



© LWF/J. Latva-Hakuni

Adopted Resolutions

The Assembly

VOTED: to adopt the resolution regarding gender justice

Text of the resolution as adopted:

BACKGROUND

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled” (Matthew 5:6).

In their pre-Assembly [p. 91] and in meetings prior to regional pre-assemblies, women members of the Lutheran World Federation reflected on issues related to living out the gospel. Now it is time for the full body of Christ, the full communion, to stand together

and denounce the sinful effects of pervasive patriarchal culture and to challenge all forms of domination. It is only through men and women working together in this way that the perspectives and gifts of women may be fully embraced in all levels of the church.

Women’s leadership in churches and society, human trafficking, and unequal food distribution are the issues on which we all cry out for righteousness. Let us raise our voices, seeking solidarity, respect, companionship and change in order to bring justice.

Consistent with the biblical message of being created in the image of God (Gen 1:27) and taking into consideration the previous declarations of the Lutheran World Federation (especially at the Seventh Assembly, Budapest; 1984; the Eighth Assembly, Curitiba, 1990; the communiqué “The ongoing reformation

of the church: the witness of ordained women today,” Geneva, March 2008; the LWF Council meeting of October 2009, “Resolutions and actions”; and *Lutheran World Information* 12/2009) we call for change in the world and, in particular, within our own churches.

We lift up the positive contributions in ministry and ecclesiology that women, in ordained ministry, offer. The full integration of ordained women into the life of the church implies shared power and service based on a theological understanding of ministry and the establishment of structures which are accessible and hospitable.

We recognize that the lack of full participation of women in churches and the LWF communion is a theological issue which must be addressed by the communion and its member churches.

ASSEMBLY ACTION

We call on the Assembly to urge member churches to re-commit to genuine, practical and effective implementation of LWF policies and decisions regarding the full participation of women in the life of the church—and of the LWF communion—as well as in society.

We call on member churches to set appropriate legislation and regulatory policies that enable and ensure women in leadership positions—ordained and lay—and the opportunities to pursue theological education. We ask that churches who do not ordain women prayerfully consider the effect that inaction and refusal on this matter has on those who are precluded from exercising their God-given calling because they are women. The pain of exclusion and the loss of God-given gifts are experienced by the whole church.

We call on member churches and the LWF secretariat to include gender analyses, as biblical and theological tools, in all aspects of the life of member churches in the communion, including diaconal and advocacy work.

We ask for a clear action plan for the development of contextualized gender policies that may be implemented on all levels in the member churches and be mandatory for the LWF secretariat. We call on the Council to develop and approve such a guiding process.

We call for the support of women leaders, lay and ordained, particularly women bish-

ops and presidents, as vital members of the communion.

We call for the LWF and its member churches to make a clear stand against domestic violence, acknowledging every person’s right to feel safe and respectfully treated, also when in their own homes.

We ask the Council to have the issue of gender justice as a standing item on its agenda. Because there is an imbalance between male and female youth at this Assembly, the Council should pay special attention to this.

The Assembly

VOTED: to adopt the resolution regarding human trafficking

Text of the resolution as adopted:

The church is called to engage in advocacy and awareness programs, including appropriate self-awareness about human sexuality, to develop strategies in order to overcome ignorance and to denounce the sin of human trafficking.

ASSEMBLY ACTION

We ask the LWF and its member churches to support and provide comprehensive sex education in order to empower all women and men to take responsibility for their own bodies and sexuality.

We ask the communion to provide leadership, in preaching, teaching and other forms of public witness against the commercial exploitation of human beings.

We ask the communion to counter the negative devaluation of female bodies, developing resources and materials in local languages.

We ask the LWF to expressly denounce the commercialization of the human body, particularly the bodies of women and children, in the media.

We ask the communion to facilitate the construction of partnerships and cooperation between church and society working for legislation that will protect persons liberated from being trafficked, and playing roles in

bringing about cultural transformation and the elimination of trafficking.

The Assembly

VOTED: to adopt the resolution on priority for liberation and the restoration of human dignity for Dalits

Text of the resolution as adopted:

BACKGROUND

We gratefully acknowledge the President of the Lutheran World Federation, Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson, for his solidarity and support for us, the Dalits, in our hopes and aspirations for a new tomorrow.

We are indebted to the Rev. Dr Ishmael Noko for his clarion call to the Eleventh Assembly to strive together to make the life-changing prayer “Give today our daily bread” a reality in its fullness.

This historic Eleventh Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation is taking the bold initiative of breaking down the walls of separation, and thereby transforming Mennonite-Lutheran relations into streams of harmony.

ASSEMBLY ACTION

We request that the LWF make the liberation and restoration of human dignity of the 250 million oppressed and discriminated Dalits in India, Nepal and southeast Asia one of the priorities of the mission, work and witness of the Gospel of Jesus, the liberator.

The Assembly

VOTED: to adopt the resolution on global priorities

Text of the resolution as adopted:

BACKGROUND

Global Priorities Initiative

A new international initiative, global priorities, links nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation to a wider set of objectives.

It reframes the challenge of disarmament by connecting cuts in nuclear weaponry to the well-being of the world’s children, thereby redoubling global efforts to address child hunger, health and education.

The 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in New York underscored the need to create a global compact reaching across political divisions and involving civil society. Deep cuts in nuclear arsenals offer an opportunity to create additional funding at this time of economic uncertainty to address needs that have been neglected over many years. These cuts must be pursued both to enhance international security and to improve global child survival and the well-being of future generations.

For the past twenty-five years, political leaders have urged drastic reductions in the nuclear arsenals of the US and the Russian Federation, starting in 1986 when presidents Reagan and Gorbachev came close to agreeing on the elimination of nuclear arms. A current bipartisan US Congressional measure, H. Res. 278, the Global Security Priorities Resolution, introduced by Democratic representative Jim McGovern and Republican representative Dan Lungren, argues for an intermediate reduction in US and Russian arsenals to 1,000 deployed nuclear warheads and a total of no more than 3,000 weapons on each side, to be achieved in the near future. Equally important, H. Res. 278 addresses the purposeful use of savings created by reductions in the nuclear arsenals.

