

Resolutions Adopted by the BWA General Council
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
July 8-9, 2011

2011-1 Resolution on the Naga Reconciliation Process

Recalling that our Lord Jesus has pronounced “blessed” those who work for peace, (Matt 5:9);

Remembering that the Apostle Paul declares that, “God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ ... has given us the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:18);

Reaffirming Paul’s admonition that “If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all” (Romans 12:18);

The General Council of the Baptist World Alliance, meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia July 4-9, 2011:

COMMENDS and undergirds with our prayers the continuing reconciliation process between the conflicting Naga groups in Northeast India and Myanmar;

THANKS God for the persistent and courageous witness for peace by the Forum for Naga Reconciliation with Dr. Wati Aier as convener;

AFFIRMS the Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC) and its leadership who have courageously supported the reconciliation process in calling Baptist brothers and sisters to be reconciled to one another and to adopt nonviolent methods in pursuit of their goals;

COMMENDS the leaders of the various civil segments of Naga life and national parties who responded to the call to reconciliation by the Forum for Naga Reconciliation and in 2008 declared their resolve to strengthen the Naga Reconciliation Process;

COMMENDS those parties who signed on June 13, 2009, the “Covenant of Reconciliation” and urges them to fulfill its promise;

HONORS those within the world Baptist community and the larger Christian church who, through prayer and action, assisted the ministry of reconciliation among the Nagas;

PLEDGES continued prayers and support for all who commit themselves to peacemaking in the Spirit of Christ; and

COMMENDS their example to Baptist brothers and sisters around the world who find themselves in conflict with one another.

2011-2 Resolution on South Sudan

The General Council of the Baptist World Alliance, meeting in Kuala Lumpur July 4-9, 2011:

RECOGNIZES the establishment of the new state of South Sudan, and the joy of achieving independence, and joins our brothers and sisters as they celebrate their newly found independence. With full cognizance of the fragile political situation in the Horn of Africa, and particularly between North and South Sudan, we regret and condemn any form of violence that causes pain and loss of human life.

RESOLVES to:

JOIN our Baptist brothers and sisters in prayer for a peaceful transition.

PARTNER with Baptist bodies in the country in strengthening Christian witness in South Sudan.
2011-3  Resolution on "Conflict Minerals"

AWARE that for 15 years the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been embroiled in war, with an estimated 5,400,000 having died due to the war and its effects and with an estimated 45,000 dying each month in eastern Congo from disease and hunger resulting from the ongoing conflict;

HORRIFIED that the conflict has fueled an epidemic of sexual violence – so much so that eastern Congo is now the most dangerous place in the world to be a woman or a girl because armed militias from all sides of the conflict use rape or other forms of abuse as a deliberate strategy to intimidate and control local populations; and

CONCERNED that one of the primary causes of the atrocities and conflicts in eastern Congo is greed for access to, and control of, the region's vast mineral resources because seventy percent (70%) of the minerals (tin, tungsten, tantalum, and gold) needed for cell phones and laptops are found only in eastern Congo. We recognize that our dependence upon electronics that utilize these metals creates the demand that drives the greed.

The General Council of the Baptist World Alliance, meeting in Kuala Lumpur, July 4-9, 2011:

RESOLVES to:

ADVOCATE with companies with which we do business for our cell phones and computers to work to create conflict-free supply chains and a conflict-free mining sector in eastern Congo;

ENGAGE in actions that encourage companies and individuals trading in minerals from eastern Congo to work for peace and promote justice in the region;

WORK for the resolution of the conflict in eastern Congo, and the elimination of rape and other forms of abuse as tools of war in eastern Congo; and

CALL on the worldwide Baptist family to pray for peace to be restored to eastern Congo and the adjoining regions; and on the African Union, the United Nations, and regional governments, including the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to address the problem of "conflict minerals," and to restore peace and security in the region of eastern Congo.

2011-4  Resolution on the Middle East

Christ is our Peace... (Ephesians 2:14)

The General Council of the Baptist World Alliance, meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia July 4-9, 2011:

REGARDS current events in various countries in the Middle East as an opportunity for peaceful positive changes in the societies, and, therefore:

CALLS for solidarity of member bodies of the BWA with all Christians in the Middle East, especially our Arab Baptist brothers and sisters, encouraging them at this time of social unrest and political uncertainty to play their part in the common longing to secure human rights, peace and respect for all people of the region;

CONDEMNS all forms of violent protest and violent repression of peaceful demonstrations during recent events in the Middle East; and expresses great concern about recent violent attacks made on Christians and Christian churches by extremist groups, especially in Egypt and Iraq, urging governments to afford full protection under law to all religious minorities, especially in places where such minorities continue to find themselves objects of discrimination;

RE-AFFIRMS the commitment in our Baptist heritage and identity to religious freedom for all, and for people of all religions to live at peace with one another in the same geographical space;

COMMENDS the "Common Word" initiative and the BWA response to it as a basis for further study, and for improving the relationship of Baptists with their Muslim neighbours in the Middle East and elsewhere;

ENCOURAGES Baptists in the Middle East to further explore how an authentic Christian witness can be made with conviction, but also with courtesy and respect, in a Muslim-majority context, commending especially the work of the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary in Beirut for its pioneering work in this regard;
COMMENDS those Middle Eastern Baptists, e.g. in Lebanon and Gaza, who are reaching out with humanitarian aid to meet the needs of their communities, including refugees, regardless of religion, and urges the worldwide Baptist family to support them in these endeavours;

URGES Baptists around the world to work and pray for a just resolution to the conflict between Israel and Palestine, one that balances Israel’s need for security with an end to oppressive policies inflicted on the Palestinian people, and to be a strong support to the Israeli (Arab) and Palestinian Baptist Churches in the many pressures and challenges that they face;

NOTES with understanding, but concern, the significant number of Christians moving away from the Middle East because of pressures on them, and invites the BWA to explore specific ways of cooperating with Middle East Baptist conventions and unions to enable and encourage Baptist Christians to remain in the Middle East as a continuing sign and affirmation of Christian presence and witness in the region; and

CALLS BWA member bodies to informed and persistent prayer for the whole region, and an active solidarity with all the Baptist communities there.

