

Federation News



WORLD STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION

MARCH 2016



BRANDI FRIESEN THORPE

God is not a wall here...

Brandi Friesen Thorpe, SCM Canada member shares her experience in Palestine as member of the Pilgrimage for Justice and Peace of the WCC.

"We sit, with stories and laughter and a plethora of different lived realities among us, eating our lunch on the sunny patio, at tables prepared lovingly for us by our new Palestinian friends. Our backdrop is the graffiti of Western Wall,

separating the West Bank in Palestine from greater Israel, and we do not forget where we are."

"Pop poppop. You can hear the backdrop of tear gas bombs being lobbed into the Palestinian refugee camps. The sounds are foreign to us foreigners, and I do not register it until the wind shifts and the air turns chemically sour, singeing the insides of our noses, making our eyes water. A minute later the wind shifts again. We return to the patio, our lunches, our fellowship. We go on. We eat. We pray. We

listen. God is not a wall here, God is in the perseverance that exists because of the oppression of the wall."

Brandi is WSCF's representative to the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace Group of the World Council of Churches (WCC). Focusing on Middle East and Palestine, the meeting was held in Palestine and Bethlehem from February 12 to 18, 2016. WSCF was invited to send one young person to represent the voice of the youth. (Link to website and resources: <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/what-we-do/pilgrimage-of-justice-and-peace>)

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**“God is not a wall here,
God is in the perseverance
that exists because of the
oppression of the wall.”**

The meeting aimed to develop recommendations to WCC's upcoming Central Committee Meeting in Norway in June on the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace Program. According to Brandi, the highlights of her experience are attending this meeting were, "exposure in Palestinian contexts, as well as meeting with some SCM Palestine members. In particular, meeting with Zoughbi Zoughbi from Wa'am, a Palestine Reconciliation Centre. Networking and relationship building with people of faith from around the world. It was an absolute gift. The agency to pitch a meaningful and hopeful empowering project that would further the WSCF mandates presented at the GA, that is beneficial to a WCC and WSCF relationship."

"My specific contribution within this meeting was advocating for two particular points. First, to advocate for trauma healing support for children and young persons. There is now a working group on this, developing thought on the topic, which will be brought forward to next year's meetings. Second, I proposed a project that would partner WCC with WSCF. This project, a student summit on arts-based approaches to peace in Palestine, would meet the peace and justice interests expressed by the WCC, as well as fulfill several mandates established at the WSCF GA in 2015."



Brandi Freisen Thorpe (middle), with SCMs from Palestine, Bayan Barham (left) and Yasmina Rishmawi (right)

Reflecting on what she learned from this experience, Brandi writes, "personally one of the most valuable knowledge I walked away with, aside from relationships and the meeting of the global church, is an understanding of the relevance of contextual theology. Sitting in the court yard of Wa'am, a Palestinian reconciliation centre meters from the Western Wall, theology takes a different shape. Understanding

God as a wall, a fortress that protects people, does not connect in a place where a giant wall oppresses an entire people, removing freedom and rights. God takes a different shape. In a place where my Palestinian friends have literally prepared a table for me and the delegation that represents a diverse world communion of church, in the presence of their enemies, love and God takes a different shape."

BUDAPEST

2016 WSCF Senior Friends Gathering

BUDAPEST. This May 2016, 12th to 15th, the Hungarian capital will host a WSCF Senior Friends reunion. To be a WSCF Senior Friend, one does not need to be actually senior. One can be called a senior friend of WSCF once he or she is no longer a student, yet feels a belonging to the Federation. This year's Gathering is organised by an international team of senior friends, who acknowledge the need for renewing the ties of today's WSCF students with today's WSCF senior friends. The reasons for this meeting, and future Senior Friends Gatherings, are: (1) ecumenical / WSCF legacy, and (2) cross-national interconnectedness – enhancing the feeling of belonging to WSCF family.

The Gathering will take place at the same time with another WSCF event - European

Study Session "Let's Talk About Sexuality: Explosive Power of Taboo Subjects", which WSCF-Europe co-organises together with Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe and Council of Europe Youth Center Budapest. Hosting both the Gathering and the students' Study Session in the same location and time gives a unique opportunity for both events' participants to meet, discuss and learn from each others.

The core organiser team of this meeting consists of:

Zuzana Babicova

(Slovakia, Chair, 2013-)

Rachel Power

(Ireland, Vice chair, 2015-)

Markus Ojakoski

(Finland, Treasurer, 2000-2005)

Sofie Eriksen

(Denmark, Chair, 2011-2013)

David Cleary

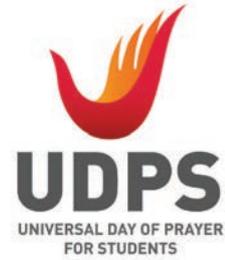
(Ireland, Fundraising Coordinator, 2013-2015)

Vera Papp

(Hungary/Ireland, Exco member, 2011-2014)

The call for registration was closed on 20 March 2016. We are happy to have a diversity of participants coming both from Europe as well as Asia and Pacific region of WSCF. If you feel that you should not miss out on this opportunity, you can still apply – 10 places may be available for short notice attendants, applying not later than 1 May 2016. All costs related to the event are to be covered by participants. Standard participation fee is 160 € and travel expenses are expected to be covered by participants. For more information or late reservations, contact Zuzana Babicova at chair@wscf-europe.org.

