

July 2024 Accountability Report

Geneva, 31 July 2024

1. Introduction: A word from the general secretary

Greetings and blessings to you in the name of our Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We celebrated many milestones in the month of July, including the 25th anniversary of the WCC Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network. Established in 1999 after the WCC 8th Assembly in Harare, the network's mission has been to pursue the place of persons with disabilities in a just society which the WCC seeks in its worldwide vision.

At the end of the month, I expressed grave concern over the recent escalation of violence in the Middle East. The situation has deteriorated significantly following the attack on Golan Heights, the subsequent Israeli attack in Beirut, and the assassination in Tehran on 30 July. These attacks have not only intensified the conflict but have also entailed violations of the sovereignty of multiple nations. Our prayer is that all hostilities and violence in the region would cease, and that political leaders and others would dialogue and work together for the good of all people in this context.

In July, we also had milestone meetings of WCC commissions. The WCC Commission on Ecumenical Education and Formation held its meeting at Yonsei University in Seoul, South Korea. It was a time to plan and envision the commission's work for the next eight years, while learning from the past.

The Commission on World Mission and Evangelism met in Nairobi, Kenya. Under the theme "Preparing the Way...mission as counter-creating," commissioners began wrestling with the key issues they will address in the coming months and years.

Also, with an eye for the future, a WCC team visited Egypt at the invitation of the Coptic Orthodox Church to plan for the 2025 World Conference on Faith and Order to take place at the Logos Papal Center at Wadi El Natrun, near Alexandria.

I was also grateful to be able to visit the United States for the Presbyterian Church (USA) 226th General Assembly. During an Ecumenical Service of Worship, I delivered a sermon on "Living into Hope: The Right to Be".

In addition, I visited Greece, where I met with Archbishop Ieronymos II of Athens and All Greece, among many other meetings with various people.

Perhaps the strongest eye for the future is within the young people involved in the ecumenical movement. The WCC released a second edition of the "Ecumenical International Youth Day

2024 Toolkit: Young People and Their Voices from the Warzones” in preparation for the special day in August.

WCC and its ecumenical partners also released another valuable resource for member churches and all people of good will: “Big Issues in Small Bytes,” the first module of “Just Digital,” an online course on digital literacy and advocacy.

The month of July in brief:

2. What we have achieved? Key programmatic work this month

WCC brings offices into new, sustainable Ecumenical Centre

The new Ecumenical Centre—where the World Council of Churches will spend at least the next three years—is adjacent to the old one but is sparkling and new. Moving the WCC to a new home brought joy, excitement, and a bit of uncertainty—even if the move is temporary. [WCC brings offices into new, sustainable Ecumenical Centre | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](https://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/2024/07/11/wcc-brings-offices-into-new-sustainable-ecumenical-centre)

WCC team received by Coptic Orthodox Church to discuss World Conference on Faith and Order in Egypt

A team from the WCC visited Egypt at the invitation of the Coptic Orthodox Church to plan for the 2025 World Conference on Faith and Order to take place at the Logos Papal Center at Wadi El Natrun, near Alexandria.

[WCC team received by Coptic Orthodox Church to discuss World Conference on Faith and Order in Egypt | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](https://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/2024/07/11/wcc-team-received-by-coptic-orthodox-church-to-discuss-world-conference-on-faith-and-order-in-egypt)

Young people, mental health—and why churches need to provide care and hope

A team from the World Council of Churches conducted three workshops during the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America's youth gathering in New Orleans, Louisiana, which convened 16-20 July. The gathering drew approximately 20,000 youth, young adults, and their adult leaders.

[Young people, mental health—and why churches need to provide care and hope | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](https://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/2024/07/11/young-people-mental-health-and-why-churches-need-to-provide-care-and-hope)

Workshop highlights survivors, solutions on World Day Against Human Trafficking

A workshop on 30 July—World Day Against Trafficking in Persons—lifted up voices of survivors and experts, offering global solutions and best practices.

[Workshop highlights survivors, solutions on World Day Against Human Trafficking | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](https://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/2024/07/11/workshop-highlights-survivors-solutions-on-world-day-against-human-trafficking)

Workshop lays foundation for Iraq's national diversity management strategy

A pioneering workshop on “Drafting the National Strategy for Managing Religious, Ethnic, and Cultural Diversity in Iraq” was held from July 23-25.

[Workshop lays foundation for Iraq’s national diversity management strategy | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

Global churches unite for Feast of Creation and climate action

The World Council of Churches joined ecumenical partners for an online meeting titled “Assisi Reunion and Next Steps of Feast of Creation.” The event brought together faith leaders to discuss ongoing initiatives and plans for promoting the Feast of Creation, highlighting the critical role of faith communities in environmental stewardship and climate justice.

