

## Water Justice is focus of WSCF global campaign

**W**SCF has launched its first global campaign on Water Justice, challenging Student Christian Movements across the Federation to explore how the worldwide water crisis is affecting local realities, indigenous peoples, marginalized communities and how it demands a response by governments.

The worldwide launch of the campaign took place on 22 March, the World Water Day declared by the United Nations, and which this year also marked the Universal Day of Prayer for Students (UDPS).

WSCF's two-year Water Justice campaign will intertwine with the 2011 and 2012 WSCF advocacy themes of Overcoming Violence and Economic Justice, recognizing that water is inextricably linked to issues of mining justice, gender justice, land justice and indigenous rights.

SCMs have been invited to explore the inter-connections between these themes, and to use these themes as they incorporate the Water Justice campaign within local contexts.

"The emphasis on water is intended as a way in to an issue that is so important for our living conditions and environment," said Marcelo Leites, chair of the WSCF Water Task Force.

In Geneva, WSCF celebrated the UDPS and World Water Day at a service organized with the Ecumenical Water Network (EWN), at which WSCF General Secretary Christine Housel took part in a dialogue meditation with EWN coordinator Maike Gorsboth.

"A United Nations report predicts that access to water may be the single biggest cause of conflict and war in Africa, and elsewhere, in the next 25 years," said Housel. "We know it is true. We must ask, what will we do?"

The campaign was proposed by WSCF's Advocacy and Solidarity Committee.

"We recognize that water is a real, universal need and one that connects all of God's world," WSCF said in its announcement about the campaign.



Photo: EWN

"As Christians, we know that water is a powerful symbol of our thirst for justice, of the power of the Holy Spirit, and of the wellspring of life in Jesus Christ."

As part of EWN's "Seven Weeks for Water" Lenten campaign, WSCF Vice Chair Shantha Ready Alonso and Linwood Blizzard II, treasurer of WSCF's North America Region, produced a biblical reflection on justice and care for creation in the context of the privatization and commercialization of water.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, Christian students in the province of Katanga launched a campaign, "Let us protect the water that we have", calling on mining companies to ensure that used water is treated to protect nearby communities and the crops alongside watercourses.

In India, the SCM's human rights desk has organized an essay and a poster competition for students, as well as the re-reading of the Scriptures from water perspectives.

"Our call for the way forward is to make our commitment for water justice, when justice is being watered away in many contexts," said the Rev. Raj Bharath Patta, General Secretary of the SCM of India.

"Let us organize public awareness on the plight of the urban poor who are denied water. Let us raise our voice against all moves of the government on privatization of water, for water is our right and our life."

In Timor-Leste, the SCM organized an event addressed by government, academic and church representatives, with 70 participants, including from NGOs, SCM members from four universities, and Catholic and Protestant youth.

At a press conference carried on the evening television news, SCM members appealed to the government and its development partners to ensure the supply of water especially to rural communities, and to introduce a law to control private water companies.

In its announcement, WSCF summed up the campaign's core message: "As student activists, we see that – due to human action – water scarcity, water pollution and water commercialization and privatization are serious threats to our fellow people of Earth – the poor, the oppressed, and the marginalized, with whom we are called to walk in solidarity."

**Ecumenical Water Network:**  
[water.oikoumene.org](http://water.oikoumene.org)

## Christine Housel elected WSCF General Secretary

Ms Christine Housel, an Episcopalian with an ecumenical background, was elected WSCF General Secretary during a meeting of the Federation's Executive Committee in Lebanon in October 2010.

"Ms Housel brings many years of experience in youth and student ministry to her new position, as well as a strong grounding in community reconciliation and human rights advocacy work," said the WSCF officers - Horacio Mesones, Janejinda Pawadee, Youhanna Kamal, and Shantha Ready Alonso - announcing Housel's election.



Housel took up her position on 1 November 2010. She has served as project manager at the Federation's international office in Geneva since 2008.

She succeeds the Rev. Michael Wallace, a priest of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia, who returned in May 2010 to Dunedin, New Zealand.

Housel studied philosophy at Wheaton College near Chicago and did a Masters of Divinity at Yale Divinity School.

She has spent more than 12 years living in Germany, China, France, and Switzerland.

Announcing her appointment, the WSCF officers said Housel had been instrumental in developing new initiatives to draw out the potential of the Federation's global community of 106 national student movements.

