

Rationale in Part for the Amendment and Restatement of the Constitution and the Establishment of Bylaws

At present, our Conference has two main documents: “The Revised Constitution (1998)” and “Bylaws for the Local Churches (1998)”. It became apparent that we did not possess clear Bylaws that addressed the operation of the Conference as a whole. What did exist was that bylaw-like provisions were wrapped into the Constitution, hampering the adaptability and flexibility of the Conference in meeting change and progress.

The proposed amendment and restatement of the Constitution of the Conference effected changes that can be grouped into two categories. The first category of changes had its beginning in the conference restructure effort that started several years ago that, among other things, sought to introduce the concept of regions and a separate Conference administrative unit.

The second category of changes is focused on improving the governance structures of the Conference by removing bylaw-like provisions from the Constitution (1998) and adopting a set of bylaws for the Conference that would address these removed provisions.

Organizations customarily adopt a variety of governance structures to regulate the operation of the organization. These structures should be designed to facilitate the efficient and effective running of the organization to ensure the organization can best achieve the purpose for which it was formed.

Governance structures that contain ambiguous or otherwise unclear rules and regulations may result in:

- inconsistent action over time or by different parts of an organization,
- interpretations of these rules and regulations that are biased towards expediency or a particular person or group’s political aims or
- inaction.

Governance structures which are rigid or ambiguous may result in a culture in which rules and regulations—regardless of their design—are not consistently followed or enforced, undermining the integrity of the organization. Some of the Conference’s more fundamental governance structures are rigid and ambiguous.

The aim of the removal of the bylaw-like provisions from the Constitution and the adoption of separate bylaws of the Conference is to increase governance flexibility, clarify certain governance matters, and eliminate unnecessary rigidity and ambiguity to improve the effectiveness of the mission of the Conference.

With these changes, the revised Constitution will focus more on why the Conference exists and the overarching purpose of the Conference, which is an appropriate focus for a constitution. The new Bylaws will focus on addressing the operation and organization of the governing bodies of the Conference, which is the appropriate focus of bylaws.

In addition, to enhance the effective operation and organization of our local churches, a template for the drafting of local church bylaws will be provided upon the respective Board’s request.