



God of life,
lead us to
justice and peace

World Council of Churches
10th Assembly

30 October to 8 November 2013
Busan, Republic of Korea

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Minute on Indigenous Peoples

The assembly theme, “God of life, lead us to justice and peace,” has guided and enriched discussions during the 10th Assembly, reminding participants repeatedly of the need for increased awareness of the rights and dignity of Indigenous Peoples.

The unique rights of Indigenous Peoples derive from their cultures, histories and spiritual traditions; from their political, economic and social structures; and from their historic rights to specific lands, territories and resources. Indigenous Peoples in the world today are vulnerable in face of situations in which their lives and security are threatened. It is necessary to dismantle oppressive laws and policies of governments, particularly trade agreements and international and national practices that promote resource extraction to the detriment of Indigenous Peoples’ human rights and sovereignty. Indigenous Peoples have the collective right to live in freedom, peace and security as distinct peoples. Yet Indigenous Peoples in many parts of the world face constant threats to their lives and survival as communities. They also, as individuals, have the right to life, integrity, liberty and security of person in each context.

The World Council of Churches (WCC) has a longstanding commitment to solidarity with Indigenous Peoples and to promoting their concerns, especially the need to respect and uphold their inherent rights and dignity.

While reaffirming the commitment to work on Indigenous Peoples’ issues, the WCC assembly, meeting in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 30 October to 8 November 2013:

Calls on member churches to:

- respect Indigenous Peoples’ spiritualities and support the aspirations of self-determination of indigenous communities around the world;
- reflect upon their own histories and seek greater understanding of the plights of Indigenous Peoples in different contexts;
- provide assistance to Indigenous Peoples’ delegations to participate in advocacy efforts at the United Nations;
- support and strengthen the efforts of indigenous communities working to dismantle oppressive laws and policies that legitimize continued colonial practices on their lands; and
- coordinate communications among the member churches of the WCC and ecumenical actors working for Indigenous Peoples’ rights.

Recommends that the General Secretary:

- give special attention to Indigenous Peoples’ issues during the next programme period of the WCC; and
- maintain the Indigenous Peoples’ programme with adequate staff in the WCC’s Geneva office, to coordinate, facilitate and realize its programmatic commitments.

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