After World War II, the Marshall Plan, an economic recovery initiative of the USA, not only rebuilt the lands of European allies but was extended to former enemies as well. In the pattern set by these efforts, H. Res. 278 and similar measures give us an opportunity to shift national and international priorities. Unmet human needs can be addressed with savings from the reduction of nuclear weapon inventories of the US, the Russian Federation and other nuclear powers. This can mitigate some of the root causes of violence and reduce the reliance on nuclear weapons.

The annual costs of maintaining the US nuclear arsenal alone at present levels are estimated to be close to USD 50 billion. Even if a saving of only ten percent of that were to be achieved in the early years of reductions, this would create a significant source of income for child survival and human development programs. Connecting nuclear weapon reductions to the well-being of

children throughout the world could help combat sympathy for terrorism while facilitating broader international collaboration among nuclear and non-nuclear nations. In poor nations, such as Somalia, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Yemen and Afghanistan, poverty and hunger are a scourge on human development. A program directed at poor communities and fragile states, derived directly from savings brought about by deep cuts in nuclear inventories, would have a salutary impact on international peace and security.

A United Nations resolution, to be introduced later this year, would help set the stage for specific international measures of this nature in the years ahead. The resolution would establish a firm link between the reduction of nuclear arsenals and humanitarian efforts worldwide. Utilizing funds made available through disarmament, programs could be conducted through UNICEF and agencies doing similar work to address global child survival and related nutritional, health and educational needs of children.

Furthermore:

Approximately 25,000 children around the world die every day from preventable causes.

The USA and the Russian Federation in April 2010 signed the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty agreement, are aiming to extend strategic arms reduction agreements and aim to consider paths to further reductions as well as strengthening verification measures.

A study by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace cited a US Department of Defense estimate that at least USD 52 billion was spent in 2008 on nuclear weapons and weapons-related programs in the United States alone.¹

The USA and the Russian Federation possess ninety-five percent of the world's nuclear weapons.

International health experts estimated in 2005 that an additional USD 5.1 billion a year in global assistance for proven child survival interventions could save the lives of 6 million young children each year.²

Practical ways must be found to reduce unproductive military spending and increase effective spending on human needs.

The first of a series of international petitions is currently underway, developed by eminent experts and based in part on US House of Representatives Resolution 278, the Global Security Priorities Resolution, introduced on a bipartisan basis on 24 March 2009, calling for deep reductions in US and Russian nuclear arsenals, saving at least USD 13 billion annually in the US alone, with some of the savings from these reductions directed toward a well-targeted international effort aimed at addressing the Millennium Development Goals of reducing child mortality and eradicating extreme poverty and hunger.

This international petition and related instruments are to be endorsed by religious, arms control and humanitarian leaders to help create the basis for a United Nations resolution to help set the stage for a concrete international process and measures to greatly reduce nuclear arsenals with savings directed toward addressing child mortality, child poverty and hunger.

International defense experts agree that such international measures would enhance global security by reducing the nuclear threat as well as address vital issues of the well-being of children living in poverty at a time of global economic crisis.

More than two dozen churches and other religious organizations endorsed the Global Security Priorities Resolution in 2010.

The Global Priorities Campaign, an international, interreligious initiative that developed this international petition, is facilitating practical ways to reduce military spending and increase spending to meet human needs, was bestowed a "Blessed Are the Peacemakers" award in December 2008 by the US Conference of the World Council of Churches for its efforts to promote these objectives.

ASSEMBLY ACTION

Therefore, be it **RESOLVED** that, the Eleventh Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation,

- Commend the bold leadership shown by the Global Priorities Campaign,
- Call upon its member churches to co-sponsor and otherwise assist the Global Priorities Campaign international petition effort and to support subsequent international processes and measures of this nature,

¹ Stephen I. Schwartz with Deepti Choubey, *Nuclear Security Spending Assessing Costs, Examining Priorities*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2009.

² Jennifer Bryce, Robert E. Black, et al., "Can the world afford to save the lives of 6 million children each year?" *The Lancet*, 365 (9478): 2193-2200.

- Call upon its member churches to consider additional ways it may sustain the efforts of the Global Priorities Campaign toward these ends, and
- Call upon the general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation to transmit this message to the member churches.

The Assembly

VOTED: to adopt the resolution on poverty and food justice

Text of the resolution as adopted:

Poverty has a woman's face. We acknowledge the chasm that separates those who suffer from famine and deprivation, and those who consume too much. When we pray, we acknowledge that food is a gift from God, and ask that it continues to sustain our daily life.

ASSEMBLY ACTION

We encourage member churches to engage in advocacy campaigns directed toward governments that their actions, commitments and attitudes on poverty and food justice as it relates to women and children might be strengthened. We ask the LWF to assist in information sharing and in the formulated targeting of these strategic partnerships.

We firmly ask the LWF to work for poverty alleviation, food justice and economic justice and to connect member churches with one another and with civil society efforts on many levels, particularly in common acts toward long-term sustainable change, for worldwide improvement in livelihood and increase the right to food for all.

Overall, we call for the raising up of gender justice in church and society, food justice, economic justice and the struggle against human trafficking from this point onward, and particularly during the 2017 Reformation commemorations as a sign of the ongoing reformation we are called to today.

We regard all of these issues to be issues for all members of the communion and the body of Christ.

The Assembly

VOTED: to adopt the resolution regarding the mining industry

Text of the resolution as adopted:

Many countries that remain dependent on foreign aid are rich in natural resources such as petroleum, gas, minerals, forests and water. The extractive industries are pivotal for development since two-thirds of the poorest in the world live in countries rich in resources. Nevertheless, revenues from those resources are often not invested in the fight against poverty and sustainable development. Only a small portion of the profits of these national resources are mobilized in order to reduce poverty and promote development. Member churches of the LWF likewise witness people in the mining areas who barely benefit from these natural resources and who are indeed becoming even poorer. In many countries, industry is subject to minimal governmental and popular democratic scrutiny and regulation. A fair tax system can contribute positively to reducing a government's dependency on aid and strengthen accountability to its citizens.

