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## A Pastoral Letter to the Churches and People of Ethiopia

*"I have said this to you, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!" John 16:33(NRSV)*

Dear brothers and sisters in Ethiopia,

We send to you Christian love and care from your sisters and brothers in different parts of the world, representing churches, church-related organizations, and networks committed to accompanying you, the churches and people of Ethiopia, in facing the challenges confronting your country.

We join you in grieving for the deaths, injuries, displacement and divisions resulting from the tragic conflict in the northern part of the country. We are deeply concerned about the hardship and loss inflicted on the civilian population, especially the most vulnerable including women, children and the physically challenged. We commiserate with all who have lost loved ones because of this crisis and pray for God's comfort in their grief.

We lament the fact that this conflict has added heavily to the constellation of concurrent crises already afflicting the people of Ethiopia – including the attacks targeting specific ethnic and religious groups, regional tensions associated with the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, the worst locust plague in 25 years, serious impacts on food production, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The work of the churches and church-related organizations responding to human suffering and need, and seeking to promote peace, reconciliation and unity is greatly needed in these exceptionally challenging times. We convey our solidarity and commitment to support and accompany the churches of Ethiopia as you seek to fulfil your prophetic ministry for justice, peace and human dignity. We encourage you to continue inviting the people of Ethiopia to choose peaceful ways to address conflicts and differences. And we pray that you be granted strength and wisdom to minister to the people of Ethiopia in this hour of need.

Be assured of our prayers for all the people of Ethiopia. As disciples of Christ and as partners in Christ's mission, we are bound together by love and compassion, especially for such moments as

these, to share each other's pain, and to lift each other up. We pray with you for an end to the conflict, the safe return of those who have been displaced, and for an inclusive reconciliation process that will lead to sustainable peace for all in Ethiopia.

May the overcoming power of our Lord Jesus Christ uphold your faith together.

Signed by:

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