

The **Decade to Overcome Violence (2001–2010)** stems from the World Council of Churches' (WCC) passionate engagement with the issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation, while relentlessly exploring the purpose of Christian unity in a broken world.

The churches meeting for the Eighth WCC Assembly in Harare, Zimbabwe, at the end of the most violent century in human history, committed themselves to a pilgrimage of peace. The Assembly called the churches, ecumenical organisations and all people of goodwill, to work together to overcome violence through peace and justice.

The WCC encourages churches and communities to address issues of violence in their own contexts and to work together for peace, justice and reconciliation in the **Decade to Overcome Violence**.

In its commitment to overcoming violence the WCC:

- Commissions studies aimed at exposing the structural and cultural roots of violence
- Campaigns against the perpetrators and instruments of violence
- Introduces education processes that seek to uphold the value and dignity of life
- Takes innovative liturgical, biblical and theological initiatives
- Links people, peace initiatives and supports networking

## OUR MANDATE

"All this is from God, who reconciled us to Godself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation." 2 Cor. 5:18

"Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an everflowing stream." Amos 5:24

"For Christ is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility..." Eph. 2:14

"We are challenged by the vision of a church, the people of God on the way together, confronting all divisions of race, gender, age or culture, striving to realise justice and peace, upholding the integrity of creation."

*(Message of the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Harare 1998)*

"We are convinced: A clear witness to peace and nonviolence grounded in justice is what the world needs today from all churches together... As Christians, we are motivated and encouraged by the Gospel message of the peace of Christ and the rich biblical tradition of peace with justice... We want to engage in constructive efforts to build a culture of peace.

*(Message from the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, Geneva 1999)*

## FOUR THEMES FOR THE DECADE

- *The spirit and the logic of violence*
- *Use and abuse and misuse of power*
- *Issues of justice*
- *Religious plurality and identity*

The study guide "**Why Violence? Why not peace?**" is a tool for groups and individuals in the churches to explore issues along these four themes. See next page for information on how to get the study guide

## STAY CONNECTED - SHARE YOUR STORY

To learn about stories and initiatives, find resources or contacts on overcoming violence, visit the DOV web site:  
<http://www.wcc-coe.org/dov>.

On this web site you are invited to submit your story, add your organization or enter information about your events related to the DOV. If you don't have access to internet, please send the information you would like to post on the web site to us at the address indicated on the back.

## CONTACT

For written information, study guides, leaflets, contact your church office, or the National Council of Churches, or the ecumenical regional organization in your region. You can download the DOV Logo, leaflet, study guide, and resources on the DOV web site. If you would like to subscribe to the DOV Newsletter, please write to [dov@wcc-coe.org](mailto:dov@wcc-coe.org), or to the WCC address on the back of this leaflet.

# STRENGTHEN THE DECADE TO OVERCOME VIOLENCE PROCESS