The impact of large scale mining on the local environment is a further concern because the health-related quality of land and water is critical for the local population to flourish. Mining is destructive to the natural environment around mines, creates waste rock disposal problems, and uses harsh chemicals, all of which can be significant sources of waste and cause harm to both workers and nature. When water and soil in the mining areas are polluted, people are affected and lose their livelihood. The situation in many areas of the mining industry today causes serious harm to human life and human dignity.

ASSEMBLY ACTION

In line with this assessment the LWF Assembly calls upon:

- The LWF General Secretariat to accompany member churches to support and encourage one another to seek national legislation in order to secure public revenues, good environmental standards, ensure public participation by stakeholders, and fair access to and fair distribution of resources.

- The member churches to strengthen and expand their advocacy for greater accountability and corporate social responsibility of corporations in natural resources and in those industries which utilize natural resources.
- The member churches to support efforts to fight corruption and ensure greater transparency in extractive industry and in those industries which utilize natural resources.
- The member churches to advocate for a fair, democratic and transparent global financial system, and new international accounting standards, which would require companies to report on their profits, expenditures, taxes, fees and community grants paid in each financial year on a country-by-country basis in order to avoid improper internal pricing and tax evasion.
- The LWF to engage in capacity development of member churches on resources and finance, in order to strengthen their role as advocates for transparency and accountability on revenues and national resources.

The Assembly

VOTED: to adopt the resolution regarding inclusiveness in the Lutheran World Federation

Text of the resolution as adopted:

BACKGROUND

In 2009, the LWF Council, meeting in Geneva, adopted the following resolution:

To ask the General Secretary to prepare a draft for a document on gender and youth participation in the LWF structures for appropriate action by the Assembly in order to fulfill the resolution adopted by the LWF Assembly in Winnipeg 2003 that reads: “to request the new Council to clearly define the policy on gender balance in order to secure a common understanding in all regions for future assemblies.”³

The LWF has had a long history of including women and young people in its work and structures. In 1984, landmark decisions on the participation of women and lay persons were made by the Seventh Assembly at Budapest, Hungary.

On the participation of women,

The Seventh Assembly RESOLVED:

6.1 To request the LWF Executive Committee:

6.1.1. To develop a plan that would, with the cooperation of the member churches and the national committees, become effective at the Eighth Assembly and provide that 40 per cent of the delegates at the Eighth LWF Assembly be women, and that 50 per cent of the delegates at the Ninth and all subsequent LWF Assemblies be women.

6.1.2 To give consideration to preparing a representation formula that will provide:

6.1.2.1 That the membership of the LWF Executive Committee, the commissions, and the appointed advisory/governing committees, each and separately, be comprised of at least 40 per cent women and at least 40 per cent men.

6.1.2.2 That of the Officers as a group at least 40 per cent be women and at least 40 per cent be men, and that regional representation be considered in their selection.

6.1.2.3 That the membership of the LWF Executive Committee be at least 40 per cent lay and at least 40 per cent clergy.⁴

On the participation of young people,

The Seventh Assembly RESOLVED,

7.1.5 That a balanced key be utilized to decide upon delegates for the next Assembly and that at least 20 per cent of the delegates be youth. Of particular concern is the regional balance of delegates under 30 years of age. Staff of the Youth Desk are to be involved in the discussion of and decision making on the new guidelines.

7.1.6 That a young person at LWF meetings and Assemblies normally be under the age of 30.

7.1.7. That there be one young person as a full member of each of the LWF commissions; that these young people be experienced in Lutheran youth work; and that geographical factors be taken into account.”⁵

As standing resolutions, these texts are considered governing documents of the Lutheran World Federation (cf. Bylaws 10.3).

³ The Lutheran World Federation, *Minutes of the Meeting of the LWF Council, Geneva, Switzerland, 22-27 October 2009*, 13.5, p. 34, para. 225.

⁴ Carl H. Mau (ed.), Budapest 1984. *In Christ—Hope for the World. Proceedings of the Seventh Assembly*, LWF Report 19/20 (Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation, 1985), 224.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 229.

Twenty-six years after implementing the Budapest resolutions, further clarifications are needed. Following discussions with the LWF general secretary and Cabinet, the following text will be submitted to the Constitution Committee, for recommendation to the Eleventh Assembly for its action:

STANDING RESOLUTION ON INCLUSIVENESS

On the occasion of the birth of the church at Pentecost, Peter quotes from the prophet Joel, “In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.” (Acts 2:17). Both males and females, both young and old are fully included in the church already (cf. also Gal 3:28), yet measures are needed to ensure that their voices and perspectives are fully represented, heard and included in the church and its decision-making processes.

Since its inception, but especially since the 1984 Budapest Assembly, the Lutheran World Federation and its member churches have been committed to witness to this new reality in Christ by reflecting this in their decision-making bodies and programs. Inclusiveness has become a Lutheran expression of what it means to be the church. Yet ongoing processes of critical ecclesial formation are necessary if we are to live out this inclusiveness. Through numerical goals, we hold ourselves accountable to the inclusiveness we seek. Numerical representation is not an end in itself, but a means for helping us to become a more inclusive communion. Besides numbers, the quality of the participation of women and youth and lay people continually needs to be developed and enhanced. The quality of our life together and the perspectives of the whole communion are enriched when the body becomes more inclusive of all its parts (1 Cor 12).

ASSEMBLY ACTION

As a further step in this ongoing journey, the Eleventh Assembly adopts the following principles of inclusive representation, and encourages member churches to adopt similar measures to ensure full participation in their respective contexts. The current quota system has proven to be an important tool that enables participation of women in all the decision-

making bodies, bringing the diversity which enriches our communion.

The Assembly requests the general secretary to: evaluate the quota system since its introduction; review commitment to and implementation of the quota system (youth, lay and ordained, male and female, etc.) on all levels (governing bodies and its elected officers); report on the quota system to the LWF Council about the implementation of the principles of inclusive representation by the LWF as well as the member churches.

This resolution is adopted as a governing document of the Federation (cf. Bylaws 10.3).

The Assembly

VOTED: to adopt the resolution regarding LWF principles of inclusivity

Text of the resolution as adopted:

1. GENDER BALANCE

The LWF Assembly, Council, Officers, and all other committees and task forces, including at all regional levels shall be composed of at least forty percent women and at least forty percent men. And that the gender quota is respected also among youth representatives.

