Wilson urges reconciliation in Ivory Coast, meets with Ashanti king in Ghana
West Africa visit also includes Ghana graduation, community center opening

ADRA part of earthquake relief in Guatemala
Several Adventist Church members among the 52 dead

Indian FM station airs historic first Adventist radio program
Broadcast ‘significant step’ toward impacting country’s major cities
Adventist Church President Ted N. C. Wilson is greeted upon his arrival. He is visiting leaders in several countries in West Africa. [photo: OHEMAENG TAWIAH]

Otumfuo Osei Tutu II is the Asantehene, a ceremonial leadership role of the Ashanti people in Ghana. Wilson met the king at the Manhyia Palace last week. [photo: GERHARD WEINER]
Nov. 13, 2012
Abidjan, Ivory Coast
Gilbert Weeh, Solace Asafo Hlordzi, and ANN staff

Seventh-day Adventist Church president Pastor Ted N. C. Wilson is meeting with government, community and church leaders in West Africa during a visit to the region.

In the Ivory Coast last week, Wilson called for reconciliation following last year's civil unrest after a disputed election.

Wilson, who served as a regional executive for the Adventist Church in Ivory Coast from 1981 to 1990, said, “During this period of reconciliation here in Ivory Coast, we must have the spirit of the Good Samaritan. The duty of Christians is to represent Christ.”

He delivered his remarks in French during a keynote speech at the Palace of Culture in Abidjan.

Wilson also added, “We must treat our women with respect. We must have a respectful and a warm attitude towards our wives, our husbands and our children. Reconciliation must first start in the home, the neighborhood, the church and then spread to the country.

Ediemou Jacob, president of the Religious National Forum of Ivory Coast, said Wilson was the first world religious leader to visit Ivory Coast with a message of reconciliation.

Wilson also met with Ivory Coast President Alassane Ouattara on November 7.

There are nearly 13,000 Adventist Church members in Ivory Coast, which is the headquarters for the denomination's West-Central Africa Division.

Wilson is visiting several countries in the division this month. Late last week he traveled to neighboring Ghana to begin a five-day visit in the country.

In the city of Kumasi, Wilson met with Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, who is the Asantehene, a ceremonial leadership role of the Ashanti people. Wilson’s father, Neal Wilson, who served as Adventist Church president from 1979 to 1990, visited the previous king 24 years ago.

Ted Wilson told the king and his officials of the gift his father received – a hand carving of a hand holding an egg. “The explanation of it is that if you are too hard on your people you will crush them, and if you are too relaxed and not interested and you relax your hand, the egg falls,” Wilson told the delegation in the Manhyia Palace.

Tutu commended the Adventist Church in Ghana for its contribution in the areas of education and healthcare. “I have realized that there is a lot of [self-] discipline in the Adventist Church, and those in the church believe in its values and principles,” he said through an interpreter.

Wilson also inaugurated a nearby multi-cultural center, which was sponsored by the Adventist Church headquarters and the church’s South Central Ghana Conference. The center will offer skills training for church and community members in information technology, catering and sewing. It will also offer
training for evangelism and outreach.

On Saturday, November 10, Wilson joined some 30,000 worshipers at Baba Yara Stadium in Kumasi for a special Sabbath worship to honor his visit.

The next day, Wilson spoke at this year’s graduation ceremony at church-run Valley View University. He challenged the more than 500-member graduating class to have the biblical viewpoint of success.

“In whatever work God leads you, you should realize that success is dependent on your connection to Christ, which results in humble service to him and others,” he said.

Wilson also met with Alfred Oko Vanderpuije, the first Adventist mayor of Accra, Ghana’s capital.

There are some 375,000 members in the church’s Ghana Union Conference.

Wilson was accompanied on the trip by his wife Nancy and officers of the division. Wilson will also visit Liberia and Togo during his trip to the region.

Earlier last week, at the division Year-End Meeting, the Executive Committee voted to grant self-supporting conference status to 14 administrative units in Nigeria and one unit in Liberia. The moves highlight development of the church in those regions in terms of its finances and leadership.

