

**Alternative Globalisation Addressing People and Earth (AGAPE)  
Consultation on Linking Poverty, Wealth and Ecology:  
African Ecumenical Perspectives**

**05-09 November 2007  
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**

**A Report**



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## 1. Foreword

The AGAPE Consultation on “Linking Poverty, Wealth and Ecology: African Ecumenical Perspectives” is one of a series of regional consultations which will be held in Asia-Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America and Europe in the coming years till 2011. This report brings together the key statements made primarily by African church representatives at the consultation which was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The statements from the Theologians’, Women’s and Youth Hearings stand on their own though these have been used to influence the Dar es Salaam statement. These are expected to enhance the work of economic justice in the region, creating a network that will follow up the results of the study on poverty, wealth and ecology in Africa. The statements are being shared with the participants in order to encourage them to put the recommendations given here into practice. The short report does not include the various papers presented during the consultation. A comprehensive report that includes all the papers will be compiled at a later stage. In order to bring in perspectives from other regions, the consultation was also attended by church representatives from Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and North America.

The consultation was successful due to the cooperation between the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), Council of World Mission (CWM), World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) and the Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT). We would like to register our thanks to all those who made this event a success: speakers, moderators, rapporteurs and drafters of statements including Ms. Athena Peralta who edited the statements. Special thanks to the Office of the Prime Minister of Tanzania which prepared and proffered the keynote speech. Finally, thanks to all the participants for their wise and thoughtful contributions.

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## 2. Summary of Proceedings

Organised by the WCC in cooperation with ecumenical partners from 05-09 November 2007, the Dar es Salaam AGAPE Consultation on “Linking Poverty, Wealth and Ecology: African Ecumenical Perspectives” was attended by 65 Church representatives, youth, women, men, and theologians predominantly from the continent of Africa. Participants from Asia, Latin America, Europe and North America shared experiences from their countries and regions.

The consultation considered the following critical questions: why is the world very rich but more than half of the global population poor? Why is majority of Africa’s people mired in poverty even though the continent possesses abundant natural resources? In what ways are impoverishment and enrichment linked? How are these two aspects of the same coin affecting African ecology negatively and how are they related to just peace? What do theology and the perspectives of women and youth inform us about these issues in the African context? What can the African ecumenical family do to resolve these issues?

The Dar es Salaam consultation was the first in a series of regional Church encounters on poverty, wealth and ecology aimed at deepening the AGAPE process which began at the 1998 WCC General Assembly in Harare and which resulted in the AGAPE Call presented at the 2006 General Assembly in Porto Alegre. The AGAPE Call invited Churches to act together for transformation of socio-economic injustice and to continue analysing, reflecting and acting on the challenges posed by economic globalisation. Eight actions were outlined, namely: poverty eradication, trade, finance, sustainable use of land and natural resources, public goods and services, life-giving agriculture, decent jobs, emancipated work and people’s livelihoods, and Churches and the power of empire.

At the 2006 Assembly in Porto Alegre, two main views emerged on economic globalisation. The first emphasised practical reforms within the neo-liberal economic paradigm. The second considered the paradigm as the main cause of poverty and extreme wealth for a few; and demanded for a radical change of the paradigm in order to achieve poverty eradication, equitable resource-sharing and ecological sustainability. The Dar es Salaam consultation provided an important venue for deepening the dialogue on these two views within an African context.

African Theologians’, Women’s and Youth Hearings comprised the first part of the consultation.

The Theologians’ Hearing laid out the theological framework for analysing the links between poverty, wealth and ecology in Africa, drawing from Biblical texts and African concepts such as ubuntu in exploring the terms “greed” and “contentment,” among others. Recognising the relationship between justice and peace, the hearing considered the concept of peace in the market in parallel with the African concept of sokoni. It grappled with the role of the African ecumenical

community – including raising prophetic voices – in addressing issues around poverty, wealth and ecology.

The Women's Hearing helped to develop and promote feminist ethical analyses of the interconnections between poverty, wealth and ecology in Africa, particularly interrogating the collusion between patriarchy and neo-liberal economic systems. It made visible and celebrated African women's actions and strategies for overcoming poverty, redefining wealth and protecting the environment. It also worked towards developing a women's action plan for the region.

The Youth Hearing accounted for the voices and visions of African young persons. Through poverty, wealth and ecology lenses, the hearing discussed the impacts on African youth of neo-liberal economic globalisation as well as the responses of African youth to the phenomenon. Young people paid particular attention to analysing the relationship between poverty and migration in the African context.

The second part of the consultation was set off by keynote presentations from the Office of the Prime Minister of Tanzania, a wealthy Tanzanian business man and a Tanzanian woman farmer, which elaborated on the linkages between poverty, wealth and ecology from contrasting social locations. The state perspective highlighted the role of global trade and financial systems, particularly agricultural trade policies and external debt instruments, in impoverishing Africa. The corporate perspective conceded that profit-oriented wealth creation often results in exploitation of workers and environmental damages, but offered examples of how these problems could be redressed in small ways. From the perspective of a woman in poverty, states and corporations were challenged to decisively act on corruption and on inequalities between classes and genders, including through education programmes.

The results of a WCC-commissioned study entitled "Wealth Creation, Poverty and Ecology in Africa" were presented and discussed. The study shed light on how resource-based wealth creation in the region has resulted in massive poverty and ecological destruction in Africa through four case studies, namely: agriculture and logging in Tanzania, copper mining in Zambia, and oil production in Nigeria. It came up with a set of recommendations at local, national and international levels. The study further proposed a methodology for estimating a "greed line" for the African continent.

A European panel was heard with the main intention of sharing experiences from the region as related to poverty, wealth and ecology issues. The presentations touched on the welfare state system – particularly the important role played by the public sector and taxation mechanisms in addressing poverty and curbing wealth, the problems with the Eastern European socialist experiment, research done in some European countries on developing a "greed line," and European churches' advocacy work around various poverty, wealth and ecology issues. The presentations also pointed out that the gaps between poor and rich are expanding even within European countries.

