

Public Witness Report

In the spirit of the Reformed tradition habit of continuous self examination according to God's Word, and the consequent call to share in the discernment of what is God both saying to us and requires of us at this particular time and space, the Executive Committee of the WCRC appointed a Public Witness Core Committee to develop a methodology and process to facilitate the preparation of the Public Witness report for General Council 2025. Through a year-long process, urgent issues and concerns were received from across the reformed family and our ecumenical partners. These were drawn together and passed on from one group of the "cloud of witnesses" to another, the Public Witness Committee (PWC) appointed at the 27th General meeting (2025) at Chiang Mai.

During the General Council, the PWC, continuing in the spirit of listening and discerning, invited additional petitions through one public hearing and in writing. Submissions both publicly and orally, and from the conversations across the multiple events at the 27th General Council sharpened, clarified, brought new insights and further submissions. The committee worked carefully and sensitively to discern the urgent issues arising from the context of the churches, regions and from ecumenical partners.

In keeping with the Council's four verbs—Discerning, Confessing, Witnessing, and Being Reformed—and the Council's five programmatic actions, this report gathers and presents submissions received from member churches and regional bodies. These petitions express the lived realities and prophetic convictions of the Reformed family in every region. Guided by the unfinished agenda of the Reformation and inspired by the Belhar and Accra Confessions and the Leipzig General Council, the Public Witness Committee offers this report as an act of communal discernment—listening to what the Spirit is saying through the churches and partners of the Communion.

Each submission represents a cry for justice and witness from within the life of our member churches and partner communions. The Public Witness Committee has woven them together in a way that honours their integrity in our continuing process of discernment while highlighting the interconnectedness of their concerns.

Justice for Creation and Displaced Peoples: A Shared Cry from the Earth and the Margins

On the submissions relating to ecological justice, forced migration, and the Pacific region's theological and contextual witness the committee recognised the deep interconnection between these concerns and the shared theological grounding in justice for creation and displaced peoples. The Committee affirms that ecological collapse, forced migration, nuclear injustice, economic injustices, and struggles for self-determination are not isolated crises, but manifestations of one broken relationship — humanity's covenant with God, neighbour, and creation. In response, the Committee offers the following integrated statement, "*Justice for Creation and Displaced Peoples: A Shared Cry from the Earth and the Margins.*" This statement brings together the theological insights and specific calls from all four submissions, articulating a united witness to the Council for action and discernment.

a. Ecological and Climate Justice — Communion with Creation

We continue to hear the cries of creation and the voices of those suffering amid ecological catastrophe, displacement, nuclear contamination, and continuing colonial oppression. We affirm that these realities are interconnected signs of humanity's broken relationship with God, neighbour, and creation. They call us to repentance, conversion, and renewed commitment to God's mission of justice, peace, and the integrity of creation.

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it (Psalm 24:1), and humanity's vocation is to care for God's oikos — the household of life. Climate change, forced migration, nuclear contamination, and ongoing colonial exploitation reveal the depth of structural sin embedded within our economic and political systems. The gospel of Jesus Christ calls the Church into solidarity with the most vulnerable — Indigenous peoples, women, youth, and displaced communities — whose suffering is a direct consequence of ecological injustice and global inequality. Contextual theologies such as the Pacific vision of Do Kamo (authentic humanity in communion and liberation) offer living testimony that the Spirit of God is already renewing the earth through communities of faith, resistance, and hope.

b. People on the Move and Forced Migration - Communion as Mutual Hospitality

At the same time, we lament the devastation of creation brought about by greed and extractive economies that privilege profit over life. We grieve the disproportionate impact of the climate crisis on poorer communities in Malawi, Madagascar, Mozambique, South Africa, and across the Pacific Islands, and the loss of biodiversity and fragile ecosystems that sustain all life. We also recognise the rise of eco-fascist and nationalist ideologies that reject global responsibility and the unprecedented scale of forced displacement — now numbering over 117 million people — caused by war, environmental degradation, and economic injustice. The militarisation of borders and policies that dehumanise migrants and refugees betray the values of compassion and solidarity. We further lament the continuing colonisation and denial of self-determination in Hawai'i, Ma'ohi Nui, Kanaky, West Papua, and Aotearoa, where Indigenous communities continue to struggle for justice, land, and sovereignty.

In living out communion as mutual hospitality, the Council recognises that forced displacement must be addressed by confronting its root causes while protecting the dignity and rights of all people on the move. The practice of hospitality is not only an act of charity but a theological expression of our shared belonging in Christ. As the people of God, we are called to accompany those who journey in search of refuge, to challenge systems that create displacement, and to nurture communities where migrants and host peoples alike are transformed through encounter, generosity, and grace.

C. Pacific Witness and Regional Solidarity

This submission also bears witness to a theology of life in which human flourishing is inseparable from the well-being of the ocean and islands. The global Communion is called to recognise that true communion emerges when humanity embraces its place within creation, not above it. The Council celebrates the Pacific churches' theological and moral leadership through the vision of Do Kamo — a call to authentic humanity, liberation, and communion — and endorses the Ocean of Peace Declaration as a faith-rooted alternative to militarised security, grounded in Pacific concepts of *filemu*, *melino*, and *sautu*, alongside the biblical vision of *shalom*.

