

WSCF celebrates 110 years of Day of Prayer for Students

WSCF celebrated its 110th annual Universal Day of Prayer for Students (UDPS) this February, with a liturgy highlighting concerns and challenges of students in the 21st century. Students and friends of the Federation around the globe gathered to pray for WSCF and to reflect on the reality of today's students - in the context of increasing commodification and commercialisation of education, glaring inequalities in rights and access to study and the repression of student movements. One of the first ecumenical days of prayer, the Universal Day of Prayer for Students has united Christians in prayer for WSCF and all students since 1898. In their 2008 UDPS call to prayer, the Federation's officers recalled the day's historic significance, **"On the 110th anniversary we are mindful of the importance of this day. We remember that in times of war sometimes the only thing WSCF members could do together was pray. The UDPS has been an act of unity, solidarity and love through many times of turmoil and conflict. In the UDPS we are mindful of the power of prayer, of solidarity and hope"**.

The call to prayer brought to the fore WSCF's movements who are suffering today, as they strive to witness to Christ's justice and peace. "...we are especially mindful of the suffering of SCMs and students in Zimbabwe, Myanmar/Burma, the Philippines, Iraq and Haiti as they witness in their contexts. We pray for students



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▲ **WSCF staff and officers and the WCC Central Committee join in the WSCF Universal Day of Prayer for Students liturgy at the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva. Foreground from right: Moderator of WCC Central Committee Rev'd Dr. Walter Altmann; WCC General Secretary, Rev'd Dr. Sam Kobia; Hon. Mrs Justice Sophia Adjebea Adinyira, Rev'd Motoe Yamada, WSCF officers and staff.**

everywhere who struggle for a better world", the officers wrote. In December 1897, WSCF Chairman Karl Fries and General Secretary John R. Mott issued a stirring call to observe the first UDPS, which was sent to WSCF movements again this year. The 1897 call is fervent and full of hope and vision. Students and churches are implored to wield "the unseen yet irresistible forces of the Prayer Kingdom" for the sake of students, their Christian faith and service to the world. Mott and Fries envisioned a real and tangible impact from the day, recalling for those who would join in prayer that "great national student movements have been born as a result of a concert of prayer, and then

mightily used to impress the Christian life of whole nations". They presented a vision of the globe lifted up and transformed by countless "little bands of Christian students, united in importunate, believing prayer". The call to prayer from 1897 still strikes a chord today, as it appeals to God to empower movements that will offer "holier and more triumphant living and more earnest service for Christ ...; more self-denying and heroic giving of money to the work of Christ; a deepening of the prayer life of the student world; the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Christian organisations of students in all lands, thus saving them from becoming mechanical, formal, worldly and powerless, and enabling their members to bear in their lives the fruit of the Spirit". These sentiments are echoed in the 2008 UDPS prayers of intercession, which pray that WSCF students fully use the opportunities they are given in their studies and as potential agents of positive change, "God, we ask that you enable the Federation to raise up prophets for our day, strengthen its witness for unity, justice and peace, and use it as your instrument among the students of the world".

> story cont. page 2



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◀ **Left: Students from Byumba Health Science and Nursing College celebrate the UDPS at the Cathedral of Saint Paul in Byumba, Rwanda.**

Rwandan movement RAJEPR reports that the 2008 UDPS liturgy was celebrated by units in six schools and tertiary institutions this year, accompanied by an opportunity for students to reflect on the issues affecting higher education and student movements in Rwanda and around the world.

WSCF celebrates 110 years of Day of Prayer for Students continued...

> continued from page 1

2008 reports testify to wide observance of the Day. This February, SCMerS joined in the UDPS liturgy at the Anabaptist Mennonite Church of Floresta, Buenos Aires. They shared in the sense of unity the day's founders had hoped for over a century ago, "Knowing that at the same time thousands of students throughout the world were joined together to pray and reflect on the same cause, gave us strength to continue and to think about new opportunities for our communities", said Argentinean SCMer, Ms. Verónica Biech. WSCF's Armenian movement observed the UDPS at the Holy Katoghikheh Church of Jervezh. Around 180 worshippers celebrated the UDPS alongside the Armenian Holy Apostolic Church's feast of the prodigal son. Celebrant Fr. Tajat Davidian spoke on the pivotal role of positive formation for students and young people, praying that education not be treated as a prize, but as a right and an opportunity. According to Armenian movement member Mr. Ashot Arzoumanian, access to education is a key issue, "Education is very important in Armenian families, yet there are still those who cannot afford it. There are children who cannot go to school because they have no shoes or cannot buy a book. What we pray for is that this situation disappears from any part of the world", he said. In Korea,