“Journey of Faith”



SCMs around the world celebrated the Universal Day of Prayer for Students (UDPS) 2016 praying for education rights, interfaith, justice and peace

The Universal Day of Prayer for Students (UDPS) 2016 was celebrated by churches and university students in different parts of the world from February 21 to March. This year’s theme, “Journey of Faith,” invited movements to pray and reflect on the faith journeys of young people from different faith traditions around the world.

This year’s celebration highlighted varied prayer activities of local SCM university units and churches commemorating the event. University students from the ISTS Women’s College in Rajanagram, Andhra Region in India held an interfaith prayer program with the participation of students from the Hindu, Islam and Christian traditions. SCM India units in Gopalpur Odisha, Aizawl, Eluru, and St. Peter’s Telugu Church held similar prayer services for students. Students from the University of the Philippines (UP) chapter of SCM Philippines organized a candlelight prayer vigil to commemorate the death of Jessiven Lagatic, and other university students, who committed suicide after not being able to pay for their school tuition. SCM New York City held an interfaith prayer for students in the US. The Palestine Youth Ecumenical Movement held an ecumenical prayer at the Church of Nativity in Al Shabaab. SCM Sri Lanka had an international prayer celebration with students from Kandy. SCM Baranquilla in Colombia had a praise and worship service in the Presbyterian Church.



SCMer from Gopalpur, Odisha India celebrated UDPS

UDPS University of the Philippines

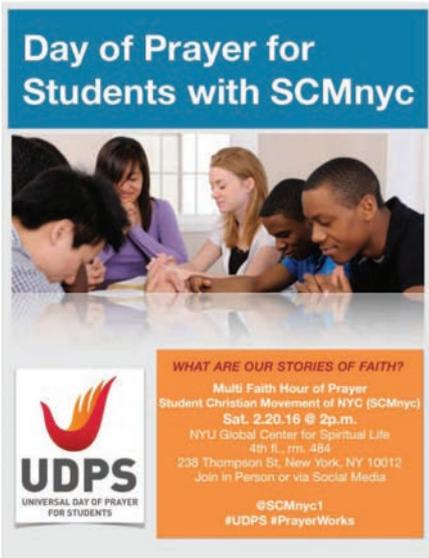
The UDPS liturgical guide used by the SCMs around the world for the UDPS was prepared by SCM UK and WSCF. UDPS was first held in 1898, and has been an annual tradition of WSCF uniting the fellowship of SCM movements to pray for students every third Sunday of February.



SCMers from Sri Lanka



SCMers from Palestine celebrated UDPS with other groups



SCMers from New York City invites students to join prayer meeting online

UDPS Jogjakarta



UDPS Rajanagran, Andhra Regions, India



UDPS Sri Lanka



University of the Philippines (UP) SCMers hold prayer vigil for students



SCMers from Barrangquilla, Colombia holds praise and worship in the Presbyterian church

SCMers from Sri Lanka



WSCF Inter-regional Leadership Training Program (IRLTP)

WSCF calls for greater compassion, openness and justice for forced migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Europe, vows to increase advocacy work and action for migrants and refugees rights.

“We should stop referring to migration in Europe as emergency, it is not, it is a consequence of the historical injustice of colonialism and global economic structure that forced people to migrate”, said Silvia Rapisarda, Waldensian pastor and SCM Italy senior friend, leading the theological reflection during the WSCF Inter-regional Leadership Development Training Program (IRLTP) on Transformative Diakonia on December 9 to 15, 2015.

Focusing on the theme Migration and Refugees, the training program attended by 25 participants from the Student Christian Movements (SCMs) was organized in Palermo Sicily, an island hosting an increasing number of migrants from Africa, Middle East and South Asia. According to the Palermo Social Service office, 345 minor migrants arrived via boat a few days before the training participants visited the office. “Because government center cannot cope with the influx, the migrant minors are sent to 38 Communities all-over Palermo where they are provided shelter, clothing, food and counseling by a group of volunteers,” explained the staff.

One such Community is the La Noce Centro Diaconale Istituto Valdese in Palermo, where the WSCF training program was also being held. La Noce hosts 9 young male migrants from Africa aged from 14 to 18, most of whom travelled months before arriving Sicily. Anna Ponente, director of the La Noce Centro explained that the “Community provides education that would allow the migrants to communicate, develop their skills for personal development to fulfill long-term plans. “A number of migrants coming to Palermo move on to other European countries to join families after completing the mandatory 7 years domicile in Italy.

Torzten Moritz, Coordinator of the Churches Witnessing with Migrants (CWWM) and SCM Germany senior friend lamented the lack of cooperation and coordinated response of the 28 member European states on the recent wave of migrants coming to Europe, “the EU member states needs to update its migration policy and laws to adapt to the changing time” he

added. He urged governments to adopt the “Legal Protection Perspective” arguing that migrants and refugees rights are human rights. Asked about the response of churches in Europe, Moritz shared varied ways churches opened their doors to migrants and highlighted the work of churches in Italy and Greece in providing safe passage called “Humanitarian Corridors” and “Humanitarian Visas” for migrants needing immediate humanitarian protection. As of recent, 1,000 visas have been approved by the EU processed through the Humanitarian Corridors.

