



World Student Christian Federation
37th General Assembly
June 4 to 11, 2020
Zwinglikerk, Berlin, Germany

Theme: **“Rejoice in Hope”** *Romans 12:12*

1. INTRODUCTION

The WSCF General Assembly or GA is the most representative and highest-policy making body of the Federation. It is to convene once every four years or within six years in extraordinary circumstances to bring together its 108 member movements from 94 countries.

The 35th in-face regular session of the GA was held in Bogota Colombia from February 27 to March 5, 2015. At this GA, a proposal was passed for the Federation to undergo a transition period with guidelines approved for implementation. Two years later, an Extra-ordinary Assembly, the 36th officially recognized by the Executive Committee, was held online from May 22 to 28, 2017 primarily to amend the WSCF Constitution. The Online GA was a transition mandate from the GA in Bogota and approved by the Executive Committee Meeting in Palermo December 2016. It was participated-in by 60 delegates from 80 Affiliated member movements and ExCo members.

The forthcoming GA will *“review and assess the situation of the member movements, regions, the work of the Executive Committee and the worldwide Federation.”* It shall *“consider the ideas, problems and aspirations of the member movements and regions, and to determine objectives and priorities of the Federation’s programme and policy in the ensuing period, with full recognition both of the diversity of the Movements composing the Federation and of the changing situation in the world.”*

It shall *“elect the four officers, regional members of the ExCo, approve or disapprove the candidacy of the General Secretary, vote upon changes in the Constitution, and decide application for membership affiliation and review the status of membership.”* (Art IV.1 WSCF Constitution Revised May 2017). These are core functions of the General Assembly as stipulated in the Constitution.

BUILDING OUR ECUMENICAL SHIP TOGETHER

In addition to these constitutional mandate and given the on-going transition work of WSCF, the GA will have the following governance objectives.

- The General Assembly (GA) will receive the report from the Executive Committee thru the General Secretary on the final outcome of the transition work including the specific recommendation for the next quadrennial. It shall include an evaluation of the implementation of the transition mandate, its challenges and impact of the work in the past years.
- The GA shall receive, consider and approve WSCF Strategic Plan for 2020 to 2024;
- The GA shall receive the report on the new WSCF Staff Model, discuss its recommendation and approve for implementation.
- The GA shall consider proposals from movements, regions and ExCo on the structure for WSCF for study and consideration in the next quadrennial.

ENRICHING OUR FAITH THRU BIBLE STUDY, FELLOWSHIP, PRAYER AND WORSHIP

The General Assembly is a space of rekindling and strengthening the friendships and fellowship as family in the Federation. It is a space to build bridges across different traditions, culture, context and expressions of prayers and worship life. It is the space to affirm our unity in Jesus Christ and enrich our faith through understanding of the biblical messages and theological perspectives relevant to the life our WSCF today.

- The GA shall put in the center of its daily activity, the study of the Bible, prayers, worship coming from diverse experiences, traditions and contexts
- The GA will celebrate the milestone of the Federation through various cultural expressions and performances through songs, dances, poems, art exhibits, installations sharing the hopes, dreams of the youth.

CELEBRATION, AFFIRMATION AND SOLIDARITY

The General Assembly is a space to celebrate our common and our diverse life of witness and mission to the worldwide community. It is a space to celebrate our contribution to the building of the Kingdom of God, and affirm our on-going task of working for justice, equality and peace in the world.

- The GA shall highlight the work of the movements towards responding to the challenges in their localities, encouraging and providing space to share their stories, their work and their hopes to the global space
- The GA will bring our collective voice as we advocated and stood in solidarity with the marginalized, discriminated and the poor
- The GA shall demonstrate its commitment to justice and peace by expressing solidarity with the churches and migrants in Germany.
- Celebration of the 125th WSCF anniversary. A special logo of the GA and anniversary, a branding to accompany every email related to WSCF and the Assembly starting in 2020 January.

2. THEME OF THE ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly gathers under a theme reflecting yearning of the world and the ecumenical youth movement at the moment the Assembly.

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

The theme speaks strongly of WSCF identity as one ecumenical movement composed of diverse traditions, background and contexts. Ephesian 4:4 and Romans 12:12 reminds us that unity in Christ Jesus is our hope in times of challenges and difficulties. We are called to be one in our spirit, mind and action in the building of the Kingdom. We are called to prophesize and proclaim hope in the coming 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.

Confronted with trials and tribulations, we turn to God, our source of hope, liberation and peace. Today, we long to hear the message of hope for the future. Hope that is built on foundation in today’s work for justice, equality and peace, hallmarks of God’s reign here on Earth. A hope that is not void of our understanding of the root-causes of poverty, fragmentation, disunity, violence and war. A hope that is truly based on actions resisting Empire, speaking truth to power and making them accountable, working for justice, equality and peace in the world.

