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SUGGESTED TITLE: Proposal to Restructure the Global UMC – Regional Conferences

DISCIPLINE PARAGRAPH: ¶¶ 9, 10, 23-31

GENERAL CHURCH BUDGET IMPLICATIONS: Yes

GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS: Yes

Delete ¶¶ 9 and 10 and replace with a new paragraph as follows:

~~¶ 9. *Article II.*—There shall be jurisdictional conferences the Church in the United States of America, with such powers, duties, and privileges as are hereinafter set forth, provided that in The United Methodist Church there shall be no jurisdictional or central conferences based on any ground other than geographical and regional division.~~

~~¶ 10. *Article III.*—There shall be central conferences for the church outside the United States of America and, if necessary, provisional central conferences, all with such powers, duties, and privileges as are hereinafter set forth.~~

¶ 9. *Article II.*—A Connectional conference shall have the option of establishing regional conferences for the organization of the church in the connection, and, if necessary, provisional regional conferences, all with such powers, duties, and privileges as are hereinafter set forth, provided that there shall be no regional conference based on any ground other than geographical division. In connectional conferences without regional conferences, the connectional conference will assume the responsibilities assigned to a regional conference. Initially, the number and boundaries of the regional conferences shall match the previous boundaries of the central conferences and jurisdictions. Subsequently, the connectional conferences shall have the authority to change the number and boundaries

of regional conferences.

Delete ¶¶ 23-27 on Jurisdictional Conferences and ¶¶ 28-31 on Central Conferences and replace with new paragraphs as follows:

Section IV. Regional Conferences

¶ 23 Article I.—The regional conferences shall be composed of as many representatives from the annual conferences and missionary conferences as shall be determined by a uniform basis established by the Global Connectional Conference, provided that no regional conference shall have fewer than 100 delegates. The delegates shall be clergy and lay in equal numbers.

¶ 24. Article II.—The regional conferences shall meet within the year succeeding the meeting of the Global Connectional Conference at such times and places as shall have been determined by the preceding respective regional conferences or by commissions appointed by them or by their respective College of Bishops.

¶ 25. Article III.—All regional conferences shall have the same status and same privileges of action within the limits fixed by the Constitution.

¶ 26. Article IV—The regional conferences shall have the following powers and duties and such others as may be conferred by the Global Connectional Conference:

1. To promote the evangelistic, educational, missionary, social-concern and benevolent interests of the Church and to provide for interests and institutions within their boundaries.
2. To elect bishops for the respective regional conferences in number as may be determined from time to time, upon a basis fixed by the Global Connectional Conference, and to

cooperate in carrying out such plans for their support as may be determined by the Global Connectional Conference.

3. To establish and constitute regional and conference boards as auxiliary to the global and connectional boards of the Church as the need may appear and to choose their representatives on the global and connectional boards in such manner as the Global Connectional Conference may determine.

4. To determine the boundaries of their annual conferences, provided that there shall be no annual conference with a membership of fewer than 50 clergy in full connection, except by the consent of the Global Connectional Conference.

5. To make rules and regulations for the administration of the work of the Church within the region, subject to such powers as have been or shall be vested in the Global Connectional Conference and connectional conferences.

6. To appoint a committee on appeals to hear and determine the appeal of a clergy person of that region from the decision of a trial court.

7. To appoint a committee on the episcopacy.

8. To establish and to appoint such other committees as may be necessary.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The actual incremental costs of this proposal will be dependent upon the global structure finally adopted by General Conference.

There will probably be some additional costs related to connectional conferences, committees, etc., but these costs may be offset by a possible reduction in costs related to the meeting of the Global Connection. If the business of the North America connection is removed from the agenda of the Global Connectional Conference, the duration of that meeting will be less than the current General Conference, perhaps by three or four days, resulting in a reduction in costs for that meeting.

The most significant increase in costs will probably involve the meetings of the connectional conferences. This proposal would require each connectional conference to meet quadrennially, prior to the Global Connectional Conference. Depending upon when and where the connectional conferences meet, the incremental cost of these meetings is estimated to be between US\$300,000 and US\$1,000,000. GCFA will be asked to develop more accurate cost projections.

Any incremental cost increases will also need to be examined in the context of the overall budget for the 2016 General Conference budget of over US\$10 million.

DATE: August 28, 2015

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