

WSCF students grapple with migration injustice

WSCF students meeting in Mexico City have committed themselves to uphold the humanity and rights of migrants and to struggle against global systems that cause migration injustice. Coming together for an intensive ten-day WSCF programme on "Migration, Movements and Justice", students from 16 countries have released a global plan of action for the world's students. The solidarity plan affirms the dignity and right to movement of all human beings, denounces criminal and state violations of migrants' rights and calls for global partnership building and critical analysis of migration. The plan challenges the world's students to listen first and foremost to the voices of migrants and "to critique the global economic system, international financial institutions and economic structures as the major causes of migration injustice and to look for just alternatives". Meeting at the Lutheran Centre, Mexico City from 12-21 September, the programme of workshops, lectures and multimedia presentations led participants into a deeper understanding of the causes and forms of migration and the complex hazards that people face as they migrate. International and local experts introduced examples and analysis of human trafficking, forced migration due to poverty or armed conflict and the abuse of migrants and refugees through expulsion, exclusion and imprisonment by nation states. Each form of migration was presented within the context of social, political and economic factors that compound the vulnerability of people on the move, particularly looking at the case of women and children who fall prey to both criminal and judicial abuse during migration. The programme was resourced throughout with Biblical and theological perspectives, which challenged participants to understand that all people can be considered migrants and that as Christians "we are all the sons and daughters of a wandering Aramean".



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▲ Participants gather round the "Migration, Movements and Justice" banner during the 2007 Global Programme in Mexico City this September. In the inner arc (from left) are: Patrick Fennig (USA), Cecilia Medina (Ecuador), Gilbert Mulimbi (Democratic Republic of Congo), Torbjørn Askeveld (Norway), Dohun Lee (South Korea), Sonja Kosunen (Finland), Leni Valeriano (Philippines), Dan Gonzalez Ortega (Mexico) and Adèle Djomo Ngomedje (Cameroon). In the outer arc (from left) are: Maria Cachacas Ramos (Bolivia), Monica Bazi (Lebanon), Israel Fernández (Mexico), Andrew Karam (Egypt), Sandra Hernández (Mexico), Marcelo Leites (Uruguay), Nina Nayoan (Indonesia) and Erica Young (Canada). Standing behind: Pedro Jimenez Vivas (Mexico), Juan Luis Loza Leon (Mexico).

A highlight of the programme was the presentation on trends in global migration by former WSCF Latin America and Caribbean Secretary Mr. Juan Artola, now Director of the International Migration Organisation in Mexico. Seminars introduced perspectives on women & migration (Dr. Carmen Fernandez), global migration patterns (Dr. Valentino Morales) and the psychological effects of migration on children (Ms. Sonja Kosunen). Leopoldo Cervantes-Ortiz offered theological reflections and Bible studies were led by Rev'd Dr José Ramon Alcantara and Ms. Elisabeth Hernández. FIM intern Mr Luis Flores shared personal stories and insights from his accompaniment work with Guatemalan migrants in Mexico. For

Filipino SCMer Leni Valeriano, the problem of migration was already very real from the Philippines, yet the conference helped her see the broader picture; "the presentations helped me see the wider aspects of the roots of "forced migration" as a worldwide concern. I realised that other movements like the labour movement, the peasant movement and those defending rights and involved in justice issues should take up the issues of migrants", she said. Participants heard directly from migrants through a video made by the local SCM - MEC por la Equidad.. The video showed Latin American migrants telling their stories of migration into and out of Mexico, from Central America in the south and across the Mexico-US border. (cont. pg 2)

WSCF students grapple with migration injustice continued...

Women and men spoke of the terrible hardships that they had suffered in their attempts to pass into southern Mexico. In some cases women and children had been robbed, abducted and forced into prostitution. In others, family members had been killed or disfigured in their attempts to cross the border by illegally boarding trains. Lebanese SCMer Monica Bazi described the stories as "heartbreaking", especially the incident where a child lost an arm in a near fatal train accident. US student Patrick Fennig was moved by the human face of migration he encountered, "In the U.S. immigration is a big issue, but... the stories of these people are never heard. Their lives are never taken into account by politicians. By watching the videos I was able to see a real face...."

