

ICFTU

CONSTITUTION

*As amended by the
Seventeenth World Congress (Durban, April 2000)*

&

STANDING ORDERS:

- Congress**
- Executive Board**
- Steering Committee**



**INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION
OF FREE TRADE UNIONS**

Brussels, Belgium

CONSTITUTION

Adopted at the First Congress (London, December 1949):

Amended by the:

Second World Congress (Milan, July 1951)

Third World Congress (Stockholm, July 1953)

Fourth World Congress (Vienna, May 1955)

Fifth World Congress (Tunis, July 1957)

Sixth World Congress (Brussels, December 1959)

Ninth World Congress (Brussels, July 1969)

Tenth World Congress (London, July 1972)

Eleventh World Congress (Mexico City, October 1975)

Twelfth World Congress (Madrid, November 1979)

Thirteenth World Congress (Oslo, June 1983)

Fourteenth World Congress (Melbourne, March 1988)

Fifteenth World Congress (Caracas, March 1992)

Sixteenth World Congress (Brussel, June 1996)

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Seventeenth World Congress (Durban, April 2000)*

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OF FREE TRADE UNIONS**

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INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS

CONSTITUTION

*As amended by the Seventeenth World Congress
(Durban, April 2000)*

PREAMBLE

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions exists to unite the workers organised in the free and democratic trade unions of the world and to afford a means of consultation and collaboration between them in furtherance of the aims here set out.

Believing that freedom of thought, expression and association must be translated into actual conditions affecting the lives of the workers and their relations with their employers, public or private, and with the State, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions proclaims the right of individuals:

to social justice and the opportunity to lead a full and decent life;
to work and choice of employment;
to security of that employment and of the income deriving from it;
to adequate protection of their lives and health in all occupations;
to mutual protection of their interests, through forming and joining trade unions which shall be free bargaining instruments and which derive their authority from their members; and
to democratic means of changing their Government.

The Confederation, proclaiming the right of all peoples to full national freedom and self-government, will support efforts towards creating conditions for the realisation of this right at the earliest possible moment.

The Confederation affirms that universal well-being based on free labour and economic democracy together with social justice and security are foundations on which to build lasting peace, and that the denial or restriction of these rights is an affront to human dignity and a threat to peace.

As an organisation fervently upholding the principles of democracy, it will champion the cause of human freedom, promote equality of opportunity for all people, seek to eliminate everywhere in the world any form of discrimination or subjugation based on race, religion, sex or origin, oppose and combat totalitarianism and aggression in any form. It pledges solidarity with and support to all working people deprived of their rights as workers and human beings by oppressive regimes.

AIMS

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions declares its aims to be:

- a) to maintain and develop a powerful and effective international organisation at worldwide and regional levels, composed of free and democratic trade unions, independent of any external domination and pledged to the task of promoting the interests of working people throughout the world and of enhancing the dignity of labour;
- b) to seek the universal recognition and application of the rights of trade union organisation;
- c) to further the establishment, maintenance and development of free trade unions, particularly in economically under-developed countries;
- d) to weld international trade union solidarity by giving succour to the victims of all kinds of oppression, by giving token assistance to those suffering from the consequences of natural and industrial disasters and by providing support in all other cases where workers should stand shoulder to shoulder;
- e) to undertake and coordinate the defence of the free trade unions against any campaign aiming at their destruction or at the restriction of their rights or at the infiltration and subjugation of labour organisations by totalitarian or other anti-labour forces;
- f) to assist in providing peoples who have been victims of war and subjugation with all practicable means for the speedy rebuilding of their economies and in promoting international measures of aid for them, with full respect for their political and economic independence;
- g) to strive for the establishment of full employment; the elimination of adverse discrimination on grounds of race, sex, nationality or creed; the improvement of working conditions; the introduction, maintenance and extension of social security for all; and the raising of the standard of living of peoples of all countries in the world;
- h) to encourage the development of the resources of all countries in order to further the economic, social and cultural progress of the peoples of the world, and particularly of economically under-developed countries and non-self-governing territories;
- i) to advocate, with a view to raising the general level of prosperity, increased and properly planned economic cooperation among the nations in such a way as will encourage the development of wider economic units and free exchange of commodities and to seek full participation of workers' representatives in official bodies dealing with these questions;

- j) to protect, maintain and expand the system of free labour and to eliminate forced labour everywhere;
- k) to represent the free trade union movement in all international agencies which exist or may be set up to perform functions affecting the social and economic conditions of working people and to further the implementation of their decisions whenever desirable;
- l) to establish and extend association with international organisations, both governmental and non-governmental, in work which will further the aims of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in protecting and advancing the interests of the peoples generally and guaranteeing human rights;
- m) to support the establishment of a world system of collective security, but pending its attainment to further and support within the Charter of the United Nations all measures that are necessary for assuring the defence of world democracy and the freedom of nations against any totalitarian or imperialist aggression;
- n) to ensure the integration of women into trade union organisations and actively to promote gender parity in activities and decision-making bodies at all levels;
- o) to carry out a programme of trade union and workers' education as a necessary adjunct to the Confederation's organisational activities in those countries where trade unions do not yet exist or are still weak and also as a means of promoting better understanding of the tasks of the free trade union movement everywhere;
- p) to engage in and foster publicity work which will increase the knowledge and understanding of national and international problems confronting the workers, so as to enable them to make their struggle more efficacious and so as to realise the widest support for the Confederation's activities;
- q) to maintain and develop an international clearing-house of information and research on the problems of trade union organisation, wages and working conditions, labour legislation, collective bargaining and any other matter related to the implementation of the Confederation's aims.

