

Statement on Interim Operations Team/Connectional Table proposals

January 27, 2012

The General Board of Global Ministries is committed to connecting the church in mission. Sending missionaries — including young adults — from everywhere and to everywhere; partnering and engaging with volunteers; evangelizing and church planting through mission initiatives; addressing diseases of poverty and global health; and responding to natural and civil disasters remain essential functions of the global church if we are to grow and be a vital presence for making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

As a general secretary coming from a central conference, I recognize the strengths of the global United Methodist Church as well as the need for change. I am proud that since early in the quadrennium Global Ministries has been taking bold steps to make the agency more effective and efficient. These included voting to reduce our number of board members by two thirds and establishing a new relationship between Global Ministries and United Methodist Women, one in which each organization would be structurally separate but missionally connected. Through restructuring our staff and budget and executing a strategic plan, Global Ministries continues to explore new ways to be faithful stewards of the resources entrusted to us in our United Methodist connection.

In considering the options for restructuring, it will be important for decisions to be made in a global context. I am confident that the General Conference will fully and prayerfully review the restructuring proposals presented by the IOT and other entities. It is my hope that all the options will be discussed, keeping in mind the gifts and graces offered through our global church. I pray that the 2012 General Conference will take wise and careful actions that will greatly enliven our whole church and result in greater numbers of more vital congregation everywhere. We need to remember that the achievement of these goals will depend in largest measure on the seriousness with which they are taken by annual conferences and the congregations themselves. The general agencies, receive a relatively small percentage of what United Methodists contribute annually to the church but in whatever configuration, these organizations are connective tissue within the denomination — necessary and vital.

Thomas Kemper

General Secretary, Board of Global Ministries