

grouped into four 'clusters'—Relationships; Issues and Themes; Communication; and Finance, Services and Administration. The Relationships cluster comprises four teams (Church and Ecumenical Relations, Regional Relations and Ecumenical Sharing, Inter-Religious Relations and International Relations), as well as two programmes (Action by Churches Together and the Ecumenical Church Loan Fund). The Issues and Themes cluster comprises four teams (Faith and Order; Mission and Evangelism; Justice, Peace and Creation; and Education and Ecumenical Formation).

In Aug. 1997 the WCC launched a Peace to the City campaign, as the initial focus of a programme to overcome violence in troubled cities. The Decade to Overcome Violence was launched in Feb. 2001 during the meeting of the WCC Central Committee in Berlin.

**Organization.** The governing body of the World Council, consisting of delegates specially appointed by the member Churches, is the Assembly, which meets every seven or eight years to frame policy. It has no legislative powers and depends for the implementation of its decisions upon the action of member Churches. The 9th General Assembly, held in Porto Alegre, Brazil in Feb. 2006, had as its theme 'God, in your grace, transform the world'. A 154-member Central Committee meets annually to carry out the Assembly mandate, with a smaller 25-member Executive Committee meeting twice a year.

**Headquarters:** PO Box 2100, 150 route de Ferney, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland.

**Website:** <http://www.oikoumene.org>

**General Secretary:** Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia (Kenya).

**Publications.** *Annual Reports; Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, Geneva, 1991; *Directory of Christian Councils*, 1985; *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, Geneva, 1993; *Ecumenical Review* (quarterly); *Ecumenical News International* (weekly); *International Review of Mission* (quarterly).

### Further Reading

Castro, E., *A Passion for Unity*. 1992

Raiser, K., *Ecumenism in Transition*. 1994

Van Elderen, M. and Conway, M., *Introducing the World Council of Churches revised and enlarged edition*. 1991

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## World Customs Organization

Established in 1952 as the Customs Co-operation Council, the World Customs Organization is an intergovernmental body with worldwide membership, whose mission it is to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of customs administrations throughout the world. It has 174 member countries or territories.

**Headquarters:** Rue du Marché, 30, B-1210 Brussels, Belgium.

**Website:** <http://www.wcoomd.org>

**Secretary-General:** Kunio Mikuriya (Japan).

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## World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU)

**Origin and History.** The WFTU was founded on a worldwide basis in 1945 at the international trade union conferences held in

London and Paris, with the participation of all the trade union centres in the countries of the anti-Hitler coalition. The aim was to reunite the world trade union movement at the end of the Second World War. The acute political differences among affiliates, especially the east-west confrontation in Europe on ideological lines, led to a split. A number of affiliated organizations withdrew in 1949 and established the ICFTU. The WFTU now draws its membership from the industrially developing countries like India, Vietnam and other Asian countries, Brazil, Peru, Cuba and other Latin American countries, Syria, Lebanon, Kuwait and other Arab countries, and it has affiliates and associates in more than 20 European countries. It has close relations with the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions, the Organization of African Trade Union Unity as well as the All-China Federation of Trade Unions. The 15th Congress was held in Havana, Cuba in Dec. 2005 and used the slogan 'The working people of the world against globalization and exploitation. For social justice, full employment, solidarity and peace'. Its Trade Unions Internationals (TUIs) have affiliates in Russia, the Czech Republic, Poland and other East European countries, Portugal, France, Spain, Japan and other OECD countries.

The headquarters of the TUIs are situated in Helsinki, New Delhi, Budapest, Mexico, Paris and Moscow. The WFTU and its TUIs have 130m. members, organized in 92 affiliated or associated national federations and six Trade Unions Internationals, in 130 countries. It has regional offices in Athens, New Delhi, Havana, Dakar, Damascus and Moscow and Permanent Representatives accredited to the UN in New York, Geneva, Paris and Rome.

**Headquarters:** 40 Zan Moreas St., 117 45 Athens, Greece.

**Website:** <http://www.wftucentral.org>

**Email:** [info@wftucentral.org](mailto:info@wftucentral.org)

**President:** Mohammad Assouz (Syria).

**General Secretary:** George Mavrikos (Greece).

**Publications.** *Flashes From the Trade Unions* (fortnightly, published in English, French, Spanish and Arabic), reports of Congresses, etc.

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## World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

**Origin.** WWF was officially formed and registered as a charity on 11 Sept. 1961. The first National Appeal was launched in the United Kingdom on 23 Nov. 1961, shortly followed by the United States and Switzerland.

**Organization.** WWF is the world's largest and most experienced independent conservation organization with over 4.7m. supporters and a global network of 27 National Organizations, five Associates and 24 Programme Offices.

The National Organizations carry out conservation activities in their own countries and contribute technical expertise and funding to WWF's international conservation programme. The Programme Offices implement WWF's fieldwork, advise national and local governments, and raise public understanding of conservation issues.

**Mission.** WWF has as its mission preserving genetic, species and ecosystem diversity; ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable now and in the longer term, for the benefit of all life on Earth; promoting actions to reduce to a minimum pollution and the wasteful exploitation and consumption of resources and energy. WWF's ultimate goal is to stop, and eventually reverse, the accelerating degradation of our planet's natural environment, and to help build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.