MEMBERSHIP

Article I

- a) All bona fide national trade union centres accepting the aims and Constitution of the Confederation shall be eligible for membership.
- b) Individual bona fide trade union organisations which accept the aims and Constitution of the Confederation may be admitted into affiliation provided that

the Executive Board, following consultation with the affiliated national centre or national centres of the country concerned, is satisfied that such affiliation is desirable. The decision to accept such applications shall in every case require a three-quarters majority of the Executive Board members present.

- c) The autonomy of affiliated organisations is guaranteed.
- d) Continued membership shall be conditional upon fulfilment of the obligations laid down in the Constitution.
- e) The Executive Board shall have the power to decide on applications for affiliation, subject to the provisions of paragraphs (a) and (b) above, and shall report its decision to the Congress for ratification. The Executive Board shall satisfy itself as to the bona fide character of an applicant organisation, which shall supply such evidence about its character as may be required by the Executive Board.
- f) From the date of admission by the Executive Board, the organisation concerned shall enjoy the privileges and accept the responsibilities of an affiliated organisation.
- g) An organisation shall have the right to withdraw from the Confederation subject to giving three months' notice.
- h) In order for a notice of withdrawal to be valid the organisation should not be in arrears at the time of submitting the notice. An organisation which ceases affiliation with arrears owing to the Confederation becomes liable, in the event of its subsequently applying for reaffiliation, to the payment of an entrance fee of an amount to be fixed by the Executive Board.
- i) The Executive Board shall have the right to suspend, and the Congress shall have the right to expel, after charges have been preferred, a member organisation for action deemed by those bodies to be in contravention of this Constitution, or against the interests of world labour. Provision shall be made for a hearing of charges before a decision is rendered. The procedure for such hearings shall be laid down by the Executive Board.
- j) The Executive Board shall also have the right to keep in abeyance the rights and privileges of an organisation as an affiliate of the Confederation as long as the Executive Board deems it necessary.
- k) It shall be the responsibility of each organisation:
 - i) to keep its constituent bodies fully informed of the work and progress of the Confederation.
 - ii) to keep the Confederation informed of major developments within its own country.
 - iii) to advise the Confederation regularly of the dates of its Congress, the decisions reached there and the composition of its Executive Committee.

CONGRESS

Article II

- a) In the determination of the programme and policy of the organisation and in the interpretation of this Constitution, the supreme authority shall be the Congress.
- b) The regular Congress shall be convened at least once every four years. Its date and place shall be fixed by the Executive Board on the basis of proposals made by affiliated organisations, and shall be communicated to affiliated organisations not later than twelve months prior to the Congress.
- c) The Congress shall consider and decide upon:
 - i) reports on activities of the Confederation, including financial reports;
 - ii) general questions of interest to working people which call for policy to be formulated to guide the Confederation and affiliated organisations;
 - iii) proposals for the activity of the Confederation during the period to follow;
 - iv) proposals for the amendment of the Constitution;
 - v) any other proposal submitted by affiliated organisations;
 - vi) nominations for the election of the Executive Board, the General Secretary and the Auditors;
 - vii) reports on the activities of the regional organisations set up by the Confederation.

Article III: Special Sessions

- a) A special Congress shall be called on the authority of the Executive Board or if one-third of affiliated organisations representing 25% of the Confederation's membership apply for it.
- b) In such a case the Executive Board shall decide the procedure for establishing the agenda and for the consideration of proposals from affiliated organisations, whenever it is not practical to apply the normal procedure as laid down in this Constitution.

Article IV: Representation

- a) The Congress is composed of delegates of the affiliated organisations, subject to the provisions of Article XXI(a), on the following basis:
 - i) representation of national trade union centres:

Up to	100,000	members		1 delegate	
Between	100,001	and	250,000	members	2 delegates
Between	250,001	and	500,000	members	4 delegates
Between	500,001	and	2,000,000	members	6 delegates

Between	2,000,001	and	5,000,000	members	8 delegates
Between	5,000,001	and	7,500,000	members	12 delegates
Between	7,500,001	and	10,000,000	members	15 delegates
Over	10,000,000	members			20 delegates

ii) representation of individual trade unions:

Up to	100,000	members			1 delegate
Between	100,001	and	250,000	members	2 delegates
Over	250,000	members			4 delegates

iii) affiliated organisations shall select their delegates taking into account the ICFTU's declared aim to actively promote gender parity. Women shall constitute half of the delegations of organisations having 2 or more delegates. Any organisation which has 100,000 members or less should designate a woman delegate, if women represent 50% or more of its membership.

Delegates shall have the right to speak and to vote.

b) A delegate may represent several affiliated organisations from one country provided he or she is duly accredited by those organisations. The delegate shall have the right to one vote if the aggregate number of members so represented is 100,000 or less, and two votes if the aggregate number of members so represented is more than 100,000.

c) The International Trade Secretariats, associated with the Confederation in accordance with Article XXIII of this Constitution, are entitled to send representatives having the right to take part in the debates but not to vote, on the following basis:

Up to	1,000,000	members			1 representative
Between	1,000,001	and	2,000,000	members	2 representatives
Between	2,000,001	and	4,000,000	members	3 representatives
Over	4,000,000	members			4 representatives

d) Delegations of the affiliated organisations and International Trade Secretariats may be accompanied by up to four advisers, who may take the floor on behalf of their delegations and with the agreement of the Chairperson but may not vote. Delegations may also be accompanied by not more than two persons who may act as secretaries or interpreters. These persons will have neither the right to speak nor the right to vote.

e) Observers from organisations, either governmental or non-governmental, with which the Confederation maintains friendly relations, may be invited by the Executive Board to attend the Congress. They will be allowed to speak at the invitation of the President.