members of the Korean Student Christian Federation (KSCF) joined in prayer at Jung-Ang University, Seoul, amidst increasing concerns that Korean universities are heading for a US-style education system. According to KSCF General Secretary Rev'd Oo-Sung Kim, Korean students are struggling with escalating costs of tertiary education which are driven up by a right-wing political agenda, "We realise that the neo-liberal ideology that puts economic pressure on universities and students is the same ideology that places unbearable pressure on the poor", he said. For Korean students, the 2008 UDPS was an opportunity to face these challenges with a sense of the whole Federation behind them. "Sharing in the UDPS we felt its sense of history, knowing that as we pray and work for change we are not alone", said KSCF Programme Co-ordinator Mr. Bang-Joo Doim.

This year's liturgy included hymns written especially for WSCF: 'Where is the Miriam?' by Ms. Shirley Murray and 'A new proclamation of hope' by Rev'd Tim Hurd, both senior friends of Aotearoa New Zealand. During the 2008 liturgy worshippers are invited to reflect on their positive experiences as students and on their hopes for students in the 21st century. In Geneva,

WSCF staff and officers led the Ecumenical Centre community in the UDPS with the participation of WCC Central Committee's 200 members. The liturgy was a memorable moment of the WCC meeting for WCC President and British senior friend Dame Mary Tanner, who enjoyed the opportunity to reflect on her SCM experience and to offer her thoughts to the current generation, "My hope for students today is that they will have great opportunities to reach out across barriers of language, church traditions, cultural traditions and to glimpse together the possibilities of healing and reconciliation and a life together in unity", she said. Young US senior friend Rev'd Motoe Yamada was moved by the UDPS liturgy, which recalled for her the importance of WSCF in her own life. "Without WSCF I wouldn't be here - as a Christian, a minister or a member of the WCC Central Committee", she said. "For me it was inspirational and uplifting to worship with such a diverse group of young voices". The 2008 Universal Day of Prayer for Students liturgy and music appendix can be found in English, French and Spanish on WSCF's global website www.wscfglobal.org
> WSCF in action > WSCF Global Activities > Universal Day of Prayer for Students. ■



◀ This February 17th, WSCF movement in the Democratic Republic of Congo (AJEC) celebrated the UDPS 2008 in Lubumbashi. AJEC senior friends joined students from nine colleges and universities in a service of prayer followed by group reflections on the rights and responsibilities of students in the 21st Century.

Bible Study asks; "How do we listen to young people?"

Following the celebration of the Universal Day of Prayer for Students (UDPS) in Geneva this February, WSCF's staff and officers led the WCC Central Committee in a Bible Study on the UDPS readings, Joel 2: 28-29 and 1 Timothy 4: 11-16. The Bible study asked, "How do we listen for prophecy arising from amongst the young?". WSCF presented young voices from Belarus and Iraq to the meeting. A Belarusian SCMer and WCC steward offered insights into the problems faced by Christian students in Belarus, where all religious activity must be registered by a state department and where anyone who tries to confess their

beliefs without official permission will be prosecuted. "If there are more than five people having an unauthorised Christian service in a private house, the organisers will be punished according to the new Belarusian law regarding religious activity", he said. Because of this situation and the suspicion levelled at Protestant churches, it becomes very difficult even to organise ecumenical events, he said. Other testimonies of young people came from Iraq, with several Iraqi Christian students' descriptions of their life experience read out to the meeting. "After the war we felt things would never go back to life again. With the help of God

I was able to overcome this reality, I started by accepting it and moving on with my life. Being at a WSCF conference gave me new hope and a new will to live and revive many good things in my life. I want such activities to continue endlessly," said Nora, one of the Iraqi students. After hearing the student voices, WCC Central Committee members were invited to discuss where they could find voices of prophecy amongst young people in their own contexts and shared with WSCF their hopes for the prophetic power of young people. ■