In all activities that it organizes at all regional levels, the LWF shall respect this basic principle, and LWF staff shall encourage those with whom it cooperates to do likewise.⁶ The basic principle also applies to executive staff in the LWF communion office.

2. GENERATIONAL BALANCE

The LWF Assembly, Council, Officers and all other committees and taskforces, including at all regional levels shall be composed of at least twenty percent young people under the age of thirty at the time of the first meeting of the body to which they have been appointed. Regional balance shall be respected.

⁶ Acknowledging the existing challenges, meetings and activities in which the basic principle has not been applied are not to be declared invalid, but their non-compliance with the basic principle shall be formally recognized and actions to improve need to be planned.

If there is more than one youth representative on a governing body, gender balance among the youth representatives shall be respected on all regional levels.

This basic principle shall apply to all activities of the LWF communion office.⁷

3. BALANCE OF LAITY AND CLERGY

The LWF Assembly, Council, Officers and all other committees and taskforces, including at all regional levels shall be composed of at least forty percent lay persons. Gender and regional balance among the non-ordained members shall be respected.

The Assembly

VOTED: to adopt the resolution regarding promoting sustainable practices

Text of the resolution as adopted:

ASSEMBLY ACTION

In light of the commitment of the LWF to environmental sustainability, it is requested that the LWF adopt a full environmental policy for its work and meetings. That the LWF prepare for certification under an international ecocertification system and audit scheme (EMAS), by 2012. In the environmentally friendly planning of the meetings and assemblies to revert to the experiences of the German Evangelical Kirchentag. This policy will incorporate the measures already taken regarding the reduction of the carbon footprint of the LWF, such as the CO₂ emission compensation system and the reduction of the number of printed documents.

The Assembly

VOTED: to adopt the resolution regarding inclusivity and proposed delegate lists for future assemblies

⁷ Acknowledging the existing challenges, meetings and activities in which the basic principle has not been applied are not to be declared invalid, but their non-compliance with the basic principle shall be formally recognized and actions to improve need to be planned.

Text of the resolution as adopted:

ASSEMBLY ACTION

The Eleventh Assembly requests the new Council shall develop bylaws which would permit it to reject those proposed delegate lists from the regions for the LWF Assembly which are not in keeping with the established inclusivity principles of this communion.

The Assembly

VOTED: to adopt the resolution regarding climate change

Text of the resolution as adopted:

CLIMATE CHANGE

The LWF Eleventh Assembly:

- recognizes that a) climate change is an increasingly urgent challenge requiring an effective global response within an inexorably diminishing window of opportunity, bearing in mind that global emissions must peak no later than 2015 if potentially catastrophic global warming is to be avoided; and b) disasters, such as the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, demonstrate that safety and clean-up technologies have not kept pace with the increasing environmental risks associated with the extraction and exploitation of fossil fuels;
- highlights the grave impacts on food security that are already being felt in many parts of the world as a result of changing climatic patterns, to which the LWF and its member churches are witnesses;
- endorses the relevant resolutions adopted by the LWF Council in 2008 and 2009, and calls for the directions outlined therein to continue to be pursued by the LWF and its member churches;
- deeply regrets the failure of the 2009 United Nations Copenhagen Climate Change Conference in December 2009 to establish a fair, equitable, legally-binding and verifiable agreement to succeed the Kyoto Protocol, and calls on the

international community to commit to achieving such an agreement at the 2010 UN Climate Change Conference in Mexico (November–December 2010);

- calls on all governments to show more decisive leadership in responding to climate change and in moving beyond reliance on fossil fuels for energy needs, and regrets the failure of the Senate of the USA to take the needed urgent action on the pending bill on climate change;
- urges all LWF member churches advocate with their governments for:
 - Measures to ensure that global greenhouse gas emissions peak no later than 2015 and then decline rapidly toward a target of less than 350 ppm atmospheric CO₂ concentration
 - Urgent action by developed countries to reduce their carbon emissions by forty percent of the 1990 levels by 2020
 - The establishment of a just and adequate means of financing climate change mitigation and adaptation in the countries of the developing world; and
- Asks the LWF general secretary, member churches and LWF country programs to consolidate and enhance their efforts to address the impacts of climate change on development and poverty in the most vulnerable communities, and to raise up the voices of indigenous communities and their perspectives on environmental ethics.

The Assembly

VOTED: to adopt the resolution regarding the inclusion of socially disadvantaged groups in central eastern Europe

Text of the resolution as adopted:

In light of the theme of the Eleventh Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation—A Communion of Churches—the delegates from the Central Eastern European region would like to direct special attention to the socially disadvantaged groups and ethnic minorities in our context. It is especially the Roma minority

whose members suffer from food insecurity, lack of resources, unsupportive structures and marginalization. The social tensions resulting from this situation have the potential of destabilizing the whole continent. We see it as the role of the churches to contribute to the empowerment and integration of socially disadvantaged ethnic groups as well as to the development of socially inclusive practices. Ministry among the Roma people has already been established and some projects are being carried out. Nevertheless, much more effort is needed if the problem is to be effectively addressed.

ASSEMBLY ACTION

We, therefore, ask the LWF to consider the inclusion of socially disadvantaged groups and ethnic minorities (especially the Roma people) in society and the church as a priority and initiate social and educational programs aimed at the development and facilitation of such groups at the regional level.

The Assembly

VOTED: to adopt the resolution regarding the indigenous people

Text of the resolution as adopted:

A great majority of indigenous people live in ancestral lands, mostly rural, but a series of factors—such as poverty, soil degradation, colonization, and the interests of national and international companies—are resulting in the loss of their lands, languages and traditions and their right to a dignified life.

Despite all of this, native peoples have resisted until today, and the nations of the whole world recognize their existence, the environmental wisdom, social harmony and their resistance against oppression.

The Lutheran World Federation has already, at its Assembly in Winnipeg in 2003, recognized the contribution of the native people—adopting a resolution on indigenous peoples. And the LWF has agreed to take relevant actions. The LWF arranged a consultation in Karasjok, Norway, September 2006, under the theme “An Indigenous Communion.” A series of supporting actions were decided to be developed in the upcoming years. Since that time, no specific indigenous program has

been established, as foreseen at the Tenth Assembly and the Karasjok consultation.