[Global churches unite for Feast of Creation and climate action | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

At international AIDS conference, “every stone has a name and a story”

In the busyness of AIDS 2024, the 25th International AIDS Conference in Munich, Germany, people of faith met for a moment of silence, reflection, and prayer under the theme “Sustaining Hope for All: Remembering, Celebrating, and Praying for a Future without AIDS.”

[At international AIDS conference, “every stone has a name and a story” | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

Asian Ecumenical Institute begins exploration of “Creation Care and Eco-Justice: Our Faith and With-ness”

The Asian Ecumenical Institute began on 22 July in Chiang Mai, Thailand, opening a month-long exploration of the theme “Creation Care and Eco-Justice: Our Faith and With-ness.”

[Asian Ecumenical Institute begins exploration of “Creation Care and Eco-Justice: Our Faith and With-ness” | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

In Africa, what is the role of faith leaders in promoting democracy?

On 17 July, a consultation in conjunction with the African Union Economic, Social, and Cultural Council Citizens Forum was convened jointly by the World Council of Churches (WCC), African Union Citizens and Directorate, and All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC). The side event explored “The Role of Faith Leaders in Promoting Democracy and Institutional Resilience.”

[In Africa, what is the role of faith leaders in promoting democracy? | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

Hope is front and centre at interfaith pre-conference to AIDS 2024

Ahead of the International AIDS Conference from 22-26 July at the Messe München in Germany, faith leaders, faith-based organisations, and faith actors gathered for a two-day interfaith pre-conference themed “Sustaining Hope for All – Through 2030 and Beyond.”

[Hope is front and centre at interfaith pre-conference to AIDS 2024 | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism begins work rooted in hope and transformation

As the WCC [Commission on World Mission and Evangelism](#) opened its meeting in Nairobi, Kenya under the theme “Preparing the Way...mission as counter-creating,” commissioners wrestled with the key issues they will address in the coming months and years.

[WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism begins work rooted in hope and transformation | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

Convening in Kenya, WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism maps out work

After a week of intense discussions in Nairobi, Kenya, the WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism ended its first meeting on 10 July, having mapped out its work for the next months and years.

[Convening in Kenya, WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism maps out work | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism joins Kenyan Christians in Sunday services

Amidst African drum beats, lively singing, and dances, Christians in Kenya welcomed in church services participants of the WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism.

[WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism joins Kenyan Christians in Sunday services | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

WCC Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network commemorates 25 years with launch of new book “Life in Church”

The meeting of the [WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism](#) commemorated 25 years since the establishment of the [Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network \(EDAN\)](#) with the launch of a new book on disability which sends the church to dismantle the forces that keep persons with disabilities at the bottom of the society and the church.

[WCC Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network commemorates 25 years with launch of new book “Life in Church” | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

WCC contributes to global dialogue on ecology and conflict at online summer school

The WCC participated in the Online Summer Ecumenical School for Dialogue on “Ecology through the Prism of War: Challenges for Ukraine and the World,” organized by the Institute of Ecumenical Studies of the Ukrainian Catholic University.

[WCC contributes to global dialogue on ecology and conflict at online summer school | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

56th UN Human Rights Council adopts resolutions related to child safety, digital justice, and health

The 56th UN Human Rights Council, which concluded on 12 July, adopted 25 resolutions related to children, climate, health, and more.

[56th UN Human Rights Council adopts resolutions related to child safety, digital justice, and health | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

As violence against Palestinians grows, “Is anyone answering my call?”

As a new report came in from ecumenical companions on the ground in Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and the Jordan Valley, their documentation of incidents shows that settler violence was increasing and becoming more blatant—and had residents wondering if anyone is answering their calls for justice.

[As violence against Palestinians grows, “Is anyone answering my call?” | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

Workshops in Liberia equip churches for sustainable health ministries

The WCC, in conjunction with Liberia Council of Churches and Christian Health Association of Liberia, offered workshops in Monrovia on 4-5 July, and Buchanan on 8-9 July, to equip churches for sustainable health-promoting ministries.

[Workshops in Liberia equip churches for sustainable health ministries | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](https://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/2022/07/12/workshops-in-liberia-equip-churches-for-sustainable-health-ministries)

Ecumenical Forum on Korea: we are not giving up on relationships

Members of the Ecumenical Forum for Peace, Reunification & Cooperation on the Korean Peninsula (EFK) gathered online for an informal meeting on 25 June, seeking new ways to work for peace in the region in cooperation with their North Korean partners and agreeing not to give up on relationships nurtured for decades.