General Assembly ready to review, renew and inspire

W^{SCF}'s 34th General Assembly (GA) is ready to engage students in prophetic change as they review the last four years, plan the next four and renew the Federation's leadership. Based on the theme "Your sons and daughters shall prophesy" (Joel 2:28), the assembly will draw delegates from each of WSCF's 105 national Movements for training, listening and empowerment for action as prophets for the 21st Century. The Assembly will be held from August 1-9, 2008 at Collège Jean-de-Brébeuf in Montréal, Canada hosted by SCM Canada and its network of senior friends. GA Host Committee Chairperson Dr. Mario DeGiglio-Bellemare is confident that the GA's programme of cutting edge theology, political analysis and training for civil society development will deliver a truly prophetic response, "Biblical prophecy has nothing to do with predicting the future and everything to do with challenging oppressive structures. When we challenge these structures, we have new visions of what a different world could look like..... Our hope is that when 200 students get together to discuss today's issues of neoliberalism, mounting xenophobia, ecological devastation, and the corporatization of universities, a sense of global solidarity will emerge. This will be the voice of the future, a future that needs to be radically different to what we are living today. This new future is what Jesus called the reign of God", he said. The call to prophesy will come through four GA commissions focused on ecumenical leadership formation, advocacy and solidarity.



theological and Biblical analysis and movement and capacity building. A keynote speech will be offered on the theme by well-known theologian, philosopher and writer Professor Rubem Alves (Brazil) and by senior friend, Canadian Senator Nancy Ruth.

Daily Bible studies will be offered by leaders with a variety of hermeneutical approaches to resource students' engagement with the Biblical texts.

WSCF senior friend and Canadian Senator Nancy Ruth will host the GA Women's Pre-Assembly in the Canadian Senate Chamber where they will learn from the experience of Canadian women political leaders and take the opportunity to dialogue and strategise on women's leadership.

WSCF General Secretary Michael Wallace is confident the GA will offer creative and visionary worship experiences that stand tall in the WSCF tradition of trailblazing ecumenical worship, "I am confident the GA's team of skilled musicians and liturgists will put the Federation once more at the forefront of ecumenical liturgy" he said.

The Assembly will commission new leaders for the Federation. A search process is underway to identify suitable candidates for the positions of global staff and officers. Applications can be found on WSCF's website www.wscfglobal.org.

org under WSCF News 'Federation calls for next quadrennium's leaders'. With programme details at the finetuning stage, the GA preparatory committee is delighted with the strong support of the United Church of Canada, the Anglican Church of Canada, the United Methodist Church USA, WCC, US Trustees of WSCF and by generous donations from individual senior friends. According to Michael Wallace, GA fundraising is advancing well, "However, we still need the financial support of friends of the Federation. Therefore we are asking all WSCF friends to give generously to the 2008 General Assembly Appeal, especially those who have previously attended a WSCF General Assembly or General Committee" he said. ■



WSCF has engaged Canadian liberal arts and management graduate Ms. Jane Sorensen, as full-time Co-ordinator for the 2008 General Assembly. Ms. Sorensen has a background in events management, film production and non-profit sector organising. She will be responsible for GA co-ordination, administration and logistics and can be contacted regarding the GA at ga.coordinator.2008@gmail.com

Jane Sorensen

Global senior friends' gathering takes shape

Once an SCMer, always an SCMer. Such is the experience of many whose lives have been shaped by involvement in the ecumenical student movements that make up WSCF. This is why WSCF senior friends will gather in Montréal, Canada, from 4 - 8 August, 2008 parallel with the 34th WSCF General Assembly. Friends of WSCF are warmly invited to attend, for an opportunity to meet old friends, make new friends in the current student generation, to dream dreams and glimpse visions together. The gathering will coincide with the 40th anniversary of the

World Student Conference held in Turku, Finland in 1968. Two contributors to Turku in 1968 will resource the 2008 conference. Professor Rubem Alves (Brazil) will give the keynote address on "Memories, Dreams and Visions of WSCF". Rev'd Dr Paul Oestreicher (Aotearoa-NZ/UK) will lead Bible studies alongside recent WSCF leaders, including former WSCF Chairperson Professor Wong Wai Ching (Hong Kong) and current WSCF Africa Regional Secretary, Ms. Georgine Kengne Djeutane (Cameroon). The Rev'd Dora Arce-Valentin (Cuba) will co-ordinate

daily worship. Senior friends will meet and work with the current WSCF generation in joint sessions at the WSCF 34th General Assembly on August 7.

