

BY-LAWS

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHARITIES

Voted by Assembly of Delegates 1985
Modified by Assembly of Delegates 1990 (art. 11c)
Modified by Assembly of Delegates 1996 (art. 5 and art.11)
Modified by Assembly of Delegates 2002 (art 11 d)
Modified by Assembly of Delegates 2005
Modified by Assembly of Delegates 2007 (Art 3)
Modified by Assembly of Delegates 2015 (Art. 5, 9^a, 10, 11, 11^a, 12, 16, 17)
Modified by Assembly of Delegates 2017 (Art. 5, 9^a, 10, 11, 11^a, 12)

PREAMBLE

*"... Associations are not ends in themselves;
they are meant to be of service to the Church's mission in the world".*
(Vatican Council II, Apostolicam Actuositatem, 19)

I - GOALS

(art. 3 of the Constitution)

Art. 1 - In order to define its objectives, AIC shall:

- endeavour to be:
 - an animator of Charity (Council ref.2),
 - attentive to the needs of all persons who suffer, with the intent to discover situations of suffering, to meet them and to call upon Church and Society to concern themselves with them, in a broad spirit of collaboration (Council ref.3)
 - respectful of the dignity of every human person (Counc.ref.4)
- watch, always and everywhere, be an artisan of justice and peace (Council ref 5),
- in a spirit of service, be sensitive to changes of the times.

II - MEANS

Art. 2 - To fulfill these objectives, the task of the AIC shall be:

- to animate national associations, by studying the problems which arise and promoting the social, civic and spiritual formation of their members, taking into account the links these associations may have with the Congregation of the Mission and the Company of the Daughters of Charity (Council ref.6),
- to coordinate their efforts through an exchange of experiences, to encourage meetings at all levels, both national and international,

- to represent them with the Church and temporal bodies,
- to initiate the creation of new associations, promote new initiatives when new forms of poverty are detected (Council ref. 7),
- collaborate especially with official bodies and/or private organizations which pursue the same objectives as well as with diverse apostolic movements.

III - SPIRITUAL ADVISER

Art. 3 - A spiritual adviser shall be named by the President, on the Executive Board advice, and with the approval of the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission. This three-year mandate is renewable once.

IV - MEMBERS

(art. 5, 6 and 7 of the Constitution)

Art. 4 - Admission:

The Assembly of Delegates shall decide, upon proposal of the Executive Board, on the admission of associations, which apply either as full rights members or associate members.

To be admitted to the AIC, an association must present a written request, accompanied by a copy of its statutes, documents verifying that it conforms to the criteria as defined in article 5 of the Constitution and specifying the number of its members.

After examination of the application, the Executive Board shall decide on the advisability of, either:

- presenting the candidature for the vote of the Assembly of Delegates,
- rejecting the candidature.

Art. 5 - Rights and Duties of the Members:

Member associations have the following rights:

- right to participate in meetings of the Assembly of Delegates. Voting rights are limited to full rights members,
- right to participate in meetings and encounters initiated by AIC,
- right to participate in the working groups and/or commissions of the Executive Board to which, by their competence, they can contribute,
- right to AIC documentation and information.

Member associations have the following duties:

- duty to attend meetings of the Assembly of Delegates and those of the working groups and/or commissions of the Executive Board of which they are members,
- duty to inform AIC of their own activities and to communicate during the month following their General Assembly activity report and financial report,
- duty to collaborate effectively in AIC activities in accordance with their qualifications and their specific field of action, in keeping with the options expressed in the AIC Charter adopted at the AIC Assembly of Delegates in Châtillon, in 2017.
- duty to contribute to the AIC budget, particularly through payment of their annual dues determined by the Assembly of Delegates,
- duty to vote, limited to full rights member associations.

V - ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES

(art. 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 19, 20, 21 of the Constitution)

Art. 6 - The ordinary session of the Assembly of Delegates is called by the International President, in agreement with the Executive Board, not less than three months before the date fixed. The draft agenda is included with the Call to Assembly. It must be submitted for approval at the first session of the Assembly of Delegates.

