World Council of Churches
Central Committee
26 August – 2 September 2009
Geneva, Switzerland

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English

FOR INFORMATION

Proposed Agenda of the Public Issues Committee

Mandate:

1. Public statements are one way in which the World Council of Churches (WCC) responds to critical issues on the international agenda. The basic provisions for making such statements are set out in Rule XIII of the Constitution and Rules of the WCC:

   Rule XIII (1):
   > *In the performance of its functions, the World Council of Churches through its assembly or through its central committee may issue statements on any situation or concern with which the Council or its constituent churches may be confronted.*

   Rule XIII (2):
   > *While such statements may have great significance and influence as the expression of the judgment or concern of so widely representative a Christian body, yet their authority will consist only in the weight which they carry by their own truth and wisdom, and the publishing of such statements shall not be held to imply that the World Council of Churches as such has, or can have, any constitutional authority over the constituent churches or right to speak for them.*

2. The criteria identified by Central Committee for making public statements:
   - areas on which the WCC has had direct involvement and long-standing commitment;
   - emerging issues of international concern to which the attention of the churches should be called for action;
   - critical and developing political situations which demand the WCC to make known its judgment and lend its spiritual and moral voice;
   - expectations from the member churches that WCC should speak;
   - when there is need to set policy.

3. In light of the interactive and integrated approach, to discuss programme proposal 2007-2009 and to forward comments to Programme Guidelines Committee.

Wednesday, 26 August

12:00   Plenary session: Brief report on public issues

Thursday, 27 August

12:30   Deadline for proposals for additional public issues

12:30 – 14:00   Meeting of the Public Issues Committee to consider the proposals for additional public issues from members of the Central Committee

Friday, 28 August

11:00   Plenary report on additional public issues
               (if any received by the committee at the expiry of the 24hr deadline)

Session 1, 16:00 – 17:30

- Introductions
- Review of Procedures on Public Issues
- Presentation of executive committee proposals on public issues:
    1. Statement on just finance and the economy of life
    2. Statement on eco-justice and ecological debt
    3. Statement on sexual violence against women in the Democratic Republic of Congo
    4. Statement on Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory
    5. Statement on caste-based discrimination
    6. Minute on the right of conscientious objection to military service
    7. Progress report of the study on genocide in the context of the "Darfur Crisis"
- Consideration of proposals for public issues received from Central Committee

Saturday, 29 August

Session 2, 8:50 – 10:30

- Discussion of moderator's and general secretary's reports
- Discussion on programme proposals 2010-2013
  (Report of the discussions to be shared with Programme Committee)

Session 3, 11:00 – 12:30

- Discussion on draft statements

Session 4, 14:00 – 15:30

- Discussion on draft statements (continued)
- Finalization of the Report on Public Issues

Session 5, 16:00 – 17:30

- Finalization of the Report on Public Issues (continued)

17:00   Additional session (if needed)

Monday, 31 August

14:00   Plenary session: Reading of the First Report of the Public Issues Committee

Tuesday, 1 September

16:00   Plenary session: Reading of the Second Report of the Public Issues Committee
                    Adoption of Recommendations on Public Issues

Wednesday, 2 September

8:50   Plenary session: Reading of the Third Report of the Public Issues Committee
                    Amendments to Recommendations on Public Issues for final action by
                    plenary (as required)

10:35   Press Conference on Public Issues