The General Council is called upon to:

a. Ecological and Climate Justice

1. Raise awareness and promote behavioural change to prevent ecological calamities.
2. Work with governments to ensure compliance with climate imperatives.
3. Advocate for rapid transition from fossil fuels to sustainable economies.
4. Participate in international processes such as COP and share outcomes with member churches.
5. Ground advocacy in scientific evidence and faith-based discernment for the joint care of the *oikos*.

b. People on the Move and Forced Migration - Communion as Mutual Hospitality

1. Educate their communities around the root causes of forced migration — including war, economic injustice, climate change, and discrimination.
2. Collaborate through webinars and solidarity visits addressing displacement.
3. Advocate for just migration policies that uphold human dignity.
4. Support grass-roots initiatives building sustainable livelihoods and resisting militarism.
5. Encourage sanctions and accountability measures that target perpetrators of oppression rather than entire populations.
6. Engage youth and intergenerational networks to build bridges of solidarity and theological reflection on migration and belonging.

(c) Pacific Witness and Regional Solidarity

1. Support Pacific efforts for decolonisation and self-determination as expressions of faith, justice, and the integrity of creation.
2. Strengthen youth and women's leadership through structured mentoring, participation in governance, and ecumenical formation, especially within climate-justice and resilience initiatives.
3. Integrate eco-communal theology into theological education and pastoral formation.
4. Support and work with the pacific region in advancing their climate commitments—including deep-sea mining, fossil fuel divestment, and culturally grounded wellbeing initiatives.
5. Work with the pacific region to pursue nuclear and environmental justice-supporting affected communities, demanding accountability, and affirming that nuclear justice is essential to ecological renewal.

Justice for all Bodies

As a Communion rooted in the Reformed tradition, we affirm that every person is created in the image of God and called to live in dignity, freedom and love. The Council acknowledges that questions of human sexuality and reproductive rights are experienced differently across our churches and cultures. Our tradition offers us foundations that might help us to deeper listening and discernment as we approach these matters not as debates to win, but as an opportunity to bear faithful witness to Christ's inclusive love as we continue to walk together in grace, humility and hope. (see Action 50&56, 26th General Council proceedings)

We affirm that all individuals are made in God's image and therefore deserve equal love, respect, and dignity regardless of their sexuality or gender identity. We condemn discrimination, violence, and social exclusion against LGBTQIA+ and gender-nonconforming people, highlighting that some faith communities' interpretation of sacred texts is used to justify fear and mistreatment. We acknowledge that at least 67 countries still criminalise same-sex relationships—often through vague laws from colonial times—and nine countries criminalise certain gender expressions. Despite the existence of protective laws in some places, prejudice and violence persist and hate crimes against LGBTQIA+ individuals remain a serious concern.

We acknowledge the Church's historical role in perpetuating oppressive practices like slavery, colonialism, and strict sexual norms, and we advocate for repentance, collective reflection, and repair. We urge the Church to exemplify God's love and justice by rejecting damaging religious and secular policies. A crucial and constructive step in this process is engaging in prayerful, inclusive dialogue that listens to the voices of LGBTQIA+ individuals. By addressing these legacies and challenging rigid gender roles and male dominance, faith communities can witness

to and foster safer environments and promote human rights, enabling all individuals to experience God's abundant love and the fullness of life.

The General Council is called upon to:

1. Reaffirm the diversity of God's creation, including the life-giving gifts of human love and sexuality
2. Reaffirm our witness to Christ's gospel of love and inclusion, explicitly rejecting efforts to stigmatise, punish or exclude individuals based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. We specifically name exclusion from the church's life and leadership.
3. Continue to engage in a process of study and consultation to enable members to deepen their understanding of the social and theological implications of sexual orientation and gender expression, discern how God is calling the Church to engage in prophetic witness on matters of sexuality and gender, and work towards building consensus for future public policy advocacy. Such consultations must include people of diverse sexualities and gender identities.

Reproductive Rights: A Justice issue for all bodies

The Committee recognises that the question of reproductive rights elicits diverse theological and cultural perspectives across our Communion. We include this submission as part of our shared discernment on the dignity of life, gender justice, and bodily integrity, trusting the Spirit to guide the Communion toward deeper understanding. The fullness of life promised by God (John 10:10) includes the dignity, safety and well-being of every-body. Reproductive justice does not stand alone but is connected to all matters of faith and life. These rights intersect with issues of gender, race, class, and religion, making reproductive freedom a cornerstone of equality and dignity. Yet, patriarchal, colonial, economic systems and different forms of social control continue to limit women's personhood and citizenship, shaping laws that endanger birthing parents, particularly in areas with scarce healthcare access.

