



# World Council of Churches

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To:  
Regional Ecumenical Organizations  
International Ecumenical Organizations  
National Councils of Churches  
Christian World Communions

*We intend to move together. Challenged by our experiences in Busan, we challenge all people of good will to engage their God-given gifts in transforming actions.*

*This assembly calls you to join us in pilgrimage.*

*May the churches be communities of healing and compassion, and may we seed the Good News so that justice will grow and God's deep peace rest on the world.*

*10 Assembly Message, paragraph 6*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings during this season of Lent

It is with deep gratitude that I write to thank you again for your commitment and contributions to the 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Both the support of the churches in prayer, through financial contributions and through the work of their delegations in Busan helped to make the assembly a joyous and meaningful gathering for the entire ecumenical family.

We must give thanks for the many fruits, which have come from the assembly. The 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches – held in Busan, Republic of Korea from 30 October to 8 November 2013 – gathered nearly 700 member church delegates and more than 4000 international and Korean participants under the theme “God of life, lead us to justice and peace”. Daily prayer and Bible study offered a journey of spiritual sharing and growth as disciples of Christ, our common God and Saviour.

The assembly showcased major plenary presentations on unity, mission, justice and peace, focusing on the role of the church in the world today. It issued a unity statement to inspire ecumenical vision and gave direction to the programmatic work of the council, producing 20 ecumenical conversations reports on topics as varied as the church, evangelism, human rights, economic justice and HIV/AIDS.

The *Madang* exhibition space featured the tremendous efforts of ecumenical partnership in promoting Christian unity and common witness. The assembly issued 11 public statements, drawing particular attention to the need for peace in the Middle East and the reunification of the Korean peninsula. It also adopted constitutional revisions and elected a new presidium and central committee.

The assembly highlighted the vibrancy and hospitality of the Korean churches. The host churches played a major role in preparing the assembly, offering significant financial and human resources. Direct contact between Korean church members and assembly participants remains among the most appreciated features of the Busan Assembly.

From the opening plenary to the weekend programme and Sunday worship in local congregations in Seoul and Busan, participants encountered the denominational diversity and

rich spirituality of the Korean churches. The participation of so many Korean church leaders, pastors, members and students; together with the work of the volunteers and host committee left an indelible mark on the assembly, affirming the practical and spiritual necessity of host church involvement in bringing an assembly to life.

Preliminary financial results include a balanced outcome for the assembly. The assembly fund opened in 2010 with a balance of CHF 1.6 million and, in the period 2010-2013, member churches and partners graciously contributed total income of CHF 4.2 million (total income budgeted 2010-2013: CHF 4.6 million). Total assembly costs for the same period were CHF 5.7 million including CHF 4.8 million for the event itself (total expenditure budgeted 2010-2013: CHF 6.5 million). A small fund balance of CHF 0.1 million is carried forward.

The costs of the assembly venue, local transportation and the week-end programme were generously covered by the Korean churches. The total assembly costs were thus considerably more than the CHF 5.7 million reported by WCC. WCC recorded CHF 7.5 million expenditure for the 9th Assembly in the period 2003-2006.

The reports and statements adopted by the assembly as well as many stories and testimonies from the participants are available on the assembly website (<http://wcc2013.info>). I particularly wish to call your attention to the message of the assembly, <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/2013-busan/adopted-documents-statements/message-of-the-wcc-10th-assembly>, as well as the unity statement, <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/2013-busan/adopted-documents-statements/unity-statement>, which the assembly adopted. Also, we share with you the summary reports from the ecumenical conversation at: <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/2013-busan/ecumenical-conversations-report>

The official report of the assembly will be published in the weeks to come.

Work has begun to review the assembly mandate to embark on a pilgrimage of justice and peace and to consult with member churches and partners in developing a strategic plan for this next period that will engage the churches in moving and working together in this spirit of pilgrimage and in finding even more ways to express their visible unity in Christ. A proposed strategic plan will be reviewed in July by the new central committee for final decision.

The assembly showed all of us the value of fellowship. To deepen our relations with member churches has thus become one of the council's strategic goals as we move forward on our pilgrimage. One measure of the fellowship's strength is through the engagement of member churches in the life of the council, its programmes and activities. This must be part of how we move together.

Relations with member churches will be organized differently post Busan. All programme executive colleagues, working in regional groupings overseen by a coordinator, will take responsibility for relations with a certain number of churches. Believing that the fellowship is strengthened through personal interaction, the council will seek to visit all member churches by the end of 2017. It is anticipated that central committee members and others involved in the council's work will take part in some of these visits. Meetings with church leaders and members will offer opportunity to better connect churches with programme activities, and thus follow up from these visits as well as on-going communication with staff will be key to integrate church relations and programmatic activity. Churches will receive communication soon offering more detail of this new way of working, and opportunity will be offered at the upcoming central committee meeting for review of strategic plans for the regions.

Through the assembly, the commitment of the churches to this global fellowship was obvious. The assembly expressed the need for an enhanced membership campaign that is fair, transparent and objective. It requested all of the member churches to evaluate the level of their commitment to the work of WCC and define a shared understanding of the fellowship and its common goal. The membership campaign of 2015 onward will be based on the outcome of this evaluation.

Your on-going support to WCC enables thousands of Christians from all over the world to engage in the pilgrimage of justice and peace.

The task of ensuring that the spirit of the 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly is articulated by a clear, responsive and engaging agenda remains before us. The continued prayers and commitment of the member churches are needed. Let us continue to move together on this pilgrimage of justice and peace, assured of the guidance of the God of Life.

Yours in our common Lord,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Olav Fykse Tveit". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit  
General Secretary