ASSEMBLY ACTION

Therefore, the Eleventh Assembly reaffirms the commitments made to the indigenous peoples at the Tenth Assembly in 2003 and the LWF's consultation on indigenous people in Norway in September 2006. The Assembly asks the secretariat and the member churches to follow up on these proposals.

The Assembly

VOTED: to adopt the resolution regarding advocacy for people with disabilities

Text of the resolution as adopted:

BACKGROUND

True fellowship, both in society and church, consists of all kinds of people. This is not only a matter of theology, but also human rights.

ASSEMBLY ACTION

The Lutheran World Federation renews its commitment to the cooperation with the

World Council of Churches and the Ecumenical Disabilities Advocates Network (EDAN) to strengthen advocacy for the inclusion, participation and involvement of persons with disabilities in spiritual, social and development life, both in the church and society.

The Assembly

VOTED: to adopt the resolution regarding a virtual resource center

Text of the resolution as adopted:

In light of the LWF's commitment to sharing resources, talents and abilities to empower its member churches all over the world to grow and prosper and to educate leaders and their congregations, especially children and young people, a need for inspiration and new ideas as well as ready-to-use materials has been encountered.

ASSEMBLY ACTION

The Assembly recommends that a virtual resource center or bank be set up by the LWF, accessible to all through the Internet, to alleviate the needs that exist in many churches. Many churches have educational materials (educational in its broadest sense) which, by sharing them with one another, can be of inspiration and thus be helpful for others.



© LWF/J. Latva-Hakuni

Statements

The Assembly

VOTED: to adopt the Public Statement on “Daily Bread” instead of Greed: an LWF Call for Economic and Climate Justice

Text of the public statement as adopted:

PUBLIC STATEMENT ON “DAILY BREAD” INSTEAD OF GREED: AN LWF CALL FOR ECONOMIC AND CLIMATE JUSTICE

INTRODUCTION

The 2003 LWF Assembly declared that:

As a communion, we must engage the false ideology of neoliberal economic globalization ... (which is) grounded in the assumption that the market, built on private property, unrestrained competition and the centrality of contracts, is the absolute law governing human life, society and the natural environment. This is idolatry and leads to the systematic exclusion of those who own no property, the destruction of cultural diversity, the dismantling of fragile democracies and the destruction of the earth.

Since 2003, many have lost their means of livelihood, their life savings and their sense of a viable future. Promises of unlimited economic growth, fueled especially by carbon consumption, are jeopardizing the planet’s future and the future of life as we have known it—especially the lives and lands of those who are the most

vulnerable in the world. Climate change is accelerating, as made evident through increasingly severe and frequent storms, rising seas and devastating droughts. It also contributes to more severe food shortages, the increased spread of diseases, conflicts over scarce land and water, and the forced migration of people.

As a communion, we have already addressed many manifestations of these crises, locally and globally, and in collaboration with ecumenical and civil society partners. Over the past year, the member churches of the LWF have been on a pilgrimage in many places: We witnessed the dramatic effects of climate change from the time of the encounter in Puri, India to the African consultation on climate change, food security and poverty in Nairobi, Kenya. At various pre-assemblies in preparation for the 2010 LWF Assembly, we heard how especially women and children, bear the burden of food shortages, and of the many ways in which an unjust economic system impoverishes the most vulnerable parts of the suffering creation.

Recently, global financial crises and environmental disasters have dramatically exposed the underlying scandalous greed—of seeking profit through any means, and at the cost of our fundamental humanity. As a faith-based organization, it is crucial that the LWF communion speak to greed, which at its root is a deeply spiritual matter (cf., Luther’s discussion of the First Commandment in the Small Catechism). Systemic greed dominates, enslaves and distorts God’s intentions for human communities and for all of creation. This is in direct contradiction to the petition “Give us today our daily bread,” which is based on the conviction that there will be “enough for all.”

Thus, at this 2010 Assembly, we testify to what we see and hear in light of biblical and theological perspectives, we name the central theological convictions at stake, and we commit ourselves to work for the changes needed in our lives, churches, societies and the world. As churches, we may feel powerless to confront or challenge these contradictions, but if we succumb to this domination of sin and hopelessness, we betray the faith we confess.

As a global communion, we bear witness to how “daily bread” and “greed” clash

We hear the cries of those who are desperate for enough “bread” so that they might live for yet another day, as well as the silent cries of those who are “dying” spiritually from having accumulated “too much bread.”

We glimpse many persons, including youth, who are hidden in our communities who, in the hope of getting the “daily bread” they need to survive, feel compelled to submit their labor and their bodies to being exploited by those greedy for profit and pleasure.

We hear the complaints of young people who face a future without jobs that can support them and their families, and the laments of older workers who cannot leave their jobs because without them they would be deprived of what they require in order to live.

We see many people who lack the basics to sustain life—food, health, shelter or security—while some leaders reap big bonuses and live in luxury, and seem unable to break the political gridlocks needed to implement policies and provide resources needed to ensure “daily bread for all.”

We feel people’s sense of panic when financial markets and banks collapse, undermining the economic security people have counted on, but also the false hopes generated as these institutions are rescued, even while the economy that provides jobs and livelihoods still falters.

We are alarmed that in most countries, a small percentage of the population owns nearly all the financial assets, such that financial gain becomes a form of idolatry instead of God’s will of “daily bread for all.”

We deplore the fact that billions can be found to rescue big banks and financial institutions, but not the financial resources needed to sustain those around the world who continually lack “daily bread.”

We deplore the global speculation on food commodities that sharply raises the cost of food, making it more insecure for at least a billion people.

We see how the land, animals and people are dying as drought conditions become more severe, accelerated by the fossil fuel emissions of distant companies that pursue ever-greater profit at the cost of the common good.

We experience increasingly unpredictable weather patterns, altering the planned growing seasons essential for cultivating the food that we need.

We hear people telling us of how their villages have been washed into the rising sea, proof that climate change, accelerated by greedy deforesting and mining practices, is very real.

We observe that large business interests, whose practices are harming communities and creation, often have undue influence over governments.

We decry that ever more advanced technologies plunge into previously unknown depths or heights for the sake of ever greater profits, without adequately accounting for risky ethical consequences, and lead to tragedies of catastrophic proportions that devastate natural habitats and human livelihoods for many years.

