

**BRITISH UNION CONFERENCE  
OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS**

**CONSTITUTION**

**AUGUST 1981**

# C O N S T I T U T I O N

of the

## BRITISH UNION CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

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### ARTICLE 1 - Name

THIS organization shall be known as the British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and is hereinafter referred to as "This Union Conference". This Union Conference functions as a member and constituent unit of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists - Northern European Division, and acknowledges in all church matters the authority and leadership of such organizations.

### ARTICLE 2 - Territory

The territory of this Union Conference shall comprise England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Eire, and all adjacent British Islands.

### ARTICLE 3 - Object

The object of this Union Conference is to proclaim the everlasting Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and to teach the commandments of God as the supreme rule of life.

### ARTICLE 4 - Composition of Union Conference

This Union Conference shall be composed of such local conferences and missions within its territory as have been, or shall be, properly organized and received into this Union Conference.

### ARTICLE 5 - Sessions

- (a) This Union Conference shall hold a regular session at an interval of five years at such time and place as the Executive Committee shall determine, and a notice of such session shall be published at least four weeks before the appointed time in the Union Conference paper.
- (b) In the event of special conditions arising which would make it advisable to postpone the calling of a regular session, the Executive Committee may postpone such session for a period not exceeding two years, provided that a regular session shall not be postponed without the consent of at least two-thirds of the members of the Executive Committee expressed by personal vote or by signature to a resolution in writing submitted to the members of the Executive Committee. Separate copies of the resolution may be signed for this purpose.
- (c) The Executive Committee may call a special session of this Union Conference at such time and place as it deems proper, by a like notice as for regular sessions, and the transactions of such special sessions shall have the same force as those of the regular sessions.
- (d) Such a special session may elect any such officers or other persons or committees and transact any such business and do any such other act as under this Constitution a regular session or the Executive Committee between sessions may elect, transact, or do.

- (a) The standing committees for the Union Session shall be nominated by a special committee consisting of a General Conference or Division representative who may be present, who shall act as chairman, and five representatives from each local conference, and two representatives from each mission. The local (conference) representatives on this special committee shall be appointed by their respective delegations at the Union Session

#### ARTICLE 6 - Delegates to Session

The delegates to a session of this Union Conference shall be:

- (a) All members of the Executive Committee of this Union Conference.
- (b) All ordained ministers holding regular credentials from this Union Conference or duly organized local conferences and missions within its territory.
- (c) All members of the Executive Committees of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and of the Northern European Division who may be present.
- (d) Such persons as are duly appointed by the Executive Committee of each local conference and mission. Each local conference and mission shall be entitled to appoint one delegate by reason of its organization and one delegate for each fifty churchmembers or fraction thereof in such local conference or mission.
- (e) Such other persons as may be present who shall be received as delegates by vote of the session.

#### ARTICLE 7 - Voting

Each delegate shall be entitled to one vote on any question. The chairman of the session shall in case of equality of votes have a casting vote.

#### ARTICLE 8 - Powers of Session

- (a) This Union Conference in session shall have power to determine all matters and things for the order and good administration of this Union Conference and the regulation of its affairs, including the management and disposal of or dealing with all real and personal property and revenues held or proposed to be acquired for or on behalf or for the use, benefit or purposes of this Union Conference, subject however to any specific trusts relating thereto and for such purposes to give to the Union legal corporation or to any company corporation or person to whom any such real and personal property and revenues shall be vested such directions with reference thereto and as to the management and disposal thereof as this Union Conference shall deem expedient in harmony with Article 20. This Union Conference in session may make rules to govern its own procedure.
- (b) This Union Conference in session shall have power to make adjustments in the boundaries of the local conferences and missions under its jurisdiction and to accept into membership such new conferences and missions as may be proposed by the Executive Committee of this Union. These adjustments in boundaries and the acceptance into membership of conferences and missions shall require a two-thirds majority vote.

#### ARTICLE 9 - Credentials and Licences

- (a) This Union Conference in regular session shall determine who are the approved ministers within the jurisdiction thereof, grant suitable credentials to such

ministers and grant licences to those whom it shall consider suitable to labour in the cause of this Union Conference, and recommend for ordination such men as shall have given proof of their call to the ministry. Between sessions the Executive Committee is authorized to perform such duties.