[Ecumenical Forum on Korea: we are not giving up on relationships | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](https://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/2022/07/12/ecumenical-forum-on-korea-we-are-not-giving-up-on-relationships)

WCC joins conference in France to address human relationship with nature

The WCC participated in the sixth Annual Meeting of the Ecumenical and Francophone Society of Theology of Ecology (SOFTE) held at the Saint Hugues Spiritual Center in Biviers, France, from 2-5 July. Dr Louk Andrianos, WCC consultant on care for creation, sustainability, and climate justice, contributed virtually with a reflection on biodiversity, spirituality, and the need to redirect human greed towards oikocentrism.

[WCC joins conference in France to address human relationship with nature | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](https://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/2022/07/12/wcc-joins-conference-in-france-to-address-human-relationship-with-nature)

Visiting Ghana, WCC president from North America presents “Ahead of her Time” awards and recognition of Achimota Secondary School

Rev. Dr Angelique Keturah Walker-Smith, WCC president from North America, visited Ghana to present the *Ahead of Her Time awards* and the related book to renowned women leaders, past and present. She also had opportunity to visit the Achimota Secondary School which contributed to the ecumenical and leadership formation of these leaders.

[Visiting Ghana, WCC president from North America presents “Ahead of her Time” awards and recognition of Achimota Secondary School | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](https://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/2022/07/12/visiting-ghana-wcc-president-from-north-america-presents-ahead-of-her-time-awards)

Faith-based organisations urged to set example in climate-responsible banking

An online event entitled “Save Children’s Lives: Climate-Responsible Banking” on 3 July highlighted how investments in new fossil fuel expansion imperil the wellbeing of children, youth, and future generations, inspiring action to hold accountable those investing in fossil fuels.

[Faith-based organisations urged to set example in climate-responsible banking | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](https://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/2022/07/12/faith-based-organisations-urged-to-set-example-in-climate-responsible-banking)

WCC commission stands ready to meet new challenges for theological education

As the WCC Commission on Education and Ecumenical Formation closed its meeting at historic Yonsei University in Seoul, South Korea, commissioners came away with new

questions about education and formation—and creative ways they’ll reach for answers in the months and years to come.

[WCC commission stands ready to meet new challenges for theological education | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

Visit to Korean observatory brings unification into hearts and minds

As part of the WCC Commission on Education and Ecumenical Formation (EEF) first in-person meeting after the WCC’s 11th Assembly in 2022, the commissioners had the opportunity to visit the Odusan Unification Observatory, some 45 minutes away from Seoul.

[Visit to Korean observatory brings unification into hearts and minds | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

Interfaith Forum addresses human rights impact of climate-related losses and damages at UN event

The WCC, as part of the Geneva Interfaith Forum on Climate Change, Environment, and Human Rights, co-hosted a side event at the 56th Session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland. The event, titled "A Human Rights and Ethical Perspective on Noneconomic Loss and Damage in the Context of Climate Change," emphasized how non-economic losses—such as the loss of life, health, cultural heritage, and flora and fauna—pose serious threats to the enjoyment of human rights and social wellbeing, and demand remedial action.

[Interfaith Forum addresses human rights impact of climate-related losses and damages at UN event | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

3. Update on communication

“Big Issues in Small Bytes” kicks off digital literacy course

Ecumenical partners released with the WCC on 2 July “Big Issues in Small Bytes,” the first module of “Just Digital,” an online course on digital literacy and advocacy.

[“Big Issues in Small Bytes” kicks off digital literacy course | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

International Review of Mission focuses on “Decolonial Discipleship”

The latest issue of the World Council of Churches (WCC) journal *International Review of Mission* focused on “Decolonial Discipleship.”

[International Review of Mission focuses on “Decolonial Discipleship” | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

Global Ecumenical Theological Institute is focus for The Ecumenical Review

The latest issue of *The Ecumenical Review* highlights the work of participants at the Global Ecumenical theological Institute (GETI).

[Global Ecumenical Theological Institute is focus for The Ecumenical Review | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

Church of Sweden theological secretary visits new WCC headquarters

The WCC welcomed its first visitor in the new WCC Office —Dr Sigurdur Hafthorsson, theological secretary and ecumenical officer from the Church of Sweden.

[Church of Sweden theological secretary visits new WCC headquarters | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

Interviews:

Brian Muyunga envisions “a just society where men and women feel safe, protected, and respected”

Brian Muyunga is a youth member of the World Council of Churches (WCC) central committee and executive committee, and a member of the WCC Commission for Youth in the Ecumenical Movement. He serves as executive secretary for youth at the All Africa Conference of Churches.

[Brian Muyunga envisions “a just society where men and women feel safe, protected, and respected” | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

H.E. Metropolitan Dr George Coorilos offers perspectives on Nicaea 2025, GETI

H.E. Metropolitan Dr George Coorilos, Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East, is a commissioner with the World Council of Churches Commission on Ecumenical Education and Formation.

