

GENERAL ASSEMBLY STANDING RULES
EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 2008

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS RECOMMENDED BY THE
JOINT COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION AND STANDING RULES
TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE NCC AND CWS
FOR ACTION IN NOVEMBER 2010

1 **GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE**
2 **CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE U.S.A. AND**
3 **CHURCH WORLD SERVICE**

4
5 **STANDING RULES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**
6 **Revised November __, ~~2008~~ 2010**

7
8
9
10 (Capitalized terms used and not otherwise defined herein shall have the same meanings
11 defined for them in the Constitution of the General Assembly of the National Council of the
12 Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. and Church World Service)

13
14 **ARTICLE I — PROCEDURES FOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETINGS**

15
16
17 ***Section 1. Calendar of Meetings***

18
19 The General Assembly shall receive a schedule of dates for each quadrennium as mutually
20 determined by both the NCC Governing Board and the CWS Board of Directors.
21

22
23 ***Section 2. Preparation and Adoption of Agenda***

24
25 The General Assembly Planning Committee, in consultation with the Committee on
26 Collaboration, shall prepare an agenda for each meeting of the General Assembly. The
27 agenda shall be designed to advance the total welfare of the General Assembly, NCC and
28 CWS, in light of circumstances existing at the time. The Planning Committee will provide
29 appropriate updates to the NCC Governing Board and the CWS Board of Directors
30 regarding the upcoming agenda. The Committee on Collaboration will assign specific
31 portions of the agenda to the respective Co-Moderators.
32

33
34 ***Section 3. Procedures for Reports and Announcements***

35
36 A. The Committees of the General Assembly, the NCC Governing Board and the CWS Board
37 of Directors, when bringing reports to the General Assembly, shall indicate in each such
38 report:

- 39
40 (1) an outline of the procedure that was followed in preparing the report;
41 (2) the attendance when the report was adopted; and
42 (3) any negative votes or abstentions when the report was adopted.
43

44 B. The General Assembly, when making announcement of actions on matters of public interest
45 shall indicate an analysis of the voting on these matters, including the number of approvals,
46 disapprovals, and abstentions.

47 **Section 4. Procedures for Elections of Additional Officers**

48
49 In the event that the General Assembly at any time determines to add additional officers to
50 those specifically named in the Constitution, any nominations for individuals to fill such offices
51 shall be processed through the Nominations Committee and brought to the General Assembly
52 for a vote, provided that:

- 53
54 (1) the person nominated has consented to the nomination; and
55
56 (2) the person nominated has the approval of his/her communion.
57

58 **Section 5. Procedures for Committee on Reference**

- 59
60 A. The General Assembly shall have a Committee on Reference which shall be composed of
61 up to twelve delegates of the General Assembly appointed by the Co-Moderators during the
62 initial session of the meeting to serve only for the duration of that meeting. The Co-
63 Moderators shall also appoint the chair of the Committee.
64
65 B. Provision shall be made during each of the first two plenary sessions of the meeting of the
66 General Assembly for the introduction of new business. Any proposals which are introduced
67 by delegates to the General Assembly shall be in written form. All new business shall be
68 referred without debate to the Committee on Reference for study and report.
69
70 C. If time and circumstances permit, the Committee on Reference may invite proponents and
71 opponents of any proposed resolution to speak to the Committee concerning the text and
72 intent, but the Committee may deliberate in executive session.
73
74 D. Provision shall be made in a later session of the General Assembly meeting for a report
75 from the Committee on Reference. Substantive discussion and consideration of items of
76 new business by the Assembly shall be scheduled by the Co-Moderators so as not to
77 interfere with the consideration of previously scheduled agenda items.
78
79 E. With regard to any item of new business which requires the expenditure of funds not
80 previously budgeted or the allocation of staff time not previously scheduled, such item shall
81 be referred to the NCC General Secretary and the CWS Executive Director for their review
82 and comment. The Committee on Reference will then consult with the General Secretary
83 and the Executive Director and report to the General Assembly any recommendation of the
84 Committee with which the General Secretary and the Executive Director agree.
85
86

87 **Section 6. Guests and Visitors to General Assembly Meetings**

- 88
89 A. It is desirable for selected guests to be invited to meetings, granted visitor status and
90 recognized by the Co-Moderators, including particularly, but not limited to, such persons as
91
92 (1) communion executives and church leaders in the geographical area and
93
94 (2) presidents and chief executive officers of ecumenical agencies and organizations in
95 the geographical area.
96
97 B. Guests and properly accredited representatives of the press shall be welcome to attend
98 open sessions of the General Assembly and its Committees.

99
100
101
102
103
104
105
106
107
108
109
110
111
112
113
114
115
116
117
118
119
120
121
122
123
124
125
126
127
128
129
130
131
132
133
134
135
136
137
138
139
140
141
142
143
144
145
146
147
148
149
150
151
152

ARTICLE II – PROCEDURES FOR MEMBERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION

Section 1. Certification of Eligibility

A church body may be recognized by the General Assembly as a Christian communion eligible for election to membership in the General Assembly and therefore the NCC and CWS (hereafter referred to as the General Assembly) upon its acceptance of the nature and purposes of the General Assembly as set forth in the Preamble and body of the Constitution and upon satisfaction of the following criteria:

- A. It shall have a basis of association on which the communion exists as a Christian body. Such basis of association may be a constitution or may be in the form of a creed, statement of faith, covenant, or other form of confession.
- B. It shall have identity as an autonomous and stable church body within the United States.
- C. It shall have demonstrated a spirit of cooperation with, and respect for, the convictions of other communions.
- D. It shall have a definite form of church government including a responsible central body and a general agency or agencies for the furtherance of its work and for the training of its ordained ministry or similar ministry leadership.
- E. It shall have a communicant membership of at least 20,000 persons and at least 50 local churches, unless special circumstances warrant exceptions.

Section 2. Recommendation for Membership

The Membership ~~and Ecclesial Relations~~ Committee may recommend an eligible non-member communion for election to membership in the General Assembly provided that the Membership ~~and Ecclesial Relations~~ Committee has notified the General Assembly that the non-member communion:

- A. has satisfied requirements as set forth in Section (1), above,
- B. conforms to the provisions of Article III, Section 2 of the Constitution,
- C. has expressed a desire to become a member in community with other member communions; and
- D. understands its commitment to the other member communions, including participation in leadership and financial responsibilities.

Section 3. Recognition, Representation and Participation

A. Recognition of Communions Formed Through Unions:

A communion resulting from the union of one or more communions which have been members of the General Assembly with one or more communions not previously members shall be recognized as a member of the General Assembly, upon receipt by the Assembly of a statement from the new communion that it accepts the provisions of Article III of the Constitution and that it desires to become a member of the General Assembly on the basis of that Article.

153 A communion resulting from the union of two or more communions, each of which has been a
154 member of the General Assembly, shall be recognized as a member of the General Assembly,
155 upon receipt by the Assembly of a statement of intention of the new communion to fulfill the
156 obligations of General Assembly membership.

157
158 **B. Communion Representation**

159
160 The nature of representation from member communions and the relative authority of their
161 delegates and other representatives on boards and committees of the General Assembly may
162 differ as between communions and, except as otherwise provided in the Constitution, is subject to
163 definition and qualification only by the communion concerned. All delegates and other
164 representatives, however, have equal status, responsibility and vote on the General Assembly
165 bodies to which they have been elected or appointed.

166
167
168 **Section 4. Seating of Member Communion Representation**

169
170 The member communion representation and subsequent modifications thereof shall be seated when
171 the Membership [and Ecclesial Relations](#) Committee certifies that the communion has satisfied the
172 requirement for representation under Article V of the Constitution.

173
174 **Section 5. Voting**

175
176 On matters providing for vote by communions, each communion shall be entitled to cast one and
177 only one vote. On all other matters, each delegate to the General Assembly shall be entitled to cast
178 one and only one vote.

179
180 **Section 6. Privilege of a Communion to Register Dissent or Abstention**

181
182 A member communion, may, through action of its delegates to the General Assembly, formally
183 register its dissent or abstention from any action. The registration of dissent or abstention shall be
184 made prior to the adjournment of the meeting at which action is taken, recorded in the minutes, and
185 (if the communion so requests) also recorded in each publication published by the General
186 Assembly of that action.

187
188
189 **ARTICLE III – PROCEDURES FOR DEVELOPMENT**
190 **AND ISSUANCE OF DOCUMENTS AND STATEMENTS**

191
192 ***Section 1. General Stipulations***

193
194 **A.** The General Assembly may formulate and issue documents and statements of several types
195 to member communions and to the general public. These Rules define terms and prescribe
196 the procedures to be followed with respect to such documents and statements, which are
197 classified into the following categories:

198			
199			
200			
201			
202			
203	<u>Policy Statements</u>	<u>Position Papers</u>	<u>Study Papers</u>
204			
205	Policy Statements	Resolutions	Study Documents

• Revised Nov. 2008 •

206 Issue Papers Consultation Reports
207 Messages
208

209 All documents issued in the name of the General Assembly must conform to one of these
210 categories and must receive the specified approvals or clearances before issuance.
211

212 B. It is recognized that, in the course of conducting programs for which they are assigned
213 responsibility, the NCC Governing Board and the CWS Board of Directors (collectively
214 “Boards”), and their respective Commissions and Committees develop numerous analytical
215 materials for internal and constituency use as well as a variety of informational and
216 interpretative releases for public use. These rules are not intended to prescribe procedures
217 for the development and release of such material.
218

219 C. The General Assembly may appropriately issue in its own name:
220

- 221
- 222 • Policy Statements which are expressions of the General Assembly outlining its basic
223 policy conviction or position with respect to Christian principles and their general
224 application in today’s society and world.
225
 - 226 • Resolutions which make application to a specific field of principles or policies
227 previously approved by the General Assembly.
228

229

230 D. The General Assembly or a General Assembly Committee may appropriately issue in its own
231 name:
232

- 233
- 234 • Issue Papers, Messages, Study Documents and Consultation Reports which deal
235 with concerns and issues which are primarily in its area of responsibility, the
236 application of which is consistent with General Assembly policy.
237

