



wfuna

World Federation of United Nations Associations

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

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GENERAL NOTES

The Constitution of the Federation was signed and entered into force at Luxembourg on 2 August 1946.

The Founding Members were the United Nations Associations of the following countries:

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Hungary, Iraq, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, South Africa, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America.

The Rules of Procedure were adopted by the 12th Plenary Assembly, held on 2/8 September 1957, Geneva. From 1983 onwards, they are known as By-Laws.

THE CONSTITUTION WAS REVISED BY:

5th Plenary Assembly, 6/12 September 1950, Geneva
11th Plenary Assembly, 2/8 September 1956, Geneva
15th Plenary Assembly, 5/10 September 1960, Warsaw
17th Plenary Assembly, 30 April/5 May 1962, Monrovia
21st Plenary Assembly, 22/27 April 1968, Geneva
22nd Plenary Assembly, 7/13 September 1969, Nicosia
24th Plenary Assembly, 13/18 August 1973, Geneva
25th Plenary Assembly, 1/6 October 1975, Moscow
27th Plenary Assembly, 8/13 October 1979, Barcelona
29th Plenary Assembly, 3/8 October 1983, Geneva
32nd Plenary Assembly, 9/14 October 1989, Moscow
33rd Plenary Assembly, 18/23 November 1991, Barcelona
37th Plenary Assembly, 8/11 May 2003, Barcelona
38th Plenary Assembly, 6/10 November 2006, Buenos Aires
39th Plenary Assembly, 10/12 August 2009, Seoul
40th Plenary Assembly, 8/10 November 2012, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
41st Plenary Assembly, 20/22 November 2015, Vancouver, Canada

THE RULES OF PROCEDURE (AS FROM 1983 CALLED "BY-LAWS") WERE REVISED BY:

24th Plenary Assembly, 13/18 August 1973, Geneva
25th Plenary Assembly, 1/6 October 1975, Moscow
26th Plenary Assembly, 26 September/1 October 1977, Geneva
27th Plenary Assembly, 8/13 October 1979, Barcelona
29th Plenary Assembly, 3/8 October 1983, Geneva
32nd Plenary Assembly, 9/14 October 1989, Moscow
37th Plenary Assembly, 8/11 May 2003, Barcelona
38th Plenary Assembly, 6/10 November 2006, Buenos Aires
40th Plenary Assembly, 8/10 November 2012, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
41st Plenary Assembly, 20/22 November 2015, Vancouver, Canada

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CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS, THROUGH THEIR GOVERNMENTS, HAVE DECLARED THAT THEY ARE DETERMINED

to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our life time have brought untold sorrow to all peoples, and

to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and

to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and

to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

And to these ends

to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbors, and

to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and

to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and

to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples,

And whereas their Governments, to accomplish these aims, have agreed to the Charter of the United Nations and thereby have established the international organization known as the United Nations,

WE, THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATIONS IN OUR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES,

Believing that since wars begin in the minds of people, it is in the minds of people that the defenses of peace must be constructed, and

Believing that the peace must be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of all peoples,

Have resolved to combine our efforts to form an association of the peoples and, having agreed to the present Constitution, do hereby establish an international organization to be known as the WORLD FEDERATION OF UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATIONS.

OBJECTIVES

Objectives

Article 1

The objectives of the World Federation of United Nations Associations ('the Federation') are:

- (a) To be a peoples' movement for the United Nations;
- (b) To co-ordinate and further the activities of its Members and to promote the establishment of new United Nations Associations;
- (c) To co-operate, where appropriate, with other organizations whose objects include the support of the United Nations and its development;
- (d) To promote tolerance, understanding, solidarity and co-operation among men, women and children throughout the world without distinction as to race, sex, language, religion or political orientation;
- (e) To contribute to the removal of obstacles to peace, to work for justice, security and disarmament, and to promote the development of peaceful co-existence and co-operation among nations;
- (f) To strive for the recognition of and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the world and for the recognition of the responsibilities and duties which those rights involve for individuals, groups and States;
- (g) To promote economic development, enhancement of social progress and better standards of life;
- (h) To promote research, information and education about the goals of the Charter of the United Nations and the work of the United Nations system.

MEMBERSHIP

Members

Article 2

- (a) United Nations Associations which accept the objectives set out in Article 1 of this Constitution and which are legally established in States members of the United Nations are eligible for admission as Member Associations, hereinafter referred to as Members.
- (b) Not more than one United Nations Association from any State shall be admitted as a Member.
- (c) United Nations Associations shall adhere to the Code of Conduct for members of the World Federation of United Nations Associations.

Admission

Article 3

- (a) Any request for admission as a Member shall be submitted to the Secretary-General, not less than three months before the session of the Plenary Assembly which considers the request.

(b) The Secretary-General shall submit applications to the Executive Committee, which shall present a report on each application to the Plenary Assembly.

(c) Members shall be admitted by the Plenary Assembly on the vote of a simple majority of those present and voting.

(d) If applications for admission are received more than six months before an ordinary session of the Plenary Assembly, the Executive Committee may admit them provided it does so with at least a two-thirds majority of those present and voting and subject to confirmation by the next ordinary session of the Plenary Assembly.

(e) All applications for admission as Members of the Federation shall be accompanied by:

1. a completed Federation membership application form;
2. a certified copy of the constitution of the applicant United Nations Association;
3. a certificate from the competent legal authorities confirming that the establishment of the United Nations Association is in conformity with their laws;
4. a declaration signed by the President and the Secretary-General of the United Nations Association that it will co-operate with the Federation and pay its annual dues to the Federation as and when they are due.
5. Payment of one year's dues calculated according to Article 37 of this Constitution.

Termination of Membership

Article 4

(a) Any Member which desires to terminate its membership must notify its intention in writing to the Secretary-General prior to the commencement of the year that it wishes to terminate its membership. Should such a Member fail to observe this formality, its membership will continue for the ensuing year.

