**PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY (PARL)-ACTION PLANS 2023**

**VOTED,** To approve the action plans of the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Association for the year 2023 as follows:

Justification:

Since one of the characteristics of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the fulfilment of the mission is to serve, collaborate, and participate in different levels of society-oriented government programs based on moral principles and values, it is recommended that we maintain good relations with the respective authorities in the areas where there is SDA Church presence, maintaining respect and a clear distinction between politics and religion.

Biblical Framework:

1 Timothy 2:1-5 (Amplified Bible)

"First of all, then, I admonish and urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be offered on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in positions of authority or high responsibility, that [outwardly] we may pass a quiet and undisturbed life [and inwardly] a peaceable one in all godliness and reverence and seriousness in every way. For such [praying] is good and right, and [it is] pleasing and acceptable to God our Savior, who wishes all men to be saved and [increasingly] to perceive and recognize and discern and know precisely and correctly the [divine] Truth. For there [is only] one God, and [only] one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus."

"It is not our work to attack individuals or institutions. We should exercise great care lest we be understood as putting ourselves in opposition to the civil authorities. It is true that our warfare is aggressive, but our weapons are to be those found in a plain “thus saith the Lord.” Our work is to prepare a people to stand in the great day of God. We should not be turned aside to lines that will encourage controversy or arouse antagonism in those not of our faith." Testimony Treasures, vol. 3, p.45

Purpose:

To establish healthy and respectful relations with duly constituted authorities to let them know who we are and what it is we do, and to place the diverse Church programs we have in favor of the society, at the disposition of the authorities.

Program Development:

Therefore, it is recommended that our Church leaders, from District Pastors to Local Fields and Unions Department Directors and Administrators throughout the IAD Territory where there is church presence, to establish a visitation plan to the authorities according to the following program:

1. To preach in each of the churches of the Inter-American Division territory, the Sermon prepared by the IAD Religious Liberty Department on Sabbath, January 21, 2023.
2. To program a courtesy visit by the District Pastor to the local authorities at the District Headquarters.
3. To present as a gift a hardbound copy of 'The Great Controversy' or 'The Desire of Ages’.
4. Extend an invitation to visit the local Church or one of the institutions.
5. Local Fields and Unions

It is recommended that the Local Field and Union Administrators perform the activities described above in items 2, 3, and 4 of this section of the program, visiting the authorities where the Church's Headquarters is located.

1. Program Implementation Dates

The suggested visits to the authorities will occur during the first quarter of 2023.

1. It is recommended to prepare a program in recognition of the corresponding authorities at the district office during the month of December of 2023, at the Local Field’s or Union's Office. It is also recommended to present a report of the Church's participation in favor of the local community, and a certificate or other type of visible recognition of the authorities' support for the church's program. It will also be an appreciated gesture to prepare snacks for an informal fellowship with the authorities' representatives.

We are hoping and expecting that at the end of the first quarter of 2023 you will share your experiences with the IAD Religious Liberty Office and the office of the Inter-American Division.