



Rev. Ande I. Emmanuel
Clergy Delegate, Southern Nigeria Annual Conference
West Africa Central Conference

WE HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Grace and peace of Jesus Christ be with all delegates to the 2020 General Conference being held in 2024 in Charlotte, NC, USA, and United Methodists and well-wishers watching all over the world. We are voices of unity for the United Methodist Church from conferences across Africa, both lay and clergy.

We join millions of United Methodists in rejoicing for the success recorded at this General Conference. Our Church is holding the most peaceful, respectful, and spirit-filled General Conference in more than 40 years. Since we have been here, we have witnessed increased energies in hospitality, and a willingness to listen among delegates, bishops, and presiding officers alike.

This statement is necessary because of the respect and confidence we have of all the proceedings of the General Conference so far; the deep love which we have for our beloved United Methodist Church (UMC); and the promising future that lies ahead of us.

We write in response to **“A Position of the Majority Delegates of the Central Conferences of Africa to the UMC General Conference, Charlotte, USA April 23 — May 3, 2024”** written by five

WCA/GMC proxies among African delegates. We wish to unequivocally clarify to all the GC delegates, United Methodists, and well-wishers that this statement is presented falsely and does not represent the majority of African delegates as claimed.

Judging from the votes taken on consent calendar items yesterday and today, including some with over 90% consensus: it is clear that the majority of Africans are in support of every positive action taken so far by the General Conference.

We are aware of the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused several postponements of the General Conference and we appreciate the work of the organizers of the General Conference to make the event finally happen. Despite all challenges, African representation and participation are visible. The General Conference has heard the voices of African delegates and passed a resolution that will ensure effective participation of Central Conferences and specifically from Africa moving into the future. We have experienced a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect.

Worldwide Regionalization

The UMC has adopted worldwide regionalization to address various concerns, including those specific to Africa. With worldwide regionalization, Africa will make decisions and policies that are more responsive to African contexts and challenges. It offers Africa the autonomy to continue to adapt our Book of Discipline based on our context. It allows African churches to address our unique theological, social, and cultural issues without strict oversight from other bodies of the Church, including the United States. Regionalization will allow more equitable resource allocation, ensuring that African churches receive the support they need for their ministries and missions. Regionalization can enhance mission and outreach efforts by allowing African churches to develop strategies that are tailored to their communities, languages, and cultural norms.

Social Principles and Definition of Marriage

Within the context of worldwide regionalization as adopted by the General Conference, Africa

will hold its definition of marriage as a union between a man and a woman. Therefore, it is a great distortion of fact to give the impression that The United Methodist Church is enforcing every region of the Church to accept same-sex marriages. In fact, it was an African delegate who suggested the language on marriage that we adopted.

We wish to make it clear that the statement issued on May 2, 2024 by a few individuals does not represent the voices of all Africans. We are excited to be in The United Methodist Church today and in the years to come.

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