

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES STATEMENT ON WATER

The Ninth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil, 14-23, February, has called on churches and ecumenical partners to work together to preserve and protect water resources against over-consumption and pollution. In a statement approved on February 21, the Assembly described water as "an integral part of the right to life".

The statement on "Water for Life" drew on the demand of the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople and New Rome, that water never be treated as private property and that "indifference towards the vitality of water constitutes both a blasphemy to God the Creator and a crime against humanity".

The Assembly said "access to freshwater supplies is becoming an urgent matter across the planet. The survival of 1.2 billion people is currently in jeopardy due to lack of adequate water and sanitation." Churches in various countries and their specialized ministries have joined together in the Ecumenical Water Network in working for the provision of freshwater and adequate sanitation and advocating for the right to water.

It said, "Agreements concerning international watercourses and river basins need to be more concrete, setting out measures to enforce treaties made and incorporating detailed conflict resolution mechanisms in case disputes erupt".

You may read entire statement at <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/home.html>

The churches that make up the WCC live in remarkably different social, economic, cultural and political conditions. Their members speak an array of languages. Their distinctive histories produce different styles of worship and forms of organization and governance. It is a rich variety, a reflection of God's rich kingdom. To learn what church groups and denominations are members of the WCC go to <http://wcc-coe.org/wcc/who/mch-e.html>