



مجلس كنائس الشرق الأوسط

The Middle East Council of Churches

*The Constitutions & By-Laws of The Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) as was approved by the Eighth General Assembly at its meeting held in Limassol, Cyprus, from 1-5 December 2003 after the approval of the report of the Restructuring Committee on 4/12/2003*

## The Constitution

### Article One: The Name of the Council

The Middle East Council of Churches

### Article Two: Headquarters of the Council

The headquarters of the Council is in Beirut, Lebanon. At need, it may also establish other regional offices in other countries in the Middle East region.

### Article Three: Definition of the Council

I. The Council is a Christian association (*hay'ah*) which has a legal personality (*shakhsiyyah ma'nawiyah*).

### II. Basis of the Council

The Council includes within it the four ecclesiastical families of the Middle East – the Orthodox, the Oriental Orthodox, the Evangelical, and the Catholic<sup>1</sup> which believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior in accordance with the Holy Scripture and as articulated in the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. These churches endeavor to realize together their common calling to praise God, the holy one in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Council derives its competence from the Christian churches assembled together. It is not an institution set in authority over the member churches.

### Article Four: The Nature of the Council

The Middle East Council of Churches is a religious non-profit organization.

### Article Five: The Purpose of the Council

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<sup>1</sup> The sequence of mention is governed by the alphabetical precedence of the names as they appear in Arabic.

The purpose of the Council is to deepen the spiritual fellowship among the churches of the Middle East, and to unite them in word and deed as they strive to achieve the unity of the churches and bear a living evangelical witness to spread the gospel of salvation and reconciliation through the Lord Jesus Christ, love, peace and justice throughout the region and among the people inhabiting it.

The Council works through its various structures to achieve this purpose by:

1. Dialogue amongst the churches (locally, regionally and internationally), and strengthening the spirit of fellowship and ecumenical awareness.
2. Providing the means for common study and research aiming at further understanding of the traditions of member churches, mutual enrichment, and activating fellowship through common worship.
3. cooperation, and joint undertakings in humanitarian service to achieve justice, to relieve the poor, the needy and the marginalized of their suffering, to uphold human rights, and to strengthen Christian presence in order to live on in freedom, peace and equality in citizenship, rights, and duties.
4. Developing and reinforcing organized dialogue aimed at strengthening and deepening peace and friendship between people for the good of humanity.

#### **Article Six: Membership**

The four ecclesiastical families noted in Article Three hold Membership in the Council. They are equally represented throughout the structure of the Council. In the understanding of this Article, an ecclesiastical family includes **churches that are autonomous administratively and ritually**, sharing a common faith tradition and is in full communion with each other. In the event that Two or more of the member families achieve full communion with each other, each family will retain its previous representation within the structure of the Council.

Each member ecclesiastical family within the Council represents churches specified according to the Council's official list of churches. In the event that an ecclesiastical family wishes to add a new church to those which it represents, that will be done in a manner consistent with Article Three of this Constitution and Item III of Article Two of the By-Laws. It will become final upon receiving the approval of the major committee of the general assembly.

In the event that a church withdraws from membership in a member ecclesiastical family of the Council, the membership and proportional representation of that family in the structures of the Council will not be affected.

#### **Article Seven: Structure of the Council**

The Middle East Council of Churches executes its responsibilities through the General Assembly, the Executive Committee, and the General Secretariat, and other structures whose creation is required, subject to approval by the General Assembly.

##### **First: The General Assembly**

- A. The General Assembly is the legislative body in the Middle East Council of Churches. It regularly meets once every four years. It may also meet in extra-ordinary session according to procedures defined in the By Laws.
- B. The General Assembly is mad-up of the heads of the member churches, and delegates appointed by the churches that make up the four members ecclesiastical families in accordance with the procedure specified in and defined by the By Laws.

C. The General Assembly takes upon itself the following duties:

1. The General Assembly evaluates the overall work of the Council through the period between any two of its meetings.
2. It elects the Presidents of the Middle East Council of Churches, one from each of the four families. It elects the regular and alternate members of the Executive Committee from among the delegates of the member ecclesiastical families to the General Assembly and those nominated by their ecclesiastical families in accordance with the By-Laws.
3. It elects the General Secretary of the Council in accordance with the By-Laws.
4. It also submits the recommendations concerning the general objectives of the Council and its future program and structures.
5. It shall entrust to the Executive Committee execution of specific tasks with the exception of the right to revise this Constitution or to dissolve the Council.