(b) Any Member may, on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, be expelled by the Plenary Assembly by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting, provided that the proposal for expulsion appears on both the provisional and the final agenda. In particular, the Executive Committee must draw the attention of the Plenary Assembly to any failure on the part of any Member to comply with the requirements of Article 2 of this Constitution. The cessation of membership for financial reasons is governed by Article 38 of this Constitution.

Co-operation within the Federation

Article 5

(a) Each Member shall co-operate with other Members in pursuing the objectives of the Federation.

(b) Each Member shall endeavor to participate in activities conducted under the auspices of the Federation and shall maintain regular communication with the Secretary-General.

(c) Each Member shall forward to the Secretary-General a report on its activities since the previous session of the Plenary Assembly, as well as keep him/her regularly informed of its work. If this is not fulfilled, the Member is not in good standing with the Federation and may be restricted from participation in the Federation's activities.

ORGANS

Organs

Article 6

The organs of the Federation shall be the Plenary Assembly, the Executive Committee and the Secretariat.

PLENARY ASSEMBLY

Composition

Article 7

(a) The Plenary Assembly shall consist of the delegations appointed by Members each in their capacity set forth in this constitution.

(b) Each Member shall be represented in the Assembly by no more than five delegates and five alternates.

(c) Officers and Honorary Presidents of the Federation, as well as the members of the Executive Committee, shall have the right to attend the Plenary Assembly.

Functions

Article 8

(a) The Plenary Assembly shall be the supreme organ of the Federation, responsible for pursuing and achieving its objectives as defined in this Constitution.

(b) The Plenary Assembly shall elaborate and adopt the policy as well as the programme of activities of the Federation. It shall have the authority to decide on all questions which any Member or the Executive Committee may submit to it in accordance with the procedures set out in this Constitution.

(c) The Plenary Assembly shall decide on the admission of new Members and on the termination of membership in accordance with Articles 3 and 4 of this Constitution.

(d) The Plenary Assembly shall consider the general report submitted by the Secretary-General.

(e) The Plenary Assembly shall approve the report of the Treasurer on the financial status of the Federation as well as the audited accounts; adopt the budget of the Federation; and determine the dues of the Members.

(f) The Plenary Assembly shall discuss the questions resulting from the items included in its agenda; receive reports from its Commissions; and adopt policy resolutions and decisions on internal matters, including the Code of Conduct for members of the World Federation of United Nations Associations.

(g) The Plenary Assembly shall elect the President, the Vice-Presidents, the members of the Executive Committee, the Treasurer and the Secretary-General of the Federation.

(h) The Plenary Assembly may, upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, confer the title of Honorary President of the Federation.

(i) The Plenary Assembly shall receive any appeal by a Member against any decision of the Executive Committee. Except for an appeal concerning the agenda of the Plenary Assembly, an appeal concerning any other decision taken by the Executive Committee since the last session of the Plenary Assembly shall be heard in the first instance by the Executive Committee which shall forward such appeal, together with its comments, to the Plenary Assembly. In each case, the Plenary Assembly shall have the authority to decide upon the appeal only after having heard the Member which originated it.

By-Laws

Article 9

Subject to this Constitution, the Plenary Assembly may adopt By-Laws of the Federation.

Ordinary Sessions

Article 10

(a) The Plenary Assembly shall meet in ordinary session once every three years.

(b) The Plenary Assembly shall decide upon the time and place of meeting for its next session. Should it not exercise this power, the Executive Committee and the Secretary-General, in consultation with the President, shall take the decision.

(c) If there is no proposal to host the Plenary Assembly by a member UNA, the Plenary Assembly shall be held at the Headquarters of the Federation.

Extraordinary Sessions

Article 11

(a) An extraordinary session of the Plenary Assembly shall be convened by the Secretary-General:

1. if a decision to this effect is taken by two-thirds of the members of the Executive Committee; or
2. at the written request of two-thirds of the Members of the Federation.

(b) Unless the Executive Committee decides upon another place, an extraordinary session shall be held at the Headquarters of the Federation.

(c) An extraordinary session shall deal only with the item or items for which it is convened.

Notices

Article 12

The Secretary-General shall give notice as follows of each session of the Plenary Assembly:

(a) Notice of an ordinary session shall be given at least six months in advance.

(b) Notice of an extraordinary session shall be given at least four weeks in advance. The notice shall state the purpose for which the session is convened.

Quorum

Article 13

The quorum of the Plenary Assembly shall consist of two fifths of the Members qualified to vote.

Organization of Work

Article 14

- (a) The Plenary Assembly shall adopt the report of the Credentials Committee.
- (b) The Plenary Assembly shall, upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, adopt its agenda.
- (c) The Plenary Assembly may establish Commissions.
- (d) The Plenary Assembly shall appoint the Elections Committee.
- (e) The meetings of the Plenary Assembly shall be open to the public unless the Plenary Assembly otherwise decides.
- (f) Detailed provisions governing the proceedings shall be regulated by the By-Laws of the Federation.

Article 15

- (a) Only Members shall have the right to vote, and each Member shall have one vote at the Plenary Assembly.
- (b) Only Members which have fully settled their dues four months before the Plenary Assembly, and which have fulfilled their reporting requirements in accordance with Article 5 of this Constitution, can exercise their right to vote at that session.

Article 16

- (a) The resolutions on matters in the field of international relations and on internal matters and amendments thereto shall require a simple majority of those present and voting.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Composition

Article 17

- (a) The Executive Committee shall consist of eighteen individuals, each from a different Member. Following a system of rotation nine of them, whose term of office has ended, shall cease to be members of the Executive Committee and elections shall be held to fill the vacancies thus created. The other nine shall continue as members of the Executive until the end of the next Plenary Assembly.
- (b) The President, the Treasurer and the Secretary-General shall participate ex officio in the work of the Executive Committee. Honorary Presidents and Vice-Presidents may attend the sessions of the Executive Committee.

