

## SECOND BUSINESS MEETING

*Sixty-First General Conference Session, June 6, 2022, 2:00 p.m.*

[Opening Prayer by Traci Oms]

ELLA S SIMMONS: Amen. Thank you, Traci. Well, we have a pretty good size showing here in the house this afternoon, after an extra-long morning session. There are a couple of items of business we're going to repeat, one coming from our parliamentarian and then I will have an announcement pertaining to the movement of the Nominating Committee. Todd, would you share your item of business?

TODD MCFARLAND: Sure. If there are any division technical staff here, please meet over to my right, your left. The GC technical personnel would like to meet with you briefly. So again, any division technical staff, please meet to your left, just over here by the space where you came in. Thank you very much.

ELLA S SIMMONS: We trust that the members of the Nominating Committee are here on the floor, and that is because the Nominating Committee is to remain here in place until after we complete the items pertaining to the unions, and there will be several items for those unions that were voted earlier this morning. Following that, there will be one item for the dissolution of one entity. After that I will make the announcement again so that you can make your way to the place where you are to be. So, all Nominating Committee members please remain as we go forward.

We had a lively discussion this morning. We had an exceptional report and address from President Wilson, and we even had discussions on how we do our business. And so, this is always helpful, always. In this afternoon's session of course we're going to be following the same *Rules of Order*. Our parliamentarian will keep us on track if we are astray, and we even have other attorneys who will help us do the same. So let us be mindful of the agenda items of the topic at hand. And when you come to a microphone, please be prepared to speak to that item that is on the floor. We will do our very

best to allow ample time for those who are online on Zoom to make their intentions known. I have spent the last two years on Zoom. So, I know what it feels like, and I know sometimes electronic devices lag just a little behind our expression of intent. So, we will do our best. We trust also that the technical issues have been resolved so that everyone will be able to use their electronic devices and ElectionBuddy this afternoon. So let us pray to that end. You continue praying where you are seated. This is what we need for the afternoon to move smoothly. We would like to celebrate the admission of new unions to the Church structure. I'm going to turn to Pastor Mooroooven, Brother Hensley, if your team is ready, please begin this segment.

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I'm still waiting for my three union presidents to join me, but we will proceed. Madam Chair, as you rightly said, this morning we officially had recognized and accepted in our midst these new babies, can we call them as such?

And now in the afternoon, we are going to welcome them, to acknowledge them, and this is what I'm planning to do now. So, I'll share a few words about the unions that were reorganized during this quinquennium. Let me take you, Madam Chair, I have five minutes to take you on an 18-hour flight to Zimbabwe. Can you do that in five minutes? So, you had better fasten your seat belt because it will be a very quick trip. And if you are on Zoom you will also be able to travel with me but by Zoom airlines. Are you ready?

We are now in Zimbabwe. Before 2018, I would even say 2018 B.C., but B.C. here means before COVID, when we used to travel a lot by plane. So, 2018 B.C. Zimbabwe was one country and one union. And we had 865,000 members in that one union. That made it—are you listening to me?—that made this union the second largest union in the world. But because we were experiencing growth in membership, in stewardship, and in leadership, we saw it wise to reorganize the territory.

We are now going to share with you how this one union was reorganized into three. You can see the three unions there, and I will see one president who is with me. It would be good if you joined me

whilst waiting for the others to come. Now, are you still with me? Zimbabwe was one union and then we reorganized it into three entities, and I can tell you, because it was born in 2018, these triplets, even though they were not born during COVID, they have experienced the challenges of COVID. And they had their lion's share of challenges when it comes to stewardship, right? But when we look back, we can acknowledge how God has led. Now we have the Central Zimbabwe Union Conference. The second entity is the West Zimbabwe Union Conference? And the third entity is the East Zimbabwe Union Conference. Now, my pastor, you are here representing which entity? Let us know, please, Pastor Musara.

GODFREY MUSARA: Zimbabwe East Union Conference.

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: Do we have the delegates from Zimbabwe East, please stand. We'd like to see you, and can we give them a round of applause. Thank you. We will continue, and we will see the other union that is present, and unfortunately, the two union presidents are not here with us. So, these are the three unions that now exist. We have witnessed growth in membership still, and growth also in stewardship in spite of the challenges. Thank you very much.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Excellent. We are thrilled to welcome them. Now, are we going from Zimbabwe to Belize? Is that our destination?

GERSON SANTOS: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's my privilege this afternoon to introduce to you the Belize Union Mission, and as you can see from the data, we have close to half a million people living in that beautiful country which is located in the Caribbean. We have 49,000 members, which gives us more than 10 percent of the population of that beautiful country, that are Seventh-day Adventists. Isn't that amazing? Praise the Lord for that. We have today 138 congregations. Last Session this entity existed as a Union of Churches, and now they are becoming a Union Mission with three local fields. So please watch this video and we will know a little bit better this beautiful country of Belize. And as you watch, I

want to introduce to you pastor Dennis Slusher. He is the president of the Belize Union, please give him a warm welcome.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Is his delegation here, Pastor Santos?

GERSON SANTOS: Yes, they are. It's a small delegation, but they should be sitting there. Where is the delegation from the Belize union? They are over there. Let's greet them. It's three delegates including the union president.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Yes.

GERSON SANTOS: Let's watch the video, please.

[A video was shown.]

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you, Pastor Santos. Now are you going to take us to Northern Ghana?

GERSON SANTOS: Yes, Madam Chair. This is the beautiful country of Ghana. An interesting thing to know is that's where the Seventh-day Adventist message arrived in that territory over a hundred years ago. Pastor Kwame, please, come forward. This is Pastor Kwame. He's the Northern Ghana Union president, and he is representing more than 200,000 members, 202,752 members. Isn't that amazing? So, praise the Lord for that. They have more than 21,000 congregations and ten local fields. We want to see your delegation, Pastor Kwame. Can they stand, please? I believe you have about 20. Can you stand? Twenty delegates from Northern Ghana Union. Thank you. Thanks for coming. Thank you, Pastor Kwame. And let's watch a video so you can know a little bit better about the history of the Church in that territory and how the Church is organized for service there. Thank you.

[A video was shown.]

ELLA S SIMMONS: Ah, exciting. Now, if you are following along on the agenda, you know that we have just completed items 111, 112, and 113. As we prepare to go to item 114 with Pastor Claude Richli, taking us to the Netherlands, I want to remind the members of the Nominating Committee that you are to remain here with the body until the conclusion of these items pertaining to the unions. So

please stay with us, and then I will have an announcement that will help guide you when you leave.

Pastor Richli, we're ready for you.

CLAUDE RICHLI: Madam Chair, you may remember that on October 6, 2016, at the Annual Council of the General Conference, we voted a change of status for the Netherlands Union Conference. For many years the Union had been operating as a Union of Conferences but without having actual conferences functioning within its territory. The need was therefore felt that a Commission be set up to inquire as to whether it was feasible to restart conferences, or whether we should bring the Union into compliance by setting it up as a Union of Churches. A survey commission visited the Netherlands in September 2016, and found much to commend, among other things, its multiple initiatives in church planting and methodologies that correspond to its various constituencies in a very difficult secular environment, and an above-average growth rate in the region, particularly considering all the challenges of that environment. The survey commission also found its initiative to make the Union more responsive to the needs of the churches and more effective in connecting with its membership of over 6,000 members. Its status can be reviewed in the future with a view towards granting Union Conference status with the corresponding approval for the formation of conferences. But, meanwhile, the General Conference Executive Committee voted to grant Union of Churches Conference status to the Netherlands Union Conference in the Trans-European Division, effective May 2017. And this will replace the current Netherlands Union Conference and its constituent entities. The statutes have been changed to reflect that reality, and I am told by its president, Robert De Raad, that the new status has enabled it to improve its standing also among other things financially, but also in continuing on the growth curve as shown previously. And therefore, I would like to congratulate Pastor Robert De Raad in his new status, as well as greet the four delegates from the Netherlands. Two who represent the field itself, and two who are part of the Trans-European Division delegation. Thank you.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Amen. That was item 114. Now, Pastor Richli, looks like you are going to now take us to Malaysia for item 115.

CLAUDE RICHLI: Indeed. This is a very interesting story. The Southeast Asia Union Mission (SAUM) used to have its headquarters in Singapore. An extraordinary city which ranks among one of the wealthiest cities in the world. For some time now, the question had been asked, should the church headquarters move to another location with a lower cost of living? At the 2016 year-end Executive Committee of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division, an action was taken to start a Feasibility Study Commission to visit and carefully analyze the territory of SAUM and to make recommendations to the Southern Asia-Pacific Division Midyear Committee of 2017. The commission would recommend the best strategies for strengthening and building the mission and evangelism in this territory. Part of its preamble is the fact that its union territory covers 222 million people in seven different countries, 669 people groups who speak 503 distinct languages, and includes most of the major world religions that are represented within its territory.

Therefore, the Feasibility Study Committee met in Bangkok in October 2017 and made the recommendation to move the headquarters and the personnel to Thailand and to use “some of the savings to create at least a couple of leadership positions to grow the Indo-China leadership and give more emphasis to the needs of the Buddhist majority countries.” However, this did not entirely solve the problem posed by the fact that the region encompasses three very different cultures. One is dominated by secularism, as in Singapore. Another one by Buddhism, and a third one by Islam. Moving the headquarters would save some money, but the issue of focus and of cultural challenge was not being properly addressed. And so, the idea was floated that perhaps the Church does not need relocation, but reorganization. And that idea slowly matured in the course of 2018 and 2019 to the point where in July 2019, another meeting of the commission was held in Bangkok. This time it determined that by moving out of Singapore, it could operate two unions for the price of one and have more

resources available for a more focused mission in its territory. One union would be located in Thailand and the other one in Malaysia. And so, over the course of time, assets were peacefully divided up between these entities in the year 2021. A new headquarters was built in Muak Lek, Thailand close to our university, Asia-Pacific International University (formerly known as Mission College). And a spacious building was purchased in the greater region of Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia, to host the Malaysia Union Mission. To that end, the Southeast Asia Union Mission was dissolved at the end of 2021 and in its place, we now have the Southeastern Asia Union Mission covering the territories of Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand with four mission fields, 82 churches, 289 companies, and 36,582 members.

The Malaysian Union Mission, covering peninsular Malaysia and the island of Sarawak and Sabah, plus the Sultanate of Brunei. This new union has three mission fields, 304 churches, 155 companies and 60,579 members. This transition has been a lengthy transition covering a full five years, but it ended in a good and happy place. I am therefore pleased to congratulate Pastor Somchai Chuenjit, former president of the Southeast Asia Union Mission and new president of the Southeastern Asia Union Mission, and pastor Abel Bana, former executive secretary of the Southeast Asia Union Mission and now the new president of the Malaysia Union Mission. Gentlemen, congratulations, and let us see the delegation that you have brought with you. Welcome.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Excellent. Thank you, Pastor Richli. Now we will move on. And we're going to Sister Karen Porter, who will take us to Eastern Ethiopia. Elder, what do you have for us?