**Second: The Executive Committee**

- A. The Executive Committee is the executive body of the Council. It shall regularly meet at least twice a year in accordance with the stipulations of the By-Laws.
- B. The Executive Committee is composed of the Presidents of the Council and of an equal number of members from each of the Council's ecclesiastical families.
- C. The Executive Committee has the following responsibilities:
  1. It implements the general directives and future programs laid down by the General Assembly.
  2. It executes the decisions taken by the General Assembly and anything else that may have been entrusted to it.
  3. It establishes regional offices or liaison offices as need may require, so as to implement the work of the Council.
  4. It appoints the commissions of the units and programs, and when needed it appoints the specific working groups to implement the required work.
  5. It must approve the by-laws of all the units and programs.
  6. It must approve the programs and priorities proposed by the General Secretariat, the units and departments, and the ad hoc committees and supervise its implementation.
  7. It shall oversee the finances of the Council, approve its balance and budget, define its sources of income, and lay down general financial directives for the Council.
  8. It shall appoint the Associate General Secretaries and the Directors of the units and programs in accordance with the By-Laws.
  9. It shall prepare the meetings of the General Assembly, including delimiting the number of delegates from each of the Council's member ecclesiastical families, delimiting the number of consultants, others who may be invited from groups defined by the By-Laws, and all representatives of ecclesiastical organizations invited as observers.

10. It shall fill vacancies in the Presidium of the Council between meetings of the General Assembly in consultation with the church and ecclesiastical family of the previous incumbent.
11. It shall fill vacancy within its own membership between meetings of the General Assembly in consultation with the church and ecclesiastical family to which previous incumbent belonged
12. It shall implement appropriate measures to assure that the work of the Council continues in the event of a vacancy in the office of the General Secretary between two meetings of the General Assembly.

*The individuals who fill the vacant positions specified above in '9.', '10.', and '11.' shall complete the terms of the original incumbents elected by the General Assembly.*

### **Third: General Secretariat**

The General Secretariat is composed of the General Secretary as chairperson, and the Associate General Secretaries as member. Their duties are defined according to the text of the By Laws.

### **Article Eight: Material Possessions of the Council**

The Middle East Council of Churches, as a legal personality, has the competence to own moveable and fixed assets within and outside the countries in which it works. It can accept various gifts in accordance with the Council's financial policies.

### **Article Nine: The By Laws**

The Council has By Laws that govern the application and detailed analysis of the Constitution. It is to be approved by and may be amended by the General Assembly or by the Executive Committee, in the event that it has been entrusted with the task by the General Assembly.

### **Article Ten: Amending the Constitution**

Upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Constitution of the Council maybe amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members who constitute the General Assembly. The General Secretary must circulate the proposed amendments to the member churches at least six months before the date set for the convening of the General Assembly.

The Executive Committee must present the proposed amendments to the General Assembly if at least one third of the members of the Executive Committee present them on the understanding that the member churches are informed of these proposed amendments according to the procedure defined above. The corrected By Laws come into effect on the date set by the General Assembly and do not have retroactive implications.

### **Article Eleven: Violations of the Constitution or By Laws**

The By Laws define the steps that must be taken in the case of violation of the Council's Constitution or the By Laws.

### **Article Twelve: Dissolving of the Council**

Only the General Assembly has the right to dissolve the Council on the basis of a two-thirds vote of the members who constitute the General Assembly. The financial assets, possessions and obligations shall be equally distributed among the families of the churches that make up the Middle East Council of Churches. The By Laws define the bases and regulations governing liquidation.

*Adopted by the General Assembly, dated 4/12/2003*

# The By-Laws

## **Article One: Defining the By Laws**

The By-Laws are a body of principles and detailed regulations for the working of the Middle East Council of Churches in accordance with Article Nine of the Constitution.

## **Article Two: The Membership of the Council**

- I. The Middle East Council of Churches is made up of the churches which founded the Council or which subsequently joined its membership. To provide for appropriate representation in the structures of the Council, the member churches are grouped into ecclesiastical families. In the understanding of this Article, the ecclesiastical families include autonomous churches that have a common faith tradition and are in full communion with each other. These families are: the Orthodox, the Oriental Orthodox, the Evangelical, and the Catholic, according to the attached list of church families.
- II. In the event that two or more member families of the Council should achieve sacramental unity, each family will retain its previous representation in the structures of the Council in accordance with Article Six of the Constitution.
- III. In the event that a church in the Middle East joins one of the four ecclesiastical families which are members of the Council, and expresses the desire to be included in the representation of that family within the membership of the Middle East Council of Churches, that church must present a written application supported by the Executive Committee members of the churches of the family concerned. This application is to be brought forward to the Executive Committee through the General Secretary.

The application must include the church's agreement with the founding principles upon which the Council rests (in accordance with the Constitution). The number of adherents coming under the ecclesiastical discipline of any one church must not be less than three thousand, and the church should manifest the stability of its life and church order.

The General Secretary will undertake a study of the application, and will forward it to the Executive Committee along with all the required information.

The Executive Committee will discuss the application, and raise it along with its recommendation to the General Assembly for appropriate action.

The General Secretary will send a copy of the application and the recommendation [of the Executive Committee] to the member churches, enabling them to express their views through their delegates to the General Assembly. The application shall be considered accepted when it receives the absolute majority of the votes of the members who constitute the General Assembly.

## **Article Three: The General Assembly**

### **I. Definition of the General Assembly:**

The General Assembly is the supreme authority of the Middle East Council of Churches.

## **II. Meetings of the General Assembly:**

- A. The General Assembly regularly meets every four years at the invitation of the Executive Committee. The General Secretary shall send out the invitations at least six months prior to the date of its being convened.
- B. The General Assembly shall meet in extra-ordinary session in the event of crisis circumstances. The Council's Presidents shall decide when such circumstances have arisen; they shall also set the time, place and agenda. The General Secretary will send out the invitations.
- C. A meeting shall be considered legal upon the attendance of at least two-thirds of the members from each ecclesiastical family in the Council.
- D. A closed session of the General Assembly shall only be attended by the Presidents of the Assembly and the members of the General Assembly who have the right to vote.

## **III. Composition of the General Assembly:**

- A. The General Assembly shall be composed of the delegates of the four member ecclesiastical families who have the privilege of the floor, and the right to vote, propose or amend actions, and second them.
- B. The Executive Committee shall define the number of delegates to the General Assembly far enough in advance of its being convened to permit the families each to be represented by an equal number of delegates.
- C. Any member church in an ecclesiastical family can appoint to the membership of its delegation members from other churches in the Council from the same family.
- D. Presidents of the Council and members of the Executive Committee who are not delegated by their churches to represent them, and the General Secretary shall attend the meetings of the General Assembly by virtue of their office (*ex officio*). They shall have the privilege of the floor without the right to vote.
- E. The Executive Committee may invite to a meeting of the General Assembly anyone whom it feels is appropriate after consulting the heads of the churches involved. These shall have the privilege of the floor without the right to vote.

## **IV. Committees of the General Assembly:**

At the outset of a meeting of the General Assembly the Executive Committee shall appoint a Committee on Credentials. It shall also put before the General Assembly at its first session its suggestions for the composition of the other committees of the General Assembly. In this way the following committees shall be constituted:

### **A. The Committee on Credentials:**

It shall study the documents and credentials that the delegates present to the General Assembly. Through the moderator of the first working session of the General Assembly, it shall put forward the recommendation with respect to accepting the members who have the right to vote and representatives of other groups as defined under Article Three above of these By Laws. The moderator of the session shall then announce the presence of a quorum at the beginning of the session.

**B. The Administrative Committee:**

The Administrative Committee is composed of the Presidents of the Council, and one member from each ecclesiastical family representing it on the Executive Committee (elected by the Executive Committee by an absolute majority vote), the General Secretary, and the Associate General Secretaries. The presidents and members of the committee shall propose to the General Assembly the names of representatives present from each of the member ecclesiastical families (one from each family) to be confirmed and added to their number as members of the Administrative Committee.

The Administrative Committee shall coordinate the daily activity of the General Assembly. It may propose changes or additions or deletions or substitutions to some of the parts of the agenda. It shall present these proposals to the General Assembly as soon as possible, and an absolute majority is sufficient for approval.

