

WCC delegation expresses solidarity with Ukraine

20 March 2015

A ten-person delegation organized by the World Council of Churches (WCC) visited Ukraine from 17 to 20 March, reporting that “the delegation has heard a consistent call for the World Council of Churches and the ecumenical movement to inform the international community about the situation in Ukraine, to promote a more adequate humanitarian response to the human suffering resulting from the conflict, and to support and strengthen the efforts of the churches and faith communities of Ukraine for justice and peace.”

According to a WCC communiqué issued on 20 March, “Delegation members had the opportunity to visit a displaced persons’ shelter in Kiev and were able to encounter people who had been obliged to flee from the fighting. Delegation members were also able to travel close to the conflict zone, near Lisichansk, and to witness for themselves the destruction and disruption resulting from the crisis. The delegation also heard of the central role being played by churches in providing humanitarian aid in the affected regions, though the unmet needs still remain very great.”

The visit was facilitated by the WCC member church in Ukraine, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate). The delegation met with representatives of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC) and the All Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (AUCCRO), a group encompassing almost every church tradition in Ukraine as well as the Muslim and Jewish communities

The communiqué describes the UOC as “the majority church in Ukraine – with congregations in all parts of the country and on both sides of the line of conflict”. It has “officially declared and reiterated its commitment to the territorial integrity and unity of Ukraine”.

Members of the delegation included WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit; Conference of European Churches president Bishop Christopher Hill; the

WCC president for Europe, Archbishop emeritus Anders Wejryd; Moderator of the General Synod of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands, Rev. Karin van den Broeke; and a vice-moderator of the WCC central committee, Metropolitan Gennadios of Sassima.

[Read the communiqué, with full list of delegation members.](#)

The World Council of Churches promotes Christian unity in faith, witness and service for a just and peaceful world. An ecumenical fellowship of churches founded in 1948, by the end of 2013 the WCC had 345 member churches representing more than 500 million Christians from Protestant, Orthodox, Anglican and other traditions in over 140 countries. The WCC works cooperatively with the Roman Catholic Church. The WCC general secretary is the Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, from the [Lutheran] Church of Norway.

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