

Constitution and Membership Committee 9-10 May 2016.

Cheryl Meban (Convenor), Gradye Parsons, Lydia Adajawah, Peter Borgdorff
Chris Ferguson (ex officio)
In attendance: Katrina Mertz

1. Membership Applications

- a. Congo CBFA – Baptist Reformed. Incomplete application, due to absence of letters of recommendation.
Recommendation: Affiliate membership status (Constitution V, d) as they deepen their understanding of our communion.
- b. Congo EBC – Awaiting further communication via Kobus Gerber.
Recommendation: Defer until further communication, and encourage Kobus to remain in communication on our behalf.
- c. India, ECA 2015 GS reported that, following our request for further information on their position regarding the ordination of women that we had confirmation of formal decision to affirm women’s ministry in 2015. The content of this information is not sufficiently clear.
Recommendation: GS continue to seek clarification on the theological and constitutional situation for ordination for women and women’s roles as officers, elders or deaconesses.
- d. Mozambique, IRM – GS reports that this has been difficult to follow up. There are no recommendation letters as yet.
Recommendation: Request Kobus to continue to follow up.
- e. Incomplete Applications -
Pakistan, ECHD – Ecumenical NGO in character. **Recommendation: GS to explore the possibilities for affiliate membership and to complete application.**
Recommendation : Constitution and Membership committee should consider clearer constitutional categories for affiliate and associate membership.
- f. Malawi DWCC– Application is not yet complete. **Action: Await further documents.**
- g. Mali – **Action: Lydia Adajawah continue to follow up and liaise with office**
- h. Togo – Lydia Adajawah visited **Reformed Church of Assemblies of God in Togo**. 150 people in chapel, including about 30 children. Broken away from Assemblies of God. 5 other branches scattered, 11 ministers, 3 trained by Assemblies of God, others trained by main leader, Rev. Kapora Tena. No women’s ordination, but two women in church council. Not yet ready for membership of WCRC.

Recommendation: that Excom thank Lydia Adajawah for the considerable investment of time, energy and personal risk that she undertook to investigate this church.

Further Proposed Recommendation: that CMC be mindful of potential risks involved in personal visits to as yet unknown churches. Such visits should be avoided or carefully planned in consultation with colleagues.

i. Other Applications GS following up on other applications.

2. Constitutional Revisions – See separate Proposed Constitutional Revisions Document

In the last six years it has become clear that certain provisions of the Constitution were unclear, inadequate for our needs or not fit for purpose. In order to equip future executive committees, officers and staff of WCRC, we propose to ask General Council when it meets to agree a number of constitutional improvements. We are mindful that the Council's main role is to build and experience Communion, and we do not want the Council to become bogged down in institutional details. Therefore any constitutional amendments agreed by excom, we hope to present to member churches in advance of General Council as constructively as possible.

Questions for Dialogue Groups:

Are there constitution and bylaw changes that we should simply avoid, as unnecessary/unhelpful?

Are there explanations and methods that will assist in presenting the task in order to be constructive of communion?

3. Membership status, defaults, reconnections etc. – no data to report.

4. Nominations Task Group – See separate document.