**C. The Nominations Committee:**

1. The General Assembly shall elect in one of its early sessions a Nominations Committee. On it each of the four member ecclesiastical families shall be represented by four members from among the delegates of each family to the General Assembly. In the composition of the committee attention will be paid geographical representation as well as representational balance between clergy and laity. A second matter that will be kept in mind in the composition of the committee is concern for the principal spheres [of activity] of the Middle East Council of Churches.
2. The Nominations Committee's duty is to nominate the candidates to the membership of the Executive Committee. These are four Presidents of the Council, and five other members and two alternates from each of the Council's ecclesiastical families. The same Committee shall make nominations for the office General Secretary. The candidates for President must be named from among those nominated by their ecclesiastical families. The candidates for membership on the Executive Committee shall also be chosen from among those whom their churches have nominated to this task.
3. The Nominations Committee shall present to the General Assembly for approval its suggestions concerning the methodology to be employed in electing. Along with these suggestions, it shall also present its nominations for the vote.
4. The election process shall take place within a legally constituted closed session. An absolute majority of the votes of the delegates present is required for election. The term is for four years that can be renewed. If the General Assembly does not define another method, the vote shall be taken by secret ballot.
5. The General Secretary shall be elected by a secret ballot in a legally constituted closed session. An absolute majority of the votes of the delegates present is required for election. The term is for four years that can be renewed only once.

It is possible to re-nominate him after the passage of at least one full term after the conclusion of his last term of service.

**IV. The Agenda:**

- A. When the invitation [to the General Assembly] – attached to which shall be a Proposed Agenda – is sent out to the churches which make up the member ecclesiastical families, calling them to send their delegates to the General Assembly, the churches shall be requested to send in topics or corrections which they may suggest be included within the General Assembly's Agenda. These

suggestions must be sent in no later than three months in advance of the date for its being convened.

- B. The Executive Committee, in its first working session at the General Assembly, shall finalize the proposal for the Agenda. Any delegate has the right to propose changes to the Agenda through adding new items or any other change on the condition that these added items shall have previously been submitted either to the Executive Committee or to the Administrative Committee after its having been appointed. This delegate has the right, in the event his proposal is rejected by either the Executive Committee or the Administrative Committee, to present his proposal to the General Assembly. The General Assembly will take the appropriate decision on the basis of an absolute majority vote.

#### **Article Four: The Executive Committee**

##### **I. Its Formation:**

- A. The Executive Committee is composed of the Presidents of the Middle East Council of Churches and five members from each of the ecclesiastical families of the Council.
- B. The members who have been elected to the membership of the Executive Committee retain their posts until the next convocation of the General Assembly. They may be re-elected on the condition that they be nominated by their churches.
- C. If a member must be absent from a meeting of the Executive Committee, the General Secretary, whenever possible in consultation with that member, shall invite an alternate member from among those elected by the General Assembly and from the same ecclesiastical family as that to which he belongs.
- D. By virtue of his office, the General Secretary of the Middle East Council of Churches shall attend the meetings of the Executive Committee. He does not have the right to vote. He executes or follows up on the execution of the Executive Committee's decisions.
- E. The Associate General Secretaries shall attend the meetings of the Executive Committee. They have the privilege of the floor, but without the right to vote.
- F. Taking into consideration the agenda of a meeting of the Executive Committee, and according to need, the General Secretariat may invite anyone whom it deems it appropriate to invite to attend that meeting – moderators of unit or department commissions, directors of units or departments, Council employees and consultants. These shall have the privilege of the floor without the right to vote.
- G. Closed sessions of a meeting of the Executive Committee may only be attended by the Presidents, the voting members, and the General Secretary.

##### **II. The Nominations Committee:**

- A. The Executive Committee shall elect a Nominations Committee upon which each of the ecclesiastical families are represented by three members. It shall fulfill the following responsibilities:
  - 1. It shall nominate a new member to fill for the balance of the term a vacancy on the Executive Committee. When the office of the General Secretary falls vacant, it nominates a Deputy General Secretary to serve out the balance of the term.

2. It shall nominate the moderators and members of the commissions of the units and programs. The Executive Committee shall define the number of members on each commission on the condition that each of the ecclesiastical families are equally represented.
  3. It shall present recommendations regarding the appointment of the staff of the Council with critical responsibilities. These are directors of units and directors of departments. It does this in consultation with the member churches. For their part, Associate General Secretaries are proposed by their ecclesiastical families. The finance secretary is nominated by the Nomination Committee. The Executive Committee appoints all of these for terms of four years, terms that may be renewed once only.
- B. The Nominating Committee will present the proposed names to the Executive Committee for deliberation and to take an appropriate decision.