In summary, the Dar es Salaam consultation:

- Reflected on a theological base for studying the links between poverty, wealth and ecology in Africa as part of the AGAPE and the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation processes;
- Discussed the perspectives of African women and youth on the links between poverty, wealth and ecology;
- Shared standpoints on poverty, wealth and ecology of an African state leader, an African woman in poverty and a wealthy African man;
- Considered the findings of study entitled “Wealth Creation, Poverty and Ecology in Africa” and outlined benchmarks for establishing a “greed line” in Africa as a guidance to Christians;
- Exchanged North-South and South-South Church perspectives and practices on the causes of and ways of tackling poverty, inequality, and environmental destruction; and
- Came up with joint Church strategies and actions for addressing the interlinked problems of poverty, excessive wealth, and ecological degradation in Africa.

The Dar es Salaam consultation produced key documents which will be followed up by ecumenical networks and taken forward in succeeding regional Church encounters on poverty, wealth and ecology, as follows:

- Dar es Salaam Statement on Linking Poverty, Wealth and Ecology in Africa;
- Theologians’ Statement on Poverty, Wealth and Ecology in Africa;
- African Women’s Statement on Poverty, Wealth and Ecology;
- African Youth Statement on Poverty, Wealth and Ecology;
- Words from Ecumenical Partners; and
- Main Points on Networking for a Movement to Address Issues of Poverty, Wealth and Ecology.

### **3. The Dar es Salaam Statement on Linking Poverty, Wealth and Ecology in Africa**

#### **Preamble**

We, African people of faith, youth, women, men, activists, theologians and Church leaders, in the spirit of community and critical discernment, have convened in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from 05-09 November 2007 to:

- Share the perspectives of women and youth on the links between poverty, wealth and ecology in the context of Africa;
- Develop African theological bases for studying these issues; and
- Formulate ecumenical strategies and actions for addressing the interlinked problems of poverty, excessive wealth, and ecological degradation in Africa as part of the AGAPE process.

#### **Linking poverty, wealth and ecology in Africa**

Africa is endowed with rich communities of people, bountiful resources and diverse ecology. Yet:

- African children die of hunger, malnutrition and preventable diseases because of neo-liberal trade policies and patent systems that force Africa to produce cash crops for export and that refuse poor people access to medicines and healthcare.
- Young people are denied the right to education and forced to migrate to unfriendly lands by debt conditionalities that oblige governments to privatise educational systems.
- Women die in childbirth, are pushed into insecure work in the informal economy, and are trafficked into new forms of slavery because of desperate economic conditions produced by systemic trade deficits, external indebtedness and structural adjustment.
- African men, deprived of the dignity of decent work by neo-liberal economic policies, are driven to violence and war over resources.
- African communities are forced away from their land and blocked off from the basics of life by multinational resource extractive industries and the construction of mega-dams.
- Africa's monetary wealth continues to flow out of the continent in the form of debt and interest payments, profit repatriation of multinational corporations and capital flight.
- The ecological fabric of Africa – the source and means to life, food, water, fuel and medicine – is systematically destroyed to fuel production for production's sake and to sustain the consumerist lifestyles of rich, Northern countries.

We have come to the crucial recognition that impoverishment, enrichment and ecological destruction are interlinked. Transatlantic slavery and 500 years of colonialism had instituted a system of plunder of human and natural resources that enriched colonial powers at the cost of decimating and dehumanising African people. Moreover, the current context of neo-liberal economic globalisation, in

complicity with patriarchal structures and militarisation, has further undermined African sovereignty, wresting away African people's communal ownership and control over productive means, natural and biotic resources. In concentrating these resources, especially capital, in the hands of powerful nations, international financial institutions and multinational corporations working in collusion with African elites, the socio-economic disparities between Africa and rich nations continue to widen at alarming rates. Driven by motives of endless economic expansion and profit maximisation – rather than provisioning for life and care of community and ecology – neo-liberal models of wealth creation are threatening the entire web of life.

We, therefore:

- Denounce neo-liberal economic globalisation;
- Remind the countries of the North of the wealth that was built and sustained on the continued extraction and plunder of Africa's resources as well as the exploitation of African people;
- Reclaim African communities' sovereignty over decision-making processes, productive means and resources; and
- Affirm that African people are creditors of a tremendous economic, socio-cultural, and ecological debt.

### **Theological bases of linking poverty, wealth and ecology**

God has created the household of life (*oikos*) and human beings to live in community with one another (Psalm 115: 16 and Genesis 1-2). We are created in God's own image and likeness and have the responsibility to take care of God's good Creation. The Christian notion of *oikos* resonates with the African understanding of ubuntu/botho/uzima (life in wholeness) and ujamaa (life in community). They embrace among others, the values of fullness of life, full participation in all life processes including in the economy and ecology. It further entails the just care, use, sharing and distribution of resources and elements of life. Where the above and life-affirming relationships have been violated, the institution of restorative, redistributive and rectificatory (wisdom) justice are necessary. These principles of justice, reparation, restoration and reconciliation, forgiveness, mutual love and dignity for all of God's Creation ought to be promoted ecumenically as bases for constructive critique of global capitalism, which increasingly violates life-in-abundance (John 10:10).

We confess that the Churches, understood as the body of Christ, have not been faithful in bearing just witness to the questions of justice in the economy, ecology and relationships among people. Churches have often neglected to challenge the death-dealing effects of the degradation of God's Creation and the unjust sharing of God's resources. This failure to address the structural sins of greed, exploitation, racism, dehumanisation and inequitable sharing of power which persist in economy and ecology, results in trivialisation of poverty where the poor are blamed for their plight.

Churches have not always offered balanced theologies and praxes on stewardship of (or caring for) life. They have often promoted narrow perspectives which place ecological issues at the periphery of daily life and have neglected to



proclaim in truth the promised wholesome abundance for all (John 8: 32). God calls us to care for Creation (Psalm 148), requiring a new understanding which affirms that caring for Creation is mandatory, not optional.

Churches have not adequately exercised their prophetic call to challenge people, companies, institutions and countries which are the benefactors and beneficiaries of neo-liberal economic globalisation.

If we affirm ourselves to be a worldwide community that respects and honours the web of life and human dignity, the life-denying relationships and practices which create poverty in the midst of wealth and dehumanise people must be challenged.