Mediterranean Hope, a program of the Federation of the Evangelical Churches in Italy is one such response. Alberto Mallardo staff of Mediterranean Hope working in the frontline in Lampedusa island shared, “migrants reception is institutionalized and militarized... once they arrive on the Lampedusa coast, they are whisked away to secured camps where there is no possibility for local people to interact.” Lampedusa, a tiny island south of Sicily with a population of 6,000 received 20,000 migrants, sparking speculation of the growing tension between the locals and migrants. “To combat this negative image we organize reception with local people bringing food, blankets, clothes the moment migrants arrive, established a Cultural Center to break marginalization and stigma” Alberto added during the panel presentation.

Sharing his experience, Massino Gnone, Coordinator of Commission Social Development (CSD) of the Waldensian Church in Paliwas critical of government’s approach of repeating the “cycle of dispossession and the identity theft that migrants experience in the course of migrating,” he explained the concept of an Integrated Reception “a shift from sphere of assistance to recognition of (migrants) fundamental rights.” Agreeing with this new approach, Immanuel Simonan International Volun-

IRLTP participants visiting CRESM or the Centro di Ricerche Economiche e Sociali per il Meridione in Palermo, a migrant center for male migrants from Africa and the Middle East



teer at CSD from SCM India works on interfaith and ecumenical approach with migrants to break isolation and establish fellowship with the local residence.

“How do we want the WSCF brand known for its advocacy and action on the issue of migration?” asked Levi Baustista, assistant general secretary of the GBCS and WSCF Advocacy Solidarity Committee (ASC) senior friend adviser during the skills training. He further urged WSCF to use “forced migration” as most appropriate to differentiate it voluntary and documented migrants. He also challenged WSCF “advocacy and solidarity with migrants should include accompaniment by creating platform for the voice holders to be present.”

The training program concluded with the adoption of the WSCF Advocacy and Solidarity Plan on migrants, refugees and asylum seekers that will be implemented in the next four years. The Plan calls for consciousness raising and education at the national level, coordination of efforts, participation and advocating for migrants rights in national, regional and global platforms with churches and ecumenical organizations. WSCF will join with CWWM in next Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) schedule in Bangladesh in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The training program was supported by the Otto Per Mille of the Waldesian Church in Italy, Karibu Foundation, Bread for the World, United Church of Canada, United Church of Christ in the USA, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and individual donors.

Executive Committee appoints Global Staff

WSCF Executive Committee approves Transition Team Proposals and Strategic Plan: Appoints Secretary General and Regional Executives and Program Directors

The WSCF Executive Committee (Exco) approved the proposals of the WSCF Transition Team summarized in the Palermo Communique released on December 23, 2014. The Communique outlined the significant decisions, among which was appointing one, instead of two General Secretaries and the subsequent plan to amend its constitutional provisions. The Exco appointed out-going Transition Team Interim Staff Coordinator, Necta Montes, former Asia Pacific Secretary and senior friend from the Philippines as Secretary General to lead the next process. Necta begins her new role this January 2016 and will hold a temporary office at the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) national office in Quezon City Philippines during the transition period.

"The task ahead continues to be daunting, systemic and structural changes in a context of a historic institution like the Federation will take time, but I have no doubt that as generation of young and committed SCMs take part in God's work for justice and peace in different parts and context of the world, WSCF's legacy of building ecumenical leaders will continue" said Necta Montes. She pointed out the importance of the new Strategic Plan in concretizing WSCF's commitment to work for Ecological Justice, Identity, Diversity and Dialogue (IDD), Peace Building and Dialogue and Higher Education. These thematic focus cut-across five of WSCF's Programmatic Strategies on Biblical and Theological Analysis, Advocacy and Solidarity, Ecumenical Transformative Diakonia, Capacity Building and Movement Building. She believes that the implementation of this Plan is key to the organization's transition from an "organization that was heavily focused towards itself, its own survival to an organization that is oriented towards its mission to the world," said Montes.

This mission orientation is also reflected in the Executive Committee's decision to appoint former Regional Secretaries as Regional Executives and Global Program Directors, "reflecting the changing nature of their work and priorities... (and) plan for global coordination and the integration of strategic programming will be the main feature of work in the next four years," according to the Palermo Communique.



WSCF ExCo Member present in Palermo Meeting (L-R): Immanuel Kitnan, Vice-chairperson; Fanny Chung, Asia Representative; Oscar Reicher, LAC Representative; Danny ElObeid, Middle East Representative; Lydia Nabunya, Africa Representative; Annika Foltin, Europe Representative; Brandi Friesen Thorpe, North America Representative; and Bronwyn Claire, Treasurer)

Transition Team members present in Palermo (L-R): Necta Montes, Marco Fornerone, Salters Sterling, Georgine Kengne Djeutane Bronwyn Claire



Following this decision, Luciano Kovacs from Italy was appointed Regional Executive for North America and Global Program Director for Advocacy and Solidarity, Sunita Suna from India as Regional Executive for Asia Pacific and Global Program Director for Identity, Diversity and Dialogue, Amos Mushwendwa from Tanzania as Regional Executive for Africa and Global Program Director for Bible and Theology, Elsy Wakil from Lebanon as Regional Executive for Middle East and Global Program Director for Peace Building and Overcoming Violence, Marcelo Leites from Uruguay as Regional Executive for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and Global Program Director for Eco Justice, and Natia Tsintsadze from Italy as Regional Executive for Europe and Global Program Executive for Interfaith.