A registration form is downloadable from the wscfglobal.org site via WSCF News >'WSCF invites 2008 Senior Friends' Gathering registrations'. To contact Senior Friends Gathering Co-ordinators email Alice Hageman: alh@theworld.com or Chris Ledger: chrisledger@netspeed.com.au ■

Federation sharpens focus on EAP

The Ecumenical Assistance Programme is in the spotlight as the first stage of its evaluation process is completed this April. EAP primary funder, the German Protestant churches' aid and development agency Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (EED), is joining WSCF's movements and leaders to focus attention on the impact and importance of EAP. WSCF's global staff and officers confirmed the value of EAP's role in Federation life at a vision session during their meeting in Geneva this February. "EAP continues to offer fantastic potential for supporting students in making grassroots change", said WSCF's Asia-Pacific Regional Secretary Necta Montes Rocas. Africa Regional Secretary Georgine Kengne Djeutane affirmed the benefit of EAP support to movements in developing countries, "EAP really helps students to carry out their activities and bring about change in their contexts", she said. The evaluation process has begun with a study to assess

and enhance EAP's project monitoring procedures - in line with WSCF's goals and with best practice in aid and development agencies. The hoped-for outcome of this step is to increase WSCF and local SCMs' capacity to accurately identify the value and impact of EAP projects and improve their quality of reporting. A further step will see external evaluators TW Welch & Partners (TWWP) conduct field visits to meet with EAP project organisers and recipients in several countries. They will record local experiences of the EAP through workshops, interviews, focus-group discussions and questionnaires and return the findings to WSCF and EAP's main partner EED. The evaluation is structured to feed findings back into future planning and training for the EAP, in order to strengthen its capacity to serve the movements in their work. TWWP Director Jim Welch is enthusiastic about the evaluation's potential, "We look forward to working with WSCF's highly



▲ EAP in 2007: Palestinian Christian students gather for an Ecumenical Assistance Programme leadership training project in youth movement building, organised by WSCF's Middle East region.

motivated, conscientious and responsible team, not only to help make EAP as effective as possible, but to support WSCF in bringing the programme's management and reporting to the highest possible aid sector standards", he said. ■

Conference commemorates Milan Opočenský

WSCF and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) joined together this Easter week in a conference to honour former WSCF Europe Secretary Milan Opočenský (1931-2007). Hosted by Milan's successor as WSCF's Europe Secretary Alastair Hulbert, the conference took place at Scottish Churches House from 24-28 March, 2008. Fifty-two delegates came together to remember Milan and to address pressing contemporary issues in theology and social justice. Delegate Dr. Milos Ivanis keenly felt Milan's absence from the gathering, but recognised his ideas in the presentations. Dr. Ivanis recalled Milan had once said, 'I am a convinced socialist; disparity between the poor and the rich in

this world is an offence to us Christians". For Milos, Roberto Jordan's conference presentation on The Cassandra Syndrome showed how forty years later, misery is inflicted on the poor of Latin America by the well to do nations "...which is an offence to human decency and to our faith" he said. For British theologian Dr Martin Conway, the Dunblane gathering honoured Milan not only by recalling times spent with him, but in addressing the world economic situation about which Milan had cared so deeply. For Dr. Conway, conference speaker Dr Kim Yong Bok summed up how Milan was remembered, "For me, Milan was *the* theologian of *justice* at the time of the cold war.... For Milan as an

heir of Jan Hus, justice was the foundation of all true community", Dr Kim said. Milan's wife Rev'd Jana Opočenska offered a reflection on Milan's motivations of justice for the poor and marginalised and ecological justice. Words from son Thomas Opočenský gave another insight into Milan's personality, "In basketball terms, you would probably say that he had good forward skills and cared less about defence. He didn't cover his back, he didn't care much about the fallout. In the culture of Central Europe this is not the usual thing for general recognition and fame, but his game was more fun to watch than others". ■

WSCF enhances its global communications

WSCF's Geneva Office has moved its communications work to a new level with the addition of a Communications Intern this March. Coming from his previous role as General Secretary of Uruguayan SCM, Mr. Andrés López (23) has been appointed to assist the WSCF global communications team in the lead up to the 2008 General Assembly. His work includes compilation, translation and editing work on WSCF's global website and for Federation News as well as being