KAREN J PORTER: We're going to go to Ethiopia, and the reason that we are talking today, Madam Chair, is because of mission. Effective November 17, 2019, the Ethiopian Union has reorganized into the Eastern Ethiopia Union Mission and the Western Ethiopia Union Mission. The rationale for this is threefold. Ethiopia has 110 million population with cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversities. Second reason, 139 out of the total 174 people groups are unreached. This leaves a huge opportunity for

outreach. And the third reason. The vastness of the territory with a lack of proper infrastructure in many regions of the country. So, the proposed fields are as shown. The Eastern Ethiopia Union Mission headquarters is in Addis Ababa. It has six fields, 599 churches, 369 companies, 112,066 members. The officers are as shown on the screen. The Western Ethiopia Union Mission headquarters is in Nekemte. It has four fields, 471 churches, 94 companies, and 114,089 members. The officers of the Western Ethiopia Union are shown on the screen. I would like to introduce to you, Madam Chair, and to our delegates, Pastor Negash Petros, who is the secretary of the Eastern Ethiopian Union and Pastor Geremu Biru Daka, the president of the Western Ethiopia Union Mission. Please, gentlemen, come. And we would like to see the delegations. So, shall we do them together or separate?

ELLA S SIMMONS: Why don't we see them separately?

KAREN J PORTER: Would the Eastern Ethiopia Union delegates please stand. Here they are. And then the Western Ethiopia Union delegates, please stand. So, Madam Chair, this brings us to the end of the ten new unions that we have presented today. We want to embrace these ten reorganized unions, as part of the sisterhood of churches.

ELLA S SIMMONS: While you're at the microphone, why don't we have everyone stand just to stretch and express our appreciation of welcome once more, and will you offer a brief prayer as we celebrate their entry.

[Prayer by Karen J Porter].

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you to the team from Secretariat who has presented these entities. Now we're going to switch gears just a little, this item, number 117, still pertains to union status. But we're going in another direction. Before we do that, I want to just take a moment again to remind you of the sacred trust that you hold in your hand, that is your vote. It is important that you participate. Some may think, "Oh, my one vote will not matter. It will not count." Every vote counts. I think we heard some of that discussion this morning when you were unable to cast your vote. So, I will trust that each one will



have the capacity and will have the technology that is working properly so that you can cast your votes on this next item that is coming up. So, please have your devices ready. This will not be a lengthy item. We trust that there will not be a lot of discussion. However, if there is discussion on this item, I want to remind you of the two-to-three-minute allocation of time that was structured into the process this morning. It appeared to work for each one, even for those who were getting translation, and we're careful to watch out for translation because some languages require a little more time than others. But so far, so good. So, in this afternoon's session we're going to stick to that two-to-three-minute allocation of time for speeches, if you desire to speak. Please do not feel that this means you must speak, right? Only if there is a need. So, with this we are going to move in that direction, and I believe Sister Karen, you have an item for the Trans-Caucasus Union of Churches Mission. I'll allow you to introduce that and lead us in the direction.

KAREN J PORTER: Thank you, Madam Chair. All of our eyes have been turned towards the Euro-Asia Division in these last months. We're not going to talk about Ukraine today, but we are going to talk about the Trans-Caucasus Union of Churches Mission. If you're familiar with that territory, you know that it is a very challenging area in the Division. This comprises three countries—Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. The Euro-Asia Division officers and team are committed to developing the pastoral and administrative resources of these countries. To give this territory the special attention that it needs, the Euro-Asia Division has attached Georgia and Armenia directly to the division as fields. They are known as the Georgia Field and the Armenia Field. Azerbaijan has already been added to the Caucus Union Mission. So, Madam Chair, I move that we recognize and record the dissolution of the former Trans-Caucasus Union of Churches Mission in the Euro-Asian Division, effective January 1, 2021.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay, we have the motion before us and I heard the support, the second. All right. We'll give a moment. Are there questions or comments pertaining to this item? We see no one at the microphones. No one at the stations. So, we're going to move right to the question. You will need to

get your devices out. The motion is to recognize and record the dissolution of the former Trans-Caucasus Union of Churches Mission in the Euro-Asia Division, effective January 1, 2021. The Division has reorganized the territory. So, you are voting “yes” if you are in favor of what you see here, “no” if you are against it. So, let's go for everyone voting.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Excellent. This is the last item that pertains to the union structures. So, I'm going to ask the members of the Nominating Committee to prepare to leave after we receive the results of this vote.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Nominating Committee, you will be going to room 130, 1-3-0. And I believe Magdiel Perez Schulz will be stationed somewhere to assist you if you're having difficulty. So, we pray God's blessings on your work this afternoon and going forward.

ELLA S SIMMONS: We are ready. Okay. It looks like this item is carried by an overwhelming majority, 99.6 percent. That is 1,626 voting in favor and only seven votes “no.” So, we thank you. That carries, and this one is done as well. I trust that the people who are moving out are actually all Nominating Committee members. We don't want anyone going out for a snack or a siesta. We need you for this business. And thank you Sister Karen. With this, we are moving to another section of the agenda. And with this transition, I simply want to remind you that it is at the General Conference Session that we make changes to the Church's Constitution and Bylaws and to the *Church Manual*. But I don't think anyone should think that Hensley Mooroven sits in his home at night and just writes up something and brings it in. That is not what happens, is it?

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: Not ever.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Not ever. There is a lengthy process through which each item must pass for preparation, presentation, structure, restructure, analysis, and reconstruction, and then there will be a chain of votes that take place in various entities along the way. This involves many people in this process. So, when you see the item that comes here crisp and clean and can be presented in just a

moment, just know that it represents days, weeks, months, years of preparation on the part of many people. So, I believe with that understanding, we are ready to receive these recommendations that will be presented, and then, of course, there will be a motion. And then you will vote. So, I'm simply going to turn this over to Secretariat, our undersecretary, Hensley Mooroooven, will you lead us through item by item? You will know where we need to break for an action. Okay?

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Since this morning you have heard more than once that only at Session can we amend the Constitution and Bylaws, the *Church Manual*, and the Fundamental Beliefs. This afternoon my colleague, Pastor Gerson Santos and myself, will begin this marathon with you. I will be presenting the recommendations on amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws. This afternoon, we would like to start the process of sharing with you the amendments to the *Church Manual*.

Now, before I even begin with the recommendations that came from Annual Council to the floor here, I just want all of us to understand what role these policies, processes, and protocols play in the administration of our church. So, as an introduction to this marathon that will deal with Constitution and Bylaws items, I would need your attention, because I would like to share with you how I see mission.

I see mission as a coin with two faces. On one side of the coin, I call it the missionary face of mission. What I mean here, Madam Chair, is this is where we preach, this is where a local church's elder gives Bible studies. This is where a local church pastor preaches the Word of God powerfully. This is where Hope Channel, AWR, and all the ministries of our church are involved in preaching the Word. That's the missionary face of mission. They preach the Word so that even if we are sleeping, the Three Angels' messages are still preached, because they're on the radio, they are on Hope Channel and the other channels that we have. So that's the missionary face of mission. Are we together?

ELLA S SIMMONS: We are together.

HENSLEY MOOROOVEN: Wonderful. Let's flip the coin. When you flip the coin, you will have the administrative face, the organizational face. This is where we deal with policies, protocols, processes, and systems. They are not just mere administrative matters; they are not just sheer policies and constitutions and bylaws. This is the other side of the same coin that deals with mission. Are you with me? So, when you hear me talk about policies and procedures and commas and semicolons, please don't think they are dry, cold, boring policies. If they were dry, cold, and boring policies, I don't think I would be involved in them, Madam Chair. For me, when we are writing policies, we are ensuring that we are giving—this is the other side. This is the other face of mission. Policies, processes, protocols, systems, Constitution and Bylaws are all here to facilitate mission. They are here to serve mission. They are not here to complicate mission but to facilitate mission. So, each time I come to you and present an item that relates to Constitution and Bylaws or is policy-related, just remember that I'm presenting to you the other face of mission. Because I believe, esteemed delegates, that our Church can be the best run organization and our pursuit of excellence is simply because that's the nature of everything that God does, am I right? So, this is what I want to share with you. The two sides.

Now, you will often hear that I allude to Constitution and Bylaws, but what are Constitution and Bylaws? I want us to have this clarified because you will hear from me often on these matters. I will use an analogy taken from the building of a house. Obviously, I will not ever, ever pretend that I'm a builder, right? But my analogy will be taken from a house. So, let me take you to the Constitution. I see the constitution as the framework of the house, right? We are building a house together. The constitutions, they are the framework, the structure of the house. If you are building a roof, this will be the structure, the framework. That's the constitution. This is where we talk of the name of that organization, we talk about the purpose of this organization, we talk about the territory of this organization, we talk about session. How would this organization convene a session? Do you see, that's the structure, and you will talk about the executive committee of that organization. So, literally, we are talking about the structure

of the organization, and if I were to remain in my metaphor of the house, the bylaws are the drywalls. Now that you have the structure, you can start building. So, the constitution, that's the structure, the framework. The bylaws will be the drywall. I think, Madam Chair, we should be ready to delve into these policies, these items from Constitution and Bylaws. With the help of my Sister Sherri here, we will show you exactly where you can find it in your agenda packet. We want you to understand every single item of business that we will vote for when it comes to the Constitution and Bylaws.

So, let me take you to what the constitution, our governing document, says about itself. The Constitution or its Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the delegates present and voting at any Session. So, that's what our governing document says about where and how amendments can be made to the Constitution and Bylaws of the General Conference. Now, I want you, esteemed delegates, each time you listen to me presenting on Constitution and Bylaws, I want you to wear the glasses of mission. I want you to see these documents, these policies, these Constitution and Bylaws through the lenses of mission. Why? Because remember, that's the second, that's the other side of the missionary coin. That's the administrative side. So, when I speak to you about the Constitution and Bylaws, always wear your mission lenses. Read these items with mission in mind, because when I am involved in dealing with them, that's what I do. My office deals with policies, Constitution and Bylaws, always with mission in mind. How can this facilitate mission? How can they be a vehicle that takes mission from point A to point B? This is how my office does mission.

