The Democratic Republic of Congo has been facing a series of crises and armed conflicts in recent decades. The country has been passing through a situation of fragile peace, lack of security, poverty and underdevelopment. With regard to security and humanitarian issues, the situation in the eastern part of the country remains a matter of serious concern, despite the 23 March 2009 peace agreement between the armed groups and the government. As a result, innocent people are constantly under attack. Killings, assassinations, widespread rape, looting, destruction of houses and setting villages on fire are common occurrences. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) indicates that more than 2,600,000 people have been displaced due to the armed conflict in North Kivu Province which has been going on since April 2012 between the government troops and M23 rebels. We welcome the recent initiative of the M23 rebels to give up their arms in order to facilitate the peace process in the DRC.

Although the Addis Ababa Framework Agreement gave the presidency of the republic an opportunity to organize the administration of the country properly, the real problem remains the continuing lack of a national consensus. With the support of the international community, the first democratic elections were organized in December 2006; these were intended to provide the country with legally-established institutions. The presidential and legislative elections were held in November 2011 amidst political chaos and uncertainties. Subsequently, the political situation became highly polarized and all state institutions in the country were weakened. The country is facing a legitimacy crisis today as a result of absence of transparency in the electoral process of 2011. This situation came about due to a dearth of preparation in terms of civic and electoral education among the voters.

The member churches of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Church of Christ in Congo (CCC) organized a Consultation on 15-16 August 2013, reflecting on current challenges facing the people of the DRC. As the political stability and security in the country continue to be in peril, it was decided that churches in the DRC should initiate a process of peace-building in the country with the assistance of the WCC. They believe that in order to prepare the Congolese people properly for the coming elections, churches in the DRC should take a leading role in preparing the people to understand the electoral process and democratic governance. This needs to be done prior to the local elections scheduled for 2014 and the general elections to be held in 2016.

The Congolese churches have requested that the WCC general secretary initiate an ecumenical process of peace-building in the DRC. In order to facilitate a peace process in the DRC, the Congolese churches have requested the support of the WCC and suggested that the WCC should play an important role similar to the one it has played in the past, in similar contexts in Africa.

Considering the urgent need for peace building in the conflict-affected DRC, the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches meeting in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 30 October to 8 November 2013, therefore:
A. **Acknowledges** and stands in solidarity with all the victims of this protracted conflict;

B. **Requests** that the general secretary explore possibilities to initiate a programme to support the peace building initiatives of the Congolese churches through dialogue and mediation;

C. **Encourages** the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs to organize continued consultations to evolve a strategic framework for global advocacy on peace and reconciliation in the DRC, in collaboration with member churches, regional and sub-regional organisations, church related and civil society groups;

D. **Supports** churches in the DRC in their efforts for civic education on electoral processes and democratic governance;

E. **Urges** the WCC to be an accompanying presence during the forthcoming elections in 2014 and 2016 through monitoring and observation; and

F. **Calls** on WCC member churches to keep the people of the DRC in their prayers, and to pray for an end to the conflict and lasting peace in the country.

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*God of Life,*

*We pray for the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo.*

*Be with them in their struggle.*

*Bring an end to the conflict.*

*God of Life, Lead us all to Justice and Peace. Amen.*

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**APPROVED**