ADRA part of earthquake relief in Guatemala

Abilio Cima (center back), treasurer of the Adventist Church in Guatemala, with six family members who lost loved ones during a recent earthquake. Surviving families were provided with funds to aid them with the deaths of their family members. [photo courtesy Guatemala Union]
The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Guatemala is mourning the loss of five of its members including a church elder after a 7.2-magnitude earthquake shook the western part of the country last week. The death toll now stands at 52, and more than 2,600 homes were destroyed.

Church leaders reported that six churches were destroyed, 15 members lost their homes and more than 100 members’ homes suffered damage.

“We are deeply saddened for the families who have lost their loved ones and some of our church leaders,” said Guenther Garcia, president of the church in Guatemala.

An eyewitness said that Juan Perez Lopez, head elder at the Tupox Adventist Church in Concepcion Chiquirichapa, in the Quetzaltenango province, was with his dad Guillermo collecting sand by their truck on the side of a mountain when the November 7 earthquake struck.

The resulting landslide buried Juan and his dad. Perez’s brother, Augusto, two other church members and several others tried to dig them out when an aftershock hit, causing another landslide that killed all of them, including the rescuers.

Abilio Cima, treasurer of the church in Guatemala, visited the families days later and took part in the memorial service in the Tupox Adventist Church. He said the church families have not lost hope.

Kevin Perez, 18, will provide and care for his four younger siblings now that he has lost his father and grandfather. “We are not alone, we have a great Adventist Church family, so it’s like God is with us giving us support and consoling us,” Kevin said.

The challenges of the church in Guatemala in the midst of this disaster are overwhelming, said Garcia.

“There are thousands of families living in shelters, hundreds of homes destroyed and thousands of people affected. Added to this are the freezing temperatures and they need food, warmth and a roof over their heads,” he said.
The Adventist Church’s Inter-American Division has released emergency funds to help provide food and blankets for the affected Adventist families, García said.

The National Commission for the Disaster Reduction (CONRED) reported that more than 1.2 million people have been affected by the earthquake, over 12,000 homes destroyed or damaged, some 18,700 people have been evacuated, and more than 6,200 are staying in 64 shelters. Adventist rescue teams assisted in the initial evaluation of damages.

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) in Guatemala has already begun to distribute emergency provisions to some 560 families with funds provided by ADRA International and ADRA Inter-America, said Gustavo Menéndez, ADRA Guatemala director.

In addition, ADRA Guatemala and the Adventist Church in the country launched a national campaign for collecting food items throughout some 900 Adventist temples across the country, Menéndez said.

The Guatemalan National Guard has joined in the efforts having delivered two truckloads of food supplies to ADRA that dozens of Adventist member volunteers have begun to distribute, Menéndez said.

The November 7 earthquake is the strongest to hit Guatemala since the 1976 quake, which killed more than 24,000 people.

To learn more of the earthquake response by ADRA and the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Guatemala, visit www.uniondeguatemala.org.

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Indian FM station airs historic first Adventist radio program

Nov. 15, 2012
Silver Spring, Maryland, United States
Shelley Nolan Freesland/ANN staff

An Indian FM station aired the country’s first Seventh-day Adventist radio program this week.

Produced by Adventist World Radio, the program was recorded in the Telugu language and aired in the city of Hyderabad in East Central India, where the language is widely spoken.

Previously, Indian listeners could only hear AWR programming in India through shortwave radio, on demand, and podcasts recorded in 13 languages spoken in the country.

The radio ministry arm of the church recently
signed a contract with a broadcast agency in India for an initial series of 11 Telugu programs. AWR officials said additional broadcasts in Hindi and English are planned for major cities such as Mumbai, Bangalore and Delhi.

Hyderabad is home to more than 9 million people. After China, India is the second most-populated country in the world.

“This is a very significant step to reach the large cities of India, which comes after two years of intensive work negotiating with related agencies and preparing the programs,” said AWR President Dowell Chow.

The Adventist Church is currently focusing on mission to cities, where half of the world’s population now lives. Mubai is one of dozens of major urban centers worldwide that the church has identified for concerted evangelism, beginning with New York City next year.

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