### **III. Meetings:**

- A. After its having been elected, in consultation with the Council's presidents the General Secretary is responsible to call Executive Committee to meet either during the General Assembly or immediately following.
- B. At the invitation of the General Secretary, ordinarily the Executive Committee shall meet at least once a year. The General Secretary shall issue the invitation to the meeting, attaching the proposed agenda. The invitation shall be sent out at least three months in advance of the meeting. It is possible, when necessary, for an emergency meeting to be convened either by a consultation between the Presidents and the General Secretary, or at the request of a majority of the Council's Presidents. In this circumstance, the Presidents with the General Secretary shall specify the place, time and proposed agenda, which the General Secretary will send out with the invitation.
- C. A meeting shall be considered legal if attended by two thirds of the representatives of each member ecclesiastical family in the Executive Committee.

### **Article Five: Preparing Meetings of the General Assembly**

- I. The Executive Committee prepares the meetings of the General Assembly. It defines the number of delegates from the member churches in the context of the ecclesiastical families. It also identifies other guests in accordance with Article Three, III., E., of these By-Laws.
- II. The Executive Committee can elect a committee to prepare meetings of the General Assembly, and define for it its responsibilities in this regard.

### **Article Six: The Presidents of the Council:**

- I. The Presidents of the Council shall assume the moderatorship of the sessions of the General Assembly and the sessions of the Executive Committee in rotation as they shall agree among themselves.
- II. The authority of the Presidents ends at the conclusion of the session of the General Assembly, which follows their election.
- III. The Presidents of the Council meet with the General Secretariat to deal with the matters that the Executive Committee delegates to them. They can also meet in response to emergency situations or when the Executive Committee is unable to gather for its regular meeting. Such meetings are convened at the request of the General Secretary in consultation with the Presidents. After they have together specified the time, place and proposed agenda of such a meeting, the General Secretary shall send out an invitation to the members to which that agenda is attached. In the event of such a

meeting, the Executive Committee in its first subsequent meeting shall examine what the Presidents and the General Secretariat have done in their meeting in order to become informed and express their concurrence.

**Article Seven: The General Secretariat:**

- I. The General Secretariat is composed of the General Secretary as moderator and the Associate General Secretaries, as members. The overall number shall be equal to the number of member ecclesiastical families in the Council.
- II. The General Secretary is the general executive officer of the Council, and the head of the structure of those who work in it. *Ex officio*, he is a member of all the commissions of the Council, but without the right to vote.
- III. In emergency circumstances requiring that the Council adopt a policy position, the General Secretary shall refer to the presidents of the Council in taking the appropriate decisions.
- IV. The General Secretariat meets periodically, at least four times a year, at the invitation of the General Secretary or upon the suggestion of at least two members of the General Secretariat.
- V. If necessary, the General Secretary shall invite others – the directors of units and departments who are not Associate General Secretaries, assistants of the General Secretary, and others whom he deems appropriate – to expanded meetings of the General Secretariat.

**Article Eight: Unit and Departmental Commissions:**

- I. The Executive Committee shall appoint commissions for the units and departments of the Council. Appointed by the Executive Committee to oversee its work, these commissions shall write their own by-laws and present them to the Executive Committee for approval. These by-laws must be compatible with the constitution and by-laws of the Council. At need, [these commissions] shall also appoint other special working groups for defined tasks.
- II. The commissions of the units and departments shall continue to work following the conclusion of the session of the General Assembly and up, until the Executive Committee shall appoint new commissions in their place. This period shall not exceed six months after the end of the General Assembly.

**Article Nine: Organizations Belonging to the Council:**

These organizations function in accordance with their by-laws that have been approved by the Executive Committee.

**Article Ten: The Finances of the Council:**

- I. The Executive Committee shall appoint a Standing Committee on Administration and Finance made up of eight members, two from each of the Council's member families, whose duty it is to propose financial and administrative policies, and supervise and follow up on their implementation. The General Secretary and the Finance Secretary shall be two additional members of this committee *ex officio* and without the right to vote.
- II. The Standing Committee on Administration and Finance shall present a full report to the Executive Committee on the administrative and financial performance, as well as the yearly financial report. It shall accompany this latter with recommendations based upon the report of the auditors. It shall also propose the annual budget of the Council for the following year for the Executive Committee's approval.

- III. The financial resources of the Council are the annual membership fees, contributions from churches belonging to the member ecclesiastical families, and designated donations from churches, ecumenical organizations and individuals.
- IV. A sub-committee of the Standing Committee on Administration and Finance is the Personnel Committee. The Standing Committee on Administration and Finance shall write its by-laws, which the Executive Committee shall receive for approval.

