an important building and land mark.

b - Armenian church which is intact and is still functioning regularly.

In addition, the church on the site has its own characteristic.

Legal constraints

The chosen site is in a dense area of Beirut where land is of very high cost. Neighbouring historic buildings should be respected and the proposed design should in no way harm the prevalent architecture. The narrow two way street on the north slopes steeply downward amidst buildings and suddenly opens up onto Riad al Solh square. Thus proposed building should not be blocking but rather forming a gradual transition.

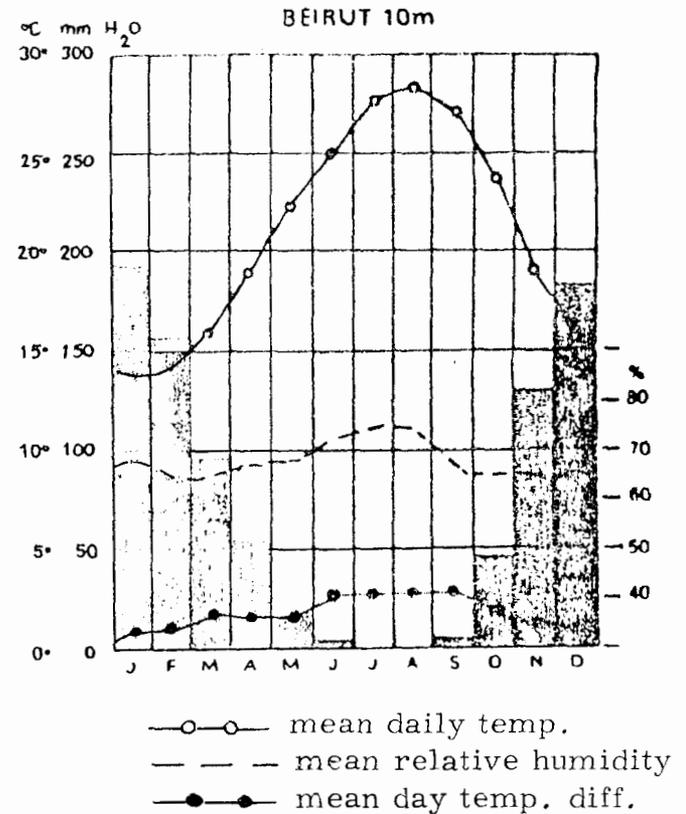
The site is in zone one where codes are lacking. The only restrictions is the built up area should not exceed seven times the total land area.

## Climate

Beirut enjoys a Mediterranean climate with mild winters and hot summers.

The spring and autumn seasons are very short and agreeable. Rainfall is seasonal and falls mainly in heavy down-pours. The prevailing breezes are south-westly which is typical of this coastal area (more noticeable in the afternoon). The number of calm windless afternoons is very small. Most of the rain falls during the months of December to February.

Daily maximum temperatures surpass the comfort limit from May onwards, and reach the work limit in August. Mean daily temperature surpasses the comfort limit from June till the end of September. Due to high humidity, it is necessary to open buildings to the summer breeze from the southwest, to provide sunprotection and sufficient thermal insulation.



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## Interviews

Mr. Gabriel Habib, general secretary, MECC.

Dr. Wannis Sima'n, president of the Near East School of Theology.

Mr. Gaby Jahshan, architect, MECC.

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