Managing Editor for WSCF's annual journal, Student World. Andrés is keen to contribute to the global life of the Federation, "For me this is a fantastic opportunity to serve the Federation full time, doing what I've studied for and in a totally multi-cultural and ecumenical environment", he said. "I am enjoying the experience I am gaining in my chosen field and at the same time learning more of how WSCF works globally. I hope that I can also bring a Latin America

and Caribbean region perspective to the life of the Geneva office", he said. Mr López will serve as WSCF Communications Intern till September 2008. Andrés can be contacted at wscfcommunications@gmail.com ■



Andrés López

WSCF advocates for women at UN CSW



◀ WSCF's delegates to the UN Commission on the Status of Women are pictured with the young ecumenical women delegates from the National Council of Churches USA delegates, following their joint meeting and liturgy at the CSW this February. Pictured are: (Front from left) Ann Tiemeyer, Tumaini Gurumo, Megan Danielle, Ariel Adamson-Strauss and Amber Dixon. (Back from left) Hellen Tetteh, Lilit Sargsyan, Mikka McCracken, Christine Housel, Emiley McCormick, Barbara Phillips, Valli Boobal Batchelor, Varsha Vijayakumar and Ruth Alerte.

WSCF made a strong contribution to global advocacy at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York this year. Through membership of the Ecumenical Women Coalition (EWC) and in close collaboration with the WCC delegation, WSCF's five young women delegates brought an energetic action-orientated approach to the CSW this February-March. The CSW meets for two weeks each year to monitor and promote the rights of women around the world and to address a specific theme, which in 2008 was "Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women". WSCF's 2008 CSW team attended advocacy training, contributed to NGO events and lobbied CSW members on changes to the CSW final document. WSCF's delegation was led by global Project Manager Ms. Christine Housel, joined by Human Rights Intern Ms. Varsha Vijayakumar and women SCMers from Armenia - Ms. Lilit Sargsyan (Varzhapetyan), Ghana - Ms. Hellen Tetteh and Tanzania - Ms. Tumaini Gurumo. Lilit Sargsyan reflected on the value of WSCF's presence amongst the Ecumenical Women, "I think the involvement of younger and older people in these processes is mutually beneficial: the older generation is encouraged by the zeal and energy of the youth trying to bring justice to the world, while the young are even more encouraged by what has been done before by the amazing people they meet", she said. Alongside the Commission's formal programme of events, a parallel programme provided events offered by Member States, UN entities, international and regional organisations and NGOs. WSCF's delegation contributed speakers to two parallel events, which like the majority of CSW parallel events were held at the UN Church Center. Lawyer and Tanzanian

SCM leader Tumaini Gurumo shared her perspective on education, employment and women's participation in decision-making at the "Ecumenical Women's Challenge to the Financing for Development Agenda" event, while Lilit Sargsyan offered her insights on women's roles in Armenian Orthodox church life at the "Gender Architecture in Religious Institutions" event. For Tumaini it was a great opportunity to recognise the power of solidarity between women, "A highlight of the experience was working together with women from all over the world in one place, all seeking to achieve one goal, which is the empowerment of women", she said. "It is ideal for WSCF to bring women to this event, as we have the benefit of working at the grassroots level, yet with the perspective of a global Federation," she said. In addition to parallel events, the WSCF women lobbied government delegates, informed by the Ecumenical Women's Coalition statement on Financing for Development (FFD). Produced by the WCC's Commission on International Affairs and contributed to by WSCF, the statement challenges the UN's 'Monterrey Consensus' on Financing for Development (FFD) which encourages national governments to "mobilise financial resources for development, poverty eradication and gender equality", through what the statement finds a highly questionable neo-liberal agenda. The ECW statement identifies the negative impact on poor and marginalised women of measures such as financial and trade liberalisation, promotion of foreign investment and conditional aid assistance. The statement elaborates key areas for change in UN and global economic structures to create real people-centred development for gender equality, including progressive taxation,

gender responsive budgeting, protection of social sector spending and external debt cancellation. WSCF's delegation contacted and met with their own countries' CSW members and argued the case for language changes to improve the final UN document. UN Church Center Chaplain, Kathleen Stone was delighted with WSCF's input, "To have young women who are able to articulate the dream God has put on their hearts for the world and to see their faith in a God who will fulfill that dream, is invaluable to those of us who work all the time in this environment. Their rich visions and their willingness to work, to speak and move toward that vision, trying new things such as direct lobbying of governmental representations to the UN, is invaluable. In addition, the governmental representatives themselves listen more attentively to young people who have risen to this level of leadership. This is powerful stuff for political will and change", she said. WCC UN staff Ms. Catherine Bordeau was also heartened by WSCF's actions, "These young women were not trained economists nor activists, but they clearly understood the principle of "see, judge, act." They saw the system set in place by the global governance of international financial institutions; they judged (and many could share their own life experiences) that this was a clear example of systemic injustice; and they chose to engage not only other civil society players but also the very people who make the decisions. They were not intimidated and faced the challenge head on", she said. More information on the WSCF delegation to the CSW will become available at www.wscfglobal.org. ■

WSCF welcomes new regional secretaries

WSCF has recently appointed new staff leaders in the Europe, North America and Middle East regions.

