

**INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN
EQUAL RIGHTS – EQUAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

**CONSTITUTION
REVISED 2022**



INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN ENVISIONS A WORLD IN WHICH WOMEN AND MEN ENJOY DE FACTO EQUALITY OF LIBERTIES, STATUS AND OPPORTUNITIES AND COOPERATE IN EQUAL PARTNERSHIP IN ALL SPHERES OF LIFE

**CHAPTER 1
THE NATURE OF THE ALLIANCE**

Article I NAME, STATUS

- a. THE NAME OF THE FEDERATION is “International Alliance of Women: Equal Rights – Equal Responsibilities”, hereafter “IAW”
The Alliance has its seat in the canton of Geneva, Switzerland
- b. IAW is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation. It is independent of any political or religious party or movement.
- c. IAW is governed by this constitution and by art. 60 et seq. of the Swiss Civil Code
- d. Board members, appointed officers and representatives shall be guided by the IAW Code of Professional Ethics (2022).

Article II

1. The objectives of IAW are

- to promote the human rights and the empowerment of women in all spheres of life
- to ensure that the status of every individual without distinction on grounds of sex, sexual orientation, age, race, religious or political persuasion or any other ground shall be based on respect for the person
- to promote social justice and
- to work for peace and good understanding among peoples

2. IAW works towards the realization of these objectives by means of

- Implementation of its current Action Programme
- Representation and lobbying at international and regional organisations
- Statements and petitions to governments, international or regional bodies
- International cooperation
- Meetings
- Bringing the vision and objectives of IAW to public notice

3. IAW shall:

- Observe strict neutrality on all other issues that are national or that concern relations between governments
- Favour no political party or religion
- Respect the autonomy of each member organisation

**CHAPTER 2
MEMBERSHIP, FEES, COMMUNICATIONS**

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

1. Membership of IAW consists of:

- a. Affiliate organisations
- b. Associate organisations
- c. Individual members

2. Qualification for membership:

- a. An organisation shall be eligible for Affiliate Membership if:
 - i. It is a national organisation which has local branches or admits its members from all over the country,
 - ii. It is an organisation not attached to any political or religious body, and
 - iii. Among its objectives are those which correspond with the vision and objectives as stated in the Chapeau and Article II of this Constitution.
- b. An organisation shall be eligible for Associate Membership if:
 - i. It is a local or regional organisation
 - ii. It is an organisation not attached to any political or religious body, and
 - iii. Among its objectives are those which correspond with the vision and objectives as stated in the Chapeau and Article II of this Constitution.
- c. Any person subscribing to the Vision and Objectives of IAW shall be qualified for individual membership. Board Members, international representatives and commission conveners must become individual members upon election or appointment.

3. Admission to Membership:

When an organisation wishes to be affiliated or associated with IAW, it shall apply for admission to the Admissions Committee, which shall decide on the basis of section 2 a) and b) whether it fulfills the conditions of membership.

The Committee shall inform any affiliate member in the same country of its decision and give it the opportunity to present its views about such admission before accepting the organisation for provisional affiliation or association.

Provisional admission is subject to ratification by the next Congress.

Individual Members shall be admitted upon payment of the annual membership fee.

4. Loss of Membership:

In addition to the provision of Article IV 1.(b) a member organisation will be expelled when it no longer fulfills the requirements for eligibility, or when it acts against the Vision and Objectives of IAW. The decision to expel is made by Congress on the recommendation of the Board.

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP FEES AND RIGHT OF MEMBERS

1. Fees:

- a. The membership fees due from affiliates and associates and from individual members shall be decided at each Triennial Congress.
- b. Membership fees shall be due from the year of provisional admission of an organisation. An affiliate or associate organisation or an individual lose their membership of the IAW if they are three years in arrears of the annual fee, provided that two formal requests for payment have been made.

- c. Individual members shall pay the yearly fee from the year of joining till the next Congress.
- d. The Executive Committee has the authority to reduce or waive the fee, if, after consideration of a formal application by any member society pleading circumstances of special difficulty, it determines that such a reduction or waiver is justified.

2. Rights

- a. All member organisations and individual members are entitled to be informed of the work of IAW. This information may be given in different formats.
- b. All members of member organisations and all individual members are eligible to hold office in IAW in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution
- c. Member organisations and office holders have an exclusive right to use the IAW logo.

ARTICLE V MEDIA

IAW shall publish a journal. All members shall receive it and may contribute to it. Individuals and institutions, who are not members of IAW, may subscribe to the journal as well as to other IAW publications.