Members

Article 18

- (a) Every member of the Executive Committee shall act in his/her personal capacity.
- (b) Each candidate for election to the Executive Committee must be nominated by the Member to which the candidate belongs and seconded by another Member at least three months before the Plenary Assembly.
- (c) In electing members of the Executive Committee, the Plenary Assembly shall give due regard to the qualifications of the nominees, their availability and to equitable geographical distribution.
- (d) Only Members with voting rights can nominate and second such candidatures.
- (e) Candidates for election to the Executive Committee cannot be from a Member from which the President and the Vice-Presidents are elected.
- (f) The term of office of the members of the Executive Committee shall be from the end of the session of the Plenary Assembly at which they are elected to the end of the second following session of the Plenary Assembly. They are eligible for immediate re-election for one additional term. This does not prevent candidatures for election to the Executive Committee being from the Member to which the "retiring" Executive Committee member belonged. Nor does it prevent the "retiring" member of the Committee seeking election at the following session of the Plenary Assembly.
- (g) Members of the Executive Committee may resign by submitting a written instrument of resignation to the Chairperson of the Executive Committee. The term of office of a member of the Executive Committee shall expire automatically with the termination of membership of his/her United Nations Association in the Federation. The term of office of a member of the Executive Committee shall expire by decision of the Executive Committee after consideration of the written advice of his/her United Nations Association and oral or written presentation of the views of the member concerned.
- (h) Members of the Executive Committee may be removed from office by the Plenary Assembly. Such action shall be proposed in writing by at least five Members at least three months before the Plenary Assembly and shall require a vote of two-thirds of those present and voting. The vote shall be taken by secret ballot and the secrecy of the ballot shall not be waived.
- (i) In the event that a member of the Executive Committee resigns, is removed or is otherwise unable to continue to serve until the end of his/her term, the Executive Committee may co-opt, for the unexpired term, a person from the same area, after consultation with the United Nations Association of which the former member of the Executive Committee was a member. If the co-opted member is not from the same United Nations Association, his/her United Nations Association shall be consulted. The co-opted member shall serve until his/her successor takes office at the end of the next session of the Plenary Assembly.

Functions

Article 19

The Executive Committee shall be responsible to the Plenary Assembly for promoting the purposes of the Federation, and in particular for:

- (a) implementing the resolutions and decisions of the Plenary Assembly;

- (b) giving guidance and advice to the Secretary-General on any matters related to the activities of the Federation;
- (c) supervising the work of the Secretariat;
- (d) considering applications for membership in accordance with Article 3 of this Constitution;
- (e) recommending termination of membership of any Member that fails to comply with the requirements of Article 2 of this Constitution;
- (f) approving the preliminary agenda for the Plenary Assembly as well as making recommendations with respect to the work of the Plenary Assembly;
- (g) approving the agenda of the Regional Conferences of Member United Nations Associations held under the auspices of the Federation;
- (h) giving guidance on matters related to the finances of the Federation; assisting in fundraising activities; controlling the administration and finances of the Federation; appointing Deputy Treasurers; appointing members of the Finance Committee;
- (i) adopting regulations related to the functioning of the Federation;
- (j) performing other functions devolved upon it by this Constitution;
- (k) acting with Plenary authority in the interval between Plenary Assemblies, except to the extent that such actions would be inconsistent with this Constitution or binding decisions of the Plenary Assembly.

Rules of Procedure

Article 20

Subject to this Constitution and to the By-Laws of the Federation, the Executive Committee may adopt its own rules of procedure.

Ordinary Sessions

Article 21

The Executive Committee shall be convened in ordinary session immediately before and immediately after an ordinary session of the Plenary Assembly and at such other time as the Executive Committee shall decide.

Extraordinary Sessions

Article 22

(a) An extraordinary session of the Executive Committee shall be convened by the Secretary-General:

1. at the request of the Chairperson of the Executive Committee in consultation with the President; or
2. at the written request of five members of the Executive Committee.

(b) Unless the Chairperson and the Secretary-General decide upon another place, an extraordinary session shall be held at the Headquarters of the Federation.

(c) An extraordinary session shall deal only with the item or items for which it is convened.

Notices

Article 23

The Secretary-General shall give notice as follows of each session of the Executive Committee to all persons entitled to attend it under Article 17(a) and (b) of this Constitution:

(a) Notice of an ordinary session shall be given at least six weeks in advance and shall be accompanied by the provisional agenda.

(b) Notice of an extraordinary session shall be given, if possible, at least two weeks in advance. The notice shall state the purpose for which the session is convened.

Quorum

Article 24

The quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of nine of its voting members.

Organization of Work

Article 25

(a) The Executive Committee shall elect from among its members a Chairperson and two Vice-Chairpersons. They shall be eligible for re-election for one additional term of office. Insofar as the responsibilities of these Officers are not set forth in this Constitution, they shall be defined by the Executive Committee.

(b) The Chairperson of the Executive Committee, or in his/her absence a Vice-Chairperson of the Executive Committee, shall be the spokesperson of the Executive Committee in the Plenary Assembly.

(c) The Executive Committee may, when appropriate, establish ad hoc working groups.

(d) The meetings of the Executive Committee shall be private unless otherwise specified by the Executive Committee.

Voting

Article 26

(a) Each member of the Executive Committee and the President shall have one vote in the Executive Committee.

(b) The Executive Committee shall work on the basis of consensus. In case this proved impossible decisions shall be taken by a simple majority of the vote of those present and voting.

SECRETARIAT

Composition

Article 27

(a) The Secretariat shall consist of the Secretary-General and such other staff as required.

(b) The Secretary-General shall have authority to appoint the staff of the Secretariat with due regard to competence and geographical distribution.

(c) Any appointment of a Deputy Secretary-General by the Secretary-General must be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval.

(d) Upon the recommendation of the Secretary-General, the Executive Committee may establish Regional and Functional Offices of the Federation.

1. The Heads of such Offices shall be appointed by the Secretary-General for fixed terms; as staff members of the Secretariat, they shall be subject to the Rules and Regulations thereof.