We, therefore, call upon Churches to bear prophetic witness by:

- Speaking truth to power (Amos 8: 4-6) and condemning systems of domination in relations, international trade and debt systems that enslave people (Nehemiah 5);
- Criticising greed as the cause and manifestation of empire (Isaiah 5: 7-10). We understand “empire” to mean “the convergence of economic, political, cultural, military and religious power, in a system of domination that imposes the flow of benefits from the vulnerable to the powerful. Empire crosses all boundaries, distorts identities, subverts cultures, subordinates nations-states, and either marginalise or co-opts religious communities” (World Alliance of Reformed Churches 2005/6). Greed violates wholeness that God created and expects. It also contradicts ubuntu/botho/ujamaa which affirm dignity and wholeness in community (uzima);
- Reminding the world that greed cuts off individuals, communities, and whole countries from the richness of life (Matthew 5) and ubuntu;
- Condemning the imperial ideologies and praxes that present neo-liberal economic globalisation as the only way of life, denying the ecological and human diversity that exist in life; and
- Condemning patriarchal collusion with injustices in the economy and ecology.

We, therefore, declare:

- Structures of domination and exploitation based on class, gender, race/ethnicity are sinful; and
- Greed and its negative manifestations (as stated above), overproduction and over-consumption are sinful and require radical transformation (*metanoia*).

### **Seeds of hope**

This is the *kairos* – a moment for change and repentance, reparations, justice, forgiveness, reconciliation, wellbeing and peace. Radical transformation derives power and inspiration from the seeds of hope rooted in African heritage and spirituality; and requires us to re-envision and recreate life in the context of these challenges.

In building creative and practical alternatives to, and resisting the neo-liberal economic paradigm, we obtain immense hope and inspiration from:

- The spiritualities and theologies of life that place community, sharing, justice and care of life and Creation at the centre;
- The ecumenical movement's historical engagement for justice, peace and integrity of Creation;
- African liberation and justice-seeking movements that continue to work for freedom from colonial and neo-colonial powers; and
- Social movements in Africa of peoples struggling for life and dignity – especially youth and women's movements – that are mobilising women and men for just wages and decent work; defending food sovereignty; responding to the HIV and AIDS pandemic and other epidemics; demanding accountability from their governments and multinational corporations; resisting mining and logging activities; and advocating at the international and national levels for just trade and debt cancellation.

### **Towards *metanoia* (radical transformation)**

We invite and challenge Church and society, ecumenical partners, and our brothers and sisters in the North to:

- Acknowledge the privileges deriving from complicity – through their production and consumption patterns – in systems of domination and exploitation that dehumanise and destroy life in Africa;
- Stop silencing and trivialising the voices of African people as they seek to expose the negative impacts and contradictions of neo-liberal economic globalisation in Africa. African people's realities, experiences and rich intellectual resources place them in the best position to critically understand their own socio-economic conditions;
- Transform institutions and conduct that perpetuate injustices in the economy and ecology; and
- Seek and engage in a radical spirituality of solidarity manifested in sharing, reparation and justice.

We call on those who collude with systems of domination in economy and ecology – including African government leaders and elites – to recognise, confess, repent and engage in restorative, distributive and transformative justice.

We commit ourselves to:

- Life-affirming theologies in the economy and ecology;
- Connect theologies with struggles for life;
- Strengthen the spaces for Churches in partnership with social movements to jointly formulate strategies to overcome poverty, redefine wealth, protect the environment, and to build alternatives to neo-liberal economic globalisation;
- Promote and affirm gender justice and feminist non-hierarchical models of relating (Joel 2: 28) and the care economy;
- Consolidate the movement for AGAPE economy and ecology in Africa and in the world, and dialogue with other disciplines and faiths;

- Call on the Northern Churches to repent for the African holocaust, which killed over 10 million Africans; and to intensify their efforts toward reparations; and
- Call on Northern Churches to examine their financial resources and investments and how these impact on poverty.

We are committed to advancing work on the AGAPE process on linking poverty, wealth and ecology and to ensure that these are translated into concrete and life-affirming actions.

#### **4. Theologians' Statement on Poverty, Wealth and Ecology in Africa**

The Theologians' Hearing was attended mainly by African participants. It also heard presentations from theologians from Brazil, USA, Europe and the Pacific.

##### **African cultural and religious heritage**

There was consensus that within the African cultural and religious heritage, the sustenance of life is ensured through the principles of ubuntu (humaneness), ujamaa (familyhood), uzima (life in wholeness) and baraza (consultative decision-making). It was emphasised that these principles can be promoted ecumenically as a basis for constructive critique of global capitalism, which threatens the life-in-abundance as promised in John 10:10. In principle, these factors are manifested in the following emphases:

Positive attributes of ubuntu:

- Sharing of life as a gift from God;
- Community – Life in relationship is underscored: “*I am* because we are, and *we are* because I am.” The individual’s identity is inseparable from identity within the wider community, which includes past, present and future generations, as well as flora and fauna, the physical environment and the spiritual realm;
- Reciprocity – Everyone has something to give and everyone is in need;
- Equity and justice;
- Well-being as a principle in making all ethical decisions; and
- Utmost respect to nature – This respect is not to be branded animism; rather, ubuntu stresses the importance of good and just relationships between all beings. Theologians and the world community have a great deal to learn from this African view of nature as an integral part of community.

Violations of ubuntu:

- Greed and discontent – The traditional values of ubuntu have been and still are being disrupted by: misuse of political power, colonisation and neo-colonialism, exploitation and plunder, and environmental degradation;
- Economic globalisation – The elite in Africa and elsewhere are benefiting greatly from economic globalisation and colluding with transnational corporations while the majority are becoming ever poorer; and
- Prosperity gospel – The proclamation of the prosperity gospel ignores issues related to wealth and poverty. The poor are blamed for their poverty: they are told they lack faith to become rich as God intends them to be.

Negative outcomes of the violations of ubuntu:

- Ever-widening gap between the rich few and poor majority;
- Inflation and unemployment;
- Discontentment and drug-abuse even in wealthy nations;

- Environmental degradation; and
- Unethical practices such as prostitution, corruption, robbery, murder and even genocide.

Role of theological educators and pastors:

- To incorporate the life-affirming values of ubuntu into Christian theological systematic articulation;
- To deepen African respect for nature;
- To address negative attitudes and practices both in African tradition and in the present circumstances, such as patriarchy;
- To promote positive practices like conservation of water sources and forests, traditional agriculture, etc.;
- To develop a relevant theology which will empower men and women to build a sustainable community;
- To be serious about the issue of the selfhood of the Church in Africa by seeking to reduce contrasts like rich-poor, powerful-powerless, donor-recipients, male-female, etc;
- To emphasise the liberative power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ by enabling believers to actively participate in socio-economic policy-making, in ownership and control over resources, in life, vocation and time management;
- To address the pressing issues of land ownership and distribution;
- To speak against the prevailing unjust economic and political order at the global, regional, national and local levels;
- To work with other NGOs and FBOs by advocating equality and justice for those people on the economic margins of society;
- To speak against plundering of natural resources carried out by transnational corporations in collusion with a small African elite while the African majority remain poor; and
- To advocate for justice as a precondition for peace.

### **A summary of some insights on the theological perspective**

Life is a gift from God. There is enough for everybody if the men and women of this planet will learn to share. God in Creation has set an example of ubuntu, the reality of the Earth Community which includes all life-forms – flora, fauna and humanity – and the earth itself. We affirm our relatedness to the whole of God's Creation. We affirm our role as responsible caretakers of God's Creation, of which we are part. Entrepreneurs in the creation of wealth should respect human dignity and nature. Equity and justice should be the primary guiding principles in sharing God-given resources. Well-being (uzima) is undermined by greed and excessive individualism which promote injustice. Excessive accumulation of wealth does not necessarily ensure happiness and contentment. Instead, opulence breeds discontentment and eventual self-destruction.

### **Challenges to the Church**

Does the Church recognise and appreciate in the Christian canonical scriptures a unifying spiritual frame of reference on matters concerning economic theory and

practice at various levels of governance? What worldview do Churches presuppose when reading and using the Bible? As presented in Africa, the Gospel has tended to focus on compartmentalisation of life, rather than integration and affirmation of God's Creation with all its complexity and richness. Although evangelisation may have changed the individual lives of many converts to Christianity, it has not achieved significant transformation of communities at the institutional and social levels. There is need for Churches to focus more attention on societal and institutional transformation as an essential part of the mandate of the Church in mission and evangelism.

For a wholesome redemption of individuals the Church must teach consistently that the Bible is *for* me but *about* God. The Bible is not about me (Collosians 1: 15-20). It is the word of God about the transformation of individuals and communities.

The Gospel is centred on the cross. The Church needs to remain focused on this essential affirmation. Any separation of spirituality from real life results in inconsistency.

The Church has not always offered balanced teaching on the stewardship over life, time, talent and treasure. Some believers have erroneously promoted a narrow perspective which places ecological concerns at the periphery of their daily routines. The promised wholesome abundance (John 8: 32 and John 10: 10) does not seem to be relevant and applicable in the lives of some believers. God invites us to care for Creation (Psalm 148) so that the whole Creation rejoices in harmony and praise. Honouring and caring for Creation is mandatory, not optional. There is a close relationship between justice and stewardship for Creation. The Church is well-placed to promote responsible leadership and sensitisation concerning the theme of "life in abundance".

There is a tension between *work* and *care* in the home, among and within spouses, siblings, families, and also within the wider society. Who takes the role of "the leader" in the context of spousal relationships? According to African culture and also in the Bible, husbands as men ought to *abad* – work, cultivate, keep, till, preserve and protect. But any excessiveness on their part becomes domination, which could be interpreted as greed and contributes towards disintegration of the family ties. Without shalom (peace and harmony) in the spousal relationships a balance cannot be reached and the imminent result is destruction of the family unit. Such tensions can be minimised though the celebration of God's presence as the unifying and reconciling force within the family (Isaiah 5: 2).

Balanced professionalism is lacking in key Church leadership and also consequently in pulpit ministry. There has to be good shepherding of all the "sheep" in the fold. The Church should encourage and cultivate inter-disciplinary professional consultation in order to ensure holistic nurturing and to combat corruption.

The Church needs to address problems of land ownership and land use in the African context. The current policies and practices of inheritance and land

subdivision should be reviewed, in view of the negative consequences of unproductive land sizes and homestead cemeteries which make agricultural land economically unviable.

### **Challenges to communities**

God has created human beings to live in community with one another, with all the beings of the earth, and with the earth itself (Psalm 115: 16). In the Kiswahili translation of Psalm 115: 16, the Earth was given to the “children of Adam,” while in the New Revised Standard Version, the translation is “human beings.” While both translations emphasise that all human beings belong to the whole human family, “children of Adam” is closer to the understanding of ubuntu and ujamaa. Genesis 1-3 and Psalm 115: 16 declare that human beings are part of and responsible for the earth. These texts challenge us to move away from sectarianism, and, in the current African context, urge us to accept neo-Pentecostal Christians as brothers and sisters while we also challenge them to become a life-affirming community.

The one Christian community appears very strongly in the Book of Acts 4: 32-35, where the early Church is described as: *“All the believers were one in heart and mind/soul...There was not a needy person among them, for as many who owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold...it was distributed to each as they had need...and it was distributed in the whole community.”*

Psalm 115 reminds us that the Earth has been given to all children of Adam. At the same time, in Acts 4 the situation has changed: some people own houses and lands while others own nothing; the early Church shows us re-distribution and restitution to the former status. By this ujamaa is created. Uzima is seen in the “whole group” as well as “one heart, one soul.” Similarly, I Corinthians 11: 18-23 tells us that the Holy Meal and the daily meal are connected. A necessary characteristic of Christian community is that everyone is provided with food so that they can gather for the Holy Meal. According to I Corinthians 12, the Church is the body of Christ with many different members, and “if one member suffers, the whole body suffers.”

If we affirm ourselves to be a worldwide community as the body of Christ, and then see that some Churches in the world own houses and lands while others cannot provide for the basic needs of their members, then we are far away from Acts.

Similarly, the whole body of Christ in the world today does not recognise the suffering of such a large of its members (I Corinthians 12).

### **Challenges to the market**

The African tradition of the market, the sokoni or oja, is that of human contact, mutual exchange and support, connecting and re-connecting with others in the community and beyond the village. The market is a place of life, of personal relationships and formation in community. This tradition is disappearing into

supermarkets and transnational trading. What was once a good place for human beings (and still is in many rural places) has become a global exchange in which the privileged elite profit and the excluded majority continue to suffer.

The prophet Isaiah cried, *“The vineyard of the Lord Almighty is the house of Israel...he looked for justice but saw bloodshed, for righteousness but heard cried of distress...Woe to you who add house to house and join field to field... until there is no space left and you live alone”* (Isaiah 5: 7-10). Isaiah saw greed and selfishness in his time; we also see greed, selfishness and destruction in our time. Ubuntu is wholeness in community, ujamaa is familyhood, relatedness: international economic greed cuts off individuals, communities, and whole countries from the richness of life, the connections of family; it is a violation of the wholeness that God expects. Matthew 5 reminds us that we cannot stand alone before God, but always as a member of the community in the spirit of ubuntu: *“First reconcile with your brother or sister and then bring your gifts to the altar.”*

Other prophets regularly decried economic injustice. Micah declares that everyone shall have their own house and their own land, thus supporting the right of a subsistence economy. Today land is sold by political and economic elites for mining, deforestation, and monoculture, taking away the land of the poor (Micah 2). Amos speaks of cheating with dishonest scales and buying the poor (Amos 8: 4-6). Today poor women and children are regularly bought for the sex trade, and international trade agreements create dishonest relationships, dishonest scales. Nehemiah named the scandalous debt system which enslaved people in his time (Nehemiah 5), and we name the international debt system which enslaves nations and much of the Global South in our time.

In the Gospel of Luke we see Jesus treating economic issues first in a rather rural context and then, once he gets closer to Jerusalem, treating the same issues in a level of higher accumulation of wealth, as we see in Luke 16 (the manager of a very rich person). When he comes to Jerusalem he goes right to the economic centre and to the centre of power: the temple, where he turns the tables upside down. He does this because the temple has become the centre of exploitation. Poor people from around the country come and bring the little money they have to purchase their gifts. Immediately after this, Jesus demonstrates an alternative caring economy through reaching out in healing and service. Right after Jesus challenges the economic centre we hear of the attempt to kill him (Luke 19: 45-46; Matthew 21: 12-14).

The Church in Africa is called to speak out against these economic injustices, which take place within political systems, and sometimes also within the Church.

### **Challenges on environment and ecology**

Ecology refers to the household of life (*oikos*). The biblical reference is the story of Creation (Genesis 1-2: 4a). God created everything good. What we see today is a wide contrast between what God has made and what we have made out of it. Men and women are meant to be God’s co-creators (2 Corinthians 6: 1). We are people of worth and value created in God’s own image and likeness, therefore we have a divine potential and responsibility to take care of God’s good Creation.



How can the Church promote efforts to repair the damaged environment and ecology?

By providing responsible leadership in anti-pollution lifestyles:

- Advocating for the use and production of environment-friendly products, for instance, the distribution of environment-friendly bags that are used instead of plastic bags;
- Advocating for mitigation of noise production within our communities such as that produced by commercial enterprises, industries, religious organisations, entertainments, advertisements, etc.;
- Educating people on the negative impacts on climate change and human health of vehicular pollution and the burning of forests to create space for farmland; and
- Maintaining clean surroundings regardless of poverty as a decisive factor.

Because God is the rightful owner of the land, and human beings serve only as stewards who must exercise responsible ownership, the Church should provide responsible leadership in land-use practices:

- Advocating strongly on good land tenure arrangements, particularly degradation and limited land use by indigenous communities in Africa;
- Educating people on the negative impacts of burning forests to create space for farmland;
- Creating space for people to enjoy the fruits of their labour through responsible land ownership; and
- Asserting that land and natural resources should be used for the creation of wealth for all people, not only the elites.

### **Challenges on wealth**

Wealth is a positive, life-affirming concept in the Hebrew Scriptures, and frequently in the New Testament, but only when it is shared with the larger community for the life of all people. The concepts of Sabbath and jubilee, as well as an understanding of just distribution, must be upheld by the faith community (Leviticus 25: 3-5). As used in critiques of economic globalisation, “wealth” denotes dominion, power, authority, monopoly and neo-liberal colonialism — all uses of wealth for the benefit of the few rather than the whole community.

The ideological concerns about poverty, wealth, and ecology raise the question of who determines the rules or standards of poverty and wealth. The Church must be careful to listen to other voices, and use a peaceful approach (Philippians 4: 8).

### **Challenges on justice and human dignity**

When we speak of human dignity, we speak of a dignity of the web of life. The following are some illustrations:

- Participation in economic processes – Pastors and preachers must use the pulpit in redirecting our people to utilise local products, promote food sovereignty, just trade, etc.;

- Just distribution – Patriarchy and inheritance issues within the African context sometimes lead to dehumanisation;
- Restoration and reparation – Large areas in some African countries are covered with land mines, which are extremely dangerous especially to children. Clearing the land mines is expensive and tedious. Yet these land mines originate from the industrialised countries. Those responsible ought to be brought into account both within and outside Africa;
- Judicial justice – This is about processes of attaining the dignity of life in relationships with others and God’s Creation. An example is the exploitative policy of the principalities and powers of global capitalism (e.g. World Trade Organisation, International Monetary Fund and the World Bank) with regard to seed, food, and medicines. Africa has become a dumping ground for obsolete products from the North, and a testing ground for new ones. These practices are contrary to ubuntu, and are a threat to peace and security; and
- Moral justice – Africans are dehumanised by child prostitution, child labour, undermining of staple agriculture, and injustice resulting from the abuse of power and authority by Church leaders, among others. There is need for proper theological training and leadership formation that is attentive to the needs of people.

### **Challenges on empire**

Empire as a phenomenon can be very opaque, which creates situations of multiplicity. For example, South Africa is becoming the “Big Brother” in the African situation. Some Churches engage in collusion with big economic players in the continent. The Church as the voice of the voiceless and the conscience of the people should not be silenced in this regard (James 2: 14-26). The Church must be very cautious about getting entangled with empire issues, such as working with international industries, multinational companies, or the powers that be. The empire sometimes operates even in our rural and some urban situations as well as in parish/congregational contexts of power and authority struggles (1 Kings 21: 1-29). The Church needs to educate its members about what is happening in world economies, politics and social sectors. Popular education should be used as a true source of power to provide liberating knowledge. Theological training and formation should be greatly improved on these issues on the African theological scene.

## 5. African Women's Statement on Poverty, Wealth and Ecology

We, African women of faith, Church leaders, theologians and activists, enriched by contributions from our sisters from Asia, Latin America, Europe and North America, have gathered in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from 05-06 November 2007 to analyse the links between poverty, wealth and ecology in Africa, in deepening study and theological reflection on neo-liberal economic globalisation, as part of the Alternative Globalisation addressing People and Earth (AGAPE) process.