They pointed to her work to establish a global Advocacy and Solidarity Committee to build the Federation's justice work, and a Development Team to promote leadership training and skill building at all levels of the Federation.

WSCF asks you to join us in welcoming her, accompanying her, and praying for her as she steps into the work God has called her to do.

## 'WSCF is a treasure God wants to make more brilliant'

The world is changing rapidly, and needs interpretation, response, and leadership. In the face of the challenges of today, all of us in WSCF feel the urgency of our call to student ministry.

In recent months, we have seen the relaunch of the Student Christian Movement (SCM) in the United States of America, we have been supporting recently-formed movements in Iraq and Timor-Leste, and we are continuing to support and strengthen all of our 100+ movements.

We have launched a range of social media tools - WSCFConnect.org, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube - to make it easier to communicate with members, supporters and friends, and to enable members and SCMs to network with each other. The first Ecumenical Assistance Programme training sessions have been organized in Asia-Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East. We continue to make the voice of the Federation heard globally through our advocacy efforts.

In all of these ventures, the Advocacy and Solidarity Committee, the Development Team, the new Communications Committee, and the emerging Theological Commission are generating momentum and strategies, building on the work of my predecessor, Michael Wallace.

Our leadership team is looking to better connect the students in the SCMs to the knowledge that they are a part of this global community of students and youth, to unify our efforts and focus our strategies as a Federation, and to increase dramatically our internal and external communication in order to fulfil our mission today.

This issue of Federation News sets out some of our efforts in this direction. Please join us by giving us your ideas, coming alongside us in partnership, and holding us up in prayer.

Nevertheless, WSCF's Executive Committee has recognized that we are not immune to the challenges that the global economic instability has brought to all of us. As we seek to support and strengthen all of our movements, we must pull our efforts, minds, and prayers together.

We have strong and solid practices to draw on from our history: creative, faithful, committed, and profound young leaders all over the world; a large network of Senior friends (WSCF alumni) who support us with their wisdom; and many other partners with whom to build our work in and for this generation.

WSCF is historic, dating back to 1895, and has worked in every generation since to fulfil its mission of student ministry and ecumenical leadership formation. WSCF attracts, engages, forms, and nurtures students and young people who are and will be leaders in their communities. We affirm Jesus' prayer for his followers to "be one" – to live out the deep reality that we are all a part of his body – as central to our Christian identity and mission, and we are committed to helping students participate in this ecumenical journey.

We are international and the relationships that are formed across church, tradition, and country boundaries have been transforming in the lives of countless young people. We apply energy and effort to the development of leadership skills of young women as well as young men, including promoting partnerships between women and men in leadership roles. We believe that our faith in Jesus Christ leads us to be in solidarity with those who suffer and to work for systemic justice.

As a student community, we turn toward analysis and we work to create spaces where we may examine information and allow genuine exploration and debate. We continue to surround our analysis and justice work in prayer, worship, and theology. Through all of these efforts we seek to honour each other, in our similarities and in our differences, both when it is exciting and interesting and when it is difficult and troubling, as the most profound expression of our unity in Christ.

Each time I have met students in the Federation in my work over the past three years, my conviction deepens that WSCF is a treasure God wants to make more brilliant, in order to continue to reach students and impact our churches and larger communities.

It is a blessing to serve this unique community. *Ut Omnes Unum Sint.*

**Christine Housel**  
General Secretary

# WSCF extends EAP training programme

The first three regional training sessions for WSCF's Ecumenical Assistance Programme (EAP) have been organized in Lebanon for the Middle East region, Argentina for the Latin America and Caribbean region, and in Sri Lanka for the Asia-Pacific region.

"One of our core concerns is leadership development," said WSCF General Secretary Christine Housel, explaining the role of the EAP as a vehicle for promoting capacity training throughout the Federation.

The EAP has evolved in recent years to become the primary way of providing tangible financial support to national SCMs. The aims of the EAP regional training sessions are to support regional leaders in project cycle management and related skills, to strengthen the capacity of SCMs, and to improve communication on project implementation with the Inter-Regional Office in Geneva.

The Ecumenical Assistance Programme goes back to the years after the First World War, when WSCF provided assistance to students in Europe, suffering from the effects of the conflict.

The principal supporter of the EAP is the German church development service, Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (EED), alongside the Dutch development agency ICCO, the Waldensian Church in Italy, and WSCF's Centennial Fund.

