



**Greetings from the World Council of Churches (WCC) Acting General Secretary Fr. Prof. Ioan Sauca
To the WSCF General Assembly, Berlin**

The World Council of Churches greets the delegates, participants, senior friends, guests, partners, and siblings in the ecumenical movement of the 37th Session of the World Student Christian Federation General Assembly. The peace and love of Christ Jesus be upon us all.

As the forerunners of the ecumenical movement, the World Student Christian Federation has a very special place in the World Council of Churches and the global ecumenical movement. In fact, Christian young people and students paved the way to the creation of WCC in the late 1930s until its first Assembly in 1948. History informs us of the crucial and key role of young people and students in the many transformations we witness in both the church and the society. This role persists and thus we see the movement continue to flow in today's generation and beyond.

Your overarching theme this year is focused on “rejoicing in hope”—and how we, people of faith, and I must also give emphasis on the young generation, must hold on to the hope that is in Christ Jesus amidst the challenges we live in today. This hope that is named in Romans 12 is tied to the ongoing pilgrimage of justice and peace—in fact the whole chapter describes how we carry this hope in our different ministries and work.

With the ongoing war and conflict in different parts of the world, the pressing climate emergency as reported by IPCC, the ongoing pandemic and emerging new endemics, the worsening disparity between the rich and the poor, the increasing hate speech and hate crimes—as well as racism and discrimination, the surging numbers of sexual and gender-based violence, and the list goes on...

Where do we find hope, and, even more, “rejoice in hope” in the midst of today's crises? This is a similar question that the WCC 11th Assembly will ask our member churches, ecumenical partners, and people of goodwill this September in Karlsruhe, Germany.

The theme of the WCC 11th Assembly is “Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity”. Both the WSCF and the WCC assembly dive deeper into what it means to be agents of hope in today's reality.

“In this fragmented and fractured world, the WCC assembly theme—which also resonates to the WSCF theme—is an affirmation of faith that Christ's love transforms the world in the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit. Against the powers of destruction and sin, the assembly theme affirms that the love of the compassionate, crucified, and risen Christ is at the heart of this world. It is a radical call to the churches to work together unceasingly and with people of other faiths and all those of good will for just peace and reconciliation. It is a call for the visible unity of the church to become a prophetic sign and a foretaste of the reconciliation of this world with God, and the unity of humankind and all creation.”

Your generation—the young and present, as well as our future—has so much to offer to all the other generations. We look up to your knowledge and experience in addressing the pressing issues of today, especially to bring back the lost hope of other generations. We look up to your energy, passion, and resilience in different contexts to work together towards unity and transformation of all creation.

As long as we continue to strain towards practicing genuine love to build authentic relationships, towards holding fast to what is good, towards serving the Lord our God with all our being, towards pursuing hospitality to strangers, towards living peaceable with all, towards a just and sustainable future for all... we can still rejoice in hope and be the hope to this suffering world and the whole creation.

May this global gathering, the 37th General Assembly of the World Student Christian Federation, remind you of the faith community that you are a part of—that indeed, you are not alone, we are not alone. As you listen to the plenaries and sessions in this gathering, may you find joy and strength, and affirmation of the good work that you do in your different contexts, as you continue to pursue peace and justice. May the people you encounter in this space and beyond, give you hope to what can be done and achieved together, in Christ Jesus. And may all of you, through the Holy Spirit, Rejoice in Hope to the gifts that are present among you, believing that we are making and will create a difference!



Rev. Prof. Dr Ioan Saucă
Acting General Secretary

Geneva, 14 June 2022