"Everytime I see a migrant in the U.S. now, I remember what they have gone through to get here. I sometimes feel helpless about what to do. But I have to remember, that treating someone like an important human being is the most anyone can do for others. This is the ultimate respect. With it comes changes. Changes in the way we view ourselves, changes in the way we act as the Body of the world, changes in the way the world moves"

Each student presented research on migration from their own context, focusing on local issues and the response of organisations working for migrants' rights. Lebanese student Monica Bazi was shocked by the stories of forced migration in North Asia shared by Korean SCMer Dohun Lee and by the reality of border harassment that the African participants had encountered - even on their way to Mexico. It all led her back to the fundamental problem of how we view the "other",

"...it made me realize that people will always be viewed as foreigners to others. This makes me go back and ask the

question, 'What do we need in order to view an individual as a friend and not as a stranger?' There should be no difference among human beings, especially if we focus on Christianity. Jesus accepted all and welcomed all to His Kingdom"

Theology and Biblical migrations

Biblical and theological studies underpinned the concept of migration as an age-old human phenomenon shared by all peoples. Students analysed pivotal Biblical stories of migration including those of Israel in Egypt, Ruth and Naomi's story and the flight of the Holy Family. The studies brought out the Abrahamic tradition of hospitality and the Gospel imperative to care for the stranger. According to Cecilia Medina (Ecuador), the theology grounded all the discussions, "The theological reflections took human beings and their dignity as the primary focus; to that perspective, we added socio-political, gender and economic insights to be able to discern that we are dealing with human lives and that the impact of the issue reaches beyond the individual" she said. For Torbjørn Askevold (Norway), the theological reflections issued a challenge, "We have to acknowledge that migrants, no matter what race, culture or religion, are created in the image of God and carry the Face of Christ. This lays out an imperative that is, as I see it, unavoidable to anyone thinking ethically about the

responsibility of living in a developed and rich society", he said. For Torbjørn, these concepts stood in stark contrast to some of the anti-immigration rhetoric heard from "pro-Christian" factions in Europe, "The meta-understanding of the "Christian tradition" is that it's under attack by immigrants, and that we have to kick them out, to shield our Christian heritage. What kind of Christian values does this discourse reflect? What about the tradition of Abrahamic hospitality? What about the way Jesus treated foreigners and outcasts from society? Isn't this a prime example of Christian values? If we are not living out our values, why are they worth protecting?". Thus far, several participants have reported on new projects and actions on migration issues they have taken up since their return home. Torbjørn showed the MEC Mexico film at Norwegian SCM's national conference to share the realities of migration and to inspire his peers back home to act for change. Back in the US, Patrick Fennig joined "Students for Economic Justice" who are currently supporting immigrant workers to fight unfair labour conditions against the US food-chain Burger King. Three students were invited to contribute to the WCC Global Platform on Migration in November, while others have returned with new energy and passion to their communities. The WSCF Migration Solidarity plan can be found on the WSCF global website www.wscfglobal.org under WSCF News "WSCF students call for action against unjust migration". ■



▲ Juan Luis Loza Leon and Marcelo Leites listen in as Sandra Hernández puts forward her perspective on Latin America and Caribbean migration issues at the WSCF programme in Mexico City this September.

WSCF strengthens global operations staff

WSCF's Inter-Regional Office has strengthened its global operations staff with an appointment to the new position of Global Project Manager.

In 2005 and 2006 the Federation saw the lowest Geneva Office staffing levels in memory, perhaps since WWII when the General Secretary Robert Mackie was evacuated to Toronto, leaving Suzanne de Diétrich and Marie-Jean de Haller to maintain the office. Current General Secretary Michael Wallace initiated the new Project Manager position to increase the capacity of the Federation's global administration, "We have had a deliberately low level of staffing to counter-balance funding reductions for administration and organisational costs", he said. To date the staff reduction strategy has proved successful, but according to Michael, the global administration now needs to be strengthened, "The time is right for WSCF to rebuild our global administration in line with the increased confidence and activity of the Movement at the global level", he said. According to Mr Wallace, the Project Manager position will play a key part in improving working relationships with movements and partner organisations. The role will also increase WSCF's capacity to carry out the necessary research,