The regional training sessions are taking place after an external evaluation of the EAP. This noted that student leaders implementing EAP projects vary widely in their knowledge of the project cycle management, reporting and evaluation processes that are increasingly required by funders.



Participants at the EAP training in Sri Lanka

As a first step, an event was organized in Jordan in June 2009 which provided exposure to an EAP project for the Programme's external evaluators and the establishment and training of a new internal Development Team (DT). The aim is that training at the regional sessions should be provided by a local trainer together with a DT member.

Training for the Middle East took place in Ain Aar, Lebanon in August-September. The trainers were Jean Hajjar and Zahi Azar (from the EPEP organization), Ayman Karam, from WSCF-ME, and Hind Farahat, Immanuel Kitnan, Youhanna Kamal, and Elsy Wakil from the DT. This was followed by the Latin America and Caribbean training in Buenos Aires in October, where training was pro-

vided by Humberto Shikiya of CREAS and Horacio Mesones, WSCF Chairperson, who is also a professional trainer working with CREAS. In Colombo the following month, training for the Asia-Pacific region was resourced by former WSCF Vice Chair Udan Fernando, together with DT co-chairs, Immanuel Kitnan and Hannah Satlow.

"I am sure that this training in leadership development through project management and evaluation, and other management tools, will strengthen the local SCMs and give them more sustainability in the future, and it's a great challenge in the coming years," said Kitnan.

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## WSCF tells public hearing about situation of Iraqi youth

WSCF representatives took part in a public hearing in Geneva in February organized by the World Council of Churches with key leaders of Christian churches in Iraq, international church leaders and members of the WCC Central Committee.

The Federation was represented at the meeting by WSCF Middle East Regional Secretary Elsy Wakil and General Secretary Christine Housel.

The meeting heard that security is the most urgent concern facing communities in the Middle East, which are experiencing multiple forms of violence. There is a need to identify the causes of this violence perpetrated against Iraqis, both Christian and non-Christian.

The Iraqi representatives also addressed the growing refugee problem that results from this lack of a secure environment within Iraq.

WSCF spoke of the witness of the Iraqi Christian Youth Committee (ICYC), a member of the Federation. The ICYC was founded at the beginning of 2002 by youth workers in several Baghdad churches.

It expanded in mid-2005 to include members from many churches: Syrian Orthodox, Greek Orthodox, Catholic, Chaldean, Armenian Orthodox and Armenian Catholic. ICYC has been an associate member of WSCF since mid-2005 and it became an affiliated movement during the Montreal General Assembly in 2008.

The WSCF delegation reported on the situation of Christian youth in Iraq who have decided to remain in the country instead of emigrating, to live their faith in the country that they believe has been chosen for them by the Lord. This witness had cost two young members of the ICYC their lives in an attack

on worshippers at the Sayidat al-Najat church in Baghdad at the end of October 2010.

The meeting put the Iraqi church leaders in direct contact with the representatives of the churches present at the public hearing. The Iraqi church representatives encouraged the participants to pressure their governments to "work to empower the role of the state to secure rights for all without discrimination."

"It was very important for WSCF to attend the public hearing on Iraq because our young Student Christian Movement of Iraq works with all its heart to bring Christian youth together to help weave a future of peaceful unity for the Iraqi population," said Elsy Wakil. "We wish to unite our students with the larger ecumenical community and to work together intergenerationally for the future of Iraq."

# WSCF celebrates release of Philippine health workers

Most of the 43 health care workers illegally arrested in the Philippines in February 2010 were released in December following a campaign by civil society organizations, including WSCF.

"What began as a call for freedom and justice in the Philippines spread like wildfire to become an international campaign that history shall never forget," supporters of the health care workers said in a message received by WSCF in January.

One of the detained health workers, Dr Merry Mia Clamor of the Council for Health and Development, visited the WSCF office in Geneva in March to thank the Federation for its support. Dr Clamor was in the Swiss city to attend the 16th Session of the UN Human Rights Council, where she delivered a statement on torture.

Two of the 43 were still in jail in April, supporters said.

The 26 women and 17 men had been arrested in Morong, Rizal province, and accused of being trainees of the Communist New People's Army. Police charged them with illegal possession of firearms and explosives.

Those arrested included Dr Alex Montes, a surgeon and director of the health programme of the United Church of Christ of the Philippines, who has provided free service to sick, poor and marginalized people. Montes is a relation of WSCF Asia-Pacific Regional Secretary Necta Montes.