Ms. Jooa Vuorinen (27) was appointed Europe Regional Secretary in January this year. Jooa is excited about sharing the opportunities WSCF offers with the students of Europe, "WSCF has been a life-changing mountain top for me and I hope to be able to provide that experience for other people", she said. A member of the Finnish Orthodox Church, Ms. Vuorinen holds a Master's degree in Orthodox theology and church music. Her engagement with WSCF began in 2005 as a participant in the programmes and leadership of both Orthodox and Lutheran SCMs of Finland and through a WSCF Europe region programme. Jooa was very attracted to the openness and breadth of welcome in WSCF which she describes as "a community in which I feel at home, more than in any other Christian church or community". She served as a member of WSCF's Europe Regional Committee from 2005-2007. Prior to joining WSCF, Jooa was an active member of Syndesmos (the World Fellowship of Orthodox Youth) and had worked as an intern at their headquarters in Athens. Jooa is committed to WSCF's ecumenical vision of unity in diversity, which she finds both radical and energetic, "WSCF is an organisation which I really believe is one of the driving forces of the ecumenical journey towards unity, as young people we have the will, the dreams and the visions, and we have nothing to lose, so we have a great freedom to make a difference", she said. Jooa can be contacted at WSCF's Europe Regional Office in Budapest (details on page 8) or by email at regionaloffice@wscf-europe.org ■



▲ Ms. Jooa Vuorinen



▲ Mr. Luciano Kovacs

WSCF has appointed social justice activist and former Italian SCMer, **Mr Luciano Kovacs** (38) to the role of North America Regional Secretary. A member of the Waldensian Church, Mr Kovacs comes to the job from a career of theologically driven justice work in Italy and the US. Luciano is excited about the North America region's potential, "I feel it is a ripe time for the WSCF in North America to enter a new phase, to find new energies, to bring students together who want to analyse the world with students from other countries who have a similar eagerness to combine their faith and social justice and to bring about change" he said. Luciano has a long association with the North American region through US ecumenical networks and in particular the Jan Hus Presbyterian Church in New York. He has served at Jan Hus Church in a number of roles, including Social Justice Director (2005-07) and Director of Homeless Outreach and Advocacy (2001-05). Mr Kovacs' professional experience includes work for the International Labour Organisation, the Agape Ecumenical Centre Conference Planning Group and as a WSCF European Region Project Assistant. He has served on WSCF's Europe Regional Committee, participated in WSCF global leadership training in India and attended WSCF's 31st General Assembly (Côte d'Ivoire, 1995). He hopes to bring this kind of experience to students in North America, "As I talk to students, campus ministers and other people involved in the ecumenical movement in the US and Canada, I feel there is a hunger for opportunities to train young student leaders and to expose them to a grassroots, global and diverse body such as the WSCF" he said. Luciano will operate from WSCF's North America Regional Office in New York (details on page 8) and can be contacted by email at wscfna@gmail.com ■

WSCF has appointed ecumenical youth educator **Ms. Elsy Wakil** (34) to the position of Middle East Regional Secretary. She is enthusiastic about taking up the Regional Secretary role and is ready for the challenge of bringing a Christian Arab woman's perspective to the job for the first time. "As the first woman to take up this position, a major challenge will be to integrate the perspective of Christian Arab women into the WSCF mission, to translate this within its work and empower other women as we work to make transformations within both the church and Arab society" she said. A member of the Greek Orthodox Church, Ms. Wakil first joined WSCF through the Orthodox Youth Movement of Lebanon in 1995. Elsy comes to the job from her previous role as Assistant General Secretary for the Middle East Ecumenical Popular Education Programme (2005-2008), where she worked training trainers in Human Rights, Popular Education and Development. She has taught her specialist field of Information Technology in schools and through popular education programmes and has held a number of management and administration jobs, including administrator of the WSCF Middle East Regional Office (1995-2002) and Finance and Administration Manager for Habitat for Humanity, Lebanon. With a wealth of ecumenical experience in the Middle East, Ms. Wakil is looking forward to working with others beyond the region, "I look forward to working at the international level, and to building new understanding between Christian Arab youth and the WSCF community around the globe. This job presents a wonderful opportunity to work in solidarity and partnership with young Christians from around the world and together strive to build a new world in Christ" she said. Elsy will be based in WSCF's Middle East Regional Office in Beirut (details on page 8) and can be contacted by email at wscf-me@inco.com.lb ■