238

239 E. An individual (with respect to a Committee item listed in subsection 1-D above) or group of at
240 least ten delegates (with respect to a General Assembly item listed in subsection 1-C or 1-D
241 above) participating in the General Assembly or a General Assembly Committee may file with
242 the Chairperson of the entity a minority report (or digest thereof with appropriate citation
243 made to enable a reader to secure the whole text), dissent, or protest and be assured of
244 attachment thereof in such document or statement. Whenever the issuance of a document
245 or statement shall be accompanied by a media release, the Co-Moderators shall assure that
246 such release contains appropriate reference to any minority report, dissent or protest
247 attached to such document or statement.
248

249

250

251

252 **Section 2. Policy Statements**
253
254
255

256 A. Definition A Policy Statement is an expression of the General Assembly outlining its
257 basic policy conviction or position with respect to Christian principles and their general
258 application to today's society and world. A General Assembly Policy Statement may be
259 approved only by the General Assembly, provided the prior approval of the NCC
260 Governing Board and the CWS Board of Directors has been obtained as described
261 below. Policy Statements are developed for the following purposes:

- for guidance of NCC and CWS and their program operations;
- for consideration by the member communions;
- for the influencing of public opinion.

266
267 A Policy Statement shall be concise. It shall be so phrased as not to bring into question
268 the Christian commitment of those who do not agree. Should any new statement
269 reiterate, elaborate upon or further refine any existing Policy Statement, the General
270 Assembly shall indicate at the time of its adoption whether it takes precedence over or
271 replaces all or part of the earlier statement.

272
273 B. The General Assembly may consider proposed Policy Statements or revisions or
274 rescissions of Policy Statements from the following sources:

- 275 1. A joint committee of NCC and CWS charged with developing and recommending a
276 Policy Statement which is affirmed by both Boards
277
- 278 2. A Policy Statement jointly initiated, developed and recommended by both the NCC
279 Governing Board and the CWS Board of Directors
280

281
282
283
284 C. The procedure for presentation of a proposed Policy Statement to the General
285 Assembly shall be as follows

286
287 (i) a sponsorship sheet, specifying the following, accompanies the proposed
288 Statement:

- 289 • originating body or persons;
- 290 • a statement that both the NCC Governing Board and the CWS Board
291 of Directors have approved the proposed Policy Statement; and
292 • proposed distribution and bodies to assume responsibility;

293
294
295 (ii) a supporting document, including the following, accompanies the
296 proposed Statement:

- 297 • identification of the circumstances or situation which makes the
298 Statement advisable and timely;
- 299 • specific purpose for Statement;
- 300 • theological basis of Statement;
- 301 • a brief exposition and evaluation of other major viewpoints on the issue
302 not embodied in the Statement;
- 303 • titles, dates, and nature of previous actions dealing with the same
304 subject which have been taken by the General Assembly and by its
305 member communions; and
306

• Revised Nov. 2008 •

- 307 • indication of whether it is to take precedence over or replace in whole
308 or in part an earlier Statement by the General Assembly;
- 309
- 310 iii) the text, accompanied by the sponsorship sheet and supporting
311 document, is submitted for a first reading in one meeting and brought
312 for action at a subsequent meeting; provided that the requirement for
313 a first reading may be waived by consent of three-fourths of the
314 delegates to the General Assembly present and voting upon
315 recommendation of the NCC Governing Board or the CWS Board of
316 Directors.
- 317

318 D. If substantive changes have been made in the text since first reading, the
319 Committee on Reference shall determine whether it is substantially the same
320 document and, if not, may either recommend to the General Assembly that the new
321 proposal be received for first reading only or that the substantive changes be
322 received for first reading only or that the substantive changes be offered on the floor
323 by the sponsoring body as committee amendments. If the amendments are
324 accepted without objection, a new first reading is not necessary. If objection to any
325 amendment is heard, the General Assembly, by majority vote, may order a new first
326 reading, postponing action until the next regular session of the General Assembly.

327

328 E. Immediately following the next regular session of the General Assembly at which
329 any proposed Policy Statement is given a first reading, the Co-Moderators shall
330 transmit copies of the proposed statement, sponsorship sheet, and supporting
331 document to all delegates to the Assembly and to the headquarters offices of all
332 member communions. All communions are to be requested to study the proposed
333 statement according to their own procedures, to submit suggestions with respect to
334 substance or editorial change to the Co-Moderators for transmission to the
335 sponsoring body and, at their individual discretion, formulate communion positions
336 with respect to the matter. A General Assembly delegate or Committee, a
337 communion or a Board may prepare an alternative view for circulation to the General
338 Assembly. Any changes to the first reading document must be approved by the NCC
339 Governing Board and the CWS Board of Directors in order for a second reading to
340 proceed. In addition, prior to a second reading of a proposed Policy Statement,
341 documentation must be presented setting forth all parties who have been consulted
342 and given input into the proposed Policy Statement, stating that all required
343 approvals of parties have been obtained to allow the proposed Policy Statement to
344 proceed to a second reading, and that all relevant notification requirements have
345 been fulfilled.