**Dr Merry Clamor (l.), one of the 43 health workers, and Gerlie Padilla (r.) from Karapatan Philippines, with General Secretary Christine Housel at the WSCF Geneva office**

The arrests came in the run up to the presidential election in May 2010 that brought Benigno Aquino III to power.

In a February 2010 statement, global WSCF leaders condemned the arrests and called for the release of the detainees. The detention of the health workers was believed to be direct intimidation of human rights and opposition activists campaigning in the election.

Human Rights Watch reported that at the time of their arrest, the health care workers were neither provided with the reasons for their arrest nor informed of their rights to remain silent or to obtain legal counsel.

Some detainees described ill-treatment in military detention, such as being blindfolded and interrogated on and off for as long as 36 hours.

## Stand together against violence, says WSCF after Baghdad church attack

WSCF's Executive Committee has urged youth and students in the Middle East to stand together against violence, after an attack on the Sayidat al-Najat Syrian Catholic church in Baghdad on 31 October left at least 58 people dead.

"The WSCF joins with all those who condemn these attacks, which are added to a long list of blood shed of Christians in Iraq," the Executive Committee said in a statement.

The committee was meeting in Lebanon as the news came through of the attack on the church in Iraq in which more than 120 people were held hostage. The Executive Committee called on students and friends throughout the world to join in prayer for the families of the victims and for communities of faith in Iraq.

Two members of the Iraqi Christian Youth Committee (the SCM in Iraq) died in the attack on the Sayidat al-Najat church. A report said 27-year-old Fadi Sabah Edward

Bahouda died of injuries received after being shot trying to protect his wife as they sheltered on the floor of the church. Raghda Wafi Bishara, 22, who was also killed in the stand-off, had been a member of the youth committee since 2008.

In its statement, the WSCF Executive Committee said the Christian community in the Middle East "is threatened every day" by incidents such as the attack on the Baghdad church.

"The World Student Christian Federation celebrates the long history of Christians in the Middle East and expresses solidarity with the Christians who currently live in the region, adding to the region's richness and diversity," it stated. "WSCF, as a student organization, especially holds the students of the Middle East - Christian and Muslim - in our thoughts and prayers, and hopes that the youth and students will together stand against violence in order to live in peace."

## Zimbabwe advocacy meeting urges prophetic action

Rising political violence and human rights violations in Zimbabwe mean a Global Political Agreement signed by the country's main political parties in 2008 is threatened with collapse, a meeting of churches from the southern African nation and their partners has warned.

Leaders of Zimbabwe church networks meeting in Geneva in October 2010 with international partners reaffirmed their commitment to provide "moral leadership and united prophetic action" to prevent a return to violence.

The Geneva meeting took place two years after the signing of the political agreement that created a power-sharing national unity government in February 2009.

The agreement followed a disputed presidential election in which President Robert Mugabe was the sole candidate in the run-off, after opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai pulled out, saying there had been widespread violence against his supporters.

The Geneva meeting was organized by the Ecumenical Zimbabwe Network (EZN), formed in 2007 to promote solidarity, advocacy and the social justice work of churches in Zimbabwe. The network is coordinated by the Zimbabwe Advocacy Office, an ecumenical partnership hosted by WSCF.

A statement issued after the meeting said there had been "very little progress on national healing and reconciliation" since the formation of the national unity government. "There are several clear indicators showing the same structures used to unleash violence during the 2008 elections are being rejuvenated and that the next election will most likely be a very violent exercise once again," it warned.

"Perpetrators of the 2008 election violence still roam freely and have begun to threaten their victims once again," it said.

The churches at the Geneva meeting "underlined the importance of ensuring that the will of the people is freely expressed and respected on all national issues." They said they would "play a proactive role in helping prevent a return to full-scale violence and repressive rule towards the next election."

The EZN and Zimbabwe churches held a follow-up meeting in March in Johannesburg, South Africa. They proposed a plan of action in which churches commit to reclaiming prophetic voice. Zimbabwe churches set out plans for a National Peace Campaign to tackle the scourge of political violence.

# WSCF launches new social networking platform

Christian students from around the world have signed up in the hundreds to a new social networking platform from WSCF, WSCFConnect.org.

"As a global community, we're embracing the power of social networking for connecting our members and member movements from across the world," said WSCF General Secretary Christine Housel. "Students are passionate about WSCF's vision of justice, peace and unity when they can catch it."

