THE UNITING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

STANDING ORDERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMISSION 2026

1. WHO ARE THE MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY?

The Executive Commission meets once every two years in the year that the General Assembly does not meet. It consists of its Office bearers as specified in paragraph 13.9 (a) along with Commissioners appointed by Presbyteries as reflected in paragraph 13.9 (b) of the *Manual of Faith and Order*. The meeting will be fully in person with only Committee Conveners allowed to present reports remotely. All Commissioners will be attending in person.

1.1. Approximately three months prior to the meeting of Executive Commission, the Clerk of Assembly shall issue to each Presbytery Clerk forms for the commissioning of a minister and an elder, along with alternates to the forthcoming meeting of Executive Commission.

Each Presbytery then elects its Commissioners to the Executive Commission in terms of paragraph 13.9 (b) of the *Manual of Faith and Order*.

1.2. Completed forms detailing the names, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers of Commissioners and their Alternates shall be returned by each Presbytery Clerk to the Clerk of Assembly not later than twelve weeks prior to the meeting.

1.3. Should any Presbytery find it necessary to appoint an alternate for a Commissioner unable to attend the Executive Commission, they shall inform the Clerk not later than 14 days before the Executive Commission convenes. Any alternate shall be proposed as a regularly appointed Commissioner when the Roll of Commissioners is amended upon presentation to the Executive Commission.

1.4. At least one month before the commencement of the Executive Commission, every Commissioner shall register themselves via the online portal in preparation for the Executive Commission orientation. One online orientation will be held before the Executive Commission to make sure all Commissioners understand the procedures of the Assembly.

1.5. The onus of ensuring each alternate commissioner (who is replacing a commissioner) receives the Papers for the Executive Commission and notice of other briefings or resources rests upon Commissioners who are unable to fulfil their commission in liaison with the appropriate Presbytery Clerk.

1.6. Any alleged irregularity regarding the appointment of a Commissioner brought to the attention of the Clerk of Assembly shall be referred to the Business Committee for examination and report to the Executive Commission.

1.7. Commissioning by a Presbytery obliges a Commissioner to be present for the whole period of the Executive Commission. Leave of absence for any period must be applied for, stating reasons, through the person/s assigned to consider these applications. The Clerk shall report on each application to the Executive Commission and move that it be granted or otherwise.

Commissioners are encouraged to acquaint themselves with the rules by which the Executive Commission operates before arrival at the meeting. These can be found in the Manual of Faith and Order chapter 14 and also here in the Standing Orders of the Executive Commission.

2. WHO IS REGULARLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE EXECUTIVE COMMISSION?

2.1 The association of Church members with the Executive Commission is in terms of para 13.12 of the *Manual of Faith and Order*. The association of any particular person may be moved at the beginning of any Session of Executive Commission after consultation with the Clerk or Assembly Business Convener.

2.2 Any fraternal delegate of a sister Church, local minister invited to bring greetings, representative of an organisation, or individual invited to address the Executive Commission, is for that purpose accorded the status of associate as defined in paragraph 13.12 of the *Manual of Faith and Order*, upon adoption of these Standing Orders.

Associates at the Executive Commission have the right to speak, but not to vote. Only Commissioners may vote. Associates may also not "move" a proposal on the floor of the Executive Commission.

In terms of 14.16 of the Manual of Faith and Order; Associates and others who are not Commissioners must leave the Council when any business is conducted in a "private" or "in camera" sitting.

3. ORDERING OF DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED TO EXECUTIVE COMMISSION

The Assembly Business Convener shall send to each Assembly Committee Convener and to the Clerk of each Presbytery one month before the meeting a copy of the Preliminary Draft Agenda for the meeting of the Executive Commission. This agenda will indicate the day, session and order in which it is proposed that the report be heard, discussed and decided upon and also the proposed time allocation.