We deplore that, instead of church leaders speaking out to challenge and change the way in which systemic patterns and policies of greed are ruling our world, often proclaim and model a gospel of prosperity or are complicit with the ways of empire, especially in pursuing gain at the expense of others, rather than being consistent advocates of “daily bread for all,” as Jesus himself modeled and taught.

SYSTEMIC GREED IS A SPIRITUAL MATTER OF IDOLATRY

While there are complex factors and analyses involved in each of the above examples, the underlying issue is excessive, personal, systemic and structural greed, which is not only a social, economic, and political scandal but also a deeply spiritual problem.

Greed haunts each of our societies, as well as our churches, when decisions are made and actions are taken that benefit a few at the expense of the many. The systemic greed built into the logic and practices that permeate our lives and world is in direct contradiction with the heart of the prayer—“Give us today our daily bread.”

As Christians, we cannot pray this petition without protesting the many ways in which greed prevails over the generosity for all which this prayer affirms. The dominant economic model today is based on assumptions of scarcity—in opposition to the biblical view of enough for all. The overexploitation of natural resources is based on assumptions of endless plentitude—in opposition to the biblical view that human beings are to be the stewards or caretakers of God’s creation. The interrelated crises we face today have come about because human beings have reversed and thus violated both of these divine mandates in Genesis.

Instead of a sense that “God will provide what we need,” what prevails today is a perverse sense that nature will provide according to the dictates of boundless human greed. Nature today is protesting this. Tragically, the people and lands most dramatically affected usually are less at fault than are wider forces, policies and developments to which the people and lands most vulnerable to climate change are captive. The lands and peoples most devastated are not

those that draw the attention of the media. Such tragedies are driven by quests for ever-higher profit and economic growth, fueled by greed. Greed has led to practices such as deforestation and the extraction and burning of fossil fuels against which nature is revolting.

To a large extent, economic crises are evoked by practices of inordinate greed in quest of ever-greater financial gain. In a reversal of biblical values, greed has become acceptable, taken for granted and encouraged as necessary for economic recovery or prosperity.

We must name and denounce the practices, systems, assumptions and logic underlying and perpetuating these contradictions or injustices. In doing so, we are inspired and emboldened by the biblical witness, by Jesus and by our forebears such as Luther.

The Old Testament prophet Jeremiah cried out, “From the least to the greatest of them, everyone is greedy for unjust gain; and from prophet to priest, everyone deals falsely. They have treated the wound of my people carelessly, saying ‘Peace, peace,’ where there is not peace” (Jer 6:13). According to the prophet Ezekiel, the great sin of the people of Sodom was that they were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned, and “did not aid the poor and needy” (Ezek 16:49).

In the gospels, Jesus drew a stark contrast between the logic of God who provides “daily bread” and that of humans seeking economic gain at the expense of others: “You cannot serve God and wealth (mammon)” (Mt 6:24; Lk 16:13). The early Christians were urged to be on their guard against all kinds of greed (Lk 12:15), to flee from it (1 Tim 6:11) or to kill it (Col 3:5). In the early church, Basil the Great referred to the greedy as those not satisfied with what suffices for their needs, and who do not share what they have with others.

Martin Luther spoke out against sinful systems and practices that oppressed and impoverished people. He clearly said “No” to practices of the banking and trading companies of his time: “... they will not change. If the trading companies are to stay, right and honesty must perish. If right and honesty are to survive, the trading companies must perish” (WA 15, 313: LW 45, 272.). He was referring not only to a few greedy individuals, but to the system and assumptions upon which it was based, which divorced making money from meeting human need and required some to acquire ever more.

As a Lutheran communion, we are called to speak out against similar systemic injustices in our day, because related crises of faith still are at stake. In the sixteenth century, the crisis was

over the gospel that frees people from the fear and bondage of sin, which became embedded in systems needing to be challenged. Today, people are in fear and bondage over the greed embedded in the economic system and over what the future will hold, unless dramatic changes are made for the sake of global economic and environmental justice.

While greed has been prevalent throughout human history, under modern neoliberal capitalism, the virus of insatiability (never having enough) has turned into a general epidemic. All aspects of life tend to be valued in terms of their monetary worth or potential financial gain. Greed often hides under a mask of good intentions and practices of respectable people. In fact, a certain amount of greed is considered “good”—necessary for a market economy to function. In this sense, greed has become systemic—built into the reigning reality which people go along with. In order to function within this system, individuals are socialized to become greedy. Although some individuals may seem particularly greedy, focusing only on them can keep us from seeing how the various systems in which we all participate are what perpetuate and legitimize patterns and practices of greed. Greed is a part of us; it is not just “out there.”

Systemic greed is an expression of the domination or bondage of sin that is expressed through the theology of Paul (e.g., Rom 6) and Luther. It becomes the idol, for which persons, communities and the rest of creation are sacrificed. Money and financial markets take on a life of their own—with the creation of an endless variety of new financial instruments for making quick, hyper-profits. More than just a medium of exchange, money has become a commodity from which ever larger profits are promised and expected. When these promises are betrayed—as when the system collapses—the undergirding idolatry is exposed.

Operating within this system, frantic attempts to rescue financial systems and ecosystems turn to tools, technologies or approaches consistent with the logic, which in some cases make matters worse. Language is used to obfuscate the greed involved, in ever increasingly sophisticated ways that even experts cannot understand, much less responsibly regulate. If politicians propose measures to regulate or rein in the craftily devised means for achieving greater profit over others, they may be punished by declines in the stock market. The real economy of jobs and what is needed for daily life has increasingly become captive to the gyrations of the virtual economy of finance and trading, the reigning god in our world today.

ASSEMBLY ACTION

Responding as churches

As churches we confess that we too are caught up in these realities. We too live in the grip of a relentless pursuit of unlimited progress and prosperity that all too often is fueled by greed. Church leaders sometimes lack transparency and obfuscate unjust practices. We too seek advantages for ourselves at the expense of others. We too live under the reign of sin.