preparation and follow-up for global programmes. As well as global project work, the Project Manager will be responsible for managing and developing WSCF's official UN and NGO relationships and will oversee the Ecumenical Assistance Programme. The position was advertised in June 2007 and in November, Ms Christine Housel (38) (USA) was appointed. Ms. Housel comes to the role with a strong background in organising, editing and communications work, as well as proven ability to work in different cultural settings. Her previous roles have included positions as an interfaith programme secretary, director of youth events for the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe, seminar and networking co-ordinator for the Geneva-based "Wisdom at Work" programme and communications consultant to the UN Indigenous Representatives. As a young graduate Christine spent two years teaching English in China. Christine describes herself as a "results-oriented manager and team-builder with a long time focus on students and young people" and is enthusiastic about working for "an organisation that stands for and believes in so many of the things I care about - social justice, spirituality and the empowerment of young people in their Christian mission". Christine holds a



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▲ WSCF Project Manager: Christine Housel

BA in philosophy from Wheaton College, Illinois and an M.Div in Theology from Yale Divinity School, New Haven, Connecticut. To contact WSCF Project Manager Christine Housel, email chh@wscf.ch or phone her on + 41 22 791 6729.



Federation reviews Ecumenical Assistance Programme

WSCF is undertaking an in-depth review of one of its oldest and most valued forms of support to student movements, the Ecumenical Assistance Programme (EAP). Originating from post WW I assistance to destitute students in Europe, the Ecumenical Assistance Programme has evolved into the Federation's primary means of supporting projects of national Student Christian Movements. Each two-year cycle of EAP grants enables students to carry out relief work, movement building and development projects in their local contexts. German aid and development agency Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (EED) is the principal supporter of the programme, contributing around 200,000 US dollars per annum to support the thirty projects funded through EAP. In 2007 EED requested an evaluation of EAP and WSCF welcomed the opportunity to engage in the review

as a strategic and learning exercise. 30,000 Euro was allocated from the EAP budget for an external evaluation. The beginnings of the review are now underway, with the hope that its findings and learnings can be fed into the planning of the 2009-2010 EAP cycle. EAP has recently funded projects focused on youth and women's leadership formation, HIV/AIDS prevention and destigmatisation, ecumenical and inter-faith dialogue, capacity building, human rights advocacy and peace and reconciliation training. Movements who have offered their time and energy to take part in the review thus far include SCMs in Liberia, Uganda, Nigeria, India, Sri Lanka, Brazil, Cuba, Jordan and Bangladesh. The intention is that the review will include the participation of EAP project leaders, students involved in the projects, individuals from affected communities, churches who have

involvement and anyone else who has a stake in the project. WSCF Project Manager Christine Housel is overseeing the evaluation and has high hopes for a number of positive outcomes, "The review process looks exciting as a way to better understand and meet the needs of grassroots movements as they develop and seek to fund relevant projects in their communities. WSCF hopes the review will bring forward new processes and support mechanisms to improve the EAP for those involved at every level." she said. To contact WSCF for more details on how to participate in the evaluation process, please email Christine Housel at chh@wscf.ch ■

Egypt welcomes WSCF leaders

WSCF leaders gathered in Egypt this June to steer the Federation's global work and encounter the churches, culture and history of Egypt. Twenty-four WSCF students and staff members met in Alexandria, Egypt for a nine-day Executive Committee (ExCo) meeting where they shared global and regional reports, put in place global policies, studied and strategised together. First time ExCo delegate Gloria Lae Joseph (Sudan) was impressed by the energy for work among students she found in Egypt, both in the local churches and in the meeting itself, "God's work is present in all the activities and everyone there had a passion for God's work and wanted to be genuinely used to serve others, not just to lead", she said. ■

Coptic churches bless WSCF's work

Egypt's national ecumenical and church leaders welcomed ExCo and spoke of their work amongst youth and students. ExCo met with leaders of the Coptic Evangelical Church, the Coptic Catholic Church, the Middle East Council of Churches General Secretary Mr Guirgis Saleh, staff of the Bible Society of Egypt, Bishop Mouneer Anis, Episcopal Bishop of Egypt and Primate of Jerusalem and the Middle East, as well as His Holiness Pope Shenouda of the Coptic Orthodox Church. Each church or organisation hosted the ExCo delegates and offered their blessings upon the work of the Federation.