The Convener of each Assembly Committee shall:

(a) send one electronic copy of their completed report to the Clerk of Assembly and another copy to the Cluster Co-ordinator under which his/her committee falls; to reach him/her not later than three months before the meeting at the date set and communicated by the Clerk;

(b) send (if necessary) a video/voice note presentation to reach the Clerk of Assembly by 31 May; and

(c) submit to the Assembly Business Convener a written motivation for changing the place of a report on the agenda or changing the time allocated for discussion or decision on the report to reach him/her not later than 31 May,

> ***REMEMBER***
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> ***It is not competent for a Committee to put into the proposals of their report a request to the Executive Commission to make funds available. The committee should deal with this according to paragraph 13.33 of the Manual of Faith and Order.***

3.3 The Clerk of Assembly shall on receipt of each report:

(a) review each proposal to ensure that its meaning is clearly expressed and that it is in proper form for printing in the Papers;

(b) consult with the Convener concerned when a substantial alteration to a proposal or other formal document needs to be made to ensure that the meaning is clear and that it is rewritten in proper form for printing in the Papers.

Overtures and Petitions.

3.4. Clerks of Presbyteries shall submit to the Clerk of Assembly, by no later than three months before the meeting (see 14.25 of *Manual of Faith and Order*), two electronic copies of all Overtures and Petitions together with any related documents that have been transmitted to Presbyteries from Sessions and from individual members and other communications to be submitted to the Executive Commission. In the case of Overtures, a short report may be included if desired. These copies are to be forwarded as follows:

(i) one to the Clerk of Assembly;
(ii) one to the Assembly Business Convener.

3.5. No Overtures or Petitions shall be considered unless the relevant provisions of the Manual have been complied with (including time frames).

Reports.

3.6. A report submitted after the prescribed date will NOT be published in the Executive Commission Papers or in the Supplementary Papers. Instead, the Clerk will report the matter to the Executive Commission and the decision about whether to hear the report will be taken by Executive Commission itself. Should the Executive Commission resolve to hear a late report, the Convener of the affected Committee will then make copies available to ALL commissioners.

3.7. No report will be considered as for publication in the Supplementary Papers unless provisions for the publishing of a Supplementary report have been complied with. That is an initial report has been submitted at the appropriate time and that between the time of submission and 14 days before the Commission meeting there have been some developments within the work of the Committee that warrant reporting to the Executive Commission. The report of the Assembly Business Committee is usually printed in the Supplementary Papers.

3.8. The Clerk of Assembly is empowered to examine Overtures as they are received. The Clerk then recommends to the Assembly Business Committee how Overtures and Petitions are to be dealt with. When there is consensus between the Clerk and the Assembly Business Committee, the Clerk makes a recommendation to the Executive Commission in his report. The Clerk also includes a proposal for the Changes in the Ministry report to be accepted.

Applications from Presbyteries the retirement of ministers and for granting Emeritus/a status.

3.9. When a minister applies to retire, the Presbytery applies for the Assembly or the Executive Commission to approve that application and to accord that minister the status of minister emerita/us. A copy of the Presbytery Minute supporting the application for retirement must be sent to the Ministry Committee of General Assembly and to the Clerk of Assembly three months before the Executive Commission. The Presbytery shall be responsible for the sending of a tribute of a minister who has applied to retire two months before the sitting of the General Assembly or Executive Commission.

Returns to Remits

3.10. Clerks of Presbyteries shall submit two copies of Returns to Remits to the Clerk of Assembly no later than the dates determined by General Assembly or Executive Commission.

Executive Commission Papers and Yearbook

3.9. The Clerk of Assembly shall have all the foregoing documents published and distributed in pdf format: a **Content Index**, the **Preliminary Draft Agenda**, these **Standing Orders**, the **In Memoriam Minutes**, **the Roll of Commissioners**, the **Changes in the Ministry, Overtures and Petitions, and Committee Reports.** These shall be known as **"THE PAPERS FOR EXECUTIVE COMMISSION."**

The Supplementary reports, proceedings and an Extract of Executive Commission decisions shall be published in the UPCSA Year Book.

3.10. **The Assembly Office shall**:

1. Distribute to all commissioners to the Executive Commission and to all Conveners of Assembly Committees who are not commissioners every year;

a) the *Papers* in pdf format in time for them to be read before the Commission meets; and

b) the minimum possible number of *Supplementary Papers* to commissioners immediately before the Council meets and to Conveners who are not commissioners as soon as is practically possible.