In the spirit of *communion as justice*, the church is called to resist all powers that diminish life. Jesus' healing of the bleeding woman (Mark 5) reveals God's concern for wholeness and dignity beyond law or custom. To restrict bodily autonomy is to obscure the *imago Dei* within each person. This text can be viewed as an illumination text for Reproductive Rights as Jesus subverts ritualised state-sanctioned laws to tend to the woman who touched his robe. Denying birthing bodies the ability to choose and autonomy through legal restriction is, theologically, a direct attempt at disembodiment of God's creation. If the Imago Dei lives within each person as an imprint of God's love in the world, then the restriction of those bodies is an attempt to bind God. Throughout the biblical text, God emphasises the importance of choice and resource sharing as essential for our flourishing. Tending to one another and loving our neighbours as we love ourselves is core throughout the biblical text.

Reproductive rights are an essential dimension of the integrity of human life. Within the broader framework of reproductive justice, these rights affirm the sacredness of bodily autonomy and the well-being of families and communities. Limited access to contraception, safe abortions, education, and accurate information, along with a lack of health resources and denial of care during pregnancies and postpartum, lead to preventable deaths. These factors reinforce systemic inequities in reproductive health.

The General Council is called upon to:

1. Include reproductive rights within the Communion's gender-justice work, giving attention to churches that require contextual resources and support.
2. Encourage theological reflection and pastoral care that affirm the sacredness of choice, dignity, and community wellbeing.

These appeals embody the Council's commitment to discern, confess, witness, and be reformed through communities that centre love, dignity, and the flourishing of life.

Indigenous People

The PWC affirms the deep concern expressed in this submission regarding the continuing impacts of colonisation and the denial of Indigenous peoples' rights to land, justice, and self-determination. These issues are central to the Communion's witness to justice and to right relationship with creation and neighbour.

Historically, the rights of indigenous peoples have been violated through land theft and oppressive colonial systems. Many churches are composed entirely of indigenous people, and issues of repair, reparations, and reconciliation remain unaddressed. Globally, similar rights violations have been experienced by indigenous populations, particularly in regions like North America, the Caribbean, the Pacific, and South and Southeast Asia. Indigenous people, already facing discrimination, are disproportionately impacted by the climate crisis. The lingering impacts of colonialism continue to limit the rights of indigenous peoples worldwide, making it a significant human rights and economic issue. In many parts of the world, in the name of development and progress, indigenous lands are being grabbed for the sake of profit by transnational corporations, and indigenous people are being displaced. We particularly hear the stories of indigenous people, called Adivasis, or original people from India who are struggling for their legitimate rights to water, forests and land.

In the Christian faith, love is the primary and central call. Jesus emphasised the importance of loving God and one's neighbour, as seen in Matthew's Gospel and the Parable of the Good Samaritan. Actions that fail to reflect God's love fall short of this expectation. Limiting the rights and experiences of others based on their religious tradition is a violation of the commandment to love one another. The church is called to embody God's love and justice by addressing these historical and ongoing injustices against indigenous peoples and advocating for their rights and dignity.

The General Council is called upon to:

1. Adopt a policy statement calling for economic reparations to be paid to indigenous peoples, including the return of land taken from native peoples.
2. Make a call to raise the issues of indigenous rights within the member communions of the WCRC.
3. Develop educational materials to raise awareness throughout our denominations and member churches about the ongoing discrimination and oppression being inflicted upon indigenous peoples.

People of African Descent - Recognition, Justice, and Development

Under the Council's call to foster a just communion and pursue reparations for the legacies of slavery and racism, the committee received a submission on the situation of people of African descent. The Accra Confession recognised the challenges especially as a result of the experience at the Cape Coast slave castles. The 2007 gathering on the 200th anniversary of the ending of slavery also invited the ecumenical family to attend to the impact of the legacies. It is time that the reformed family pay particular attention to the reality of the legacy

The ongoing legacy of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade has been recognised by global ecumenical and civil society partners for decades. The Durban Conference in 2010 and its predecessor conversations named the importance of recognizing the impact of enslavement of the peoples of African Descent.

The United Nations established the International Decade for People of African Descent to recognize their essential contributions worldwide, promote social justice and inclusion, eliminate racism, and uphold human rights in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. Under the

theme “Recognition, Justice and Development,” the Decade and the resulting Permanent Forum of People of African Descent offer a platform for consultation and action to enhance the safety, quality of life, and livelihoods of people of African descent while confronting the ongoing influence of systems such as white supremacy and discriminatory social structures.

Despite progress through initiatives, people of African descent remain among the world’s most marginalized groups. They face persistent barriers to education, healthcare, housing, and social security, along with racial profiling, police violence, and compounded discrimination based on gender, age, religion, or other factors. These discriminative and manipulative acts on Africans, including centuries of exploitation and social exclusion have left enduring scars on Africans.

The General Council is called upon to:

1. Demand an end to the racist attacks and acts of violence against individuals, churches and communities.
2. Recognize that violent attacks on and the incarceration of individual Black Bodies are possible because of institutionalized racism in the structures, systems, and processes across countries.
3. Commit to dismantling white supremacist ideologies, and the myth of racial superiority and to champion initiatives of reparations.
4. Prioritize engagement with the Permanent Forum of People of African Descent, including active participation in side events, and submission of written experiences from member churches and grassroots bodies.
5. Ensure that Forum priorities and activities are presented to relevant WCRC decision-making bodies and serve as the basis for advocacy areas for the General Council.

