



THEME OF THE GA

37th WSCF GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2022

Theme: “Rejoice in Hope” (Romans 12:12)

Sub-theme: “Young People, Journeying Together Towards Justice and Peace.”

Our source of hope for justice, liberation, and peace is God. In all ages humans have faced trials and tribulations, and, as those who came before us, we long to hear the good news of hope for the future. Such hope inspires today’s work for justice, equality and peace, hallmarks of God’s reign here on Earth. Such hope calls us to understand the root causes of poverty, fragmentation, disunity, violence, and war. Such hope is truly based on actions resisting *the Empire*, speaking truth to power, and working for justice, equality, and peace in the world.

The theme speaks strongly of WSCF as one ecumenical movement composed of diverse traditions, backgrounds, and contexts. Ephesian 4:4 reminds us that unity in Christ Jesus is our hope in times of challenges and difficulties, as “there is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called”. Thus, we are called to be one in our spirit, mind, and action in the building of the Kingdom. We are to be THE hope in today’s world. As young people, WSCF offers the message of hope in the context of the suffering of the world today. It is our reason for being.

The context in which WSCF holds its 37th General Assembly in Europe is significant in examining its new vision and mission. We live in a world of increased risk and vulnerability of young people due to unemployment, poverty and hunger, corruption, migration, war and conflict, a threat to democracy and the democratic system, media censorship, climate crisis, and commodification of education. The United Nations 2018 World Youth Report states that there are 1.2 billion young people aged 15 to 24 years, which is 16 percent of the global population. According to the report, there is an unacceptably high number of young people that



are experiencing poor education and worsened unemployment, 71 million are unemployed and 156 million youth in low and middle-income countries are living in poverty.

The general trend is a world-denying any possibility of a future. Economic injustice, among nations and inside nations, has developed into ecological injustice. Thus, our traditional strive toward social justice intertwines the struggle for climate justice. It is a challenge to convert from the usual dominance of humans on nature towards a reconciled relationship between fellow creatures. In many parts of the world, such a struggle takes the shape of young people claiming the right to have a future.

A less inhabitable earth will intensify the migration of peoples towards other countries, where, instead of being welcomed and taken care of, they meet xenophobia and racism, the growth of extreme-right-wing movements, and the rise of populist parties. In some cases, these radicalized reactions are nurtured by religious fundamentalism. Ironically enough, one of the causes of migration is the rise of fundamentalism in the country of origin of the migrant which becomes less and less home for minorities, women, and younger people.

In the last two years, a global pandemic showed how fenced borders between countries mean nothing to most of the Creation, and that healthcare cannot be a privilege of the rich without consequences for everyone. Lastly, in February 2022, as Russia invaded Ukraine, we were reminded of one of the great elements threatening our future: mutual nuclear destruction. Such an atrocious possibility never diminished from the Second World War, but after the fall of the Berlin Wall, most of us lived as if nuclear weapons were not part of reality. While ultimate atomic destruction is still a risk, the current consequence of this war is the rising worldwide cost of food and natural resources; in a world with increased accumulation of wealth and inequality, this means that millions of already poor people are exposed to even more deprivation.

In Europe and in other parts of the world this situation calls us to discernment and action as a global ecumenical community. We are called to task by our Faith, to be one with our churches, and faith communities in welcoming the strangers and extending radical hospitality to the migrants, refugees, and those marginalized seeking hope for a new life. We are called to be hope, as we rejoice in the one Hope that is Jesus Christ



Proposed Keynote and Panelists:

Keynote Speech - Saturday 25th June 10.15h - 11h CEST:

Rev. Dr. Rudelmar Bueno de Faria - General Secretary ACT Alliance

Thematic Panel on the Worldwide Context - Saturday 25th June 16.30h - 18.30h CEST

Testimonies 30 Minutes:

Panelists:

- Joy Eva Bohol - Program Executive on Youth World Council of Churches - Youth,
- Dr. Azza Karam - Secretary General Religions for Peace - Multi-religious collaboration
- Rev Chris Fergusson - Qonaquy - Former General Secretary - World Council of Reformed Churches
- Moderator - Respondent: Necta Montes - Former WSCF General Secretary