



Statement on the Middle East

20.07.1968 | Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches

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THE FOURTH ASSEMBLY OF THE

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The Assembly, held at Uppsala from 4 to 20 July 1968, one year after the Six-Day War, passed a "Statement on the Middle East".

1. We are deeply concerned that the menace of the situation in the Middle East shows no present sign of abating. The resolutions of the United Nations have not been implemented, the territorial integrity of the nations involved is not respected, occupation continues. No settlement is in sight and a new armament race is being mounted.

In these circumstances we reaffirm the statement of the Heraklion Central Committee in August 1967, and make the following points based upon it:

a) The independence and territorial integrity and security of all nations in the area must be guaranteed. Annexation by force must not be condoned.

b) The World Council of Churches must continue to join with all who search for a solution of the refugee and displaced person problems.

c) Full religious freedom and access to holy places must continue to be guaranteed to the communities of all three historic religions preferably by international agreement.

d) National armaments should be limited to the lowest level consistent with national security.

e) The great world powers must refrain from pursuing their own exclusive interests in the area.

2. The forthcoming report of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General is urgently awaited, and the Assembly earnestly hopes that it may open the way to a settlement.

3. It is the special responsibility of the World Council of Churches and of its member churches to discern ways in which religious factors affect the conflict.

* From: The Uppsala Report 1968, ed. Norman Goodall. Geneva, WCC. 1968. p.189.