We are compelled to engage in the critical discourse on poverty, wealth and ecology as African women of faith because:

- We are nurturers of life and we see, hear and feel the sufferings wrought by deprivation, hunger and disease besieging African people;
- We are endowed with creative and intellectual gifts;
- We come with a strong commitment to community;
- We bring resources of enduring hope and resilience; and
- We are ever seeking justice in line with our biblical mandate (Luke 4: 18-19).

### Lifting up African women's stories of hope and action

Neo-liberal economic globalisation, as intertwined with patriarchy, has posed severe socio-economic and ecological crises especially in the continent of Africa. African women are resisting this death-dealing paradigm and are building communities of hope. We lift up and celebrate the African women who are:

- **Analysing** national and local budgets to demand accountability from their governments;
- **Empowering** other women through macroeconomic literacy programmes;
- **Advocating** at national and international levels for just trade and the cancellation of illegitimate debt;
- **Challenging** corporate power and greed, and calling for corporate social accountability;
- **Mobilising** other women and men for just wages and decent work;
- **Participating** in political resistance to unjust laws and the curtailment of civil liberties;
- **Struggling** for ecological justice in several areas, including through resistance to mining and logging activities;
- **Defending** food sovereignty by organising farmers and promoting organic farming programmes; and
- **Responding** to changing gender relations through dialogues with men on transforming relationships, and programmes of healing to address violence against women and children.

### Making the links between poverty, wealth and ecology in Africa

To sharpen our understanding and to develop creative and practical alternatives to neo-liberal economic globalisation, we realise the importance of closely

interrogating the interrelationships between poverty, wealth and ecology.

We affirm that Africa is wealthy. God has blessed the African continent with abundance of wealth: communities of people, resource-laden lands and diverse ecology. However, the enslavement of Africa's people and the plunder of Africa's natural resources during 500 years of colonialism had impoverished African people while enriching European colonial powers.

In the current context of neo-liberal economic globalisation, powerful nations and international economic institutions, namely the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB), and World Trade Organisation (WTO), have forced Africa to liberalise trade, deregulate capital flows including foreign direct investments, and privatise social and other strategic sectors, resulting in huge socio-economic chasms between poor and rich countries and between the poor and rich within Africa. These neo-liberal economic policies continue to be imposed on African countries through conditionalities contained in the Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) initiative and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) approach of the IMF and WB, official development assistance (ODA) or aid, multilateral and bilateral trade and investment agreements such as WTO agreements and Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), and the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) plan.

Patriarchal structures are pivotal to processes of neo-liberal economic globalisation. The interaction between patriarchy and neo-liberal economic globalisation has concentrated decision-making power and productive means and resources, especially capital, in the hands of the so-called "Davos man." It has also resulted in drastic cuts in investment in life-giving areas such as sustainable agriculture and education and health services. Women, who stand at the fulcrum of production and reproduction, have been disproportionately affected through:

- Weakened participation in economic decision-making processes;
- Diminished access to productive resources and services (e.g. land, credit and technology);
- Erosion of food sovereignty;
- Declining wages and destruction of livelihoods;
- Violation of economic, social and cultural rights (e.g. the right to avail health and education services); and
- Intensification of socially-ascribed reproductive or caring responsibilities especially in light of the HIV and AIDS pandemic (e.g. caring for the ill and fetching water and fuel).

Neo-liberal economic globalisation has also severely damaged Africa's diverse ecological fabric. The privatisation, commodification and commercialisation of land, water and seeds through large-scale mining projects, the construction of mega-dams and neo-liberal trade policies have fragmented and displaced entire communities in Africa, blocking them off from their sources of sustenance. African people are forced to migrate as a survival mechanism. In particular, many African women have fallen victim to trafficking and are facing heightened risk of HIV and AIDS infection.

Resource extraction and deforestation in Africa to fuel and feed overproduction and over-consumption in rich Northern countries have contributed to changes in weather patterns. In turn, the droughts, floods and cyclones wrought by climate change have wreaked havoc on Africa's predominantly agricultural economy, further threatening African peoples' livelihoods and access to food.

In Africa, the poor and women in particular rely heavily on pastures, fishing grounds and forests for their livelihood, food, medicine, and fuel, increasing their vulnerability to the destruction, depletion and appropriation of natural resources.

The intensifying competition among powerful nations and multinational corporations for Africa's oil, minerals and lumber has not only deprived African people of the use of these resources for their wellbeing. In the scramble to secure these resources through political pressure, military and paramilitary force, wars and conflicts have erupted in the continent, accompanied by massive human rights violations. The growing nexus between neo-liberal economic globalisation and militarisation is a reflection of the face of empire in Africa. By "empire" we mean the coherence of economic, cultural, political and military powers and religious fundamentalism that constitute a global system of domination directed by powerful nations and organisations.

Connecting these threads between poverty, wealth and ecology in Africa, it becomes patent that structures and policies of wealth creation that are motivated by profits and greed – rather than provisioning for life and care of community and ecology – generate poverty, environmental destruction and conflicts. And in taking away communities' and women's decision-making power, ownership and control over productive means and resources, including natural resources, colonialism and neo-liberal economic globalisation in collusion with patriarchy have dealt double death blows to Africa.

Therefore, we:

- Reject the neo-liberal and patriarchal economy; and
- Declare that domination and exploitation of people and the environment is a sin against God, humanity and ecology.

### **Constructing African feminist theologies on poverty, wealth and ecology**

We reject the patriarchal view in our Churches that equates theologians with being "adult" and "male" and undermine the intellectual resources of women theologians.

We recognise the inadequacy of existing dominant theologies couched in patriarchal systems of domination and power in addressing the interlinked issues of poverty, excessive wealth and environmental destruction.

In constructing African feminist theologies that will respond to these issues, we derive power from Africa's religious pluralism and diverse spiritualities – our Christian faith, African spiritualities, strengths in African religio-cultures – and African women's realities, experiences and intellectual resources.

From our Christian faith, we are inspired by the witness of the widow who demanded justice from the unjust judge (Luke 18: 1-8). However, we reject the systems of domination that force women to clamour and labour for justice rather than claiming it as a God-given right.