2. The responsibilities of the Regional Offices shall be to co-ordinate the activities of the United Nations Associations of their region and to carry out such other functions as the Secretary-General may assign.

3. The responsibilities of the Functional Offices shall be to maintain a field liaison with the United Nations system and to carry out such other functions as the Secretary-General may assign.

General Regulations

Article 28

(a) Members of the Secretariat, including the Deputy Secretaries-General, shall serve under the authority of the Secretary-General and in accordance with regulations approved by the Executive Committee.

(b) The Secretary-General shall at sessions of the Plenary Assembly and of the Executive Committee be the sole spokesperson for the Secretariat.

(c) In the performance of their duties the Secretary-General and the staff shall not seek nor receive instructions from any Member or from any other authority external to the Federation. They shall refrain from any action which might reflect on their position as international officials responsible only to the Federation.

(d) Each Member, Officers of the Federation, Honorary Presidents and members of the Executive Committee undertake to respect the exclusively international character of the responsibilities of the Secretary-General and the staff and not to seek to influence them in the discharge of their responsibilities.

Officers

Article 29

(a) The Officers of the Federation shall be the President, the Vice-Presidents, the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairpersons of the Executive Committee, the Treasurer and the Secretary-General.

(b) The Officers of the Federation shall be elected with due regard to equitable geographical distribution, preferably by consensus.

(c) One person may not hold more than one office named in paragraph (a) above at the same time.

(d) Only the Secretary-General may be salaried.

(e) The Officers of the Federation shall act in accordance with this Constitution and with the policies of the Federation, as established by the Plenary Assembly.

(f) The President, the Chairperson of the Executive Committee and the Secretary-General shall, if necessary, consult on matters of urgency.

President

Article 30

- (a) The President of the Federation (referred to in this Constitution as "The President") shall be elected by the Plenary Assembly. He/she must not be of the same nationality as his/her predecessor. His/her term of office shall be from the end of the session at which he/she is elected to the end of the next session. He/she shall be eligible for re-election for one additional term of office.
- (b) Candidates for election as President shall be nominated by a Member which has the right to vote at the session of the Plenary Assembly at which election is sought and has submitted a report on its activities since the previous session of the Plenary Assembly.
- (c) The President shall ex-officio participate in the sessions of the Plenary Assembly, of the Executive Committee and of the Finance Committee.
- (d) The President shall, when present, preside over the Plenary Assembly.
- (e) The President may resign by submitting a written instrument of resignation to the Secretary-General.
- (f) The President may be suspended from office by the Executive Committee. Such action shall be proposed in writing by at least five Members and shall require a vote of two-thirds of those present and voting. The vote shall be taken by secret ballot and the secrecy of the ballot shall not be waived.
- (g) A vacancy in the office of the President may be filled for the unexpired period of his/her term by the Executive Committee by designating one of the Vice-Presidents to act as President.

Vice-Presidents

Article 31

- (a) There shall be no more than six Vice-Presidents, each from a different Member, elected by the Plenary Assembly. Each ordinary session of the Plenary Assembly may elect three Vice-Presidents. Their terms of office shall be from the end of the session at which they are elected to the end of the second following session. They shall not be eligible for immediate re-election.
- (b) A Vice-President may deputize for the President:
1. by appointment of the Executive Committee;
 2. by appointment of the Plenary Assembly, on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, if the President is absent from a session of the Plenary Assembly;
 3. by appointment of the President, during a session of the Plenary Assembly, to preside temporarily in his/her stead.
- (c) Candidates for election as Vice-Presidents shall be nominated at least three months before the Plenary Assembly by and from Members which have the right to vote at the session of the Plenary Assembly at which election is sought.
- (d) Vice-Presidents shall have the right to attend the sessions of the Plenary Assembly, of the Executive Committee and of the Finance Committee; they shall have a voice but not a vote in these organs.
- (e) The Vice-Presidents may resign by submitting a written instrument of resignation to the Secretary-General.
- (f) The Vice-Presidents may be suspended from office by the Executive Committee subject to final decision by the next session of the Plenary Assembly. Such action shall be proposed in writing by at least five Members and shall require, both in the Executive Committee and in the Plenary Assembly, a vote of

two-thirds of those present and voting. The vote shall be taken by secret ballot and the secrecy of the ballot shall not be waived.

(g) In the event of a vacancy during the term of a Vice-President between Plenary Assemblies, the office shall remain unfilled until the next Plenary Assembly for the unexpired period of his/her term.

Treasurer

Article 32

(a) The Treasurer shall be elected by the Plenary Assembly. His/her term of office shall be from the end of the session at which he/she is elected to the end of the next session. He/she shall be eligible for re-election.

(b) Candidates for election as Treasurer shall be nominated at least three months before the Plenary Assembly by a Member which has the right to vote at the session of the Plenary Assembly at which election is sought and has submitted a report on its activities since the previous session of the Plenary Assembly.

(c) The Treasurer together with the Secretary-General and the Executive Committee shall be responsible for:

1. submitting the budget, in conformity with Article 39 of this Constitution;
2. preparing a statement of accounts, in conformity with Article 40 of this Constitution;
3. keeping the Executive Committee informed of the financial status of the Federation;
4. collecting dues from Members and in general maintaining relations with them with regard to financial matters;
5. assisting in fundraising activities;
6. taking measures required under Article 38 of this Constitution with regard to Members which are in arrears in the payment of their dues;
7. fulfilling other tasks of a financial nature which may be entrusted to him/her by the Plenary Assembly or the Executive Committee;
8. performing other functions devolved upon him/her by this Constitution.

(d) The Treasurer may recommend one or more Deputy Treasurers for appointment by the Executive Committee.

(e) The Treasurer shall ex-officio attend the sessions of the Plenary Assembly and of the Executive Committee; he/she shall have a voice but not a vote in these organs.

(f) The Treasurer may resign by submitting a written instrument of resignation to the Secretary-General.

(g) The Treasurer may be suspended from office by the Executive Committee. Such action shall be proposed in writing by at least five Members and shall require a vote of two-thirds of those present and voting. The vote shall be taken by secret ballot and the secrecy of the ballot shall not be waived.

