



God of life,
lead us to
justice and peace

World Council of Churches
10th Assembly

30 October to 8 November 2013
Busan, Republic of Korea

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Minute on Climate Justice

*“The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world and all who live in it;
for he founded it on the seas and established it on the water”. (Psalm 24)*

*“...cease to do evil and learn to do right; Pursue justice and champion the oppressed
Give the orphan his rights, plead the widow’s case”. (Isaiah 1:16b-17)*

Climate change is today one of the most challenging global threats affecting especially the most vulnerable. The World Council of Churches (WCC) was among the first to warn about the dangers of climate change. Now after 20 years of advocacy, churches have helped bring ecological justice into the international debate on climate.

The WCC governing bodies have developed policy on climate change. Furthermore, the WCC has also presented statements to the high level segment of the Conference of Parties (COPs) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In recent years churches and specialized ministries have increased their advocacy efforts. Together with Christian churches, interfaith initiatives have also shown how faith communities have reached consensus in addressing the climate change crisis.

Despite being a most crucial issue, climate change has lost priority on the public and political agendas. While there are some encouraging signs, nonetheless climate change negotiations at the international level have not realized the stated goals.

In September 2013, the first part of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Fifth Assessment Report was delivered confirming the gravity of climate change and the consequences it already has, among them the rise of sea level, the melting of glaciers and polar ice, the further increase of the strength and frequency of floods, tropical storms and droughts. The report also evidenced the growing consensus in the scientific community on the human causes of climate change.

The effects of climate change are being experienced already now. Churches in countries like Tuvalu, Kiribati, Bangladesh, the Philippines as well as the United Nations (UN) and other international organizations are already addressing the tragedies associated with climate displaced people.

Victims of climate change are the new face of the poor, the widow and the stranger that are especially loved and cared for by God (Deut. 10:17-18). When creation is threatened in this way, churches are called to speak out and act as an expression of their commitment to life, justice and peace.

The 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Busan, Republic of Korea, 30 October – 8 November 2013, therefore:

- A. **Reiterates** the concerns of the churches over climate change and its adverse effects on the whole of creation and especially on vulnerable communities in many parts of the world;
- B. **Encourages** member churches to support the role of the WCC in enabling an ecumenical pilgrimage for justice and peace to strengthen links between churches and communities in various parts of the world working together to care for creation and eco-justice; and
- C. **Calls** upon churches and ecumenical organizations to insist that the respective governments look beyond national interests in order to be responsible towards God's creation and our common future, and urge them to safeguard and promote the basic human rights of those who are threatened by the effects of Climate Change and particularly those church representatives present at COP19 in Warsaw, Poland, to urge the Polish COP presidency to increase the ambitions of the Warsaw outputs; and
- D. **Welcomes** the Climate Change plan of the White House and calls upon the President of the United States to reject the building of the Keystone Pipeline in the United States of America.

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