

For information

REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Moderator,
Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

In this report from the work we have done to interpret and follow up the mandate from the 10th Assembly, I will also share some of my reflections about what it means to now be together on a pilgrimage for justice and peace.

1. The Message from the 10th Assembly: Join Us in a Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace!

The message of the 10th Assembly reads in paragraph 6:

“We intend to move together. Challenged by our experiences in Busan, we challenge all people of good will to engage their God-given gifts in transforming actions.

This assembly calls you to join us in pilgrimage.

May the churches be communities of healing and compassion, and may we seed the Good News so that justice will grow and God’s deep peace rest on the world.”

We need to be moved to move. The triune God, the God of life, brought us together as one humanity in the life given to us since our birth and in our daily experiences. The God of life has brought us together as one Christian fellowship through the particular gift of baptism and faith in Jesus Christ given to us through the Church. We were moved to be together, and we were given new perspectives. Even more, we were given another clear sign of how God is calling us to move, to move together, towards one another. This can happen through moving into the world together. In a new way we were called to focus first of all on our common calling in the world, and through that work for the unity to which God has called us.

The first day after the inspiring (and for some of us, quite busy and demanding) days of our assembly in Busan, I visited the church of the moderator of the local host committee in Busan, Pastor Hur. Some of us remember how he shared about how God had led him, against the protest of significant church members, to make a sacrifice and take this role of supporting the WCC assembly. He told me that the assembly had moved the churches in Busan to start on a new journey together, establishing an ecumenical council for that city. They were discussing how to address the needs of the people of the city in a new way together. He even said that the blessing of the presence of the participants in the assembly was like a spiritual tsunami coming to them. The demonstrations in Busan had paradoxically made most of his rather evangelical church members more open to the ecumenical fellowship and our common call for justice and peace. They were overwhelmed in a positive sense. I hope and believe he is one of many participants, including those who so wonderfully and generously hosted the assembly, who has been moved by the Holy Spirit through this event--moved to move.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, The Most Rev Justin Welby, wrote to me after the Assembly to thank us for the great experience of unique Christian fellowship that the Assembly had been for him. He described it in terms of repentance in his report to the General Synod of the Church of England; from high scepticism of this kind of work and events to a new experience of how God in Busan and through the WCC is calling the churches together, to go out together in our mission, sent by Jesus Christ.

Others have addressed how the assembly called us to focus on the life God has given us and is giving us and the whole creation, and how we as churches can help the world to protect and nurture the sacred gift of life. Others have written to me or talked to me with new questions in their minds of what we can learn from this, what we can change in the way we work, as churches and as WCC, and other questions we can discuss later about the assembly itself.

Some have said that we could have used even stronger words in the message, more prophetic, and more weighty theological arguments. Be that as it may, the total experience and mandate of the assembly challenge us now very clearly to give shape to the future role and voice of the WCC in the way we can.

How can the work of the conciliar ecumenism move us as churches now in the next phase of the ecumenical movement? Or to use the metaphor of the Gospel of Luke, chapter 1, which was also used as an entry to the message from the assembly: How do we go into the new dawn God is giving us? How is God making the light of Christ shine in the darkness and the shadow of death, through us and our churches together? How is God leading our feet into the way of peace?

I am asking these questions, well aware that some ask what is actually new in this. I think we will discover how much we are building on what has been done, and the value of work and decisions of the past. However, I think we will discover that a focus on how we now move into a new period, a new time, an unknown reality, as a pilgrimage, can make us more open and able to find other ways forward together. I see that happen, and I believe it is our task to make it happen.

I am asking these questions in humble respect for this task, as we together are called to offer leadership to the WCC in this period ahead of us. I stand in front of you also asking these questions as a person who feels both the enormous potential and the weight of the responsibility given in our calling. Most of all I want us to remember that the call to unity and to serve is based on what we are given in the kingdom of God, not what we have made up ourselves: *The kingdom of God is given in righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.* (Romans 14:17) The deepest meaning in life is to contribute to bring others into the life of the triune God, to experience the creating, liberating, sustaining and truly joyful qualities of the kingdom of God - for us human beings and the entire creation, for time and eternity.