- f) Guests invited to attend the Congress by the Executive Board will be permitted to address the Congress at the invitation of the President.
- g) Members of the Executive Board who are not members of an accredited delegation shall have the right to attend the Congress as observers and take part in the debates, but shall not have the right to vote.
- h) The expenses of delegations and observers attending the Congress shall be borne by their respective organisations.

Article V: Credentials and Nominations

- a) Affiliated organisations must submit the names of their representatives to the General Secretary not later than three months prior to the Congress.
- b) By the same time limit they shall submit their nominations for:
 - i) the Credentials Committee;
 - ii) the Standing Orders Committee;
 - iii) the General Secretary;
 - iv) the Auditors.

Article VI: Agenda

- a) The agenda of the Congress shall be prepared by the Executive Board following consultations with affiliated organisations. It shall include items as stipulated in Article II(c) of this Constitution.
- b) The General Secretary shall communicate to affiliated organisations the agenda not later than six months prior to the Congress, and invite them to send in proposals related to various items of the Agenda. These proposals shall be so forwarded as will reach the General Secretary not later than three months prior to the Congress.
- c) The proposals received shall, prior to their submission to the Congress, be reviewed by the Executive Board, which may direct the General Secretary to circulate any or all of them to affiliated organisations in advance to enable amendments thereto to be forwarded. In this event the Executive Board shall fix the time limit for submission of the amendments.
- d) The Executive Board shall have the power to make recommendations in regard to proposals and amendments. The Executive Board shall be also empowered to submit proposals directly to the Congress, either on general questions or on matters of emergency which have arisen during or immediately prior to the Congress.
- e) All proposals or draft resolutions submitted by affiliated organisations after the time limit fixed in paragraph (b) shall be referred to the Executive Board. The

Executive Board may decide to submit them to the Congress as in paragraph (d) above, but its decision will be final.

Article VII: Standing Committees

- a) On the basis of the nominations received from affiliated organisations and applying the principle of gender balance, the Executive Board or its Steering committee shall appoint the members of:
 - i) the Credentials Committee of five members,
 - ii) the Standing Orders Committee of thirteen members.
- b) These two Committees shall be convened immediately prior to the Congress and shall submit their first reports to the first working session of the Congress. In considering these reports the Congress shall also be requested to ratify the composition of the Committees.
- c) The Credentials Committee shall:
 - i) prepare a list of persons attending the Congress;
 - ii) report to the Congress on the composition of delegations and on their voting power;
 - iii) consider any objections to the credentials of delegates;
 - iv) examine the eligibility of nominees for the Executive Board, the General Secretary and the Auditors and report to the Congress thereon;
 - v) attempt to effect agreement among the organisations of the areas concerned in cases where there are more nominations than seats allocated for those areas on the Executive Board and report to the Congress thereon.
- d) The Standing Orders Committee shall:
 - i) consider the draft Standing Orders and report on them to the Congress;
 - ii) fix the time-table and order of business for the Congress;
 - iii) make proposals relating to the setting-up, size, terms of reference and agenda of special Congress Committees;
 - iv) consider amendments to the Constitution and report on them to the Congress;
 - v) report to the Congress on any other questions requiring a decision for the proper conduct of its business;
 - vi) consider requests for the circulation to the Congress of literature or printed matter other than official Congress documents.

Article VIII: Special Committees

- a) The Congress, on the recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee, may decide to set up Special Committees, fix their terms of reference, size and agen-

da and elect their members.

- b) The Committees shall carry out their tasks in conformity with the provisions of the Constitution and the relevant provisions of the Congress Standing Orders.

Article IX: Officers

- a) The Officers of the Congress shall be the President, the Vice-Presidents and the General Secretary of the Confederation.
- b) The President of the Confederation shall chair the Congress. In carrying out his or her duties the person concerned shall adhere to this Constitution and the Congress Standing Orders.
- c) In the absence of the President during a sitting or any part thereof, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Confederation shall preside.

Article X: Secretariat

- a) The General Secretary of the Confederation shall be the Secretary-General of the Congress.
- b) The General Secretary shall appoint the members of the Secretariat to act on his or her behalf and such staff members as are necessary for the proper conduct of the Congress.

Article XI: Voting

- a) The endeavour of the Congress shall be to secure the widest possible measure of agreement rather than the carrying out of simple majorities. When a vote is called for, however, the decision of the Congress shall be by majority, except in the case of proposals for the amendment of the Constitution, the expulsion of an organisation or the suspension of Standing Orders, which must secure two-thirds of the votes cast.
- b) Voting shall, as a rule, be by show of hands, but at the request of any two or more delegations representing at least 25% of the Congress membership, a roll-call vote shall be taken, in which each delegation shall cast its vote as a unit on the basis of the membership it represents.

Article XII: Implementation of Decisions

After each Congress the General Secretary shall communicate the decisions to affiliated organisations and take the necessary action on them. The General Secretary shall report to the Executive Board on the action taken.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Article XIII: Composition

- a) There shall be elected by the Congress an Executive Board having fifty-three members, of whom forty-seven shall be nominated by the respective areas as follows:

Africa	6
Asia	8
Oceania	2
Western Asia	1
Middle East	2
Europe	15
Latin America	6
North America	6
West Indies	1

Furthermore, the Congress shall elect five members at large nominated by the Women's Committee established in conformity with Article XVIII(b) of this Constitution.

The Congress shall also elect one member representing young workers, to be nominated by the ICFTU Youth Committee.

