



INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN  
ALLIANCE INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES

# CONSTITUTION ADOPTED 2025

**INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN**

**EQUAL RIGHTS - EQUAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

**CONSTITUTION**

**REVISED 2025**

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 organization. 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 organizations
- 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 organization

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **MEMBERSHIP, FEES, COMMUNICATIONS**

#### **ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP**

##### **1. Membership of IAW consists of:**

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

##### **2. Qualification for membership:**

- a. An organization shall be eligible for Affiliate Membership if:

- i. It is a national organization which has local branches or admits its members from all over the country,
  - ii. It is an organization 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 organization shall be eligible for Associate Membership if:
  - i. It is a local or regional organization
  - ii. It is an organization 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 organization 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 organization 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 organization 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 organization. An affiliate or associate organization 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 organizations 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 organizations and all individual members are eligible to hold office in IAW in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution
- c. Member organizations and office holders have an exclusive right to use the IAW logo.

## **ARTICLE V MEDIA**

IAW shall publish a digital Journal as part of its website, serving as the central platform for articles, statements, interviews, portraits and other content relevant to the mission and objectives of IAW. All Members shall have free access to the Journal and may contribute to it. Content may also be made accessible to the wider public in line with IAW's communication strategy.

A quarterly selection of the digital articles will be assembled into The International Women's News and be delivered via e-mail to the inboxes of members, women's libraries and archives around the world.

The Board shall appoint the Chair of the Communication Committee for the website and Journal as well as other IAW media in accordance with Article IX 1.g.

## **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 organizations 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 organizations, 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 organizations, 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. Voting Board Members (elected Board Members and appointed Commission Conveners) are expected to attend every Board meeting, in person or online, as appropriate.
  - b. Any voting Board member who is unable to attend a Board meeting may appoint a proxy, with voting rights for that Board meeting. The proxy must have active knowledge of the work of IAW and the member must have fully instructed her in the business of the meeting.  
One person may be a proxy for a maximum of two Members.
  - c. A voting Board member may rely on a proxy a maximum of three Board meetings, after which the Board member will be considered to have resigned. The Executive Committee may then appoint a replacement to serve the remainder of that Board term after appropriate consultation with relevant parties including the nominating organization.
  - d. In the event that a Board Member resigns from office, the Executive Committee may appoint a replacement to serve the remainder of that Board term after appropriate consultation with relevant parties including the nominating organization.
  - e. A Board member who is unable to fulfill her duties for an extended period shall notify the Executive Committee, which may then appoint a replacement to complete the Board term after appropriate consultation with relevant parties including the nominating organization.
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.
  - c. Notwithstanding the foregoing, an elected Board Member who simultaneously serves as a Commission Convener shall be entitled to one vote only.
4. Past Presidents who have served one full term of office shall become Honorary Presidents.
5. The Honorary Presidents, the representatives of the IAW to the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies and to regional intergovernmental organizations, as well as the chairs of committees, editors, coordinators of IAW projects, 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 may appoint Regional Coordinators who 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 twice 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 OTHER BOARD APPOINTMENTS**

1. In the post-Congress Meeting, the Board shall appoint:
  - a. ---
  - b. The permanent Representatives of IAW to the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies and Representatives to Regional Intergovernmental organizations, which admit representation of non-governmental organizations. 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 organizations to which IAW may belong, or to sister organizations.
  - 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 Chair and the Members of the Communications Committee, including the editor/s of the website and other publications.
  - 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. The Board may appoint auxiliary officers to help carry out the work of the Board.

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.
7. The Treasurer or Secretary General may appoint their Assistants as proxies to attend Executive Committee meetings and vote on their behalf on specific items based on a pre-approved meeting agenda.
8. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the provisional admission of new member organizations.
9. The Executive Committee may create Task Forces to support IAW's activities.

#### **ARTICLE XI THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING**

Between Congresses, the Board with input from the Presidents of the Affiliates and Associates organizes International Meetings for all Members.

The International Meeting discusses and formulates the theme of the upcoming Congress.

### **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 ORGANIZATION**

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
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 Organizations
- resolutions placed before the Congress
- the admission of new affiliate and associate societies
- approval 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 organization 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 organizations, 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 organizations 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 organizations, 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 organization 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 organizations 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 organization 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 organization, 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 organization 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 organizations.

Notice of proposed amendments must have reached the Executive Committee at least six months before the Congress and must be sent to all Member Organizations 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 shall be approved by the members at Congress.

#### **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 organization, 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.

November 2025