



Building a Just and Sustainable Peace in Colombia

1. The WCC central committee, meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, on 15-21 June 2018, and reflecting on the progress of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace (PJP) proclaimed at the WCC 10th Assembly in 2013, notes and affirms the PJP 2018 focus on the Latin American and Caribbean regions, especially Colombia.
2. The central committee recalls the WCC's history of accompaniment and support for the churches and people of Colombia in their witness for justice and for peace, during the long and brutal conflict in the country that has taken so many lives, and disrupted and displaced so many families and communities. We reaffirm our support for the peace accord reached between the Government of Colombia and the FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*), and for the peace process between the government and the ELN (*Ejército de Liberación Nacional*), in order to bring this tragic and destructive conflict to an end.
3. The central committee notes the various initiatives taken by the WCC during 2018 to focus on the situation in Colombia and to re-emphasize the importance of international ecumenical support for realizing the hopes of the people of Colombia for justice and peace. In particular, we recall the several Pilgrim Team Visits undertaken in different parts of the country, the convening of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA) 55th meeting in Cartagena, and the public forum organized by CCIA on 28 February 2018 on "The Peace Process in Colombia, and the role of churches and faith communities" with HE Juan Manuel Santos, President of the Republic of Colombia and 2016 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, as key speaker.
4. The WCC's Pilgrim Team Visits in Colombia identified factors which threaten the prospects for a just and sustainable peace in Colombia, including:
 - Lack of fulfilment of government commitments under the accord with the FARC, particularly with regard to land distribution, employment and reintegration of demobilized FARC members;
 - Lack of security and protection for human rights defenders, community leaders, and demobilized FARC members, with attacks and assassinations continuing to take place against these groups.
 - Attacks, arrests, detention and harassment by government forces against individuals and communities suspected of association with ELN.
 - Continued marginalization of Afro-Colombian, Indigenous and rural poor communities.
5. After more than half a century of unresolved conflict, peace can only be achieved in Colombia by dialogue and negotiations, engaging all stakeholders in the country's future. Peace can only be secured by full implementation of agreements reached and by resolution of the social and economic injustices which have helped to create a constituency for armed struggle.
6. The WCC central committee, meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, on 15-21 June 2018, therefore:
 - **Urges** the Government of Colombia to implement fully and without further delay all of its commitments under the accord with the FARC.
 - **Calls** on the Government and the ELN to remain firmly committed and engaged in the process of dialogue and negotiation, to ensure that a peace accord is also reached to end the conflict between them.
 - **Appeals** to all parties to refrain from returning to armed violence, but to remain committed to dialogue, negotiations and a fully democratic political process as the only legitimate and viable means of achieving peace and promoting justice.

- **Invites** all members of the international community, all churches and all people of good will to support and encourage the Government and the people of Colombia in the pursuit of justice through peaceful and fully democratic processes.
- **Encourages** strengthened ecumenical collaboration among the churches of Colombia in support of peace, justice and human rights in Colombia.
- **Urges** WCC member churches to collaborate through the WCC to find the necessary resources and means to sustain and strengthen ecumenical networks and churches in Colombia in their work for justice and peace.
- **Invites** WCC member churches to join in ecumenical advocacy and accompaniment for the full implementation of the peace accord with the FARC, for the continuation and successful conclusion of the peace process between the Colombian government and the ELN, and for an end to violence and harassment against community leaders and human rights defenders in Colombia.¹
- **Requests** the general secretary to explore ways in which the WCC can meaningfully and effectively observe, accompany and assist the peace negotiations between the Colombian Government and the ELN.
- **Proposes** that the WCC and its member churches identify and offer expertise, experience and other resources from within the ecumenical movement to support and strengthen the work of the Truth Commission established under the accord with the FARC, as a key instrument for transitional justice and the healing of memories.

¹ <http://especiales.presidencia.gov.co/Documents/20170620-dejacion-armas/acuerdos/acuerdo-final-ingles.pdf>