**Article Eleven: Personnel Policy:**

- I. The Executive Committee appoints directly of appropriately qualified people to administer the programs of the Middle East Council of Churches.
- II. Retirement age for all classifications of the Council's employees is sixty-five years of age.

**Article Twelve: Legal Jurisdictions:**

- I. The Middle East Council of Churches shall be represented before the official authorities by individuals whom the Executive Committee delegates on the basis of a decision which the Committee shall take in one of its sessions. One of the Council's Presidents and the General Secretary shall be among these.
- II. The Middle East Council of Churches shall be legally obligated by the co-signing of one of the Council's Presidents and the General Secretary. These two responsible people shall have the power to delegate other individuals to function in their behalf in specific areas through the instrument of a power of attorney.
- III. The members of the General Assembly, the Executive Committee, and the commissions of the units and departments of the Council shall not bear any personal liability with respect to the commitments of the Council. The guarantee for these [financial] responsibilities shall be the holdings of the Council only.
- IV. With regard to any meeting of the General Assembly, the Executive Committee, any commission of a unit or department, or any other [body] of the Council, the meeting shall continue legally until the end of its sessions, in accordance with the period defined by the official invitation to that meeting, in accordance also with the agenda which shall be approved during the first session of that meeting, on condition that the meeting shall have been legally begun in accordance with the the articles of the Council's Constitution and By-Laws, and on condition that the number of those present at any given stage of the meeting thereafter shall not be less than the absolute majority for that meeting.
- V. These By Laws take effect at the conclusion of the General Assembly or the Executive Committee that approved it, [Date] and have no retroactive effect.

**Article Thirteen: Amendment of the By-Laws:**

These By-Laws may be subjected to amendment by two-thirds of the votes that make up the General Assembly, at any meeting of that body, or by the Executive Committee if it is delegated to do that by the General Assembly on the condition that the amendments are approved by a two-thirds vote of those who make up the Executive Committee. The proposed amendments must be distributed through the General Secretary to the member churches or to the members of the Executive Committee at least three months before the meeting of either body.

The Executive Committee must submit the proposed amendments to the General Assembly or discuss the amendments within the Committee in the event that it has been delegated to do so by the General Assembly. The call of amendment shall be submitted by at least one-third of the Executive Committee

members, and on the condition that the member churches are informed of these proposals in accordance with procedures defined above.

**Article Fourteen: Violations of the Constitution or By-Laws:**

In the event that any church of a member ecclesiastical family in the Council should violate either the Constitution or the By-Laws of the Council, the matter shall be presented to the Executive Committee for discussion. When a violation has been established that church and all of the churches involved in the relevant family shall be contacted by the General Secretary to call their attention to this violation so that the situation may be corrected. A delegation -on which all of the ecclesiastical families in the Council are represented- shall also be sent to deal with the matter with the church involved. If the situation is not corrected within six months after its having been made known to the Executive Committee, the Executive Committee shall discuss the matter once again. It may then take an action to cut off the offending church from those things upon which its ecclesiastical family is represented in the Council. This action must be supported by a two-thirds vote of those who make up the Executive Committee. This cutting-off can either be temporary or permanent, depending upon circumstances.

In the event that the General Assembly is to meet within a year from the date the matter is laid before the Executive Committee, the Executive Committee shall content itself with addressing the problem and presenting its recommendation to the General Assembly, so that it [the General Assembly] may take the appropriate action on the basis of a two-thirds vote of the General Assembly.

**Article Fifteen: Dissolution of the Council:**

- I. Only the General assembly has this right [to dissolve the Council] by a two-thirds vote of those who make up the General Assembly.
- II. In the event the Council is dissolved, the General Assembly shall appoint a Liquidation Committee.
- III. This committee shall avail itself of any appropriate specialists and technical people to assist it in fulfilling its mandate.
- IV. This committee shall implement the process of liquidation. It shall see to the taking of an inventory of assets and liabilities, to distributing them in accordance with Article Nine of the Council's Constitution. The Liquidation Committee shall pursue its task of overseeing the distribution of assets and liabilities within the churches that make up the [ecclesiastical] families.
- V. When the committee begins the process of distribution among the churches that make up the [ecclesiastical] families, members from these churches shall join the committee so that the number of those present in the committee's membership from each church shall be equal to relevant the ecclesiastical family.
- VI. The Council cannot be dissolved until the member churches have been given three months' notice.

*Adopted by the General Assembly on 4/12/2003*