



Adopted at the meeting of the central committee, 15-18 June 2022

SUPPLEMENT TO THE WCC RULES

GUIDELINES, PROCEDURES, TERMS OF REFERENCE

- I. The Moderator and Vice Moderators: Profile, Nomination and Election (CC 2012)
- II. Responsibilities of church representatives elected to the WCC's governing bodies (10th Assembly, cf. PRC 01, November 2013, CC June 2022)
- III. The Central Committee: Guidelines for Mid-term election of the Executive Committee (CC 2012)
- IV. The General Secretary (CC 1987, CC 1992, CC 2009, CC 2010)¹
- V. The Audit Committee Terms of Reference (CC 2009, EC 2010, CC 2012, CC 2014, CC June 2022)
- VI. Assembly Planning Committee Guidelines for Terms of Reference (EC November 2014; CC 2016)
- VII. Committees, Commissions, Consultative Bodies, Reference and Advisory Groups (EC, November 2019, CC June 2022)
- VIII. Consensus Consultant (EC, November 2019)
- IX. Protocol/Guidelines for Suspended Churches (PCCC 2017; CC 2018)
- X. Procedures for Dealing with Public Issues

The supplement to the rules is a document for reference that compiles decisions of the central committee, as well as guidelines, procedures, and terms of reference, to assist/guide the central and executive committees in the conduct of the business of the World Council of Churches. The provisions of the supplement are not rules in themselves. In the event of any inconsistency between the materials in this supplement and the constitution and rules of the World Council of Churches, the constitution and rules shall prevail.

The central committee can add new decisions, guidelines, procedures or terms of reference or change the existing guidelines, procedures or terms of reference included in this supplement.

¹ No amendments were proposed by the Working Group or considered by the central committee in June 2022 to sections 11 (search) or 12 (election) of the Supplement section related to the General Secretary because of the ongoing process at the time of review; the Working Group suggested that the next leadership and central committee review these sections at the earliest opportunity.

I. The Moderator and Vice Moderators Profile, Nomination and Election

1. Profile: The process of identifying, nominating and electing persons to the positions of moderator and vice moderator shall include consideration of the particular profiles that might most serve the World Council of Churches, including prominence, skill and experience in ecumenical settings, as well as ability to undertake the responsibilities included in rule VI.3.

Those considered for nomination to the position of moderator shall include persons who are widely recognized for their ecumenical experience, have demonstrated the ability to moderate complex meetings, are familiar with the work of the World Council of Churches, and are committed to facilitating the process and ethos of consensus discernment.

The nomination process shall take into account the inter-relationship of the four members of the leadership team, that is, the complementarity between each nominee and the general secretary and the others being nominated for moderator or vice moderator.

The nominations process also shall take into account historical, confessional geographical and cultural factors.

2. Nomination process: The moderator, and vice moderator(s) are nominated from among the newly elected members of the central committee during its organizing meeting which is held during or immediately after the assembly (the “organizing meeting”) rule VII.

There shall be an interval between the first and second sessions sufficient for the nominations committee to consider the relevant backgrounds of the members of the central committee and to form a common mind.

3. Immediately following the organizing meeting of the central committee, the outgoing moderator and vice-moderators shall meet with the newly elected moderator and vice-moderators in order to ensure an orderly transition and continuity of leadership.

II. Responsibilities of Member Church Representatives to Governing Bodies

A. Members of governing bodies should familiarize themselves with the Constitution and Rules of the WCC, the Supplement to the Rules, and Guidelines concerning consensus decision-making, with particular attention to the fiduciary responsibility that accompanies roles they will undertake or committees to which they have been assigned.

B. Members of governing bodies should be familiar with history and seminal texts of the WCC.

C. Members of governing bodies shall commit themselves to engaging in the work of the WCC in the ethos of consensus.

D. Members of governing bodies should commit themselves to participate in the entire meeting. Late arrivals and early departures should be avoided. They should constitute a reported and recorded exception, rather than a common practice.

E. Members of governing bodies may lose the right to be nominated for a second term if persistently departing early or arriving late.

- F. Members of the governing bodies when obliged to leave earlier, should propose a proxy to another member in the meeting.
- G. Proxies to members of the central committee must be approved by central committee; proxies to members of the executive committee must be approved by the executive committee.
- H. Each member of the governing bodies is allowed to serve as proxy only for one member who is obliged to leave earlier. The leadership of the central committee should regularly monitor this matter.

III. The Central Committee – Guidelines for Mid-term Election

1. The mid-term election of executive committee shall be conducted according to rule VI.6.
2. The governance and nominations committee of the central committee shall prepare nominations for the mid-term election, providing that:
 - a. there should be a substantial change in the membership, so that normally no more than a quarter of the elected members should continue;
 - b. those who had already served on a previous executive committee should be among the first considered for replacement;
 - c. the provisions of rule VII. 3, 4, 5 and 6 shall apply;
 - d. it should not be assumed that those representing smaller churches will be replaced while those representing larger churches continue;
 - e. The first priority is to elect to executive committee members with the skills and experience to undertake the responsibilities according to the constitution and rules.

IV. The General Secretary

1. Authority: The general secretary shall lead the work of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and shall speak on its behalf. The general secretary shall serve as the chief executive officer of the WCC, including final responsibility for the work of the WCC and its staff.

2. Responsibility: The general secretary shall have the responsibility to interpret and promote the strategic vision of the WCC consistent with its Basis and Purposes, the mandates of the assemblies during which he/she serves, and in consultation with its governance leadership and governing bodies. The general secretary will represent the WCC in its strategic leadership role for the one ecumenical movement, interpreting the programmes of the WCC to the member churches, ecumenical partners, secular bodies and governmental authorities, and the world at large.

Consistent with the Constitution and Rules of the WCC and with Swiss law, the general secretary shall identify staff and consultants qualified and mandated to develop and implement WCC programmes and objectives as approved by the governing bodies, and oversee their work. Together with WCC staff

and consultants, the general secretary shall listen to, gather, analyze, interpret and respond to the changing religious and cultural context, the changing ecclesial and ecumenical context, the changing international and political context, and the changing economic and social context as these affect the member churches, the fellowship of churches and the ecumenical movement.

3. Delegation: The general secretary shall be accountable to the central committee for the programmes, policies and strategic direction of the WCC, and will delegate to competent qualified staff appropriate responsibilities and assure the effective, efficient and transparent management of the human and financial resources of the WCC.

4. Appraisal: A periodic appraisal, including a self-appraisal of the general secretary shall be conducted for the benefit of both the general secretary and the governing bodies, in order to provide constructive feedback on his or her performance relative to stated expectations and provide an opportunity to improve. Initiated by the moderator as chief governance officer, the appraisal shall be managed by the moderator and vice moderators and may be facilitated by an outside expert, at the request of either the general secretary or the moderator. The moderator and vice moderators shall determine who will be invited to offer input in the appraisal process, identify what evaluation tools will be used and select the outside expert. The appraisal shall precede meetings of the central committee, except during the renewal process, when a full evaluation described in section 5 below, shall supersede the periodic appraisal.

The appraisal shall assess how the general secretary is fulfilling the responsibilities of the office as described in the initial role description, the WCC Rules and WCC staff rules and regulations, and other policies adopted by the executive committee related to the WCC general secretary and communicated to him/her. The moderator, vice moderators and/or the outside expert shall meet with the general secretary to discuss the results of the appraisal and any recommendations. The moderator shall inform the executive committee that the appraisal has been conducted. The appraisal shall be kept confidential, except in the event of issues which, in the opinion of the moderator and the outside expert, are of such nature that they require action consistent with chapter VI of the WCC staff regulations, in which event those issues should be referred to the audit committee, which shall function as the advisory appeals board for the general secretary.

5. Renewal Process: The general secretary shall be evaluated and retained or terminated according to the following procedures:

- a. During the meeting of the central committee or executive committee that occurs eighteen months prior to the completion of the current term of the general secretary, the general secretary shall inform the governing body whether he/she is willing to make himself/ herself available for an additional term of office as general secretary.
 - i. If the general secretary is willing to make himself/ herself available for an additional term of office, the central committee or the executive committee as the case shall be shall elect an ad hoc evaluation committee of no more than five members of the central committee to conduct a renewal appraisal, the work of which committee may be facilitated by an outside expert selected by the evaluation committee. The evaluation committee shall consult with the general secretary, and the moderator of the WCC to identify persons who may be consulted as part of the evaluation process. Persons to be consulted as part of the evaluation process shall include: a small representative sample of (a) members of the executive and central committees, (b) staff entrusted with direct responsibility for major programme or management areas of the WCC and those to whom are directly delegated responsibilities of the general secretary, (c) select

members of programmes and support staff, and (d) senior members of select ecumenical partners. The general secretary shall offer a self-evaluation of his/her service as general secretary. The evaluation process will focus on how the general secretary is fulfilling the responsibilities of the office as described in the initial role description, the WCC Rules and the WCC staff rules and regulations, and other policies related to the WCC general secretary adopted by the executive committee during the tenure of the general secretary and communicated to him or her, and whether an additional term would be in the best interests of the WCC.

The report of the conclusions of the evaluation process shall be shared with the general secretary in a confidential session with the moderator, chair of the evaluation committee and outside expert. The general secretary shall have a period of ten (10) days following the confidential session to decide whether he/she remains willing to be considered for an additional term of office. If so, the report of the evaluation committee, including its recommendation regarding an additional term, shall be delivered to the central committee in a closed session. If the general secretary decides he/ she is not willing to be considered for an additional term of office, the evaluation report shall remain confidential.

ii. In the event the general secretary does not wish to be considered for an additional term of office, or in the event that the central committee decides not to offer to the general secretary an additional term of office, the central committee shall establish a search committee composed of members of the central committee in accordance with section 11 of this supplement in order to search for nominees. The search committee shall organize its work in such a way that nominees are presented to the central committee for election prior to the completion of the term of the current general secretary, so that the term of the new general secretary can begin upon the expiration of the term of the current general secretary.

b. In the event of an unexpected vacancy in the office of general secretary between two meetings of the central committee, the executive committee shall provisionally appoint general secretary who shall serve until the election of a new general secretary by the central committee, and shall initiate the search process for a new general secretary.

6. Term of Appointment: The normal terms of appointment for the general secretary shall be five years, adjusted as necessary to coincide with the normal schedule for meetings of the central committee, unless some other period is stated in the resolution making the appointment, with the possibility of one additional appointment.

7. Retirement: Retirement policy for the general secretary shall normally conform to the provisions of Swiss law and the WCC staff rules.

8. 'Whistleblower' Procedures: If any WCC staff or persons related to the governing bodies reasonably believe that some policy, practice, or activity of the general secretary is in violation of law or a clear mandate of WCC policy or public policy, a written complaint may be filed by that employee directly with the audit committee of the executive committee, which committee shall function as the point of reference for such concerns.

9. Vacancy: In the event of a vacancy or the anticipation of a vacancy in the position of general secretary of the WCC, the central committee shall initiate a search for a new general secretary by electing a search committee in accordance with these provisions.

10. Qualifications: The general secretary shall be expected to be a gifted, skilled and experienced Christian theologian and leader with deep spiritual discernment grounded in scripture and prayer. He/she will be an active lay or ordained member of a Christian community that is one of the member churches of the WCC.

The general secretary will be expected to demonstrate (a) deep knowledge and experience with the WCC, (b) understanding of, respect and sensitivity for its various member churches and ecumenical partners, (c) commitment to hold in balance the different historical streams of work of the Council (Faith and Order, Mission and Evangelism, Education and Ecumenical Formation, and Life and Work), and (d) a clear commitment to the world-wide mission of the Church today.

He/she must have a breadth and depth of vision for the future of the WCC and the ecumenical movement and must be able to articulate, orally and in writing, the possibilities and promise of the ecumenical movement, and be deeply committed to ecumenism and the purposes of the WCC. He/she will lead the development of the WCC in ways consistent with the stated programme priorities. He/she must have knowledge of, and relationships with, other faith communities and be committed to inter-religious dialogue and cooperation.

Among the most crucial administrative roles of the general secretary will be his/her intentional cultivation of teamwork and respect within the staff of the WCC and between and among the staff and the members of governing bodies, and of the ethos of consensus. He/she shall listen to the staff and build consensus within the team, seeking to encourage connections to be made between the various areas of work. The general secretary shall encourage and nurture staff expertise, commitment and dialogue, made manifest in a dedicated and spiritual community of the Council.

11. Search:

a. Election of the search committee:

- i. The search committee shall be composed of eighteen members from among the members of the central committee.
- ii. The central committee shall directly elect ten members of the search committee, with each central committee member having ten votes. Each central committee member shall receive one numbered ballot sheet, along with a list of the then current members of the central committee. Failure to indicate ten names will render the ballot invalid. Three scrutineers appointed by central committee shall count the completed ballot sheets.
- iii. Normally, the election of the search committee shall take place during a meeting of the central committee. In the event a vacancy or anticipation of vacancy in the office of general secretary occurs between meetings of the central committee and the executive committee decides that it is in the best interest of the World Council to accelerate the formation of a search committee, the election of the search committee may be conducted by post or electronically in accordance with rule XIX.
- iv. The audit committee shall receive the returned ballots, serve as scrutineers of ballots received, certify that a sufficient number of valid ballots have been received and report to the executive committee the election of the ten elected members of the search committee. In the event a sufficient number of valid ballots are not received by the indicated date, the election process

shall be declared null and void and the election of the search committee shall be conducted at the next meeting of the central committee.

- v. The vice moderator(s) of the central committee shall serve as members of the search committee.
- vi. The remaining six members are to be appointed thereafter by the executive committee in order to assure proper confessional, geographical, gender and youth balance in the membership of the search committee.
- vii. The moderator of the search committee shall be that person who received the highest number of votes among the members elected directly by the central committee.
- viii. The two persons with the next highest number of votes not otherwise named to the search committee shall be considered "alternates". In the event a member(s) of the search committee withdraws from the committee, the next alternate shall become a member of the search committee.

b. Search Process:

- i. The final date by which nominations of candidates for the office of general secretary must be received by the search committee and the timetable necessary to meet this deadline, shall be established by the search committee well before the anticipated end of term of the incumbent general secretary, and the central committee shall be so informed.
- ii. The search committee shall prepare a role description based upon this supplement and shall invite names of possible candidates from as wide a circle as possible, including all member churches, all members of central committee, all ecumenical partners, and WCC staff.
- iii. The search committee shall report regularly to the executive committee and the moderator of the central committee as to how their work corresponds to the timetable, but not the substance of their work. The search committee, its individual members and all persons related to its work are expected to maintain strict confidentiality regarding the substance of the work of the search committee during and after the search process.
- iv. The search committee may consult with any persons or groups whom the committee thinks able to help in its task.
- v. No person considering becoming a candidate for general secretary should accept to be a member of the search committee. If a member of the search committee later becomes a candidate for the position, he/she should immediately resign and be replaced by one of the alternates.
- vi. At an appropriate time, the moderator of the search committee will take the initiative to invite consultation with existing WCC staff in accordance with a procedure established by that search committee.
- vii. The search committee shall meet as often as it deems necessary to do its work, i.e. to establish criteria and a timetable, to invite nominations, to establish a short list, to interview candidates and to decide upon a nomination or nominations.

12. Election of the general secretary:

The general secretary shall be elected, in accordance with WCC rule XX.10.a.2, according to the procedures described here.

- a. In a closed hearing session of the central committee, the moderator of the search committee shall present the final report of the search committee, including information on the search process and the qualifications of the candidate(s). A full dossier on each nominee shall be made available to central committee members, including a brief statement of his/her vision for the WCC and for the ecumenical movement.
- b. The central committee will be invited to ask questions of the moderator of the search committee for clarification and information about the search process and substance of the report.
- c. Each nominee shall briefly (10 - 15 minutes) address the central committee.
- d. In a closed decision session, following the procedures of WCC rule XX.10, the central committee shall consider the nominations of the search committee.
 - i. In the event the search committee has nominated one name only, the central committee shall consider whether to accept or reject the name recommended by the search committee. No nominations from the floor will be accepted.
 - a) After due discussion moderated by the moderator of the central committee, the central committee will decide, by simple majority of those members and substitutes present, whether to close discussion. If the vote on whether to close discussion is negative, the moderator will allow further discussion, until the central committee agrees to vote.
 - b) Once the central committee agrees to vote, the moderator of the central committee shall proceed with the election of a general secretary by secret ballot. The presidents will count the votes and present the results to the moderator who shall announce the results in the same session in which the vote is taken. A simple majority of central committee members and substitutes present and voting in favour of the nominee shall constitute an election.
 - c) If the majority is in favour of accepting the nominee, the moderator shall announce the results of the election and the central committee will receive the general secretary-designate in an open session. He/ she shall then greet the central committee.
 - d) If the majority is not in favour of accepting the nominee, the process will move to section iii below.
 - ii. In the event the search committee brings two nominees or more for consideration by the central committee, the central committee shall first consider whether to accept the two names or more recommended by the search committee or to reject all of the names. No nominations from the floor will be accepted.
 - a) After due discussion moderated by the moderator of the central committee, the central committee will decide, by simple majority of those members and substitutes present,

whether to close discussion. If the vote on whether to close discussion is negative, the moderator will allow further discussion, until the central committee agrees to vote.

- b) If the vote on whether to close discussion is positive, the vote will follow without further discussion, with the central committee invited to vote either “yes” (i.e., to accept all of the names recommended by the search committee) or “no” (i.e., to reject all of the names recommended by the search committee). The presidents will count the votes and present the results to the moderator who shall announce the results in the same session in which the vote is taken.
 - c) If a simple majority of central committee members and substitutes present and voting accept the names recommended by the search committee, the moderator of the central committee shall proceed with the election of a general secretary by secret ballot. In the event of the election of one of the nominees by simple majority the moderator shall announce the results of the election. In case no one candidate will have the simple majority then the election will be repeated between the two candidates who had the highest number of votes. The moderator shall announce the result of the second round and the central committee will receive the general secretary-elect in open session. He/she shall then greet the central committee.
 - d) If a simple majority of central committee members and substitutes present and voting do not accept the names recommended by the search committee, the process will move to section iii below.
- iii. If the central committee decides by a simple majority of central committee members and substitutes present and voting to reject the nominee(s) brought forward by the search committee, the central committee shall then decide by consensus process:
- a) to ask the current search committee to continue its work and to bring a report including nomination(s) to the next regular or special session meeting of the central committee, or to proceed to elect a new search committee to bring a report including nomination(s) to the next regular, or to a special, meeting of the central committee, and
 - b) to delegate to the executive committee appointment of an interim general secretary to serve from the end of the term of the current or acting general secretary until such time as the next regular or special session meeting of the central committee shall elect a new general secretary.
- iv. At each stage of these procedures when a vote is taken, the following process shall be followed:
- a) The doors of the room shall be closed and those gathered in the room shall remain in the room for the duration of the election. No one shall enter or leave the room during the voting process. Participants shall be instructed to turn off all means of electronic communication including mobile telephones, computers and similar devices for the duration of the election process.
 - b) The moderator of the central committee shall appoint persons as “ballot distributors” to distribute numbered ballots to each member of the central committee or substitute present, which ballots shall be either blank, in the case of yes/no voting, or, in the case

of an election, listing in alphabetical order the names of each of the nominees and also the word “abstain” in each of the working languages of the WCC.

- c) The roster of central committee members or substitutes present certified as such by the moderator, i.e. the “official roster”, shall be marked by the ballot distributors to indicate that person has received a ballot. No record shall be made of the number of the ballot received or cast by a particular person.
- d) Once all central committee members and substitutes present have received ballots, the ballot distributors shall note the number of ballots distributed and the balance of ballots prepared but not distributed shall be destroyed.
- e) Each member of the central committee and substitute present shall be invited to mark his/her ballot either by writing the words “yes” or “no” in any of the WCC working languages in the case of a yes/no vote, or, in the case of an election, by circling or marking with an “X” next to one of the names of the nominees or next to the word “abstain” if that person wishes to abstain from selecting between the nominees. Only one mark should be made.
- f) Once voting has been completed, the ballots shall be deposited into a sealed ballot box. The ballot distributors shall count the ballots cast to assure that the number of ballots received does not exceed the number distributed and that no ballot is returned bearing a number out of the range of those distributed.
- g) The presidents shall receive and count the ballots cast and present the results to the moderator who shall announce the results in the same session in which the vote is taken. In the event of an election, the presidents shall count the total number of valid votes cast for the nominees, including abstentions, i.e. “valid votes cast”, and shall separate from the valid votes cast any non-valid ballots. Ballots shall be considered “non-valid” if there are two or more marks made or selections indicated on the same ballot such that the choice indicated on the ballot is ambiguous. Non-valid ballots shall not be counted. The total number of valid votes cast shall serve as 100% for the determination of a simple majority, understood to be 50% of the valid votes cast plus one.
- h) In the event that neither candidate reaches a simple majority and there have been invalid ballots and/or abstentions among the votes cast, the moderator shall call for a re-vote. If the re-vote also fails to achieve a simple majority for either candidate, the process moves to section (iii) above.

V. The Audit Committee Terms of Reference

1. Overall purpose

To liaise with the independent auditors with a view to ensuring that member churches, funding partners, related organizations and other stakeholders are given an independent assurance of the integrity of the WCC’s financial reporting process, its stewardship of resources and management of risks and controls.

The audit committee should keep under review the independence and objectivity of the auditors.

2. Objectives

2.1 To oversee the process for the appointment of auditors.

2.2 To monitor the annual audit process and the performance of the auditor.

2.3 To receive and review the draft financial statements, together with any observations from the auditors, ensuring that any material issues are raised to the leadership of the finance sub-committee before their approval of the financial report.

2.4 To receive and review reports from the auditors regarding WCC's financial and internal control process.

2.5 To monitor the choice and application of accounting policies and principles.

3. Tasks of the audit committee

3.1 Audit planning and preparation

- To review the scope of the current year's audit, including the areas where the auditors have identified risks, or where observations have been raised by finance policy committee or finance sub-committee, making recommendations to the auditors for amendment of scope as appropriate.
- To assess whether appropriate assistance is being provided to the auditors by the finance staff.
- To review control weaknesses detected in the prior year's audit and corrective measures implemented by management.
- To review the auditor's engagement letter, including the audit fee and expenses.
- To review current financial results, related issues and any cases of litigation.

3.2 Accounting and control systems

- Enquire about changes in the financial systems and control systems during the year.
- Enquire into the condition of the records and the adequacy of resources committed to accounting and control.
- Enquire into the major financial risks faced by the Council and the appropriateness of related controls to minimize their potential impact.

3.3 Fraud risks and controls

- Receive and review annually an assessment of the risks of fraud in the organisation, as prepared by staff in accordance with the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy.
- In accordance with the same policy, and with WCC procedures concerning the reporting of fraud concerns, receive, review and address as appropriate any concerns raised by staff directly to the moderator of the audit committee.

3.4 Review the progress in the building project with particular attention to accounting treatment, disclosures, documentation of internal controls and estimates of profitability and cash flow.

3.5 Annual financial statements

- Review the financial statements, with particular focus on: the selection of, and changes in accounting policies, methods used to account for unusual or particularly significant transactions, issues on which management has made estimates or judgments that had a significant effect on the financial statements, the reasonableness of the estimates and judgments, and significant transactions with related parties.
- Enquire about changes in professional standards or regulatory requirements.

3.6 Audit results

- Review the auditors' proposed report on the financial statements.
- Review the auditors' draft detailed report assessing the internal control systems and other audit issues.
- Discuss with the auditors whether there are concerns such as: organizational and management deficiencies, limitations placed on the scope of the auditor's examination; significant misstatements or irregularities.
- Ensure that issues are reported as appropriate to the executive committee.

3.7 Special audit mandates

- Be informed of special project audits mandated and their outcomes.

3.8 Appointment of auditors

- Discuss with senior management whether there are any concerns about the conduct of the audit.
- Enquire as to the experience and capabilities of the individuals being proposed to conduct the audit, their objectivity and independence.
- Recommend to the executive committee the auditors to be appointed for the following year.
- Lead an audit tender process in accordance with procurement policy recommending appointment, in principle for a five year period, to the leadership of the finance sub-committee.

4. Membership

The audit committee shall be composed of four to six members of whom two or three shall be members of the executive committee, and two or three who shall be professionals in audit, financial reporting and/or accounting systems and controls, or have expertise in these areas.

Each member of the audit committee will have experience in financial reporting or other tasks of the committee, and should be willing and able to ask searching questions about these matters, as well as to commit the time required.

5. Appointment

Members of the audit committee shall be appointed by executive committee for a period of four years, and shall be eligible for reappointment. Names of professional members shall be offered by the audit committee or by the general secretary to the executive committee for appointment. The committee will be responsible for appointing a moderator from within its number.

6. Meetings

The Audit committee will meet at least twice each year, ordinarily in person at least once per year. The Audit committee may meet with auditors and staff present, or with one or neither of these groups of persons present. Flexibility is expected so that audit committee members and the auditors can meet on an as-needed basis.

7. Reporting

The audit committee shall report directly to the executive committee with copies to the central committee.

VI. Assembly Planning Committee Guidelines for Terms of Reference

(Note: Adapted from the Terms of Reference for the current APC, approved at its meeting in February 2018)

Preamble

The assembly planning committee (APC) is elected by the WCC central committee (CC), and reports to the executive and central committees. The WCC general secretary is responsible for implementing the assembly-related decisions of the executive and central committees.

The APC work is based on recommendations of the central committee, takes into consideration other recommendations made by WCC governing bodies, and reflects the central committee's desire to include the wider ecumenical movement in preparing an "open and inviting" assembly.

APC members representing ecumenical partners are expected to communicate and consult with the churches and partners they represent.

The assembly worship planning committee, also elected by the central committee, works in close collaboration with the APC.

Responsibilities and duties

1. Assembly theme

- 1.1 Reflect on the context and ecumenical landscape in which the assembly will take place, taking into consideration possible venue sites.
- 1.2 Discuss possible themes for the assembly in response to the global context and ecumenical landscape, in relation to the mission of the WCC, and formulate a proposal for consideration of the central committee.

2. Nature and style of the assembly

- 2.1 Consider the nature and style of the assembly and bring recommendations to the executive and/or central committees.
- 2.2 Maintain a clear distinction between the governance functions of an assembly and other components of the assembly, i.e. spiritual life, celebration, interaction with host churches and fora for encounter (*Padare, Mutirão, Madang, Brunnen*).

3. Assembly programme

- 3.1 Consider the building blocks of the assembly (i.e. prayer and Bible study, plenaries, ecumenical conversations, committees, and fora for encounter) bringing initial recommendations to the penultimate meeting of the central committee prior to the assembly, and final programme to the last meeting of the central committee prior to the assembly. In the event the period from the last central committee to the assembly exceeds one year, the final programme may be modified by the executive committee.
- 3.2 Consider pre-assembly events (e.g. youth, women, EDAN, Indigenous Peoples) and concurrent events (e.g. Global Ecumenical Theological Institute, GETI).

- 3.3 Recommend general preparatory events (e.g. regional, confessional).
- 3.4 Visit the assembly venue in order to propose how the space will be used.

4. Participation in the assembly

- 4.1 Consider the number of member church delegates (seat allocation) and bring recommendations to the penultimate meeting of the central committee prior to the assembly.
- 4.2 Explore possibilities to strengthen the participation and interaction among member churches, ecumenical partners and the wider ecumenical movement.

5. Spiritual life

- 5.1 Discuss and offer guidance to the central committee and coordinate with the assembly worship planning committee for the development of the assembly spiritual life.

6. Communication

- 6.1 Discuss and recommend the best ways and means of communicating and promoting the assembly with member churches and ecumenical partners.

7. Budget and reimbursement policy

- 7.1 Discuss and monitor the development of the assembly budget including fundraising.
- 7.2 Review the existing reimbursement policy, recommending any adjustments for the assembly.

8. Other tasks

- 8.1 Monitor the timeline for assembly preparations and report on progress to the executive and central committees.
- 8.2 Consider the continuing role of members of the APC who are delegates to the assembly in assisting the assembly business committee, if requested.
- 8.3 Undertake further preparatory and/or assembly responsibilities as assigned by the executive and central committees.

VII. Committees, Commissions, Consultative Bodies, Reference and Advisory Groups

There is a fundamental distinction between “governance” and “consultation”, i.e. the distinct roles and functions of the various instruments related to the work of the WCC. Commissions, consultative bodies, reference and advisory groups broaden the range of insights and expertise available to the general secretary and the programmatic work of the Council, as well as to the governing bodies, assisting them to listen to, gather, analyse, interpret and respond to the changing religious and cultural context, the changing ecclesial and ecumenical context, the changing international and political context, and the changing economic and social context as these affect the fellowship of member churches, the ecumenical partners and the ecumenical movement, so that the governing bodies can carry out the mission of the WCC.

1. Governing bodies

In the area of governance:

- The “**Governing Bodies**” with authority and responsibility defined in the WCC Constitution and Rules: **Assembly, Central Committee and Executive Committee** (They meet as such, take decisions within the range of their mandates; record their work in minutes).

- **Standing Committees of the Central Committee** (Rules VI and X), composed of members and assigned advisors, supported by staff related to their mandates, meet during meetings of the central committee. They receive reports from committees, commissions, consultative bodies, reference groups, and staff as well as reports from the general secretary, remarks of the moderator, reports of the executive committee, reports of ad hoc or working groups, related to their mandates, consult with one another, in the ethos of consensus, in order to prepare recommendations for action by the governing body. Standing committees do not keep minutes but prepare a consensus report submitted to and acted upon by the central committee.
- **Sub-committees of the Executive Committee** (Rule VIII), composed of members of the executive committee, supported by staff related to their mandates, meet during meetings of the executive committee, receive reports from commissions, consultative bodies, reference groups, and staff as well as reports from the general secretary, reports of ad hoc or working groups, related to their mandates, consult with one another and with related staff, in the ethos of consensus, in order to prepare recommendations for action by the governing body. Subcommittees do not keep minutes but prepare a consensus report submitted to and acted upon by the executive committee.
- **Other committees** – permanent committee on consensus and collaboration (Rule IX), audit committee (Rule VIII.5.b; Supplement to the Rules), assembly planning committee (Supplement to the Rules), search committee for the election of a new GS (Supplement to the Rules) – work according to fixed mandates; as well as *ad hoc* committees and working groups appointed and assigned particular tasks by and for the governing bodies.

2. Consultative bodies

- **Commissions** are elected by the central committee (Rule VI.5.m), which approve their by-laws, receive their reports, and integrate their initiatives into the life of the WCC. Commissions have a special status given their histories and wider constituency represented in their structures either as members or advisors (e.g. Roman Catholic Church and other non-member churches; mission societies; etc.). With the exception of the recently established Young People in the Ecumenical Movement Commission and the Commission on Health and Healing, commissions pre-date the reorganization of the WCC and, in some cases, represent streams of the ecumenical movement that predate the WCC itself. Commissions (in their numbers and in terms of their membership) expand the circle of participation in the life and work of the Council and expertise available to inform decisions of the governing bodies and offer advice primarily for programme policy.
 - Any changes in the mandate and compositions of the commission requires consultation with the constituency (as spelled out in the commissions' by-laws).
 - Commissions, as integral part of the Council's programmatic activities, draw their resources from the activity budget.
 - The work (in broadest sense) of the commissions permeates and informs all aspects of the WCC. The historical legacy and by-laws constitute the primary references.
 - The work of the commissions is at the core of the vision and mission of the WCC.
- **Joint Consultative Bodies**, such as the Joint Working Group with the Roman Catholic Church, and the Joint Consultative Group with the Pentecostals are particular initiatives between the WCC and churches or church traditions not directly represented in WCC membership and offer advice for institutional and relational policy.
 - The mandate of the consultative body is developed together with the partner.
 - Joint consultative bodies, as integral part of the Council's programmatic activities, draw their resources from the activity budget.

- Joint consultative bodies inform the WCC's work and strengthen the WCC's ecumenical witness.
- The work of the consultative bodies is at the core of the vision and mission of the WCC.

3. Reference and Advisory Groups

- **Reference Groups** are formed to accompany major programme and ecumenical initiatives offering programme advice. Functioning in an advisory capacity to the general secretary and governing bodies, a reference group will assist in the process of gathering, analysing, interpreting, and responding to the changing contexts related to the initiative and evaluating outcomes, as these affect the member churches, the fellowship of churches and the ecumenical movement. A reference group typically will include key members of the central committee as well as other representatives of member churches or partners with particular interest and/or expertise related to the programme being accompanied, proposed by the central committee, by the executive committee, or by the general secretary and elected by the central or executive committees, with a size and mandate approved by the electing body. Reference groups normally report to the general secretary, and, through the general secretary, to the executive and/or central committee.
 - The mandate, term, composition and budget of the reference group is approved by the governing bodies.
 - The terms of a reference group does not extend beyond the term of the central committee that approved the reference group.
 - Reference groups may be formed upon suggestion and in cooperation with ecumenical/funding partners, but remain accountable to WCC governing bodies.
 - Reference groups are advisory, not implementing, bodies, but inform the WCC's programmatic work and strengthen the WCC's ecumenical witness.
- **Advisory groups** are appointed by the general secretary to consult and advise the general secretary on matters internal to the WCC staff, specific projects or to stimulate discussion on emerging issues. Advisory groups report to the general secretary, and, through the general secretary, report to the executive committee when recommendations relate to programme initiatives or WCC policies or practices.
 - The mandate, term, composition and budget of the advisory group is proposed by the general secretary and approved by the executive committee.
 - The term of an advisory group does not extend beyond the term of the central committee during which the advisory group was appointed.

VIII. Consensus Consultant

The leadership of the central committee normally will consult with a person(s) experienced in consensus process decision-making for meetings to advise their work ("consensus consultant") in preparation of meetings of the governing bodies. Meetings of the central committee normally will be accompanied by such a consensus consultant. In furtherance of its constitutional responsibility to plan for meetings of the Assembly, making provision for the conduct of its business (Constitution, Article V.2.c.x), and in light of the particular challenges of introducing consensus process decision-making during the assembly, the central committee may arrange for a consensus consultant to be available to accompany the work of the assembly. Such a consensus consultant present at the assembly may be invited as an advisor to meetings of the assembly business committee. All persons who will moderate sessions or serve as recorders and rapporteurs of assembly sessions or committees or central

committee and its standing committees shall undertake specific training in conducting meetings based upon the consensus model of decision-making, and may have reference to a consensus consultant during those meetings. A consensus consultant may be invited to meetings of the executive committee.

When a consensus consultant is invited to assist in the preparation, moderation and evaluation of meetings, he or she will have the following responsibilities:

A. Before the meeting

1. Advise the leadership of the central committee (LCC) on the process of developing agendas, with particular attention to the time necessary for consensus discernment on matters proposed for decision, taking into account whether the meeting will be in person or electronic.
2. Ensure all steps are taken to assist moderators to put necessary consensus procedures into practice.
3. Plan and facilitate the orientation sessions for committee moderators and rapporteurs, and staff assigned to accompany committees, including techniques for facilitating consensus, use of indicator cards and managing categories of participation.

B. During the meeting

1. Provide orientation for meeting participants on consensus;
2. Meet regularly with the leadership of the central committee (LCC) in order to
 - a. Debrief on how consensus had been managed during sessions during the day;
 - b. Discuss sessions, noting risk areas and possible solutions ahead of time;
3. Identify and plan the decision sessions so that consensus decision making runs smoothly;
4. Committees of the central committee;
 - a. Attend at least one committee meeting for each committee, remaining "on call" for assistance when necessary;
 - b. Advise moderator and rapporteur on particularities, and risk areas;
5. During plenary sessions, when necessary, discretely alert moderators to risks, particular dynamics or other matters needing special attention and/or remind moderators of the various available tools to develop consensus.

C. After the meeting

1. Debrief with LCC directly after meeting
2. Debrief with standing committee moderators and rapporteurs directly after the meeting
3. Receive a copy of the participants' evaluation report once prepared
4. Submit a written evaluation on consensus to LCC and to the PCCC,* with reference to the participants' evaluation report, including suggestions for the next meeting.

D. Electronic communications and meetings (Rule XVIII and Rule XIX.11 and 12)

1. Advise LCC and executive committee on processes for decisions by postal or electronic decision.
2. Advise the LCC on implementation of the platform for consultation, building consensus and decision making, including relevant new technologies.
3. The tasks outlined in A-C above also apply for electronic meetings, with special attention to the particular challenges of meeting electronically.

* Consultant may be invited to meetings of the PCCC, as appropriate.