The Executive Committee thanked the members of the WSCF Transition Team composed of Georgine Kengne Djeutane, Necta Montes, Salters Sterling, Marco Fornerone, Chris Ferguzon, Pretty Mubaiwa and Bronwyn Claire for their invaluable work and contribution in the transition work.



WSCF Global Staff Team 2016 (L-R):
Necta Montes,
Marcelo Leites,
Elsy Wakil,
Natia Tsintsadze,
Luciano Kovacs,
Sunita Suna,
Amos Mushendwa

WSCF Centennial Fund Board to Meet on May 19 – 22 in Bossey Geneva

The WSCF Centennial Fund Board of Trustees will meet in at the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, Geneva this coming May 19 to 22. The annual meeting will hear the financial reports of the Fund and the WSCF, decide on the members of the Investment Advisory Committee (IAC), decide on the budget for 2016 and support for the WSCF Budget. It will also assess the performance of its investments in Europe and North America and consider the current investment policy of the Fund and review its relevance for the future. The Meeting will likewise discuss the formation and plans of the Joint Fund raising Group with the WSCF Executive Committee. A special Group which aims to coordinate and plan joint fund-raising activities for the current needs of WSCF.

In this Meeting, the Board welcomes its new members, Jannes Hutagulong from Indonesia, Ilari Rantakari from Finland, Sherly Johnson from Canada, and Bruce Rigdon from United States of America elected as the Board Treasurer last May 2015. They will join Salters Sterling from Ireland, elected as the Board Chairperson



Salters Sterling, WSCF Centennial Fund new Chairperson

and President in 2015, Alex Roumi student representative from Lebanon, Bronwyn Claire from Australia and WSCF Treasurer. Necta Montes, WSCF General Secretary and Jean Luc de la Soujeole will also join the meeting.

In the afternoon of May 19, WSCF and SCM senior friends based in Geneva will join the Board members for an afternoon of fellowship, sharing and updating of the situation of WSCF.

WSCF elected new Chairperson and Co-vice Chairperson



CHAIRPERSON

Ms Georgine Kengne Djeutane
(Cameroon)

has been performing the duties of WSCF Interim Chairperson after the 35th General Assembly in March 2015 and until the Chairperson elections in March 2016. Former Africa Regional Secretary, Georgine is an Economist by training. She received a Masters of Philosophy (MPhil) in Economics Sciences. In addition she also trained on Project management, Monitoring and Evaluation, Fundraising, Conflict Resolution, Gender and Human Rights, Anti-Corruption Campaign, Lobby and Advocacy, Management for Head of Project and Organization of Development in Africa and Corporate Governance.

In her past experience, she served on an advisory board for the Nairobi Peace Initiative Africa (NPI-A), the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA) and the Programme for Christians and Muslims Relationship in Africa (PROCUMURA). She is a recipient of the McArthur Foundation Prize on Research on "Real Economy in Africa". She is the author of several articles related to debt issues published in Scholarly journals.

MsGeorgine is a committed Christian. She has been working since her graduation with faith-based organization as part of her commitment to serve Jesus Christ. She has a good grasp of the Ecumenical vision, great experience with church, church-related and ecumenical organizations at national, regional and especially at the international level given her past job as the WSCF Regional Secretary for Africa and the Vice Chairperson of the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance based in Geneva. She is committed and empowered to serve students and young people with ability to work and communicate in cross-cultural setting. She is also a graduate of the Ecu-

menical Institute of Bossey. Currently working as a consultant with a Research organization and planning to finalize her PhD.

On March 17, 2016, the WSCF Executive Committee elected Georgine Kengne Djeutane as Chairperson and Salma Charaf as Co-vice Chairperson. Georgine and Salma join Immanuel Kitnan, as Co-vice Chairperson and Bronwyn Claire as Honorary Treasurer of WSCF until the next General Assembly. The elections concluded a three-month search process led by the Search Committee.

menical Institute of Bossey. Currently working as a consultant with a Research organization and planning to finalize her PhD.

Tell about yourself.

– I'm an African Woman born in Mbouda, Cameroon. A committed Christian and have a passion to serve Christ and to work with Faith-based or Christians organizations. Talking about my personal goal, I am aiming with the help of the Holy Spirit to contribute to the best of my ability in the field of Justice and Peace, to use my knowledge in the field of Economy to improve the quality of life of the most vulnerable at the national or international level, within faith based organization or NGO's.

What did you have for breakfast?

– A mixture of many foods, it might be oats, eggs and bread, lot of fruits or left over from my dinner.

What are your long-term motivations in your position?

– WSCF has made great leaders over the years, there is again a great need of those visionaries leaders who will work alongside with others to transform positively the world. A stable and re-invigorated WSCF will continue through the renewal of the ecumenical movement to be a laboratory of new ideas to discern the mission of the church in social issues, promoting change and practical solutions to the growing fundamentalism, ecological, economic, cultural and social issues.

Who has inspired you in your life and why?

– First my parents, my father and my mother. Servant of Jesus Christ, they showed me the way to Christ my Savior and God, humble and polite they taught me to respect others. Then the late Rev. Luc Norbert Kenne who guided my dreams of being a model through my faithful action in serving Christ. My trainings as he convinced me that I have to be graduated and that the knowledge I gain will help me to achieve my goals. His commitment and passion for justice and peace shaped my mind and I learned a lot from Him.

