

The Gothenburg Process

Bogotá Process

Declaration

Assembled by the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI) and the Latin American Bishops Conference (CELAM), with support from the Gothenburg Process, the Ecumenical Conference of Latin American and the Caribbean was convened on 26 to 28 May 2009 in Bogota, Colombia. Representatives from different Churches in South America, North America, Europe and the Philippines, and from the World Conference of Religions for Peace, gathered together in this regional meeting on the arms trade hosted by the Bishops Conference of Colombia.

We reflected on the consequences of the arms trade, the misuse and proliferation of arms, and the resulting loss of human lives, the increase of crime and the undermining of development. We also reflected on the efforts taken in the world and in our region to establish clear norms that would permit a greater control of the use of arms as well as their legal and illegal trade.

We, the representatives of the Latin America Council of Churches, the Latin American Bishops Conference and the World Conference of Religions for Peace, commit ourselves to motivating our organizations in order to deepen our commitment for peace and our stand against all forms of violence. At the same time, we elevate the level of consciousness in our communities on the dangers presented by the use of arms, especially by civilians, on human life and development.

We commit to the creation of a platform that will allow for the continuation of the process initiated in this meeting - the Bogotá Process – and that is in line with the international Gothenburg Process, which aims at the creation of strict norms on the use and trade of arms on behalf of our governments. Internationally, we seek to support the efforts toward the signing of an Arms Trade Treaty within the framework of the United Nations.

Our commitment is to life, to the development of our communities and to overcoming all forms of violence.

We commit to assist the victims of armed violence in the search for recognition of their rights. We pray to the Lord of life so that violence and bloodshed caused by arms will cease.