So, friends, I think now we are ready. I will rely on my Sister Sherri Ingram-Hudgins. She will play an important role in helping me ensure that you understand everything that I am planning to share with you. So, on your screen now you should have the agenda of our Constitution and Bylaws. I told you already ahead of time that my colleague, Pastor Gerson Santos, will deal with *Church Manual* items. Now, let's go to item number one on the agenda. In this instance, it is item 201. Let me take a few seconds, Madam Chair, because you have alluded to this. I am not planning to reveal to you all the

secrets of Secretariat. In other words, secretariat has the word “secret” in it, right? When you have a secret, you need to know when to reveal the secret, right? So, Secretariat deals with secrets. Now, let me reveal to you a little secret of Secretariat. If you look on top, you will find the routing line. You remember Madam Chair telling us, “Oh, this is not something that Hensley just wrote, you know, out of thin air.” No. It tells you all the committees this item has gone to. So, this item has gone to Secretariat, to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, it has gone to ADCOM, it has gone to GCDO, it has gone to Annual Council, it has gone through all these committees and today we are now bringing these recommendations to you because this is the highest body with the highest authority that we have in the structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. So, this one is a recommendation coming from the Annual Council, right? Now, with all this, I'm sure you are ready to receive all these recommendations. And I see some of them already from here that you are diligently following what my Sister is sharing with you on the screen. So let me take the first item.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Pastor, just as you begin, I just want to draw attention to the fact that we are going to take three items in this cluster so that everyone will follow, and you can decide how you would like to take questions, if there are any.

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: Of course. Remember this morning we said that your responsibility is to be informed, to read, to listen, to ask questions. You are perfectly right. We will work with what Madam Chair has said. I will present these three items because they are mostly editorial in nature, but remember these are not just mere editorial items. They bring clarity for the sake of bringing stability, so that the Church can be involved in mission.

Now, what is the first editorial recommendation that we are bringing to the floor? You can read on line 18 that we needed to include here, just for the sake of being abundantly clear, which executive committee we are referring to. So, this editorial amendment clarifies that the General Conference Executive Committee is the body that approves recommendations from divisions regarding their

representation on the Committee. So, here it does not say which executive committee does approve the recommendations? So, just to be sure that we are on the same wavelength, we are recommending the inclusion here of "General Conference" so that it is clear for all of us that we have no other body in mind than the General Conference Executive Committee. That's the first item that we want to bring to your attention. Is it the pleasure of the Chair for me to move to the second one, because one, two and three are editorial in nature. Is it your pleasure, Madam Chair?

ELLA S SIMMONS: Yes, it is. Please move.

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: Let's go to the second item of business. This editorial amendment seeks to alphabetize the names of the departments. If you scroll down a little bit again, you will see something. So, this department was Trust Services before. What was the name? Trust Services. Because we put things in an orderly way, we abide by the alphabetical order by department. So, it was T for Trust Services. But later on, it became Planned Giving and Trust Services. So, all of a sudden it does not follow the T anymore but the P. So, in order to bring clarity and harmony in our governing document, we are bringing a recommendation to change the placement of the department because now it has a new name, Planned Giving and Trust Services. I have moved the first one. I am moving the second one.

And this brings me to the third editorial item for this first section that we have lumped together because they have the same nature. What we are doing here in our governing document, we use the terminology of "telephone conference." That's what is alluded to in the document, to conduct a meeting with telephone conference. But you know that nowadays we have more than just telephones. So, we are seeking permission from the body to ensure that we can amend the GC Constitution and Bylaws where appropriate to delete "telephone conference" and replace it with "electronic conference" so that we have more room to operate, it does not have to be telephone. It can be Zoom, it can be other electronic means for us to conduct business. I have moved this third item and this brings me to the end of this editorial point. Thank you, Madam Chair.

ELLA S SIMMONS: All right. We have the motion on these editorial items. Do we have support from the floor? We see the support and hear. So, we take that for all three. At this time, Pastor Mooroven is standing prepared to answer any questions for clarity, if we need any of those. Okay. We're scanning, and Brother Hensley, I do not see anyone at the microphone. You have done an excellent job of explaining, and everyone has done homework. So, we know we are ready. With that, all right, Brother Todd, will you take us to the vote?

TODD MCFARLAND: Madam Chair, this will come as a single ballot to vote all three of these items. It should be opened up here momentarily. We'll have the standard three minutes for people to vote. It is open now so individuals should feel free to start voting.

ELLA S SIMMONS: You are voting "yes" if you agree to amend the following General Conference Constitution and Bylaws items as found in the Session agenda 201, 202, and 203. We are moving through how we are starting, Brother Todd.

TODD MCFARLAND: We had a timer but it disappeared. So, if the technical people could put that timer back up and they were supposed to start that originally when I said open but we're working out the details.

ELLA S SIMMONS: They were being polite to me because they knew I was trying to read item number three, so thank you.

TODD MCFARLAND: So, Madam Chair, the good news is that over 1,000 people have already voted. So, we'll give them a little bit more time.

ELLA S SIMMONS: We cannot top our previous number because so many left with the Nominating Committee, but we know more people can vote.

TODD MCFARLAND: Well, people seem to be getting the hang of it, Madam Chair. We're already up to 1,200.



ELLE S SIMMONS: Wonderful, and everyone is voting. We are just under two minutes. Do not doze off. There will be three minutes for all the votes to come in. That seems like an eternity when you're sitting here waiting and just looking into the faces.

TODD MCFARLAND: I can tell you, Madam Chair, we are up to 1,431.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Moving right along with just over one minute remaining. Giving everyone an opportunity, including those online, those on Zoom.

TODD MCFARLAND: Just a reminder, please hit the submit button and of course if you're having problems and are attending in person, go to your division IT people. If you're online go to the site: [thevote.gc.admist.org](http://thevote.gc.admist.org). So, plenty of opportunity there. And Madam Chair, we have broken 1,500.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Excellent, you did it! I know, we had a few more at the end of that one but 1,500 was our threshold. We're down to just under 30 seconds. How many more in the queue?

TODD MCFARLAND: Madame Chair, there are 65 people still voting. They should be able to do that in about 15 seconds.

ELLA S SIMMONS: We are at the mark.

TODD MCFARLAND: All right, Madam Chair, we are at 1,551 ballots. I think we're probably going to close. All right, Madam Chair, the ballot is being closed as we speak and will be displayed as soon as it is available.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Here we see it—98.9 percent, that's 1,544 voting "yes" to this motion, which includes all three items and only 17 voting "no." So, these items carry. Thank you very much. And we need to move right on to agenda items 204 and 205. Is that correct, Pastor?

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: Yes, it is. We intentionally began with some starters, right? So, we knew that I would be speaking just after lunch and that you just needed some appetizers because it's difficult to speak to people who have just eaten. You know why, Madam Chair? Because they would say yes to questions that you don't even ask, you know. So, it's difficult to keep an audience saying "yes" to

questions you don't even ask them to keep them awake. That's why we started with literally the starters, the appetizers. But we will go to what the French call the plat de résistance, the main course. So, we don't want anyone to sleep here. Are your mission glasses still on? You need to have them on, then you will understand why we do policies, processes, and protocols the way we do them. So, Madam Chair, I think the body is ready and my Sister Sherri is also ready. So, we can go to this item of business. It is number 4 on your agenda list, but do not be bothered with your agenda list, because what you have on the screen is exactly what is there, and we want you to see everything. We're not hiding anything and sharing everything because we want you to know how your Church is run.

Now, let's go to this. What are we doing here, Madam Chair? This amendment seeks to reflect that, in an effort, to be consistent with other world divisions, the secretary of the North American Division will no longer be an associate secretary of the General Conference. I think this is self-explanatory. Until now the secretary of the North American Division, that's historical, and the treasurer, the CFO of the North American Division, by virtue of their function, they are also an associate secretary of the General Conference and an associate treasurer of the General Conference respectively. This recommendation seeks to bring consistency with other divisions because secretaries and CFOs or treasurers of the other 12 divisions are not associates of the GC. I have moved that one, Madam Chair.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you. And I do believe I hear support, as we move forward with that item. Thank you. On to the next that will be clustered with it, correct?

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: There's two, the first one that I just spoke about, and the next one will be lumped together. What are we seeking to do in the second item to be amended? What are we doing here before? We used to call them inter-division employees. You will hear this a lot when you serve in Secretariat, and that's a free plug, when tomorrow you will hear the Secretary's Report, you will hear a lot about missionaries and ISEs. Again, we are on item 205 in your agenda.

ELLA S SIMMONS: We are 204 and then 205 pertaining to General Conference Undertreasurer and Associate Treasurers, Constitution and Bylaws amendment? If we need to leave this one, we can, but I think you have it there. Yes.

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: So, we have just talked about the secretary of the North American Division. We have deleted that section on line 26 and 27. Now, what are we doing when it comes to the International Service Employees? What we have done. So somewhere in November 2015, we changed the nomenclature, the terminology from Inter-Division Employees to International Service Employees. We now call them instead of IDE, ISE. So, this recommendation seeks to harmonize our Working Policy that already talks about ISE with our governing document which is the Constitution and Bylaws so that both documents can allude to ISE. This is the second one that we have lumped together. I have moved this one, Madam Chair.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you, and there is support. All right. We have two items in one cluster before us. We have the motions and support, and now we have two waiting to speak. Flaviano Dalisay from the Southeastern California Conference in the North American Division, the time is yours, do you have a question on either one of the two items that we're on right now?

FLAVIANO DALISAY: I would like to request clarification or further clarification into the rationale of these amendments. Number one, what does it mean in the effort to be consistent versus what would be conceived as equally fair or just. Number two, by replacing the name of Inter-Division Employees with International Service Employees, it would seem that employees within the US territory will also be considered international employees. Lastly, with the deletions of lines 26, 27, it would seem that we prefer to exclude the secretary of any division, not only the North American Division, from the role and responsibilities of an associate secretary of the General Conference. In a sense of inclusiveness, shared goal, unity, and spiritual mentality of one purpose and direction. Thank you.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you very much. We're going to turn to Secretariat, particularly to Pastor Mooroven to respond to you. There is a very good reason. I've actually participated in some of the discussions. As I said, that long trail leading up to these, these items have been carefully prepared and rigorously tested. So, as Pastor Mooroven prepares to respond, we are ready. Okay.

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: Thank you very much, and I appreciate your question, brother. When we talk about in an effort to be consistent, we are just explaining what it means, that is, the 12 other divisions do not have their secretary serve as an associate secretary of the General Conference. Historically this was done because we were in the same building, but now as I explain and as it is written here, we want to be consistent with other divisions. That's my first answer to the first question.

ELLA S SIMMONS: You are saying that this action actually does exactly what the speaker was requesting—it brings everyone on the equal level playing field because North American Division was outside the protocol structure in which all other divisions participated, for those reasons that you mentioned, but now it brings everyone into line. That is what you are saying?

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: Indeed. Thank you for summarizing what I said so clearly.