The Secretariat must receive, not less than two months in advance, motions or communications to be submitted to the Assembly.

Their President or a duly mandated person represents full rights members, as well as associate members. Every full rights member association may appoint the following to participate in the Statutory Assembly of Delegates: delegates, observers, experts, the number to be determined each time by the Executive Board. In addition, Spiritual Advisers (male or female) may be appointed.

The Assembly of Delegates shall meet in a place determined by the Executive Board.

Art. 7 - The Executive Board may invite to the Assembly of Delegates:

- qualified persons, as experts,
- representatives of other associations or bodies whose presence is deemed useful for the fulfilment of the objectives of the AIC.

Art. 8 - The Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, successor of Saint Vincent de Paul, and the Superior General of the Company of the Daughters of Charity are invited to the meetings of the Assembly of Delegates in an advisory capacity. This constitutes a pledge of fidelity of AIC to the spirit of its Founder.

A person of their choice may represent them.

Art. 9 - Jurisdiction of the Assembly of Delegates:

Having full power to carry out the objectives of the AIC (Art. 9 of the Constitution), the Assembly of Delegates shall:

- a) determine the main guidelines, fundamental options and the program of activities of the AIC and its working bodies,
- b) undertake all studies and initiatives it considers necessary in the framework of the objectives outlined in the Constitution,
- c) create bodies which are judged to be useful,
- d) vote on draft budgets and determine the amount of annual dues for the member associations (Art. 19 and 20 of the Constitution),
- e) hold elections provided for in the Constitution (art. 12 of the Constitution),
- f) examine and vote on the Activities Report of the Executive Board and the measures taken by it between two Assemblies of Delegates,
- g) examine and vote on the financial report (art. 19 of the Constitution),
- h) decide upon amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws (Capt. IX of the Constitution),
- i) upon proposal of the Executive Board, decide on the admission and the exclusion of member associations (art. 6 of the Constitution).

Article 9a – The use of voting by post or by any other means of electronic communication at the Assembly of Delegates.

1. The Executive Board can decide to authorise the use of voting by post or by any other means of electronic communication on the occasion of an Assembly of Delegates.
2. The vote by post or by any other means of electronic communication is organised under the responsibility of the Delegate responsible for day-to-day management who shall send each of the members the texts and the applications that will be submitted to vote as well as the deadline to respond; this information shall be sent by email with a delivery receipt.
3. The deadline, except in the case of an emergency, cannot be less than 48 hours.
4. Each member must vote individually, the possibility for instruments of proxy is not anticipated.
5. The vote shall be organised without debates, a lack of response within the prescribed deadline shall be considered as valid approval; any comments concerning the basis of the proposal presented shall be considered as a vote against. The voting shall be done by responding directly to the Delegate responsible for day-to-day management with all the people to whom the mailing was sent in copy.

6. Each member of the Board can ask by point of order (by responding to the mailing), 24 hours before the deadline at the latest, that the proposal be deferred until the following meeting for debate.
7. If such a point of order is introduced, the Delegate responsible for day-to-day management shall ask for a separate vote within 24 hours on this motion – a lack of response means the motion shall be rejected. If an absolute majority of the members approve the motion for postponement, the issue shall automatically be put on the agenda for the next Executive Board meeting.

VI - THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

(art. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 of the Constitution)

Art. 10 - Past President

The retiring president acquires the title of “Past President” for a period of three years. The past president assists the President in her task.

Art. 11 - Jurisdiction of the Executive Board

The members of the Executive Board shall assume collective responsibility for the entire AIC and not act as a representative of their respective associations.