2. The Mandate from the Assembly: To Facilitate a Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace

Let me share some perspectives how I understand the mandate from the assembly in light of what we have done already and what we are to do now in this particular meeting of the executive committee.

a. From “Staying Together” to “Moving Together”

We have promised to move together. We need to interpret what change of language, perspective, methods and tasks this will mean. We are a fellowship which started by affirming and reaffirming that we will stay together (Amsterdam 1948). In spite of all our differences and internal challenges, being on different sides of lines of conflicts or in different contexts, cultures and continents, we are a fellowship studying and understanding together, sometimes negotiating and even fighting together, openly or in more subtle ways. Sometimes we have focused particularly on our interests before we have looked at how the whole fellowship is served by our contributions and actions.

We have worked hard and long towards a more common understanding of many issues of high significance for this fellowship and for the churches. Some of these processes were brought to another level of maturity before the 10th Assembly in texts about ecclesiology (*The Church - Towards a Common vision*), about our call to mission (*Mission Today - Together Towards Life*), about *Economy and Ecology of Life*, about diakonia, about proper interfaith relations (Christian Witness in A Multi-Religious World), about migration and many other issues. In the assembly itself we finished a new statement: *God's Gift and Call to Unity - and our Commitment*.

The final message of the assembly actually corresponds to the bottom line of many of these documents I have mentioned. They all call for further actions - towards something new. I read that in many of these discourses, there is a change: How can we now focus more on what we do together to make a difference together? How can we focus more on where we are going, more than discussing only where we are in relation to one another as institutions? In my mind this is not to shift from theology to ethics, or from ecclesiology to politics. It is to try to discover how God is teaching us more about what it means to be One, Holy, Apostolic and Catholic Church in our time and in the time ahead of us. The answers can only be found by going into this future in faith and with the prayer that God will lead us.

Actually, I interpret the change over the last years towards a consensus method and practice in the WCC to secure a more proper participation of Orthodox churches in the WCC as something that has prepared us for this change. The true way to consensus is actually a way forward to something that is more than we had, a new possibility, a new way of seeing and doing something together. It is not - when it works - a static power game, based on our relative weight or our positions, searching for the least common denominator. It is a process that leads us forward, into the future. At its best it is a movement following the basis of the WCC, and in that sense a move back to our basis: our common faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and savior, and our common call to unity and service. This move, towards salvation, is always a way forward, into the unknown but also to the new possibilities, into what can be made out of our lives, individually and together, through the Holy Spirit.

How can the WCC facilitate that we do move together, address more challenges together, share with one another how we can do that, finding new ways and new practices to express what we have together? How can the WCC become more of an instrument for how we act and move together as churches?

b. The Pilgrimage as Guiding Motive for the Ecumenical Movement

Many books and many people can give us a lot of reflections on what a pilgrimage is. I would only like to mention a few dimensions of a pilgrimage relevant for our work together:

- Pilgrimage is about true spirituality and true humanity. There is something in the connection between body and soul, united in a spiritual dimension, that is revealed in the life of a pilgrim. The ecumenical movement can only move in the Holy Spirit, creating and sustaining our lives as body and soul. It is difficult to be artificial or superficial as a pilgrim; it is a very realistic approach to spirituality. On the other hand, it is a way to connect our lives with everything and everybody that God has created. I hope and pray that this focus on pilgrimage can make us able to be more honest and true human beings, to ourselves and to one another, open for how God's spirit is guiding us as we are but also in the world as it is.
- There are many holy places that pilgrims visit. For us as one Christian family the significance of Jerusalem - and Bethlehem and other places in the Holy land - cannot be underestimated. And we need to continue the work for a responsible pilgrimage for those who visit those holy places, assisting them to understand how these places are in need of people who are not only praying for themselves, but for the just peace of those who live there.
- Thereby we are already bringing in a new dimension to the definition of the goal of our pilgrimage. A pilgrimage of justice and peace must mean that any place where justice and peace are threatened, and particularly there, be it in countries of conflicts or in relations of oppression and injustices across borders in any place of the world, we should pray that God leads us there. Not for our curiosity, but for our true and honest will to be in solidarity and willing to do something to bring justice and peace.
- The pilgrimage perspective is one that makes us all humble and open for changes, for repentance and something new and better. Pilgrims are open for what they will see on their way and what they can learn from the way and getting to their goal. This attitude is a true ecumenical attitude of openness but also of searching the real and sustainable values that can bring us all to a better world.
- To be pilgrims for justice and peace means that we are together. No one can bring justice and peace alone. It makes us open for all who have this calling and aim. It makes us open to ask what did we really have to contribute ourselves, giving account of the most basic and most valuable we carry with us in our faith and our liturgies, in our prayers and our teaching; and, it makes us open for what the contribution of the others are.
- Therefore, there is a strong connection between the many reflections and recommendations of being mutually accountable to one another in the ecumenical movement and the motif of pilgrimage. To give account to one another and to be accountable to what we share, is not a matter of writing, or even signing agreements or covenants for the files or the shelves. We share and we are in dialogue together, to be mutually accountable in our attitudes to one another. The purpose of the ecumenical movement is not to be ignorant of differences and difficulties, but to not be limited by the definitions and problems of the past. Rather, it is to be open for how God can make us able to serve one another and be accountable to our common calling together. And for that the motif of movement as pilgrims, with a purpose and with common values, offers a significant perspective.

c. The Pilgrimage as One Perspective and One Uniting Profile on All Our Program Work, Visits and Relations

We must understand this call to move together in the light of the decisions about our programs: We shall define and organize all our programs as a pilgrimage of justice and peace. All projects must contribute to make this happen. All projects must be seen as serving this purpose. For the first time, I think, we have been given one uniting perspective and title for all what we plan to do. The idea of a pilgrimage is not something besides or beyond what we are supposed to do or just a rhetorical device to give the programs a title. It is a way to speak the language of faith and of hope in the complex reality of today and tomorrow.

Not many days after returning from Busan, the Staff Leadership Group (SLG) had a retreat together to discuss what this means, and what strategic goals do we need to develop to make this happen. We have had an all staff meeting where we have discussed what does it mean for all the programs and colleagues to contribute and even define their work from their contribution to a pilgrimage of justice and peace. We will have ample opportunities in this meeting to discuss what it means.

d. The Pilgrimage as a Necessary Mode to Move in a Rapidly Moving World

Our shared understanding that we need to move together comes from a more and more shared interpretation of the world around us as a world rapidly in transition, people moving and generations changing. Their perception and relationship to church is also changing. Even the people of the church and the churches are experiences of significant and rapid changes. Cultural and political changes, like in the Middle East, or economic, cultural and demographic changes, like in Europe and in North America. Other churches are struggling in a very difficult environment of conflict and injustices, like in South Sudan, Syria and other places, with the fear of rapidly deteriorating realities.

Some of these and other changes could lead to a defensive and self-protective reaction, becoming preoccupied with oneself as institution or as a society within the bigger society. Some of the churches are experiences growth, even rapid growth, like in Korea and China and in several African countries. Then, as well, it is important to focus on how can we be a church that is serving the world we belong to - not focusing on ourselves as success or failure? Whatever the reality of our churches are, again we share the same question: How can we together be Church in the time and the world in which we are living in today and tomorrow?

e. The Pilgrimage as a Missional Perspective

We have to focus on how we are going out, not to be preoccupied with ourselves. We are called to go out to those who are in need of us, of the voice and the faith of the Church, of the churches being and acting together to pray and work for the kingdom of God, making the values of the kingdom known and influential in the world, locally, nationally and globally. Pope Francis has given in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel) from November 24, 2013, to his church, but also other churches, a way forward in this regard. The text is an inspiration to change the perspectives of the Church and its work to be more outward-looking, outward-going, focused first of all on how to share the Gospel and its values and joy in a world in so much need of justice, peace, forgiveness, reconciliation, care. His words are potentially opening many doors for what we can do together as churches. I believe also his words can open many hearts.

His message is corresponding to both the understanding of the mission of the Church expressed in the WCC mission statement, and the shared understanding in the Faith and Order text on ecclesiology, describing the Church in mission together, serving the world together.

