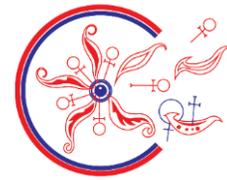




**EFECW**

ECUMENICAL FORUM OF EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN WOMEN



**Xth General Assembly  
7-12 August 2018, Soko Grad, Serbia  
Final Message**

**If You Remain Silent in this Time... (Esther 4:14)**

Over 100 members of the Ecumenical Forum of European Christian Women gathered together from 24 countries and from all traditions of the Christian family to share in prayer, fellowship, discussion and pilgrimage. We met at the Orthodox Monastery Sveti Nikolaj, Soko Grad, Serbia. We thank the local women who have welcomed us, and the people of the Monastery who have been such generous hosts.

With prayerful reflection on the book of Esther and guided by the text “if you remain silent in this time”, we discussed what it means to speak out as women in our churches about the issues we face within our contexts.

We will speak out:

- About the invisibility of women within our churches
- About the importance of women’s social, political and economic empowerment
- Against rape, abuse, torture and violence against women
- About the importance of ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue
- To support the human rights of everyone, especially migrants and those seeking asylum
- Against populist propaganda
- About the role of women in peace-building

We stand together with our sisters to achieve the recognition and meaningful participation of women within our churches.

We will continue to develop and support projects that contribute to the social, political and economic empowerment of women.

2018 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the World Council of Churches’ [Ecumenical Decade in Solidarity with Women](#). We regret that there is still a need to address its original priorities, and urge all churches to recommit to these. In particular we call for the support of governmental ratification of the [Istanbul Convention](#), as well as the [Thursdays in Black](#) and [White Ribbon](#) campaigns, which demand an end to violence against women.

We walk together with women of all Christian denominations and all faiths on our journey towards equality and celebrate our participation as members of the [Side by Side](#) Movement for gender justice.



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We will challenge current European and national laws and policies which lead women to undertake unnecessary acts of survival, resulting in a loss of human dignity. We will work in solidarity with women who are at the mercy of traffickers and smugglers.

We provide a platform for women to share knowledge, raise awareness, and to develop an informed opinion on issues women face today.

We seek to be voices for peace and reconciliation within our churches, communities and the wider world.

**We have been on pilgrimage together and created a space to share and express our spirituality. Renewed by our gathering, may God lead us on our way with joy and peace as signs of Christ's love on earth.**

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