2. Place the *Papers,* the *Supplementary Papers,* the final version of the *Proceedings*, the *Decisions* and the *Remits* on the website, each as soon as possible.

3. As soon as possible after the Executive Commission distribute to all commissioners and all Conveners of Assembly Committees who were not commissioners copies of:

a) all the *Decisions* of the Assembly or Executive Commission and
b) all the *Remits* adopted by the Assembly or Executive Commission, separately printed and identified.

4. Within two months after the Assembly or Executive Commission, to distribute to all Conveners of Assembly Committees and to all Sessions a copy each of the annual *Yearbook,* which shall contain;

a) the *Papers* and *Supplementary Papers*;

b) the *Decisions* of the Assembly or Executive Commission (of which only one complete copy is necessary, with the decisions affecting [a] Ministers, Sessions and Congregations and [b] Presbyteries (marked in different ways);
c) all the *Remits* adopted by the Assembly or Executive Commission, separately printed and identified.

5. Send hard copies of the *Yearbook* and the *Proceedings* to all archival repositories.

4. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES ACTIVE DURING GENERAL ASSEMBLY

4.1. The Assembly Business Committee

Each General Assembly shall appoint a Convener of a Business Committee for the next Assembly, together with not more than six members to serve with him/her. The Clerk of Assembly shall be a member of the Business Committee. Meetings will take place online.

4.2 The Nominations Committee

The Nomination Process

4.2.1. The Nomination Committee Process shall be as follows:

(a) The Convener of the Nominations Committee corresponds with the members appointed to it by the General Assembly which consists of one member per Presbytery. The committee meets using a virtual meeting platform. Together they decide before the end of April which Conveners of Assembly committees should continue in office, bearing in mind Assembly's decision about length of tenure. The Convener ascertains from current Conveners who are otherwise due to retire in terms of that decision, whether there are good reasons for them to continue in office.

(b) The Convener contacts all Conveners, whom the committee thinks should continue in office by **30th April**, requesting them to let him/her have, by **15th May,** the names of those they wish to be members of their committees.

(c) The committee compiles a preliminary report. The Convener sends this to all members of the Committee by **31st May.**

(d) All members of the Committee comment to the Convener on the report **by two weeks before the Assembly.**

(e) The Convener compiles a first draft report for the Assembly and submits that for printing in the Supplementary Papers. He/she tables this without discussion on the first day of the Assembly and requests commissioners to communicate comments on it to him/her.

(f) The Nominations Committee meets virtually (using an online platform) during the Assembly to consider the first draft and amends it in light of information and comments from Assembly commissioners made directly to the Convener. The Convener then presents the second draft on the third day of the Assembly and the final report on the final day.

(g) During the meeting of Executive Commission, the Nominations Committee also meets virtually but their work is merely to fill vacancies on the committees and commissions of the UPCSA.

4.3 The Scrutinization of Records

All Presbyteries, Synods and committees of Assembly are required to send to the Clerk of Assembly by 31 May scanned copies of the minutes for all their meetings that have taken place since the end of the previous year's Assembly or Executive Commission. These scanned minutes are to have been signed by the Convener and dated on the occasion of their being confirmed. These will be kept in the UPCSA's online digital repository.

5. THE ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE'S ROLE

5.1. The Assembly Business Committee shall:

(a) in consultation with the Conveners of Committees, arrange the order in which the business of Executive Commission is to be taken and in particular arrange with the Clerk of Assembly to have the Preliminary Draft Agenda published and circulated with the Papers;

(b) consult with the Moderator, General Secretary, and Clerk to decide how communications addressed to the Executive Commission through them are to be dealt with;

(c) make arrangements for: the distribution of documents; projection of presentations and proposals, handling requests for leave of absence; appointment of a Drafting Committee; scrutineers; vote of thanks; confirmed plans for next Assembly; and the nomination and election of any Records scrutineers;

(d) report at the beginning of the meeting of Executive Commission regarding business arrangements and personnel to be appointed to facilitate the meeting of Commission, and be prepared to meet thereafter as and when required to guide the Commission in its business;

(e) arrange for the meeting of Insaka groups during the Executive Commission and to advise commissioners on the appropriate wording for proposals as well as the appropriate place on the Agenda where the suggested proposal can be dealt with;

(f) do all it can to encourage the Executive Commission to communicate effectively, use its time well and expedite its business in such a manner as may be well pleasing to the Lord;

(g) recommends to Executive Commission a Drafting Team consisting of up to 4 members who will read the reports of each Insaka Group and prepare, in consultation with those groups, a set of proposals for the Commission's Decision Session. The members of this committee should preferably not be commissioners. The Clerk of Assembly supervises the work of the Drafting Committee.