The board shall appoint editors of the journal and other IAW media as in Article IX 2a

CHAPTER 3 STRUCTURE OF IAW

ARTICLE VI CONGRESS

1. Congress is the governing body of IAW. In order for it to exercise its authority, at least one third of the member organisations must be represented at Congress.
2. IAW shall hold Triennial Congresses called by the Board. The Board shall have the power to change the length of time between Congresses for an urgent and serious reason. The interval between Congresses shall not be more than four years nor less than two years. In the case of a longer or shorter period between two Congresses, this period shall be considered a Triennium.
3. Additional Congresses shall be held whenever called by the Board. The Board shall convene a Congress if requested to do so by at least one-third of Affiliate Societies or the International Meeting.
4. Congress is comprised of delegations of member organisations, members of the Board of IAW, individual members and all individuals appointed by the Board under Article IX.
5. If six weeks before Congress the registration does not comprise one third of the member organisations, a repeated call to congress shall be sent. If attendance falls short of the number required under section 1 of this article after the second call, Congress shall be empowered to attend to all business.

ARTICLE VII BOARD

1. IAW shall have a Board in which is vested all executive power. The Board consists of:
 - a. The President, the Secretary General, the Treasurer and a maximum of 15 other members from at least twelve countries, ensuring an equitable geographical distribution. They shall be elected at Congress according to article XVII and shall hold office for the next Triennium.
 - b. Conveners of Commissions according to Article VIII.

An elected member of the Board may stand for re-election, but may not serve more than two consecutive trienniums. She may stand for election to the Board again after an interval of one or more Trienniums.

A candidate for the presidency must have been a member of the board prior to standing for election as President. If she is a member of the Board immediately prior to this election she may be re-elected as President for a second consecutive triennium.

A Secretary General or Treasurer who has reached the end of her term on the Board after one triennium in her office may stand for a second consecutive triennium.

2.
 - a. An elected Board Member who is prevented from attending a Board Meeting has the right to appoint a proxy provided that such proxy has active knowledge of the work of IAW and that the member has fully instructed her in the business of the meeting. One person may be a proxy for a maximum of 2 members.
 - b. A Commission Convener who is prevented from attending a Board Meeting has the right to appoint a member of her Commission as a proxy.
3. Voting at Board Meetings is restricted to:
 - a. Board Members as defined in section 1 above or their proxies
 - b. The immediate Past President for the first Triennium after leaving office.
4. Past Presidents who have served one full term of office shall become Honorary Presidents.
5. The Honorary Presidents, the Honorary Vice Presidents, the representatives of the IAW to the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies and to regional intergovernmental organisations, as well as the conveners of committees, editors and auxiliary officers appointed by the Board are entitled to attend Board Meetings and International Meetings in an advisory capacity.
These together with the board members are referred to as the Extended Board.
6. Board Members, appointed officers and representatives shall sign and submit the Statement on Conflict of Interests upon election/appointment.
7. After each Triennial Congress the newly elected Board Members shall elect from amongst themselves two Executive Vice-Presidents to serve on the Executive Committee and Regional Vice-Presidents to coordinate the activities of IAW in their respective regions.
8. With a qualified majority the Board may remove an elected officer for malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance.
9. The Board may fill any vacancy caused by the death, illness, resignation or removal of the Secretary General or the Treasurer preferably from amongst its members in the interim between Congresses. If the President is unable to continue in active office, the most senior Executive Vice-President, if willing, shall be appointed for the remainder of the Triennium. If none of the Vice-Presidents are willing, the Board may appoint one of its other members.
10. The quorum for a Board Meeting is the simple majority of its members, or their proxies as in section 2 of this Article. A quorum may be achieved if absent Board Members are sufficiently involved in the business of the meeting, as described in a by-law.
11. The Board shall meet immediately before and after Congress and at least annually between Triennial Congresses, being summoned for the purpose by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall convene an additional Board meeting at the request of five members of the Board.
12. The term of the Board expires at the end of the last session of the Triennial Congress and the term of the newly constituted Board commences immediately thereafter.

ARTICLE VIII COMMISSION CONVENERS

The Board shall, if it is deemed necessary to facilitate the work of IAW, establish Commissions for fields of policy and appoint their Conveners. Commission Conveners may be re-appointed provided they have stated in writing that they are prepared to serve another term and have given a satisfactory report to Congress. It shall be the duty of the Convener to secure adequate membership of her Commission from amongst the members of IAW.

