



**Decade to Overcome Violence**

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**An Invitation To Theological Schools and Seminaries**

# Glory to God and Peace on Earth

## International Ecumenical Peace Convocation

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES



May 4-11 2011

**Dear Colleagues,**

You may be familiar with the decision of the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Porto Alegre ( 2006 ) to organize an *International Ecumenical Peace Convocation* ( IEPC ) that would mark the closing of the Decade to Overcome Violence and initiate further work in this field. According to our present plans this Convocation will take place in the early months of 2011.

The Porto Alegre Assembly also decided to elaborate an *Ecumenical Declaration on Just Peace* to be agreed upon by the Peace Convocation.

As we begin our work for such a Peace Declaration we are determined to involve Christian people at all levels of the Churches' life. Therefore, we have the pleasure of inviting you to join us in this process by organizing a seminar with your students on the following question:

**IF WE WERE TO WRITE AN ECUMENICAL DECLARATION ON JUST PEACE,  
WHAT WOULD WE PUT INTO IT?**

This question opens up a variety of productive options:

1. It would enable students to gain some clarity about their own concepts of peace as it relates to justice, reconciliation, or healing, to study the relevant Biblical texts and influential concepts in the Christian tradition. It would challenge them to identify practical approaches and consequences.
2. While you and your students would approach this theme from specific angles, you would at the same time be engaged in an effort of formulating a joint statement and to deal with the specific difficulties that are part of such an effort. But this would give them an impression of the hermeneutical problems that present themselves in ecumenical settings.
3. Although such a seminar would be a relevant academic project in its own right it would provide you and your student group with the opportunity of becoming part of a world-wide ecumenical network. We would provide a website to facilitate exchange between all the student groups involved. If we can get the financial resources we plan to organize an international conference to which you and some of your students would be invited in order to deepen and expand the discussions.

**4. There are many approaches you may suggest for such a seminar—from theoretical analysis to discussing the practical implications of a Peace Declaration:**

- As a **Biblical scholar** you may lead your students in researching the scriptural sources and their theological problems.
- As a **systematic theologian or ethicist** you may invite your students to study christological problems or to enter into the debates on just war and just peace, the heritage of peace churches, the legacy of non-violence, to mention but a few examples.
- As an **instructor of pastoral counseling** you may ask your students to explore the question in light of real-life problems of violence confronted by a congregation e.g., family breakdown, abuse, youth gangs, violence in entertainment etc.
- As a **teacher of specialized ministries**, you may challenge your students to devise Bible studies, training manuals or propose peace-building action plans for use on the mission field.

All these results would contribute to the preparation of an **Ecumenical Declaration on Just Peace**.

5. It would help us if you could schedule such a course or seminar during the time from fall of 2007 to summer of 2008. This would make it possible for your input to be included in the first draft of the Declaration and to coordinate an international conference of professors and students during the remainder of 2008 or early 2009. However, this time frame should not refrain you from entering into this process at a later stage if this was more convenient for your academic working schedule.

Please let us know at your earliest possible convenience if you can be part of this exciting endeavor by contacting Reverend Dr. Geiko Müller-Fahrenheit by email: [gmf@wcc-coe.org](mailto:gmf@wcc-coe.org) (with copy to Ms. Susan Lee: [sle@wcc-coe.org](mailto:sle@wcc-coe.org)) or by phone: +41 22 791 6106.

We are looking forward to hearing from you soon!

With sincere greetings,

Reverend Dr. Samuel Kobia  
General Secretary

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Moderator of DOV  
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