REGULATING OF DEBATE IN THE ASSEMBLY

5.2. The Moderator chairs the meeting of the Executive Commission, seated at a table set up at the front of the Commission. The Moderator is assisted by the Clerk (seated to the Moderator's left) and the Assembly Business Convener (seated to the Moderator's right). The Minute Clerk/s are seated at a table near the Clerk.

Duties of the Clerk

5.3. The chief responsibility of the Clerk, during the meeting of the Executive Commission is to see that the minutes are properly kept. The Clerk is assisted in this by one or two Minute Clerks appointed by the Commission. The Clerk of Assembly supervises the process and makes sure that the Minute Clerk/s have all the documents they need to keep the minutes accurately.

5.4. The Clerk advises the Moderator on procedure, whether this relates to the rules of debate or to the laws of the Church.

5.5. In the absence of appointed persons, the Clerk moves proposals with regard to overtures, remits and reports.

Duties of the Assembly Business Convener

5.6. The Business Convener supervises the team appointed by the Executive Commission to perform tasks except the Minute Clerks who are supervised by the Clerk.

5.7. The Business Convener advises the Moderator on when notices of motion, overtures and all business not listed on the agenda should be dealt with.

5.8. The Business Convener advises the Moderator or the mover of a proposal as to whether it should be moved as a notice of motion or simply an amendment to an existing proposal, and as to whether the motion is competent in terms of the provisions of the *Manual of Faith and Order.*

5.9. The Business Convener advises the Moderator with regard to the time available for the Commission to transact its business and may use proposals contained in paragraph 14.11 of the *Manual of Faith and Order* to help Assembly to handle its business more expeditiously.

5.10 Although the Clerk is responsible for advising the Moderator on procedure, the Business Convener may also do so. The General Secretary may substitute for the Clerk or the Assembly Business Convener when requested.

6. WHAT HAPPENS FIRST AT GENERAL ASSEMBLY?

Roll of Commissioners

6.1. The Clerk of Assembly shall advise the Commission of each apology and substitution. The Clerk shall report on any allegation of an irregular commission. After the decision of the Assembly on these reports has been taken, the Clerk shall move that the Roll of Assembly commissioners be adopted.

Changes in the Ministry

6.2. The Clerk shall move the adoption of the report on Changes in the Ministry as printed in the Papers. When the Council has satisfied itself as to the accuracy of the changes reported since the previous Assembly, it shall agree to adopt the report.

Report of the Assembly Business Committee

6.3. The Assembly Business Convener shall report on, and move for the Council's approval:

(a) The Final Draft Agenda;
(b) The Committee's nominations for the team to administer the meeting;
(c) The Standing Orders;
(d) Plans for the next meeting of General Assembly.

7. WHAT SORT OF RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS IS REQUIRED AT EXECUTIVE COMMISSION?

7.1. The minutes of the Executive Commission shall contain a brief narrative on the conduct within any Session of the meeting and record of its decisions.

7.2. Where Executive decides by consensus against a particular proposal, or where Assembly chooses to "pass from the subject", or where proposals are referred elsewhere, the manner in which the Assembly disposed of the proposals shall simply be noted alongside the number and subsequent proposals shall not be renumbered. The numbering of decisions of General Assembly may be changed at any time by the Clerk of Assembly so that the decisions follow in an understandable way.

7.3. Proposals introduced by the way of Supplementary Reports or Notices of Motion should be numbered in accordance with the above system.

7.4. The Decisions of Executive Commission shall be listed together as the "Decisions of Executive Commission," in appropriate order.

