



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WELFARE

Constitution

International Council on Social Welfare

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INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WELFARE

CONSTITUTION

1. CONSTITUTION

1.1 The International Council on Social Welfare, hereafter referred to as “the Council”, is a global, non-governmental, non-political, non-sectarian and non-profit organisation which represents a wide range of national and international member organisations that seek to advance social justice, social welfare, social work and social development.

2. OBJECTS

2.1 The objects of the Council are to:

2.1(a) Promote forms of social and economic development which aim to reduce poverty, hardship and vulnerability, especially amongst disadvantaged people;

2.1(b) Strive for recognition and realisation of fundamental rights to employment, income, food, shelter, education, health care and security;

2.1(c) Promote equality of opportunity, freedom of expression, freedom of association, participation and access to human services and oppose discrimination;

2.1(d) Promote policies and programmes which strike an appropriate balance between social and economic goals and which respect cultural diversity;

2.1 (e) Strengthen civil society throughout the world to achieve these objects;

2.1(f) Seek implementation of these objects by governments, international organisations and non-governmental agencies in cooperation with its network of Member Organisations.

3. MAIN ORGANS

- 3.1 The main organs of the Council are:
 - 3.1(a) The General Assembly;
 - 3.1(b) The Supervisory and Advisory Board, hereafter referred to as "The Board";
 - 3.1(c) The Management Committee;
 - 3.1(d) Regional General Assemblies;
 - 3.1(e) Regional Executive Committees.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 Membership of the Council shall be in the following categories:
 - 4.1(a) National Member Organisations (Category A);
 - 4.1(b) International Member Organisations (Category B);
 - 4.1(c) Other Member Organisations (Category C);
 - 4.1(d) Associate Member Organisations (Category D);
 - 4.1(e) Individual Members (Category E)
- 4.2 On application the Management Committee shall admit into membership organisations that meet the requirements of the Constitution, By-laws and guidelines approved by the Board.

5. NATIONAL MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1 A National Member Organisation shall have a broadly based membership of organisations which seek to enhance social justice, social welfare, social work and social development in that country.
- 5.2 There can be only one National Member Organisation in each country unless the Management Committee decides otherwise.
- 5.3 A National Member Organisation can be established especially for the purpose of Council membership.

- 5.4 In any country where there is no National Member Organisation, the Management Committee can admit one organisation as a Member Organisation with the same rights and obligations as a National Member Organisation until such time as a National Member Organisation is admitted.
- 5.5 Each National Member Organisation is entitled to appoint two delegates to the General Assembly and is entitled to exercise two votes at General Assembly meetings.

6. INTERNATIONAL MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

- 6.1 An international organisation is eligible for Council membership if it is an international non-governmental organisation which seeks to enhance social justice, social welfare, social work and social development.
- 6.2 An International Member Organisation retains its full autonomy and full rights in its relationships with various organs of the United Nations and other inter-governmental bodies.
- 6.3 Each International Member Organisation is entitled to appoint one delegate to the General Assembly and is entitled to exercise one vote at General Assembly meetings.

7. OTHER MEMBER ORGANISATIONS AND ASSOCIATE MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

- 7.1 An organisation which is not eligible for membership under clause 5 or 6 can be eligible for Council membership if it is an organisation which seeks to enhance social justice, social welfare, social work and social development.
- 7.2 Each Other Member Organisation and Associate Member Organisation is entitled to appoint one delegate to each global and regional General Assembly meeting but such delegates shall not have voting rights at the global level.

8. Category D - Associate Member Organisations)

- This category includes government ministries or departments and regional non governmental organisations. Members in this category do not have voting rights.

Category E – Individual Members

A New category E individual membership—Distinguished Fellows is established. Eminent experts in social welfare or social development who have made internationally or regionally outstanding and widely recognized contributions to social welfare and social development shall be eligible for individual membership in ICSW category as E members.