A moment of joint study and discussion of this text in the staff community proved to be both very enriching and inspiring for our own work on defining the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. Pope Francis words at the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, explicitly talking about the way to unity as a pilgrimage, searching and serving together, emphasize the potential of more work together with the Roman Catholic Church, particularly in the perspective of pilgrimage, justice, peace and mission. This has been confirmed also in conversations I have had with other high-ranking representatives of the Roman Catholic Church of the last months. The plans for reorganizing the Joint Working Group between the WCC and the RCC are pointing also in this direction, waiting for the opportunity to meet to define this new phase of work together.

3. We Are Already on the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace

Since the assembly we have experienced how the need for our contributions to justice and peace is not something that only might come in the future. We are already in the middle of the needs and moving in these realities. Let me mention some.

a. South Sudan

The WCC has contributed to the peace efforts for Sudan for the last 40 years. Together with several ecumenical partners, like AACC, LWF, and national specialized ministries the ecumenical family has offered more attention and efforts to the peace of the people of Sudan than to many others. My predecessor, Sam Kobia, has been a special ecumenical envoy to Sudan, particularly involved in the peace settlement in 2011. I visited both Khartoum and Juba in March 2013. Many were those who thanked the WCC for the longstanding and faithful support to the peace process and the establishment of the new South Sudan, including President Salva Kiir Mayardit. I expressed the commitment to continue working for justice and peace and to accompany the churches and the church councils in both countries. The two highly trusted church leaders in South Sudan, Archbishop Deng (Anglican) and Bishop Taban (Roman Catholic) had just got the high responsibility of leading the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for South Sudan. They told me they were realising that peace not only had to be won, it had to be built. They had gone “on vacation” after independence but realised that there was no time for them to pull back from the involvement of the churches in the next phase of peacebuilding. They were more right than any of us wanted to know.

The violence and tendencies to ethnic conflict in South Sudan that erupted in December last year, belong to the very sad stories in our world. For a new nation, which needs to focus totally on building the nation from almost nothing, internal rivalry between former warlords and rivals was the last thing needed.

Our Moderator Dr Agnes Abuom, knowing the situation in Sudan very well for many years, and with a personal commitment to work for justice and peace, has spent most of the Christmas time and a lot of the time afterwards to address the situation and particularly to find ways to support the church leaders in South Sudan and their role of mediation and reconciliation. I have discussed regularly with her, our colleagues in LWF and ACT Alliance, and particularly with Norwegian Church Aid, what could be done. Our colleague Nigussu Legesse organized that the Ethiopian

churches accompanied Bishop Taban in his efforts in Addis Ababa to support a signing of a peace agreement between some of the parties last week. I am very impressed by the tireless efforts of our moderator to bring hope and constructive contributions to the suffering people of South Sudan; and, I am eager to hear more from her about the situation.

b. Syria

As you know from the media, the cruelties and destruction happening in Syria are endless and escalating. I recently read that people are starving due to the blockade in Homs and that children are used as shields in the fighting. The people of our member churches and other churches are not parties in the conflict but heavily affected by this terrible conflict. The number of displaced persons inside and outside Syria accounts for almost half of the population. Since the churches are numerically minor to others, they are also suffering very much from this migration.

The WCC has taken several initiatives, as you probably are aware of, to address the situation through conferences about the situation for the Christians in the Arab world, through dialogues between Christians and Muslims here in Geneva to develop a vision for another future life together in Syria, and through statements, but also through meetings here in Geneva to address the need for justice and peace. The last was January 16, in the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva, where church leaders from Syria met others from the MECC, and from other countries involved in addressing the conflict in Syria (Russia, USA, EU, et al). We have been working closely with Mr Brahimi and his office, to convey the clear message of church support for the difficult peace negotiations still going on here in Geneva and the commitment to contribute to a process of reconciliation after a peace agreement is settled. Someone must speak first and foremost from the perspective of the dramatic needs of the people of Syria, regardless of the category to which they belong.