Confirmation of Minutes

7.5. The minutes of the Executive Commission shall be recorded during the course of the meeting. All except those of the last two sessions shall be distributed during the course of meeting, but none shall be presented to the Executive Commission for confirmation. The completed minutes will be distributed to all Commissioners within 30 days of the end of the meeting of Executive Commission and shall be confirmed within 60 days of the same date, after having been scrutinised by persons appointed for the purpose and the necessary corrections, if any, having been made. Any Commissioner may point out corrections to the scrutineers.

8. HOW DOES EXECUTIVE COMMISSION MAKE DECISIONS?

The Role of Standing Committees

8.1. The Executive Commission receives reports from Assembly's Standing Committees. These reports contain proposals for decisions that the Commission is being requested to make. These proposals constitute the beginning of the decision making process. Requests for action can also come in the form of Overtures and Petitions from Presbyteries or Sessions. Without these proposals, the process of decision making may never begin. Committees are expected to produce concise reports and limited proposals for the Executive Commission whereas for the Assembly, reports may be more comprehensive.

The Listening Session

8.2. The Convener of a Committee (or in their absence their nominee or the Clerk of Assembly) is offered an opportunity by the Commission to present their report in the Listening phase of the Commission's meeting. This presentation may take the form of a short speech, a video, a computer generated presentation or a display. The aim is to showcase the committee's work for the sake of celebrating what the Lord of the Church is doing. The proposals are not moved at this point, but their substance forms part of the presentation.

In the case of an Overture or Petition, the person/s appointed by the relevant Council is/are invited to present the proposal. After the report is presented:

8.2.1 The Convener or the Clerk moves that the Commission receives the report.
8.2.2. The Moderator allows for questions for the purpose of finding clarity.
8.2.3. The Clerk indicates which proposals have been designated "Transactional" and which are "Missional" (also allows change from "T" to "M" without any debate but the "M" CANNOT be changed to "T").
8.2.4. The Clerk then moves all "T" proposals linked for adoption.
8.2.5. The Moderator informs Council that "M" proposals are to be discussed in Insaka Groups.

The Discussion Session (including Insaka Groups)

8.3. Any report, having been presented to the Commission during the listening stage, is sent by the Commission to Insaka Groups for discussion. Before the meeting of Executive Commission, the Clerk shall, in consultation with the General Secretary, divide Commissioners into Insaka Groups of a reasonable size and appoint a facilitator for every group from among the Commissioners. An Insaka Group is a group which shall meet during Executive Commission to discuss reports of Standing Committees, Overtures, Petitions and such other business as the Executive Commission will instruct these to consider.

8.4. An Insaka Group will, at its first meeting, appoint for itself a scribe who will record the Group's decisions and possible amendments. The Clerk of Assembly will prepare a list of proposals for the Insaka Group's consideration. The Group will then discuss each proposal and record its consensus on each. Where the Group is not able to find consensus on a proposal, the reasons for this are stated in the Insaka Group's report. Where consensus can only be found after the proposal is amended, then the amendment is stated in the Group's report.

8.5. The Executive Commission may consider certain proposals, overtures or petitions which are regarded by the the Moderator and Business Committee as needing further discussion in a General Session. All commissioners are expected to attend these Sessions which are held in Plenary.

8.6. The Business Committee shall appoint, in consultation with the General Secretary, a Drafting Team. The function of this team shall be to study the reports from all the Insaka Groups and then draft a consolidated report and a fresh set of proposals for the Decision Session.

The Decision Session

8.7. Only Missional proposals are dealt with in Decision Sessions, and proposals shall normally be presented by the Clerk of Assembly or the Convener of the Drafting Team. The Clerk of Assembly shall move each proposal in turn and the Commission shall decide by consensus.

8.8. Committees to which matters have been especially referred during the Executive Commission shall deal with those references promptly and report as the Commission may direct.