Yet at the same time, we also live under the reign of God’s grace, compassion, justice and generosity. Instead of remaining captive to the principalities and powers reigning in this world, we are liberated by Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit to resist the inner logic of personal and structural greed. Living out of this Christian freedom rather than out of fear, we are able to lift the veil from our eyes to see, unblock our ears to hear, and unleash our wills to act. We face these crises with a sense of God’s indwelling, abiding presence, which empowers us to speak and act.

We recognize that negotiating the tension between the two reigns—of grace (“daily bread”) vs. greed—is the ongoing struggle of discipleship. In our churches we call for teaching and preaching that clearly names the tensions operating in their respective contexts, and for ongoing spiritual formation that enables people to deal with these tensions in their own lives.

We will name, analyze and publicly denounce the domination of capital accumulation over people and earth in the present economic and political system as well as blatantly greedy practices of large businesses and financial institutions, and call them to account for the consequences of their actions, including through the inter-relationships we share with others in the communion.

We will advocate with governments and inter-governmental organizations for the development and enforcement of adequate regulations of financial transactions, trade and investment, which—if unrestrained—expedite greed at the expense of the most vulnerable.

We recognize and will speak out against the ways in which economic and environmental injustices are inter-related. For example, there must be drastic reductions in carbon-based consumption

for the sake of reducing global warming trends, through measures that share the responsibility globally. Those who have contributed most to the problem should bear most of the cost for adaptation and mitigation, especially for the sake of those in the world who are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The world's wealthiest nations must assume responsibility for the ecological debt they have created, and for the disasters that perpetuate carbon colonialism in the developing world.

We will engage with those of other faiths, and with the rest of civil society in efforts to subvert structural greed and develop alternatives that are life-giving and sustaining for all.

The Assembly

VOTED: to adopt the Public Statement on Illegitimate Debt and the International Financial Crisis

Text of the Public Statement as adopted:

PUBLIC STATEMENT ON ILLEGITIMATE DEBT AND THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CRISIS

Gathered at the Eleventh Assembly and seven years after the Tenth Assembly in Winnipeg where a Public Statement on Illegitimate Debt was issued, we note that debt, now aggravated by the crisis originated in the wealthier industrialized countries, remains a major obstacle to the eradication of poverty and the achievement of fundamental human rights for all people. The debt burden has had a significant impact in parts of Latin America, Africa, Eastern Europe and Asia.

The results of the instruments by which the international financial institutions (IFIs) have faced the issue of debt have been wrong or limited. Relief initiatives for poor countries, while benefiting a few, in most cases have had meager or even negative effects, as these initiatives have been linked to harmful economic conditionalities and to asymmetrical power relations. Moreover, beyond their technical weakness, these instruments are mistaken in their approach, as they concentrate exclusively on the *sustainability* of debt and not on its *legitimacy*.

Debt, and the financial system on which it is based, the same that caused the cur-

rent crisis, not only block the development potential of millions of human beings, but their very survival: the bread that we ask for all humanity in the prayer Jesus taught us is a reality for fewer and fewer people. This is a matter of ethic and moral condemnation and as churches we cannot remain indifferent.

However, over the last years, we have seen many signs which encourage us to continue our efforts and help foster the necessary changes to overcome the current situation and make progress toward a new international financial architecture based on justice and law.

Among these encouraging signs it is important to mention:

- The Norwegian government's initiative unilaterally and unconditionally to cancel the debt of five countries on the basis of its co-responsibility;
- The sovereign decision of the Government of Ecuador to conduct a comprehensive audit of the public debt;
- The International Symposium on Illegitimate Debt (Oslo, October 2008). It was organized by the LWF, Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) and the Church of Sweden, and brought together representatives of governments, churches and United Nations agencies along with university professors and prominent movement leaders and civil society organizations;
- The debate at the UNCTAD and its proposal for responsible lending and illegitimate debt; and
- The progress in social and political acceptance of the concept of illegitimacy and the growing awareness that sovereign borrowing and debt are not just a matter of finance and economics, but of politics, law, justice, and ethics.

In this context it is necessary to:

- Continue to develop the concept of illegitimate debt in the light of useful criteria that can be found, along with other sources, in the academic scientific production and the work of UNCTAD and other organizations.
- With the vision to start a new financial structure that serves human beings and not

be served by them, encourage the creation of international legislation to control the conditions of loans and credits. This legislation should include the principle of shared responsibility of borrower and lender to ensure that all credit and loan operations will benefit the host population.

- Ensure an efficient system of audit of all sovereign credit transactions.
- Implement a full and active participation of the population of the borrowing countries in every contract of indebtedness. This must be done through legal mechanisms in each country, ensuring the right to free and full information on contracts and obligations.

ASSEMBLY ACTION

Therefore the Eleventh Assembly urges all the churches of the Lutheran Communion as well as the LWF to:

- Assume, with courage and decision, the role that the churches should have about the ethical and moral guidance on issues such as foreign debt and economic governance;
- Sustain and deepen the commitment made with reference to illegitimate debt incorporating reflection and analysis on the effects of the current international financial crisis and the causes that motivated it;
- Promote and give impetus to, both ecumenically and with other civil society actors, the conduct of audits, verification of contracts, censuses of creditors, and all the necessary mechanisms to help expose and obtain the annulment of all illegal or illegitimate debts;
- Challenge all governments and all public and private lenders to accept and implement the principle of shared responsibility as a fundamental issue of justice and to express this in their regulatory frameworks;
- Promote the right to information together with the recognition of the indispensable role of civil society in mobilizing political will, and in the proposal and supporting

of legal interventions related to the illegitimate debt;

- Promote, by all means available, the request for an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice about debt and its regulatory framework in international law. This is a necessary action that will help establish legal frameworks to govern credit and debt both past and future; and
- Undertake the essential task of advocating for the construction of a new international financial architecture developed on the basis of justice, respect for human rights and the environment.

The Assembly

VOTED: to adopt the Public Statement on the Deaths at the Duisburg ‘Love Parade’

Text of the Public Statement as adopted:

PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE DEATHS AT THE DUISBURG “LOVE PARADE”

ASSEMBLY ACTION

The Eleventh Assembly of The Lutheran World Federation, meeting in Stuttgart, expresses its profound sympathy to the families of those who died on the 24th of July in Duisburg at the entrance to the “Love Parade” dance music festival. This terrible incident, which resulted in 19 deaths and left more than 340 people injured, has shocked and saddened the church leaders attending the LWF Assembly from 79 countries around the world.