(h) A vacancy in the office of Treasurer may be filled for the unexpired term by the Executive Committee.

Secretary-General

Article 33

(a) The Secretary-General shall be elected by the Plenary Assembly for a fixed term, on the recommendation of the Executive Committee. The conditions of his/her employment shall be determined by the Executive Committee. He/she shall be eligible for re-election.

(b) The Secretary-General shall be the chief executive Officer of the Federation. He/she shall, under the guidance of the Executive Committee, organize the work of the Secretariat and conduct everyday activities of the Federation in accordance with his/her mandate as defined in this Constitution as well as in the resolutions and decisions of the Plenary Assembly. He/she shall make a general report to the Plenary Assembly on the work of the Federation and shall be responsible to the Plenary Assembly and to the Executive Committee in accordance with their respective competencies as defined in this Constitution. He/she shall have a voice but not a vote in these organs. Insofar as the tasks of the Secretary-General are not set forth in this Constitution, they shall be defined by the Executive Committee subject to Article 19 of this Constitution.

(c) The Secretary-General may resign by submitting a written instrument of resignation to the President. His/her resignation can only become effective provided it is either accepted by the Plenary Assembly or the Executive Committee or bears an effective date at least three months after the date of submission.

(d) The Secretary-General may be suspended from his/her duties by the Executive Committee subject to final decision by the next session of the Plenary Assembly. Such action shall be proposed in writing by at least five Members and shall require, both in the Executive Committee and in the Plenary Assembly, a vote of two-thirds of those present and voting. The vote shall be taken by secret ballot and the secrecy of the ballot shall not be waived.

(e) A vacancy in the office of the Secretary-General may be filled by the Executive Committee until the next session of the Plenary Assembly.

HONORARY PRESIDENTS

Honorary Presidents

Article 34

(a) The Plenary Assembly may, upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, confer the title of Honorary President on persons whose international standing and whose devotion to the causes of peace and of the United Nations in the view of the Federation merit this distinction.

(b) Honorary Presidents shall have the right to attend the sessions of the Plenary Assembly, of the Executive Committee and of the Finance Committee; they shall have a voice but not a vote in these organs.

FINANCES

Finance Committee

Article 35

(a) There shall be a Finance Committee established as a subsidiary body of the Executive Committee, consisting of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of

the Executive Committee, the Treasurer and the Secretary-General, as well as four persons appointed by the Executive Committee from among its members. The President, the Vice-Presidents and the Honorary Presidents may attend the meetings of the Finance Committee.

(b) The Finance Committee shall give guidance to the Treasurer, report and make recommendations to the Executive Committee on all financial affairs of the Federation.

(c) The Finance Committee shall be entitled, should the need arise during a session of the Plenary Assembly, to meet, report and make recommendations directly to the Plenary Assembly.

Financial Year

Article 36

The financial year of the Federation shall begin on 1 January and expire on 31 December.

Dues

Article 37

(a) The expenses of the Federation shall be covered by the dues of all Members, together with such voluntary contributions and funds from other sources as may be available. In no circumstances shall any Member be liable to pay any sum in excess of its own dues.

(b) Each Member shall pay its dues to the Federation annually. The dues of the current year are considered as payable on or before 1 May of each year.

(c) The dues of the Members shall be determined by the Plenary Assembly and, in such cases as referred to in Article 3(d) of this Constitution, by the Executive Committee.

(d) The Executive Committee may, in special cases, modify the scale of dues of Members in the light of paragraphs (a) and (c) above.

Dues in Arrears

Article 38

(a) The Treasurer shall keep the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee informed of the Members which are in arrears in the payment of their dues. The Executive Committee shall instruct the Treasurer on the steps to be taken to recover these arrears. The Executive Committee shall report such action to the Plenary Assembly.

(b) The Executive Committee may, in exceptional circumstances, conclude an agreement with a Member for the settlement of its dues in arrears. The Executive Committee shall report on such agreements to the Plenary Assembly.

(c) If such arrears rises at any time to the equivalent of three years' dues and are not reduced, and if no agreement is concluded for their settlement, the Executive Committee may recommend to the Plenary Assembly the termination of membership of such a Member.

Budget

Article 39

(a) The budget of the Federation shall be prepared by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Treasurer and, following adequate consideration by the Finance Committee, shall be submitted to the Executive Committee for transmission, with or without comments, but with an appropriate recommendation to the Plenary Assembly for final adoption.

(b) Taking into consideration the financial situation at any particular time, the Executive Committee may adjust the budget expenditure of the Federation. The Executive Committee shall report such adjustments to the Plenary Assembly.

Accounts

Article 40

(a) The Secretary-General shall, for each financial year, prepare a statement of expenditure and income together with a general balance sheet of the assets and liabilities of the Federation. This statement shall first be examined and checked by a qualified auditor appointed by the Executive Committee and, after submission to the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee, be communicated to the Members.

(b) A report of the Secretary-General in consultation with the Treasurer on the financial status of the Federation shall be submitted to the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee for examination and forwarded, with or without comments and with an appropriate recommendation, to the Plenary Assembly.

Disposition of Assets upon Dissolution

Article 41

In the event of the dissolution of the Federation, the Executive Committee shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all liabilities of the Federation, dispose of all assets of the Federation either to such United States organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, religious or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501 (c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as well as under corresponding provisions of Swiss law, or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law, as the Executive Committee shall determine; or to such (foreign) organization or organizations outside of the United States organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, religious and/or scientific purposes as these terms are defined in the Internal Revenue Code and the regulations there under; or to both United States and foreign organizations in the United States and in other countries which meet the above requirements.

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Legal Status

Article 42

The Federation, as long as its Headquarters are in Switzerland, is set up under Article 60 of the Swiss Civil Code.