- b) All affiliated organisations represented at the Congress shall have the right to participate in the arrangements for considering nominations for membership of the Executive Board from their particular area. A classification of affiliated organisations by area for the purpose of the election shall be made by the Executive Board.
- c) The Executive Board shall determine the procedure for proposals to be received and considered by the Women's Committee for the nomination of candidates for the five members to be elected at large.
- d) The Congress shall elect a first and second substitute for each member of the Executive Board on the basis set out above.
- e) The members of the Executive Board and their substitutes shall be regarded as representing the Confederation as a whole and not any particular geographical division thereof nor the Women's Committee. Each member shall have one vote.
- f) No person shall be entitled to serve on the Executive Board whose organisation has ceased affiliation with the Confederation or which, without valid reason approved by the Executive Board, is in arrears with payment of affiliation fees,

or who has ceased to be an accredited representative of the affiliated organisation to which he or she belonged at the time of election.

- g) Representation of International Trade Secretariats shall be in accordance with arrangements made under Article XXIII.
- h) The mandate of the members and their substitutes shall expire at each regular Congress, but they are immediately re-eligible.
- i) In the event of the Congress leaving a vacancy on the Executive Board, the Congress shall be deemed to have delegated the power of election to the Executive Board, full freedom as to the manner of nomination being left with the area concerned or the Women's Committee as the case may be.
- j) Vacancies on the Executive Board arising in between two Congresses among members or substitutes from different areas shall be filled as follows:
 - i) in the event of a vacancy arising owing to the decease or the resignation of a member or substitute, full freedom as to the manner of replacing the person concerned will be left to the organisation to which he or she belonged, subject to ratification by the Executive Board;
 - ii) in the event of a vacancy arising owing to the fact that a member or substitute has ceased to be an accredited representative of the organisation to which he or she belonged at the time of election, his or her place will be taken by a person nominated by the organisation concerned, subject to ratification by the Executive Board;
 - iii) in the event of a vacancy arising owing to the fact that the organisation to which a member or a substitute belonged at the time of his or her election has ceased affiliation with the Confederation, or is, without valid reason approved by the Executive Board, in arrears with payment of more than one quarter's affiliation fees, full freedom as to the manner of replacing the member or substitute will be left to the area concerned, subject to ratification by the Executive Board.
- k) In case a vacancy arises among members elected at large or their substitutes in between two Congresses, it shall be filled by the person nominated by the Women's Committee, subject to ratification by the Executive Board.
- l) The provisions of paragraphs (e), (f) and (j) shall apply also to the members and substitute members of the Executive Board nominated by the Women's Committee.

Article XIV: Meetings

- a) The Executive Board shall meet not less than once a year. The date of the meeting shall be notified to affiliated organisations at the same time as to the members.

- b) In the event of a member being unable to attend a meeting of the Executive Board, the member shall inform the secretariat in due time. In a case when the first substitute is from the same organisation as the member, the latter shall invite the first substitute in his or her place. If the first substitute is from a different organisation from the member, the secretariat shall invite the first substitute. Should the first substitute also be prevented from attending, the same procedure shall be followed regarding the second substitute.
- c) The expenses of Executive Board members in the performance of their duties in the Confederation shall be met by the Confederation up to an amount fixed by the Executive Board.
- d) For the proper conduct of its meetings, the Executive Board shall adopt its own Standing Orders, without prejudice to the obligations arising from this Constitution.

Article XV: Competence

- a) The Executive Board shall have the authority to act on behalf of the Confederation. It shall be responsible for directing the activities of the Confederation and giving effect to the decisions and recommendations of the Congress.
- b) The Executive Board shall establish the annual budget and adopt the annual financial report of the Confederation.
- c) The Executive Board shall carry out the duties entrusted to it by this Constitution under Articles I to IV, VI, VII, XIII, XVI to XXII, XXV to XXVIII.

Article XVI: Agenda

- a) The agenda for the Executive Board meeting shall be prepared by the General Secretary and circulated with appropriate documents to reach members of the Board not less than two weeks in advance of the meeting.
- b) Any affiliated organisation has the right to submit suggestions for the agenda of the Executive Board, which shall decide if and when discussion of the item is appropriate. Such suggestions must be received in writing by the General Secretary not less than one month prior to the date of the Executive Board meeting.

Article XVII: Steering Committee

- a) At its meeting immediately following the Congress the Executive Board shall elect a Steering Committee composed of the President, the General Secretary and up to seventeen members of the Board.

- b) For each member of the Steering Committee the Executive Board shall elect a first and second substitute.
- c) The Steering Committee will elect its own Chairperson.
- d) The Steering Committee shall have the authority to deal with questions of urgency or importance that arise between meetings of the Executive Board, in addition to other matters which may be referred to it by the Executive Board. It shall meet not less than twice a year.
- e) The expenses of members in connection with meetings of the Steering Committee shall be borne by the Confederation up to an amount to be fixed by the Executive Board.
- f) For the proper conduct of its meetings the Steering Committee shall adopt its own Standing Orders.

Article XVIII: Special Committees

- a) The Executive Board may elect committees from among its members and decide upon their terms of reference.
- b) The Executive Board may in addition establish a Women's Committee and decide upon its composition and terms of reference.

REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Article XIX

- a) Regional organisations shall be established as organic parts of the Confederation for such areas as may be determined by the Executive Board.
- b) Only organisations affiliated with the Confederation shall be eligible for membership in a regional organisation.
- c) It shall be the task of the regional organisations to deal with problems affecting the workers and the trade unions in their respective areas and to further the aims and objects of the Confederation as set out in this Constitution.
- d) The relationships between the Confederation and the several regional organisations shall be determined by the Executive Board in accordance with decisions of the Congress.
- e) The regional organisations shall be governed by rules which shall be subject to approval by the Executive Board.
- f) The regional organisations shall have their own finance. They shall have the power to fix and collect affiliation fees from their affiliated organisations. They shall submit their annual budgets and accounts to the Confederation for approval by the Executive Board.