8.9. During a Decision Session,

a) the Clerk of Assembly moves the proposal and then the Moderator calls for an indication of the Commission's response. This is gauged through the display of indicator cards either physical ones or via the electronic "widget," each Commissioner showing either the colour "orange" to indicate support for or "blue" to indicate lack of support for the proposal as moved.

b) The Moderator considers the response of the Council to each proposal or group of linked proposals. If there is no disagreement, consensus is announced either by declaring that the proposal is carried or lost by consensus. In each case, the Moderator declares the decision of the Commissionl and this decision is recorded in the minute of the Commission.

c) If the Moderator observes, from the display of the indicator cards, that there is no consensus on the matter, the Moderator calls commissioners to discuss the issue. Amendments may be moved in the course of the discussion, with the Moderator being the judge of when consensus is achieved. A decision is reached when any one of the following occurs:

(1) all are in agreement (unanimity);
(2) most are in agreement and those who disagree are content that the discussion has been both full and fair and that the proposal expresses the general "mind of the meeting"; the minority therefore gives consent;
(3) it is agreed that consideration on the matter be postponed;
(4) it is agreed that no decision can be reached.

8.10. If the Commission believes that consensus cannot be reached then it may, by a two thirds majority, choose to use the formal majority procedures.

Indicator Cards

8.11. The Commission may use physical indicator cards or the electronic widget for the purpose of communication between Commissioners and the Moderator. **Orange** indicator cards may be used to indicate approval and **Blue** to indicate disapproval.

Formal Majority Procedure

8.12. The Commission may, if it votes by a two thirds majority, choose to consider a proposal using the formal majority procedure. This simply involves an indication of those in favour of a proposal and those against by a show of hands. A vote is indicated by raising a hand and not a card. After the votes are counted, the Moderator announces the Commission's decision.

Notices of Motion

The use of Notices of Motion is discouraged. Any member of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa is free to communicate with the Clerk of Assembly or Convener of a relevant Assembly Committee regarding an issue that he/she would like the Assembly to take up. This may also be done with greater weight by means of an Overture or Petition submitted by the member through the Session and/or Presbytery. <u>The use of these procedures whenever possible would limit the necessity for bringing to Assembly by Notice of Motion any matter that has not been previously examined in a Session, Presbytery or a Committee of Assembly.</u>

8.13. A member of the Executive Commission desiring to raise a matter not covered by a proposal of an appropriate Committee shall take the following steps:

(a) he/she shall draft his/her Notice on a "Notice of Motion" form;

(b) he/she shall consult with the Convener of the relevant Committee or, if the matter falls under no particular Committee, with the Clerk of Assembly, as to the substance and urgency of his/her notice. He/she shall submit the drafted notice to that person for signature and an indication of the notice given to the Convener of the relevant committee;

(c) Notices of Motion to be presented at Assembly must be handed to the Clerk by the end of the first Session on the first day of Executive Commission.

(d) a single original copy shall be presented at the Executive Commission upon giving notice. The Assembly staff will then attend to the photocopying and circulating of the required copies;

Notices of Amendment

8.14. Notice of Amendment is not required in the Discernment Model of Decision Making. Commissioners are encouraged to make their amendments in their Insaka groups when it is their intention to move a **major** amendment to any proposal of an Assembly Committee. No opportunity will be provided for Notices of Amendment as in the Formal Majority procedure. The Moderator will allow amendments from the floor in the Decision Session only when this seems helpful to finding consensus on the matter.

8.15 Any question as to the competence of an amendment shall be decided by the Moderator.

8.16. The Drafting Committee has the right to bring a completely amended set of proposals to the Assembly each day after they have studied the reports of the Insaka groups and made every effort to reach consensus with those who have serious reservations about the issue under discussion. The committee is not expected to explain how amendments suggested by each Insaka Group have been handled.

Overtures

8.17. When an Overture is presented to the Executive Commission, the procedure then followed is that laid down in the *Manual of Faith and Order*, paragraph 14.18 – 14.26.

Time Limits

8.18. The timing of speeches is under the direct jurisdiction of the Moderator.

8.19. A Convener of an Assembly Committee presenting a report and moving its reception shall not address the Executive Commission thereon for more than the amount of time allocated in the final agenda.

8.20. A Convener moving the adoption of subsequent proposals of a Committee shall not speak thereto except when invited by the Moderator to do so.

8.21. Other speakers on a report, proposal or amendment shall not exceed five minutes each.

8.22. A member submitting an Overture or speaking to a motion, of which he has given notice, shall not exceed ten minutes.

