

Contributors to the "Churches' Commitments to Children"

Special thanks go to the following people, who collaborated in the participatory drafting process of the "Churches' Commitments to Children":

Core Group members

1. Mr Masimba Lovemore Kuchera, Moderator of the Commission of Churches on International Affairs (CCIA)¹ Working Group 2

Currently the Director of the Centre for Disability and Development in Zimbabwe, Mr Kuchera, a native of Zimbabwe, serves on the boards of the Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCODD) and the Rotary club of Highlands and is a member of the Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (EDAN). His main interests are in disability advocacy, peace and conflict resolution, and community development. Mr Kuchera is a member of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe.

2. Ms Liza Barrie, Chief, Civil Society Partnerships, UNICEF

Liza Barrie has been Chief of Civil Society Partnerships at UNICEF headquarters in New York City since January 2008. In this role, she leads a focused global effort to strengthen the organization's strategic engagement with civil society. This includes employing UNICEF's proven ability to mobilize, convene and coordinate broad coalitions within civil society to respond to complex challenges facing children; imparting effective strategies to country offices on partnering with civil society organisations; and sharpening the evidence and knowledge base of UNICEF engagement with civil society.

3. Metropolitan Elpidophoros of Bursa

The Metropolitan of Bursa and Exarch of Bithynia is a member of the Patriarchal delegations to the General Assemblies of the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the WCC. He served as Secretary of the Pan-Orthodox Synods in Sofia (1998), Istanbul (2005), Geneva (2006), and Istanbul (2008). A native of Turkey, he was elected to his current position in 2011, when he was appointed Abbot of the Holy Patriarchal and Stavropegial Monastery of the Holy Trinity on the island of Chalki.

4. Mr Joseph Cornelius Donnelly

Permanent Delegate to the United Nations for Caritas Internationalis, North America, with extensive international humanitarian and emergency experience in Central/Latin America, Africa and the Middle East. With strong advocacy engagement with UN agencies and other global organizations, he has promoted substantive partnerships rooted in local communities, with deliberate ecumenical and inter-religious accompaniment to promote peacebuilding, reconciliation, human rights, dignity and justice for all peoples.

5. Rev. Dr Micheline Kamba Kasongo

A minister with the Church of Christ in Congo and the Presbyterian Community of Kinshasa, Rev. Dr Micheline Kamba Kasongo also serves as a lecturer in her native Democratic Republic of Congo. A member of the WCC Central Committee since 2006, she specializes in women's and disability issues.

¹ <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/what-we-do/ccia>

6. Mr Vakhtang V. Kipshidze

Currently serving as Head of Information and Analytics Directorate within the Informational Department of the Moscow Patriarchate, Mr Kipshidze is responsible for coordinating Inter-religious summits in connection with the G8 nations. In this capacity, Mr Kipshidze, a Russian national,

has taken part in numerous events coordinated by the United Nations, OSCE and the Council of Europe. Mr Kipshidze has served as executive secretary of the group of experts which drafted the Russian Orthodox Church's Basic Teaching on Human Dignity, Freedom and Rights, which was later adopted by the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church.

7. Rev. Jennie Nordin

As Policy Adviser on International Development for the Church of Sweden, Rev. Nordin focuses on faith and Learning, which includes theology and education, leadership and organization, exchange between faith communities as well as the role of religion, churches and others in development and freedom of religion. As a child and teen she actively participated in programmes for children and youth at the parish, diocese, national and international level. A Swedish national, Rev. Nordin's particular experience is in preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse of children, serving both the church and international children's rights organizations.

8. Bishop Dr Chibuzo Raphael Opoko

A Bishop of the Methodist Church of Nigeria, Bishop Dr Opoko holds a Master of Science in Disability Studies from the London Institute of Child Health (ICH) and a joint Diploma in Theology and Religious Studies from the University of Calabar, in his native Nigeria. His activities have included engaging with government officials to ensure the adequate provision of resources to rehabilitate and reintegrate persons affected with leprosy and to educate their children. Bishop Opoko is also engaged with the promotion of human rights, religious liberty, gender equality, the rights of refugees, migrants and internally displaced people, and issues of peace and justice.

9. Ms Ekaterina Gizela Papadhopuli

Currently serving as Spiritual Nurture of Children Director for World Vision International. Ms. Papadhopuli formulates policies, strategies and technical guidance. Spiritual Nurture of Children is an integral part of children's development, affected in particular by relationships, care, protection and the environment in which children live. Mrs. Papadhopuli holds a master degree of "Development Management", from the Open University, Milton Keynes in the United Kingdom.