The Executive Board shall assume administration of AIC. It shall therefore:

- a) prepare the meetings of the Assembly of Delegates to which it makes suggestions deemed useful for the fulfilment of the objectives of the AIC,
- b) ensure the execution of the decisions taken by the Assembly of Delegates; it may create permanent or temporary working groups or commissions for which it is responsible and determine the tasks and methods of functioning of these working groups or commissions,
- c) see to the proper functioning of the bodies created by AIC, in the framework of its Constitution and By-Laws and coordinate the activities of these bodies,
- d) propose candidatures to the Executive Board,
- e) study requests for admission from the associations. In this regard, it is brought to examine the conditions for admission as a full rights member for associations which are faced with the impossibility of legal constituting themselves as legal entities in their country for political, juridical or religious reasons. In this case, it shall present a formally reasoned proposal to the Assembly of Delegates.
- f) deliberate on the choice of persons to be invited to the Assembly of Delegates, under the conditions provided for in article 7 of these By-Laws,
- g) prepare modifications to the Constitution and By-Laws,
- h) be responsible for the Secretariat and the Treasury General,

- i) report on its mandate and on all its activities at the ordinary meeting of the Assembly of Delegates,
- j) it may appoint a Permanent Committee responsible for work between Board meetings. The International President of the AIC is, ipso facto, President of the Permanent Committee,
- k) in an emergency, take all measures necessary to defend the interests of the AIC.

Article 11a – The use of electronic voting within the Executive Board.

1. The President can decide, between two Executive Board meetings, for texts and documents to be approved by electronic means.
2. Electronic voting is organised under the responsibility of the Delegate responsible for day-to-day management who shall send each of the members the text of the proposal to be adopted as well as the deadline to respond; this information shall be sent by email with a delivery receipt.
3. The deadline, except in the case of an emergency, cannot be less than 48 hours.
4. Each member must vote individually, the possibility for instruments of proxy is not anticipated.
5. The vote shall be organised without debates, a lack of response within the prescribed deadline shall be considered as valid approval; any comments concerning the basis of the proposal presented shall be considered as a vote against. The voting shall be done by responding directly to the Delegate responsible for day-to-day management with all the people to whom the mailing was sent in copy.
6. Each member of the Board can ask by point of order (by responding to the mailing), 24 hours before the deadline at the latest, that the proposal be deferred until the following meeting for debate.
7. If such a point of order is introduced, the Delegate responsible for day-to-day management shall ask for a separate vote within 24 hours on this motion – a lack of response means the motion shall be rejected. If an absolute majority of the members approve the motion for postponement, the issue shall automatically be put on the agenda for the next Executive Board meeting.

Art. 12 - The Executive Board meets in a place determined by the Permanent Committee. The Delegate responsible for day-to-day management is invited to Executive Board meetings, in an advisory capacity.

Art. 13 - The Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and the Mother General of the Company of the Daughters of Charity are invited to meetings of the Executive Board, in an advisory capacity. A person of their choice may represent them.

VII - BUDGETS AND FINANCE
(art. 20 of the Constitution)

Art. 14 - Annual dues of each full rights member, as well as the contribution of associate members shall be in proportion to the size of its membership. The rate is voted by the Assembly of Delegates and applied in accordance with a scale approved by the Assembly of Delegates, upon a proposal of the Executive Board.

Art. 15 - By decision of the Executive Board, given upon request, any full rights member whose financial situation warrants it, may be dispensed from paying all or a portion of its dues, without losing rights to representation and voting rights at the Assembly of Delegates.

Art. 16 - The AIC shall include in its budget funds for the exercise of the office of the Presidency as well as for meetings of the Executive Board and of AIC working groups and/or commissions.

Art. 17 - The Treasurer General shall be assisted in her functions by a Finance working group which she shall preside. Placed under the responsibility of the Executive Board, this working group shall assist in the raising and the management of funds for the functioning of AIC, as well as for specific projects, voted by the Assembly of Delegates.

The Executive Board decides upon the attributions and functioning of this working group and it is subject to a written rule of order.

Art. 18 - Before presentation to the Assembly of Delegates, the financial Report shall be audited by an official Auditor in Belgium.

VIII - AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS

Art. 19 - All proposals for changes to the By-Laws must be submitted in writing to the International Secretariat not less than three months prior to the meeting of the Assembly of Delegates.

Amendments shall be adopted by an absolute majority.

Amendments to the By-Laws take effect immediately following their vote.