We realized that it is important that the WCC takes initiatives like this; it is possible to use our mandate and platform for the benefit of churches in a conflict situation. It is possible to lead the process towards consensus and a strong, common message expressed with one voice. The reality calls for united efforts and words from the ecumenical movement. That it is possible to respond to that across confessional and political differences, was a sign of encouragement. I am also particularly grateful to HH Aram I for his support and active leadership in this event, benefiting from his long ecumenical experience. We are also grateful to see the readiness to support any in need in this conflict, as we see it happening from ACT Alliance and affiliated organizations.

c. On the Way towards an Economy and Ecology of Life for All

The need for changes in the economic structures of the world is one of the issues raised in my report and in several discussions in the assembly. The WCC had already before the assembly taken initiative to follow up a statement from the joint consultation with other ecumenical partners, the LWF, WCRC and CWM (Council for World Mission) that took place in São Paulo, Brazil, October 2012. This is one way to follow up on the reports from the long study process in the last period on economic justice and ecology, following the AGAPE process that led up to the Porto Alegre Assembly. I have long called for plans for actions as next steps on how to address unjust structures and realities that create and prolong poverty; so did the consultation in São Paulo.

A panel of economists, theologians, former politicians and diplomats worked together in August 2013 and in January 2014 to respond to this call, to bring the work to another phase where we find some common projects and campaigns we believe would be strategic and relevant. Senior

colleagues from the WCC participated; and, I attended partially. The final version of their report came last week and it is forwarded to the programme subcommittee here.

The action plan is recommended to be implemented in cooperation between the four partners. We are now working on how that can happen in practice; but, we need your guidance and help to see how the WCC should be involved in this very important joint ecumenical initiative. I believe the process now has come to a very constructive track; and, there should be ways to make a difference through some of the proposed actions.

Invited to participate in the World Economic Forum meeting in Davos this year, I tried to listen carefully to how some leaders of nations, of the international community, from civil organizations, people from the business and finance world, and some religious leaders speak to the current challenges of the world in this respect. I found the Open Forum in Davos, open to the public, a discussion on capitalism, to be one of the most relevant for me in this regard, raising several important questions about how capital or wealth can serve the world (as Pope Francis said in his greeting to the WEF), to bring more justice and improve the livelihood of ordinary people. However, I also found that some of the issues raised in the report of “our” panel, like the international work on tax issues, and better regulations of the banking systems, are high on the agenda in the discussions in Davos.

The most interesting discussions, for me, were those focusing on sustainability and responses to climate change. The UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon, together with many others, tried to urge a new level of cooperation between governments, finance sector and civil sector to really make a change in how we think and how we act. He particularly mentioned the need for actors of the civil sector to be the voice of the people and the moral voice in the upcoming summit in September this year. I got support in private conversations for my idea of calling an interfaith summit on climate change the days before the UN summit, also in New York, from Cardinal Turkson, from Jim Wallis, a significant evangelical leader in the USA, from a Jewish leader, from Lord Stern (who gave a brilliant exposé on why significant long term investments in the right, sustainable sectors can make a real difference, and that this is much more economically sound than not doing so) et al.

d. Planning and Working Together on the Pilgrimage

The weeks after the assembly have been used for recreation, vacation and Christmas celebrations; but, we have also started a significant piece of work as SLG and with the other colleagues to develop concepts and plans for the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace.

We find that there is a lot of work to be done, and it can be and should be done, together with you and others, to develop this as the program profile of the WCC for final decision in the central committee meeting in July. We find that there is a growing interest and enthusiasm among member churches and ecumenical partners, particularly among specialized ministries, when they are involved in discussions about what this could mean for themselves in their own work.

One of our ecumenical partners has moved out of the Ecumenical Centre these last months. The World Communion of Reformed Churches opened its new office in Hannover, Germany, in January. I emphasized in my greetings to them, as I participated in the event, that we have to be able to find ways to work together also with this change. They are very committed to that and to making the issues of Justice and Peace a priority for their work also in the future.

We are moving in our plans for the Ecumenical Centre, not to move out but to increase our future financial sustainability and our visible presence in Geneva. In a part of Geneva reserved for international organizations, we have one of the most valuable real estates. We celebrated the winners of the architect competition for this new project; and, the work together with Implenia Construction is developing well.

