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Unity Oversight Committee continues to meet

Compliance process outline begins

May 15, 2018 | Silver Spring, Maryland, United States | Unity Oversight Committee



After several months of dialogue and gathering data, the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Unity Oversight Committee has begun outlining elements of a compliance process that will be considered by world church leaders later this year. The Committee, which met May 14 at the church's headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, had a positive and productive time together and is moving toward consensus on the basic elements of the document that will go to Annual Council in October, said Mike Ryan, who chairs the group.

The committee is part of the “Unity in Mission: Procedures in Church Reconciliation” process voted by the church’s General Conference (GC) Executive Committee during its 2016 Annual Council.

During its May 14 meeting, the committee discussed the first steps in drafting an outline of a document to be brought to the 2018 Annual Council which will be held in October, according to Ryan.

“Consensus is forming around a few points to be included in the outline,” Ryan said, “although it is still under development.” He also pointed out that “the dialogues with the world divisions and various unions have been very helpful and have guided the writing committee in its outline.”

By the end of this month, members of the committee will have met with the leaders of 12 of the 14 world church entities (13 divisions and one attached union), according to Hensley Moorrooven, secretary of the Unity Oversight Committee.

“These have been very cordial and candid dialogues,” Moorrooven said.

Meetings with the remaining two entities are scheduled to take place in the next few weeks, and according to Moorrooven, the work of the committee will be informed by the input received, indicating their input will be considered before the document is finalized.

According to Ryan, some of the elements included in the document will be:

- an acknowledgement that the church operates on trust, and that the administrative level closest to the issue of non-compliance will be the one trusted and responsible for bringing about compliance.
- the next higher administrative level is tasked with the responsibility of overview, and administrators are expected to create an atmosphere by which compliance and unity may be achieved.
- In dealing with non-compliance, administrators are asked to continue to use good judgment, maturity, and discretion.
- existing General Conference policies and guidelines are available as tools for administrators in dealing with issues of non-compliance.
- a listing of consequences for non-compliance.
- a process of recourse.

Ryan emphasized the document is still in its outline stage and “between now and August we will be in the development process.”

The document will be released in its entirety once it is considered and voted by the GC Administrative Committee (ADCOM). From there it is sent to the General Conference and Division Officers (GCDO) Committee before going to the GC Executive Committee at its Annual Council in October.