



STATEMENT FROM CUBA

We, the Executive Committee of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, have gathered here in Havana, Cuba, 8–13 May 2016, under the theme "Living God, renew and transform us."

Following the words of the Apostle Paul, God calls us not to conform to this world but be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:2).

The story of the church in Cuba is an inspiration to us. The church taught us that faith is not a fragile enterprise but a resilient force.

The church transformed the experience of difficult times into a greater dependency on God with the realization of miracles happening around them every day.

Even while governments attempted to separate, erecting walls between nations and peoples, the broader Reformed church still built relationships and partnerships. This solidarity contributed to the new life between Cuba and the United States.

The Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba provided the ecumenical world with strong leaders, opened global doors for the other churches in Cuba and provided a theological foundation for understanding mission in the struggles of the Cuban context.

We pray that this tradition of contributing to the social fabric of Cuban society will only continue to grow and that the government will equally respect all religions and churches and their unique gifts to their communities.

We respect the role Cuba has played in the Colombia peace talks. Many people in Latin America owe their health to the medical workers Cuba has trained in the region.

We also heard about the larger Latin American context with struggles for justice, specifically guaranteeing human rights and overcoming poverty. So we pray that democracy be respected, as it nurtures peace as a fruit of justice.

We pledge our continuing solidarity and support to the Cuban church and call upon the Communion:

To our member churches in the United States, we encourage them to continue their work to end the economic blockade/embargo

To the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba, we encourage them to hold fast to their identity and faith while encouraging the development of young leaders

To all of our members, we encourage relationships to be newly built or renewed and call upon all to pray:

Living God,

Do not let us conform to the world's view of power but let us always be dependent upon you.

Transform our uncertain faith with a resilient grace that faces each new day.

Renew in us a commitment to our sisters and brothers everywhere that face challenges in their lives as a church.

Thank you for making us braver than we are.

In Christ's name we pray,

Amen.

There is still much to be done and much to learn. We will continue to journey together. The Cuban churches' struggles are the Communion's struggles. Their successes are our celebrations.

13 May 2016