- g) The regional organisations shall be answerable for their actions to the Confederation, and shall submit annual reports on their activities to the Executive Board. All questions involving modifications in the general policy of the Confederation shall be referred to the Executive Board.

FINANCE

Article XX

- a) The activities of the Confederation shall be financed out of income deriving from:
- i) regular affiliation fees;
 - ii) special levies;
 - iii) voluntary contributions.
- b) Annual affiliation fees payable by affiliated organisations calculated for each thousand members or part thereof, shall be as follows:

For the year	2001	Euro	161.80
For the year	2002	Euro	165.05
For the year	2003	Euro	168.35
For the year	2004	Euro	171.70

These fees shall be payable in Euro or the equivalent in other currencies.

- c) The Congress may decide to empower the Executive Board to impose levies on affiliated organisations. In so doing the Executive Board shall also decide the nature, duration and purpose of such levies.
- d) The Congress or the Executive Board may decide to organise fund-raising campaigns based on voluntary contributions towards a well defined programme. Funds thus collected shall not be used for other purposes, unless the contributors so agree.

Article XXI

- a) Affiliation fees shall be paid quarterly in advance, on 1 January, 1 April, 1 July and 1 October of each year. Any organisation owing two but fewer than four quarters' affiliation fees shall be allowed to be represented at the Congress but without voting rights. Organisations owing four but fewer than eight quarters' affiliation fees shall not be permitted to be represented at the Congress. Organisations owing eight or more quarters' affiliation fees shall be regarded as having withdrawn.
- b) The Executive Board shall have the authority to fix different rates for those affiliated organisations where general economic and social or political condi-

tions do not permit them to pay at the full rate. These arrangements shall be reviewed from time to time. The Executive Board shall moreover be empowered to exempt, in exceptional circumstances, an affiliated organisation from paying affiliation fees for as long as such circumstances exist, its rights and privileges as an affiliated organisation thereby not being affected. Any action taken in this connection shall be included in the report on activities submitted to the Congress for endorsement.

- c) Affiliation fees shall not be receivable from affiliated organisations in respect of which the Executive Board has taken action provided under Article I(i) and Article I(j).

Article XXII

- a) The Congress shall elect three auditors, who shall hold an annual audit of the accounts of the Confederation. Members of the Executive Board shall not be eligible as auditors. The auditors shall submit their report to the Executive Board and to the Congress and, after endorsement by one of these bodies, the report shall be circulated to affiliated organisations.
- b) In the event of the office of one of the auditors becoming vacant between two Congresses, the Executive Board shall have the authority to fill the vacancy.
- c) The expenses of the auditors in the performance of their duties in the Confederation shall be borne by the Confederation up to an amount determined by the Executive Board.

CO-OPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL TRADE SECRETARIATS

Article XXIII

Agreements shall be made for the most effective cooperation between the Confederation and the International Trade Secretariats in the performance of their functions.

HEADQUARTERS

Article XXIV

The headquarters of the Confederation shall be determined by the Congress.

PRESIDENT

Article XXV

- a) The Executive Board shall, immediately following its election by the Congress, elect a President.

- b) The President shall chair all meetings of the Executive Board and the Congress and shall have the right to attend all other meetings of the Confederation.
- c) The President shall have full voting rights at meetings of the governing bodies of the Confederation.

VICE-PRESIDENTS

Article XXVI

At the same meeting at which it elects the President, the Executive Board shall elect at least seven of its members as Vice-Presidents.

GENERAL SECRETARY

Article XXVII

- a) The General Secretary shall be elected by the Congress from nominations received from affiliated organisations and shall be eligible for re-election at each Congress.
- b) The General Secretary shall, ex officio, be a member of the Executive Board with the right to vote.
- c) The General Secretary shall be responsible to the Executive Board for:
 - the administration of the Confederation;
 - maintaining contacts with the affiliated organisations;
 - collecting material for the subjects which are to be discussed by the committees of the Confederation; and
 - the issue of such publications of a regular or special character as may be determined by the Confederation.
- d) It shall be the responsibility of the General Secretary of the Confederation to notify all affiliated organisations of the decisions taken at Congresses and Executive Board meetings within one month of the termination of the meeting in question.
- e) The General Secretary shall remain in office as long as his or her conduct of affairs is deemed by the Executive Board or the Congress to be satisfactory.
- f) In the event of the office of the General Secretary becoming vacant between two Congresses, the Executive Board shall appoint an acting General Secretary for the remaining period until the next Congress.

ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARIES

Article XXVIII

- a) Assistant General Secretaries shall be appointed, and their duties defined, by the Executive Board.
- b) The Assistant General Secretaries shall remain in office for as long as their conduct of affairs is deemed by the Executive Board to be satisfactory.

AUTHORITATIVE TEXT

Article XXIX

In the case of a conflict in meaning between different language versions of the text of the Constitution, the English text shall prevail.

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CONGRESS STANDING ORDERS

*As amended by the Seventeenth World Congress
(Durban, April 2000)*

Article I: General

- a) The present Standing Orders shall supplement the provisions relating to the Congress contained in the Constitution (Articles II-XII).

Article II: Plenary Sitzings

- a) The plenary sittings of the Congress shall be public except when the Congress expressly decides to go into private session.
- b) Seats in the Congress hall shall be assigned by the Secretary- General.

Article III: Opening of the Congress

- a) The Congress shall be opened by the President.
- b) Immediately after the opening the Congress shall proceed with the following business:
 - i) Addresses of Welcome;
 - ii) President's Address;
 - iii) Consideration of the First Report of the Credentials Committee;
 - iv) Ratification of the composition of the Credentials Committee;
 - v) Consideration of the First Report of the Standing Orders Committee;
 - vi) Ratification of the composition of the Standing Orders Committee.

Article IV: Objections to Credentials

- a) Objections raised to the seating of any delegate shall be submitted to the Secretary-General not later than 24 hours after the opening of the Congress, or 12 hours after the seating of that delegate has been made public.
- b) The Secretary-General shall submit these objections to the Credentials Committee, together with any relevant information.
- c) The Credentials Committee shall report to the Congress as soon as possible. Pending final decision by the Congress on his or her admission, any delegate whose credentials are being challenged shall enjoy full rights as a delegate.
- d) Any delegation that is unable to comply with the Constitutional provision IV(a)(iii) related to gender parity must provide an explanation to the credentials committee.

Article V: Committees

- a) The sessions of the Credentials Committee, the Standing Orders Committee and the Special Committees shall be private.
- b) The only persons authorised to attend the meeting of these Committees shall be:
 - i) delegates duly appointed by the Congress to serve on such Committees;
 - ii) delegates appointed as substitutes to any such delegates and designated in writing to the Congress; such substitutes shall have the right to take part in the debates and to vote only in the absence of the regular members for whom they duly act as substitutes;
 - iii) advisers designated in writing to the Chairperson of the Congress by delegates; such advisers may take part in the debates with the permission of the Chairperson of the Committee but shall not have the right to vote;
 - iv) a secretary or interpreter designated in writing to the Chairperson of the Congress by a delegate serving on the Committee; such a person shall not have the right to take part in the debates or to vote;
 - v) staff members appointed by the Secretary-General;
 - vi) representatives of the International Trade Secretariats, who may attend meetings of Special Committees as observers; such persons shall have the right to take part in the debates but not to vote.
- c) If a Committee is discussing a resolution moved by an organisation which is not represented on that Committee, it may invite a delegate from that organisation to attend the Committee meeting for the duration of the discussion of the resolution.
- d) The Standing and Special Congress Committees shall elect their own Chairperson and Rapporteur.
- e) The Secretary-General shall appoint the Secretary of each Committee.
- f) Voting in Committees shall be by show of hands.

Article VI: Languages

- a) The official languages of the Congress shall be English, French, German and Spanish.
- b) The Congress may decide to adopt other working languages.
- c) Any delegate wishing to speak in any other language must provide a translation into one of the official languages.

Article VII: Right to address the Congress

- a) Applications to speak shall be handed to the Chairperson in writing except on a point of order or procedure. The speakers shall be called upon in the order in which they signified their desire to speak.
- b) A delegate shall speak only once on any subject unless otherwise agreed by the Congress, except, however, that the rapporteur of any Committee shall have the right of reply at the close of the debate. The mover of a motion, resolution or amendment (except on a point of order or procedure) shall have the same right.
- c) The Secretary-General shall at all times have the right to speak on any subject.
- d) Observers shall be allowed to address the Congress with the permission of the Chairperson.
- e) Guests invited to attend the Congress by the Executive Board of the Confederation shall be permitted to address the Congress at the request of the Chairperson.
- f) If a motion of closure has been made, the Chairperson shall read to the Congress the names of the delegates who have notified him or her of their desire to speak.
- g) Should the Chairperson consider that there is no real difference of opinion among the delegates, he or she shall have the power to close the debate and if so required proceed to the taking of a vote.
- h) The Chairperson may require speakers to resume their seat if their remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.
- i) Unless otherwise agreed by the Congress, no speech shall exceed ten minutes exclusive of the time for interpretation, except that delegates appointed to introduce agenda items, and rapporteurs when presenting a report, shall be allowed a time limit of twenty minutes.

Article VIII: Motions, resolutions, amendments

- a) Motions, resolutions and amendments submitted through the procedure set out in Article VI of the Constitution shall be circulated in the four official languages. They shall be deemed to have been duly moved and seconded.
- b) Motions and resolutions on matters of urgency may be submitted directly to the Congress by affiliated organisations or by their delegations. Such motions (other than those on a point of order or on procedure) and resolutions shall be submitted in writing in one of the official languages to the Secretary-General and, in the first instance, be referred to the Standing Orders Committee of the Congress.

- c) No motion or resolution submitted under paragraph (b) above shall be discussed by the Congress unless it has been seconded and circulated in the four official languages. The same shall apply also to amendments.
- d) Amendments may be submitted to the Congress during a sitting for immediate discussion. Such amendments shall be submitted in writing in one of the official languages.
- e) If there are several amendments to a motion or resolution the Chairperson shall determine the order in which they shall be discussed and put to a vote.
- f) Any amendment may be withdrawn by the delegate who moved it unless an amendment to it is under consideration or has been adopted. Any amendment so withdrawn may be moved without previous notice by any other delegate.
- g) A delegate may not submit a motion, resolution or amendment (except on a point of order or on procedure) in a personal capacity, but only on behalf of a delegation.
- h) Motions of procedure may be moved verbally and without previous notice.
- i) Motions of procedure include the following:
 - i) motion to refer the matter back;
 - ii) motion to postpone consideration of the question;
 - iii) motion to adjourn the sitting;
 - iv) motion to adjourn the debate on a particular question;
 - v) motion to vote on the subject under discussion;
 - vi) motion that the Congress proceed with the next item on the agenda;
 - vii) motion to suspend Standing Orders.
- j) A motion on procedure shall be put immediately to the vote. The Chairperson may allow one delegate to speak in favour of it and one against it.
- k) No motion, resolution or amendment shall be declared carried if an equal number of votes is cast for and against it.
- l) Any delegate at any time may draw attention to the fact that the Standing Orders or the Constitution of the Confederation are not being observed, and the Chairperson shall give an immediate ruling on any question so raised.
- m) A motion challenging the Chairperson's ruling on any matter shall be put immediately to the vote and one delegate shall be allowed to speak in favour of such a motion and one other to speak against it.

