**REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP**

1. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION BY THE COUNCIL
2. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COUNCIL COMMITTEES

With reference to Council Exhibits 18.1 through 18.7,

it is

RECOMMENDED

that the Council approve the Terms of Reference as found in Exhibits 18.1 through 18.3 and 18.5 through 18.7 as well as Exhibit 18.4 as revised.

1. MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

*The Lutheran Church of the Republic of China (LCROC)*

The LWF has received the application for full membership of the Lutheran Church of the Republic of China, dated 27 April 2015. This church grew out of the work of missionaries of the Norwegian Lutheran Mission, who came to northern Taiwan in the early 1950s. The LWF currently has two member churches in Taiwan, the Taiwan Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church of Taiwan (Republic of China). These churches have endorsed the application of the LCROC.

The LCROC is a small church, with 570 members in 10 congregations. It is served by 4 ordained pastors and 9 full-time evangelists. Its bishop is Dr. Nong-Ruay (Ray) Chen. It carries out a Christian radio program called Voice of Salvation. The church is now financially, administratively, and organizationally independent from the Norwegian Lutheran Mission. It cooperates with the other Taiwan Lutheran churches in the China Lutheran Seminary.

The church was visited this year by the LWF Secretary for Asia, Dr. William Chang, and by the Rev. Selma Chen, a member of the Lutheran Council in Asia (LUCAS). The LWF Asia Secretary writes: “The whole Lutheran communion in Taiwan, including the seminary, are in high spirit at the Asia Church Leaders Consultation affirming their part and role in the Asia communion. The ‘’coming home’’ of LCROC is very much celebrated and anticipated even as the seminary reclaims its history with LWF.”

It is

RECOMMENDED

that the Council welcome with joy the Lutheran Church in the Republic of China (LCROC) into membership in the Lutheran World Federation.

1. ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION BY THE COUNCIL

There were no issues for which the Committee requested Council discussion.

1. ISSUES DISCUSSED BY THE COMMITTEE - for information to the Council

The Committee again discussed possible amendments to the LWF Constitution and Bylaws with respect to: 1) simplification and delegation of the appointment authority for executive staff; 2) replacement of a Council member; and 3) re-definition of LWF regions. The text of these proposed amendments was shared with the Council for information in Exhibits 18.8 and 18.9. The timeline is that at its 2016 meeting, the Council would formally recommend Constitution and Bylaws amendments to the Assembly.

In addition to these proposed amendments, which had been discussed at the Committee’s 2014 meeting, the Meeting of Officers requested the Committee to consider a constitutional amendment to allow for the early termination of office of a Council member. The Committee is of a mind to recommend that section VIII(7) of the Constitution be amended to add the words, “Council members or of”, with the entire section reading as follows:

7. The term of office of Council members or of persons elected by the Council may be terminated before expiration by a two-thirds vote of the members of the Council.

The Committee will review at its 2016 meeting the Rules of Procedure for the 11th Assembly in 2010 and consider what adjustments should be made for the formulation of the Rules of Procedure for the 12th Assembly in 2017.

The Committee heard progress reports about the applications for full membership of the Church of the Faroe Islands and the Uganda Lutheran Church. It was updated about the membership interests of the Evangelical Lutheran Indigenous Church of Ecuador, the North American Lutheran Church, North Western Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Church (India), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Gambia, the Evangelical Church of Maraland (India), and the six successor churches to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia and Other States.

1. ISSUES REFERRED TO THE MEETING OF OFFICERS

There were no issues referred to the Meeting of Officers.