WSCFConnect.org provides news updates and prayer requests, as well as calls for solidarity, and information about events and campaigns. The platform offers opportunities for Christian students to meet for cross-cultural engagement and to share ideas on transforming the world around them.

WSCF has also launched a new Facebook page ([facebook.com/wscfconnect](https://facebook.com/wscfconnect)), as well as a YouTube site ([youtube.com/wscfconnect](https://youtube.com/wscfconnect)) and a Twitter feed (@wscfconnect).

Harold Ozioma Ikewueze, from the Abuja national office of the SCM of Nigeria, welcomed the launch. "It will go a long way to strengthening our work among young people," he said. "Young people are the most Internet-friendly group in the world."



Every member of WSCFConnect.org has their own profile, making it easy to connect to other members, write notes on their profile pages, and add them as friends.

Housel stressed that the new tools will complement rather than replace face-to-face engagements.

"It's clear we need to use these tools to reach and engage with students today," she said. "However," Housel added, "WSCF will not be giving up its long tradition of facilitating in-person meetings."

She said, "Face-to-face meetings will continue to be a priority for WSCF, as they provide an opportunity to engage with more complexity and depth than online encounters."

## 'What would Jesus tweet?'

Christian students from across Europe gathered in Finland in April to explore the relationship between faith, social activism, and social media such as Twitter and Facebook. "The Living in a World of Technology" conference, organised by WSCF's Europe Region, encouraged participants to consider the positive and negative aspects of modern communications technology. Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant participants debated whether the Internet makes everyone equal; if it is possible to worship God online; and what Jesus would "tweet" if he were alive today.

"Jesus would tweet all the time. He'd be an infamous Twitter celebrity," said Paul Crome, 22, a Protestant student from the United

Kingdom. "He would be quite radical and say things people wouldn't like."

Mirka Bukovinska, 26, a Ukrainian Greek Catholic, was less certain that technology is able to play a meaningful role in Christian faith. "I believe there will always be a need for worship in real communities," she said. "Communication in social networks cannot substitute for real life communication." Nino Kikvadze, 21, an Orthodox participant from Georgia, saw social media as having a crucial part to play in social change. "The Internet can make people equal," she said. "It plays a big role in changing politics and society."

## WSCF video team to collect stories of peace at global gathering

A WSCF team is taking part in the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in Jamaica to make a series of videos sharing the global church's message of peace.

The convocation is the culmination of the World Council of Churches' Decade to Overcome Violence, launched in Berlin in 2001. It is gathering about 1000 religious leaders and peacemakers from around the world in Jamaica's capital, Kingston.

Using a one-on-one video style, the WSCF team is bringing to the wider world the visions and hopes for peace being explored by convocation participants. The team has members from Argentina, Malawi, the Philippines and the United States. "The world is a network waiting for interaction," said Desireé Kameka, a team member from the United States.

"Young people inherently understand that communication with anyone in the world can occur instantly, information can be sent to an enormous network with a single click, interactive multimedia is the norm," she said.



Each of the four members of the WSCF team has a camera to record people and events throughout the gathering, running from 17 to 25 May. The team is supported by the communications department of the World Council of Churches.

The videos are aimed at other young people and students around the world, as well as people of any age interested in peacemaking and the church.

They are available on the WCC and WSCF YouTube channels, on WSCFConnect.org, the

WSCF's social network, and on a dedicated website, [iepcstories.com](https://iepcstories.com).

Mike Garcia, a team member from the Philippines, said he hoped that through the videos the group would "convey the core of the IEPC to the world so that we can achieve the peace that we are aspiring for."

The WCC said it chose WSCF as its partner for the youth team because of its global network of youth movements and its vital role in forming ecumenical leaders.

"So many of the leaders of the ecumenical movement have come out of the WSCF and will continue to do so in the future," said Mark Beach, WCC director of communications.

Bob Craigie, Media Center Director of the Andover Newton Theological Schools and a documentary producer and videographer, will provide training for the team.

### YouTube:

[www.youtube.com/WCCwebOffice](https://www.youtube.com/WCCwebOffice)  
[www.youtube.com/wscfconnect](https://www.youtube.com/wscfconnect)

# Change gender stereotypes, says WSCF at UN

WSCF delegates joined a global advocacy initiative in New York at the 2011 meeting of the United Nations' Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

The commission gathers for two weeks each year to monitor and promote the rights of women. This year's meeting ran from 22 February to 4 March, and marked the launch of UN Women, the UN agency that seeks to accelerate actions to achieve gender equality.