[H.E. Metropolitan Dr George Coorilos offers perspectives on Nicaea 2025, GETI | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

Suk Yi Pang challenges: can we develop a new sense of how we encounter “otherness?”

Suk Yi Pang is from the Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China. In a video interview, she reflects on forming the next generation of ecumenical leaders.

[Suk Yi Pang challenges: can we develop a new sense of how we encounter “otherness?” | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

WCC and the Colombia peace process “a true witness of international solidarity”

About nine months ago, In Colombia, the peace process through the Round Table of Peace Dialogues between the government and the Estado Mayor Central of the FARC-EP, formally began talks began between both negotiating parties.

[WCC and the Colombia peace process “a true witness of international solidarity” | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

Prof. Dr Amos Nascimento reflects on why we still aspire to unity

Prof. Dr Amos Nascimento, from the United Methodist Church, serves on the World Council of Churches Commission on Ecumenical Education and Formation. In a video interview, he reflects deeply on how aspiring and dreaming toward unity keeps us reaching for the reality of unity.

[Prof. Dr Amos Nascimento reflects on why we still aspire to unity | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

Dr Sara Gehlin highlights why 2025 will be a very special year for churches in Sweden

Via a video interview, Dr Sara Gehlin, from the Church of Sweden and the University College Stockholm, highlights what’s on the horizon, ecumenically speaking, for 2025—and why it’s special for Sweden.

[Dr Sara Gehlin highlights why 2025 will be a very special year for churches in Sweden | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

WCC releases Youth Day Toolkit: “Young people and Their Voices from the Warzones”

The WCC released a second edition of the “Ecumenical International Youth Day 2024 Toolkit: Young People and Their Voices from the Warzones.”

[WCC releases Youth Day Toolkit: “Young people and Their Voices from the Warzones” | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

4. Update on statements, comments and messages

31 July: [WCC urges respect for human life as Middle East violence escalates | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

31 July: [WCC invites all to observe Nuclear Prayer Day | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

31 July: [WCC extends congratulations on 10th anniversary of Muslim Council of Elders | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

31 July: [WCC condemns attacks on St Porphyrius Church in Gaza and Golan Heights | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

30 July: [WCC stands in solidarity with Ethiopian people in wake of deadly landslides | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

29 July: [On behalf of global Christian fellowship, WCC calls for explanation of Olympics opening ceremony | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

25 July: [Global prayer for peace and reunification on the Korean Peninsula reflects “we will not give up” | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

23 July: [WCC congratulates Claudio González Urbina for human rights award | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

23 July: [Role of faith action highlighted in UNAIDS report and launch | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

23 July: [Communicator Robin Gurney leaves legacy of unity and friendship | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

19 July: [WCC mourns loss of linguist and United Reformed Church minister Rev. Tony Coates | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

18 July: [WCC delegation will offer input into 25th International AIDS Conference in Munich | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

15 July: [WCC welcomes peace efforts between warring parties in Sudan | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

12 July: [WCC to GenFest: “young people are not only the future but the present of the church” | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

11 July: [Apply for global theological institute: “Where now for visible unity?” | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

11 July: [WCC will share resources at Evangelical Lutheran Church of America youth gathering | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

11 July: [WCC expresses condolences to communities devastated by Hurricane Beryl | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

11 July: [WCC congratulates new connexional president, Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

9 July: [WCC leaders share insights at Baptist World Alliance global gathering | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

8 July: [WCC denounces Russian missile strikes on civilians and hospitals in Ukraine | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

8 July: [WCC strongly condemns attacks on Sacred Family School in Gaza, closure of hospital | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

6 July: [World Council of Churches Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network to celebrate 25th anniversary | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

6 July: [WCC general secretary to Commission on World Mission and Evangelism: “you are shapers of the next phase of Christian mission” | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

4 July: [WCC general secretary meets with Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens and All Greece | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

3 July: [WCC extends greetings for 30th anniversary of Francophone missiology association | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

3 July: [Tribute to Ernst Lange honours pioneer who saw the ecumenical movement as “test case of faith” | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

2 July: [In US, WCC general secretary delivers sermon on “Living into Hope: The Right to Be” | World Council of Churches \(oikoumene.org\)](#)

We are thankful for the many varied activities and ministries during the month of July. The WCC continues to exercise ministries in places of challenges and struggles and we celebrate the goodness of God and the work of our member churches, staff and ecumenical organisations who continue to serve with faithful and bold witness to the abiding presence of God in these places. The world around us is embedded in the context of conflicts and wars and climate crises, let us continue to pray and work for justice and peace as we continue our Pilgrimage in such a context, offering hope and joy amidst pain and suffering.

The assurance that in Christ the Father holds all things together gives us continuous hope and strength.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jerry Pillay". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jerry" being more prominent than the last name "Pillay".

Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay
General Secretary
World Council of Churches