Working Languages

Article 43

The working languages of the Federation shall be English and French.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Amendment Procedure

Article 44

(a) Any proposal from a Member to amend this Constitution shall be received in writing by the Secretary-General not less than six months before an ordinary session of the Plenary Assembly. Such a proposal, together with the comments of the Executive Committee, or any proposal to amend this Constitution from the Executive Committee, shall be circulated to Members not less than three months before an ordinary session of the Plenary Assembly.

(b) Amendments to proposed amendments referred to in paragraph (a) may be received by the Secretary-General no later than three months before an ordinary session of the Plenary Assembly.

(c) Amendments to this Constitution can be made by the Plenary Assembly only by a vote of two-thirds of those present and voting and will come into effect on their adoption.

BY-LAWS

PLENARY ASSEMBLY

Invitations

Rule 1

(a) In addition to Members and persons as specified under Article 7 of the Constitution of the Federation, the Secretary-General may invite as observers to each session of the Plenary Assembly:

1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Heads of its Related Agencies;
2. The organizations as referred to in Article 1(c) of the Constitution of the Federation;
3. The governments of United Nations Member States where there is no member United Nations Association;

(b) The Secretary-General may also invite the representatives of United Nations Member States to the opening plenary meeting of the Plenary Assembly.

Duration

Rule 2

The duration of an ordinary session of the Plenary Assembly shall be decided by the Executive Committee.

Agenda and Programme

Rule 3

(a) The Executive Committee shall prepare a preliminary agenda for the Plenary Assembly. In drawing up this preliminary agenda, which may include a central theme, the Executive Committee shall take into account proposals referred to the Plenary Assembly by previous sessions and proposals by Members as well as by Officers of the Federation, Honorary Presidents and members of the Executive Committee.

(b) The preliminary agenda of the Plenary Assembly shall be circulated to the Members and all those entitled to attend the Plenary Assembly under Article 7 of the Constitution of the Federation, not later than five months before the opening of an ordinary session of the Plenary Assembly.

(c) Members shall be invited to submit to the Secretary-General, not later than ten weeks before the opening of an ordinary session of the Plenary Assembly, their comments on the preliminary agenda, including suggestions for additions to or deletions from, that agenda.

(d) The Secretary-General shall, on the basis of the preliminary agenda and of the comments received, prepare a provisional agenda to be circulated at least six weeks in advance of the opening of an ordinary session of the Plenary Assembly.

(e) Any proposals to add a new item to the provisional agenda shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary-General at least two weeks before the session of the Executive Committee immediately preceding an ordinary session

of the Plenary Assembly. Any such item may be added to the provisional agenda only after the Executive Committee has commented thereon and by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at the Plenary Assembly.

(f) At formal meetings, e.g. the opening and closing plenary meetings, the programme to be followed and the names of speakers shall be determined by the Executive Committee and shall not be altered except at the discretion of the President of the Plenary Assembly.

Reports and Documents

Rule 4

(a) Reports from Members on their activities since the previous session of the Plenary Assembly shall be forwarded to the Secretary-General in either English or French at least four months prior to the opening of the Plenary Assembly.

Credentials

Rule 5

(a) Each Member shall furnish the Secretary-General with a list of its delegates signed by a responsible Officer. This list should reach the Secretariat not less than six weeks before the beginning of any ordinary session of the Plenary Assembly.

(b) A Credentials Committee, appointed by the Executive Committee shall examine and report to the Plenary Assembly on the credentials of each delegation and on its voting rights. The Plenary Assembly shall be called upon to adopt this report.

Registration Fees

Rule 6

Registration fees, as determined by the Executive Committee, shall be payable two weeks in advance by delegates, alternate delegates and other participants.

Presidency

Rule 7

If the President and the Vice-Presidents are absent from a session of the Plenary Assembly, this session shall be presided over by the Chairperson of the Executive Committee.

Commissions

Rule 8

(a) The Plenary Assembly may establish such Commissions as recommended by the Executive Committee. The Plenary Assembly shall elect the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and one or more Rapporteurs of each Commission so established, taking into consideration the recommendations of the Executive Committee.

(b) When a Commission of the Plenary Assembly considers any item, it should decide, during the course of the debate, whether it will conclude its debate on that item with a draft of a resolution or decision, or a written report presenting the principal views of the session.

(c) Drafting groups may be established by a Commission in order to facilitate the formulation of drafts of resolutions and decisions. Such drafts shall be handed

to the Chairperson of the Commission for further consideration by the Commission, which shall recommend final drafts to the Plenary Assembly for adoption.

(d) The provisions of Article 15 of the Constitution of the Federation and of Rules 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 of these By-Laws apply to Commissions.

Functions of the President of the Plenary Assembly

Rule 9

The President of the Plenary Assembly shall declare the opening and closing of each meeting of the Plenary Assembly, accord the right to speak, direct the discussions, put the questions to the vote, announce the results of the vote and ensure the observance of the provisions governing the proceedings of the Plenary Assembly. He/she shall rule on the points of order and, subject to these provisions, shall have complete control of the proceedings at any meeting and over the maintenance of order thereat. He/she may, in the course of the discussion of an item, propose to the Plenary Assembly the closure of the list of speakers or the closure of the debate. He/she may also propose the suspension or the adjournment of the meeting, or the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion.

Right to Address the Plenary Assembly

Rule 10

(a) No delegate may address the Plenary Assembly without having previously obtained the permission of its President, who shall call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak. The President of the Plenary Assembly may call a speaker to order if his/her remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

(b) Unless the President of the Plenary Assembly decides otherwise in special cases, speeches shall not exceed ten minutes in duration. Any delegation may move that this time be reduced and, subject to the discretion of the President of the Plenary Assembly, this motion shall be submitted to the Plenary Assembly to be voted on immediately without debate.

(c) During the discussion of any item, only one member of any delegation shall speak and such delegate shall not speak more than once, except:

1. to reply to questions raised in debates;
2. in the case of the mover of a motion, to reply to the debate immediately before the vote is taken;
3. when, in the opinion of the President of the Plenary Assembly, it is in the interest of the debate that a delegate shall be allowed to speak again.