This is also a time of change. Several colleagues have concluded their service to the WCC after many years; others will do so during the next couple of years, partly due to end of contracts according to our rules or time for retirement or to move on to other tasks. After an assembly is a proper time to make a thorough assessment of the resources (human and financial) we have and need; and, we are trying to implement a new program plan and structure already in 2014, shaped by the commitment to work more closely with the churches, in a more integrated way and to shape the pilgrimage of justice and peace. We are already on the way.

It is proper to give thanks to colleagues who have finished their service to the council, for those who continue and try to find their way with some new responsibilities and tasks, and to the many who do what they have done with great commitment and faithfulness to our common mission. It is a privilege to serve as general secretary in this organization and also to have the possibility to now lead the work in a new phase and with some renewed structures. We have several challenges, as we will discuss these days, but most of all great opportunities.

4. The Legacy from Nelson Mandela

To end my look forward to the next period, I will end with a very special and significant part of the ecumenical legacy: The Programme to Combat Racism, and its connection to South Africa. I had the privilege to represent the WCC in the memorial service and events to honour the late President Nelson Mandela in Johannesburg in December. That was for me a strong reminder of what these words of life, justice and peace, which we are using so often, really mean, how costly they are and how costly it might be to search for the realities they represent.

I was asked to participate in the private prayer with the Mandela family, organized by the Methodist Church of South Africa to which he belonged. I shared in my reflection how Mandela had inspired a whole nation, a whole world, but also the churches in the world, to believe that it is possible to work for both justice and peace. He never gave up the vision for freedom in justice with equal rights for all according to their God given intrinsic values. He still challenges us to be willing to fight for it, even die for it. He never gave up believing that this can be achieved through keeping one's own dignity and treating others with dignity, through forgiveness and reconciliation. More than many others, he has shown the relevance of the Christian message of justice and peace given through grace. Therefore, we were proud to be among those he saw as a true partner in the long walk to freedom. He said to the WCC after his release and in the 8th Assembly in Harare that without the churches, he would not be a free man. After the prayer with the family, they expressed their thanks to the WCC and the ecumenical movement for their critical solidarity with Mandela and the freedom struggle in South Africa.

The churches in South Africa were grateful for the presence of the WCC in these events, also in the South African media, giving visibility to the strong connection between Mandela and the ecumenical movement. This is a time when also the South African churches discuss how they now should serve justice and peace for the people of South Africa and the whole region in a time when the economic inequalities and violence is increasing and the need for moral qualities in society and

political leadership are highly required. The way to justice and peace was found through the great leadership of Mandela, now properly honoured by the whole world in a way no other political leader can dream of. It was strange to see how the most mighty leaders of the world could agree to the values we also believe in--at least for a day.

Mandela called his autobiography *The Long Walk to Freedom*. He showed that the way to justice and peace, or the pilgrimage to justice and peace, really is a way, and you have to walk it. He also showed that it requires certain attitudes of resilience, of dignity, of mutual respect and of mutual accountability to one another.

His legacy is both an inspiration and a challenge to everybody called to a pilgrimage of justice and peace.

Appendix 1

General Secretary Visits and Meetings from 9 November 2013 to 5 February 2014

TRAVEL:

DATE	PLACE	PURPOSE
November 9, 2013	Busan, Korea	Visit Sansung Church
November 9-11, 2013	Seoul, Korea	Visit churches: Kyundong Presbyterian Church Yoido Full Gospel Church Myungsung Presbyterian Church Meet with Rev. CHANG Sang, WCC President for Asia Visit NCKK and meet with GS
November 12-14, 2013	Oslo, Norway	Meetings with Church of Norway and Ministry of Culture
November 21, 2013	Vienna, Austria	Religions for Peace Assembly – key note speaker
December 9-12, 2013	Johannesburg, South Africa	Attended funeral and events in honour of Nelson Mandela
January 11-13, 2014	Hannover, Germany	WCRC Installation Service Visit EKD
January 22-24, 2014	Davos, Switzerland	World Economic Forum
January 27, 2014	Kongsberg, Norway	Church of Norway Conference