- (b) Any credentials, licences, or certificates granted or issued by this Union Conference in session or by the Executive Committee shall remain in force and be valid until the next regular session unless previously terminated by this Union Conference in special session or by the Executive Committee.

#### ARTICLE 10 - Election

- (a) This Union Conference in regular session shall elect:
  - (i) Executive Officers
  - (ii) Departmental Directors
  - (iii) Elective members of the Executive Committee of this Union Conference
  - (iv) Auditors as provided for in Article 19, Section (b)
  - (v) Officers of duly organized missions within this Union.
- (b) Persons thus elected shall hold their respective offices or appointments until the next regular session of this Union Conference, except for missions' appointments, which are by Constitution biennial, unless their offices or appointments are previously terminated by this Union Conference in special session, or by the Executive Committee in counsel with the Division officers.
- (c) This Union Conference in session and the Executive Committee between sessions may establish such other offices, positions, and committees as may be determined, prescribe the duties and functions thereof and elect persons thereto and vary or terminate any such office, position, or committee and may remove any member of any such committee.
- (d) This Union Conference in session and the Executive Committee between sessions may elect, nominate, or appoint trustees of any real or personal property or revenues mentioned in Article 8.
- (e) The Executive Committee of this Union Conference shall recommend to the respective boards and management of Union institutions the appointment of their officers, bursars, editors, as may be required, within the six months that follow a Union Session.

#### ARTICLE 11 - Officers

- (a) The Executive officers of this Union Conference shall be a president, a secretary, and a treasurer. The secretary and treasurer may be one person known as secretary-treasurer. There shall be such other officers as this Union Conference in session or the Executive Committee may determine.
- (b) All officers of this Union Conference shall hold office until the next regular session of this Union Conference or until their successors are elected, excepting where appointments are by Constitution biennial, and unless their appointments are previously terminated by this Union Conference in special session or by the Executive Committee.
- (c) The president shall supervise the general work of this Union Conference; open and preside at all sessions of this Union Conference and also at all meetings of the Executive Committee, but should he so desire he shall have power to call to the

chair a representative of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists or of the Northern European Division, or a member of the Union Conference Executive Committee.

- (d) The secretary shall keep a record of all proceedings of the sessions of this Union Conference and of the meetings of the Executive Committee and perform such other duties as usually pertain to his office.
- (e) The treasurer shall receive all moneys belonging to this Union Conference, keep an account of same, and disburse them as the Executive Committee shall direct, and make full report thereof at all sessions of this Union Conference and at such other times as may be required by the Executive Committee and perform such other duties as usually pertain to his office.

#### ARTICLE 12 - Departmental Directors

The departmental directors shall work under the direction of the Executive Committee and shall occupy an advisory relationship to the field.

#### ARTICLE 13 - Appointments

This Union Conference in session and the Executive Committee between sessions

- (a) shall appoint such agents, ministers, missionaries, and other persons as may be necessary to carry on the work of this Union Conference; and
- (b) may terminate or vary any such appointment.

#### ARTICLE 14 - Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Executive officers of this Union Conference, the presidents of local conferences, and organized mission fields within this Union Conference, the directors of the organized departments of this Union Conference, the secretary of the legal corporation, the managers or Heads of Union institutions, the Newbold College principal, the chief editor of church publications, and up to five elective members as may be voted at the Union Session.

#### ARTICLE 15 - Authority of Executive Committee

- (a) Between sessions the Executive Committee shall manage the affairs of this Union Conference and may exercise such of the powers of this Union Conference in session as under this constitution are not exclusively exercisable by this Union Conference in session, but subject to this Constitution and any directions as to policy or otherwise and any regulations given or made by this Union Conference in session.
- (b) In particular and without prejudice to the general powers conferred by Section (a), the Executive Committee may between sessions exercise the powers of this Union Conference in session under Article 8 with regard to the real and personal property and revenues therein referred to.
- (c) The Executive Committee between sessions, in counsel with the Division officers, may remove from office, for just and adequate cause, any officer of this Union Conference or from the Executive Committee any member thereof, provided that such action has the consent of at least two-thirds of the members of the full Executive Committee by personal vote.