Overcoming all forms of slavery

In continuation of the Communion’s call to reparations and healing for historical injustices, member churches submitted statements on modern and inherited forms of slavery. Although slavery has been formally abolished, its legacy endures through both personal and structural forms of racism, inequality and exploitation. New forms of slavery persist worldwide through trafficking, descent-based discrimination, and coercive or hazardous labour conditions. Scripture calls the Church to resist and overcome all that enslaves human beings and creation, working toward reconciliation, repair, and restoration.

The General Council is called upon to:

1. Endorse and affirm collaboration with other ecumenical organizations such as the World Council of Churches, the Council for World Mission and the Lutheran World Federation in overcoming all forms of slavery and its continuing legacy.
2. Encourage member churches to discern, to listen, and to see how modern forms of slavery play a role in their own context
3. Invite member churches into companionship and solidarity with those affected by slavery and its continuing legacy in order to transform injustice, heal memories and actively engage in a ministry of repair and reparations.

Solidarity with Dalits - Dismantling discrimination on the basis of birth and occupation

Under Covenanting for Justice (p.2) — democracy and the dismantling of race and caste — the committee received a submission expressing deep concern for the ongoing oppression of Dalits. Formerly called “untouchables,” Dalits are those who lie outside the caste system in India. For millennia, they have been oppressed through a graded system of social hierarchy based on notions of purity and pollution. It is a system of discrimination based on occupation and descent. This oppression continues today through practices of social exclusion and includes practices of

untouchability and violence. Of course, the situation of Dalit women is even worse. A majority of Christians in India are Dalits.

The General Council is called upon to:

1. Stand in solidarity with Dalits and Dalit Christians and their struggle for dignity and liberation.
2. Advocate for Dalit emancipation in international forums
3. Organize consultations that bring together people oppressed due to reasons of caste, race, occupation, or descent to share experiences and strengthen mutual solidarity across regions.

Justice for All and Freedom and the Right of Self-Determination for Palestinians

Under the Council's call to persevere in witness to justice and peace, the committee received a submission from member churches concerning the ongoing situation in Palestine and Israel. While a recent ceasefire and peace framework are in place, the Palestinian people continue to endure ongoing destruction of land, displacement, dehumanisation, violence, genocide and apartheid. These actions violate their fundamental rights to freedom, dignity and self-determination. The Church recognises that true and lasting peace can only come through justice, not domination, occupation, or violence.

The Palestinian Christian community, alongside churches, and faith organisations throughout the region, play a significant role in the nation's cultural, spiritual, and humanitarian life. At the same time, the indiscriminate killing of civilians and destruction of infrastructure have affected the people of all faiths across Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, and Syria.

The misuse of theology to justify Zionism and colonialism further deepens the intergenerational trauma of both Palestinians and Israelis. The current global moral divide, shaped by many nations and Christians failing to uphold post-WWII values and international law, exacerbates this humanitarian crisis. Despite widespread condemnation, Western powers continue to support Israel with military aid and arms.

The situation affects not only Palestinians but also Israelis and their society and culture and as can be seen in the rise of anti-semitism. The latter however does not mean non support for Palestine. A fair resolution for Palestine, similar to the end of apartheid in South Africa, would free both Palestinians and Israelis.

The Church recognises that genuine, lasting peace comes from justice, not law and violence. The WCRC President in her address invited us to 'break the chains of slogans' and invited Council 'to speak prophetically' for all humanity. The Church looks to the Scriptures, where cries for justice are rooted in the Torah and the prophetic tradition, and the teachings of Jesus show the way to justice. The Hebrew Bible depicts God as the God of justice, standing with the oppressed and recounting Israel's history under successive empires. Jesus' ministry, seen in the context of resistance to the Empire, emphasised justice and ultimately led to his crucifixion. The Church is called to demonstrate its commitment to justice through its statements and actions, following the example of Jesus.

The General Council is called upon to:

1. Re-affirm the General Council's declaration of Leipzig, which affirmed "that with respect to the situation of injustice and suffering that exists in Palestine, and the cry of the Palestinian Christian community, the integrity of Christian faith and praxis is at stake."
2. Therefore, state that the continued oppression of the Palestinian people, depriving them of their freedom and right to self-determination, is a sin against both God and humanity.
3. Reject Christian Zionism in all its forms, defined by Palestinian theologian Mitri Raheb, Christian Zionism is a Christian lobby that supports the Jewish settler colonialism of Palestinian land using biblical/theological constructs within a metanarrative, while taking

global considerations into account. This definition is less focused on the biblical discourse of Christian Zionists, which can vary considerably from literalists to post-Holocaust theology, from very conservative to liberal. In fact, the biblical/theological rationale espoused by the majority of Christian Zionists is very vague and is based on very few, yet varied, verses from the Bible. The emphasis of our definition is on the lobbying aspect of Christian Zionism: not on what people *believe* but what they *do* based on that belief.

4. Confess and acknowledge that any attempts to justify oppression biblically or theologically distort God's truth and justice.
5. Demand that Israel be held accountable to act in accordance with UN resolutions and international law
6. Call on the international community to support Gaza's reconstruction and the rehabilitation of the Palestinian people, including long-term trauma care and recovery programmes, as well as member church humanitarian programmes working with Palestinian partners to support these efforts.
7. Work towards and support all efforts to promote just peace and reconciliation for Palestine and Israel and across the region, including working with our member churches, partners and other ecumenical and international organizations.

Rejecting Anti-Semitism

The Council recognises and condemns all forms of anti-Semitism. The church has a long and entangled history of anti-Jewish teaching and persecution — from exclusion and vilification to violence and genocide. We acknowledge that anti-Semitism has been perpetuated through biblical interpretation and theology, and we repent of that sin.

Anti-Semitism persists today through hate speech, conspiracy theories, and violent attacks on Jewish communities. A particular form has emerged that conflates the actions of the State of Israel with those of Jewish people everywhere, placing entire communities at risk.

The General Council is called upon to:

1. Reject anti-Semitism in all its forms
2. Encourage member churches to engage in interfaith dialogue that promotes mutual understanding, respect, and shared commitment to human dignity. and
3. Remit to the Executive Committee any necessary strategic and resourcing work to be done in this area

Religious Nationalism - Persevering in Witness to Christ's Inclusive Gospel.

Member churches raised concern about the rise of religious nationalism in several contexts, where political leaders and movements misuse Christian symbols and rhetoric to legitimise exclusion, hatred, and authoritarianism.

Persevering in the witness of our call to communion and our commitment to justice, we are facing in some contexts, for example the US, a rise of Religious Nationalism that puts at stake the very nature of the Christian witness, both in voice and praxis. Some authorities claim the Christian faith while portraying it is a faith of hate, exclusion, inequity, and violence.

A trend of growing global polarisation leads also to an increasing marginalisation and discrimination based on religious affiliation, threatening the rights and freedoms of religious minorities. This "brand" of religious exclusivity and hatred contradicts the loving, affirming and welcoming expressions of faith that many traditions seek to embody, and fuels violence. Authoritarian governments that seek to limit the freedoms of religious minorities perpetuate

oppression and marginalisation, affecting individuals, families and entire communities lacking political influence. These impacts extend to those who practice religious pluralism or maintain multiple religious identities.

The General Council is called to:

1. Reaffirm the commitment to a gospel that is centered on the ministry of Jesus Christ, who revealed the just and loving reign and the radical inclusion of God countering theologies of hatred and exclusion in his time;
2. Adopt a policy statement condemning Religious Nationalism affirming the rights of religious minorities across the globe and reinforcing that the church's loyalty is to God alone and not to any political ideology or power;
3. Facilitate the sharing among member communions of resources, theology, and praxis that help churches to resist and counter portrayals of the Christian faith as one of hate, exclusion, inequity, and violence;
4. Partner with other global communions (like the World Council of Churches), different faith traditions, and any other partner God provides to raise awareness on Religious Nationalism and advocate in the United Nations.

Autocratic tendencies in Europe - Witnessing for Democracy and Human Dignity

Recognising the responsibilities of all people to participate in sharing the common good of their society, the WCRC, guided by the Accra confession and its call to discern the signs of the times, names the misuse of power and privilege as a threat to justice, freedom, and self determination. The world today is increasingly divided by fear, mistrust, and hatred, and the rise of authoritarianism exacerbates this division. When democratic institutions falter or are allowed to erode, a vacuum is created that provides authoritarianism, totalitarianism, and autocracy to take root easily. History has shown that when democratic principles are neglected, oppressive regimes rise to power, suppressing freedom and stifling progress. Political leaders in various parts of the world have increasingly undermined the core principles of democracy, such as the rule of law, human rights, and freedom of expression, in favour of populist rhetoric, authoritarian practices, and power consolidation. Georgia serves as an example of how political forces can exploit societal divisions to consolidate power, often targeting religious, ethnic, and sexual minorities. These groups, including members of the LGBTQ+ community, Muslims, and various ethno-religious minorities, are particularly vulnerable to marginalisation. This trend is not confined to any one nation; it is a global issue affecting both emerging and established democracies.

The General Council is called upon to:

1. Engage in theological reflection on the rise of authoritarianism and its impact on justice, democracy, and human rights.
2. Examine the Church's role — both complicity and resistance — in the growth of nationalism and autocracy, seeking renewed commitment to truth, humility, and freedom in Christ.

Militarisation - Witnessing for Peace in a Violent World

In today's interconnected world, conflicts in one region have a profound impact on the global community, affecting it economically, socially, and politically. For developing nations, like Trinidad and Tobago, disruptions to the global food supply chain caused by conflict have lasting impacts on food security, livelihoods, and public health. Persevering in witness, followers of

Christ are called to be peacemakers. In continuity with the WCRC's confessional witness against the powers of empire and death-dealing systems, we discern militarisation as a violation of God's covenant of life, justice and peace. Militarisation reflects the empire's false promise of peace through domination, a reality the Accra Confession exposes as idolatry that denies God's sovereignty. The church is called to costly solidarity and witness-rejecting the false security of weapons, standing with those whose lives and lands are torn apart by war while the agents of militarisation capitalise economically. Militarisation also intersects with several other issues.