10. Ms Melisande Schifter

A member of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), Ms Melisande Schifter is currently a PhD student in ethics, researching Chinese Christian entrepreneurship and the influence of Christian faith on business behaviour. She holds a Master of Theology from the University of Geneva, Switzerland, and offers expertise in social entrepreneurship, sustainability, business ethics, and humanitarian work. Formerly an intern serving both the WCC and Globethics.net, Ms Schifter is a resident of Switzerland, and holds dual German and Thai citizenship.

11. Ms Frederique Seidel

Serving as Special Advisor on Child Rights for the WCC, Frederique Seidel specializes in peacebuilding through child rights implementation. A French and German national, Ms Seidel holds a Master's degree of Sociology and Educational Science from the Sorbonne and Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Paris, and Freie Universität in Berlin. Ms Seidel worked for

UNICEF for 13 years, serving as Head of Sub-Office in Kosovo, Child Rights Education Programme Manager, and UNICEF Deputy Representative in Algeria. She also served as spokesperson for the UN and the OSCE in post-war Balkans (1996- 2001) and was a journalist for Deutsche Welle TV in Berlin. Her research includes strategies of support to children affected by violence.

12. Mr Paul Stephenson

Paul Stephenson leads the Child Development and Rights technical team for World Vision International, which provides strategic and technical guidance for the global World Vision partnership on Child Development, Child Protection, Child Participation, Child Rights, Gender, Inclusion and Spiritual Development.

13. Ms Caterina Tino

Caterina Tino works as Partnerships Specialist for UNICEF Civil Society Partnerships in New York since 2011. In this capacity, she works to strengthen, expand and monitor UNICEF work with religious communities to promote and to protect children's rights. In particular, she manages UNICEF global partnerships with Scholas, the WCC and Religions for Peace. Prior to her appointment with UNICEF, Ms Tino held several other advisory and research positions with the United Nations.

14. Ms Agneta Ucko

Agneta Ucko is Vice Chair of the Interfaith Council on Ethics Education for Children of Arigatou International, a faith-based NGO committed to building a better world for children and securing child rights through partnership-based initiatives and interfaith cooperation. Ms Ucko was the Deputy General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) before she held the position of Director at Arigatou International in Geneva from 2003 – 2013, where she was responsible for developing the ethics education programme, Learning to Live Together. She served as President of the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child from 2005 – 2007.

15. Bishop Ketut Waspada

A Moderator of the Protestant Christian Church in Bali (GKPB), Bishop Waspada's relationship with the WCC dates back to 1975, when he served as steward at the WCC 5th Assembly, in Nairobi. A native of Indonesia, Bishop Waspada also served on the executive board of the National Council of Churches in Indonesia for ten years, and was Chair of the Association of Christian Institutes for Social Concern in Asia, or ACISCA. A graduate of Duta Wacan Theological Seminary, Yogyakarta, he also holds a Doctor of Theology degree from Ludwig Maximilian Universität in Munich

16. Dr Emily Welty

A member of the Presbyterian Church (USA), Dr Welty is Assistant Professor and Director of Peace and Justice Studies at Pace University, New York City. She has been a member of CCIA since 2006. Since 2013, she has been a WCC Ecumenical Peacebuilder. Dr Welty trained in peace and justice studies, and specializes in regions throughout Africa and the Middle East, focusing on humanitarian aid and the religious dimensions of peacebuilding. She has experience working in cross-cultural and unstable contexts, including Israel/Palestine, Myanmar/Burma, Sri Lanka, Northern Ireland, Cuba, Nicaragua, Haiti, South Africa, Uganda, Kenya and Sudan.

Theological Working Group members

1. **Rev. Dr Niclas Blåder**

Rev. Dr Niclas Blåder is a researcher at the Church of Sweden Research unit. He has written about Children and Church didactics, and about ecclesiology and identity.

2. **Ms Marcia J. Bunge**

A Professor of Religion and the Bernhardson Distinguished Chair of Lutheran Studies at Gustavus Adolphus College (Saint Peter, Minnesota). Her current area of research is religious understandings of children and childhood. She has edited and co-edited four volumes on the subject: *The Child in Christian Thought* (Eerdmans, 2001); *The Child in the Bible* (Eerdmans, 2008); *Children and Childhood in World Religions: Primary Sources and Texts* (Rutgers, 2009); and *Children, Adults, and Shared Responsibilities: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives* (Cambridge, 2012).