What would you like to change (positively) in our organization, and how would you do that?

tively) in our organization, and how would you do that?

– To be very modest, I think there is a need for greater connection in the Federation – National Movements – Regions – Senior Friends – Partners – Churches. I will use any opportunity given to the Federation to create more links to bring our members together for collaborative action.

What cheers you up?

– First of all : Prayers. Then good news. Any good information about friends, relative, church etc.

What do colleagues say is your best quality?

– Ms. Kengne can be described as a strong spiritually grounded person, with excellent abilities to listen, reflect and advise.

How would people communicate in a perfect world?

– Very interesting question! I hope I getting it well. By speaking their mind, respect each other and value every one contribution.

What is the best gift you've ever received?

– My son. He his a gift from God.

If you were 80 years old, what would you tell your children?

– I thank God for the years He blessed me with. Even though I wasn't very faithful in my early years of service with Him as I let Him down miserably when He needed me. While growing in His knowledge, I'm happy Jesus Christ inspired me to be a blessing to many through my life, the trainings I offered, small gifts and support I was able to give out to those He leaded me to, support to missionaries work and organizations. When I knew and made mine that obeying and trusting was the only way to be happy in Jesus, I passionately gave him my life then lived, worked and acted to please Him and serve the neighbor. Keeping a great memories of my time as servant in one His most cherish Vineyard, the World Student Christian Federation. I'm happy to tell you that: "surely His goodness and love followed me all the days of my life, and I dwell in the house of the Lord forever" — Psalm 23:6.

The Chair and Vice-Chair will be dealing with the following tasks:

1. Accountable to the General Assembly;
2. Chairing meetings (Executive Committee, General Assembly and other meetings where required);
3. Nurturing the worldwide fellowship and preserving the unity of the Federation;
4. Interpreting the work and needs of the Federation to churches and the wider ecumenical movement;
5. Supporting the work of the executive staff of the Federation;
6. Ensuring that the goals, priorities and mandate of the General Assembly are acted upon in accordance with the Constitution.



VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Salma Charaf
(France)

currently based in Paris, is a student of International Relations and Management. Salma grew up in Morocco, in a multicultural and open-minded Russian-Moroccan family. She got to know WSCF when she started her university studies in France, where she joined SCM France. Through her SCM, Salma met the WSCF General Secretary, got inspired, and decided to participate in her first WSCF project taking place in UNESCO. In 2014, Salma was invited to take part in the inter-regional leadership development program in Jordan and Palestine, where she discovered the real spirit of WSCF. When she returned to Paris, Salma became the main international contacts person of SCM Paris, and continued to be involved in WSCF-European projects representing her SCM, recently reconnecting this old WSCF member with the Region.

In parallel to her studies, Salma did several internships in France and abroad. Her first professional experience was junior consultant's position in a management consultancy firm in Moscow. Later Salma decided to try herself in human resource recruitment consultancy, which led her to a sector manager's position for a commercial company in Paris. These experiences allowed Salma to gain professional skills such as leadership and management skills. Today, Salma is closely engaged in ecumenical and cultural life of her SCM, and currently she also represents WSCF at UNESCO.

Tell about yourself in less than 140 words.

– My name is Salma, I'm of Moroccan/Russian origin based in Paris, I'm 22 years old and I'm on my second Masters degree in

International Relations and Management. I got to know WSCF right after I moved to the SCM Paris, where I had the chance to welcome the general secretary of WSCF Global, being inspired, I decided to participate in my first project with the federation that took place in UNESCO. Moreover, few months later, in 2014 I was invited to take part in the inter-regional leadership development program in Jordan and Palestine, there, I discovered the real spirit of WSCF, when I came back to Paris I became the key international contact person of SCM Paris, I continued to be involved in European projects representing the SCM Paris and that how I succeeded to reconnect this old member of WSCF with the region.

Who was the most inspiring speaker you have met at events you've attended?

– I was really impressed by the knowledge and the easy contact that the senior friend Chris Ferguson offered during my inter-regional program in Jordan and Palestine. His pedagogical skills allowed me to understand the big issue of the conference, and his intellectual capacities inspired for further experiences.

Tell us about your experience as WSCF representative to UNESCO

– My first experience as WSCF representative with UNESCO was in 2013, I was involved in an advocacy training with other organizations, it was a very enriching experience that allowed me to discover the world of NGOs. Currently I have the possibility to attend different conferences organized in UNESCO, and thanks to my access to this establishment, I can invite students from my SCM to share this experience and present it to others, for example the 10th of March I attended a conference dedicated to the issues of the education in the world, new methods and innovative ways of teaching.

What is your favourite way of moving?

– I wish I could always use my bicycle for any circumstances; it's incredible how you can feel free in such an easy way.

Imagine that someone has asked you to explain WSCF. You have no more than one minute. What will you tell?

– WSCF is first of all a big family, you meet new people it is also a chance to see old friends. WSCF offers this positive energy and a spiritual environment; it is all about sharing, sharing feelings, experiences, faith and values.

How would people communicate in a perfect world?

– I'm always supporting innovation, but in terms of the communication between human I would stay classic, I prefer direct and live contact.

