



World Council of Churches
Conseil œcuménique des Eglises
Consejo Mundial de Iglesias
Ökumenischer Rat der Kirchen

General Secretariat

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H.E. Mr Anders Fogh Rasmussen
NATO Secretary General

H.E. Mr Fredrik Reinfeldt
Prime Minister of Sweden
Swedish Presidency of the European Union

H.E. Mr Javier Solana
Secretary-General of the
Council of the European Union/
High Representative for the
Common Foreign and Security Policy

The Honorable Barack Obama President of
the United States
of America

H.E. Mr Dimitry Medvedev
President of the Russian Federation

Geneva, 28 October 2009

Your Excellencies,

We are writing to leaders of NATO and of the European Union in follow-up to our 30 March 2009 joint letter concerning NATO nuclear policy and its current strategic concept review. We are also writing to US President Barack Obama and Russian President Dimitry Medvedev as leaders of the states with more than 95 percent of the world's nuclear weapons.

The new political dynamic for nuclear disarmament figures in public statements recently issued by our councils, which represent nearly 200 member churches in North America and Europe. Referring to these statements by our governing bodies, we:

- Strongly affirm the joint statement by US President Obama and Russian President Medvedev on 1 April 2009 in London and the US President's appeal for a world free of nuclear weapons on 5 April 2009 in Prague.
- Look to the US and Russia to take an important early step toward that goal in the new START follow-on agreement.
- Call for NATO to respond in kind, with a clear endorsement of the new call for a nuclear-weapon-free world and by deciding in NATO's new Strategic Concept that nuclear sharing should be ended and US nuclear weapons based in NATO's non-nuclear-weapon member states should be eliminated.
- Call for the European Union to equally endorse the new call for a nuclear-weapon-free world in the EU Common Position for the 2010 NPT Review Conference, also reflecting that the EU includes two nuclear-weapon states and four member states with nuclear weapons on their soil.
- Call for Russia to address its vast number of tactical nuclear weapons and resume the hopeful process of unilateral reductions started in 1991 by both the US and the Soviet Union/Russia.

You will find the texts of the three statements enclosed. One of the issuing bodies, the Conference of European Churches, met under the theme 'Called to One Hope in Christ'. Members looked for new developments that raise hope in the world. We believe the new striving to abolish nuclear weapons is such a sign. We send you the statements as encouragements to pursue this new course.

We acknowledge the steps NATO has taken to reduce its reliance on nuclear weapons, as respondents to our earlier letter to NATO leaders noted. We also welcome the commitment of the new German government to have all nuclear weapons withdrawn from its soil.

Now is the time to continue the trend. Every state has a part to play in breaking out of the self-fulfilling logic so often cited, that "we will need nuclear weapons as long as others have them". We appeal to all nuclear-weapon states and states with nuclear weapons on their soil to contribute to progress under the new political dynamic.

It is our conviction that the present opportunity must be transformed into conclusive actions.

Sincerely,



Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia
General Secretary
World Council of Churches



The Venerable Colin Williams
General Secretary
Conference of European Churches



Rev. Michael Kinnamon, Ph.D.
General Secretary
National Council of the Churches of
Christ in the USA



The Rev. Dr. Karen Hamilton
General Secretary
The Canadian Council of Churches

cc: respondents to our joint letter of 30 March 2009

The Honourable Lawrence Cannon, P.C., M.P., Minister of Foreign Affairs, Canada
Dr. Christoph Heusgen, Director-General, Foreign Policy and Security Advisor,
Bundeskanzleramt, Federal Republic of Germany
[in addition to Mr Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, former NATO Secretary General]

Enclosures:

Statement of the World Council of Churches
Statement of the Conference of European Churches
Statement of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA