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

**CONSTITUTION**

**JULY 1991**



### **ARTICLE 1 - Name**

The name of 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 is a member and constituent unit of the Trans-European Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

### **ARTICLE 2 - Territory**

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

### **ARTICLE 3 - Purpose**

The purpose of this Union Conference is to proclaim the everlasting Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to teach the commandments of God as the supreme rule of life and to persuade people to become His disciples and responsible members of the church.

### **ARTICLE 4 - Membership 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. A notice of such session shall be published at least four weeks before the time appointed in the Union Conference paper.
- (b) At least fifty-one percent (51%) of the authorized delegates must be present at the opening of any regular or extraordinary Constituency Meeting to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Once the meeting is declared open the delegates remaining present shall constitute a quorum.

- (c) In the event of 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. In such a case this shall require the consent of at least two thirds (2/3) 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.
- (d) The Executive Committee may call an extraordinary session of this Union Conference at such a place as it deems proper, by a like notice as for regular sessions when:
  - i) it is deemed necessary by the Executive Committee, or
  - ii) it is voted by the delegates at any constituency meeting, or
  - iii) it is requested by the Trans-European Division Committee.

The transactions of such extraordinary sessions shall have the same authority as those of the regular sessions.

- (e) An extraordinary 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.

#### **ARTICLE 6 - Delegates to Session**

Each member organization shall be represented at this union conference constituency meetings by duly accredited delegates as follows:

- (a)
  - i) Each local conference/mission shall be entitled to one (1) delegate without regard to membership and one (1) additional delegate for each fifty (50) church members or major fraction thereof.
  - ii) Such delegates shall be chosen by the respective local conference/mission executive committees.
- (b) In addition, delegates at large shall participate in the union conference constituency meetings as follows:
  - i) The individual members of the executive committee of this union conference.

- ii) Members of the General Conference Executive Committee, who may be present at any constituency meeting of this union conference. The number of such delegates representing the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists shall not exceed two percent (2%) of the total number of delegates provided for hereinabove in Section (a) i).
  - iii) Such other persons from the union conference staff, church institutions owned and operated by the union, and local conferences/missions, as may be recommended by the union conference executive committee and accepted by the delegates in session; the total number of delegates from this category not to exceed fifteen percent (15%) of the total number of regular delegates provided for hereinabove in Section (a) i).
- (c) All delegates with voting rights appointed to represent the members of this union conference at any constituency meeting shall be members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

#### **ARTICLE 7 - Voting**

- (a) 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. Voting shall be by ballot when determined by vote of session.
- (b) All delegates must be present in person at any constituency meeting in order to be eligible to vote. There shall be no voting by proxy.

#### **ARTICLE 8 - Authority of Session**

- (a) This Union Conference in session shall be authorized 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 be authorized 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 Conference. These adjustments in boundaries and the acceptance into membership of conferences and missions shall require a two-thirds majority vote.

#### **ARTICLE 9 - Session Committees**

- (a) i) A recommendations committee shall be appointed for each regularly scheduled constituency meeting and where required for extraordinary session. It shall consist of eleven (11) representatives from the South England Conference, seven (7) representatives from the North British Conference, and two (2) representatives from each mission and the president of the Trans-European Division or his designee who shall serve as chairman.
- ii) The members of the recommendations committee shall be appointed by their respective delegates during the first business session.
- iii) The recommendations committee shall nominate and the constituency meeting shall elect where required:
- i) a nominating committee;
  - ii) a constitution committee;
  - iii) a credentials and licences committee;
  - iv) a plans committee;
  - v) other committees as necessary.
- (b) The nominating committee shall consist of not less than seventeen (17) and not more than twenty-one (21) members, with the president of the Trans-European Division or his designee serving as chairman.
- (c) Each regularly scheduled constituency meeting of this Union Conference shall elect a standing constitution committee.