ELLA S SIMMONS: You are going to mention something else to the second portion of his comment, and then we will go to the next speaker.

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: Yes. The second question is why are we removing Interdivision Employees and replacing it with International Service Employees? We have some experts here, and if my Sister Karen Porter would like to complement my response, she's free to do that. But if she decides not to do so, I will remain with my part of the answer. This is very technical as well. When someone serves from one division to another division—for example, I am from the SID, and I'm currently serving in the NAD. I am an interdivision employee. Is that clear? Now, this was causing some issues when, for example, in one continent you had three divisions and they were becoming like intradivision employees;

so, it was causing some confusion, and that is why the terminology International Service Employee, we believe, was clearer to differentiate between people serving intradivision, in a division, who are serving outside a division. So, for us the term International Service Employee is better to convey this idea. That's what the answer is. And I see my colleague giving a nod of approval to what I have just said.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you very much. With that then we're going to go to microphone number 2, to Gizelle Lou Cabahug, North Philippine Union Conference (SSD).

GIZELLE LOU CABAUG: Thank you, Madam Chair. I would just like to inquire where we can refer or see the entire Constitution and Bylaws so we can better appreciate these amendments in the light of the Constitution and Bylaws in their entirety.

ELLA S SIMMONS: You want to see these items in context, within the entire Constitution?

GIZELLE LOU CABAUG: Correct. Thank you.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Pastor?

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: Yes. We have the Constitution and Bylaws and they are part of the thick *GC Working Policy*. So, my Sister, when you open the first portions of the *Working Policy* book, the first lines, you have access to the Constitution and Bylaws of the General Conference as they stand excluding these amendments as they have not yet been voted.

GIZELLE LOU CABAUG: I would like access to the Constitution and Bylaws excluding the *Working Policy*, perhaps even in pdf format.

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: Unfortunately, at this stage your comment will bring us to a new era. Maybe we will have these documents separately the way I have done it for me, you know, and then we can share it with the delegates. This point was well received and well taken.

GIZELLE LOU CABAUG: Thank you.

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: I promise you we will think about it. Thank you for that suggestion.

ELLA S SIMMONS: One other question which would align with this one. Can the delegates find the Constitution online anywhere at the GC website?

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: Yes. It is available online, however, we don't distribute it to everybody, but if you need it, let's see if we can pull it up. We would not expect you to be voting on something that you don't understand. Is there a way for you to show to our esteemed delegates a place where they could access the Working Policy of the GC and including the Constitution and Bylaws? Is there a way to do that? Sorry, I did not prepare you for that, but based on the question that we have received, thank you. We would like to share. Tami?

TAMI BOWARD: The Constitution and Bylaws are available on our Secretariat website: [secretariat.adventist.org](http://secretariat.adventist.org) under resources.

ELLA S SIMMONS: I believe this does answer the question, and Sister Gizelle has brought up an important point.

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: Here you go. The website again is [secretariat.adventist.org](http://secretariat.adventist.org). We go under the resources. You click there, and you can have access to the Constitution and Bylaws, the *Working Policy*, everything that we have in this big, black book here.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Everything of the Constitution that we have in that big black book, right? We don't publish the working policies. Okay. Thank you very much. We need to go to microphone number 7, David Trim, General Conference, ASTR.

DAVID TRIM: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to help Sister Gizelle and my esteemed colleague, Hensley, the Constitution and Bylaws are also made available in the *Yearbook*. So, if anyone has access to the *Yearbook*, they have the Constitution and Bylaws without all the *Working Policy*.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Excellent. Thank you so much, Dr. Trim. And let us now move to microphone number 5, Jonathan Fetrick, Wisconsin Conference in the North American Division.

JONATHAN FETRICK: Yes, I'd like to speak to the issue of interdivision versus international. I believe that we should vote what is put before us because it clarifies some issues but that in the future you might want to look at the issues created by "international" as international implies a nation and that creates a new set of issues.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Understand. Thank you very much. And we will certainly take that under advisement. We appreciate that. That's why we come together. Again, microphone number 5, Debbie Jackson, Central States Conference, North American Division.

DEBBIE JACKSON: I was just wondering if there's any concern of calling them service employees since that's what many of the union employees are called in the United States. And so many of the unions are SEIU; so that's employees—service of employees.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Pastor Mooroooven, did you hear that clearly? Can you respond?

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: I have heard that. I have taken copious notes of what our sister has said, and we will study this, and we will ensure that this terminology brings clarity instead of confusion. But thank you. I have taken note of your comment, and we will follow up. Thank you.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you, Sister Jackson. We'll get back with you or you'll be able to reach Pastor Mooroooven at his office. All right. Are we ready to move forward? We're ready for item number 205?

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: Yes, we are.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you.

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: What we have done about the secretary, we are doing the same for the treasurer. You can read the rationale. This amendment reflects that in an effort to be consistent with other divisions, the treasurer of the North American Division will no longer be an associate treasurer of the General Conference. And I gave this explanation before, and I think we are all together, and I have moved this, Madam Chair.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Right. Is there support? Thank you. We hear the second. Are they questions or comments? Actually, this item was clarified previously, so, I believe we can just move right to the question.

TODD MCFARLAND: All right, thank you, Madam Chair. We are getting ready to open it up here. Just give it a couple seconds, and it will appear on your screen. Madam Chair, it is open. People should have three minutes to vote now.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay. Use your three minutes wisely. Start voting. The motion, 1, to amend the General Conference Bylaws, Article 4, General Conference undersecretary and associate secretaries as found in the Session Agenda with the explanation you've received. And, 2, to amend the General Conference Bylaws, Article 5, General Conference undertreasurer and associate treasurers as found in the Session Agenda.

TODD MCFARLAND: Madam Chair, I think we can probably close the vote. We're up to just over 1,600.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Excellent let us close it right here.

TODD MCFARLAND: Madam Chair, it's being closed, and it will display as soon as it can.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay. All right. Both amendments carry. Thank you very much. Well, Brother Hensley, what is next?

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: We will continue. I see my colleagues from *Church Manual* Committee are here behind me. You can see that we have now left the appetizers, right? We are coming to the plat de resistance. One day I was conducting a seminar and someone was seated in the front and the same thing, presenting just after lunch. The person was dozing just a little bit so I asked the person: "What are you doing? You know, you should wake up." And the person said, "Pastor, I am praying for you!" I remembered this verse that says, "You should watch and pray". You should also be watching what is happening in front of you. This is just to be sure that you are with me and that you are fully



awake and that you understand what we're doing today in this Constitution and Bylaws amendment that we are bringing to the floor. We will try to bring another item. It will be item 206, item 206 of your Constitution and Bylaws agenda.

ELLA S SIMMONS: These next items are taken individually, correct?

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: You are perfectly correct. These items will be taken individually. We have quite a few of them here. What are we seeking to do with the first item that I'm going to talk about? We are removing "Christian Record Services" from the list of General Conference sponsored entities as now Christian Record Services is sponsored by the North American Division, and this change took place at Spring Meeting in 2016. So, you can see there is a deletion that is recommended on line 36. We are deleting Christian Record Services. I have moved this item, Madam Chair.

ELLA S SIMMONS: All right. Is there support for this motion? Are there any questions or comments on this one? I see a few people moving, but I'm not sure if they're moving to the microphones. I see a hand over there, but we're seeing nothing on the screen. Reinhold Gallos is calling point of order. Northern Rhenish-Westphalian conference EUD, Inter -European Division.

REINHARD GALLOS: I would like to ask you to extend the election time as we still see problems with the VLAN and it turns out that after two or three minutes, some more people can vote. So, it is just because it's everyone at the same time.

ELLA S SIMMONS: You're trying to get us to extend the voting because we are bombarding the system and then that slows everything down. Do I understand you?

REINHARD GALLOS: Yes.

ELLA S SIMMONS: We will give that some consideration here and see what we can do about that. If you noticed, if you were really watching us, in several cases we did extend the time without making it a voted item because we could tell there were still individuals in the queue trying to get their votes in. So, we are watching. If that works for you, if you see further need, you can come right back.

REINHARD GALLOS: I saw this and I recognized it, and that's good, but I even see some people that get into the vote button already short before the three minutes are running out.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay. We'll give it a little try. Thank you very much. Okay, coming back to Brother Johannes Bochmann, German Central European Conference, Inter-European Division, I believe you have a question or comment on item number 206.

JOHANNES BOCHMANN: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. A comment, question, and possibly a motion concerning page 2, lines three and four, the definition of what a frontline denominational employee is. Now, I welcome very much the effort to clarify who frontline employees are, and so I welcome the inclusion of more than one example of what this could be. However, the wording that is suggested here excludes some people from eligibility as elected members of the committee that would otherwise be included, and that is by including the word full time denominational employee. I see that we have part time pastors, at least in our field, I believe there may be part time other employees, and I would like to see them included in the eligibility for serving on this committee. If the union and the division and the individual concerns so decide. So, I move to amend this to strike the word "full time" and the preceding comma. Thank you.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay. So, you have come with a motion to amend. And, of course, it does need a second to go forward. Brother Bochmann, we conferred to determine, it appears that you are ahead of the process here. We have not gotten to the section that you are addressing. And as we know, we're not going to compose or revise on the floor, but we want to allow appropriate time for individual concerns to be heard. But we will handle those in the proper manner but also in the proper sequence. So perhaps it is best right now that we just take note of your question and comment. And if there is further need to address that on the floor this afternoon, we can do so in an appropriate manner, of course, if need be, we can refer items back for revision. But then of course we would have to go through the full process for that. But for right now we take under consideration what you have placed before us,

although it was out of turn. So, we will not do anything on this at the time. Thank you. Now we still stay there at microphone number 1, Rodney Brady, North New South Wales Conference in the South Pacific Division.

RODNEY BRADY: Mine may be out of order. I just need clarification. The way that it's worded in our book is it's one action covering this whole section, which is on paragraphs now because mine's related to later on, just the wording that is here is different to what the motion was that we understand might be the case.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay. I think I understand what you're saying, Brother Rodney. Did you get that, Brother Hensley?

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: I received that from Brother Rodney. This is highly technical, Brother Rodney, because what was in the motion mirrors the section which is the in the Constitution, but what we have voted is in line with what I had presented. But it is true, Rodney, in the motion, it covers the whole section in the Constitution where the section is coming from. And it is always a challenge, Madam Chair, because if we were to give you the whole document and the whole context, it would be a very bulky document. That's why we bring to you, when you see in one line, "No changes," it means that the whole section has not been changed but only portion of it. So, this could have been the confusion from my Brother Rodney. Thank you.

ELLA S SIMMONS: And perhaps there is another way to understand the question. Brother Rodney has left the microphone. But Karen, can you help us? Did you hear something different on this? On the microphone.