IX. Protocol/Guidelines for Suspended Member Churches

Appendix to the Report of the Permanent Committee, Rhodes 2017, following request for “guidelines regarding relationships between WCC and suspended member churches” Executive Committee, June 2017, reviewed November 2017.

These guidelines apply to the churches whose membership has been suspended according to rule I.6.b. and those churches that have requested to have their membership suspended:

- A. Rule I.6.c defines a relationship of the WCC with a suspended member church: “When the central committee suspends the membership of a church, the general secretary shall ascertain whether the reason for the suspension is resolved, can or cannot be resolved, and shall present progress reports to the executive committee until the process for the suspension is concluded. Any decision about the membership status of the church shall be taken by the central committee.”
- B. During the period of suspension, the suspended church is to be removed from the list of WCC member churches, and named in a separate list entitled “Suspended churches” with the following explanation “Suspended member church, as per decision of the Central Committee taken in place, date...”
- C. It is expected that a suspended WCC member church will affirmatively assert and provide evidence of its faithfulness to the norms and practices of the WCC fellowship and organizational criteria described in the WCC Constitution and Rules, as well as its commitment to the ecumenical movement, as a starting point for seeking re-admission in the fellowship as a full member.
- D. Based on the recommendation of the general secretary, the central committee may decide to invite the suspended church to send observers to assemblies (Rules IV. 1. c.ii.a.). In case of such a participation, all related costs shall be covered by the suspended member church.
- E. Representatives of the suspended church cannot be elected to any WCC committee, commission or consultative body, or hired as WCC staff. In the event the suspended church has representatives in WCC committees, commissions or consultative bodies, their membership in these bodies is revoked immediately after the WCC central committee decision, or request by a church to suspend membership.
- F. A suspended church will be encouraged to continue informing the Council about its concerns, priorities and activities and to nurture its ability of becoming a full part of the ecumenical family.
- G. Representatives of a suspended church cannot represent WCC in any capacity and context like delegations, anniversaries, celebrations, etc.
- H. A suspended church may continue to receive WCC, press releases, and news for information and study.
- I. A suspended church should not be requested to make an annual contribution to the general budget of WCC.
- J. Progress shall be reported during each meeting of the central and executive committees during the suspension.
- K. When the general secretary reports to the executive committee, and the executive committee agrees, that the suspended church has resolved the conditions that led to the suspension, the executive committee shall report to the central committee and recommend restoration of the church’s status as a member church.
- L. When the general secretary reports to the executive committee, and the executive committee agrees, that all reasonable efforts to resolve the conditions that led to the suspension of the church from active membership have been expended and the conditions have not been

resolved, the executive committee reports to the central committee and may recommend termination of the church's status as a member church.

- M. Any decision about the membership status of the church shall be taken by the central committee. If the church is removed from membership it shall be removed from the list of "suspended" member churches.

X. Procedures for Dealing with Public Issues

(First approved at the central committee meeting, Geneva, July 2014, Doc. No. GEN PUB 02 rev.)

1. Texts for consideration by the central committee for approval as statements or minutes on public issues should be based on impulses from member churches [*WCC Constitution and Rules, Rule VI, para 5 (c)*] and/or from the commissions (especially the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs) [*WCC Constitution and Rules, Rule XII, para 3*].
2. Texts for such statements/minutes should be developed through a process of research and consultation between the general secretariat and relevant member churches, commissions and other stakeholders/partners.
3. The resulting draft statements/minutes, after review by the WCC staff leadership group (SLG), shall be circulated to central committee members well in advance of the next scheduled meeting (together with a clear rationale for action by the central committee and any other necessary background materials), and reactions invited.
4. The public issues committee will, in accordance with its prescribed mandate [*WCC Constitution and Rules, Rule X.7*], receive, discuss and finalize such drafts for action by the central committee, taking into account any reactions received from central committee members.
5. Situations requiring a more immediate public response should generally be addressed by other forums or instruments of the WCC able to react in an appropriately timely manner [CCIA, executive committee, moderator/vice-moderators/general secretary].
6. In case of emergent circumstances and situations arising immediately before or during meetings of the central committee which are considered to warrant a public statement or minute without the normal preparatory research and wider consultation process, the following procedures shall apply:
 - a. A deadline for receiving proposals from central committee members for any such statements/minutes concerning emergent situations shall be stipulated in an early session of the meeting, giving at least 24 hours' notice. Proposals received after this deadline may not be able to be considered by the public issues committee during that meeting, but may be referred to the general secretary for consideration and any appropriate action.
 - b. Proposals for any such statements/minutes should be accompanied by relevant background information.
 - c. Subject to compliance with the above requirements, proposals received will – in accordance with its prescribed mandate [*WCC Constitution and Rules, Rule X.7*] – be received and analysed

by the public issues committee, which will make such recommendations and prepare such texts for action by the central committee as it considers appropriate.

7. The public issues committee will report to the central committee on all proposals received, and provide a rationale for its recommendations in relation to each (including reference, where relevant, to ways in which the issues concerned already have been or are being addressed by WCC).
8. Recommendations by the public issues committee to the central committee concerning draft texts or proposals for action may, inter alia, include:
 - Approval of a final draft text as either a public statement or minute.
 - Referral to another appropriate committee.
 - Referral to the general secretary for consideration and any appropriate action.
 - Deferral to a subsequent meeting (pending further research and/or consultation).
 - No action.
9. Any statements/minutes containing recommendations for a programmatic response by WCC shall be referred to and processed by the programme committee or the policy reference committee, as appropriate.