

DELEGATION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

May 2016

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report of the Delegation of the General Assembly and thank it for its work.
2. Continue the appointment of the Delegation with the same powers as hitherto – the Principal Clerk of the General Assembly to be Chairman, the Depute Clerk of the General Assembly to be Vice-Chairman and the Solicitor of the Church to act as Secretary.

REPORT

The Delegation has to report that during 2015 it granted, in virtue of the powers conferred upon it by the General Assembly, eight additional Model Deeds of Constitution.

The present amended Model Deed of Constitution was approved and adopted by the General Assembly on 21 May 1994 for issue to each congregation whose temporal affairs were then administered by a Congregational Board under the Model Deed and for granting to each congregation thereafter adopting it. Some amendments to it have over the years been approved to take account of changes such as those required by charity legislation.

The General Assembly of 2003 also permitted congregations to adopt, as an alternative to the Model Deed of Constitution, the Unitary Constitution either by Resolution of the congregation or by Basis of Adjustment. 58 congregations adopted the Unitary Constitution during 2015 compared to 45 in 2014. The number of congregations electing to be constituted in terms of the

Unitary Constitution thus continues to be substantially higher than those adopting the Model Deed.

The members of the Delegation have noted, and concur with, the proposal of the Legal Questions Committee that from next year the Unitary Constitution should be the only form which congregations seeking to change constitution should be entitled to adopt.

A number of the congregations adopting the Unitary Constitution have done so prompted by the Deliverance of the General Assembly of 2008 instructing congregations to review their constitutions. The Delegation once again expresses the hope that those congregations who have not yet held such a review will do so in the course of this year.

In the name and on behalf of the Delegation

JOHN P CHALMERS, *Chairman*
JANETTE S WILSON, *Secretary*