

## 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of ACT Alliance

27<sup>th</sup> February 2020

On behalf of the World Council of Churches, and especially the WCC general secretary, Rev Dr Olav Fyske Tveit, I offer our warmest congratulations to ACT Alliance on your 10th anniversary. Back in 2011, the WCC Central Committee received a document “Co-operation between the WCC and ACT Alliance”. I would like to quote a short part of it:

*“The roles of the two WCC and ACT have clearly a complementary nature. WCC’s roles have more a theological reflecting, inspiring, convening, coordinating and mediating nature, while ACT Alliance’s role is more focused on direct facilitation, support and coordination of the implementation of work by its members in specific areas of work. The complementary nature of these roles is a good basis for cooperation.”*

Today, I want to celebrate and reaffirm the “complementary nature” of our two organisations. The World Council of Churches together with the Lutheran World Federation gave birth to ACT Alliance. Over this decade, the two organisations continue to accompany ACT Alliance through our participation in the ACT Alliance governing bodies and through joint programmatic activities.

ACT Alliance and its members have done and continue to do vitally important work – making a real impact for some of the poorest and most marginalised people in the world. You do this work in Christ’s name as Action by the Churches Together. Your practical work in humanitarian and development is also matched through your advocacy. Not only do we share this building here in Geneva, but we also share an office in New York and have staff working together in the regions. This is a very human sign of our mutual interdependence.

Together, in 2014 we organised the International Consultation on the Relationship Between Churches and Specialized Ministries. In 2018, we organised the Joint Day on Ecumenical Diakonia in Uppsala, Sweden between participants in the ACT Alliance assembly and the WCC executive committee. The WCC Executive Committee of November 2018, affirmed the desire for continued joint reflection among the leadership of the WCC and ACT Alliance governing bodies, a proposal received with appreciation by ACT Alliance. This materialised last week when the WCC Leadership of the Central committee and the leadership of ACT Alliance governing board met.

In addition, last week, representatives from both ACT Alliance and the WCC were working together in Nairobi to develop pilot projects in Kenya and Zimbabwe – churches (including regional and national councils of churches) and ACT national forums can, must and do collaborate effectively. For we are on the same side: We

have a mutual interest – and more importantly a mutual Christian calling – to ensure that the Christ’s people are cared for and supported, particularly those in greatest need. Think of these words of St Paul: *“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.”* (1 Corinthians 12:4-7)

This is a day for celebration. The World Council of Churches looks forward to working together with ACT Alliance over the next 10 years and beyond. ACT Alliance is an essential part of the ecumenical family; your work is needed and deeply appreciated. Congratulations and every blessing on all that you do.

*Isabel Apawo Phiri*

*Deputy General Secretary*

*World Council of Churches*