

***INTERNATIONAL ECUMENICAL FELLOWSHIP CONFERENCE (IEF-UGANDA) IN
PARTNERSHIP WITH BISHOP STUART UNIVERSITY.***

VENUE: LAKE VIEW RESORT HOTEL, MBARARA UGANDA

DATES: 1st -2nd September 2022

Theme: Reconciliation and Restoration; the how for African refugees

Background

International Ecumenical Fellowship (IEF) is a grass-root, international community of Christians from countries across the world bringing together Christians from all traditions to worship, pray, study and enjoy fellowship. IEF brings lay and ordained Christians together across the divides of language, ethnicity, nationality, political structures, spirituality and Church traditions. The fellowship annually holds a number of conferences aiming at bridging, building and forging collaborations that make the world a better place to live. In Africa, IEF activities are run by an Interim Africa Chapter Secretariat in Uganda currently housed by Bishop Stuart University in Mbarara city, Mbarara district Uganda. The secretariate is also in the process of formalizing the International Ecumenical Movement Uganda (IEM-U) while International Ecumenical Movement Kenya (IEM-K) was formed in 2014. Other countries including Rwanda and Burundi are in the initial stages of planning. IEF Africa Chapter is coordinating the organization of the regional conference the first having been held in Kenya in 2016. The conference to be held in Uganda is slated for **Thursday 1st and Friday 2nd of September 2022**. The theme of the conference is **“Reconciliation and Restoration; the how for African refugees”**. The theme is thought to be timely and relevant especially in the East African region context due to the long history of conflicts and wars that have made some people get displaced from their home countries. The conference will also be used as an opportunity to re-ignite other International Ecumenical Movements across different countries. These will spearhead national, regional and International ecumenical activities in respective countries. During the conference there will be paper presentations under the following sub-themes; Repentance and Forgiveness, Conflict Resolution, and Education and Justice Mechanisms.

The conference is also a follow up of IEF-U conference held at Lake View Resort Hotel on 8th and 9th August 2018 under the theme **“Unity in Diversity”** and the 2013 Continental conference held in Uganda and organized under the theme **“Healing the Wounded History”**. Reconciliation and Restoration for African Refugees, is not only a means to restoring friendship but also development. This is particularly important in the East Africa region within the context of the current tensions and experiences particularly during and after presidential and parliamentary elections, civil wars in countries like South Sudan, ethnic and tribal conflicts in Burundi, Ethiopia, Uganda in Kasese, Bundibugyo attacks, political and religious tensions and individual differences among others. There is therefore need for an everlasting solution that guarantees restoration and reconciliation amidst the wars, conflicts and their effects and this is more important today than before. As part of the conference, paper presentations and discussions will be made on establishing ways for reconciliation and restoration of the African refugees.

Objectives

The conference aims at meeting the following objectives:

1. To bring together Christians from world over in a forum that discusses ways for reconciliation and restoration of the African refugees through paper presentations and knowledge sharing.
2. To lay strategies for initiating International Ecumenical Movements across the regions after Kenya.

Activities

A series of activities will be performed to ensure the conference meets its set objectives. Among the activities include; mobilization of resources, identifying focal institutions from the selected countries, calling for abstracts, holding meetings and presentation of papers among others.

Output

By the end of the conference, a number of outputs and lessons will be realized and learnt respectively. The expected output will be a report about strategies for reconciliation and restoration for African refugees, from the IEF perspective. Other outputs include minutes, testimonies on best practices and Publications in form of articles, book chapters and posters.

Outcome/Impact

The output from the conference will contribute to peace and Justice among African Refugees. Peace and Justice are key to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 16.

Participating countries

The conference targets all countries in the world. All countries have at one time experienced different conflicts at different time periods. Some of these countries have good experiences to share and learn from. In effect the displacement of people from their homes in some countries affects a number of other countries in the whole world.

Location/Venue

This year's conference is planned to be held at Lake View Resort Hotel in Mbarara City, Mbarara District. In case the Organization is willing to host the conference, it must uphold IEF core values and most importantly be able to accommodate all Christians irrespective of their background. Countries that have not hosted earlier conferences will be encouraged to participate.

Audience and Organization

The conference will take two days and will attract Christians from within the region. These cross the divides of language, ethnicity, nationality, political structures, and spirituality and Church traditions. The conference expects around 150 participants representing all Christian

denominations in the region. Representation of the different Christian denominations will be emphasized during the selection of delegates. Conference organizers will select Key facilitators from a broad spectrum of Christian personalities with a proven Christian, intellectual, political and field/practical experience in dealing and working with restoration and reconciliation.

Program

Program will be divided into two main sessions; the first one day and a half will be for praise and worship and paper presentations and discussion while the remaining time will be used for testimonies/experience sharing. All these will provide key experiences and knowledge for developing strategies important for reconciliation and restoration of the African refugees.

Coordination

A number of conference committees will be set up including the steering committee that will spearhead the activities. The steering committee will be chaired by Conference convener and have one member from each participating country who will serve as the country focal/contact person. Due to distance related barriers meetings will be held online as deemed necessary. A Whatsapp group will be formed for updates and brief consultations. The identified contact person will help in mobilization and related coordination of country members for effective participation. A conference operational committee will be set up in the host country to run activities on a day-to-day basis and update the Steering committee. A secretariat specifically in charge of the conference will also be set up.