

## Plan of action for Peace, Human Rights and Conversion to a sustainable world 2018-2020

Adopted in the Uniting Church of Sweden's leadership group in September 2018 - based on the revised policy

### Goals

- The three main areas in the policy have a natural place in the planning of all activities in the church.
- The contribution of the Uniting Church to the UN global goals in the Agenda 2030 has been clarified.

### Purpose

The plan of action, as the Policy, aims to raise consciousness, increase knowledge and clarify the Uniting Church in Sweden's prophetic voice and intent. Both documents are directing for national and regional staff and can give ideas and inspiration to congregations and individuals to raise some of the issues of interest to the local context. The plan also states a desire to share experiences and mutually learn in the relationship with cooperating churches in other countries.

### Extent

To work with peace, Human Rights and transformation is a long-term task, a learning process and requires patience. Therefore the first planning period is for three years, 2018-20, with revision annually in relation to the Policy, the overall work plans of the church and the surrounding world. Proposed activities can have different priorities, starting points and intensities during this period and can be included in the work plan and budget. The Policy and the plan of action define together a frame, an approach and a direction for the planning of work in the different sectors of the church.

## Peace

The Uniting Church in Sweden wants to work for: (from the policy)

- Overcoming hostility
- Counteracting discrimination
- Fighting oppression in all forms and all situations
- Creating a world without nuclear weapons

National/local:

- Raise the concept of "Fair Peace" in information about projects in cooperation with other countries/churches. On the website, in articles and facebook-inlays regularly and explicitly describe current facts.
- Cooperate with the Swedish Fellowship of Reconciliation regarding developing competence for conflict management in congregations and involvement in advocacy for peace and non-violence.
- Find ways to work with consequences of the #metoo-calling in churches and especially in the Uniting Church in Sweden. Cooperation with the Swedish Ecumenical Women's Council.

#### National/International:

- Regularly raise the campaign “Thursdays in Black” within the Uniting Church in Sweden, and in the dialogue with cooperating churches in other countries. At least one ecumenical event focusing on violence in different forms every year.
- Continue to participate in the Swedish OSCE-network (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) as well as cooperate with experts within the Uniting Church regarding “Fair Peace” in Europe, Central Asia and globally.
- Support efforts to implement the UN convention prohibiting nuclear weapons. Try to influence the Swedish government to ratify it, to work in the most efficient way possible for the disarmament of nuclear weapons and for – as a long term goal – their abolishment.

#### International:

- Raise possibilities with cooperating churches in other countries to strengthen the development of a peace culture.

## Environment and climate

The Uniting Church in Sweden wants to work for: (from the policy)

- A social and economic development within the planet’s capacity
- Encouraging recycling and environmentally conscious lifestyles as well as choosing the environmentally best alternatives for products, services, travel and activities.
- A fast phasing-out of fossil fuels and the extension of renewable energy sources.

#### National/local:

- Develop the facebook group “Uniting Church in Sweden climate/sustainability” to become a vibrant meeting place for discussions and profound sharing.
- Monitor the website on detailed information about the work on environment and climate and add material on the church service web.
- Participate in the international ecumenical effort “Time for creation” through church services and prayer during a specific period of the year.
- Contribute to theological understanding that the challenges of climate change concerns the essence of our Christian faith. Spread information through theological material and make them easily accessible.
- Spread knowledge and good examples to the congregations about solar cells, possibilities for sustainable financial investment as well as other ways of contributing to the adaptation towards a fuel-free society.
- Build a network of “climate congregations” through which congregations can share experiences and receive support in their work.

#### National:

- Produce a detailed plan so that the national and regional offices are assisted in being climate smart in terms of choice of consumable goods, equipment, electricity contracts, recycling etc.
- Develop a travel policy with goals and concrete measures, e g on climate compensation, leading to declining ecological footprints.
- As a tool for increasing awareness and concrete contribution to the decline of our ecological footprints, successively introduce vegetarian food and fairtrade products possibly as a norm at all arrangements by the church.

- Materialize the project “fast for Lent” before Easter 2019 with profound preparations and an evaluation that can provide information and learning for future similar activities.

National/International:

- See to that there is necessary technical equipment and knowledge for digital meetings as a viable option to physical meetings.

International:

- Make an inventory of which development projects and other forms of cooperation the Uniting Church is involved in that in a specific way deal with environment and climate. Raise these issues in contacts with cooperating partners and develop the work e.g. with funding from the new climate fund created from climate compensation.

## Justice and Human Rights

The Uniting Church in Sweden wants to work for: (from the policy)

- A fair distribution of the world’s resources and prioritization of fairly produced and procured products.
- Equality between people as well as fair and equal treatment before the law.
- The UN declaration of Human Rights is respected and followed.

National/local:

- Encourage congregations to use fairtrade products and be certified as “Kyrka för Fairtrade” (Congregation for Fairtrade).
- Continue to strengthen the congregations’ efforts to support and integrate asylum candidates and migrants.
- Work for a generous treatment of asylum candidates.
- Cooperate with Eumenia so that the child convention is applied in practice in Sweden.
- Consider accessibility for disabled people and a child’s perspective in all activities of the church.
- Engage against discrimination in our society regardless of gender, sexual orientation or religion. Non-discrimination should be a guiding principal in the church.
- Investigate the possibility for a volunteer/coordinator regarding human trafficking in Sweden to survey which congregations are dedicated to this line of work and compile learning from them.
- Advocate that Sweden adopts the International Labour Organization’s (ILO) convention on the rights of indigenous people.

National/international:

- Cooperate with ecumenical and confessional organisations and the Swedish Mission Council (SMC) in the area of freedom of religion and belief to influence politicians, diplomats and office bearers at foreign administrations, but also educate and assist exposed groups to affect authorities responsible for their situation.
- Continued work for fair treatment and development for minorities in Europe and against human trafficking through activities in Sweden, through support to active churches in Europe on these issues and through ecumenical and confessional organisations that the Uniting Church has relations to.

- Continue to work for the rights of the Samis in society and church through cooperation with Samic groups, other organisations and congregations as well as cooperating churches in the Nordic countries and Russia.

International:

- Prepare an inventory of which projects with cooperating churches that relate to Human Rights.
- Influence the confessional world organisations our church belongs to, to raise questions on fair trade.
- Report violations on Human Rights in the annual meeting organised by the Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).
- Cooperate with World Baptist Alliance and other networks/organizations to advocate through the UN regarding Human Rights.
- Support work concerning rights of indigenous people in cooperating countries, especially where churches already work among these groups. Cooperate with and support the World Council of Churches' network in this area.

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