3. **Bishop Duleep De Chickera**

A member of CCIA since 2006, Bishop Duleep de Chickera served as moderator of the CCIA working group on interreligious cooperation from 2006 to 2013. The Bishop of the Church of Ceylon, a native of Sri Lanka, he is also a member of the WCC Reference Group for follow-up from the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation, and the WCC Economy of Life and Diakonial processes. His areas of expertise include the exploration of theological and biblical resources on inter-religious collaboration for social integration, social justice, reconciliation and peace, and Asian spirituality.

4. **Rev. Maren von der Heyde**

Rev. Maren von der Heyde is the Managing Director of the Educational and Diaconal Ministry of the Church District Hamburg- West/Südholstein. The Diaconal Ministries offer counselling services and therapy to families, parents and children and young persons who need help, including services for refugees, the homeless, and people with drug and alcohol problems. She is member of a group responsible for establishing and implementing safeguarding policies for children and all vulnerable persons.

5. **Ms Jennifer Haddad Mosher**

Jennifer Haddad Mosher is an educator and independent researcher in American Orthodox religious education and the challenges of Orthodox spiritual formation in the modern North American context. She has a BA in Church History from Yale University, a MAR in Scripture from Yale Divinity School, and a ThM in Systematic Theology & Ethics from St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, where her thesis explored patristic teaching on the nature and significance of Jesus' childhood. She is currently working on a doctorate in Religion & Education at Union Theological Seminary in NYC. She is a member of the Orthodox Church in America.

6. **Dr Isabel Apawo Phiri**

An African theologian, professor, and ecumenist who serves as a WCC Deputy General Secretary for Public Witness and *Diakonia*, Dr Phiri is a native of Malawi. She was director of the Centre for Constructive Theology at the University of KwaZulu Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, before being appointed editor of the *Journal of Gender and Religion in Africa*. Among her many are two co-edited with Dietrich Werner, the *Handbook of Theological Education in Africa* and the *Anthology of African Christianity*, both from Regnum Books International. Dr Phiri has been engaged with the ecumenical movement for two decades, serving as commissioner for WCC's Programme on Theological Education and as general coordinator of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians.

7. Rev. Christopher Rajkumar

Rev. Christopher Rajkumar serves the National Council of Churches in India as an Executive Secretary for the Commission on Justice, Peace and Creation. He is one of the members of the Child Theology movement in India. Rev. Rajkumar campaigns for 'Green Sunday Schools' and he is part of a team of experts developing curricula for Sunday Schools and Primary Schools on issues such as climate change and mutual understanding among people of different faiths.

8. Rev. Dr Maria Klasson Sundin

An adviser at the Church of Sweden national office, she has written about children and freedom of religion in the context of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child.

9. Rev. Prof. Dr Dr h.c. Dietrich Werner

Senior Advisor for Theology, Ecumenical Education and Research in Bread for the World/Protestant Development Service in Berlin, Germany, Dr. Werner previously served as programme executive for the WCC's Ecumenical Theological Education unit. Author and editor of several handbooks on theological education and, most recently, co-editor of the *Anthology of African Christianity*, he is an ordained minister of the Evangelical Church in Germany.

10. Dr Keith J. White

Dr Keith J. White is Chair of the Child Theology Movement (www.childtheology.org), Director of Mill Grove (<http://www.millgrove.org.uk>), and Associate Lecturer at Spurgeons College.

Advisors

1. **Dr Agnes Abuom**, Anglican Church of Kenya, WCC Moderator of the Central Committee
2. **Barr. (Mrs.) Chinelo Ngozi Anazodo**, Office of the Primate - Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) and All African Conference of Churches, Coordinator, Women and Children
3. **Ms Caroline Bader-Richter**, LWF, Youth Secretary
4. **Rev. Dr Niclas Blåder**, Church of Sweden, Research Department, Secretary for Theology and Ecumenism
5. **Ms Cristina Colon**, UNICEF, Climate Change and Environment, Policy Specialist
6. **Ms France Charlet**, ECPAT, Head of Advocacy and Communication
7. **Mr Chris Dodd**, Churches' Network for Non-violence, Coordinator
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10. **Ms Theresa Kilbane**, UNICEF, Social Norms and Protection of Children from Violence, Sr. Adviser
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12. **Mr Gert Kuiper**, ICCO/Kerk in Actie, International Programme Department, Regional Coordinator Latin America & Southern Africa
13. **Ms Nadya Kassam**, UNICEF, Birth Registration, Child Protection Specialist
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15. **Ms Sue Mitchell**, Diocese of Liverpool, UK, Specialist on Child-friendly Churches Award Scheme
16. **Rev. Lydia Mwaniki**, All African Conference of Churches, Director, Theology, Family Life
17. **Mr Kerry Neal**, UNICEF, Justice for Children, Child Protection Specialist
18. **Ms Marta Palma**, Global Network of Religions for Children Europe, former Coordinator
19. **Ms Karen Rasmussen**, Child Safe Horizons, Director