The WSCF team was part of a joint delegation with the World Council of Churches. It was the fifth time that delegates from the Federation joined in lobbying at the CSW.

The team worked with Ecumenical Women, an international coalition of church denominations and ecumenical organizations.

"Collectively we shared our successes and our struggles, hoping to learn from each other and to provide continuity and historical perspective on the presence of faith-based organizations," said Katy Argueta of SCM-USA.

Others in the WSCF delegation were Isatu Ville and Facia B. Harris from Liberia, Sheryl Johnson from Canada, Heraldo Kane-Osorto from the United States, and Nina Nayoan from Indonesia.

The WSCF-WCC team took part in a side event exploring how to build partnership with men to advance work on women's issues. WSCF panellist Heraldo Kane-Osorto of SCM-USA said, "New models of partnership need



**WSCF delegates at the CSW: Facia B. Harris, Katy Argueta, Nina Nayoan, Isatu Ville**

intergenerational dialogue, we as men need to be willing to be taught by women leaders and understand that we cannot be defined by our gender box."

At an event on West Africa, Facia B. Harris underlined the "importance of mentoring" in promoting education and development for young women.

The WSCF delegation to the CSW is part of a larger effort by the Federation to strengthen its role in international advocacy. The Federation has consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council.

A young adult caucus offered "a great opportunity to network," said Sheryl Johnson. She described her involvement in the WSCF team as a "life-changing" experience. "The skills

that I have gained in advocacy and critical analysis and learning about international processes and global women's issues will greatly affect all the programming and work that I do in the future."

Isatu Ville said she would take back to Liberia "the spirit of advocacy and teamwork." Understanding how policies are made at the UN helps address advocacy issues, she said, "even at the local levels."

The Rev. Marta Benavides, from El Salvador and ecumenical advisor to slain Archbishop Óscar Romero, accompanied the delegation.

**Ecumenical Women CSW statement:**  
[ecumenicalwomen.files.wordpress.com/2011/01/csw-statement1.doc](http://ecumenicalwomen.files.wordpress.com/2011/01/csw-statement1.doc)

## WSCF takes part in advocacy week on Palestine and Nigeria



**WSCF at the UN Advocacy Week: Cody Nielsen, Elsy Wakil, Yasmine Rishmawi, Monica Bazi**

WSCF's six-member delegation made a strong contribution to the World Council of Churches' sixth annual United Nations Advocacy Week in September 2010.

Around 120 participants took part in the Geneva meeting, which addressed global and regional advocacy issues, particularly focused on Palestine and Nigeria. It ran in conjunction with a meeting of the UN Human Rights Council.

WSCF participants highlighted the contribution of Nidal Abuzuluf, the manager of the Joint Advocacy Initiative of the East Jerusalem

YMCA and the YWCA of Palestine. Abuzuluf is one of the authors of the Palestine Kairos document, launched in Bethlehem in December 2009. This document declares the occupation of Palestinian land to be a sin against God and humanity, and urges churches and Christians worldwide to stand against injustice in Palestine.

Abuzuluf described how he had been involved in bringing youth into the process of preparing the Kairos message. He underlined the need to revise the theology that justifies the Israeli occupation and the injustices it causes.

The presentations highlighted "the importance of our active roles in Palestine," said WSCF participant Yasmine Rishmawi from Palestine.

Other Federation representatives were Elsy Wakil, Middle East Regional Secretary; Monica Bazi from Lebanon, a member of WSCF's global Advocacy and Solidarity Committee; Ayman Nasri from Egypt; Cody Nielsen from the United States; and Christine Housel from the WSCF Geneva office.

Oluwarotimi Akeredolu, a senior Nigerian lawyer, told participants that colonial authorities and post-independence politicians followed a policy of "divide and rule" in his country, which has about 250 ethnically-distinct groups.

The world's media has often oversimplified resulting conflicts as a clash between Christianity and Islam, he said.

One issue brought to the fore by WSCF participants was the trafficking of women in Nigeria and worldwide. WSCF participants took part in drawing up advocacy strategies on Palestine/Israel, Nigeria, and interreligious issues in the Middle East and Africa.

