



# INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH REFORM MOVEMENT

General Conference

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October 25, 2021

To: Leaders and Members of the International Missionary Society, Seventh-Day Adventist Church Reform Movement

## Re: COVID-19 Vaccination

Dear brethren, leaders, and members of the International Missionary Society,

Greetings with the word of God in 3 John 2:

*“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”*

For the past 18 months the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a lot of suffering, fear, sickness, and the confirmed deaths of more than 4 million people around the world – including the deaths of several of our church leaders and church members. During this time, the General Conference Health Department has conducted and participated in several health symposiums in our attempt to fulfill our responsibility to provide credible COVID-19 related health information to the members of the church. However, questions are being received at the General Conference office requesting our position on vaccination. The intensity increased with the mandatory vaccination introduced in several countries around the world.

Considering COVID-19 and its vaccines, the General Conference gathered the Health and Ministerial Departments for an open discussion on this matter. In addition, the General Conference Full Board met and took a decision in this regard. With this circular letter we wish to inform you about the official position of our church until this moment.

Beginning with the decision of the General Conference in session:

On July 25, 1997, the General Conference Delegates discussed and voted on the following resolution pertaining to *Childhood Vaccinations*:

### 1997-22 Childhood Vaccinations – July 25, 1997

This proposal asks: “Is it a moral or health danger to vaccinate our children, particularly when governments require childhood immunizations as a prerequisite for public school attendance?” The decision states: “We recommend that our members live within the principles of the health message and fortify the immune system naturally. We do not recommend the use of vaccines, nevertheless we do not prohibit their use under special circumstances.”

The vote on this issue was: 54 yes; 2 no, and 3 abstentions.

Related to this decision, some members have asked, firstly, why we do not recommend vaccines and, secondly, which are the cases of exceptions.

Based on the above-mentioned meetings of the Full Board of the General Conference and the Health Department Leader, we wish to communicate the following reasons why we do not recommend vaccination:

1. Because we have the knowledge of the health reform which, if properly implemented, will boost the immune system in a natural way. A healthy immune system should protect us from sickness as it is designed.
2. Generally, vaccines are of man-made origin and may have unpredictable side-effects, depending on different bodies and health conditions.
3. Specifically, the vaccines related to COVID-19 are relatively new. It is not known for how long the immunity will last and potential side effects still remain to be discovered.
4. The reaction of each body is different towards a vaccine depending on allergy sensitivity. Every person individually needs to seek the advice of medical professionals and find out if he or she has allergies towards any ingredient in the vaccine.

Related to the exceptions in which vaccinations may be used by our members, the General Conference Executive Board and the General Conference Health Department called a Full Board meeting. Different points of view and theories were considered. The positions of the Health Department and Ministerial Department of the General Conference were presented, after which the following decisions were made:

1. **The global COVID-19 pandemic is to be considered a special circumstance.**  
It was considered that there are sicknesses such as rabies, tetanus and others in which the use of vaccination is a life-saving necessity. The proportion and severity of the pandemic under COVID-19 comes close to the said life-threatening circumstances for some groups and people with certain pre-existing health conditions, such as diabetes, hypertension, obesity, asthma and COPD.
2. **Taking a COVID-19 vaccine is not a sin against God.**  
It was considered that “sin is transgression of the Ten Commandments.” Taking a vaccine for COVID-19 is NOT a transgression of the Ten Commandments. The vaccine is NOT the mark of the beast and we do not favor the conspiracy theories that are going around in the media. In addition, traditionally our church has not interfered in personal decisions related to health procedures such as treatments of cancer, malaria, yellow fever, tuberculosis, and others. In such cases we do recommend natural remedies but if a church member prefers to use conventional treatments, such a person is free to decide for himself and will be solely responsible for the consequences.

The following inspired testimonies have been considered and been the foundation of the above-mentioned decisions:

“There are many ways of practicing the healing art; but there is only one way that Heaven approves. God's remedies are the simple agencies of nature, that will not tax or debilitate the system through their powerful properties. Pure air and water, cleanliness, a proper diet, purity of life, and a firm trust in God, are remedies for the want of which thousands are dying; yet these remedies are going out of date because their skillful use requires work that the people do not



appreciate.” –*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 301, no. 451; *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 443.

“If the sick and suffering will do only as well as they know in regard to living out the principles of health reform perseveringly, then they will in nine cases out of ten recover from their ailments.” –*Medical Ministry*, pp. 223, 224 (Manuscript 22, 1887).

“It is our privilege to use every God-appointed means in correspondence with our faith, and then trust in God, when we have urged the promise. If there is need of a surgical operation, and the physician is willing to undertake the case, it is not a denial of faith to have the operation performed.” –*Selected Messages*, vol. 2, p. 284.

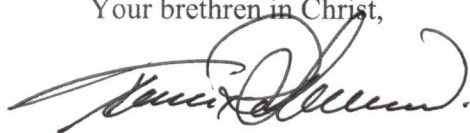
Every member of our denomination should seriously weigh the matter of the pandemic and take an informed decision related to his/her own health – as to whether or not to use the vaccine as a preventive option. The church gives advice but does not assume any responsibility for the personal decisions of the members or the consequences thereof. For those who wish to abstain from the vaccine, the church provides a letter of certification of their belief and membership of this religious institution.

“It is the duty of every person, for his own sake, and for the sake of humanity, to inform himself in regard to the laws of life and conscientiously to obey them.” –*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 128.

The Health Department of the General Conference would like to once again urge our members to continue to take all necessary precautions/steps to preserve and protect one's health and to avoid getting infected with the coronavirus, and if you are infected, to avoid spreading the virus to others.

Let us pray for the protection of our dear Lord and the progress of the work of God fulfilling the prophetic word and sacred mission of our church.

Sincerely,  
Your brethren in Christ,



Pastor Tzvetan Petkov  
General Conference President



Pastor Douglas Francis  
General Conference Secretary



Pastor Morris Lowe  
General Conference  
Health Department Leader

TP:kk

Encl.: Sample letter of certification