Point of Order

Rule 11

During the discussion of any matter, a delegation may rise to a point of order, and the point of order shall be immediately decided by the President of the Plenary Assembly. A delegation may appeal against the ruling of the President of the Plenary Assembly. The appeal shall be immediately put to the vote. A member of a delegation rising to a point of order may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

Procedural Motions

Rule 12

(a) Except for a point of order, the motions indicated below shall have precedence in the following order over all other proposals or motions before the meeting:

1. to suspend the meeting;
2. to adjourn the meeting;
3. to adjourn the debate on the item under discussion;
4. to close the debate on the item under discussion.

(b) Such motions may be moved by any delegation during the discussion of any matter; they shall not be debated but shall be immediately put to the vote.

Exceptional Procedural Motion

Rule 13

(a) A motion of suspension of the provisions governing the proceedings of the Plenary Assembly may be proposed by six Members on a matter of paramount importance to the Federation.

(b) Such a motion shall have precedence over motions under Rules 11 and 12 of these By-Laws.

Resolutions and Decisions

Rule 14

(a) Drafts of resolutions and decisions can be submitted only on matters included in the agenda of the session. They shall be submitted to the Secretary-General at least two months before the Plenary Assembly and circulated to all Members. At the Plenary Session they shall be submitted, together with comments and proposals received, to the appropriate Commission, as established according to Rule 8 of these By-Laws. Exceptionally, drafts of resolutions and decisions on matters not included in the agenda may be submitted at least twenty-four hours before their consideration in a plenary meeting, if the Plenary Assembly decides so by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.

(b) No drafts of resolutions and decisions or amendments thereto except when related to procedural matters or drafting changes, shall be discussed until the text is in the hands of delegates present, in at least one of the working languages of the Federation.

(c) When an amendment to a draft of a resolution or decision is moved, it shall be voted on first.

(d) When two or more amendments are moved, the one furthest removed in substance from the original draft shall be voted on first; and then the next furthest removed there from, and so on, until all amendments have been put to the vote.

(e) If the adoption of an amendment implies the rejection of another, the latter shall not be put to the vote.

(f) The amended draft may be voted on section by section and shall in any case be voted on as a whole.

Voting

Rule 15

- (a) The voting is valid only if the total number of those present and voting is at least equal to half the number of the delegations participating in the Plenary Assembly.
- (b) For the purpose of the Constitution of the Federation and these By-Laws, the expression "those present and voting" shall mean the delegations of Members casting an affirmative or a negative vote. Delegations which abstain from voting shall be considered as not voting.
- (c) No vote by proxy shall be authorized.
- (d) No vote can be cast in advance.
- (e) The President of the Plenary Assembly shall grant a request by any delegation for a vote by roll call, provided this request is seconded by two other delegations.
- (f) If the President of the Plenary Assembly is appointed by his/her United Nations Association as a member of its delegation to the Plenary Assembly, he/she shall not be authorized to exercise the voting rights of his/her delegation.

Elections Committee

Rule 16

- (a) There shall be an Elections Committee of the Plenary Assembly, responsible for controlling the elections process. The Elections Committee shall be appointed by the Plenary Assembly on the recommendation of the Executive Committee. It shall consist of five delegates, each from a different Member, none of whose delegates are standing for election. It shall appoint its own Chairperson.
- (b) The Elections Committee shall decide on the validity of the nominations submitted, draw up a list of candidates, distribute the ballot papers to the delegations qualified to vote, supervise the ballot, count the votes and report to the Plenary Assembly on the results of the voting. If the results of the elections are not contested within twenty-four hours, it shall destroy the ballot papers.

Nominations

Rule 17

- (a) All nominations shall be seconded by at least one Member qualified to submit nominations and be accompanied by a typewritten curriculum vita.
- (b) Nominations for the offices of the President, the Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer, and nominations to the Executive Committee shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary-General at least three months before the commencement of the plenary meeting during which elections for these offices are scheduled to be held.
- (c) A list of candidates for each office as drawn up by the Elections Committee shall be distributed to all delegations prior to the voting and the curriculum vitae shall be placarded at an appropriate place.

Elections

Rule 18

(a) All elections shall be held by secret ballot, except when the number of candidates equals the number of vacancies, in which case secret ballot may be waived by the Plenary Assembly.

(b) The President of the Plenary Assembly shall declare the opening and closing of the voting.

(c) A candidate is elected when securing at least half of the number of those present and voting.

(d) The following shall be considered null and void:

1. for the elections to the Executive Committee, ballot papers in which less than five votes are cast;

2. ballot papers in which the voters have revealed their identity, in particular by apposing their signature or mentioning the name of their delegation;

3. ballot papers bearing other names than those of the candidates nominated in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the Federation and these By-Laws.

(e) The Chairperson of the Elections Committee shall, in plenary meeting, announce the results of the elections in the following order: number of delegations entitled to vote; number absent; number of abstentions; number of ballot papers null and void; number of those present and voting; number required for a majority; names of candidates and the number of votes secured by each of them, in descending order of the number of votes.

(f) For the purpose of the provisions of paragraph (e) above, the following definitions shall apply:

1. "Absent" - delegations entitled to vote but whose members are not present at the meeting at which the secret ballot takes place;

2. "Number of those present and voting" - the difference between the number of the delegations with the right to vote and the total number of absentees, abstentions and invalid ballot papers.

(h) The President of the Plenary Assembly shall declare elected candidates who have obtained the required majority.

Meeting of the Heads of Delegations

Rule 19

(a) The Executive Committee may convene during the Plenary Assembly a meeting of the heads of delegations in order to hold consultations aimed at facilitating the decision-making process of the Plenary Assembly.

(b) Those taking part in the meeting shall be:

1. the heads of delegations of Members, or, in their absence, another members of the delegations duly appointed by the head of delegation;

2. the Officers of the Federation;

3. the Honorary Presidents;

4. the members of the Executive Committee.

(c) The meeting shall be chaired by the Chairperson of the Executive Committee. The President of the Federation or, if not available, the President of the Plenary Assembly may preside on the invitation of the Executive Committee.

(d) Opinions expressed during the meeting shall not be formally binding on the delegations to the Plenary Assembly and no deciding vote shall be taken.

(e) The meeting shall be private and shall not be minuted.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Designation by a Member of a Substitute

Rule 20

If a member of the Executive Committee is unable to attend a session thereof he/she may, with the approval of his/her United Nations Association, designate a member of a Member United Nations Association as a substitute to attend that session.

OFFICERS

Procedure for the Selection of Candidates for the Post of Secretary-General

Rule 21

(a) A vacancy in the post of Secretary-General shall be brought without delay to the knowledge of all the Members of the Federation.

(b) The President, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Executive Committee, shall invite all Members to submit applications for the post within a fixed deadline. The vacancy shall also be publicized outside the Federation.

(c) A list of applications, providing basic information on the candidates, shall be circulated to all members of the Executive Committee and persons entitled to attend its sessions under Article 17(a) and (b) of the Constitution of the Federation.

HONORARY PRESIDENTS

Honorary Presidents

Rule 22

(a) The title of Honorary President is the highest distinction the Federation may confer, in accordance with Article 34 of its Constitution.

(b) Any Member may submit a nomination for the title of Honorary President two weeks before the Executive Committee immediately preceding the Plenary Assembly. Such a nomination shall be presented to the Executive Committee in writing together with a brief description of the nominee's merits for this distinction. The nomination shall be seconded by at least two other Members.

(c) The Executive Committee shall, in private meeting, review the nomination submitted and decide on a recommendation to the Plenary Assembly. The vote shall be taken by secret ballot and the secrecy of the ballot shall not be waived.

(d) In exceptional circumstances, the Plenary Assembly may, upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, withdraw the title of Honorary

President of the Federation. Such action shall be proposed in writing to the Executive Committee two weeks before the Executive Committee immediately preceding the Plenary Assembly by at least five Members and shall require, both in the Executive Committee and in the Plenary Assembly, a vote of two-thirds of those present and voting. The vote shall be taken by secret ballot and the secrecy of the ballot shall not be waived.

FINANCES

Finance Committee

Rule 23

The Finance Committee shall meet before every session of the Executive Committee except the session immediately following a session of the Plenary Assembly.

Dues

Rule 24

(a) There shall be minimum dues fixed by the Plenary Assembly on the recommendation of the Executive Committee.

(b) Dues of Members shall be payable in such currency as the Plenary Assembly shall specify. In case of necessity, special provisions can be authorized by the Executive Committee.

(c) Any payment of dues shall automatically be applied to the furthest remoted arrears.

(f) Before the end of the session the Plenary Assembly must adopt the annual budget for each of the following two years.

Budget and Budgetary Procedure

Rule 25

(a) The Treasurer, in consultation with the Secretary-General, shall submit to the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee the draft annual budget of the Federation for each of the following three years.

(b) The draft annual budget shall consist of an estimate of expenditure and income as well as, if necessary, explanatory notes.

(c) The draft annual budget shall be examined by the Finance Committee preceding the penultimate session of the Executive Committee before a session of the Plenary Assembly and be submitted to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall consider the draft annual budget and send it, with any further observations, to all Members for consideration, not later than four weeks before the session of the Plenary Assembly which is to adopt it.

(d) At the session of the Executive Committee which precedes a session of the Plenary Assembly, the Finance Committee shall review the draft annual budget in the light of any comments received from Members and of any developments, and forward it with a report to the Executive Committee.

(e) The Executive Committee shall, after considering the report of the Finance Committee and the draft annual budget, forward them with or without

comments and with an appropriate recommendation to the Plenary Assembly (or any relevant Commission thereof).

(f) Before the end of the session the Plenary Assembly must adopt the annual budget for each of the following three years.

AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS

Amendment Procedure

Rule 26

Amendments to the By-laws are subject to Article 44 of the Constitution of the World Federation of United Nations Associations.



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World Federation of United Nations Associations

CODE OF CONDUCT

ADOPTED AT THE 40TH WFUNA PLENARY ASSEMBLY
6-10 NOVEMBER 2012
RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

WFUNA

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CODE OF CONDUCT FOR UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATIONS

The code of conduct of the members of the World Federation of United Nations Associations (Federation) aims to strengthen accountability, organisational sustainability, and collaboration. This Code outlines acceptable practices and should be used to direct member United Nations Associations interaction with the Federation, other member United Nations Associations, the United Nations, governments, civil society organisations, academia, donors, and all other stakeholders.

The following are acceptable practices for a United Nations Association:

- United Nations Associations are expected to make correct use of the UN name and logo in their branding strategy. Based on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreed between the Federation and the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, a United Nations Associations can only use the UN name and logo in conjunction with the formulation “United Nations Association of (country)”.
- United Nations Associations are expected to respect the United Nations and the Federation’s mission and values. All their programmes and activities must be guided by the principles and goals of the United Nations.
- United Nations Associations representatives are expected to act in a manner which upholds the reputation of the Federation and member United Nations Associations at all times.
- United Nations Associations external relationships should be guided by the intention to collaborate with, and treat with respect and consideration, the Federation, all member United Nations Associations, United Nations agencies, civil society organisations, and all other stakeholders.
- United Nations Associations are expected to handle their finances in a transparent and legal manner. Their accounts should be audited annually according to generally accepted accounting standards.
- No funds raised on behalf of the United Nations Associations should be used for personal gain.
- In the exercise of their functions, United Nations Associations representatives are expected to conduct themselves in an honest manner at all times. Falsification of documents or partaking in any other criminal or otherwise unlawful activity is not tolerated.
- United Nations Associations cannot deliver written or oral statements, or speak on behalf of the Federation unless the statements or comments have been explicitly approved by the Federation Secretariat.
- All United Nations Associations should be active and reachable. If inactive or unreachable for a prolonged period of time, a UNA membership to the Federation is at risk.