

THE ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES
8THTHEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE STATEMENT TO THE 11THGENERAL ASSEMBLY,
24THOF JUNE TO 07THJULY 2018,
KIGALI-RWANDA
24THJUNE –07THJULY 2018

Preamble

We the young theologians from across the continent of Africa, the Middle East and Europe gathered here today; are completely grateful for the knowledge received from our mentors here, in Kigali, Rwanda; at the 8th All Africa Conference of Churches' Theological Institute, under the auspices of the 11th General Assembly with the theme ***“Respecting the Dignity and God’s Image in Every Human Being”*** which is taken from Genesis 1:26-27.

Our gratitude extends to the leadership of the Institute and the churches around Africa for their participation and contribution in all this, not just for young theologians but to humankind in general.

We laud the efforts of the outgoing General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Andre Karamaga and his team in establishing the Theological Institute, Campaign for African Dignity and improvement of the AACC’s asset base. We witness the transformative capacity of these efforts on young theologians.

We congratulate and welcome Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwombeki on his appointment as the General Secretary and we trust that the baton will not fall, but where sustainability is needed, it will be so, where development is needed, there will be effort to have it and that young theologians will play an imperative role in all of it. We commit to supporting the General Secretary the best way we can.

Following the lectures, discussions and reflections held on this year’s theme, we acknowledge and appreciate the efforts made by the African Union and African States to maximize on available resources towards the improvement of human dignity.

However, we are greatly concerned by the indignity visited to humanity by acts of omission and commission, that have been promoted sometimes through misrepresentation and selective interpretation of scripture; for example, corruption, gender injustice, bad governance, human trafficking, exploitation

of resources for benefit of few, lack of opportunities for youth to engage in economically productive efforts, illegal immigration outside of their countries, environmental degradation and conflicts, including other act that affect the image and likeness of God.

As young theologians, we:

1. **Affirm** the fervent effort by the AACC in **promoting Christian unity**, in Africa through encouraging, experiencing, sharing, learning and implementing various models and programs, which will further promote partnerships and the unity we seek.
2. **Continuously** appreciate the AACC **Theological Institute as a means to** empower and nurture emerging and future religious leaders. We acknowledge that the effort is for the glory of God in promoting the Africa we want through theological reflection on ecological, political, gender, children and youth, socio-cultural and ethical topics; as these promote dignity, justice and peace for all.
3. Have **observed** with great concern that universal churches have exploited and misused biblical texts to legalize human discriminating ideologies for interests which undermined human dignity and nature, which are a gift from God and must be respected and protected at all times,
4. **Encourage** the AACC to motivate churches from different denominations, traditions and countries in the African continent to acknowledge the misinterpretation of the bible, which **disregarded humanity and nature in Africa. This calls for an encouragement to repent and offer an apology,**
5. **Acknowledge**, faithfully, that God is the only source for the whole creation (Gen 1:9, 12, 18). Therefore, we confirm our human vocation as stewards of the environment, bearing the image and likeness of God.
6. **Acknowledge** the AACC's financial sustainability effort which is a model to encourage national councils of churches across Africa, for Christians and the whole society to benefit directly from the social ministry (*Diakonia*)
7. **Encourage** the AACC to rotationally hold its meetings in different regions of Africa to increase its visibility and that of national councils of churches.
8. **While we acknowledge** some of the beauty and diversity of our cultures, however we recognise some of its harmful practices like FGM, child marriage, teenage pregnancy, breast flattening, **and inheritance of widows** which lead to undignified humanity.

9. **Acknowledge** that the theological task of the church should be in the service of the kingdom of God and not under any social, nationalistic or political agenda. The theological discourse should start from the word of God while recognizing different church traditions and experiences in their community
10. Condemn any Christian religious radicalism and invite other religions to partner with Christians in working towards eradication of extremism and radicalization.
11. **Encourage** the AACC to domesticate the **AU Agenda 2063**, through National Councils of Churches in different countries and to facilitate congregations to be aware of the continental vision. For example, trans-African trade, business and travel of goods and to open borders among Africa to facilitate trade, business, and tourism.

RECOMMEDANTIONS

As young theologians:

1. We recommend that traditions, theologies and cultures of different denominations be respected and appreciated by all and that it be recognised as diversity in our societies.
2. We recommend that young theologians especially participants at the Institute be encouraged and supported to write, present and publish their theological literatures and reflections on modern, contextual and intercultural theologies to meet the needs of churches in the 21st century
3. We recommend that, those who graduates from the Theological Institute be made mentors of young theologians and resource persons in future meetings, and encourage them to join theological networks at national, sub-regional and regional levels
4. We recommend that the Institute should develop a curriculum on theological responses and foundations on contemporary and emerging issues as well as ways to make the church relevant to current generations and be responsive to current ecological, political, gender, youth, children, socio-cultural and ethical topics which promote dignity, morality, justice and peace for all.
5. We recommend that, the Institute refine papers presented at the past conferences and gatherings and publish them in a form of volume as testimony/evidence of the effort by the church to address various issues facing humanity.

6. We recommend the AACC to encourage Churches in Africa to live its calling as the light, salt, and voice of humanity by questioning, confronting, and collaborating with others in seeking to promote dignity, justice and peace for all.
7. We **recommend** that the church acknowledges and implement the international, regional, sub-regional and national frameworks, including Sustainable Development Goals, the 2063 African Union Agenda, treaties, conventions, protocols that seek the theological foundations in promoting human dignity and peace for all.
8. We **recommend** for inclusion of the differently abled young theologians in future theological institutes and encourage churches, national councils and the AACC to make facilities friendly for them.
9. We **recommend** the establishment of a commission, to develop ecological sustainable models, to be implemented by the regional association of National Councils of Churches and other partners.
10. We recommend and **encourage** African Christians to promote and practice eco-theology.
11. We **encourage** economists and theologians to cooperate and learn from each other in order to face the economic issues facing the different African contexts.

We, the 68 young theologians hereby commit to this statement of the 8th Theological Institute as submitted to the 11th General Assembly of the AACC in Kigali Rwanda; we pledge to use the skills and knowledge we have acquired from the theological institute for the transformation and promotion of human dignity.

Thank you

Kigali, Rwanda

4th July 2018