

Organization of the Islamic Conference, it changed its name in June 2011.

Members (57 as of Feb. 2017). Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Brunei, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Suriname, Syria*, Tajikistan, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Yemen. *Observers.* Bosnia and Herzegovina, Central African Republic, Russia, Thailand, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. *Suspended since Aug. 2012.

Headquarters: PO Box 178, Jeddah 21411, Saudi Arabia.

Website: <http://www.oic-oci.org>

Secretary-General: Dr Yousef bin Ahmad Al-Othaimen (Saudi Arabia).

Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO)

UNPO is an international organization created by nations and peoples around the world who are not represented in the world's principal international organizations, such as the UN. Founded in 1991, UNPO had 40 members as at Feb. 2017 representing more than 250m. people worldwide.

Membership. Open to all nations and peoples unrepresented, subject to adherence to the five principles that form the basis of UNPO's charter: equal right to self-determination of all nations and peoples; adherence to internationally accepted human rights standards; to the principles of democracy; promotion of non-violence; and protection of the environment. Applicants must show that they constitute a 'nation or people' as defined in the Covenant.

Functions and Activities. UNPO offers an international forum for occupied nations, indigenous peoples, minorities and oppressed majorities, who struggle to regain their lost countries, preserve their cultural identities, protect their basic human and economic rights, and safeguard their environment.

It does not represent those peoples; rather it assists and empowers them to represent themselves more effectively. To this end, it provides professional services and facilities as well as education and training in the fields of diplomacy, human rights law, democratic processes, conflict resolution and environmental protection. Members, private foundations and voluntary contributions fund the Organization.

In total six former members of UNPO (Armenia, Belau, Estonia, Georgia, Latvia and Timor-Leste) subsequently achieved full independence and gained representation in the UN. Belau is now called Palau. Current members Bougainville and Kosovo have achieved a degree of political autonomy. Kosovo declared itself an independent state in 2008, although both Serbia and Russia oppose its sovereignty.

Headquarters: Laan van Meerdervoort 70, 2517 AN The Hague, Netherlands.

Website: <http://www.unpo.org>

Email: unpo@unpo.org

General Secretary: Marino Busdachin (Italy).

Publication. UNPO News (quarterly).

World Council of Churches

The World Council of Churches was formally constituted on 23 Aug. 1948 in Amsterdam. In Feb. 2017 member churches numbered 348 from more than 110 countries.

Origin. The World Council was founded by the coming together of Christian movements, including the overseas mission groups gathered from 1921 in the International Missionary Council, the Faith and Order Movement, and the Life and Work Movement. On 13 May 1938, at Utrecht, a provisional committee was appointed to prepare for the formation of a World Council of Churches.

Membership. The basis of membership (1975) states: 'The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of Churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.' Membership is open to Churches which express their agreement with this basis and satisfy such criteria as the Assembly or Central Committee may prescribe. Today, Churches of Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox, Old Catholic and Pentecostal confessions from all over the world belong to this fellowship. The Roman Catholic Church is not a member of the WCC but works closely with it.

Activities. The WCC's Central Committee comprises the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee. Within the Programme Committee there are advisory groups on issues relating to communication, women, justice, peace and creation, youth, ecumenical relations and inter-religious relations. Following the WCC's 8th General Assembly in Harare, Zimbabwe in 1998 the work of the WCC was restructured. Activities were 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).

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 10th General Assembly, held in Busan, South Korea from 30 Oct.–8 Nov. 2013, had as its theme 'God of life, lead us to justice and peace'. A 150-member Central Committee meets annually to carry out the Assembly mandate, with a smaller 26-member Executive Committee meeting twice a year.

Headquarters: 150 route de Ferney, CP 2100, CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland.

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

General Secretary: Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit (Norway).

Publications. WCC Annual Review.—*Directory of Christian Councils.* 1985.—*Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement.* 1991.—*A History of the Ecumenical Movement.* 1993.—*Ecumenical Review* (quarterly).—*International Review of Mission* (biannual).

Further Reading

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

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