

## Text of the Statement on the Centenary of the Armenian Genocide

issued by the Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches  
at 10 June 2015 in Etchmiadzin, Armenia

During the centenary year of the Armenian genocide by the Ottoman Empire, the executive committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC) is meeting in this country on 8-13 June 2015, hosted by the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, to honour the martyrs and victims of the genocide. We visit the genocide memorial to remember them and to pray in the name of the risen Lord Jesus Christ. And we celebrate the life of the Armenian nation and the witness of the Armenian Church.

The executive committee recalls the Minute on the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide adopted by the WCC 10th Assembly in 2013 in Busan. This important action by the 10th Assembly followed many other occasions on which the WCC Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA) had called for recognition of the Armenian genocide by the United Nations (UN) and by member states, dating back to the 1979 session of the UN Human Rights Commission. The WCC has played a key role over many years in accompanying the Armenian Church in speaking out and working for recognition of the genocide, and for appropriate responses to the genocide's continuing impacts on the Armenian people.

A minute adopted at the 6th Assembly of the WCC held in 1983 in Vancouver acknowledged that "The silence of the world community and deliberate efforts to deny even historical facts have been consistent sources of anguish and growing despair to the Armenian people, the Armenian churches and many others." While some continue their efforts to deny or minimize these historical events, the executive committee is greatly encouraged by His Holiness Pope Francis' public recognition on 12 April 2015 of the mass killing of an estimated 1.5 million Armenians as genocide. We stress that there is a duty on the international community to remember the victims of genocide, in order to heal these historical wounds and to guard against similar atrocities in the future.

The WCC, with its many member churches, has participated in several events marking the centenary, including the official commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide and canonization of the martyrs in Yerevan, Armenia, on 21-25 April. The WCC and its member churches will continue to participate in the ongoing centennial commem-