#### ARTICLE 16 - Meetings and Notices

- (a) Meetings of the Executive Committee may be called at any time by the president or in his absence by the secretary upon the written request of three or more of the members of the committee.
- (b) Any seven members of the Executive Committee including the chairman shall, after due notice to available members, constitute a quorum and shall be empowered to transact any necessary business.
- (c) Minority meetings of less than seven members of the Executive Committee may be held for the transaction of necessary urgent business, but actions at such meetings shall not be final until the minutes of such meetings have been approved in regular session of the Executive Committee.

#### ARTICLE 17 - Annual Meeting

- (a) The Executive Committee shall hold an Annual Meeting with as full a representation of its members as possible.
- (b) The Executive Committee at its annual meeting
  - (i) shall nominate boards of management of all institutions of this Union Conference
  - (ii) shall examine and if necessary adjust the wages schedule and authorize the annual budgets and shall set all wage rates in harmony with the schedule
  - (iii) may transact any other business.

#### ARTICLE 18 - Finance, Funds

- (a) The funds of this Union Conference shall be as follows:
  - (i) A tithe of the tithe receipts of the local conferences and local missions within its territory
  - (ii) Special donations for work within its territory
  - (iii) A tithe of the profits of institutions under the control of this Union Conference
  - (iv) Such percentage of the annual profits of these institutions, after deducting the tithe, as may be arranged by joint counsel of the Executive Committee of this Union Conference and the Boards of Management of the institutions.
- (b) This Union Conference shall receive trust funds for the Northern European Division of the General Conference as follows:
  - (i) Funds received through local conferences and local missions from the churches, Sabbath schools, societies, and individuals, for missionary purposes.
  - (ii) Special donations from any source
  - (iii) A tithe of the tithe of this Union Conference

- (iv) Such percentage of the tithe of conferences and local missions and of the profits and pay-rolls of institutions as may be arranged by the Executive Committee of this Union Conference in harmony with the Northern European Division of the General Conference policy for the operation of the Retirement Fund for the support of such aged and infirm workers and for such dependant widows and orphans of workers as may be voted by the Executive Committee of this Union Conference.

#### ARTICLE 19 - Auditors

- (a) The auditor of the Northern European Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists shall be recognized as the auditor of the books kept by the Union Conference treasurer and shall audit the accounts of such major institutions within the Union Conference as the Division Committee may direct.
- (b) At each regular session this Union Conference shall elect such auditors as may be required, whose duty it shall be to examine the accounts and vouchers of each and all of the local conferences, missions and institutions under the jurisdiction of this Union Conference, at such times as the Executive Committee or the president may direct, and to report to the Executive Committee of this Union Conference or the Executive Committee of the local conference.

#### ARTICLE 20 - Trustees

- (a) The legal corporation, Seventh-day Adventist Association Limited, formed and controlled by this Union Conference shall be the regular trustee for this Union Conference to acquire, hold, manage, dispose of or deal with real and personal property for and on behalf of or for the use, benefit, or purposes of this Union Conference, but subject to any specific trusts relating to such property and generally to conform with such directions, if any, as are from time to time given to it by or on behalf of this Union Conference.
- (b) The Irish Good Health Association Limited, a corporation formed and controlled by this Union Conference to represent and conduct all legal matters appertaining to our denominational work in Eire, shall be the regular trustee for this Union Conference to acquire, hold, manage, dispose of, or deal with real and personal property for and on behalf of, or for the use, benefit, or purposes of this Union Conference in Eire, but subject to any specific trusts relating to such property and generally to conform with such directions, if any, as are from time to time given to it by or on behalf of this Union Conference.

#### ARTICLE 21 - Amendments

This Constitution may be amended by a resolution of this Union Conference in session passed by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the delegates who vote. No amendment shall be moved except with the consent of the Executive Committee unless notice thereof shall be given to the secretary not later than two calendar months before the date of holding the sessions and the notice of convening the session shall set out any intended amendment. If it is proposed to amend this Constitution at a special session, notice of the proposed amendment shall be given in the call for such session.

#### ARTICLE 22 - Dissolution

- (a) The dissolution of this Union Conference may be effected by a three-fourths vote of the delegates present and voting at any regular or special session of this Union Conference, provided that if it is proposed to dissolve the

Union Conference at a special session, notice of the proposal to dissolve shall be given in the call for special session.

- (b) After all claims against this Union Conference have been satisfied, any remaining funds shall be transferred to the Northern European Division of Seventh-day Adventists.

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(Issued and printed by the authority of the Executive Committee of the British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.)

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