

KENTUCKY COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
A CALL TO ACTION ON AFRICA
Program Unit on Peacemaking/Racism
Adopted by the 47th Annual Assembly, October 20 - 21, 1994

BACKGROUND

The continent of Africa continues to be in transition. Colonization has given way to new problems under self- rule of civil unrest, internal strife, famine, disease, and oppression. Africa, three times the size of the United States with twice the population deserves the world's attention not only because of the vastness of its area and the magnitude of its need, but because of its potential impact on the Christian world.

In the past two years, despite tremendous human suffering the Christian Church has seen unparalleled growth. In spite of massive external debt, the continuing wars and the growing number of refugees in Rwanda, Sudan, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Liberia, and the uncertainty of the sometimes violent movement toward democracy in Zaire, Cameroon, Togo, Kenya, and Nigeria the Church continues to grow in numbers and maturity.

Kentucky Christians have responded to Africa's needs through their communities' relief agencies in these terrible times and will continue to do so. But an increasing number of African Christian voices are calling to us to come and learn with them what God's Spirit is teaching them about faithfulness, community, and commitment. By the year 2000 there will be more Christians in Africa than on any other continent. What factors has the Spirit used to bring African Churches to such growth and maturity over the past century of life and witness? Our own churches have much to learn from African Christians who continue to serve God despite the powerful forces of injustice, poverty and despair.

CALL TO ACTION

THEREFORE the Kentucky Council of Churches calls upon its member churches to:

- * express through regular prayer, study, relief aid, and dialogue, their solidarity with African Christian, during these times of massive change and great suffering and confess out complicity in the past sins of economic exploitations and colonialism;
- * increase their understanding of Africa and African Christianity by identifying and implementing ways to listen to the African churches, including support for missionaries from Africa to the United States;
- * increase each church's understanding of the Churches of Africa through existing programs and resources;
- * encourage our national leaders to support preventative actions with those African nations experiencing famine or internal conflict in order to prevent future massacres and refugee problems such as those that have occurred in Rwanda in 1994;
- * encourage our State Department to develop pro-active foreign relations with African nations with a strong focus on supporting and promoting long-term economic development efforts which focus on the real needs of the people.

SOME AGENCIES WHICH ARE SENDING RELIEF TO RWANDA:

Adventist Development and Relief Agency, PO Box 4289, Silver Spring, MD 20914; (800) 424-2372
American Red Cross, Rwanda Relief, PO Box 37243, Washington, D.C., 20013; (800) 842-2200
Care, 151 Ellis Street, Atlanta, GA 30303; (800) 842-CARE
Catholic Relief Services, PO Box 17090, Baltimore, MD 21203-7090; (800) SEND-HOPE
Church World Service, Attn: Rwanda Emergency, PO Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515; (800) 762-0968, (219) 264-3102
(information)
Doctors Without Borders, USA, Inc., 30 Rockefeller Plaza, Suite 5425, New York NY 10112; (212) 649-5961
International Rescue Committee, 122 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10168-1289; (212) 532-5411
Lutheran World Relief, 390 Park Avenue South, New York NY 10116; (212) 532-6350
Mennonite Central Committee, Attn. Rwandan Relief, 21 South Street, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; (717) 859-1151
Oxfam America, 26 West Street, Boston, MA 02111-1206; (617) 482-1211
Presbyterian World Service, Attn: Rwandan Relief, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115; (800) 554-8583
United Methodist Committee on Relief, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115; (800) 554-8583
World Relief, Dept. 8, PO Box WRC, Wheaton, IL 60189; (708) 665-0236
World Vision, 919 West Huntington Drive, Monrovia, CA 91016; (818) 357-7879