ARTICLE IX THE BOARD APPOINTMENTS

1. In the post-Congress Meeting, the Board shall appoint:
 - a. An Admissions Committee for the triennial period, which shall consist of three members of the Executive Committee.
 - b. The permanent Representatives of IAW to the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies and Representatives to Regional Intergovernmental organisations, which admit representation of non-governmental organisations. Representatives may be re-appointed provided they have stated in writing that they are prepared to serve another term and have given a satisfactory report to Congress.

- c. Representatives to non-governmental organisations to which IAW may belong, or to sister organisations.
 - d. A Constitution Committee to advise the Board on the conformity of decisions with the Constitution and by-laws and on desirable changes thereto.
 - e. The Financial Advisory Committee.
 - f. The Committee on Ethics
 - g. The editors of the journal and other communications media
 - h. A membership secretary
 - i. Substitutes for any vacant functions as described in this Article and in Articles VIII and IX.
 - j. An auditor in accordance with Article XIV hereafter.
2. In the meeting the year prior to Congress the Board shall appoint an Elections Committee in accordance with Article XVII.1 hereafter.
 3. In the pre-Congress meeting the Board shall appoint a Resolutions Committee in accordance with the by-laws.

The Board may appoint auxiliary officers to help carry out the work of the Board.

The Board may institute ad hoc Committees for other fields of the internal work of IAW as deemed necessary and appoint their Conveners and members.

The Board shall establish job descriptions for the various tasks.

ARTICLE X EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND HEADQUARTERS

1. The President, two Executive Vice-Presidents, the Secretary General and the Treasurer constitute the Executive Committee.
2. Between Board Meetings the Executive Committee is empowered to take decisions on behalf of IAW. These decisions shall be communicated to the Board immediately.
3. The Secretary General functions as officer in charge of Headquarters.
4. The authority to sign documents on behalf of IAW shall be specified in the by-laws.
5. The President represents IAW in and outside of Court.
6. If the President is temporarily unable to function the Executive Committee appoints an Executive Vice-President as Acting President as necessary.

ARTICLE XI THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING

The Presidents of the Affiliates and Associates and the (extended) Board constitute the International Meeting. They convene once in between Congresses on the occasion of a Board Meeting.

A President who cannot come may send a proxy.

The International Meeting determines the theme and the outline of the next Triennial Congress.

Voting at the International Meeting is reserved for the Presidents of Affiliates and Associates and the voting members of the Board or their proxies.

CHAPTER 4 FINANCE

ARTICLE XII FINANCIAL MEANS

The financial means of IAW consist of:

- Membership fees and subscriptions
- Donations
- Legacies
- All such funds as are acquired legally

ARTICLE XIII FINANCIAL ORGANISATION

1. The fiscal year of IAW runs from 1st January to 31st December.
2. The Treasurer shall submit on behalf of the Executive Committee to each Triennial Congress the audited accounts of IAW together with the Auditor's report for the Triennium preceding the Congress.

3. The Treasurer shall submit to each Triennial Congress a budget and a proposal for the membership and subscription fees for the coming triennium.
4. At each Board Meeting the Treasurer shall present an audited report on the state of the finances of the IAW for the fiscal years since the last Triennial Congress and for the period of 1st January of that year to the end of the previous quarter.
5. The Executive Committee appoints an auditor
6. The Board appoints a Financial Advisory Committee whose duties are set out in the by-laws.
7. Authority to approve and make payments is given to the President, the Treasurer and one Executive Vice-President, as specified in the by-laws.

CHAPTER 5 RULES FOR CONGRESS

ARTICLE XIV AGENDA OF CONGRESS

With due observance of Article VI 1. the Triennial Congress shall at least deal with:

- election of President, Secretary General and Treasurer
- election of other Board members
- consideration and approval of the executive report of the President
- consideration and approval of the accounts of the IAW for the preceding Triennium
- discharge of the Executive Committee for the previous Triennium
- decision on the membership and subscription fees for the next Triennium
- approval of the budget for the next Triennium
- decision on the Action Programme for the next Triennium
- consideration of the reports of Commissions, Representatives and Member Organisations
- resolutions placed before the Congress
- the admission of new affiliate and associate societies
- acknowledgement of any by-laws made by the Board since the last Congress

The Congress programme may include public meetings relative to the work of IAW.

ARTICLE XV REPRESENTATION AT CONGRESS

1. A member organisation shall be entitled to be represented at Congress by not more than ten delegates and ten alternate delegates.
Individual Members are entitled to full participation in Congress.
2. Members of member organisations, who are not delegates, shall be entitled to attend all meetings of Congress, as non-voting participants.
3. It is the prerogative of the President or the Executive Committee to invite to the relevant meetings of Congress representatives of organisations and individuals involved in work for equality as non-voting participants.