From our African spiritualities and religio-cultures, we learn of:

- The sacredness of life and all Creation;
- The importance of our interconnectedness with each other and with mother earth;
- The essence of relationships that are compassionate, respectful and interdependent;
- The values of ubuntu/botho, namely: sharing, community, reparations, redistributive and restorative justice, and the economy of enough; and
- The need to redefine wealth as community and ecologically-centred such that wealth is shared equitably and used for the wellbeing of the community.

### **African women and Churches acting for transformation**

*“Now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships and calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labours, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience and kindness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God” (2 Corinthians 6).*

The various spaces of African feminist theologies are the wellsprings from which we draw hope for the transformation of systemic injustice and resilience in the continuing struggle for life-giving economy.

Therefore, we commit ourselves to:

- Ownership of the African Women’s Statement on Poverty, Wealth and Ecology;
- Continued critical study of socio-economic policies and structures – matters of life and death for African communities – especially from the perspective of women;
- Reclaiming community decision-making and custodianship of Africa’s productive means and resources;
- Promotion of non-hierarchical models of relating and the care economy; and
- Continued resistance and search for life-giving alternatives to neo-liberal economic globalisation.

We call on the Churches to transform the fundamentalist, sexist and patriarchal discriminatory theology and practices by male Church leaders/ theologians<sup>1</sup> (Joel 2:28).

We enjoin Churches, ecumenical organisations and partners to:

- Share the African Women's Statement on Poverty, Wealth and Ecology at different spaces, levels and fora (e.g. the European Union-African Union Strategy Meeting in Accra, Ghana, the 52<sup>nd</sup> session of the United Nations (UN) Commission on the Status of Women, UN Economic and Social Council meetings);
- Engage communities and ensure women's representation and participation in all decision-making spaces in Church and ecumenical processes, not least the AGAPE process on linking poverty, wealth and ecology;
- Mobilise resources for communities and women to engage in discussions on concerns around poverty, wealth and ecology;
- Deepen study and theological reflection on Churches' complicity in neo-liberal economic systems;
- Develop a new paradigm within Churches in respect of pastoral and ecumenical formation, ecclesial and "pulpit language," and a new biblical hermeneutics that addresses the linkages between poverty, wealth and ecology;
- Promote an ecumenical spirituality that draws from the richness of African spiritualities and diverse faiths within the reality of religious pluralism; and
- Ensure and strengthen spaces for Churches in partnership with women's and other social movements to jointly formulate strategies to overcome poverty, redefine wealth, protect the environment, and to build alternatives to neo-liberal economic globalisation.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, the conduct of preferential and differential treatment for some male Bishops and theologians and the usurping of dialogical space without due consideration of full participation by all.

## **6. African Youth Statement on Poverty, Wealth and Ecology**

### **Preamble**

Economic globalisation is not a new phenomenon; its application and context varies from century to century. It has transformed economic structures as well as social institutions. Young persons bear much of the myriad consequences. The globalisation of economies, for instance through the liberalisation of trade, has exposed youth to socio-economic challenges such as economic exclusion, decreased access to natural resources, and migration.

Politically, economically and technically driven by market forces whose ultimate aim is profit maximisation rather than sustainable human development, economic globalisation policies have undermined life in communities and Churches, especially affecting the youth.

### **African youth are concerned that:**

Under the present economic order (economic globalisation), the poor have become poorer and the rich richer. More and more people both in the South and the North are sinking into poverty even as wealth is increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few. African countries in particular are experiencing a heightened trend of exclusion, poverty, inequality, and environmental destruction.

Unemployment is one of the major consequences of economic globalisation in Africa. Youth are the main victims of high rates of joblessness which marginalise and alienate them. Many young persons are forced to migrate within as well as outside of Africa in search of employment opportunities.

Multinational corporations offer unfair low wages to poor young people in Africa; young women form the largest group of workers who suffer.

The World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Trade Organisation (WTO) impose strict budget allocation restrictions on – as well as push for the privatisation of – social services, especially education and health services, in African countries. Poor young persons are disproportionately affected by these policies, which limit their opportunities for living productive and healthy lives especially in the face of the HIV and AIDS pandemic. Poverty and illiteracy are among the principal contributing factors to the spread of HIV and AIDS.

In a world of unprecedented wealth, many young people and children continue to die each year for lack of clean water, from hunger, water-borne and other infectious diseases. Moreover, millions of young girls and women in Africa spend hours collecting and carrying water and fuel, restricting their opportunities and their choices.



In the period of economic globalisation, Africa's ecology is being rapidly degraded, adversely affecting food production and the availability of potable water, and thereby enhancing the conditions for violence.

Economic globalisation has also encouraged consumerism among young persons. While the process of globalisation has been accompanied by advances in information and communication technologies, it has at the same time promoted a digital culture (e.g. computer games) that may alienate young people by creating an artificial world of individualistic hyper-stimulation.

**Therefore:**

We, African young people from Botswana, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Nigeria, Sudan, Tanzania, and Togo – youth participants at the World Council Churches' (WCC) AGAPE consultation on "Linking Poverty, Wealth and Ecology: African Ecumenical Perspectives," meeting in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> November 2007;

Compelled by our faith in Jesus Christ, compassion and commitment to dialogue, ecumenism, social and economic justice, peace and integrity of Creation;

Encouraged by the initiatives of many ecumenical and civil society organisations such as the World Student Christian Federation that are working tirelessly on poverty alleviation, social justice and sustainable development; and

Affirming our responsibility as young people in the Churches in Africa to bear prophetic witness in Church and society;

**Respond to the following four thematic areas:**

Poverty

We understand "poverty" to mean the lack of basic needs (food, shelter, clothing and opportunities), quality of life, economic justice, dignity and human rights. Furthermore, we have come to the recognition that policies associated with economic globalisation which dispossess the poor of resources, lack of good governance, corruption and political instability are factors fuelling poverty in Africa. The direct impacts of these on the youth are enormous. In the fight against poverty, we draw inspiration from Matthew 25: 35-36 where Jesus responds: *"For I was hungry and you gave me food I was thirsty and you gave me water to drink, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me."*

Wealth

In the context of economic globalisation, processes of wealth creation are basically rooted in exploitation and greed. However, we young people believe that justice, peace, ecological balance, happiness, contentment, dignity and cultural values should inform our concept of wealth, instead of defining wealth as "accumulation of resources, assets and cash." We young people think that real

wealth is happiness that brings about freedom and liberty. As it is written in Proverbs 10: 2: “*Treasures of wickedness profit nothing, but righteousness delivers from death.*”

### Ecology

Processes of wealth creation under economic globalisation are ecologically destructive. We have observed the mismanagement of natural resources, and the plunder, exploitation and pollution of the environment especially by multinational corporations. This is part of the ecological debt owed to Africa.