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EXECUTIVE BOARD STANDING ORDERS

*According to the Constitution revised by the 15th World Congress
Caracas, 17-24 March 1992*

Article I: General

The present Standing Orders shall supplement the provisions relating to the Executive Board in the Constitution (Articles XIII - XVI).

Article II: Sessions of the Executive Board

- (a) As a general rule Executive Board meetings shall be held once during the summer and once towards the end of the year, provided that on the occasion of the ICFTU Congress a meeting of the Executive Board shall be arranged immediately to precede the Congress. At each meeting the Executive Board will decide on the date of the following meeting. Should it become necessary in the interval between meetings to alter the date decided on, the President and the General Secretary will make the necessary alterations.
- (b) The President may summon a special meeting should he/she deem it necessary to do so, and will be bound to summon a special meeting on receipt of a written request to that effect signed by at least seven members of the Executive Board.
- (c) The sessions of the Executive Board shall be held at the headquarters of the Confederation or elsewhere in the locality, unless the Executive Board shall otherwise expressly determine.

Article III: Admission to Meetings

- (a) Substitutes of the Executive Board who have not been called upon to replace a regular member as provided for in Article XIV, paragraph (b) of the Constitution, may attend the meetings of the Executive Board without the right to speak or vote, but their expenses will not be met by the Confederation.
- (b) In exceptional circumstances, if a titular member and his/her two elected substitutes are unable to attend a complete session, the Executive Board may authorise a personal substitute to attend on behalf of an elected member, but only if all concerned belong to the same organisation and if a written request for representation is made by that organisation. Such a personal substitute shall only be admitted to the particular session for which the request is made.
- (c) As a general rule the sittings are private. Nevertheless, the President may authorise representatives of affiliated organisations and other visitors to attend

and also, at the General Secretary's request, members of the staff of the Confederation.

- (d) The members of the staff who form the Secretariat of the Executive Board under the responsibility of the General Secretary shall be present at the sittings.
- (e) The President may authorise technical advisers to be present at the sittings during the discussions on points of the agenda where their special advice may be required.
- (f) The Assistant General Secretaries may participate in the meetings of the Executive Board in a consultative capacity.
- (g) Representatives of International Trade Secretariats may attend in a consultative capacity in accordance with arrangements made under Article XXIII of the Constitution.

Article IV: Agenda

Matters of urgent importance may be added to the agenda fixed in accordance with Article XVI of the Constitution.

Article V: President and Vice-Presidents

- (a) The President shall declare the opening and the closure of each sitting. Before proceeding with the agenda he/she shall bring before the Executive Board any communication which may concern it. He/she shall direct the debates, maintain order, ensure observance of the Standing Orders, put questions to the vote and announce the result of the vote.
- (b) In the absence of the President, the Executive Board shall appoint one of the Vice-Presidents to act in his/her stead.
- (c) The President may be invested with such functions as the Executive Board may deem proper to delegate to him/her for the joint signature or the visa of certain documents, for preliminary approval of enquiries or for the despatch of official representatives of the Confederation to meetings, conferences or congresses.

Article VI: Technical Committees

- (a) The Executive Board may elect from among its members Technical Committees.
- (b) Each Technical Committee shall comprise at least three members and the General Secretary or his/her representatives.

- (c) As a rule Technical Committees shall meet only on the occasion of the sessions of the Executive Board to which they shall report on the items of the agenda with which they are concerned.
- (d) The General Secretary may consult the members of a Technical Committee by correspondence.
- (e) Members of the staff, specialised in matters before a Technical Committee, may be appointed as consultants.
- (f) The meetings of the Technical Committees shall be fixed by the General Secretary after consultation with the President.

Article VII: Special Committees

- (a) The Executive Board may elect from among its members any Special Committee, decide its composition and terms of reference.
- (b) Paragraphs (d), (e) and (f) of Article VI shall also apply to Special Committees.

Article VIII: Right to Vote and Methods of Voting

- (a) None other than titular members, or elected substitute members attending in place of an absent titular member, shall have the right to vote in the Executive Board or its Committees.
- (b) As a rule, voting will be by show of hands.
- (c) A ballot vote shall be required for the election of the President and the Vice-Presidents and in any other case where it is demanded by six of the members present.
- (d) The President shall endeavour to secure the widest possible measure of agreement rather than carry decisions by simple majorities. When a vote is called for, however, decisions shall be by simple majority, except that decisions to accept applications for affiliation by individual bona fide trade union organisations shall require a three-quarters majority of the Executive Board members present.
- (e) No vote is valid unless at least two-thirds of the members are present at the sitting.

Article IX: Resolutions, Amendments and Motions

- (a) Any member of the Executive Board or any substitute occupying the seat of a member may move resolutions, amendments or motions in accordance with the rules which follow.