## Centennial Fund looks to future

The Board of Trustees of WSCF's Centennial Fund at its March meeting in Geneva agreed to provide significant financial support to the budget of the Federation. This move highlights the importance of the endowment fund in sustaining the future of the Student Christian Movement.

As a result of this decision, the Board agreed it was fiscally responsible to close the Fund Development Office. This meant the position of the Fund Development Officer, held by Marsha Lougheed Paige, would be discontinued.

The Board and the Federation are profoundly grateful to Marsha for her work in helping the WSCF Centennial Fund achieve a more visible and stable profile as an endowment fund in difficult financial times. Since its establishment in 1990, the Centennial Fund has provided increasing support for the operations of WSCF, and has contributed to two General Assemblies.

It was with regret that the Board received the resignation of Dr Martin Conway as President due to health concerns.

AJ Finlay (pictured right), a member of the Anglican Church of Canada, former International Chair of the World Day of Prayer, and a former WCC Central Committee member, was elected President of the Board. The Board also elected Professor Bungaran Saragih, former Minister of Agriculture in Indonesia, as Vice President and the Rev. Jorge Domingues, Deputy General Secretary of the United Methodist Global Ministries, as Treasurer. It welcomed the new student member of the Board, Ruth-Aimée Ngotty, from the SCM of Cameroon.



## SCM relaunched in United States

The Student Christian Movement in the United States of America was relaunched in October 2010 at a gathering at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia.

The theme of the meeting was, "Overcoming Violence: Encountering the Past, Engaging the Present, Empowering the Future". It gathered student representatives from seminaries, colleges, universities and current SCM-USA chapters.

Ali Holness, the executive director for the Council of Churches of Greater Washington, was elected chairperson of the SCM-USA Board. "I believe the time is now when we can really do something and get some things moving," Holness said in a YouTube clip available on the WSCF YouTube channel ([www.youtube.com/wscfconnect](http://www.youtube.com/wscfconnect)). Vice-chairperson is Kristen Kane-Osorto, currently part of the Luther Volunteer Corps, working for the Steinbruck Center for Urban Studies at Luther Place Church in Washington DC.

They said their main priorities for the coming year would be to build strong connections between local SCM chapters and the national, regional, and global movements.

The predecessor of SCM-USA, the University Christian Movement, was known for its witness for civil rights and peace in the first half of the 20th century. The group voted itself out of existence in 1969 as its members turned to other forms of Christian activism.

Pockets of SCM groups remained active on campus – especially in New England – until the 1980s, noted WSCF North America Regional Secretary Luciano Kovacs. However, he said, "the lack of a national entity calling students of Christian faith to be critical



thinkers and social change agents created a huge void on campus and in the life of the whole Federation as well as the ecumenical community in the US."

Kovacs highlighted the need for serious Biblical, theological and political reflection for the new SCM-USA to become a prophetic voice. "In a world where intellectually-engaging liberation theologies have yielded the pace to individualized forms of doing theology, grappling with a new community-oriented theological perspective today is of utmost relevance," Kovacs said.

Momentum for the relaunch of SCM-USA began in San Francisco in January 2009 at a North America regional event, "Raising New Prophets, Arising of a Movement". This marked the reinvigoration of the WSCF North America region and spearheaded the formation of a steering committee that was tasked to lead the building of a new SCM in the United States.

SCM-USA describes itself as a student-led, grassroots organization rooted in Christ which actively seeks justice and peace, speaks truth to power, and works to overcome oppression in communities on local, national and global levels by empowering students and young people to claim their voice, exercise leadership skills, and build transformational networks of relationship.

**Link:** [www.scmusa.org](http://www.scmusa.org)

## New Regional Secretary for Europe



David Masters from the United Kingdom was appointed WSCF Regional Secretary for Europe in September 2010.

He has a Masters degree in Reconciliation Studies from the Irish School of Ecumenics, and a Bachelors degree in Theology and Social Science from the University of Manchester. He was chair of the Student Christian Movement in Manchester from 2006-2008, and was on the General Council of SCM Britain from 2008-2009.

"I found SCM challenging, but in a good way," Masters said. "At university I wanted to challenge my faith, to deeply examine my beliefs. SCM provided a supportive and creative community in which I could do this. I was also inspired by the strong social justice stance of SCM."

His goal as Regional Secretary is to let every member of SCM in Europe know they are a member of WSCF. "WSCF is the SCMs, and without the SCMs there would be no WSCF," said Masters. "There are many opportunities to take part in the work of WSCF, in addition to attending conferences, including acting and praying in solidarity with other SCMs, representing WSCF at partner events, and following our work on [WSCFConnect.org](http://WSCFConnect.org)."