MEETINGS:

DATE	PLACE	PURPOSE
November 19-20, 2013	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting of Church World Communion
November 26, 2013	World Council of Churches	Courtesy visit of Greek Ambassador to the UN and Greece Government Secretary for Religious Affairs
December 13-14, 2013	Ecumenical Centre	First meeting of new WCC central committee leadership
December 16, 2013	Ecumenical Centre chapel	Memorial service in honour of Nelson Mandela, joint ceremony with South Africa Mission
December 15, 2013	Palais des Nations	Meeting with I. Brahiimi, UN Special Envoy to Syria
December 17, 2013	Palais des Nations	Memorial ceremony for Nelson Mandela
December 17, 2013	Ecumenical Centre	WCC and Implenia – award ceremony for architectural competition development of the Ecumenical Centre
January 10, 2014	World Council of Churches	Visit of Archbishop Tomasi, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations
January 10, 2014	World Council of Churches	Visit of His Eminence the Antiochian Metropolitan for France and Switzerland, Mgr. Ignatius
January 14, 2014	Crown Plaza Hotel, Geneva	Meeting with H.H. Aram I
January 14, 2014	Hotel Warwick, Geneva	Planning meeting with General Secretaries of WCRC, LFW and CWM for Financial Architecture meeting
January 15-17, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Ecumenical Consultation on Syria
January 17, 2014	World Council of Churches	Courtesy visit of Edward Peters, Executive Vice President and

Rainer Gude, Chargé de Mission
for International Geneva -
Initiatives of Change International

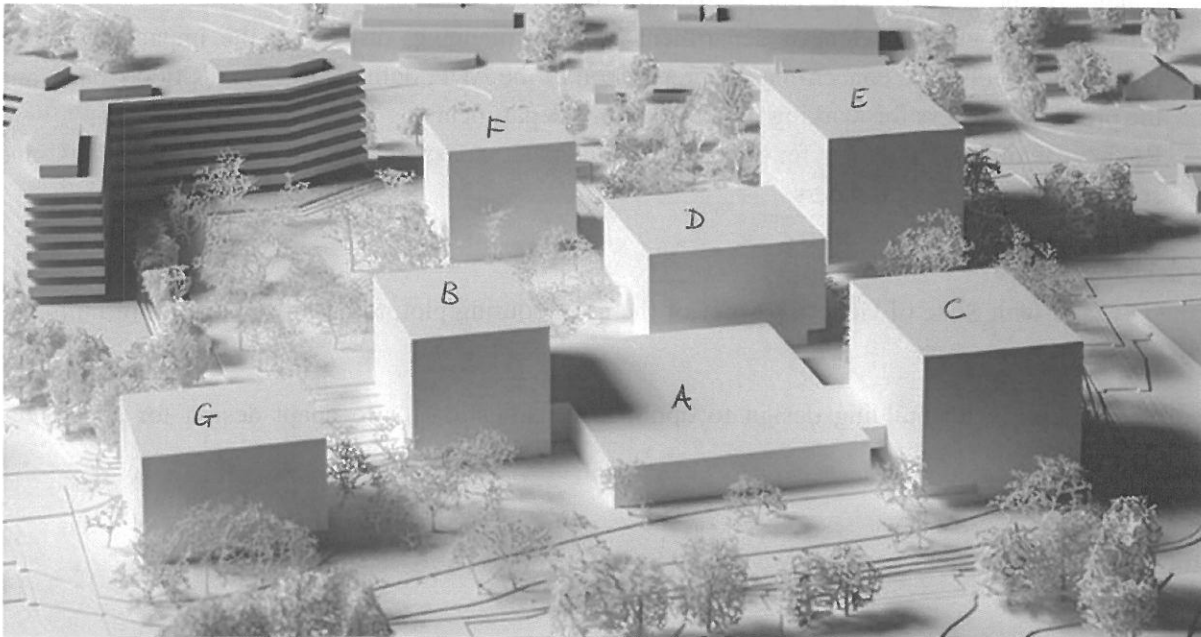
January 19, 2014	English speaking Lutheran Church in Geneva	Attend service and preach
January 20, 2014	Palais des Nations	Meeting with I. Brahiimi, UN Special Envoy to Syria
January 20, 2014	St Nicolas de Flüe Church	Interreligious Service for Peace, deliver greetings
January 21, 2014	World Council of Churches	Staff celebratory lunch
January 29, 2014	World Council of Churches	Norwegian Ambassador to Switzerland courtesy call
January 29, 2014	Palais des Nations	Diplomatic Club New Year Reception
January 30, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Rev. V. Filschl, General Secretary Ecumenical Council of Churches in Hungary