KAREN J PORTER: No.

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: No.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Perhaps not. Okay.

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: Thank you very much.

ELLA S SIMMONS: We're willing to hear if we misunderstood you, Rodney.

KAREN J PORTER: What I thought I understood was there was one agenda item with three parts and we are taking each part separately. I think that was the confusion.

RODNEY BRADY: The way that it is worded has the whole section, but it now looks like we are dividing these items into individual parts. So, it wasn't clear what he was moving.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay. We had a discussion about that as well. We were trying to decide if this was to be clustered or individual. So, we will follow your lead. Thank you for that, Brother Rodney. In the meantime, microphone number 7, Tim Standish, Dr. Standish from General Conference that is Geoscience. Where are you?

TIM STANDISH: Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair. On the issue of the *Adventist Review* and *Adventist World*, my question is what if at some point it was decided that these two publications would have different editors, would we then have to come back to a General Conference Session to split them apart? It seems to me that if we just left this alone, it's fine for one person to be editor of both, but if we cluster them together, then we've sort of restricted our options unnecessarily. And that was my comment.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Let us hear a response from Secretariat.

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: I can try to understand where the confusion could be coming from. On the first page, you have four rationales because we were dealing with four sections that need to be amended. I am still on the first one where I was reading about Christian Record Services, the rationale one for the first change. Then I would take you to rationale 2 that clarifies that the position of the editor for *Adventist Review* and *Adventist World* is the same person. I would have explained it. Then I would have taken you to number three, which would be the definition of frontline employee, and I would have explained it. And number 4, I would have done the same. I am still at rationale number 1, and we are

still dealing with Christian Record Services. If it pleases the Chair, now I can move to the second one, which is the second rationale, which now explains *Adventist Review* and *Adventist World*. Thank you.

ELLA S SIMMONS: But before you do, we have Yusuph Zegge, English Zoom. Southeast Tanzania Conference in the ECD. My brother, you may speak to us.

TODD MCFARLAND: Madam Chair, I think the gentleman may have some other people in the room that have a zoom going as well and is getting feedback, so you need to make sure that you have no one else in the room with this streaming on. So, the audio people will turn you back up once that can be accomplished. So, make sure there is no other device playing this Session in that same room. We saw your two friends there, so for this you were turned off because it was getting feedback.

ELLA S SIMMONS: I'm sure they are delegates or duly appointed tech services professionals. Brother Yusuph try again.

YUSUPH ZEGGE: My comment is also in the section of the frontline sentences, it has the word Etc. I just suggest that this word should be removed to avoid confusion and to add more groups that are not intended according to the definition of the frontline that has been moved forward.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you very much. Our undersecretary has taken note of that and can respond before we go to the next speaker.

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: I have taken note of this and this will be dealt with when I present the third rationale that will take us to the frontline employees. I have taken note of it.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you, and also on English Zoom number 101, Jackson Mwakali, East Central Africa Division. We see that you are calling a point of order. Please, give us your point of order.

JACKSON MWAKALY: It's important that we take one item at a time because they are mutually exclusive.

ELLA S SIMMONS: I will not deem that a point of order but rather a request for clarification on the process. Perhaps Pastor Moorrooven will explain again that some of these items are related. There's

interrelatedness within the documents and he's trying to touch on the items as he goes through and that is why we're taking time for clarification. Now we have Tim Standish on mic number 7 again.

TIM STANDISH: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am confused but my comment has to do with this frontline business on page 42.

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: We can go to that after we finish the current item.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Let us go to several items and then we will come back to questions and comments. The same will be true for Brother Yusuph who is back in the queue. Let us hold these until you go through the section. Perhaps they will see the connections and if not, we are more than willing to adjust and to explain.

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: Very good, so we have touched on number 1, we have touched on 2 and now let's go to number 3. Here we are defining the term frontline employee. Once you define something and you start giving an exhaustive list, you have this challenge of being all inclusive. I looked up the dictionary definition of frontline and it is "Those who are closest to the enemy." So, this is what we are bringing to you because this definition is needed for us to ensure that we know exactly who those who will serve in this capacity of being frontline are.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay. Continue to bring all of those items together and then, if need be, we will go back to some of the speakers if you do not clarify in the process.

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: Very good. So let me read number 3. We are including "frontline, full time denominational employees such as Bible worker, health care professional, literature evangelist, teacher, et cetera." We are including these lines in this section just to be sure that we have clearly explained who a frontline denominational employee is. Let's go to number 4. This will conclude this part on the agenda. What is number 4 all about? Our Office of General Counsel, our lawyers, have expressed a need to be protected, to be safe, that we add in our governing document the section on the minutes. So, I will read this new section to you. The new section will read, "Minutes of the General Conference

Executive Committee, including those of Annual Council and Spring Meeting, shall be approved during a meeting of the General Conference Administrative Committee after such minutes have been distributed to the Executive Committee members at least one week prior to the meeting of the General Conference Administrative Committee.” What I will do now, I will move this whole section, which I'm doing just now, I have moved it.

ELLA S SIMMONS: All right. And there is support for the motion. All right, now we go back, and if there are questions or comments, we will take those, just moving through methodically, and so we go back to microphone number 7 to Tim Standish followed by Rodney Brady on microphone number 1. Okay, Dr. Standish, yes.

TIM STANDISH: My concern about item number 3 - the one relating to frontline workers, is that this has the effect of violating the intent of total member involvement. The effect of this particular policy is that it dilutes the representation of lay people. And I would hope that if we're going to make changes here, we look at how lay people can be involved in the governance of the Church rather than adding more church employees that maybe drown out that signal from our lay people.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay. Thank you, Dr. Standish. We're going to microphone number 1, Rodney Brady.

RODNEY BRADY: I want to speak to section 2, but Hensley, can I just make a question on that line 3, frontline, can I just ask you to think about whether the comma really should be there after frontline, that might be what's causing the problem because it makes full time employees look like a category of its own which could be anybody, just think about it, because you've never had it before, you might have a grammar person look at it because I think it may be changing the nuance unintentionally putting that comma there.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you very much. Good observation.

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: We will study the comma indeed.

ELLA S SIMMONS: We as people of the word, of the book, believe in studying the comma; right?

RODNEY BRADY: I want to speak to section 2, and I think it's right that we do need to approve our minutes promptly. Sometimes we don't do them as quick as possible. I am questioning whether this should be in our Constitution—I'm actually speaking against it going in there. The way that committees are responsible for themselves to approve their minutes and the process for approving the minutes, and it is an order for the Executive Committee, if it wants ADCOM to approve the minutes that could be done by way of a terms of reference and approved on its behalf. Putting it in this way here is actually quite a substantial shift because you're taking away from the Executive Committee the authority to approve or amend minutes. We say that they are being distributed a week before, but we don't say if there's a disagreement with what the final version that was voted by ADCOM to sign off on because what we're doing is we're saying ADCOM becomes the final determinant of the approval of the minutes and not the Executive Committee. And that is a shift, there's a nuance of the shift and the approval. I suggest it just remain as a term of reference and not a Constitutional thing, because you're actually taking away authority from the Executive Committee to be responsible for its final action. So, I'd like to speak against that.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay. Thank you, Brother Brady. And we'll have an observation from OGC. Our parliamentarian is shifting just a little bit and perhaps can comment.

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: When this was introduced, I explained to you that this was a recommendation from our OGC because, unlike what Brother Rodney is suggesting, this is to keep us safe. Because this came from OGC I will invite our parliamentarian to expand on this, please.

TODD MCFARLAND: Thank you. I'm speaking from here [podium] because this is not in my role as parliamentarian. I please ask the body's indulgence. Normally the parliamentarians shouldn't weigh in on items, but I'm also not head of the Office of General Counsel, and unfortunately the other OGC officers who could address this are with the Nominating Committee getting them started.



The rationale that was behind this is that currently the Executive Committee minutes are not approved at all, right? Annual Council meets once a year, Spring Meeting once a year, while there are a handful of Executive Committee meetings in the interim, they're for limited items so the idea here was to empower a minutes committee which is a very standard approach in parliamentary procedure. If there is an issue with the minutes, Executive Committee members would raise that with ADCOM. The Executive Committee would still retain its authority to decide things. So, if someone disagreed with it, they could always put that on the agenda for the next year's Annual Council. And of course, if there was a misunderstanding the Executive Committee could say that you were wrong and clarify that. But this is to empower them. And it was felt that it needed to be in the Constitution and Bylaws to give them that power to do the minutes as opposed to just being a term of reference. So that was the rationale, Madam Chair.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you. Now we have Hilde Huru, North Norway Conference in the Trans-European Division.

HILDE HURU: Yes. Thank you. Now the previous speaker raised the same issue that I wanted to raise, and though you have already answered this, I think this is still important. And I think we should have changed the wording. And I wanted to make a motion how we can change maybe from distributed to somehow include also being approved by these members of the Executive Committee.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Sister Hilde, we will receive from you your suggestions or recommendations that can be taken back into Secretariat, perhaps even reviewed in Steering Committee if we want to turn it around quickly and bring it back, perhaps tomorrow. But at this point we will not be composing on the floor. I do want to remind everyone that all of these documents are really living documents, and sometimes the concerns that come up on the floor of the GC Session have always been there or have never been there. But suddenly when we're here together and looking at these, something looks different or maybe is nuanced a little differently. And so actually many of the changes that you see here

have had their birth at a Session with someone making a suggestion or recommendation. Those are taken back and studied, tested with other documents and so forth. And then they make their way back through the system. But if you would get your ideas to Secretariat, perhaps that would be the best way to address that today. Thank you very much. Okay. Microphone number 8, Paul Ananaba, Lagos Mainland Conference in the West Central Africa Division.

PAUL ANANABA: Yes, Madam Chair, I --

ELLA S SIMMONS: And please. I'm sorry. I don't mean to be rude. I see someone at microphone number 2. I just want you to know that you've been standing there a while, but your registry has not shown up on the screen so we may want to double-check that, going back to Brother Paul, WAD.

PAUL ANANABA: Madam Chair, two suggestions. On the issue of frontline—the word frontline, I suggest that that word should be deleted. When you delete it, the paragraph will become consistent on itself. If you retain the word frontline, you have to create an interpretation subsection, and that will create more challenge for that section. So, I recommend that the word frontline be deleted. Once you delete it, most of the controversies will be gone. As well, on the section on minutes, I do not think it should be part of the policy document of the church as such. It should be an administrative thing that the Executive Committee should deal with. I again suggest that that paragraph should be deleted entirely. We can't be debating in and putting a provision on minutes in the working policy of the Church. The Executive Committee should be able to regulate itself in terms of its minutes. I'm saying that because the delegates do not attend meetings of General Conference Executive Committee, how would they make laws or rules that will guide the Executive Committee? Thank you.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you, brother. All right. Pastor, would you comment on that?