The ExCo meeting was enriched by presentations from local experts on Egyptian Biblical history, Egyptian church history and the spiritual heritage of desert monasticism. ExCo members deepened their exposure to the cultural and faith history of Egypt with visits to an Orthodox monastery, St Mark's Cathedral Alexandria and the historic Alexandria Library. ■

WSCF regions share news and views

The Asia-Pacific region reported on their recent training programmes in leadership, human rights organising, peace building and women's empowerment. In the region, WSCF has lately developed solidarity programmes and campaigns in response to human rights crises in the Philippines and Indonesia.

WSCF Middle East activities offer young



▲ Chairperson Dr Ken Guest presents WSCF's gift to His Holiness Pope Shenouda III, Head of the Coptic Orthodox Church, as Bishop Moussa, Bishop for Youth Ministry in the Coptic Orthodox Church looks on. ExCo was welcomed by His Holiness at an official reception in the Patriarchate in Cairo this June.

people hope in many countries where mistrust and hatred between religious and ethnic groups has been made more difficult by last year's Israeli bombings and the war in Iraq. In this context where Middle East Christians find themselves the misplaced targets of anti-Western sentiment, WSCF programmes have focused on Arab Christian identity, interfaith journey and Christian-Muslim dialogue.

In Europe, WSCF has taken up the themes of violence against women, migration, inter-faith dialogue and family. Recent programmes have addressed issues of homelessness, globalisation, anti-Semitism, spiritual activism and domestic violence. The North America region has built support for SCM in university ministry networks throughout the US and Canada, established the new regional secretary position and worked on ecumenical cooperation for peace. In the Latin America and Caribbean region, the focus has been on movement building in Bolivia, Nicaragua and El Salvador and the region's programme on theology and development, gender and ecumenism.

WSCF Africa Region has focused on youth leadership training, as the key facet in its long-term strategy against HIV/AIDS, armed conflicts, unemployment and poverty within the continent. Recent

programmes have included a focus on HIV/AIDS and economic justice, capacity building and youth mobilisation for peace. ■

New guidelines set for global work

Global reports to ExCo recounted the work of the Ecumenical Assistance Programme, General Secretary, Treasurer and Chair and Vice-Chairs and the work of the Inter-Regional Women's Co-ordinator. Global work has focused on themes of Empire and migration, with work carried out in communications, donor relations, fundraising and global programmes.

ExCo received and adopted new guidelines for identifying and dealing with sexual harassment at global meetings. The new policy outlines pastorally appropriate responses to incidents of sexual harassment, ranging from counselling and dialogue through to expulsion of the harasser.

ExCo has set up a committee to develop WSCF archives policy and to maintain awareness of archives management issues. The committee includes the Rev'd Dr Thomas Wieser, Ms. Gillian Strong and Yale Divinity School Library Archivist Ms. Martha Smalley.

ExCo has directed a gender justice audit to



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▲ WSCF leaders pictured at the June 2007 ExCo meeting in Alexandria are: Front row: (from left) John Milad, Michael Wallace, Necta Montes Rocas, Nina Nayoan, Ingjerd Jøssang, Adèle Djomo Ngomedje, Sunita Suna and Milanya Mahfouz. Middle row: Brandon Gilvin, Youhana Kamal Shawky, Elias El-Halabi, Carla Khijo, Hanna Tervantko, Gillian Strong, Trayce Stewart, Gabriela Miranda Garcia, Georgine Kengne Djeutane, Yarkus Pérez Gandara. Back row: Udan Fernando, Anucharn Siroros Tik, Faisal Faoud, Kendra Dunbar, Ken Guest, Gloria Lae Joseph, Dan Gonzalez Ortega and Thorsten Roerbaek.

be carried out throughout the Federation. The audit will focus on structural inequalities that women face in the SCMs and WSCF. It will then identify key areas where changes can be made to empower women and women's leadership. ExCo formed a committee to spearhead the audit, convened by Georgine Kengne Djeutane and Necta Montes Rocas.

Several options on closer collaboration with Frontier Internship in Mission (FIM) came before ExCo. The meeting affirmed FIM's radical approach to mission and committed

the Federation to remain in conversation on closer ties between the two organisations in the future.