### Migration

We understand “migration” as movement of labour and services. The root causes of migration are unemployment, low incomes, shortage of land and food, conflicts, and under-recognition of youth, among others.

### **Proffer the following recommendations:**

We call upon the WB, IMF, WTO, United Nations agencies and other international organisations to:

- Ensure transparency and inclusiveness in the formulation and implementation of development policies;
- Ensure local ownership and acceptability of their development initiatives;
- Be accountable for their development policies; and
- Promote sustainable human development with youth in focus and the Creation of global youth networks.

We urge African governments to:

- Provide quality leadership that improves the living conditions of youth;
- Institute and implement effective policies that reduce the gap between the rich and poor;
- Ensure equitable distribution of resources;
- Encourage regional trade, i.e. within the African continent; and just and fair trade;
- Strengthen educational institutions to provide adequate life-building skills for youth;
- Improve curricular of education systems to include issues around poverty, wealth and ecology;
- Provide social services and facilities for both rural and urban communities;
- Reinforce infrastructure at various levels;
- Enact employment policies to protect young people and regulate labour and wage policies of multinational corporations;
- Implement land reform;
- Address the issue of corruption and its impact on youth;
- Ensure that Africa’s natural resources are not exploited unduly; and
- Seek for reparation of all ecological damages.

We urge WCC, All African Conference of Churches, ecumenical partners and our Churches to:

- Strengthen spaces for developing integral relationships between young persons and local Churches for greater youth involvement in Churches;
- Offer peer and mutual learning fora with the participation of various confessions in order to strengthen our faith;
- Provide capacity building on leadership development of youth around issues of poverty, wealth and ecology;
- Establish youth coordination and networks in Churches for information sharing around poverty, wealth and ecology;
- Seek for alternative media; and
- Fulfil their prophetic mandate and call African governments to ensure:
  - Responsible governance and provision of people's basic needs; and
  - Responsible leadership which hinders violence and conflict and promotes wellness and peace.

We urge both governments and Churches to:

- Provide special funds for young persons to promote small-scale enterprises which will open more employment opportunities for youth;
- Promote vocational training, networking and mentoring programs;
- Develop budget tracking systems;
- Provide spaces for rich people to share their wealth with poor; and
- Promote education on how to conserve the environment (e.g. encourage planting of trees).

**Make the following commitments:**

We hereby unanimously commit to overcome all forms of injustice and to promote the AGAPE (Alternative Globalisation Addressing People and Earth) economy in Africa. More specifically, we commit to:

- Share and disseminate information on poverty, wealth and ecology;
- Be pro-active and demonstrative in our local contexts;
- Uphold the value of hard work, thereby inviting other young persons to do the same in school, out of school, and within Churches;
- Refuse to be used as instruments of abuse, corruption, exploitation and violence against our fellow humans, communities and Creation; and
- Take initiative in demanding for reparation and payment of the ecological debt owed to Africa.

## 7. Words from Ecumenical Partners

*“I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind – just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you – so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord” (I Corinthians 1:4-9).*

We thank you all for your warm hospitality. From our various arrivals at the airport, we have felt welcomed into the whole process of the consultation, and included in the dialogue. We affirm the value of multiple voices as we all struggle against the principalities and powers of our time. We prepare to depart feeling more fully part of the global ecumenical family, particularly with our African sisters and brothers, whose names and faces we now can see and hear.

We have seen and heard your powerful strength rooted in Christ in the soil of Africa. We have experienced your deep and compassionate faith, and felt your rightful and righteous anger against the Empire in whose belly many of us live. The Empire supported by too many of our churches destroys your ecology, sucks out your wealth, contributes to political and social corruption, and plunges your peoples deeper and deeper into absolute poverty. Your critical analyses of these social, political, military and economic realities have been clarifying and challenging.

As we prepare to return to our homes, we commit to you that we will:

- Interpret the documents of this consultation, and their spirit, in our home contexts – in Churches, and ecumenical and civil society organisations;
- Facilitate the AGAPE process as integral parts of our own research, analyses, and actions; and
- To continue to march in solidarity and alliance with you in the years and months ahead.

*“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armour of God...For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in heavenly places...Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. As shoes for your feet, be ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. With all of these, take the shield of faith...Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:10-17).*

Speaking on behalf of those invited from other continents,

Susan Davies (USA)

## **8. Main Points on Networking for a Movement to Address Issues of Poverty, Wealth and Ecology**

### **Issues**

- Poverty as a result of unjust economic systems and poor governance
- Wealth creation for African masses through advocacy, lobbying and mobilisation
- Ecological degradation as a direct result of economic injustice

### **Existing structures for creation of viable movements**

- Local churches and church-related organisations, women's guilds, youth organisations, men's organisations
- Interfaith organisations and justice-based movements in gender, economy and ecology
- All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) and other ecumenical organisations

### **Methodologies**

- Community mobilising by in-depth reflections on local ways of knowing
- Consultations, workshops and training sessions in advocacy, lobbying and mobilisation
- Websites and internet networking (facilitated by World Council of Churches (WCC) and partners)
- Media and billboards

### **Procedure**

- Each participant to the hearings to commit to the dissemination of information from their respective hearings and to initiate a process of research, analysis and action by connecting with or starting locally-based networks to mobilise communities to advocate and lobby for justice.
  - WCC, AACC, World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), Council of World Mission (CWM) and ecumenical partners will set off the networking process by using the participant list and:
  - Breaking down poverty, wealth and ecology into issues that can be covered in brochures, posted on the web, tackled in newsletters, etc;
  - Monitoring the transmission of information starting with the hearing statements and the Dar es Salaam statement to regional ecumenical organisations and partners;
  - Targeting planned events like Youth Week, Women World Day of Prayer, etc.; and
  - Connecting existing networks within WCC, AACC, WARC, CWM and ecumenical partners with participants to the consultation.

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