

Being Salt of the Earth – Together resisting forces of war, violence, extremism and racism

We, the delegates from Africa, Asia and Germany of the 10th General Assembly of the United Evangelical Mission who met from 25 – 30 September in Villigst / Schwerte reflected on the theme extensively and:

- We express our deep concern about the ongoing war in the Ukraine which started in February 2022 with the Russian invasion into the territory of the Ukraine. With sadness we mourn the bloodshed, the losses of lives, the suffering of the people, the humanitarian crises with hundreds of thousands of refugees caused by this war. With fear we see the increasing risks for further and incalculable escalations of this conflict where nuclear threats are already put on the table. We already see the global impacts of this crises by rising energy and food prices which lead to increasing suffering, poverty and misery in many countries in Africa, Asia and even Germany affecting the most vulnerable people in our societies. Increased investment in military budget contribute to this development. We condemn this blatant violation of the law of the nations and demand and pray for cease-fire.
- We are as deeply concerned about violence, war, political repression, intimidation and injustices affecting many sisters and brothers in our communion and we are aware that often they are forgotten, and nobody takes care of their sufferings.
 - The neglect of political rights of Papuan people have resulted in a prolonged conflict, which has caused human rights violation resulting in arbitrary detention, crime against humanity, extra judicial killings, rapes, and torture causing misery very specially to the Papuan indigenous people's life such as systematic marginalization and discrimination, economic injustice, violation against women and children in the land of Papua. The continuous military operations resulting in the displacement of Papuan indigenous People for the purpose of exploiting natural resources, transmigration of people that causes decrease in the availability of people for field work and depopulation of Papua people along with structural racism are all matters of urgent concern. Therefore, we call for the end of all forms human rights violations that tend to increase with various policies of the Government of Indonesia which ignores the aspirations of the Papuan people. Further, the systematic environmental degradation of Papuan ecology (as we experience in other regions of the UEM) calls for addressing the issue of global warming and climate change that causes drought, rising sea level, which is sinking low lying areas of Papua and we call for the protection of our tropical forests, which is considered as the lung of the planet and our coral triangle reef which is part of the world coral ecosystem.
 - The situation in DR Congo is becoming more and more dramatic, especially at the Eastern part of the country where residents are victims of brutal massacres. The most endangered persons are women under the threat of being raped and the children of the area. Whole villages are depopulated. The main reason leading to that situation is the exploitation of resources of the DR Congo. We, the UEM, together with the German Ecumenical Network on Central Africa and other protestant federations will continue to work side by side with the ECC (Eglise du Christ au Congo) in seeking the support of international organizations to reach an end of the exploitation and to demand the adjoined countries not to support armed groups that sow seeds of terror in Congo.

- The recent events in the Philippines like the human rights abuses, illegal arrests, and extrajudicial killings have negatively impacted the lives of our church-workers, lay-leaders, and youth leaders alike — dedicated supporters and advocates for environmental protection, peace, justice, and human rights. They have been vilified for their prophetic witnessing and for serving the least of among our people in the communities where they serve. As UEM we will continue pleading with our brothers and sisters in exerting all reasonable efforts through solidarity statements, to provide legal and financial help, and to extend support to those who are wrongfully accused until justice is served.
- We express our sorrow and concern on the pain and suffering experienced by millions of people in Sri Lanka due to the economic bankruptcy caused by economic mismanagement and political corruption. We call upon on the government to desist from intimidating or arresting those involved in genuine protest but ensure that the basic rights of the people are safeguarded while ensuring the steady supply of the essentials needs of the people. We express our prayers and solidarity with the Churches in Sri Lanka, as they continue to be a prophetic voice, a symbol of hope and strive to be a Good Samaritan to those fallen by the roadside.

As Communion of Churches in three continents we express our deep solidarity with our sisters and brothers in the four countries, we continue to pray and to advocate for their rights. Together we stand against any form of violence, extremism and discrimination.

- During this assembly we identified the following:
 - The integrity and the rights of children must be at the core of our minds. As example the fate of street children and so called “witch children” in the Democratic Republic of Congo moved our hearts. We also learned about the challenges and pressures single parents are experiencing and the effects on their children.
 - Economic interests to exploit recklessly natural resources do not only cause conflicts, economic and social injustice but also endanger the last remaining natural eco-systems. Poverty intensifies and tightens conflicts and violence. Striving for justice incorporating all elements of creation and being reconciled with it must be a vibrant vision for us as churches.
 - Natural disasters are becoming more intense and frequent because of the climate crisis. If we do not act now the devastating consequences will be irreversible. We must focus our energies on finding appropriate lifestyle to be in harmony with creation. At the same time, the Christian communities need to foster resilience based on faith, communion and prayer among us and for those who need our help.
 - We will continue our interreligious journey to resist forces of division, extremism and spreading hate looking forward for the third Consultation and Action for Peace among the People in the Indonesia in 2023.

We send a message of peace from this Assembly to the World and all people of good faiths and commit ourselves to work to overcome structures of war, oppression, domination and injustice.

“BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS, FOR THEY WILL BE CALLED CHILDREN OF GOD.” Matthew 5: 9