ExCo farewells staff

Three staff members were at ExCo for the final time and were formally thanked and farewelled from their current roles; Ms. Sunita Suna (Inter-Regional Women's Co-ordinator), Rev'd Hanna Tervantko (Europe Secretary) and Rev'd Brandon Gilvin (North America Secretary). The

departing staff were each offered the traditional WSCF gift of a "channe" (pewter tankard from Geneva). Students, officers and WSCF staff travelled to the meeting from Sri Lanka, Argentina, Switzerland, Kenya, Costa Rica, Norway, Lebanon, Canada, Hong Kong, Chile, Denmark, Thailand, USA, Hungary, UK and Timor Leste.

The final meeting of this Executive Committee will take place in Montréal, July 2008 immediately prior to WSCF's 34th General Assembly. ■

Endowment pursues proactive approach to growth

WSCF's Centennial Fund has taken a major step in its fund building work for the Federation's future. Meeting in May 2007, the Centennial Fund Board of Trustees decided to engage a full-time professional fundraiser whose task will be to reconnect WSCF with its massive potential base of financial supporters. The Centennial Fund has made positive growth in 2007, with added speed due to the work of fundraising consultants Robert Brukner (Canada) and Julie Wityk (US). Current pledges made over the last six months are set to raise the Fund's total over two million dollars by the close of

this year.

A new development for WSCF has been to establish named funds in honour of highly significant figures in the Federation's life. The first such fund has been established in honour of Marie-Jean de Haller (Coleman), Swiss (and Canadian) senior friend and WSCF staff member, renowned for her ministry of reconciliation as well as for her Biblical and theological scholarship. Funds are currently being established in honour of WSCF luminaries Philip Potter, Shiozuki Kentaro, Ted Scott, Milan Opočenský and

and Suzanne de Diétrich.

The Board's 2007 allocations went to the Ecumenical Assistance Programme and the 2007 ExCo meeting.

Two outstanding WSCF senior friends were welcomed as new Trustees this May. The new Trustees are Prof. Bungaran Saragih (Indonesia), academic and former cabinet minister and the Rev'd Jorge Domingues (US/Brazil), currently the head of evangelization, church growth and mission work for the United Methodist Church USA. ■

WSCF enhances global human rights advocacy

WSCF is to increase its global human rights advocacy with the establishment of a new human rights and solidarity internship.

A Geneva-based intern will soon start work alongside global staff to build networks, represent WSCF, lobby at the United Nations and with international human rights NGOs and global ecumenical organisations. The internship is part of WSCF's work to enhance engagement with the UN and international NGOs, which comes in response to the directive of the 2004 General Assembly.

Ms. Varsha Vijayakumar (22) has been appointed to the internship, with the support of the Global Ministries division of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ in the USA. Global Ministries Executive Dr Peter

Makari is pleased to renew cooperation with WSCF, building on previous WSCF partnerships in the Middle East, Europe and the Inter-Regional Office, "We are excited at this opportunity to renew our relationship with WSCF and to add a new dimension to it through the Geneva-based human rights internship....We are delighted that Varsha has come forward to take up this opportunity that fits so well with both WSCF and Global Ministries' priorities of fostering young leadership through international ecumenical service", he said. Varsha was attracted to the role through her own commitment to human rights, "My particular interest in human rights advocacy and lobbying lies in my belief that human potential should never be oppressed or destroyed when there is the power to protect it and allow it to flourish" she said.

Varsha hopes the internship will lead her into a better understanding of the international human rights arena, "The human rights and solidarity internship seems a perfect fit for me...I have the qualifications and I am looking for practical experience to direct my future plans in best applying myself to the field", she said. The human rights intern has a one-year term which is extendable for a further year. Ms. Vijayakumar will take up the role from early December 2007. ■



▲ Varsha Vijayakumar

© WSCF/V. Vijayakumar.

Canadian senior friends step up support for WSCF

Canadian senior friends of WSCF have made a new commitment to work for the future of the Federation.

In October 2007, a new body entitled WSCF Canada was set up to establish a national network for senior friends, raise funds for all levels of the Federation and provide means for other contributions such as senior friends' events, hosting students and starting new SCM chapters.

Prominent Canadian former senator, church leader and ecumenist, the Very Rev'd, the Hon. Dr Lois Wilson is founding Chairperson of WSCF Canada. She believes now is the key time to step up support for the Federation, "it is particularly important to support

the WSCF at this point in time, as the collective memory of its historic ground-breaking work, held by senior friends, will begin to fade or disappear as time passes. To sustain that important work and give it life in the future, it is critical to establish a sustained and reliable financial base of support in the shape of an endowment within the next decade. Although it is a student movement and therefore without adequate financial resources, the WSCF has always been on the cutting edge of ministry and has demonstrated itself to "be the church before the church", she said.