Due to militarisation, many people have lost their lives violently, many have fled their countries seeking refuge elsewhere, while countless others are internally displaced. The impact of militarisation disproportionately harms women and children often in harmful ways, silencing their voices and denying their dignity. A generation has grown up knowing only violence and insecurity, shaping their worldview and future leadership.

The General Council is called upon to:

1. Participate actively in global efforts for peace, supporting initiatives that promote non-violent conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and justice.
2. Encourage member churches to establish and support ministries specifically designed to assist displaced persons and refugees.
3. Encourage member churches to collaborate with local and global partners to address the growing food insecurity resulting from international conflicts.
4. Work towards establishing programmes to encourage social cohesion and combat xenophobia in communities affected by migration.
5. Collaborate with ecological and humanitarian organisations to advocate for environmental protection in conflict zones and promote sustainable development in post-war recovery efforts.
6. Invite Member churches to call on their governments to reduce military spending.

Persevering in Witness for Peace, Justice, and Hope amid Global Turmoil

In keeping with the Council's call to persevere in witness to peace, reconciliation, and the healing of creation, the committee received several submissions addressing urgent situations across east Asia. These appeals share a common longing for justice and a commitment to transforming structures of violence through faith and solidarity.

a. The Korean Peninsula - Pilgrimage of Peace and Reunification

In 2025, the 80th year of division and the 72nd year since the signing of the armistice agreement, the Korean Peninsula remains one of the most sensitive flashpoints in the global peace landscape and a focal point of military tension in Northeast Asia. The overlapping dynamics of U.S.–China strategic rivalry, strengthened security cooperation among North Korea, Russia, and China, and the trilateral military alignment of South Korea, the United States, and Japan have created an atmosphere where the logic of deterrence prevails over the language of dialogue. In such a context, the pursuit of reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula is not merely a regional concern but a global spiritual journey that holds the possibility of transforming the structures of violence into pathways of peace.

The World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC), as an ecumenical community called to serve God's life, justice, and peace, recognizes the current situation on the Korean Peninsula through a lens of global moral responsibility. We affirm that healing relationships and restoring channels of trust are central to our shared pilgrimage of peace. We recall the moment at the 2017 WCRC General Council in Leipzig, when representatives of churches from both South and North Korea gathered around an agape meal. That encounter testified that even in a context of division, the church remains one body called to communion. It is in this spirit that we reaffirm our

commitment to accompany the churches on the Korean Peninsula so that spaces of encounter and dialogue may be reopened.

Following the unlawful martial law in 2024, faith communities and civil society in Korea rose to defend democracy and human dignity. As a fragile opening for humanitarian and faith-based engagement emerges, the global church is called to accompany the Korean people in nurturing reconciliation amid the still-open wounds of war.

Reconciliation and peace on the Korean Peninsula is, therefore, a confession of faith for the global church. We pray that mistrust may give way to mutual respect, and that the logic of security may be transformed into the practice of life-affirming justice. The WCRC affirms that we are companions in this journey, and we hold in hope that the Korean Peninsula and the broader region of Northeast Asia may become a land where the peace of God takes root.

b. Regional Peace and Solidarity with Taiwan

Taiwan, like Korea and Japan—nations situated in Northeast Asia—deeply experiences the anxiety and shock caused by ongoing global tensions. As an integral part of Asia and a member of the ecumenical family, Taiwan deserves the companionship, solidarity, and prayers of churches around the world. Together with the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT), we invite the ecumenical community to continue journeying with us in the shared mission of peace and justice.

In recent years, Taiwan has been caught amid the growing tensions between two major powers. The future of Taiwan and the safety of its people remain uncertain. Almost daily, military aircraft from China cross into Taiwan's airspace, and frequent large-scale military exercises have placed the lives and security of the Taiwanese people under constant threat. Such circumstances force the people of Taiwan to live under the shadow of possible military conflict. Moreover, Taiwan continues to face obstruction and suppression from the neighboring country across the Taiwan Strait, particularly when participating in international meetings or events. This persistent interference isolates Taiwan from the international community and undermines the principles of equality and mutual respect.

For decades, the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan has been a faithful witness to faith, justice, and peace on this island. The PCT has consistently stood with the oppressed, spoken truth to power, and embodied the hope of liberation and self-determination. In light of the current challenges, we call upon the global ecumenical community to stand in solidarity with the people and churches of Taiwan—to take concrete and coordinated action for peace in Northeast Asia.