ARTICLE XVI THE RIGHT TO SPEAK AND VOTE AT CONGRESS

1. Members of the Board and delegates (or in their absence, their alternates) from member organisations, as well as Individual Members are entitled to speak and vote at Congress.
Members appointed by the Board under Article X, who are not delegates, have the right to speak and vote on their portfolio.
2. The representatives of any organisation and Individual Members whose fees up to and including the year of the Congress are unpaid shall not be entitled to vote at Congress until such fees are paid. Newly admitted organisations must pay their dues from the year of provisional admission up to and including the year of the Congress before they can vote.
3. Distribution of Votes
 - a. The delegation of an Affiliate shall be entitled to a block of ten votes (irrespective of the number of delegates present at Congress).
 - b. The delegation of an Associate shall be entitled to a block of five votes.

- c. Each individual member is entitled to one vote after six months of membership.
- 4. Where an Individual Member also attends Congress in the capacity of a Delegate, her right to vote as an Individual Member shall not be affected.
- 5. Non-voting participants as mentioned in Article XVI. 3 and 4 shall have the right to speak if called upon by the Chair.

ARTICLE XVII ELECTIONS

1. The Elections Committee is responsible for the organisation of elections. The Committee consists of five members who are not members of the Board or candidates and belong to five different countries. The Executive Committee shall immediately appoint a successor for any Member of the Elections Committee who is nominated for election to the Board during Congress. The Elections Committee shall elect its own Convener at its first meeting.
Nominations of candidates for election either to the offices of President, Secretary General and Treasurer or to the Board must be received by the Convener of the Elections Committee no later than two days before the election. Each nomination must be accompanied by a relevant curriculum vitae. Nominations shall be made by a member organisation, ten Individual Members, or a group of ten delegates present at Congress.
All nominations shall be made on a prescribed form, signed by the candidate and by the person responsible for the nomination.
No nomination can be accepted from an organisation whose dues are not paid up to and including the year of Congress.
2. Before the ballot :
 - a. the Elections Committee shall present a report of the nomination procedure and make the curricula vitae of the candidates available to Congress.
 - b. Candidates shall have the opportunity to present themselves to Congress.
3. The election to the offices of President, Secretary General and Treasurer shall be by ballot. The candidate who receives the greatest number of votes shall be considered elected provided the votes given to her exceed one half plus one of all the votes cast at the election. If none of the candidates receives an absolute majority of the votes cast, a second ballot shall be taken on the two candidates who have received the highest number of votes. In the event of a tie the election shall be decided by lot.
4. After the results of the election of President, Secretary General and Treasurer have been announced, the election of the Board Members shall be conducted. To be elected each candidate must have an absolute majority of votes.
5. A ballot shall be taken regardless of the number of candidates for each office or the Board. The list of candidates shall be in alphabetical order, beginning with a letter decided by lot.

ARTICLE XVIII AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

1. The Constitution can only be amended by a two-thirds majority of votes cast at Congress.
2. Amendments may be proposed by Congress, the Board, the Executive Committee, the Constitution Committee, the International Meeting and member organisations
Notice of proposed amendments must have reached the Executive Committee at least six months before the Congress and must be sent to all Member Organisations and Members of the Board with the preliminary agenda, or in a matter of urgency a motion to amend may be approved unanimously by all votes cast at the Congress.
3. Unless otherwise provided, the amended Constitution takes effect immediately after the close of the Congress at which it was adopted.

ARTICLE XIX BY-LAWS

The Board shall make by-laws as provided by the Constitution and in regard to other matters consistent with the Constitution as it deems necessary.
By-laws come into force as soon as they have been sent to the Member Organisations. The next Congress will take note of them.

ARTICLE XX DISSOLUTION

The IAW may be dissolved by a resolution passed by Congress with a majority of no less than two thirds of the votes cast. The procedure of Article XVII 2 has to be followed.

In the event of a decision to dissolve, the Executive Committee shall notify all concerned and shall take steps to liquidate all assets and, after payment of outstanding debts, it shall transmit any balance to a non-profit, non-governmental organisation, whose Objectives and Vision conform to the Objectives and Vision of IAW, and which follows a similar aim of public good as IAW, and which is the beneficiary of tax exemption. In no case may the assets be returned to individual members or founder members, nor may they be utilized for their profit in part or in their entirety in any manner whatsoever. If the dissolving Congress has not elected officers, the task will fall to the Executive Committee in office at the time of decision.

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