▲ Ms. Elsy Wakil

Funds named for WSCF luminaries make a strong start

The Centennial Fund has welcomed the positive response to its recently inaugurated named funds, which honour former leaders of the Federation.

Marie-Jeanne de Haller Coleman Fund

The Marie-Jeanne de Haller Coleman Fund was the first named fund to be established. Donations to the Fund will generate earnings to uphold core WSCF activities. The Marie-Jeanne de Haller Coleman Fund now stands at over 55,000 USD thanks to donors Dr John Coleman, Bishop K.H. Ting and family, Senator Nancy Ruth, Mr Paul Warner and St George's Cathedral, Kingston, Canada.

Ted Scott Fund

WSCF Canada has instituted a fund in recognition of senior friend Archbishop Ted Scott. The Ted Scott Fund will support the Federation with a focus on his areas of interest including women's empowerment, anti-racism action and social justice. Advisors

to the Ted Scott fund are Archbishop Desmond Tutu and prominent Canadians: former Governor General Rt. Hon Adrienne Clarkson, former Prime Minister Rt. Hon Joe Clark, former cabinet minister Hon. Flora MacDonald and Archbishop Michael Peers.

Suzanne de Diétrich Fund

A memorial fund has been set up in tribute to legendary WSCF Bible study leader, Suzanne de Diétrich. The fund will support WSCF's work in cutting edge Biblical exegesis and hermeneutics training for Christian students.

WSCF senior friend and ecumenical historian Rev'd Dr Thomas Wieser is excited about the fund's potential to invigorate Biblical study throughout the Federation. His founding donation has contributed generously to the Fund which now stands at 90,000 US dollars.

Milan Opočenský Fund

A Milan Opočenský Fund has been set

up in recognition of Milan Opočenský's contribution to the life of the Federation. The fund will support WSCF's work in theological education and currently stands at over 10,000 USD. Contributors include Rev'd Alice Hageman and Dr Yong Bok Kim.

How to make a donation

To make a contribution to a named fund, please send a bank draft in US dollars, Euros or Swiss Francs written as follows: WSCF Centennial Fund (Name of Fund). Please post drafts to the WSCF Inter-Regional Office (address on page 8). Alternately please send drafts or transfers to the Centennial Fund's bank with a note attached informing which fund the donation should be directed to. Address: The WSCF Centennial Fund, Account No. 8869600, Lombard Odier Darier Hentsch & Cie, 11 Rue de la Corratierie, Geneva, PO Box 5215 1211, Geneva 11, Switzerland. ■

Centennial Fund engages professional fundraiser

WSCF's Centennial Fund has taken its fundraising capacity to a new level with the recent appointment of Fund Development Officer, Ms. Marsha Lougheed Paige. Ms Lougheed Paige (35) comes from Trinidad and Tobago and studied at the University of the West Indies to gain a Bachelor of Laws degree. After practising law in Antigua, she studied further to obtain qualifications in public relations and environmental diplomacy. Marsha has previously served as Legal Officer and Human Resources manager for Antigua's sole utility provider and since

arriving in Geneva in 2005 has gained ecumenical experience in a contract carried out for the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance. Marsha brings key skills necessary for fund development, including a proactive and energetic commitment to WSCF's core values and the ability to communicate with those outside its usual sphere. Marsha is enthusiastic at the prospect of working for WSCF, "I have a strong desire to utilise my talents and training to truly make a difference in this world. WSCF offers me an incredible opportunity to operate in a faith-based environment and work with

other committed Christians passionate about living Christ-like lives", she said. Marsha is confident her belief in WSCF and its ideals will make it easy to generate excitement in WSCF's work and its potential. Marsha Lougheed Paige will commence as Fund Development Officer following the Board's meeting in May 2008.