Identify your best area of expertise in life.

– As my familial background is multicultural I would say that foreign languages have always been an exciting challenge for me, as today I can speak Arabic, Russian, French, Spanish, and English.

If you would be a fantasy creature, what would you be and why?

– I would choose the Unicorn not only because of its holiness but also because it is a creature that symbolizes the indispensable virtues of nobility and purity to its core; these, to me, are qualities that everyone should strive toward.

Your favourite book?

– I was inspired by the Great Russian literature, and I completely felt in love with the chef-d'oeuvres written by Pushkin. If I had to choose one, I would say that the book "Captain's Daughter" is one of my favourite.

Give an advice to students who are considering to attend their first WSCF event.

– Keeping in memory my first experience, I would advise student not to be afraid to open their mind, their heart and their soul as with WSCF you can always share your feelings and your thoughts.

Natia Tsintsadze

Function: To provide an overall leadership to the work of the Federation. She/he is responsible for the organization's consistent achievement of its mission and financial objectives, in global programme development and administration. The General Secretary will work with the Executive Committee Members and Staff and Student Christian Movements to ensure that the mission of the Federation is fulfilled through programs, strategic planning, advocacy and movement building.

Where are you from, and what is your professional / WSCF back-ground?

– I am an Italian citizen, originally from Georgia. I hold MA degree in Development Studies (2012) and MA in Diplomacy and International Relations (2003).

– In October 2014 I became the RS of the WSCF-Europe which recently has been changed into the Executive for Europe region and the Program Director for Inter-faith Dialogue and Cooperation.

If you woke up and had 2,000 unread emails and could only answer 300 of them how would you choose which ones to answer?

– I remember at my first day at the office I had over 300 unread emails waiting for me. It was a bit scary, but instead of panicking I decided that the best way forward was just to get on with it and it perfectly worked. So my answer is to respond urgent matters first and categorise these emails according to their immediate priorities. Well, I believe I would get the priorities right in the first place! :-)

What songs best describes your work ethic?

– “Get up, Stand up” of Bob Marley.

What projects you are currently working on? Which project is going to release first in the coming days?

– I have just come back from the partners meeting with the European Youth Foundation in Brussels. A week prior to this meeting I attended the WSCF-Europe Capacity Building Training Course in Oslo.



Both meetings were inspiring in different ways. My current priorities are to ensure financial sustainability of the organisation through fundraising and to empower our member movements through more effective, targeted and outcome based activities.

How would you occupy your time if you did not have to work for a paycheck?

– I have always been lucky for doing jobs that I loved and cared about. I have been able to combine professional interest with my personal passion and comfort. Over 15 years of experience in the non-governmental sector allowed me generous flexibility to work on the issues closer to my heart i.e. human rights advocacy, inter-religious and interfaith dialogue, equality and social justice. In addition, I was volunteering for a local charity working with the disable children. Recently, due to my busier timetable and frequent traveling I have not been able to do as much volunteering work as I wish. Perhaps it would give me more time to care for my little nephew who has a cerebral palsy and admires spending time with me.

Tell me about a time you did the right thing at work and no one saw you do it.

– Given the fact that at the moment I am the only staff member at the office, it is expected that other people do not see every little (and big) thing I do on a daily basis. The results and outcomes of my work are the important to share and keep other people informed. Whether it is going an extra

mile for the reputation of our organisation or spending hours in untangling historic debts and finances in hope to recuperate extra money.. I rather stay quiet and let the results speak all about it.

What is your greatest indulgence?

– Free time... with a cup of coffee, a scoop of gelato in the company of my best friends.

What did you do for your latest birthday?

– I do not like big parties, but I always go out with my husband and best friends. Last time I bought for my collection a new wooden elephant from the Indian shop in Berlin.

What is your perfect pizza?

– My perfect pizza is a crispy, light crust with a simple tomato sauce and gorgonzola and walnuts on top.

Why is a tennis ball fuzzy?

– Maybe because it's easier to control a ball covered by felt... but I exactly know why a shuttlecock has a conical shape! :-)

What is your favourite Disney or Pixar villain?

– Villain?! As predictable as this may sound, my favourites are no villains and doubt if they ever be...

Necta Montes

Function: The Regional Executive and Program Director is responsible to coordinate, manage, support, organise and expand the WSCF activities globally and in regions according to the WSCF Constitution and By-laws. They are to act on recommendations of the Executive and Regional Committee respecting local laws. They work with the General Secretary and Student Christian Movements to ensure that the mission of the Federation is fulfilled through programs and strategic planning. Specific duties are regional Governance work, networking and partnership building, global and regional program planning, finance, administration, communication and most especially, movement building.

Where are you from, and what is your WSCF background?

– I am from the Philippines, born in Eastern Samar, Philippines and raised in Manila.

– My previous WSCF experience in chronological order, includes: Regional Secretary for the WSCF Asia Pacific from 2005 to 2012 and its Regional Women's Program Coordinator from 1996 to 2001. I was WSCF AP student ExCo representative to the global WSCF ExCo in 1987 to 1990, General Secretary of SCM Philippines from 1987 to 1988, and Deputy General Secretary from 1985 to 1986.

