

9.3.5 Guidelines on withdrawal of a national Church Partner or the accession of a new national Partner

It is acknowledged that, in the years since the Act of Commitment (1967) and Statement of Accord (1982), national Churches have diverged in matters of faith and practice. While this may be a matter of regret, it is healthy to acknowledge change, and to provide a mechanism by which a national Church Partner may withdraw from the commitments of a previous era; also that provision should be made for the accession of other national Partners.

- 1 A Church Partner re-considering its relationship with the other Partners of the 1967 Act should contact the UCANZ office at the earliest opportunity in order to allow for consultation between all the Partners.
- 2 Consideration should be given to the effect of withdrawal on associated Cooperative Ventures. Prior steps should be taken to ensure their wishes are heard and understood by the national Partners. UCANZ may facilitate this process.
- 3 All the Partner Churches (represented by the General Secretaries or equivalents) should meet together to identify the reasons for withdrawal. If, following this meeting, withdrawal is the option preferred over suspending active participation (becoming a “sleeping Partner”) then a formal meeting of the national Church Leaders (Archbishop, President, Moderator, or equivalent) will be convened by a mutually acceptable person. UCANZ shall be asked to represent the interests of the Cooperative Ventures affected by this course of action.
- 4 The purposes of the Leaders’ meeting are:
 - i. to set out a timetable of decisions required by Partner Churches’ governing bodies - some denominations meeting biennially at national level;
 - ii. to resolve the status of any affected union churches;
 - iii. to determine if there are property or other financial issues to be resolved;
 - iv. to advise on a new Partnership agreement (remaining Partners);
 - v. to advise on the formal date of dissolution of the Partnership;
 - vi. to acknowledge the end of a shared journey.
- 5 Should a further national Partner wish to consider joining the current Partnership, the following steps should be followed:
 - a. the potential Partner should acknowledge the Act of Commitment (1967), the Statement of Accord (1982), and the Vision Statement (2008) (see Procedures 1.1.1);
 - b. the existing Partners (through the Standing Committee) should affirm their willingness to enlarge the Partnership;
 - c. all the Partner Churches (represented by the General Secretaries or equivalents) should meet together to identify any formal decisions required or practical matters that are raised by the new Partner’s accession to the Partnership;
 - d. the national Church Leaders should then meet to frame the new Partnership and give provisional assent to it;
 - e. once the various denominational approval processes have been completed, the new Partnership agreement should be signed at the next UCANZ Forum or other suitable gathering.