This committee shall function between the regularly scheduled sessions of the constituency and shall submit its reports and detailed recommendations to the Executive Committee for consideration by the constitution committee at the next session.

- (d)
  - i) This Union Conference in regular session on the recommendation of the credentials and licences committee shall determine who are the approved ministers within the jurisdiction thereof, grant suitable credentials and licences to those whom it shall consider suitable to serve in this Union Conference, and recommend for ordination such persons as shall have given proof of their call to the ministry. Between sessions the Executive Committee is authorized to perform such duties.
  - ii) 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 extraordinary session or by the Executive Committee.

#### **ARTICLE 10 - Election**

- (a) This Union Conference in regular session shall elect:
  - i) Executive Officers
  - ii) Departmental Directors and Associates
  - iii) Elective members of the Executive Committee of this Union Conference.
  - iv) 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 extraordinary 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 Conference Session.

#### ARTICLE 11 - Officers

- (a) The Executive Officers of this Union Conference shall be a president, a secretary, treasurer and vice-president, if such is elected. The secretary and the treasurer may be one individual.
- (b) The president is the chief executive officer and shall act as chairman of constituency meetings and the executive committee, and work in the general interests of the union as the executive committee may advise. In his leadership he shall adhere to the policies of the Trans-European Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and work in close counsel with the Trans-European Division Committee.
- (c) The secretary shall work under the direction of the executive committee and shall act as vice-chairman of the executive committee. It shall be the duty of the secretary to keep the minutes of the union conference constituency meetings and of the executive committee meetings; to furnish copies of these minutes to all members of the executive committee and to the Division officers to collect such data as may be desired by the president or by the executive committee; and to perform such other duties as usually pertain to the office.
- (d) The treasurer shall work under the direction of the executive committee. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive all funds, to disburse them in harmony with the actions of the executive committee, to remit all required funds to the Division/General Conference, in harmony with Trans-European division policy, and to render such financial statements at regular intervals as may be desired by the president of the union conference or by the executive committee. Copies of these financial statements shall be furnished to the Trans-European Division offices. Bank accounts approved by the executive committee shall be operated by the treasurer and/or such other individuals as may be authorised by the executive committee.
- (e) A vice-president may be elected to assist the president with specialised areas of administration in this Union Conference.
- (f) 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 extraordinary session or by the Executive Committee.



## **ARTICLE 12 - Departmental Directors**

The departmental directors and associates shall work under the direction of the Executive Committee and shall occupy an advisory relationship to the local conferences and missions.

## **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 fulfil the purpose 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 the official church paper of this Union Conference, and up to nine elective members, seven of whom shall be lay persons, 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 authority 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 authority conferred by Section (a), the Executive Committee may between sessions exercise the authority 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 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 Trans-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 Trans-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 dependent widows and orphans of workers as may be voted by the Executive Committee of this Union Conference.

## **ARTICLE 19 - Budget, Salary Review & Audit**

- (a) This Union Conference shall prepare an annual budget in harmony with the policies of the Trans-European Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
  
- (b) The executive committee shall constitute an Employee Remuneration Committee to review annually the salary and expense of all the employees of this union conference and set salary rates for the subsequent year.

- (c) The General Conference Auditing Services shall be recognized as the auditor of the financial records kept by the Union Conference treasurer and shall audit the accounts of the Missions and institutions within the Union 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 World-Wide Advent Mission (Ireland), a corporation formed and controlled by this Union Conference to represent and conduct all legal matters appertaining to our denominational work in The Republic of Ireland, 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 the Republic of Ireland, 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**

The Constitution of this Union Conference may be amended at any duly called Constituency Meeting by two-thirds vote of the delegates present and voting. All proposed amendments shall be considered by the Standing Committee on constitution before being approved by the Session.

If it is proposed to amend the Constitution at any extraordinary Constituency Meeting, notice of such proposed amendments shall be given specifically in conjunction with publication of notice such special 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 an extraordinary 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 Trans-European Division of Seventh-day Adventists.