– Others: Resource Development Officer for Isis International, a feminist international organization based in Manila from 2002 to 2005, Project Coordinator for Partnership for HIV/AIDS Prevention of the AIDS Surveillance and Education Program (ASEP) of the Department of Health (DOH) in the Philippines and US AID from 1994 to 1996, General Secretary of the Philippine Christian Youth Federation (PCYF) of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) from 1992 to 1994, Program Assistant for the Ecumenical International Relations Desk (EIRD) of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) from 1989 to 1990.

Can you tell me about a situation in your work that was difficult and you were able to overcome it?

– I have experienced plenty of difficult situations at work, some are personal issues, example are conflict among people you work with or under your supervision because of personal difference, or problems related to work performance or outputs. Most often, work related issues such as difference in opinion and strategies, lack of funds, unmet goals and objectives, etc.



In whatever situation, it is important that you fully understand the nature and root cause of the situation before making any decision or action. You also need to analyze the problem, have two or three options and know the consequences of each option or decision. You need to think about the 'greater good' of the majority or the organization, or an action that would have less negative impact. You have to be ready to accept the consequences of your decisions, whether good or bad and confront it.

If you could wake up tomorrow in the body of someone else, who would you pick and what would you do?

– I would be Bill Gates or Mark Zuckerberg, I would donate and distribute company profits to the poorest of the poor, without any conditions and pay the debts of the poorest nations in IMF or World Bank.

What qualities should a team leader have?

– Should be an attentive and active listener, should be consultative and enable group members to reach consensus, should be respectful of contradictory opinions, should learn self-criticism and accept criticism from others, manage conflict, should initiate actions, focus on higher goals and mission of the organization, should be a servant leader, respectful and humble.

– He or she must be able to communicate effectively in writing and orally primarily in English language to the various level of constituency of the Federation: its members, senior friends, partners and networks in the churches, ecumenical circles, social movements and NGOs. He or she must know must have knowledge in technical writing necessary in project and funding proposals, concept notes, project and annual reports, progress reports to the constituency of WSCF. He or she must have skills in oral presentations during meetings, conferences and facilitation skills dur-

ing training programs and workshops for students. He or she must have substantial knowledge and experience to manage the finances (budget preparations, simple accounting and monitoring), the day-to-day operation of an office (negotiation), the work of support staff within his/her supervision guided by the policies, systems and structures of the organization. He or she must know how to do fund-raising at various levels, identify funding opportunities and possibilities and immediately respond to any possibility.

What do you do in your spare time?

– I read books and novels written by Philippine local authors and up-coming young writers, I run/jog with my daughters and join fun runs and local marathons, do yoga, spend time with my daughters, niece and nephews, visit weekend markets and alternative shops. I listen to 80's music while working.

Describe the color yellow to somebody who's blind.

– It relaxes your mind, makes you feel warm, comfortable and happy.

If we came to your house for dinner, what would you prepare for us?

– I would cook our local Philippine dishes, mainly fish based dishes such as "kinilaw" or "inihaw" and local vegetables and fruits, with rice on the side.

Your dream vacation? Worst vacation? Best vacation?

– No dream vacation or worst vacation.

Have you ever danced in a rain?

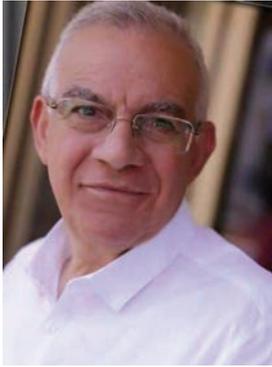
– I have joined marches and demonstration as a student activist in the rain.

What is one thing people would be surprised to know about you?

– I am very shy and often reluctant to speak if not asked. I prefer to act or do things, rather than speak to make people understand.

Who are your heroes?

– I admire individuals who sacrificed their personal interests for a greater cause and greater good, individuals who fought for justice and the rights of others but never sought personal recognition for their good deeds. Individuals who are selfless and using their gifts and talents to do random acts of kindness and service to others. We should learn from the experiences of others, not for who they are, but what they did for the people and their communities. We have so many unnamed heroes that have sacrificed and contributed much. I do not believe in personality cult, I believe that individuals are God's instrument in the building of the Kingdom of God here on Earth.



Dr. Makram Mehany

Unique persons are rare, especially when the subject is GIVING. Giving effort, offering time and money are the common behaviors of giving, but offering care, kindness, peace, and all related human feelings are not the habit or even a feature commonly appear in life. That was Dr. Mehany, the Chairperson of University Students Christian Association (USCA) in Egypt, the member in the WSCF-ME region, who played a role in the establishment and continuation of the WSCF region. Dr. Mehany was also a vital member in establishing the ecumenical movement in Egypt in 1971 under the name of Ecumenical Youth Committee-Egypt, which is also a member in the WSCF-ME region. He was the senior friend in all these societies in addition to his full participation within the organization of the Youth Bishopric in the Coptic Orthodox Church of Egypt.

Dr. Mehany, participated in several activities of the WSCF worldwide and some of the General Assemblies, he was representing also the Coptic Orthodox Church in the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) and in the WCC as well. He was a reference person for all movements in the region.

Dr. Mehany was a pharmacist by profession, and was the CEO of group of pharmaceutical companies in manufacturing, sales, distribution and promotion of pharmaceuticals in Egypt. He was also the chairperson of the Pharmaceuticals manufacturers union in Egypt and the board member of the Arab League of Manufacturers of Pharmaceuticals.