346

347 F. A Policy Statement adopted by the General Assembly must be approved by at
348 least a two-thirds vote of delegates present and voting, and must receive affirmative
349 votes equal to at least one-fourth of the total authorized number of General
350 Assembly delegates.

351 ***Section 3. Position Papers***

352

353

354
355
356
357
358
359
360
361
362
363
364
365
366
367
368
369
370
371
372
373
374
375
376
377
378
379
380
381
382
383
384
385
386
387
388
389
390
391
392
393
394
395
396
397
398
399
400
401
402
403
404
405

A. RESOLUTIONS

1. Definition: A General Assembly Resolution is an expression of the General Assembly or of one or more General Assembly Committees with respect to a current moral, ethical, or religious situation confronting the churches, the nation, or the world. It commends a matter for reflection or action to member communions. It is based upon Policy Statements of the General Assembly and applies existing policy to a particular problem. It has application only to the immediate situation and does not in itself add to the body of General Assembly policy. It represents agreement by a substantial preponderance of the members of the adopting body that the conviction or view expressed is based on Christian foundations and insights and is a part of their witness to Jesus Christ. It shall be phrased so as not to bring into question the Christian commitment of those who hold different opinions. A proposed Resolution which contains new policy must be processed as a proposed new Policy Statement.
2. The introduction and background of each proposed General Assembly Resolution shall make reference to the Policy Statement upon which the Resolution is based and shall also clearly state the objective to be accomplished by the Resolution and the manner in which its effectiveness may be evaluated.
3. A General Assembly Resolution may be adopted by the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the delegates present and voting and, in that vote, by at least one-fourth of the total authorized number of delegates to the General Assembly.
4. Each proposed Resolution shall be supported by such documentation as may be required to facilitate discussion of the proposed Resolution.
5. A proposed General Assembly Resolution may be presented to the General Assembly for consideration and adoption:
 - a) by a member communion;
 - b) by either Board if the subject of the proposed Resolution is primarily within the field of work of that entity;
 - c) by a Committee of the General Assembly if it is within the field of work for which it was elected or appointed; or
 - d) by any individual member of the General Assembly, provided that at least ten other delegates sign the proposal indicating their endorsement and support.
6. All Resolutions that either Board proposes to present to the General Assembly shall be referred to the other Board for review.
7. All resolutions of the NCC Governing Board or the CWS Board of Directors that commend a matter for reflection or action to member communions, based upon a General Assembly Policy Statement, shall be reported to the General Assembly at its next regularly scheduled meeting and shall be received as a report from that Board.
8. A Resolution may be adopted and issued by a General Assembly Committee in its own name provided that it shall have found that the Resolution proposed is a clear

406 application of existing General Assembly policy and is clearly within the mandate of
407 that Committee. A Resolution adopted by a Committee shall be reported to the next
408 following General Assembly meeting by the Committee chairperson.

409
410 9. A proposed Resolution may be presented directly to the General Assembly if the text
411 with required documentation shall have been received by the Co-Moderators six
412 weeks in advance of the meeting at which action is proposed. The Co-Moderators
413 will be responsible for mailing it to all delegates four weeks in advance of the
414 meeting. Resolutions so processed need not go through the Committee on
415 Reference.

416
417 10. A proposed Resolution that is introduced at the General Assembly by at least eleven
418 delegates to the General Assembly shall be classified as New Business and shall be
419 handled by the Committee on Reference, which may recommend concurrence, non-
420 concurrence, modification, postponement or referral. The recommendation of the
421 Committee on Reference shall be reported to and acted upon by the General
422 Assembly.

423
424 11. Proposed Resolutions may be received by the General Assembly without being
425 mailed out in advance if they come from either the NCC Governing Board or the CWS
426 Board of Directors.

427
428
429 12. In the alternative, proposed Resolutions may be received by the General Assembly
430 without being mailed out in advance if they:

- 431
- 432 a) relate to issues and situations developing within thirty (30) days of a meeting;
 - 433
 - 434 b) address situations which are national or international in scope;
 - 435
 - 436 c) provide supportive documentation; and
 - 437
 - 438 d) contain a data sheet stating:
 - 439
 - 440 • why the Resolution is being submitted late;
 - 441 • to whom the Resolution is addressed;
 - 442 • reference to the policy base;
 - 443 • content outline; and
 - 444 • nature of action requested.
 - 445

446
447 **B. ISSUE PAPERS**

448
449 1. Definition: An Issue Paper presents a particular position or stance. Because of its
450 advocacy purpose, it need not include nor allude to other points of view.

451
452 2. An Issue Paper may be developed by or at the request of either Board.

453
454 3. Issue Papers shall not be distributed unless each such paper contains the following
455 statement prominently displayed on the title page or equivalent thereof: "This Issue Paper
456 presents information in support of a single point of view. It is not a statement of policy by

457 the General Assembly, which has requested preparation of this paper, or any of its member
458 communions.”

459
460

461 C. MESSAGES

462

463 1. Definition: A General Assembly Message is a statement developed and issued by the
464 General Assembly or the Co-Moderators in connection with a meeting or an
465 observance with other religious and secular bodies.

