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To
General Conference Administration
Biblical Research Institute
General Conference Health Ministries
Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department
General Conference Office of General Counsel
Loma Linda University Health

Request to revise or withdraw the statements "COVID-19 Vaccines: Addressing Concerns, Offering Counsel", dated 12/18/2020, and "Reaffirming the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Response to COVID-19", dated 10/25/2021

Stuttgart, February 19, 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

over the past three years, the Corona crisis has been a challenge to all of us on various levels. Many people have been infected with SARS-CoV-2. Although most of them had mild symptoms, others experienced great distress in going through the disease. Our sympathy goes to all who were, or still are, struggling with the effects of the Corona virus, are suffering from adverse events of the vaccinations, or have lost loved ones during that time. Furthermore, we don't want to overlook those who are negatively impacted by other diseases and epidemics (Luke 22:11), or have to cope with the financial impact of the corona crisis.

People had different views on the Corona crisis, the measures adopted by governments, and the Corona vaccinations. Unfortunately, in many cases, critical thinkers in the medical, public health and epidemiological sectors who were not following the official political and media position were vilified, censored, or ostracized. This is fatal, since science thrives on critical discourse, and a willingness to re-evaluate yesterday's hypothesis in the light of today's evidence.

Meanwhile, across the EU many politicians are beginning to change their mind, and a critical evaluation of some anti-Corona measures is taking place.

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In your service for the Seventh-day Adventist Church you, too, were facing multi-faceted challenges during the Corona crisis. We want to thank you with all our hearts that in your pastoral ministry of preaching, counselling, and praying as well as in your administrative leadership your focus has ever been on the well-being of the worldwide membership.

On December 18, 2020, your statement "COVID-19 Vaccines: Addressing Concerns, Offering Counsel" was published. This statement reads:

"As a church, while we support evidence-based public health recommendations, we are also careful not to make pronouncements that may be construed as replacing national and international public health guidelines. For this reason, it is important for our comments to be understood within the framework of our official church position on immunization."¹

The official church position on immunization was published on April 15, 2015 by the Administrative Committee of the General Conference. There we can read:

"We value the health and safety of the population, which includes the maintenance of 'herd immunity.'"²

It has now become evident that the novel mRNA vaccines that since 2020 have been strongly recommended and in many cases mandated by employers and national authorities around the world do not contribute to herd immunity, and therefore cannot maintain it.

Today, many of the supposedly scientific claims about the corona vaccinations made in 2020-2021 have turned out to be false:

- Corona vaccinations do neither prevent infection, transmission, hospitalization, nor death.³
- A basic immunization of two shots on 75 – 80 % of the population does not produce herd immunity.⁴
- The assumption that new variants of the virus cannot neutralize the protection of the vaccination has been disproven.

¹ tinyurl.com/45273hg

² adventist.org/official-statements/immunization

³ Dr. Anthony Fauci: "When people are vaccinated, they can feel safe that they are not going to get infected." May 17, 2021, <https://tinyurl.com/4wumd9j7>

Joe Biden: "You're not going to get COVID if you have these vaccinations." July 21, 2021, tinyurl.com/2cdxa275

⁴ Dr. Anthony Fauci, as paraphrased by *The Harvard Gazette*: "If 75 percent to 80 percent of Americans are vaccinated in broad-based campaigns likely to start in the second quarter of next year, then the U.S. should reach the herd immunity threshold months later." December 10, 2020, <https://tinyurl.com/mnx78sw8>



- Corona vaccinations are not "without side effects,"⁵ nor are they the only safe way out of the pandemic.⁶
- The argument of "Love Your Neighbor" has been reduced to absurdity by the lack of protection against infection provided by Corona vaccinations.

There are claims in your statement that are contrary to current reality. For this reason, we officially request that the General Conference Officers and ADCOM either revise or withdraw the document "COVID-19 Vaccines: Addressing Concerns, Offering Counsel".

The same motion applies to the publication "Reaffirming the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Response to COVID-19"⁷ from October 25, 2021.

Corona vaccinations do not prevent transmission. However, your statement conveys just the opposite:

"In weighing the various options, we should also take into consideration that the benefits of vaccination extend beyond oneself and help to protect the local and global community at large."

In some countries, this assertion has been the ground for bringing enormous pressure on many church members who for conscientious reasons would not take the Corona vaccines. Many were slandered, marginalized, discriminated against, or even lost their jobs, both in wider society and within their local SDA congregations and Conferences.

Against this backdrop, we see the following statement as a matter of great concern and kindly ask you to change your position:

"The Seventh-day Adventist Church, in consultation with the Health Ministries and Public Affairs and Religious Liberty departments of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, is convinced that the vaccination programs that are generally being carried out are important for the safety and health of our members and the larger community. Therefore, claims of religious liberty are not used appropriately in objecting to government mandates or employer programs designed to protect the health and safety of their communities."

We are convinced that God has given every mature person the liberty of conscience to decide responsibly, and without any pressure or compulsion, upon the medical treatment of his / her body. We therefore believe that no Church committee, Officer,

⁵ Prof. Karl Lauterbach, German Federal Minister of Health, August 14, 2021, tinyurl.com/2p8m2eba

⁶ Dr. Anthony Fauci, September 11, 2021, tinyurl.com/vckm9v8

⁷ tinyurl.com/48hka5mn



Departmental Director, or group thereof should have authority to withdraw or deny another member's liberty of conscience, including the freedom of a mature person to not comply with a state mandate on medical drug treatment (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:29).

For the years ahead, we encourage you to place a special emphasis on liberty of conscience and to defend it on all Church levels. Ellen G. White summarizes the value of liberty of conscience with the words: "Nothing is dearer or more fundamental." (*The Great Controversy*, 564)

We thank you for your service and wish you much wisdom in carrying out your tasks in our church.

In heartfelt fellowship

The Executive Committee of the [REDACTED] Conference in the [REDACTED]
Union