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: No, we have taken note of that.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay. You've taken note of that.

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: Yes.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Along with others. Let's go to Spanish Zoom number 103, Armando Marriaga, Caribbean Colombian Conference, Inter-American Division. Yes, we see you. Please unmute if you have not and you may speak. Your time is now.

Brother, may I stop you for one second. It's not your problem. I want to be sure that the translators are prepared. Okay, I saw someone, but I heard something behind me. Please continue.

ARMANDO MARRIAGA: The statement regarding frontline to me sounds like war. I would recommend changing how the sentence reads. My other point is a question about this ministry. Can the North American Division clarify why this ministry was removed from the General Conference. What are the implications for the resources CRS provides for other divisions since this is now under the umbrella of the North American Division.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you. The response will not come from North American Division, of course, but rather from Secretariat. If you can say a word on that. I think it's just that there's apparently some legal issues as well. But we're having our parliamentarian change hats again.

TODD MCFARLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. The reason for that was because Christian Record Services primarily services the North American Division. There were also some financial components there and restructuring was done at the same time. But there was a reevaluation of this ministry and what it served and where it best could relate. Remember when all of these ministries were originally created, there was no North American Division. Everything was in the General Conference by default. And so, the leadership felt (not to minimize in any way the work of CRS) that it best belonged to NAD because of what it primarily serves.

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: Thank you very much.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you, Brother Todd. Is there anything else to add to that one? Shall we go to the next speaker? Okay, on microphone number 1, Niklas Rantanen, Finland Union of Churches Conference, Trans-European Division.

NIKLAS RANTANEN: Madam Chair, I have a question regarding the term full time.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Full time?

NIKLAS RANTANEN: Yes.

ELLA S SIMMONS: You'd like a definition to clarify the meaning?

NIKLAS RANTANEN: Yes. Is there a definition somewhere in the Constitution and Bylaws?

Because in different areas of the world, the legislation for full-time work might mean more than 50 percent or 80 percent or a hundred percent. Therefore, unless it's defined, it's quite unclear what it means.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you. Understood.

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: Yes, and I believe a previous speaker made the same comment, and we have taken note here, we will restudy the inclusion of the word full time. We had taken note previously of that. Thank you very much.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay. Now we can go to microphone number 2 and I believe Norbert Zens, Inter-European Division.

NORBERT ZENS: Perfectly fine, Madam Chair. I want to come back to this issue of proof of the minutes. I appreciate the comments of the OGC regarding that there should be something that the Executive Committee minutes should be approved but I believe from a government perspective that the minutes should be approved by the committee itself, by the Executive Committee. Actually, the Executive Committee meets almost every two months, at least every three months; so, it would be no problem for the Executive Committee to approve their own minutes.

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: Okay. We have taken note of this.

ELLA S SIMMONS: And thank you very much. And thank you for your patience as well. All right, we're going to microphone number 5, Mandla Se-Bantwini Lupondwana, Southern Africa Union Conference in the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division, SID.

MANDLA SE-BANTWINI LUPONDWANA: Thank you, Chair. I appreciate first, in section B on elected members, the fact that we have given examples of people who are frontline or whatever word we use that could be elected because it broadens the categories. We usually run the risk or fall into the temptation of simply electing pastors who are frontline or sometimes simply elect educators, but I think coming up with a list of other categories that could be elected is good. And I would support retaining "etc." because in different parts of the world they may have other types of workers who are not on the list, and I wouldn't want us to think that the list was intended to be exhaustive. So, I would support retaining "etc." and coming up with examples. On section 2, I also would like to speak against the inclusion of that entire section. It's more of an operational thing. I understand the concern of the Office of the General Counsel. However, I think that now that we have moved into the space of electronic meetings, that the General Conference Executive Committee can find a way of approving its own minutes electronically without having to wait for the next Spring Council or annual council. I don't think it should be in the Constitution and Bylaws because that way it locks it in and takes away from the Executive Committee the prerogative to decide how their own minutes can be approved. Thank you, Chair.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you very much. And now on English Zoom, number 101, Nurudeen Agbabiaka, Ondo Mission, West-Central Africa Division. And we have three other speakers on this. We will take no more on this. I believe we're going to have to make a ruling and decide what we're going to do. All right? Nurudeen? Yes?

NURUDEEN AGBABIAKA: Thank you for recognizing me.

ELLA S SIMMONS: We could hear you at first but now we cannot. Perhaps you went on mute. Sometimes that happens. Try again, please. I think we've lost you altogether. Maybe you can get back in the queue. We will come back to you if we can do so. Going to microphone number 2, Paul Bhaggien, Southern Asia Division. Microphone number 2. I don't see you standing there.

PAUL BHAGGIEN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a recommendation and a clarification. I want to thank you for explaining to us what frontline workers are really, because I remember our leaders not clear on this and was often referred to as exclusive to pastoral workers. Now we know it's not. I just wanted clarity on the word "teacher" used there. Is it a reference to only Bible teachers or could it be inclusive of any institutional teacher? Thank you.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you for that. We have taken note. That will be included. And we almost saw Brother Nurudeen at the top but he's not coming back on. I think there's some technical difficulties.

NURUDEEN AGBABIAKA: Are you hearing me now?

ELLA S SIMMONS: We can hear you yes. Please.

NURUDEEN AGBABIAKA: Thank you. On the frontline denominational employee that has now been set out as frontline full-time workers with examples. I agree with the delegate who suggested that the word frontline be removed, if it's causing so much debate. But I think the point that the document is trying to make is that that position is for denominational employees. That should not be overlooked. That is what is being explained. And so maybe it could have been read "denominational employees such as . . ." then all these debates might not arise. That is one. For those who want the ladies to be included, I think it is divine, led by the Spirit to suggest that they should be denominational employees because they are more responsible to the mission and the organization of the Church and will not for any reason want to rock the boats because to understand the mission better, they have no other thing they are doing than the work of the church. For laity they have a lot of things to do that may not give them enough time for the mission of the church. Laity are wonderful people. They are trying their best in their own way but still, it is better to leave it to denominational employees who are full-time workers unrepresented. Thank you.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you, brother. We've taken note of that. Then we go to English Zoom again, number 101, Telisha Williams, Guyana Conference, Inter-American Division. May we hear from you? Thank you.

TELISHA WILLIAMS: Good afternoon. Thank you for allowing me to speak. My comment is related to the Christian Record Services. It is my understanding that Christian Record Services serves persons who are blind so that they know they are not excluded from the reach of the gospel. And the explanation given me from the floor by the parliamentarian as to removing it or placing it on the North American Division indicated that the services would be best suited from that division. My question or clarification is whether this now excludes the other divisions who have persons who are blind from being able to benefit from the materials or the programs that were previously provided by Christian Record Services and what would be available for them there in reaching their persons who are blind.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you, Sister Telisha, and we will have our parliamentarian change hats again and speak to us from the Office of General Counsel.

HENSLEY M MOOROVEN: Just before he speaks, I can tell you that this is not what it means. When I was the Sabbath School Personal Ministries Director of the SID, we were intentional in ensuring that people even from our division could get materials from the Christian Record Services. So, this is not the intention of this amendment to have Christian Record Services serving only the North American Division. It's an organization sponsored by the North American Division.

ELLA S SIMMONS: That's right but that was the intention. Thank you, my friend, with compliments.

TODD MCFARLAND: I would reiterate, and I apologize, I should have been clear. Christian Record Services serves the world and it will provide its material around the world. However, as a practical administrative matter, its work is primarily based in North America, and that's why it's a big sponsor. I would also point out that's already been done. It's been a North American Division sponsored

organization for a number of years. This is simply catching the bylaws up. And so, this isn't really a debate on whether it should be in the GC or the NAD. It's simply reflecting the change that's been made. Since CRS is not sponsored by the General Conference, it should not receive the representations of the GC institution. So, the question here is not whether or not it's a General Conference sponsored, or North American Division sponsored entity. That's already been decided. The question really is do you want your bylaws on representation to reflect the reality that is there. So, I hope that answers the question, Mr. Chairman.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you very much. Now, the Chair had actually called an end to the discussion or the debate on this one, but there's no way we're going to close that without allowing the leader of the entity to speak; so, we have Diane Thurber from the North American Division, and then we will go back to the SID voice. Okay, Diane Thurber on microphone number 5.

DIANE THURBER: Good afternoon. Yes, Christian Record Services is a North American Division ministry. However, we are so pleased to be able to collaborate and coordinate with the General Conference Adventist Possibility Ministries, and through that collaboration we're able to offer services to the other divisions of the World Church. They're contracted services. Some services are available without cost, for instance, our online proprietary library. So, I just invite anyone in any of the divisions to contact your Adventist Possibility Ministries coordinator to learn about the services available from Christian Record Services and also visit our virtual booth at the General Conference Session. Thank you.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you for that clarification and that assurance. All right. Now we go to microphone number 5 again, Boyce Mkhize, Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division.

BOYCE MKHIZE: Thank you very much, chairperson.

BOYCE MKHIZE: Thank you so much, Madam Chair. Two reasons that militate against the **alias of mission** on the Administrative Committee taking care of the minutes of the Executive Committee and I would like to urge a reconsideration to that. Reason 1, Article number 8 of the bylaws, General



Conference, section one, during intervals between Sessions of the General Conference, the General Conference Executive Committee is delegated the authority to act on behalf of the General Conference in session. I'm going to jump and go to the last line. The authority, therefore, of the General Conference Executive Committee is the authority of the World Church. And what that means is that authority can never be delegated because principle number 2, in law a body that has been vested with a delegated authority cannot further delegate that authority. And for those two reasons, **the proposition around the body,** other than the General Conference Executive Committee taking care of a matter as serious as the determination and confirmation of the minutes, is something that would be at odds with the very bylaws that we're seeking to uphold. Thank you, Madam Chair.

ELLA S SIMMONS: With this, the chair would turn to Secretariat and respectfully ask that you take these items back, with all of the comments. It has been noted that notes have been taken from each speaker. And Secretariat serves the church, serves the members and is always open to hearing different perspectives and understanding in terms of what we're putting forth for the world Church. We wanted to be appropriately structured for the entire World Church, and so with this, Brother Hensley, would you take these items back, and we will wait to find if you can find a way to do something quickly. If not, these would have to be recycled back into the system for another complete cycle, which would be, in this case, three years instead of five.

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: It's a little less than five; right?

ELLA S SIMMONS: Yes.

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: But Madam Chair, we have another plan.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay.

