

## Greeting to the 12<sup>th</sup> LWF Assembly in Windhoek, Namibia – 11<sup>th</sup> May 2017

**Bishop Doctor Munib Younan, Vice presidents, Rev. Doctor Martin Junge, Church Leaders, Delegates, Assembly participants, Sisters and Brothers.**

I am greatly honoured to be here, along with my colleagues from the ACT Secretariat, to participate in the 12<sup>th</sup> LWF Assembly here in Windhoek, Namibia, representing the ACT Alliance. The Lutheran World Federation, together with the World Council of Churches, were the founding members of ACT. Membership in the alliance is mainly drawn from LWF and WCC member churches and their related agencies. ACT Alliance brings churches and agencies together. Together we have a voice at the table, we respond to disasters, and we learn and share in development practice. Together we work with the most vulnerable, marginalized and excluded communities and people. Together we live out diakonia.

The three components of the assembly theme “Liberated by God’s Grace”; Salvation Not for Sale, Creation Not for Sale, and Human Beings Not for Sale, speak to the core of ACT’s work, for instance, climate justice, fighting inequalities and fighting for the rights of refugees and migrants.

The rights of refugees and migrants are being violated every day by warlords, smugglers, traffickers, and unscrupulous recruiters and business owners, but also by States, which are failing to live up to the commitments to respect basic human rights and dignity. As one of the key members of the alliance, LWF has been a global leader in delivering critical assistance to communities in need, and especially working with refugees and displaced people.

Together, LWF and other ecumenical organizations, working with ACT Alliance, have stood in solidarity with affected people and communities to fight for climate justice. Through the ACT Now for Climate Justice campaign, we helped ensure that the Climate Agreement was delivered in Paris in 2015. It is time now to ensure that this agreement is implemented in an ambitious and equitable manner that safeguards the rights of all, especially women, who are disproportionately affected by climate change.

This assembly, therefore, should also be a place where we can celebrate the successes of LWF work which is delivered guided by deep Christian values. I myself, worked for LWF in the field for 11 years mainly coordinating refugee programmes in the Africa region. I can testify to the calibre of work LWF delivers, in an accountable manner, respecting the dignity of the people and communities it works with.

I wish you a joyous, fruitful and successful assembly, and may the commemoration of the 500 years of the Reformation further deepen your spiritual lives.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to inform you that after working with ACT Alliance for 17 years of which 12 years in the leadership role, I will be retiring from service at the end of this month. It has been a privilege to work alongside the LWF and its members for so many years!

I would like to thank Martin Junge and staff for the wonderful collaboration we have had during our time of working together.

Once more, wishing you a very successful assembly.

God Bless you All.

John Nduna  
Secretary General