466
467

468 2. Each Message should indicate clearly the issuing body or person, the purpose of the
469 Message, and the audience to which it is addressed.

470

471 **Section 4. Study Papers**

472

473 A. STUDY DOCUMENTS

474

475 1. Definition: A Study Document is a study and analysis of a subject or a problem which
476 involves substantial ethical, moral or religious elements and on which it is deemed
477 important that the members of the churches be more thoroughly informed as an aid to
478 the formulation of Christian opinions and judgments or on which the judgment of
479 individuals or groups is desired.

480

481 2. A Study Document shall clearly and fairly set forth various points of view held by
482 Christians.

483

484 3. Boards or General Assembly Committees may determine what Study Documents shall
485 be prepared and circulated in their respective fields.

486

487 4. Advance approval by the General Assembly of a proposed Study Document is not
488 required but may be sought if deemed desirable by the entity concerned or by the Co-
489 Moderators. The scope and plan for development of such a document shall be reported
490 to the General Assembly in support of the request for approval.

491

492 5. When a Study Document is issued by a Board or General Assembly Committee, the
493 following statement shall appear in a conspicuous place: “This document is issued by
494 the (name of entity). It is a Study Document; it is not a Policy Statement. It is not to be
495 construed as an official statement of attitudes or policies of the General Assembly.” The
496 introduction to the document shall include the substance of the definition of the term
497 “Study Document” as set forth in “1” above.

498

499 6. A Study Document may be issued by the General Assembly if circulated to members of
500 the General Assembly four weeks in advance of the meeting and approved by a simple
501 majority. When issued, it shall bear an introduction similar to that specified in the
502 preceding paragraph indicating that it is not a statement of the policy of the General
503 Assembly.

504

505 B. CONSULTATIONS AND CONSULTATION REPORTS

506

- 507 1. Definition: A Consultation is a gathering of persons from the churches and elsewhere
508 representing diverse points of view whose counsel is desired on a subject specified in
509 the call. It is called by an entity or officer of the General Assembly.
510
- 511 2. A Consultation does not determine policy nor speak for the General Assembly, but it
512 makes its report or recommendations to the body or officer calling it, which will
513 determine what use to make of them. In any such use, the report or recommendations
514 shall be clearly identified as expressing the view of the participants but not necessarily
515 those of the General Assembly or its member communions. The following statement
516 must be prominently displayed on its report: "This document is issued by the (name of
517 General Assembly entity). It is the report of a consultation; it is not a Policy Statement.
518 It is not to be construed as an official statement of attitudes or policies of the General
519 Assembly."
520
- 521 3. Member Communions of the General Assembly shall be afforded the opportunity to
522 participate in a Consultation in appropriate ways, including sending representatives and
523 receiving the products of the Consultation.
524
- 525 4. Minority reports from a Consultation may be submitted to the convening entity, and
526 protests or dissents will be noted and recorded by the Consultation.
527
- 528 5. A joint Consultation may be held by an entity of the General Assembly in conjunction
529 with any comparable agency or body, but participation by the General Assembly entity
530 will be governed by these Rules.
531

532
533 **Article IV – STANDING COMMITTEES**

534
535 There shall be the following Standing Committees of the General Assembly: Committee on
536 Collaboration, Constitution and Standing Rules Committee, Membership ~~and Ecclesial Relations~~
537 Committee, Nominations Committee, ~~Ecumenical Networks Committee, Inclusiveness and Justice~~
538 ~~Committee~~ and General Assembly Planning Committee. The General Assembly may designate
539 additional committees as it shall deem necessary.
540

541 **Section 1. Standing Committee Membership**

542
543 A. Subject to the requirements indicated in this Article IV and in the Constitution, the General
544 Assembly shall determine the size and composition of its Standing Committees, and shall be
545 responsible for the election of the membership of the Standing Committees. The members and
546 the chairpersons of all Standing Committees of the General Assembly, with the exception of the
547 Nominations Committee, for an ensuing quadrennium shall be elected by the General
548 Assembly, upon nomination by the Nominations Committee, at the last meeting of the
549 quadrennium. The members and chairperson of the Nominations Committee shall be elected by
550 the General Assembly at the last meeting of the quadrennium from among the delegates of the
551 General Assembly for the ensuing quadrennium upon nomination by an ad hoc committee
552 appointed by the Co-Moderators for the sole purpose of making such nominations.
553

554 B. Vacancies may be filled and persons added through election by the General Assembly at any
555 meeting.
556

557 C. Delegates to the General Assembly shall constitute a majority of any Committee, although
558 other representatives of member communions or the Boards may also be elected or appointed
559 to a General Assembly Committee as recommended by a Board committee or the General

560 Assembly Nominations Committee based upon needed expertise for a particular committee. All
561 delegates or other representatives on Committees shall be selected in consultation with the
562 appropriate officials of their respective communions.

563
564 D. The membership of each Standing Committee shall conform to the composition, if any,
565 specified in Article V, Section 3.B of the Constitution.

566
567 E. With the exception of ecumenical officers, members shall not serve for more than two
568 successive quadrennia on the same committee, and shall be eligible for re-election only after
569 another quadrennium has elapsed.