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: We are very happy for all that we have heard. And you rightly said we want this document to serve the mission of the Church. And if it needs to be clarified, the recording secretary has taken copious notes of what you are doing. This is what we will do. On Wednesday, whilst

you will be having supper, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee will meet, and we will study all the comments that you have made. You can see the notes here on the front on the inclusion of the new section 2 about the minutes, and we will bring a recommendation on the following day. So, thank you very much.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Excellent.

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: We will not vote it today. We will bring it to our Constitution and Bylaws Committee. Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

ELLA S SIMMONS: And thank you, everyone, for your comments and your wisdom and guidance and questions on these items. Now, Mr. Undersecretary. Are there any other items for Constitution and Bylaws for this evening?

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: I suggest that my brother Gerson and together with the chair of the *Church Manual* Committee, come here and join me at this podium as well.

ELLA S SIMMONS: I understand what you're saying there. And your generosity is overwhelming.

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: Thank you for your kind words. So, this will be the end. We have more items. We will come back to you I think sometime tomorrow, we will see how the schedule allows for it. But thank you very much. We have taken note of everything, and we will see some more Constitution and Bylaws. But remember to always wear your mission lenses when you read these documents.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Yes.

HENSLEY M MOOROOVEN: Thank you.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Your work is very much appreciated, and it looks like we turn to *Church Manual*. Ah, yes, thank you. Pastor Gerson Santos and Pastor Billy Biaggi, who comes first? Okay.

GERSON SANTOS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm so excited to be here, and I need to explain why, not just because finally we are having General Conference Session.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Yes, that's why.

GERSON SANTOS: After waiting for so long, right?

ELLA S SIMMONS: Yes.

GERSON SANTOS: But also, for this time that we've been discussing these important items from the *Church Manual*.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Yes.

GERSON SANTOS: We have some slides that you can see on the screen to illustrate to make the recommendations from the *Church Manual* Committee a little bit simpler. And I'm thankful because I have Pastor Biaggi here to give us more support if necessary. The items that will be presented starting today I don't think we're going to finish today because there are 37 items.

ELLA S SIMMONS: We're not trying to exhaust everyone. We are just trying to do high quality work this afternoon.

GERSON SANTOS: Exactly. Exactly. And that's one of the reasons we decided to have each one of those items voted separately.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay.

GERSON SANTOS: So, give time for them to appreciate and vote. However, 37 items will take three hours, just for the voting part, at least.

ELLA S SIMMONS: That's true.

GERSON SANTOS: So, we need to be conscious of that. Some of the items we're organizing are different areas. As you can see on the screen we separated into different areas. The first one is church services and meetings. The second is pastors and elders. And I'm very happy to share this with you because as a pastor, evangelist, church planter, leader from this Church, I'm so excited to see some of these items as we present to you. You will see the importance that this will have in the local church because that's where ministry really happens, right?

At the local church, is where our brothers and sisters are working, witnessing, and visiting the community and serving the community, inviting people to join the Church and become followers of Jesus. You will see from these recommendations that each one of them has the purpose of highlighting the importance and effectiveness of the local church ministry. Let's start with the agenda. You have listed here by numbers starting on 401. And you have the whole list on pages 20 to 22. And you see there are numbers with 401 being the first one, but the actual item has a number of 400.

Why is that? Because they are coming, as was very well explained by Elder Mooroven, as the policy reviews are made to the Church as we meet in Executive Committee at the General Conference. The same thing with the *Church Manual* recommendations. They come from the *Church Manual* Committee, they are presented to the Annual Council, at the end of the year, our last Executive Committee of the General Conference, and if they are voted, then they are brought to this body to be appreciated and accepted or rejected. The numbers you see on the screen, 400-22GS, these are the numbers that give us the history, where the action came from. But in your agenda it is item 401. Let's see the first one. The title is unauthorized speakers. This is a *Church Manual* amendment. In the *Church Manual*, and I have mine with me. I don't think you brought yours, but maybe you have an electronic format with you that many people use today. Mine is totally underlined and highlighted and I even have some little papers here marking the pages that I need to be conscious about.

The *Church Manual*, pages 120 to 121 and if you want to follow your agenda, it is on page 53. I'll be opening now page 53 in my agenda book. We are deleting one paragraph and revising the whole paragraph. As you can see on the screen, this is the recommendation from the *Church Manual* Committee, on unauthorized speakers. And the rationale behind this recommendation is that this item will clarify who may be invited to speak in the church and addresses the confusion caused by the implication that a layperson could not preach because they do not hold credentials because, usually, we

use credentials for the denominational worker, and this brought a little bit of confusion; so, we are editing the whole paragraph as this.

“Authorized speakers. Only speakers worthy of confidence will be invited to the pulpit by the local church pastor in harmony with the guidelines given by the conference. The local elders or church board may also invite speakers in consultation with the pastor and in harmony with conference guidelines. Individuals who are no longer members or who are under discipline should not be given access to the pulpit.”. Madam Chair, I move we accept this recommendation.

ELLA S SIMMONS: All right. That's clear. We have the motion and we have a second. Are there any questions or comments on this item? Seeing none, we're going to move right to the question. And we do see one. Someone walking to microphone number 3, and I do see Christopher Holland from General Conference on number 5. Please, Christopher Holland, number 5.

CHRISTOPHER HOLLAND: Madam Chair, I am slightly concerned about this. Pastors are hired with confidence to decide who is speaking from their pulpit. And the phrase authorized by the conference, while I certainly understand the concern that may exist over some speakers, this seems to withdraw confidence or at least, at the very least, display distrust in the pastor or the local church. I would urge this to be reconsidered by the committee.

ELLA S SIMMONS: And are you speaking specifically about the use of the term authorized?

CHRISTOPHER HOLLAND: I am. Authorized by the conference.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Authorized by the conference. All right. And we have number 7, mic number 7, Tim Standish, General Conference.

TIM STANDISH: Thank you, Madam Chair. My concern with this is that while it requires church boards to work with their pastor in terms of who preaches in the church, it does not require the pastor to work with the church board. It makes him only accountable, apparently, to the conference. But there must be some accountability of pastors to the local congregation that they serve. Thank you.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you. That is clear. Back to microphone number 5, Mandla Se-Bandwini Lupondwana, Southern Africa Union Conference, SID.

MANDLA SE-BANDWINI LUPONDWANA: Thank you. My question is about the use of the word consultation. Consultation can sometimes be applied in this way. I told him that we are calling someone to come and preach. He may or may not have objected, that's fine, but we consulted him. It does not always require consent. My question to the committee would be in the phrasing of the paragraph, were we looking for mere consultation, or were we hoping that it would lead to consent? I'm thinking of a situation where there is a disagreement between the local elders or the local church board and the pastor on the person being invited. Consultation would allow the elders or the church board to proceed because they have consulted. But if we are hoping that consultation also includes consent, then when there was a disagreement, they would not proceed with that particular speaker. And if the idea was to include consent, I would suggest probably relooking at the word "consultation" and finding one that would include the concept of consent. Thank you, Chair.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Excellent. That's good. Before you leave the microphone, please say your very melodic, beautiful name for me.

MANDLA SE-BANDWINI LUPONDWANA: Mandla Se-Bantwini.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you. I like it. Now the last speaker on this item is at microphone number 3, Chalmer Gevieso, South Philippine Union Conference in the Southern Asia Pacific Division and obviously not the last because we have another who just joined. All right.

CHALMER GEVIESO: Thank you. By the way, I would just like to point out that in the list provided those who should not be invited, limited only to those who are no longer members and are under discipline. Based on our experience, there was a time when there was a pastor, a retired pastor, actually, whose membership was from another conference and he was already residing in our place, but because of his membership in a pyramid scheme, of which the church spoke adversely, this pastor was

already antagonistic to the church, antagonistic to the leadership of the mission and of the union. But, just the same, some churches still invited, especially those who are sympathetic with the pyramid scheme of which the pastor was a member. I would suggest that we should not limit only the disqualifications from speaking in our pulpit to those who are not members or those who are under discipline. But we should include even those who are not loyal to the church. Just a suggestion. Thank you.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you very much. Then we go to the English Zoom number 101 again. Brother Youseph Zegge, Southeast Tanzania Conference, East-Central Africa Division.

YUSUPH ZEGGE: Yes. I have a comment on the phrase, the word "confidence" is not defined well. I will personally define and measure the confidence of a person to stand before the church and the pulpit, that is my concern. If you define it well, it will provide guidance on how we can allow people to stand in the pulpit. Thank you.

ELLA S SIMMONS: You're just calling for some definition; right? Okay. Thank you. And microphone number 1, Eva Stefanova.

EVA STEFANOVA: The old wording very clearly makes it impossible for individuals who are not members of the church to talk at the pulpit, it says strangers or any unauthorized persons. And I don't find this in the new wording. It says members who are under discipline or no longer members, there is nothing about people who do not belong to the Church. Is this on purpose?

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay. Thank you very much. I believe we have note of this. And we go to microphone number 5, Josias Flores, Carolina Conference, North American Division.

JOSIAS FLORES: Thank you, Madam Chair. My comment is just on the rationale and what the new phrasing reads. The rationale is talking about who may be invited to speak in church and addressing this confusion about credentials. However, the new paragraph seems to deal more with who has the authority to select these speakers rather than clarifying who's invited to speak, because we now see

that the wording of invited by the local church pastor—this is line 24, and then line 25—in consultation with the pastor, this wasn't in the original statement, yet it seems to be added separate from what the rationale is really stating. It's just a comment as to what rationale is saying and what we see in the new statement. I'm not sure if there's a discrepancy there that is meant to be there.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you very much. And we move back to microphone number 1, Reto Meyer, Inter-European Division.

RETO MAYER: Yes. Just a little invitation as we are speaking about guidelines by the conference and thus, we have some Union of Churches, could we just include that somewhere also. That was just a little point.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Did you get that one? Please repeat that. We were not hearing it clearly here.

RETO MAYER: Yes. In the text you will refer to the guidelines of the conferences, but you have some Union of Churches, and I think we should add something here to clarify this.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay. Thank you very much, Brother Mayer. Going to microphone number 8. Armando Miranda, Sr., General Conference, number 8.

ARMANDO MIRANDA SR: Thank you, Madam Chair. It seems to me that it's very difficult to find a place for everything that is needed, and it seems to me that the way how it is written covers many things. For example, it says “in consultation with a pastor” and also “in harmony with conference guidelines.” So that means that the local conference has some work to do in that direction because there are some concerns with people who are affecting the church just inviting those who are not confident to speak to the church. So, it seems to me the way how is written is appropriate and covers what we need.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you very much, Pastor Miranda. We have two other speakers. These should probably be the last two. On microphone number 4, Musa Nzumbi, Northeast Zambia Conference East Central Africa Division.