As we prayed in our Sunday services in different congregations around Stuttgart, we continue to pray for the consolation of the bereaved families of those who died, and for the swift recovery of those who were injured—physically and psychologically—in Duisburg. We hold up those who responded to the emergency, saving lives and helping the injured. And we pray that the tragic lessons of that day will be studied and learned, so that future tragedies might be avoided. We pray for all the victims worldwide.



In an afternoon plenary, Bishop Naison Shava, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe, proposes an amendment to an Assembly resolution on food justice. © LWF/ J. Latvia-Hakuni

Eleventh Assembly Matters Referred to the LWF Council

The Assembly

VOTED: to refer to the Council

Text of the resolution as referred:

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

In light of the commitment of the LWF to environmental sustainability, it is requested that:

- the LWF commit further in its efforts and actions in a number of areas, in order for the LWF to live up to its stands on environmental sustainability;
 - the LWF hold an experimental, virtual meeting of executives during the next four years
- in order to explore the feasibility of using virtual meetings, thereby saving economical and environmental resources. We ask the Council to make recommendations that would ensure that profound efforts are made to hold future assemblies in an ecologically and economically sustainable manner.
- the Communion purchase and promote fair trade and sustainable products. Likewise, we request that the LWF be certain to use food, snacks, coffee, gifts and so forth, whenever possible, which have been produced under fair conditions—often associated with the Fair Trade Certification.
 - tap water be served instead of bottled water whenever the quality of the tap water allows it;

- locally and organically produced food be served during meetings and assemblies;
- during meetings and assemblies that extend over multiple days, wholly vegetarian meals be served; Furthermore, the LWF encourage all participants to choose the vegetarian alternative as a way to contribute to environmental sustainability.

Regarding recycling and the distribution of materials it is requested that:

- recycling at the LWF secretariat as well as during meetings and assemblies be promoted and employed;
- packaging food and gifts be avoided when possible;
- material in written form only be distributed when necessary, and books and pamphlets not be handed out liberally, but rather offered to those who choose to receive them.

Regarding the venues of meetings it is requested that:

- possible ecological and sustainable alternatives to the proposed meeting and Assembly venues always be investigated;
- preferential option be given to hotels and meeting halls with an ecological awareness and profile. It also implies investigating the possibility of conducting meetings online.

That member churches only invest in ethical and environmentally-friendly funds and investments.

The Assembly further requests that:

- the LWF and its member churches investigate new banking options, specifically focusing on ethical practices (e.g. low corporate bonuses and not rewarding greed) and sustainability practices (e.g. not contributing to the financial crisis);
- the Council formulate a public statement addressing greed and social, economic and environmental sustainability, food security in the context of climate change, and agro-ecological approaches to food production, distribution and consumption.

- the Council ensure that the environmental policy of the LWF covers other necessary areas in order to be extensive.

The Assembly

VOTED: to refer to the Council

Text of the resolution as referred:

LWF VISIBILITY AND THE ROLE OF YOUTH

The Eleventh Assembly asks that the LWF implement regional committees for translation of all documents into the official languages. To accomplish this goal, the LWF shall identify and utilize the services of professional and volunteer translators chosen by the regions.

The Eleventh Assembly asks that the LWF consider creating permanent regional or sub-regional youth committees within each of the LWF regions. These committees should organize regular youth conferences on the regional level to help build a stronger youth constituency for the LWF, and to enhance the engagement of youth with the LWF.

Furthermore, all Assembly plenaries should report on the gender balance within the youth delegate representation.

The Assembly

VOTED: to refer to the Council

Text of the resolution as referred:

RENEWING THE CURRENT FORM OF THE ASSEMBLY

The Eleventh Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation requests the Council to organize a committee (according to the established quotas) that will investigate the possibilities to renew the current form of the LWF Assembly with the aim to increase the democratic influence of the participating delegates.

The Assembly

VOTED: to refer to the Council

Text of the resolution as referred:

ECUMENICAL CONCILIAR COOPERATION

The Eleventh Assembly took note of the report of the Renewal Committee, particularly paragraph 12.

Radical changes in the global ecumenical landscape are happening very fast. Some ecumenical bodies are suffering and some have to deal with problems related to their continuation.

In the future it will be important for the LWF to strengthen its relationship to the World Council of Churches (WCC).

Therefore the Council is requested to explore the possibility that the next assemblies of the LWF take place within the expanded space of the WCC assembly, together with other confessional bodies.

In light of declining financial resources, it will become more urgent in the near future to strive for a more concise definition and distribution of the tasks and responsibilities among the different ecumenical bodies. This process will need to reflect the richness of the different identities of these bodies in order to be fruitful for the entire ecumenical community.

The Assembly

VOTED: to refer to the Council

Text of the resolution as referred:

THEOLOGICAL FORMATION

With regard to the report of the Renewal Committee, particularly Exhibit II, Annex II, it is recognized that the theological formation of leaders throughout the Lutheran World Federation is necessary to all members of the communion.

The Eleventh Assembly requests that the LWF Council place theological formation as a central priority and assess this on a regular basis for the sake of the entire communion.

The Assembly

VOTED: to refer to the Council

Text of the resolution as referred:

A MEETING OF ASSEMBLY YOUTH DELEGATES

In their powerful presentation the youth delegates and participants at this Assembly offered their enthusiasm and know-how to serve not only their churches, but also the LWF in general. Several times questions were raised to learn about ways to help the LWF to achieve a greater visibility in the respective home churches and local contexts.

Many of the youth delegates are still in training. They will have moved and changed their responsibilities long before the next Assembly and their experiences and achievements might be lost.

The Assembly therefore asks the LWF to plan a meeting of the youth delegates in two or three years' time. Such a meeting should prepare a report about what has been achieved in the past two–three years, namely how decisions made in Stuttgart have been implemented.

This report will provide useful feedback for the Council while collaboration will establish a network that contributes to create future leadership. This youth meeting, if carefully prepared, will also give considerable visibility to the LWF at a worldwide level during the rather long period between this and the next LWF Assembly (similar to the German Kirchentag or the "Papa-boys").