C. Unpeace in the Philippines

The situation in the Philippines is marked by *unpeace*—a state of pervasive injustice rooted in historical oppression, economic inequality, and political corruption. Human rights violations, systemic poverty, and government policies aligned with neoliberal and foreign interests—particularly those of the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and the United States—continue to exploit and marginalize the Filipino people. Decades of armed conflict reflect deep-seated social and economic injustices that cannot be resolved through military means. Despite previous peace negotiations between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), the government has failed to uphold its commitments, resorting instead to red-tagging, repression, and violence.

In this climate of political tension and foreign military influence, especially under the U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy and growing regional conflicts with China, the suffering of the Filipino people has intensified. The United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) urges the global

ecumenical community to stand in solidarity with the Filipino people by re-establishing the Global Ecumenical Forum for JustPeace in the Philippines. It calls on the World Communion of Reformed Churches and other partners to support peace negotiations, condemn human rights violations, resist militarization, and accompany the churches and communities in their struggle for justice, sovereignty, and a just and lasting peace.

The General Council is called upon to:

a. The Korean Peninsula - Pilgrimage of Peace and Reunification

1. Pray and speak out so that governments choose de-escalation and reopen dialogue to ease military tensions in Korea and Northeast Asia.
2. Observe the Sunday of Prayer for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea (Sunday before 15 August) and encourage all WCRC churches to join using the shared prayer resources in their own worship context.
3. Support and strengthen the Ecumenical Forum for Peace, Reunification and Development of the Korean Peninsula (EFK) with WCRC partners to reopen spaces for encounter and theological dialogue among churches in North and South Korea and the region.
4. Advocate for humanitarian exceptions to sanctions and travel restrictions that block faith-based engagement and compassionate service.
5. Engage in the Korean Peace Pilgrimage through youth exchanges, peace education, prayer networks, and ecumenical learning circles that nurture a community of peace in action.
6. Encourage the WCRC to send an ecumenical peace delegation or Pilgrimage of Peace to Korea and the DMZ as a visible sign of global solidarity and a witness against war.

(b) Regional Peace and Solidarity with Taiwan

1. Journey with the PCT and the people of Taiwan through the platform of the Taiwan Ecumenical Forum (TEF), in order to enhance the international visibility of Taiwan and to strengthen our common witness for peace and justice in the region.

(c) Unpeace in the Philippines

1. Stand in active solidarity with the Filipino people in their struggles for self-determination which is just and lasting peace that addresses the roots of injustice by Calling for the resumption of GRP-NDFP peace negotiations that address the roots of UNPEACE, help investigate violations of human rights and international humanitarian law through pastoral visits and expose and deepen global understanding of the roots and manifestations of systemic violence and repression in the Philippines, and their links to global militarization and regional instability in the Asia Pacific.
2. Help establish GEF-PH in the context of the global movement of mutual solidarity, reinvigorate moral, material, and other forms of support for Philippine churches in the work for peace based on justice.

Statement the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar

The Council also received a submission from the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar, bearing witness to the church's perseverance under oppression and conflict.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic and the military coup in 2021, the situation in Myanmar has gone from bad to worse. Every state has become a battlefield between the army and revolutionary groups. Health care, education, communication, and transport systems have

collapsed. The army's "Four Cuts" strategy has had a devastating impact (loss of lives and displacement) on civilians. The forced-conscription law drives many young people to flee the country, exposing them to trafficking and modern-day slavery. Seven of PCM's ten Synods lie in conflict zones where no government schools' function. We recognize that other areas Myanmar where we have member churches

Adding to these trials, a devastating earthquake in March 2025 struck Central Myanmar. We are also grieved by conflict among our kindred in Chin State. Churches are making efforts through dialogues, care, and prayers towards peace for our people and nation.

The General Council is called upon to:

1. Continue to pray for peace, justice, and healing in Myanmar.
2. Stand in solidarity with the people of Myanmar and all those who suffer under oppression.
3. Support the Church's efforts in education, health care, and peacebuilding as acts of faith and compassion.

Venezuela and the Caribbean - Region of Peace, Not War

Member churches in the Caribbean expressed concern over increasing militarisation and foreign intervention in the region, particularly against Venezuela. The deployment of U.S. naval forces under the guise of counter-narcotics operations threatens regional stability and endangers livelihoods, especially among fisherfolk. This action by the US has caused increased regional tensions and militarisation, creating a high risk of escalating a geopolitical conflict

Currently, the Caribbean area is fastly becoming a site of tension and war inclined especially given the deployment of US military presence. These unjust imperial actions of the USA's maritime intervention against Venezuela, under the guise of the war on drug trafficking, pose a serious threat to Caribbean nations, especially one of their most vulnerable populations, their fisherfolk. Critical to income generation, their life and livelihood are being threatened with the possibility that they could be killed and falsely labelled as "narco-terrorists" and their boats and vessels mistakenly and unlawfully targeted by US military strikes or interdiction. The Caribbean and Latin American region should remain a zone of peace.