2011-5  Resolution on Theological Education and Leadership Formation

There is an urgent need:

- to proclaim the gospel to vast numbers of persons in all areas of the world;
- for vast numbers of new congregations to be established around the world; and
- for pastors and leaders to serve both new and existing congregations worldwide.

God continues to call believers to serve as pastors and in other forms of ministry and every believer is commissioned by Christ to share in the gospel ministry;

Therefore, the General Council of the Baptist World Alliance, meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, July 4-9, 2011:

AFFIRMS

- the importance of training ministers, especially in strategic ministries of church planting and equipping the whole people of God for ministry;
- the need for in-service training for the continuing development for pastors; seminarians and others in ministry;
- the need to equip all believers in the church for ministry in the Church, society and the market place; and
- the need to mobilize pastors and faculty to be involved in short-term teaching and training in countries that lack educational resources as an expression of global partnership and mutual learning.

2011-6  Resolution on Religious Freedom

The General Council of the Baptist World Alliance, meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from July 4-9, 2011:

BELIEVES THAT:

- every individual should have the right to worship without government interference or restriction;
- each individual should have the freedom to join like-minded groups to express his/her religious beliefs; and
- religious education is an essential part of worship and understanding

NOW THEREFORE THE GENERAL COUNCIL:

AFFIRMS every nation in the world that guarantees its citizens and others the freedom to worship, to gather peacefully with others of like belief, and to educate themselves in their religious beliefs without interference or restriction.
Resolution on Foreign Guest Workers

The General Council of the Baptist World Alliance, meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia July 4-9, 2011:

AFFIRMS the value of purposeful work for personal and social well-being and for economic and cultural progress;

REAFFIRMS its commitment to the principles articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the associated International Covenants relating to employment;

RECOGNIZES the rights and responsibilities of employers and employees including fair pay for fair work and just workplace conditions;

ACKNOWLEDGES that foreign guest worker programs often provide better access to employment, security and regular wages and gives employees greater opportunities to financially support their families at home;

LAMENTS the fact that globally, some employers treat foreign guest workers unjustly and abuse their human rights;

CALLS on governments to enact and enforce laws guaranteeing the human rights and just working conditions of foreign guest worker visa holders;

CALLS on Baptist churches, conventions and unions to develop and support effective ministries of compassion and advocacy for current and former foreign guest workers who are suffering as a result of mistreatment by employers and the systems that support them; and

COMMITS to monitoring our dealings with others where foreign guest workers are involved.

Resolution on Evangelism

The General Council of the Baptist World Alliance, meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia July 4-9, 2011 affirms that:

God created humanity to have an intimate relationship with him;

Humanity chose to sin and thereby separate and alienate themselves from God bringing upon themselves the penalty of death;

Despite humanity's sin, God came down from heaven in the form of His Son Jesus Christ to show us how to live and paid the penalty for our sin, thereby offering each one who believes in Christ abundant and eternal life.

Therefore, the General Council:

CALLS on all Baptist conventions, unions, churches and individuals to share the saving gospel of Jesus Christ with those with whom God brings them into contact;

ENCOURAGES the Baptist World Alliance members to mentor and, by example, teach others to share the saving gospel of Christ with their family, friends, acquaintances and strangers so that many more are able to come to a living faith, an abundant life here on earth and the hope for an eternal relationship with God;

URGES Baptists around the world to pray for and support Christians who are denied the freedom to share the Gospel, and who therefore often suffer persecution for their evangelistic effort; and

COMMENDS the “Bread of Life” initiative of this quinquennium that rests on three major pillars:

- The empowerment of the Holy Spirit,
- The awareness of the evangelistic mandate of local Baptist churches, and
- The renewed emphasis on the holistic mission of local Baptist churches.
A Statement in Support of the Practices of "Just Peacemaking"

The General Council of the Baptist World Alliance, meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from July 4-9, 2011:

RECALLS that when Jesus approached Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, he wept over the city, saying, "If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes" (Luke 19.42) and

ENVISIONS Jesus weeping over many cities and nations of our world because we do not know those things that make for peace.

THEREFORE the General Council:

ENDORSES the following ten practices of "just peacemaking" developed by scholars led by Baptist Professor Glen Stassen;

- support nonviolent direct action,
- take independent initiatives,
- use cooperative conflict resolution,
- acknowledge responsibility for conflict and injustice, seek repentance and forgiveness,
- promote human rights, religious liberty, and democracy,
- foster economic development that is just and sustainable,
- work with cooperative networks in the international system,
- strengthen the United Nations and international organizations,
- reduce offensive weapons and weapons trade, and
- support grassroots peacemaking groups and voluntary associations,

URGES all Baptist conventions, unions, churches and individuals to learn the practices of "Just Peacemaking", to incorporate them into the teaching of the "things that make for peace" in our congregations and institutions, and to support these practices in the various contexts represented in our Alliance; and

CALLS on the various governments of the world to pursue these practices of "Just Peacemaking" in their leadership, policies, and actions.