8.23. Other members speaking to an Overture or a motion of which notice has been given shall not exceed five minutes.

8.24. The mover of a proposal has five minutes to reply to the debate on his Motion when it is put as the substantive motion.

8.25. Once the Moderator has signalled the end of the speech, the speaker may be given extra time only if the Moderator has ascertained that the Executive Commission desires the speaker to continue.

8.26. The Assembly Business Committee, in consultation with the Moderator and Clerk, may at any time during the Assembly move the proportional lengthening or shortening of these limits according to available time.

General

8.27. The Executive Commission shall meet in three postures: Listening, Discussing and Deciding. Each of these is separate and the Moderator will clearly announce the moving from one phase to another.

8.28. In the Listening phase, the Commission will be afforded the opportunity of receiving presentations on the work of Standing committees. There will be no debate or decision making during the Listening phase.

8.29. In the Discussion phase (Insaka Groups), opportunities will be offered for commissioners to discuss reports in groups so as to search for consensus on each proposal. Amendments can be suggested. Each group will write a report for the Drafting Team who will then present a consolidated set of proposals to the Commission for Decision.

8.30. The Business Committee may provide an opportunity for plenary discussion as well but only pre-selected proposals will be discussed here.

8.31. A Decision Session will be held where proposals will be presented, discussed and consensus will be sought.

8.32. No Commissioner shall, during the course of the discussion, employ speech that is of an insulting, inflammatory or defamatory nature.

8.33. When several members wish to enter the discussion they indicate their intention to the Moderator and then wait to be recognised by the Moderator. The Moderator in any case decides who shall have the floor at any time.

8.34. Any Commissioner to Executive Commission may make a **written request** to the Moderator for corporate or shared prayer on an issue confronting the Assembly. The decision to accede to any such request shall rest solely with the Moderator, who will determine the form of the prayers and who may lead them.

8.35. No Committee, except by leave of the Commission, shall continue to sit after the Moderator has taken the chair.

8.36. The distribution of circulars and the making of announcements at Executive Commission must have the prior approval of the Clerk of Assembly and the Assembly Business Convener.

8.37. Whenever a physical count of votes is taken, the number of abstentions will also be ascertained and recorded except in voting where these will simply be considered spoiled ballots.

Press Release

8.38. The General Secretary is the Executive Commission's duly appointed Press Officer and is responsible for all releases to the Press and official posts on social media.

9. Voting Procedures – at General Assembly only

9.1. This process will be limited to the two Elections that are held at the General Assembly, the election of the Moderator-Designate and the election of the Court and the Administrative Review Panel.

9.2. The whole process will be entirely managed and run by the General Secretary, the Scrutineers, and the Information Technology (IT) team.

9.3. Nominations will be received through Presbyteries, two months before the sitting of the Assembly. For the Moderator Designate, nominations may be made during the Assembly from the floor.

9.4. Voting will take place according to the Final agenda.

9.5. Prior to the first round of elections, the Moderator will invite the General Secretary to introduce the elections and address the Assembly on the procedure to be followed, explaining how each Commissioner will be required to vote in that respective election.

9.6. All voting will take place using the electronic widget, with the help of the IT team, and the process will be explained in the Assembly orientation sessions, held before the Assembly.

9.7. All voting for the Moderator Designate and the Court of General Assembly (and AARP) will be done by secret ballot (*Manual of Faith and Order* 18.32.3).

9.8. Only commissioners as per the Final Roll of commissioners will be legible to vote. No other parties, delegates or visitors may participate.

9.9. The following is to appear in the Election Report:

9.9.1. The number of eligible voters according to the Roll.

9.9.2. The number of commissioners present in the Election Session as confirmed by the IT team and scrutineers prior to the voting.

9.9.3. The number of votes cast.

9.9.4. The results of the election.

9.10. All records of the voting must be kept in a separate file for accountability and transparency.

9.11. The results from each voting session will be tabled at the discretion of the Moderator.

9.12. The General Secretary or Clerk of Assembly will inform the candidate who has dropped off the list of Candidates so that s/he can receive the information before the Moderator announces the results of the election.

9.13. At the conclusion of the Assembly the Files mentioned in 9.10 containing the work of the Elections shall be destroyed under the supervision of the Clerk of Assembly.