Distinguished Fellows of the International Council on Social Welfare shall be admitted to category E membership by decision of the Management Committee. They shall be nominated by a Regional President and a member of the Management Committee. The President of ICSW , the Vice-President and the Executive Director may also nominate candidates on a par with Regional Presidents. Former ICSW officers shall be appointed Distinguished Fellows automatically upon application.

All candidates shall submit their CVs for consideration by the Management Committee

10. REGIONAL STRUCTURE

- 10.1 The Council has a regional structure established under the By-laws. A Regional General Assembly and other regional organs are established under global and regional By-laws. Each Member with the exception of International Member Organisations is allocated to a region by the Board for the purposes of allocation of membership fees and each Member is entitled to at least the same rights in its region as at global level. However, any Member organisation is able to cooperate and collaborate with Member Organisations in other regions as well as, by agreement, participate in other regional meetings, activities and ICSW structures.

9. GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- 9.1 The General Assembly is the supreme governing body of the Council and:

- 9.1(a) Comprises delegates appointed under clauses 5, 6 and 7, the President, the Vice President, the Treasurer and the Immediate Past President;
 - 9.1(b) Adopts the four year global programme and the two-year budget framework;
 - 9.1(c) Elects the President, Vice President, Treasurer and other members of the Management Committee; and
 - 9.1(d) Meets at least every two calendar years.
- 9.2 The General Assembly shall elect a President, a Treasurer and two other members of the Management Committee for a term of approximately four years commencing at the end of the General Assembly at which they were elected and finishing at the end of the second General Assembly meeting after the one at which they were elected. The Immediate Past President shall be member of the General Assembly for period concurrent with the President.

10. SUPERVISORY AND ADVISORY BOARD

- 10.1 The Supervisory and Advisory Board:
- 10.1(a) Comprises the Regional Presidents, the President (non voting), the Vice President (non voting) and the Treasurer (non voting);
 - 10.1(b) Creates and amends By-laws;
 - 10.1(c) Establishes and restructures regions;
 - 10.1(d) Supervises and monitors the Management Committee; and
 - 10.1(e) Meets at least once every calendar year.

11. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- 11.1 The Management Committee:
- 11.1(a) Comprises the President, Treasurer and two other members elected by the General Assembly;
 - 11.1(b) Is responsible for all matters not specifically allocated under the Constitution to the General Assembly or the Board.

12. DECISIONS

12.1 **General Assembly**

Except as provided for under clause 13, a decision of the General Assembly is only valid if:

- 12.1(a) At least 50% of the Member Organisations of the main organ or committee are present in either person or proxy;
- 12.1(b) At least 50% of the Member Organisations eligible to vote, do so, at either a meeting or through a postal ballot; and
- 12.1(c) More than 50% of the votes support the resolution.

12.2 **Other organs**

A decision of the Board or committee is only valid if:

- 12.2(a) At least 50% of the members of the Board or committee are present in either person or proxy;
- 12.2(b) At least 50% of the members eligible to vote, do so, at either a meeting or through a postal ballot; and
- 12.2(c) More than 50% of the votes support the resolution.

13. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

- 13.1 The Constitution can only be amended by a ballot of the General Assembly provided that:
 - 13.1(a) Notice of any proposed amendment is provided to Member Organisations at least 90 days before the ballot takes place; and
 - 13.1(b) At least 50% of the Member Organisations eligible to vote, do so at either a meeting of the General Assembly or through a postal ballot; and
 - 13.1(c) At least 67% of the votes cast support the amendment.

14. DISSOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL

- 14.1 The Council can only be dissolved by the Member Organisations through the same procedure and vote as required to amend this Constitution. In the event of dissolution, the assets of the Council can be transferred only to an organisation of similar scope and purpose as those of the Council.

15. COMMUNICATION AND MEETINGS

- 15.1 Communication with Member Organisations and between committees may be electronic or any means either written or electronic. Meetings of any organ may be conducted in person or electronically. A postal ballot as referred to above includes a ballot conducted by any electronic means.

16. BY-LAWS

- 16.1 The Board can create and amend By-laws. Where there is a conflict between the Constitution and any By-law the provisions of the Constitution shall prevail.