570
571 F. The members of Standing Committees shall take office at the beginning of the quadrennium
572 and shall serve through the quadrennium unless other provision is made by the General
573 Assembly or is stated at the time of election.

574
575 G. If a new committee is established during a quadrennium, its members and chairperson may
576 be elected by the Assembly at the meeting at which the committee is established or at any
577 meeting thereafter, upon nomination by the Nominations Committee.

578
579

580 Section 2. Composition and Responsibilities

581

582 The composition and responsibilities of the Standing Committees shall be as follows:

583

584 A. Committee on Collaboration. The Committee shall be responsible to ensure collaboration
585 between NCC and CWS as they seek to fulfill the purposes of their member communions in
586 coming together as a General Assembly and as members of the NCC and CWS. The
587 Committee shall be elected by the General Assembly and comprised of the President of
588 NCC, two other members of the NCC Governing Board nominated by that body, the General
589 Secretary of NCC, the Chair of CWS, two other members of the Board of Directors of CWS
590 nominated by that body, and the Executive Director of CWS. The NCC General Secretary
591 and the CWS Executive Director will assign staff to support the Committee. ~~(See Article V,~~
592 ~~Section 10, of the Constitution, which provides that~~ The Committee shall:

593

594

595 1. Act *ad interim* on behalf of the General Assembly, exercising in such capacity all powers
596 of the General Assembly except those powers not authorized to committees under
597 Article V, Section 9, of the Constitution.

598

599 2. Assign specific portions of General Assembly agenda sessions to the respective Co-
600 Moderators.

601

602 3. Monitor, review and evaluate all programs, staffing patterns, policies and operations of the
603 General Assembly affecting racial/ethnic persons, gender, and persons of all social and
604 economic classes and levels, and make appropriate recommendations to the General
605 Assembly regarding the effectiveness or relevance of those programs.

606

607 4. Monitor the nominating process and membership of the Standing Committees and other
608 committees for inclusiveness.

609

610 5. Identify contributing factors, steps and resources leading to justice and inclusiveness and
611 make recommendations with action steps to the General Assembly for implementing policies
612 that increase inclusiveness and facilitate the participation of racial/ethnic persons, women

- 613 and men, and persons of all social and economic classes and levels in the life of the General
614 Assembly.
- 615
- 616 6. Monitor the functioning of the General Assembly and its committees to identify barriers to
617 inclusiveness and make appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly for reducing
618 or eliminating such barriers.
- 619
- 620 7. Serve as an advocate for justice against racism, sexism, classism and structures that
621 historically exclude people in the church and society and as an enabler with the General
622 Assembly, NCC Governing Board, CWS Board of Directors, Standing Committees, other
623 appropriate committees and member communions for the concerns of those adversely
624 affected by racism, sexism, classism and other structures that exclude people.
- 625
- 626 8. Help the member communions and Boards build relationships with and among current and
627 emerging local, state, regional, national and global manifestations of the ecumenical
628 movement.
- 629
- 630
- 631 ~~3.~~ 9. Perform such other responsibilities as are delegated to it by the General Assembly or
632 in the Constitution or these Standing Rules.
- 633
- 634 4. 10. Report its *ad interim* actions to the General Assembly at its next scheduled session.
- 635
- 636 B. Constitution and Standing Rules Committee. The Committee shall be composed of an equal
637 number of members from the NCC Bylaws Committee and the CWS Bylaws Committee and
638 shall be co-chaired by the respective chairs of those Committees. The composition must include
639 at least four delegates of the General Assembly. The Committee shall:
- 640
- 641 1. Formulate and recommend for consideration by the NCC Governing Board and the CWS
642 Board of Directors and for action by the General Assembly amendments to the Constitution
643 and Standing Rules of the General Assembly.
- 644
- 645 2. Establish and maintain liaison with the Bylaws Committees of NCC and CWS and with the
646 Nominations Committee.
- 647
- 648 3. Review and recommend to the General Assembly for adoption Standing Rules for the
649 General Assembly and its Committees and amendments thereto.
- 650
- 651 C. Membership and Ecclesial Relations Committee. The Committee shall be composed of (i) the
652 Ecumenical Officers of the member communions who wish to serve on the Committee, (ii) at
653 least one member from each of the NCC Governing Board and the CWS Board of Directors, and
654 (iii) such other delegates or representatives as shall be recommended by the Nominations
655 Committee and elected by the General Assembly. The Committee shall:
- 656
- 657 1. Explore with communions eligible for membership in the General Assembly their receptivity to
658 the possibility of membership, interpret the purposes and work of the General Assembly, NCC
659 and CWS to such bodies; and, when appropriate, encourage communions to make application
660 for membership in the General Assembly.
- 661
- 662 2. Review applications for membership in the General Assembly and formulate
663 recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly.
- 664
- 665 3. Recommend certification by the General Assembly of communions as being eligible for
666 membership in the General Assembly.