MUSA NZUMBI: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have just two concerns. And number one is the explanation about the conference, that is in harmony with the guideline given by the conference. Some entities that we have are things which have not been qualified to be conferences. So maybe we could add the word "field" so it can apply to those entities which are not conferences. But also, the issue for which they invited to the pulpit by their local church pastor in harmony with the guideline given by the conference, the local elders or church board may also invite speakers in consultation with the pastor. Now, maybe here also we could expand the word "pastor" maybe to be "church pastor" or "district pastor" so that they cannot just consult with any pastor around. Because we can have maybe chaplains allowed in the church who don't hold managerial power. Maybe we could have some retired pastors within the area, maybe those who could not have some decision on the church. Maybe this word also, this title for the second sentence can be expanded so that can be understood. Thank you, Madam Chair.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you very much. And it looks like someone else is added so I hope no one else is being scanned. We want to allow the scanned items to show up on the screen, but at this point there should be no more. And we would go to number 8, microphone number 8, Jeff Scroggins, General Conference, then we have one other.

JEFF SCOGGINS: Thank you. I dealt with this particular item often while I was pastoring. And I actually interpret this to be a little bit less restrictive than what we had before. So, I actually appreciated the changes that were made, and I would support the way that it stands. It actually seems to give the pastor a little bit more flexibility, of course, in consultation with their Local Conference, Mission, Union of Churches, whatever it may be.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you very much. And finally at microphone number 5, Gloria Netshidzini, Trans Orange Conference, Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division. Number 5.

GLORIA NETSHIDZINI: Thank you, Madam Chair. My issue is the implementation of that part, because you'll find a church inviting a person, and that person has been having a long time without

seeing him or her. All of a sudden, that person is invited to come and preach. You don't even know if he or she has taken his or her own membership somewhere else. So, I think this issue is affecting the local church. And then I wonder if we can get help on that part.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you very much. It seems that the observations are somewhat balanced and maybe I don't want to say canceling each other out but balancing each other. And I'm wondering if you want to call the question on this one? Please open the voting.

TODD MCFARLAND: All right, Madam Chair, we will be opening here momentarily.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay, very good. Excellent start. And we are voting on the motion to amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 10, Services and Other Meetings, pages 120 to 121, Unauthorized Speakers, as found in the Session Agenda, item number 401, and that is found on pages 53, 54, and 55, it appears, maybe.

ELLA S SIMMONS: This item requires only a simple majority, whereas the Constitution and Bylaws items require two-thirds. By the way, of which we got well over two-thirds for each item. But with this we have almost 91% in favor with 1,336 votes "yes" and 137 votes "no," which is just a little more than 9 percent. So, this carries. Thank you very much. It's carried. We're going to the next item.

GERSON SANTOS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Agenda item number 402, as you can see on the screen, it's listed as 403-22 and I believe you, Madam Chair, will be very happy to see this because we are to facilitate the work of the school board and the rationale behind this recommendation is that it removes the confusing term "union school board" and replaces it with "multi-constituent school board" to be more consistent with the rest of the section. So, you can see on the screen, you have the item presented there and let me show the next slide where the change is. You can see the word "union" crossed out and then you have "multi-constituent." We don't want to have confusion with the union board of education or something like that. I believe you understand what they're trying to do here to

clarify when you have more than one church sponsoring the school. So, we have a multi-constituent school board. I move, Madam Chair, that we accept this recommendation.

ELLE S SIMMONS: is there a second? Thank you. I want to be sure I'm hearing a second actually, and not my echo. Does multi-constituent translate neatly in most languages? Or do you need to give a word of clarification?

GERSON SANTOS: I believe this would be easily translated into Portuguese.

ELLA S SIMMONS: But we're just simply saying more than one constituent body serving the school.

GERSON SANTOS: This will be for those translating the *Church Manual* in their own languages.

ELLA S SIMMONS: that's what we want to hear. Okay. Thank you so much. We have the motion; we have the second. We are looking to see movement at the mic. There is none, so we're going to vote on the amendment.

TODD MCFARLAND: Madam chair, we are opening it up.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Ok, get those devices ready, and if you are in favor of it, if you support you are saying "yes" to this motion to amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 8, Local Church Officers and Organizations, pages 90 to 92, Church School Board as found in the Session Agenda and explained here.

TODD MCFARLAND: And Madam Chair, it is open for voting.

TODD MCFARLAND: All right. We are closing it and we will display it as soon as it's ready.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay. We have 99, a little more than 99 percent, at 1,502 votes for "yes" and 9 "no" votes. So, it is carried. Thank you. Brother Gerson, maybe we can pick up a little steam with a few of these.

GERSON SANTOS: It looks like we can move faster now.

ELLA S SIMMONS: We're ready to go.

GERSON SANTOS: All right. The next item is number 403 but you can see on the screen it's number 404-22 because of where they come from. And this item is just to be consistent throughout the *Church Manual*. We've been using two ways to describe the baptismal ceremony or baptismal service; so, the recommendation is for us to be consistent. Recommendation is to approve a directive to amend the *Church Manual* where appropriate by replacing baptismal ceremony with baptismal service. In areas —this is very important—in the areas of the world where baptismal ceremony is preferred, due to differences and other languages, baptismal ceremony may be retained, as long as the term is used consistently throughout the text of the *Church Manual*. In other words, Madam Chair, we expect the *Church Manual* to be consistent in any language that is presented. Therefore, I move, Madam Chair, we accept this recommendation.

ELLA S SIMMONS: All right. a second for this motion? Second, we've heard. Scanning, looking for movement toward microphones. Seeing none, I think we are ready to vote.

TODD MCFARLAND: All right, Madam Chair, it's being opened up as we speak.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay. Please get those devices working. Vote “yes” if you want to approve a directive to amend the *Church Manual* where appropriate by replacing baptismal ceremony with baptismal service. In areas of the world where baptismal ceremony is preferred do to differences in other languages, baptismal ceremony may be retained as long as the term is used consistently throughout the text of the *Church Manual*.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Excellent. Let's move on to this one. Let's see if we can get those votes up quickly. And the music is beautiful again.

ELLA S SIMMONS: The time is gone when we hit 15. Let's close it out.

TODD MCFARLAND: All right, Madam Chair, it's being closed out, and will display as soon as it's available.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay. Here we are. 97.9 percent, almost 98 percent. "Yes" votes are 1,478, "no" votes 32. It carries. It is carried. Thank you, Brother Gerson. We have a point of order showing. Crystal Knight, Welsh Mission, Trans-European Division, microphone number 2. What is your point of order?

CRYSTAL KNIGHT: It would be item 404, would have been 403, it was 403 on the screen, but it's 404 in the agenda.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay, this is not a point of order, just a clarification?

CRYSTAL KNIGHT: Just a clarification. Yes, please.

ELLA S SIMMONS: And it is confusing. It was explained earlier that we have the numbers that you see, the running numbers in your agenda, but then there's a reference number that's different, and that has to do with the processing number, where it began, and so we do want to make sure that those are accurate. Please double-check, Brother Secretary, if there's a mistake, we will acknowledge that now, but I think that's the difference that was explained a little earlier. It is confusing when you look at that, right?

CRYSTAL KNIGHT: Okay.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay. Thank you, Sister Crystal.

GERSON SANTOS: Yes, Madam Chair, you're totally right and we apologize for that but that's the way the Church has been operating and we prepared this presentation a long time ago before the agenda was done. And so, this is why we had the item number. The one that we're going to be talking about now is 404. That's item number 404. And you see on the screen, the reference numbers 420-22.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Right, so the agenda number and the processing reference number are not the same number.

GERSON SANTOS: Exactly.

ELLA S SIMMONS: I think because both numbers happen to be 400 series numbers it is confusing.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Yes.

GERSON SANTOS: And now we are going to see that they are distanced more as they move on in the agenda.

ELLA S SIMMONS: That helps.

GERSON SANTOS: But it's a good observation. Again, this is number 404, and you see on the screen the reference number is 420-22. The rationale behind this recommendation, Madam Chair, is that this amendment allows for electronic participation in church board meetings. This is actually something that most churches have already been doing for a long time and especially during the pandemic, this became a common practice. So, we've recommended amending the *Church Manual*, Chapter 10, serves another meeting page, 131. And this is the addition we have at the end of the paragraph that describes that each Church should determine at business meeting the number of board members who must be present to constitute a quorum at future meetings. Then it's the new amendment that we put at the end of the paragraph. Where allowed by local law, board members may participate in meeting, by means of an electronic conference or similar communication, by which all persons participating can communicate with each other at the same time and participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at such a meeting." I move, Madam Chair.

ELLA S SIMMONS: All right. We have the motion before us. Is there a second? Yes. All right. I am going to trust my vision and go right to the question. All right.

TODD MCFARLAND: All right, Madam Chair, it is being opened up. Local churches can now experience the joy of Zoom like the rest of us.

ELLA S SIMMONS: That's it. To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 10, Services and Other Meetings, page 131 Meetings as found in the Session Agenda, and you have that, and it has been explained.

TODD MCFARLAND: It is open, Madam Chair. People should be able to vote now.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Okay. We are voting. And now I see on microphone number 1 Daniel Chuunga, Southern Zambia Union Conference in the SID. We are voting, but we will hear you because it's possible that I didn't see that you were moving toward the microphone previously.

DANIEL CHUUNGA: Thank you, Madam Chair. My observation is that I have a concern with the wording where the local law. What if there is no local law? The implication is that you can't have that kind of meeting. For this reason, I ask you to consider rephrasing that part of the wording. Thank you.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Thank you, my brother. I believe the implication is where there is local law pertaining to this, but we'll turn to the Secretary.

GERSON SANTOS: Yes, Madam Chair, that's exactly the purpose. If there is a prohibition of the local law for that to happen, of course that would be a problem. But in the case there is no law, there wouldn't be any problem with this recommendation. That's the way I understand.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Yes. While we are voting, I'm going to ask Dr. Ginger Ketting Weller to move toward the microphone closest to her or microphone of her choice to be prepared to give us our closing prayer this afternoon.

ELLA S SIMMONS: Excellent. We now have the results with 1,450 votes "yes", almost 99 percent, and 16 votes "no," so this one has carried as well. I think we're going to have to cut it off there because we are going to end on time; so, I want to thank you for staying awake in the afternoon and giving this your best. Let's stand together and praise God. And Dr. Ketting Weller will give us our closing prayer.

[Prayer by Ginger Kettering-Weller]

ELLA S SIMMONS: Amen. I failed to introduce Dr. Ketting Weller as the president of AIIAS, the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies in the Philippines. Enjoy your meal and get a great rest, see you tonight. We are going to start back at 7 p.m. tonight. Thank you. Enjoy your meal.

[End of afternoon session.]