We also prayed, gave tributes and honored the memories of our senior friends who passed away in 2015. We will always be inspired, grateful for their time with us and honored with their association with WSCF and the SCMs. You can visit the link to read the full messages and tributes for:



Jane Leong

Last January 17, 2016, SCM Singapore senior friend and WSCF Asia Pacific former Chairperson (1995 – 1998) and WSCF Ex-Comember (1991 to 1994) passed away in Singapore. Jane was actively involved in the life of the SCM and WSCF in different capacities for more than 15 years of her life. As Staff Person of SCM Singapore in the tumultuous 80's period, one of her contemporary writes, "It gave us great comfort and confidence to know that SCM was in her good hands. We knew that she would always stand up for our rights. She would stand no nonsense from any critic of Singapore SCM. We were her prodigies who could do no wrong. Jane influenced at least 5 generations of Singapore SCMs in our thinking and beliefs on social justice and social action. She did it with a guitar and her graceful voice. Her smile and undying support won over allies and sceptics of young SCM then."

Prior to becoming staff of SCM Singapore, Jane was also involved in the Workers Party in Singapore where she actively fought for workers rights, democracy and people's participation at the time when rights and liberties were systematically suppressed by the state. After her time with WSCF, Jane established a publishing company in Singapore. Jane was a passionate leader, a brave strategist, a comrade to many, a loving friend and family.

Caterina Dupre

(1970 - April 6, 2015)

<http://wscfglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Tribute-Caterina-Dupre.pdf>

Philip Potter

(August 19, 1921 - March 31, 2015)

<http://wscfglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/WSCF-Tribute-and-Message-for-Rev.-Dr.-Philip-Alford-Potter-1.pdf>



Dr. Hindi Mikhail

In October 2014, the family of youth movements in Sudan missed the spiritual leader, the real servant in the Coptic Orthodox Church, in the University Students Families (member in the WSCF-ME region) and in the ecumenical society in Sudan.

His history in participating in all activities of the WSCF either in Sudan, the region and worldwide was full of events and shares as he attended the General Assemblies as form Yamoussoukro, in Ivory Coast 1995, till Bogota, Colombia 2015. He was also the Chairperson of the Regional Committee of the WSCF-ME for two year. He was also one of the youth leaders representing his church in the Sudan Council of Churches. He was also a leading member in the illiteracy care program initiated by the WSCF region, the Ecumenical Popular Education Program (EPEP) in Sudan.

No one can deny his efforts in keeping the spirit of peace within his society and even in the field of ecumenism specially the WSCF regional activities. He was always a beloved person, supporting and fulfilling the needs of others, presenting the life of Jesus practically in his daily life. He was a mobile message of the Christian life in his country pushing for peace in an area suffered a lot in the last decade.

Bishop George Ninan

(August 4, 1934 - June 21, 2015)

<https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/general-secretary/tributes/tribute-to-bishop-dr-a-george-ninan>

Tony Waworuntu

(August 16, 2015)

<http://cca.org.hk/home/news-and-events/1124-2/>

WSCF ExCo proposal for Online Extraordinary General Assembly

Dear SCMErs,

We thank God you feel the hope of new beginnings, love and happiness during Easter. It is with the renewed faith and God endless blessings that we are writing to you requesting you to approve the organization of an online Extraordinary General Assembly.

For those who attended the 2015 General Assembly in Bogota, you may recall that the General Assembly approve the recommendations of the Future of the Federation task group. A transition Team was formed with the aim of proposing solutions to the problems identified by the task force. The work of the Transition Team ended in December 18 and their recommendations for the intermediate and long term actions for Governance and Operational change needed to ensure WSCF stability presented and most of them approved by the Executive Committee Members.

Some of the recommendation need « Constitutional change » and as outlined in Article IV: 4 of WSCF Constitution: Frequency of Meetings *“The General Assembly shall as a rule meet every four years or within a period of six years in case of extraordinary circumstances. The Executive Committee shall determine the exact time and place of meetings. Extraordinary meetings may be held with the approval of two-thirds of the Affiliated Movements.”*

It is impossible to organise a face to face General Assembly at this moment, reason why we took a pragmatic decision based on the reality and efficiency to proposed an organization of an Extra-ordinary online General Assembly during which Governance and structural change proposed will be brought to your attention.

WSCF will be holding for the first time ever and online Assembly. The process will be slightly the same except that the methodology will be different and the vote carry on online.

The GA will be held with official representative of the affiliated movements

(voting delegates) and voting member of the Executive Committee (including officers). You will be requested to send the name of your voting delegate and his/her email. The quorum will be checked with respect of gender and student representation. The agenda of the Assembly will be the constitutional amendments. The proposed amendments coming from the Executive Committees members will be sent to movements 6 months before the GA.

In term of methodology, an online voting platform will be created. Delegates will be register beforehand, materials and information loaded. The voting process will last two weeks. Taking into account that some WSCF affiliated movements have difficulties accessing internet, we will send information and materials as file they will download, read, study, vote, scanned and email later.

The constitutional Commission has been formed by the Executive Committee to work on all aspects of the GA and ensure the process and methodology are smooth and accessible to all.

We therefore need your approval for the organization of the online Extraordinary General Assembly by the 20th of April 2016

Thanking you in advance for your time and consideration

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