## Interim Regional Secretary for LAC

Marcelo Leites Martinez has been appointed Interim Regional Secretary for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), following the resignation of Gustavo Quintero Casadiego.



Leites will hold the position until December 2011 while the Federation undertakes a search process for a new Regional Secretary.

Born in 1985, Leites was coordinator of the Uruguay SCM in 2008-2009. He coordinated the participation, human rights and democracy networks in the LAC region. Leites studied philosophy and has worked as a community educator in Montevideo.

Leites is a member of the Federation's Advocacy and Solidarity Committee. He said his priorities as Interim Regional Secretary include, "Building up communication with the local SCMs, reorganizing the regional office, conducting a regional media project, fundraising, and strengthening the SCMs and their identity."

# In Memoriam

## Kentaro Shiozuki

Professor Kentaro Shiozuki, a former WSCF East Asia Secretary who prepared the groundwork for the Federation's regionalized structure in Asia-Pacific, died in Tokyo on 9 July 2010 at the age of 86. After graduating from Osaka Imperial University in 1947 with a degree in metallurgy, Shiozuki became the Secretary of the Student YMCA, the SCM of Japan. His wider involvement in the Federation began the following year. He took part in the WSCF Ceylon Leaders' Meeting and then in the 1949 Asian Regional Council Meeting.



Shiozuki joined the WSCF global team in 1957 as Secretary for the East Asia Desk. In this position, he prepared the regionalization of the WSCF that began in 1968. In 1965, Shiozuki returned to Japan, where he worked until 1970 as WSCF Secretary with university teachers in Asia. He organized the first Asia Leadership Development Center Program for SCM Asia secretaries. After positions with the YMCAs of Japan, and the Japan Overseas Christian Medical Service, Shiozuki was appointed a professor at Meiji Gakuin University in 1987, a position he held until 1994.

In 2009, the WSCF Centennial Fund established a fund in honour of Kentaro Shiozuki and his contribution to the Federation. Donations can be made to the fund using the instructions on this page.

## John Coleman

John Coleman, WSCF's Universities Secretary after the Second World War, died on 30 September 2010 in his 93rd year. As a 20-year old, Coleman represented Canadian SCM at WSCF's 18th General Committee (as the Assembly was then known) in Bièvres, France, in August 1938. Exactly 70 years later, he was at the Federation's 34th Assembly in Montreal.



Coleman was on the WSCF staff during the 19th General Committee in 1946, and finished in Geneva after the 20th General Committee in Whitby, Canada in 1949. While working for WSCF, he met his future wife Marie-Jeanne de Haller, the Federation's Bible Secretary. Coleman's book "The Christian in the University" was translated into German and French, and was said to have been the first foreign Christian writing published in Japanese after the Second World War. He went on to become Head of the Mathematics Department at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario.

In 2008, Coleman addressed the Montreal General Assembly, where he noted that many delegates came from outside Europe and North America, unlike his first gathering 70 years earlier. "That's a great step forward," he said. "It's a realisation of an ambition that's been going on a long time amongst the Federation Secretaries."

In 2007, to honour his late wife and to support the Federation's work, John set up the Marie-Jeanne de Haller Coleman Fund within WSCF's endowment. Donations can be made in honour of John or Marie-Jeanne to this fund using the instructions on this page.

**Our sincere thanks** to all the interns and volunteers who have worked in recent months with the Federation: Desireé Kameka from the USA, who created WSCFConnection; Ayman Nasri, Senior friend from Egypt SCM, assisting with PR and communications; Corinna Panayiotides-Djaferis, helping with graphic design; Ng Yi Ching (Juliana) from Hong Kong, managing our archiving, and a growing list of volunteer translators. Those able to lend their expertise or time to WSCF, in Geneva or anywhere around the world, please contact us at [wscf@wscf.org](mailto:wscf@wscf.org).

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Make an electronic bank or wire transfer to our bank account in Geneva - Banque Cantonale de Genève, Case Postale 2251, CH-1211 Genève 2, Switzerland (BIC/SWIFT BCGEGHGGXXX) as follows:

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If you would like to contribute towards the longer-term movement-building fund of the WSCF, please replace the account name with "WSCF Centennial Fund".

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