- (b) The text of any resolution, amendment or motion shall be submitted in writing to the President. This text will, whenever possible, be distributed before being put to the vote. Distribution will be compulsory if six members of the Executive Board so request.
- (c) If there are several amendments to a motion or resolution, the President will determine the order in which they are discussed and put to the vote, subject to the following provisions:
 - (i) every motion, resolution and amendment shall be put to the vote;
 - (ii) amendments may be voted on either individually or against other amendments, according to the ruling of the President.
 - (iii) if the motion or resolution is amended as the result of a vote, that motion or resolution as amended shall be put to the meeting for a final vote.
- (d) A member may withdraw an amendment which he/she has moved, unless an amendment to it is under discussion or has been adopted.
- (e) In the case of motions as to procedure, no notice in writing need be handed to the President or be distributed. Motions as to procedure include the following:
 - a motion to refer a matter back;
 - a motion to postpone consideration of a question;
 - a motion to adjourn the sitting;
 - a motion to adjourn a debate on a particular question or incident;
 - a motion that the Executive Board proceed with another item on the agenda of the sitting.
- (f) No resolution, motion or amendment shall be discussed unless it has been seconded.

Article X: Reports, Minutes and Communiqués

- (a) A verbatim record of the sittings of the Executive Board shall be kept. This shall not be published or distributed.
- (b) The General Secretary shall keep the minutes of the meetings. They shall not be published. At the commencement of each meeting, the minutes of the previous meeting shall be confirmed.
- (c) Documents prepared by the General Secretary and dealing with the items on the agenda of the Executive Board shall be circulated to members of the Executive Board before the beginning of each session. They shall not be made public until the question with which they deal has been discussed by the Executive Board. After each meeting the General Secretary shall classify the documents into three categories:

A. CONFIDENTIAL:

Not for distribution or publication.

B. FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

Not for publication (can be issued to interested persons or organisations).

C. FOR PUBLICATION.

- (d) The General Secretary shall be entitled to issue to the Press, in addition to the documents classified “for publication”, suitable information before, during and after the meeting of the Executive Board. The Official Bulletin of the Confederation shall publish an account.
- (e) Decisions of the Executive Board which call for specific action by any or all affiliated organisations shall be communicated to those organisations with the request that the General Secretary be notified of the measures taken to apply these decisions. The General Secretary shall report to the Executive Board on the action taken.

STEERING COMMITTEE STANDING ORDERS

(Adopted by the Steering Committee, Geneva, June 1992)

Article I: Membership

- (a) Unless the Executive Board determines otherwise, the Steering Committee elected by the Executive Board immediately after an ordinary Congress in accordance with Article XVII of the Constitution shall maintain the same composition until the next ordinary Congress except for the filling of such vacancies as may arise in between.
- (b) No person who has ceased to be a member of the Executive Board shall remain a member of the Steering Committee.
- (c) Unless the Executive Board determines otherwise, the vacancy that arises on account of a member having ceased to be an Executive Board member shall be filled by the person who replaces him/her on the Executive Board.

Article II: Sessions

- (a) As a general rule the Steering Committee shall meet at least twice each year.
- (b) The Committee shall elect from amongst its members a Chairperson who presides over its meetings. In case he/she is absent for the whole or part of its sitting, the Committee shall each time designate a member to take the chair during his/her absence.
- (c) Additional meetings of the Committee shall be convened if the General Secretary deems it necessary in consultation with the Chairperson. Such a meeting shall also be convened if a written request to that effect, signed by at least one-third of the Committee's titular members, is received.
- (d) The Committee shall normally meet at the headquarters of the Confederation.

Article III: Admission to meetings

- (a) The sittings of the Steering Committee are private, restricted to titular members and the substitute members called upon to replace the titular members who are unable to attend. Procedures to be followed for the substitution are the same as are provided under Article XIV(b) of the Constitution in respect of the Executive Board meetings.
- (b) The only other persons who are authorised to attend meetings of the Committee shall be:

- (i) Not more than one person accompanying a titular member, or the substitute member replacing him/her, as his/her technical adviser or interpreter;
 - (ii) Two representatives of International Trade Secretariats or their substitutes attending in a consultative capacity;
 - (iii) Assistant General Secretar(y)(ies) of the ICFTU attending in a consultative capacity;
 - (iv) General Secretaries of ICFTU regional organisations attending in a consultative capacity;
 - (v) The members of the ICFTU staff who are designated by the General Secretary to service the meeting.
- (c) In exceptional circumstances, if a titular member and his/her two elected substitutes are unable to attend a session, the Committee may authorise, on the basis of an advance request in writing, a personal substitute to attend that session on behalf of the titular member.

Article IV: Competence

- (a) The Committee shall have the competence to deal with questions of urgency or importance as indicated in Article XVII of the Constitution. The action it has taken in this regard shall be reported to the Executive Board for ratification.
- (b) The members of the Steering Committee may be consulted by correspondence.

Article V: Agenda

- (a) Before each scheduled meeting of the Committee, the General Secretary shall prepare a draft agenda and forward it to the Committee members, together with documentation where appropriate, at least two weeks prior to the date of the meeting.
- (b) Matters of urgent importance may be added to the agenda thus drafted, even without documentation.

Article VI: Voting

- (a) None other than titular members, or substitute members attending in place of absent titular members, have the right to vote.
- (b) The Committee shall endeavour to secure the widest possible measure of agreement rather than carry decisions by vote. When a vote is called for, however, decisions shall be by simple majority unless the Committee has decided otherwise.
- (c) As a rule the voting shall be by show of hands.

- (d) No vote is valid unless at least two-thirds of the members are present at the sitting.

Article VII: Records and reports

- (a) A verbatim record of the meeting of the Steering Committee shall be kept. It shall not be published or distributed.
- (b) A summarised report of each meeting shall be prepared by the General Secretary for submission to the Executive Board at its next meeting. It should contain, among other things, an account of the action taken by the Committee at the request or on behalf of the Executive Board.

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