- 667
668
669
670
671
672
673
674
675
676
677
678
679
680
681
682
683
684
685
686
687
688
689
690
691
692
693
694
695
696
697
698
699
700
701
702
703
704
705
706
707
708
709
710
711
712
713
714
715
716
717
718
719
4. Make recommendations to the General Assembly concerning participation of non-member bodies.
 - ~~5. Annually convene a meeting of Ecumenical Officers of the member communions in order to share concerns and coordinate their approaches to serving the communions and the General Assembly in enhancing the Christian unity work of the member communions.~~
 - ~~6.~~ 5. Determine accreditation, subject to appeal to the General Assembly, of communion delegations to the General Assembly as meeting the minimum requirements for representation as set forth in Article V, Section 2.B of the Constitution, and report its findings and recommendations thereon to the General Assembly.
 - ~~7.~~ 6. Assist the member communions to participate more fully in the programs of the General Assembly.
 - ~~8.~~ 7. Assist with providing orientation to member communion delegations to the General Assembly.
 - ~~9.~~ 8. Explore with the national structures of the Catholic Church and evangelical and pentecostal bodies means to witness together to the body of Christ, including inviting their participation in General Assembly meetings and other events and seeking invitations to participate similarly in their life.
 - ~~10.~~ 9. Periodically review the criteria, standards and processes for membership in the General Assembly and recommend changes as necessary or desirable.
- D. Nominations Committee. The Committee shall be composed of an equal number of members from the NCC Nominations Committee and the CWS Nominations Committee. The composition must include at least four delegates of the General Assembly. The Committee shall:
1. Nominate members of the Standing Committees and any additional officers of the General Assembly as required or permitted by the Constitution and Standing Rules, and perform such other duties as appropriate.
 2. Formulate and communicate to the member communions provisions regarding their privileges and responsibilities in naming delegates to the General Assembly and delegates and other representatives to Committees of the General Assembly.
 3. Determine the eligibility of and nominate persons for election by the General Assembly as additional delegates to the General Assembly in accordance with Article V, Section 2.C of the Constitution.
 4. Recommend, after clearance with the appropriate officials of member communions, General Assembly members and others for election by the General Assembly as additional officers or chairpersons and members of its standing and special committees unless otherwise provided in the Constitution.
 5. Review the composition of Standing and Special Committees and note any concerns regarding diversity of representation, reporting any such concerns to the General Assembly and to the Nominating Committees of NCC and CWS.

720 ~~E. Ecumenical Networks Committee. The Committee shall be composed primarily of~~
721 ~~representatives from state and local councils of churches with at least one member from each of~~
722 ~~the NCC Governing Board and the CWS Board of Directors, all as recommended by the~~
723 ~~Nominations Committee and elected by the General Assembly. The Committee shall:~~

724
725 1. ~~Discern the historic, present and emerging gifts of unity and justice from across the nation.~~

726 2. ~~Proclaim the need for a generation of ecumenical commitment in and for the third~~
727 ~~millennium.~~

728 3. ~~Help the member communions and Boards build relationships with and among current~~
729 ~~and emerging local, state, regional, national and global manifestations of the ecumenical~~
730 ~~movement.~~

731 4. ~~Establish and maintain active, on-going, multifaceted, collaborative networking processes.~~

732
733 ~~F. Inclusiveness and Justice Committee. The Committee shall be composed of delegates and~~
734 ~~other representatives nominated by their respective communions, including at least one member~~
735 ~~from each of the NCC Governing Board and the CWS Board of Directors, all as shall be~~
736 ~~recommended by the Nominations Committee and elected by the General Assembly. The~~
737 ~~Committee shall:~~

738
739 1. ~~Monitor, review and evaluate all programs, staffing patterns, policies and operations of~~
740 ~~the General Assembly affecting racial/ethnic persons, gender, and persons of all social~~
741 ~~and economic classes and levels, and make appropriate recommendations to the~~
742 ~~General Assembly regarding the effectiveness or relevance of those programs.~~

743
744 2. ~~Monitor the nominating process and membership of the Standing Committees and other~~
745 ~~committees for inclusiveness.~~

746
747 3. ~~Identify contributing factors, steps and resources leading to justice and inclusiveness and~~
748 ~~make recommendations with action steps to the General Assembly for implementing~~
749 ~~policies that increase inclusiveness and facilitate the participation of racial/ethnic~~
750 ~~persons, women and men, and persons of all social and economic classes and levels in~~
751 ~~the life of the General Assembly.~~

752
753 4. ~~Monitor the functioning of the General Assembly and its committees to identify barriers to~~
754 ~~inclusiveness and make appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly for~~
755 ~~reducing or eliminating such barriers.~~

756
757 5. ~~Serve as an advocate for justice against racism, sexism, classism and structures that~~
758 ~~historically exclude people in the church and society and as an enabler with the General~~
759 ~~Assembly, NCC Governing Board, CWS Board of Directors, Standing Committees, other~~
760 ~~appropriate committees and member communions for the concerns of those adversely~~
761 ~~affected by racism, sexism, classism and other structures that exclude people.~~

762
763 ~~G. E. General Assembly Planning Committee. The Committee shall be composed of (i) a~~
764 ~~Chairperson and at least one member from each of the NCC Governing Board and the CWS Board~~
765 ~~of Directors, as recommended by the Nominations Committee and elected by the General Assembly~~
766 ~~to serve from the conclusion of a regular General Assembly meeting through the conclusion of the~~
767 ~~next regular General Assembly meeting, and (ii) NCC and CWS Staff as assigned by the NCC~~
768 ~~General Secretary and the CWS Executive Director, respectively. The Co-Moderators may appoint~~
769 ~~additional members as needed. The Committee shall set direction for General Assembly meetings,~~

770 consulting with NCC Governing Board, CWS Board of Directors and member communions in
771 developing agendas and planning all aspects of the General Assembly meetings.