Jurgen Moltmann, German Reformed theologian introduced to WSCF in its 1968 Turku General Conference a Theology of Hope, a concept that is inclusive of the secular understanding and theological meaning of Hope. Fifty years later, we continue to find relevance from Moltmann’s theology in discerning our mission in today’s world. “Those who hope in Christ,” Moltmann wrote then, “can no longer put up with reality as it is, but begin to suffer under it, to contradict it. Peace with God means conflict with the world, for the goad of the promised future stabs inexorably into the flesh of every unfulfilled present.” Such hope, he continued, “makes the Church the source of continual new impulses towards the realization of righteousness, freedom and humanity here in the light of the promised future that is to come.”¹

WSCF is going through renewal and transformation. The past quadrennial (2016 to 2019) of organizational transition highlighted the challenge of working together towards a common goal in the context of diverse organizational culture and structures. WSCF needs to change if it is to adapt to changing times, new challenges and continue its prophetic mission in the world.

The context in which WSCF hold its 37th General Assembly in Europe is significant in examining its new vision and mission in the coming years. Thirty (30) years ago in Chantilly France, the 30th WSCF GA gathered under the theme, “*You Shall Be My Witnesses: Student Witness in Pluralist Societies.*” In a post-colonial and post-globalization era, we seek understanding of the challenges faced by young people in today’s world.

¹ https://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/50-years-after-theology-of-hope-jurgen-moltmanns-vision-continues-to-inspire#_ftn2

Today, radical extremism, xenophobia and racism are rising in different parts of the world. The growth of right-wing movements, with populist political agenda calls us to discernment as a global ecumenical family to respond to emerging social realities, to violation and threats to basic and fundamental human rights of people in the world today. The increasing role and influence of Christian Fundamentalism serving anti-rights political agendas should prompt us to re-examine our faith imperatives in times of political change. The global ecumenical family cannot be silent at this time of turmoil. We are called to task by our Faith in God and discipleship to Jesus Christ, to be one with our churches, faith communities in welcoming the strangers and extending radical hospitality to the migrants, refugees, and those marginalized by unjust systems, seeking hope for a new life.

Cooptation of media, especially social media by corporate interest threatens democratic systems, freedom of expression and sovereignty. In some countries in the Global South, trans-nationalization and financialization of speculative economy has become a tool to circumvent people's rights to economic self-determination and sovereignty in emerging economies.

We live in a world of increased risk and vulnerability of young people due to unemployment, inequalities, poverty and hunger, corruption, migration, war and conflict. 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 unacceptable 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 according to the International Labor Organization (ILO).²

3. GA PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The General Assembly will have 4 Program Components or building blocks spread throughout the five-day program of the Assembly. Each component corresponds to the constitutional function and objectives of the Assembly and major activities that will lead to the achievement of the objectives of the GA.

1. Organizational and Governance

- Chairperson's Address
- Treasurer's Report
- Regional Reports
- General Secretary's Report
- Centennial Fund Report
- Presentation and adoption of the Strategic Plan 2020-2024
- Elections and installation of the officers and regional representatives to the ExCo
- Approval the General Secretary's appointment
- Amendment of the WSCF Constitution

² Executive Summary, Youth and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2018UN World Youth Report

2. Bible, Theology and Worship

- Opening and Closing Worship
- Daily Bible Study
- Daily prayers
- Keynote Address

3. Witness for Justice and Peace

- Thematic Panel Presentations and Workshops
- Visits and conversations with local groups and communities
- Statements and Resolutions

4. Community Building and Fellowship

- Welcome and opening event
- Inter-cultural presentations
- Pop-up shows, exhibits and performances
- Singing and dances
- Senior friends fellowship
- Story-telling and poetry
- Celebration of 125th anniversary of WSCF – with a special event

4. METHODOLOGY

The GA shall be a space of discernment, dialogue and interaction of the delegates, guests and all the participants coming to the GA.

1. Table Groups as Home Groups
2. Regional caucuses
3. Listening sessions in plenary
4. Business sessions in plenary
5. Workshops
6. Panel Presentations
7. Cultural expressions
8. Exposure Visits
9. Women's Pre-Assembly

5. THE VENUE OF THE ASSEMBLY

The WSCF General Assembly is to convene at the Zwinglikirche in Berlin, Germany. This was the decision made by the WSCF Executive Committee following its Jakarta meeting last June 2018. The delegates will be accommodated at the Berlin OstKreuz Youth Hostel, located 1.7 km from the Zwinglikerk.

Built in 1908, the Zwinglikirche named after the Swiss reformer Huldreich Zwingli, is part of the Evangelical church of Boxhagen Stralau in the southeast of Berlin. It is located in a very vibrant and lively district of Friedrichshain. It is part of the EKD or the Evangelical Church of Germany.

6. TIME-TABLE OF THE GA (See Annex 1)

7. BUDGET (See Annex 2)