Marsha Lougheed Paige



Action on Zimbabwe: WSCF has joined forces with the World YWCA to keep international ecumenical attention focused on the crisis in Zimbabwe. Pictured here is a section of the WSCF/YWCA organised protest and prayer vigil for Zimbabwe held outside the United Nations headquarters in Geneva on April 28. Earlier in the day WSCF and YWCA led a service at the chapel in Geneva's Ecumenical Centre for justice, peace and healing in Zimbabwe. The two organisations have lobbied the SADC heads of state and government urging action on Zimbabwe, publicly applauded those who prevented the Chinese arms shipment to Zimbabwe and instituted a weekly meeting in the Ecumenical Centre to keep Zimbabwe at the forefront of the ecumenical agenda. Pictured from left are: Mr. Francis Cheongmun Chan Lutheran World Federation (LWF), WSCF General Secretary Rev'd Michael Wallace, and General Secretary of the World YWCA Ms. Nyaradzai Gumbonzvanda. For more on Zimbabwe please see WSCF News on www.wscfglobal.org. ■

Serampore awards Ahn Jae Woong DD.

Eminent Asian ecumenist and former WSCF Asia-Pacific Regional Secretary, the Rev Dr Ahn Jae Woong (68)(Korea) has been awarded a Doctorate of Divinity(DD.) by esteemed Indian theological institution, Serampore College. The DD. was presented to Dr Woong in Tiruvalla, Kerala this February by the senate of Serampore College, in recognition of his contribution to church and society in Asia. Formerly Dr Woong served the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) as General Secretary, and has worked for social justice in Korea and beyond through theology, social development and political action. In his

Tiruvalla convocation address, Dr Woong challenged the ecumenical movement to counteract global domination by Western technologies, ideologies and military force, calling for resistance to global empire, and creative transformation from Asian spiritual perspectives. He is currently president of a Seoul-based NGO that works to generate employment for under-privileged Koreans. Former WSCF Chairperson D.T. Niles (1908-1970) and former WSCF Vice-Chairperson M. M. Thomas (1916-1996) are previous recipients of the Serampore DD. ■

Cuyo University honours Mauricio López

Former WSCF Latin America and Caribbean Regional Secretary Dr Mauricio Amílcar López (1919-1977) has been posthumously honoured by Argentina's National University of Cuyo, where a permanent memorial lecture series has been established in his name. A distinguished philosopher, theologian, ecumenist and human rights supporter, Dr López made "an outstanding contribution to Latin American intellectual and moral life" according to biographer Mr. Alejandro Paredes. The first Director of the University of San Luis in 1973, Dr López was dismissed in 1976 for his advocacy of Argentinians under threat of violent political suppression by the military. On New Year's day 1977, he was captured in his home by military commandos and became a member of Argentina's 30,000 recorded "disappeared", around 10,000 of whom were university academics and intellectuals. Dr López's death was a harsh loss to the ecumenical movement and to WSCF, which he had served as LAC Regional Secretary between 1955-63. Cuban senior friend Rev'd Dr. Adolfo Ham recalls Mauricio's work with Cuban SCM, "He shared his wisdom from his position in the vanguard of socio-political thinking at that time. But he also strengthened the Cuban SCM through his support of students and the movement as a whole. He was a peaceful and gentle man", he said. Dr López contributed to ecumenical dialogue and social justice programmes in Argentina and internationally, including as Vice-President of ISAL (Church and Society in Latin America) and as a WCC Commissioner for Dialogue with Other Religions and Ideologies of our Time. Since the 1990s Dr López has been honoured by a number of awards for human rights defenders in the Americas, including annual prizes awarded by San Luis University and the NCC USA. The Cuyo University Mauricio López memorial lecture series is the third to be established, following those in Cuba and Nicaragua. It will address issues of political philosophy, personal and collective social responsibility and will be open to all students and the general public. For more information please contact Alejandro Paredes at aparedes@lab.cricyt.edu.ar ■

WSCF's Geneva staff would like to thank Mr. Heewung Kang (pictured right) for his volunteer work in the office in early 2008. Mr. Kang is a member of the Korean Student Christian Federation. When Heewung graduated from WCC's Bossey Ecumenical Institute he organised a three-month study programme on ecumenical organisations in Geneva which included research and archives work for WSCF. The staff is very grateful for his time with WSCF.



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