The General Council is called upon to:

1. To denounce the ongoing US-led aggression against Venezuela and its people including targeted repression and stigmatisation. Organise and promote a global and regional campaign to advocate for the immediate lifting of the economic and political blockade against Venezuela
2. Call for an end to illegal military action against Venezuelan vessels in the Caribbean Sea.
3. Call for an end to the US interference in the internal Venezuelan political affairs.
4. Call on the United Nations, and multilateral organizations to mobilize diplomatic efforts towards non-military solutions that uphold human rights, democracy and self-determination.
5. Undertake a pastoral solidarity visit to our member church in Venezuela together with AIPRAL and other willing ecumenical actors.

Haiti - Cry for Peace, Justice, and Repair

Haiti is facing an unprecedented humanitarian and political crisis, with increasing concerns over loss of life and human rights abuses. Countries like the United States are indirectly contributing to this crisis through the legacy of colonialism, ongoing immigration issues, and weapons

trafficking, which supplies arms to gangs, destabilising the country. With around 750,000 Haitian immigrants residing in the United States, many of whom are neighbours and members of local churches of the reformed family, the US bears a historical responsibility for Haiti's political instability and underdeveloped economy. Furthermore, many of the weapons flooding Haiti amid the ongoing gang violence have been trafficked from the US. Haiti remains one of the world's poorest nations, with over 59% of its population living in poverty.

This is a global issue with repercussions for people of African descent in the Americas, including Haitians and Haitian-Americans. Haiti is the only country in the Caribbean that achieved self-emancipation from slavery and colonisation by France. Since evolving from a colony with enslaved African peoples to an independent post-colonial republic, Haiti and its people have endured retribution and punishment by France and complicit supporting colonising nations. Haiti continues to be punished as a symbol of Black anti-colonial resistance. Given the ongoing issues of legacies of the transatlantic slave trade, reparations, post-colonialism, contemporary racism, and global migration challenges, Haiti's fate remains of international importance.

The General Council is called upon to:

1. Request the Executive committee to adopt a statement calling for peace, justice and reparation in and for Haiti.

Madagascar - A Cry for Justice and Hope for a New Beginning

Madagascar, one of the world's poorest nations, has seen its extreme poverty rate rise from 69% in 2021 to over 80% in 2025. On 25 September, widespread youth protests erupted across several cities, demanding basic necessities such as water and electricity. The movement, reflecting deep social despair and lack of opportunities, was met with violent repression by authorities, resulting in deaths, arrests, and unrest. In response, some soldiers sided with the protesters. Following the president's flight abroad and the absence of other constitutional leaders, the High Constitutional Court declared the presidency vacant and temporarily transferred executive power to one of the soldiers who intervened, emphasizing that the situation should not be regarded as a coup d'état.

The situation in Madagascar reveals a nation yearning for justice, renewal, and integrity in public life. The prophetic task of the church in such a time is to listen to the cries of the people and to accompany them in their struggle for dignity and hope.

The General Council is called upon to:

1. To be in solidarity with the Malagasy people in their distress at the catastrophic situation in their country and their desire to build a more just future.
2. To pray for Madagascar, its transitional leaders, that they may govern with integrity, wisdom, accountability, and a genuine commitment to service the people rather than power.
3. Appeal to international bodies and partner governments to maintain aid and development funding for Madagascar.

Solidarity Call from Churches in Germany: Witness in a Changing Context

Member churches in Germany submitted a reflection on the rapidly changing religious landscape of Europe, where for the first time, people without religious affiliation now outnumber those formally belonging to the churches. This profound shift challenges traditional models of ministry, discipleship, and community.

For the first time in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany, people without religious affiliation make up a larger proportion of the population than Catholics and Protestants together. According to the data, there are around 39 million people without religious affiliation (46,8% of the total population compared to 22% in 1990) and around 38 million (21,5% Protestant [36,9%

in 1990], 23,7% catholic [35,8% in 1990]) who are still members of one of the two major churches.

By the end of this year, there will be more people without religious affiliation than all Christian church members combined. This decline also affects our reformed congregations and churches strongly. At the same time, we are aware that we are still in a very privileged situation, with strong structures, resources and freedom, compared to a lot of churches worldwide, which enables us to shape our ministry. Nevertheless we are aware, that this also means in future, that our financial resources are getting smaller.

This is a fast-changing situation that the Churches struggle with. The gospel is hard to hear in this loud world. We search for ways to reach out to continuing belonging members and new members, fostering a community that has space for the word of God to be heard and to move hearts. We believe that we could learn a lot from our siblings of the Reformed family.

The General Council is called upon to:

1. To explore what theological and educational resources exist within member churches to support churches facing membership decline and changing social context.
2. To share best practices about strategies to inspire more enthusiasm for God's word.

Conclusion — Persevering in Faith, Justice, and Hope

Through these multiple and often inter-related submissions, the churches of the Communion have borne witness to the cries and hopes of their peoples and regions. In receiving them, the General Council is invited to discern how the Spirit is calling us to confess, witness, and be reformed—participating in God's renewing work of justice, peace, and the healing of creation.

The General Council:

1. Remits to the Executive Committee those specific concerns we have heard during the public hearings (procedural inclusions and Communications) and any submitted proposal which the Public Witness Committee discerned needed more careful work/consideration, best dealt with by the Executive Committee to take into account and act upon.