20. **Ms Kristiina Rintakoski**, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission Peacebuilding and Advocacy, Director
21. **Ms Saudamini Siegrist**, UNICEF, Senior Advisor for Child Protection in Emergencies
22. **Ms Sally Smith**, UNAIDS, Partnership Adviser
23. **Ms Katri Suomi**, Finnish Church Aid, International Programme
24. **Rev. Dr Olivia B. Updegrove**, Family and Children's Ministry Team, Disciples of Christ, USA
25. **Rev. Lorenzo Vargas**, World Association of Christian Communication, Canada
26. **Ms Mollie Vickery**, United Methodist Women, Executive Secretary for Children, Youth & Family
27. **Mr John Walden**, VIVA Network, Network Development Consultant
28. **Ms Karin Wibor**, Swedish Christian Council, General Secretary

Contributions to the Principles in the WCC-UNICEF seminar on 19/20 November 2015

1. **Dr Stefanos Athanasiou**, Christkatholische Kirche der Schweiz, Assistant Chief Catechist
2. **Dr Abba Ayenew**, Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, WCC Executive Committee Member
3. **Bishop Samuel Robert Azariah**, Church of Pakistan, WCC Executive Committee Member
4. **Rev. Dr Hyun Ju Bae**, Presbyterian Church of Korea, WCC Executive Committee Member
5. **Dr Ulysses Burley III**, Evangelical Lutheran Church USA, WCC Executive Committee Member
6. **Ms Caroline Collins**, Church of England, Diocese of Liverpool, Children and Families Worker
7. **Prof. Dr Oscar Enrique Corvalán-Vásquez**, Iglesia Pentecostal de Chile, Education Specialist
8. **Mr Peter Ekman**, Church of Sweden, Officer for Children and Youth
9. **H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima**, Ecumenical Patriarchate, WCC Vice-Moderator, Central Committee
10. **Archpriest Mikhail Goundiaev**, Russian Orthodox Church, WCC Executive Committee Member
11. **Mr Kimhoun Ham**, Parable Cambodia, Director
12. **Rev. Dr Henriette Hutabarat-Lebang**, Gereja Toraja, WCC Executive Committee Member
13. **Rev. Welmintje Kameli Maleng**, Gereja Masehi Injili di Timor (GMIT)
14. **Deaconess Mable Kifwabantu**, United Church Zambia, Community Development/Social Justice
15. **Ms Kerstin Kollander**, Church of Sweden, Senior Advisor Global Relations, Team Coordinator
16. **Dr Manoj Kurian**, WCC, Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance
17. **Ms Anne Laakko**, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Legal Officer (Statelessness)
18. **Ms Heather MacLeod**, World Vision International Humanitarian Operations
19. **Ms Nicolette Moodie**, UNICEF, Human Rights and Gender Liaison Officer
20. **Ms Elda Moreno**, Office of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Violence against Children, Director
21. **Ms Ilaria Paolazzi**, Child Rights Connect, Child Rights Officer
22. **Ms Jennifer Philpot-Nissen**, World Vision International, Senior Advisor, Human Rights
23. **Mr Peter Prove**, WCC, CCIA Director
24. **Dr Susan Purcell Gilpin**, WCC, Health and Healing Programme
25. **Dr Audeh B. Quawas**, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, WCC Executive Committee Member
26. **Rev. Dr Peniel Rajkumar**, WCC, Programme Executive, Inter-religious Dialogue and Cooperation
27. **Ms Sabine Rakotomalala**, Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, Technical Adviser
28. **Rev. Margaret Rollins Rose**, The Episcopal Church USA, Deputy to the Presiding Bishop
29. **Ms Birgit Sandler-Koschel**, Protestant Church Germany (EKD), Head of Education Department
30. **Ms Joyce Steiner**, Christian Council of Ghana, Senior Programme Manager, Human Rights
31. **Mr Dinesh Suna**, WCC, Ecumenical Water Network
32. **Bishop Mary Ann Swenson**, United Methodist Church USA, WCC Vice-Moderator, Central Committee
33. **Ms Juliette Torabian**, UNESCO, Programme Specialist
34. **Rev. James Cecil Victor**, Church of South India, Director, Department of Pastoral Concerns
35. **Ms Jane Wambui**, Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Kenya, Sunday School Coordinator