772
773 Section 3. Special Committees

774
775 A. The General Assembly may establish or discontinue special committees as may be required from
776 time to time.

777
778 B. The General Assembly may elect or provide for the appointment of the members and the
779 chairperson of any special committee. The chairperson and a majority of the members of a
780 special committee shall be delegates to the General Assembly. Each member of a special
781 committee shall be in good standing in a member communion and chosen in consultation with the
782 appropriate official of that communion.

783
784 **ARTICLE V — PAYMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENSES**

785
786 **Section 1. General Costs**

787
788 General costs of the General Assembly shall be shared equally between NCC and CWS. Costs
789 of attendance of delegates at General Assembly meetings shall be borne by the communion or
790 related organization represented by any delegate.

791
792 **Section 2. Committees of the General Assembly**

793
794 The member communions or their related organizations are expected to pay the travel
795 expenses of their members who serve on Standing and Special Committees of the General
796 Assembly.

797
798
799 **Article VI – RULES OF ORDER**

800
801 Section 1. General Rules of Order

802
803 A. Except insofar as inconsistent with provisions of the Constitution or Standing Rules, Robert's
804 Rules of Order, Newly Revised, latest edition, shall be the official parliamentary authority for
805 all formal bodies of the General Assembly.

806
807 B. Any one or more delegates to the General Assembly or members of any General Assembly
808 committee may participate in a meeting of such Assembly or committee by means of a
809 conference telephone or similar communications equipment allowing all persons participating
810 in the meeting to hear each other at the same time. Participation by such means shall
811 constitute presence in person at the meeting.

812
813 C. No action may be taken by the General Assembly or any committee by written vote without a
814 meeting unless all its delegates or members consent in writing to adoption of a resolution
815 authorizing the action.

816
817
818 Section 2. Special Rules of Order

819
820 A. The General Assembly may adopt Standing Rules to define further its organization, govern
821 the conduct of its meetings, and prescribe procedure for the consideration and adoption of

- 822 Policy Statements, Resolutions, Issue Papers, Messages, Study Documents and
823 Consultation Reports.
824
825 B. All recommendations for adoption or amendment of Standing Rules of the General Assembly
826 shall be submitted to the ~~Co-Moderators at least 30 days before the meeting of the General~~
827 ~~Assembly at which the action is requested; and the~~ delegates of the Assembly, who shall receive
828 written or electronic notice of the substance of the proposal at least 15 days prior to the meeting.
829
830 C. A two-thirds vote of members present and eligible to vote shall be required to adopt or to amend
831 the Standing Rules of the General Assembly.
832

833
834 Section 3. Ex-Officio Membership
835

- 836 A. The term "ex-officio" as used in the Constitution and these Standing Rules shall mean "voting
837 membership by virtue of office" except as otherwise defined in these Standing Rules or the
838 Constitution.
839
840 B. The elected head of any General Assembly committee shall be an ex-officio member of all
841 committees subordinate to that committee.
842

843 Section 4. Open Meetings
844

- 845 A. All meetings of the General Assembly, its committees and subcommittees, and similar meetings
846 are ordinarily open to the public.
847
848 B. Meetings permitted by this rule to be open to the public shall be conducted in areas having
849 reasonable facilities for observation by the public.
850
851 C. Observers to a meeting may be subject to any charges or registration fees paid by the official
852 participants.
853
854 D. Notice of meetings shall be published as follows:
855
856 1. Each entity of the General Assembly shall prepare for the Co-Moderators by February
857 1 a schedule of all regular meetings, which shall contain the dates and places of such
858 meetings in the ensuing year. At least one copy of the schedule of regular meetings shall
859 be sent to the member communions by the Co-Moderators and it shall be available to
860 media outlets.
861
862 2. Special meetings may be scheduled as provided in Article V, Section 7-B of the
863 Constitution.

- 864 E. Portions of the meeting may be closed for consideration of specific subjects if the closed
865 session is authorized by two-thirds of those present and eligible to vote, a quorum being
866 present, and if the vote is taken during an open meeting and duly recorded and entered in the
867 minutes. Documents distributed in open meetings shall be considered public. Great restraint
868 should be used in closing meetings. Closed sessions should be used as seldom as possible.
869 Subjects that may be considered in closed session are limited to issues related to consideration
870 of admission of new member communions; communications with attorneys or accountants; and
871 confidential third party information. A report on the results of a closed session shall be made
872 immediately upon its conclusion or as soon thereafter as is practicable.

873

874