



# THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

LUTHERISCHER WELTBUND - FEDERACIÓN LUTERANA MUNDIAL - FÉDÉRATION LUTHÉRIENNE MONDIALE

*Office of the General Secretary*

His Excellency Isaias Afwerki  
President  
State of Eritrea

His Excellency Meles Zenawi  
Prime Minister  
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

13 December 2000

Your Excellencies,

On behalf of the Lutheran World Federation, a federation of 131 member churches around the world, representing approximately 60 million people, I welcome the signing yesterday in Algiers of the peace agreement between your two nations. I pray that this step will formally and effectively bring to a close a tragic chapter in the history of your two nations, in which every life lost was a life too many, and every resulting reversal of development progress in your region was a reversal too far.

I affirm our support for the processes reflected in the agreement, whereby your two countries commit themselves to the investigation of the causes of the outbreak of armed conflict, and to the resolution of contentious issues relating to border demarcation and compensation claims, through independent, technical and binding mechanisms.

I also underline the necessity, in accordance with international humanitarian law, of the speedy release and repatriation of all prisoners of war and other persons detained as a result of the armed conflict, and of supporting and restoring to their homes all people displaced during the fighting.

However, as the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan emphasized, the work of reconciliation and re-establishment of a culture of peace in your region will require more than the simple cessation of fighting, and the written words of this agreement. Actions of trust and solidarity will be needed, and a long-term commitment to the promotion of a culture of peace. At this sensitive time, words must indeed be carefully chosen, given their powerful capacity to either soothe or inflame.

My prayers at this time are for the consolation and healing of the many victims of this conflict and, for their sakes, that you might be granted wisdom and strength in the faithful implementation of the agreement you have solemnly signed.

Yours respectfully,

Ishmael Noko  
General Secretary