The WSCF Canada executive includes Mr. Ken Wyman (Vice-Chairperson), Mr. David McKee (Treasurer), Mr. Robert

Brukner (Secretary), Ms. Nancy Whitla and Ms. Sheilagh McGlynn. Honorary members include Prof. Eva Kushner, the Rev'd Prof. C. Douglas Jay and Prof. John Coleman.

Centennial Fund President the Rev'd Werner Gebert and WSCF General Secretary the Rev'd Michael Wallace sent greetings to the inaugural meeting, commending the Canadian senior friends on taking this positive step and offering them the appreciation and support of WSCF and the Centennial Fund Board. WSCF Canada asks that Canadian senior friends around the world contact them with their details via Lois Wilson at <lm.wilson@utoronto.ca>. ■

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◀ WSCF ExCo members learn from the monastic heritage of Egypt at the Deir el-Suryan Monastery, Wadi Natrun, during their meeting this June. Pictured from left are: Gloria Lae Joseph (Sudan), Ingjerd Jøssang (Norway), Trayce Stewart (USA), Sunita Suna (India), Gillian Strong (Canada) and Brandon Gilvin (USA).

Federation prepares for prophetic assembly 2008

W^{SCF} is preparing to raise up a new generation of prophetic leaders at its 34th General Assembly next August. Taking its theme from the words of the prophet Joel, "Your sons and daughters shall prophesy", the 2008 global gathering of students is set to draw out a prophetic vision for the world and the Federation's future from amongst a multitude of perspectives. Over 200 student delegates, WSCF staff and resource people will work together over the nine-day conference to articulate the hopes and dreams of the world's Student Christian Movements and put plans in place towards a better future. Challenging theological and socio-political analysis of contemporary issues will be engaged in by the delegates during the plenaries, commissions, Bible studies and experiential learning components of the assembly to empower them to speak out as prophets in today's global context. The 34th General Assembly will take place from August 1 - 9, 2008 in Montréal, Quebec hosted by SCM Canada.

Prophetic mission takes direction

Expert scholars and practitioners in the fields of Biblical study, community

development and activism will resource and challenge students in four of the Federation's primary fields of engagement. Four commissions entitled "Raising Prophets", "Prophecy in Action", "Radical Renewal" and "Making the Vision Real" will shape the assembly. The commissions will focus on ecumenical leadership formation; advocacy and solidarity; theological and Biblical analysis and capacity building and will produce concrete recommendations for the student movements to carry into their social justice, education and development activities. Some areas to be covered are: inter-faith dialogue, ecumenical leadership training, HIV/AIDS education, politics of development, climate change, contextual and liberation theologies, women doing theology, political and community organisation and movement building.

Senior friends called to global gathering

A global senior friends' gathering will take place in Montréal from August 4-8 alongside the assembly. The senior friends' event aims to renew WSCF links and energy between friends from different countries and with current students. The gathering will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the

historic World Student Conference in Turku, 1968. For details on the global senior friends' event please contact Dr Christine Ledger or Rev'd Alice Hageman via: chrisledger@netspeed.com.au; alh@theworld.com

Gender justice in focus from the outset

Movements entitled to an assembly delegate are required to put forward both a female and a male candidate, so that gender balance can be ensured within the voting body of the assembly. Prior to the assembly, women's and men's pre-assemblies will meet over two days to inspire a renewed awareness of gender justice in the Federation's life and mission, which delegates will then bring forth into the main assembly. The women's pre-assembly will focus on women's leadership empowerment, while the men's pre-assembly will focus on gender and power analysis in WSCF, the church and ecumenical movement. Patriarchy, men and violence will be the themes for men's Bible studies and discussion groups.

Call to raise new Federation leaders

Students attending the assembly will elect new leaders to implement their vision over the coming years. The Federation's leadership search process is now underway, scanning the world's young ecumenical leaders for the best qualities of commitment, competence and understanding of the Federation's mission necessary in the officers and global staff of the Federation. Current WSCF Vice-Chairperson Mr Udan Fernando is chairing the process, which will identify appropriate women and men to take up the roles of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson(s), Treasurer and Co-Secretaries General/General Secretary. All officer positions are voluntary, yet demand a strong commitment to availability and responsibility for the achievement of administrative and supervisory tasks at the global level of the Federation. Expressions of interest for any of the positions above are welcome through direct contact with Mr Fernando at udan@sltnet.lk ■



▲ Students from the 2007 "Migration, Movements and Justice" programme visit the biggest university in Latin America - the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). Pictured from left are: Pedro Jimenez Vivas (Mexico), Erica Young (Canada), Gilbert Mulimbi (Democratic Republic of Congo) and Quinn Gorges (USA).

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WSCF mourns and honours Dr Letty M. Russell

WSCF was sad to learn of the death this July of long-time supporter and friend of WSCF, renowned feminist theologian Dr Letty M. Russell.

Dr Russell (78) has been described as a "monumental" influence on contemporary theology for her groundbreaking work on developing and facilitating theologies of the marginalised. Close friend and colleague, WSCF US Trustee Kathy Todd, recalls Letty as "an extraordinary woman, for her gifts, her strength of purpose, her deep commitment to human liberation and her capacity to change the lives of people who knew her, as well as the direction of institutions". As a leader of the New England SCM in the 1950s and a young Biblical scholar, Letty was very much influenced by Biblical, theological and liturgical materials from WSCF. Kathy Todd recalls how Letty was also formed by contact with WSCF leaders who "embodied international ecumenism, a high level of Biblical and theological scholarship and engagement in peace and justice issues", particularly recalling their meeting with Suzanne de Diétrich and Philippe Maury in 1951. Letty Russell's commitment to justice, inclusion, ecumenism and peace shaped

the many facets of her work.

As a Presbyterian minister in East Harlem Protestant Parish, New York, her solidarity and empowerment of Black and Hispanic Christians helped them to theologically articulate their needs and struggles. She worked to raise the voices of women and marginalised people in academic theology and Biblical studies throughout her 27 years of lecturing at Yale Divinity School (including 16 years as Professor of Theology) and through authoring/editing more than 17 books of feminist and liberationist theologies. Letty Russell was co-ordinator of the Feminist Doctor of Ministry Program at San Francisco Theological Seminary and instituted the Letty Russell Travel Seminar, which engaged students first hand with the realities of theology in developing countries. She worked ecumenically at the international level through the WCC's Faith and Order Commission from 1975-1983 and at home in the YWCA and the NCC USA, in particular through its Task Force on the Bible and Sexism. Dr Russell held a B.A., S.T.B., S.T.M. and a Doctorate in Theology. She is survived by her partner Shannon Clarkson. ■

ExCo consolidates Student World renewal

WSCF's ExCo has decided to build on the recent success of the Federation's journal Student World, with a move to reintegrate it into the work of the WSCF global office. Since being restarted by the Johannesburg ExCo in 2002, the journal has been edited by an international team headed up by Hungarian senior friend and former global ExCo member Szabolcs Nagypál. Four annual issues were produced under Mr Nagypál's direction between 2003 and 2006, after a break in production reaching back to 1969. Established in 1908, Student World was discontinued in 1968 by the 25th General Assembly in Otaniemi, Finland. A 2006 review of WSCF's communications strategy led to the decision to strengthen Student World by re-incorporating it into the publishing operations of the IRO and reverting to the former editorial model with the General Secretary as editor. Student World will continue to provide a voice for the diverse range of ideas that have challenged students to new insights from its pages throughout the years. WSCF is grateful to Szabolcs Nagypál for his leadership and commitment to Student World over the past four years. Mr Nagypál continues to edit and produce publications in the WSCF Europe region and serves at the Békés Gellért Ecumenical Institute in Pannonhalma, Hungary. ■

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Support WSCF

Dear WSCF Supporter, thank you for your interest in and support for the Federation. If you would like to support our work financially, please send a cheque made out to the World Student Christian Federation and post it to us at the Inter-Regional Office address above.

If you prefer you can contribute via a direct electronic transfer to our bank account: Account number: LO790.08.11 Banque Cantonale de Genève. Swift code: BCGECHGGXXX

If you would like to make a contribution toward the long-term movement building fund of WSCF, please make a cheque out to "WSCF Centennial Fund" and post it to the WSCF Inter-Regional Office address listed above.