Update on the WCC building development project

In October 2013, WCC and its development partner, *Implenia*, the leading Swiss construction company, announced the project “Green Village”, designed by the Swiss firm *LRS architectes Sàrl* as winner of the architectural competition launched in June 2013. The project proposes six buildings around the renovated centre, set in a landscaped park. The *Promenade de la Paix* (peace walkway), designed by the Geneva Canton, is to cross the site.

A new neighbouring building, also designed under a separate project by *LRS architectes*, which will house offices of the *Global Fund*, is to be constructed just behind the Ecumenical Centre, and appears in the picture below.

Green Village: The winning project, by LRS Architectes



A: Offices and Chapel 5'590 sqm
C: Offices for WCC's tenants 10'765 sqm
E: Offices 13'868 sqm
G: Apart-hotel 5'604 sqm

B: Ecumenical Centre offices 7'268 sqm
D: Offices and commercial area 9'015 sqm
F: Apartments (and crèche) 5'512 sqm
Underground parking: 624 spaces

Next steps

LRS architectes is now mandated to prepare an *Area Development Plan (ADP)*, which will require to be submitted for review and approval by the various state departments of urban planning, including those concerned with construction regulations, transport, environment, heritage and landscaping. The ADP will define the volumes of the buildings, their gross floor surface, the layout of the estate, including definition of new plots, access, car parks, paths and energy requirements. Given the dimensions of the project, WCC is required in addition to submit studies to the local authorities assessing the impact of increased transport, and the environmental impact, related to the project. In parallel during this period, there will be discussion with potentially interested investors, with the opportunity to adapt aspects of the ADP to meet their requirements. It is estimated that two years are required to complete this work, resulting in the approval of the ADP.

Calendar of principal events since executive committee October 2013

- 17.12.13 Celebration of the architectural project winner, and exhibition of all ten models and project plans from firms participating in the competition; about 160 guests were received in the Ecumenical Centre, including representatives of the state departments and the local *commune*, neighbouring international organisations, sister organisations and WCC tenants.
- 8.1.14 Working session with *LRS architectes* and Implenia, defining the approach to the work on the ADP, the calendar of tasks, and opening discussion on possible amendments to the design to increase slightly the densification ratio on the plot from 1.7 towards 1.8, and plans to exchange unused square metres of land with the neighbouring plot, in the interests of both owners meeting local regulatory constraints concerning margins of land required between buildings and perimeters.
- 9.1.14 Presentation by *LRS architects* and Implenia to staff of WCC and sister organisations, as well as tenants, on the project and the perspective timeline.
- 22.1.14 First meeting with the Geneva department of town planning, discussing the impact of certain changes in regulations concerning the preparation of the ADP, definitions of gross floor space, and the preferred process for working with the various departments.
- 3.2.14 Review of offers for tender for specialists to conduct transport and environmental studies, and selection of preferred providers.

Forthcoming decision points

- Exchange of land with State of Geneva, owner of the neighbouring plot, to optimise position of buildings on both plots
- Choice of amendments to building design to optimise densification, or to adapt design for a potential investor's requirements

Project timeline

Project phase 2

- June 2014 Deliver ADP file and impact studies
September 2015 Approval of ADP

Project phase 3

- December 2016 Building permits

Project phases 4 and 5

- November 2016 Define financial objectives of each building, as preparation for the investor selection process
December 2016 Launch invitation to tender for investors, for sale of building(s)

Project phase 6

- December 2018 Delivery of first building