**Statement from the men gathered for the WCC Women’s and Men’s Pre-assembly**

We the men in the first WCC Women’s and Men’s Pre-assembly express our immense gratitude to women who have enabled us to understand the pain and injustice of patriarchy and gender inequality. We have experienced transformation in our lives, by the grace of the God of Life, which has begun to open our hearts and minds to a shared struggle for gender justice. Yet, we are painfully aware that we men still have a long way to go on our journey toward a true community of women and men in the churches and in society at large.

The Spirit beckons us into a just community of equals. The Spirit is speaking to the churches and is calling us to listen. Today, as men committed to gender justice and a life affirming community of women and men, we listen and respond to the Spirit’s call. We joyfully celebrate the advances of the women’s movement, we appreciate the participation of men who have journeyed with the women and look forward to a full community of humans together.

As men, we are aware that almost every culture around the world accrues privilege to us. We acknowledge that this unequal allocation of privilege deprives many from living life in its fullness.

Unjust gender relations have not only disempowered women but also distorted us as men and limited the way we, as men, relate to others, nature and ourselves. Patriarchy as a social structure affects both women and men, it causes pain to both men and women.

Men have been the perpetrators of overt and covert violence against both women, children and other men. Many men continue to idolize violence at home, on the street or within communities. Militarization and the glorification of violence create a culture that endangers all of life. We acknowledge that we are socialized into aggression and have used culture, ideology, religion and theology to justify our violence.

There are many forms and practices of masculinity and we have not honoured the diversity of men. We express our solidarity with men who have been outcast because of their sexual orientation and suffer from the violence of homophobia.

Men have been absent from movements for gender justice within and outside of the church, even when we have claimed to be struggling for justice.

We pledge to stand in solidarity with movements for gender justice, by rethinking our theologies and our liturgies to be inclusive of gender concerns and to speak for justice. We will continue to reevaluate ourselves and our own understanding of masculinity. We heard the pain of women in the preassembly who find their gifts and calling to leadership rejected by patriarchal attitudes in the churches. We recognized the divided denominational views about ordination but still believe justice calls for the equal participation of women and men in the leadership of the churches.

We call on all the Churches to `dare to work together towards just gender relations, promoting the life of peace and justice this will bring. Together as men and women we will play our part in being churches that are places of solidarity, affirmation and welcome of a new society of justice and life for all.