



World Council
of Churches



ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES
CONFERENCE DES EGLISES DE TOUTE L'AFRIQUE

actalliance

Call to Action:

Faith communities for overcoming hunger and sustaining justice and peace
in the Horn of Africa, 29 June 2017

We – church leaders, faith-based humanitarian and development leaders, and workers from the Horn of Africa and East Africa – are calling all our member churches, ecumenical partners, other faith communities, civil society, governments and intergovernmental bodies to further strengthen the ongoing work and take action in overcoming hunger and sustaining justice and peace in the Horn of Africa.

- We are committed to respond to immediate and urgent needs, to prevent further suffering of our sisters and brothers, and we resolve to:
 - Pray and work together for the end of hunger and food insecurity, that all may have abundant and full lives.
 - Raise and mobilize resources for assisting communities in need, including through dedicated Sunday collections in churches for overcoming hunger and famine.
- Together, we identified three areas where we need to vigorously and prayerfully engage to bring about long-term solutions:
 - **Address and resolve conflicts**
 - **Respond to climate change**
 - **Promote good governance**

In all this, we will strive to:

- Work with local churches and communities.
- Partner and network to enhance the effectiveness and usefulness of our services.
- Engage with local government and national leadership.
- Ensure gender parity in participation and decision-making.
- Incorporate these issues in the education systems in church structures and theological schools.

Address and resolve conflicts

...beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more... (Micah 4:3, Isaiah 4:41)

As faith communities we are on our “Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace” and are striving for the

establishment of peace and the resolution of conflicts as one of our core mandates. Conflict is an unacceptable common denominator across all countries currently facing the risk of famine.

We are committed to:

- Advocate for peace and preach a transformed narrative, from war to peace; enhancing listening skills and working against a culture of violence and prejudice.
- Address and prevent land and water grabbing and address the complexities of land tenures.
- Promote proper land use plans (such as between agriculturalists and pastorals) and overall principles of stewardship and caring for the earth.
- Target inequity and injustice, address historical injustices and encourage confession, healing of memories, reconciliation, justice and transformation.
- Strengthen conflict resolution skills and peacemaking capacity; prepare safe spaces where we can have dialogue and enhance understanding of living with the other.
- Invest in the formation and education of youth in theological and secular schools and colleges against radicalization and hate speech.
- Collaborate with communities, non-governmental organizations and governments to prevent conflict and promote conflict resolutions.
- Call on media to confront, change and avoid the dissemination of stereotypes and biased images as well as to promote better understanding between different cultures and religions, while uplifting the resilience of people.
- Advocate against small arms and weapons trade in the region.
- Strengthen our accompaniment of refugees, internally displaced people and the host communities.

Respond to climate change

How long will the land mourn,

and the grass of every field wither?

For the wickedness of those who live in it

the animals and the birds are swept away,

and because people said, "He is blind to our ways." (Jeremiah 12:4)

Extreme variations in climate often lead to widespread droughts or devastating floods, putting millions of lives at risk. It is imperative to continue addressing climate change, to be the stewards of environmental protection and to bring our moral authority to safeguard the integrity of creation.

We are committed to:

- Create awareness on climate change and its impact and the relationship to food insecurity.
- Promote "life giving agriculture" through minimizing chemical use (fertilizers and pesticides), establishing local seed banks and applying alternatives that include indigenous knowledge on sustainable agriculture (e.g. intercropping, diversifying food crops, mulching, irrigation practices, water harvesting and post harvesting), traditional food reserves, storage and preservation.
- Support and invest in small farmers, fisher-folk and indigenous peoples, to build their resilience and capacity to expand sustainable production. They hold the key to managing biodiversity and adapting to climate change.
- Enhance overall protection of ecosystems with specific activities such as:
 - Planting of fruit trees in church lands which may be linked to key occasions such as baptisms and marriages.
 - Promotion of afforestation and agro forestry.

- Conservation of water and protection of water sources.
- Encourage faith communities to be part of developing, implementing and sharing early warning and early action strategies and in documenting climate change best practices and coping mechanism.
- Promote stronger and united ecumenical/interfaith partnerships on climate change.
- Accompany communities in accessing technology and funding so as to enable them to embark on the use of renewable energy and reduce fossil fuel use.
- Advocate for equitable channeling of climate financing for supporting adaptation and mitigation measures in the Horn of Africa.

Promote good governance

*...what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8)*

We need to experience and cherish good governance at all levels. Good governance is participatory, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective, efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the 'Rule of Law'. An integral part of our prophetic ministry is to prayerfully work for governance that responds to the needs of people experiencing hunger and poverty.

We are committed to:

- Strive for transparency, accountability and integrity within churches, to be models for good governance so that we can boldly challenge other governance structures.
- Advocate for governments to practice good governance and to eradicate corruption.
- Promote the participation of faith communities, at the policy making level and during implementation – with communities being well informed, seeking their insights to make recommendations and being part of the decision-making processes at all levels.
- Ensure that faith communities are involved in monitoring, identifying and sharing evidence of successes and learnings to demonstrate that agriculture resources are well used.
- Promote a just and transparent participation of the **public sector, the civil society and private sector** where they interact together in good ways, to serve the community in a sustainable manner.
- Influence governments to design good policies that seek to overcome hunger, corruption and injustice, including just land reforms that will enable people to possess land for their livelihoods.
- Ensure that governments take into account the voice and needs of the most vulnerable when designing and implementing development policies, and that taxation policies are put in place to ensure that countries have adequate resources to finance peoples' development and social protection.
- Influence government policy formulation and implementation on disaster mitigation and disaster risk reduction.
- Advocate with governments and intergovernmental agencies for the implementation of existing policies for addressing hunger and ensuring food security.

It is our prophetic witness to overcome hunger, to sustain peace, justice and the care for creation, in the Horn of Africa and in all places. We pray that God grants us the faith, hope and love to follow through with this Call to Action! May peace and justice prevail on Earth!