

# International Association of Conference Translators

## CONSTITUTION<sup>1</sup>

### TITLE AND DEFINITION

#### *Article 1*

There is hereby created an "International Association of Conference Translators" (hereinafter called "the Association") consisting of revisers, translators, terminologists, précis-writers and editors (hereinafter called "translators") who work for international conferences or organizations.

#### *Article 2*

1. The translators referred to in this Constitution may be either free-lance or permanent.
2. Within the meaning of this Constitution:
  - (a) "free-lance translator" means any translator who works for international conferences or organizations on an essentially temporary basis under contracts which do not entitle them to membership of the pension fund of the employer and which are established on a daily or monthly basis or for the performance of specific tasks (e.g. work at home);
  - (b) "permanent translator" means any translator who works for an international organization and who contributes to its pension fund;
  - (c) "international organization" means an intergovernmental organization or an international non-governmental organization whose working conditions in language services are consistent with best practices;
  - (d) "international conference" means an international gathering organized by or held under the auspices of a government or an international organization, in which the participants are representatives of governments or international organizations and for which the working conditions in language services are consistent with best practices;
  - (e) a "day's experience" means a day of work in-house under a contract with an international organization or an international conference, or 1,650 words of translation work for an international organization or an international conference paid according to the volume of work done.

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<sup>1</sup> Text adopted by the General Assembly on 26 May 1963 to replace the Provisional Constitution adopted by the Constituent Assembly on 3 June 1962, and amended on 30 May 1965, 8 May 1966, 7 May 1967, 20 June 1971, 25 June 1972, 19 May 1974, 8 May 1977, 7 May 1978, 21 June 1980, 25 June 1983, 8 July 1989, 30 June 1990, 27 June 1998, 23 June 2007 and 19 June 2010.

## **AIMS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

### *Article 3*

The purpose of the Association, which represents the profession of conference translator, is to study the problems arising from the exercise of the profession, to defend the moral and material interests of those who practise it, to maintain high professional standards and to provide a forum for communicating with colleagues, sharing information and experiences and offering assistance and guidance to those entering the profession. Within the scope of this definition, the Association shall lay down a set of rules constituting the ethical code of the profession (hereinafter called "the Professional Code").

## **HEADQUARTERS**

### *Article 4*

The headquarters of the Association shall be at Geneva (Switzerland). They may be transferred to any other place, by decision of the General Assembly adopted by a two-thirds majority.

In order to enjoy corporate status, the Association shall be constituted in accordance with the Swiss Civil Code. If the headquarters are transferred to another country, the Executive Committee shall take all necessary steps to ensure that the Association shall enjoy corporate status in that country.

## **DELEGATES AND CORRESPONDENTS**

### *Article 5*

The Executive Committee shall designate delegates or correspondents at the major international organizations and in certain cities. The Association will not approach the organizations without first consulting the delegates or correspondents concerned.

## **MEMBERS**

### *Article 6*

The Association shall consist of active members, candidate members, associate members and honorary members.

Active members and candidate members shall have the right to vote. Associate members and honorary members shall have the right to speak but not to vote.

## **Active members**

### *Article 7*

- A. The following may become active members:
- (a) any person who regularly practises the profession of free-lance translator in the circumstances defined in Article 2, paragraph 2 (a), and who has had 300 days' experience, including at least 100 days during the two years ending on the date on which he or she applies for membership;
  - (b) any permanent translator within the meaning of Article 2, paragraph 2 (b) who has had 300 days' experience as a translator, including at least 100 days during the two years immediately preceding his or her application for membership.
- B. Any person who fulfils one or other of the conditions mentioned in paragraphs (a) and (b) above may apply for membership of the Association. The decision on admission shall lie with the Executive Committee.

## **Candidate members**

### *Article 8*

- A. Any person who practises the profession of free-lance translator in the circumstances defined in Article 2 and who has 100 days' experience may become a candidate member. Any person who fulfils these conditions may apply for membership of the Association. The decision on admission shall lie with the Executive Committee.
- B. A candidate member shall become an active member when he or she has acquired 200 days' additional experience. If this experience is not acquired within three years, he or she shall cease to be a member of the Association.
- C. Candidate members shall have the same rights and duties as active members, although they may not serve on the Association's Bureau or its Disciplinary Board.

## **Associate members**

### *Article 9*

- A. The following may become associate members:
- (a) any active member who no longer practises the profession of free-lance translator in the circumstances defined in Article 2, paragraph 2 (a), but wishes to maintain ties with the Association;
  - (b) any permanent translator who fulfils the conditions for admission to the Association but does not wish to become an active member.

- B. An associate member may at any time become or resume being an active member. If an associate member wishes to engage or resume engaging in free-lance work, he or she must become an active member.
- C. Anyone who fulfils the conditions for becoming an associate member shall submit an application. The decision on admission shall lie with the Executive Committee.

### **Honorary members**

#### ***Article 10***

The General Assembly may confer the title of honorary member on any person who has earned the Association's gratitude.

### **Rights and duties of members**

#### ***Article 11***

Any member may request the assistance of the Association within the limits defined in Article 3. It shall be for the Executive Committee, if it considers it expedient, to deal with the requests referred to it and to take all necessary measures.

#### ***Article 12***

Members of the Association shall be under the obligation:

- (a) to comply with the provisions of the present Constitution and with the rules of the Professional Code;
- (b) to contribute to the best of their ability to the implementation of the decisions taken by the General Assembly for the attainment of the purposes specified in Article 3;
- (c) to pay their subscriptions regularly.

### **Admission**

#### ***Article 13***

1. Any person who wishes to join the Association as an active member, candidate member or associate member shall submit an application to the Executive Committee and, on its invitation, shall forward to it any evidence it may require, accompanied by a declaration in which the candidate undertakes to comply with the provisions of the Association's Constitution and to observe the Professional Code.
2. After considering the candidature, the Executive Committee shall take its decision.

## **Resignation**

### *Article 14*

Any member wishing to withdraw from the Association shall submit his or her resignation to the Executive Committee. Nevertheless, the member's subscription for the current year shall be retained by the Association and the member shall pay all arrears.

## **Penalties**

### *Article 15*

On a proposal accompanied by reasons and submitted in writing by one or more active or candidate members, the Disciplinary Board may apply penalties – warning, reprimand or expulsion – to a member of the Association who

- commits a serious professional offence or is guilty of dishonourable conduct;
- acts in a manner detrimental to the Association or any of its members;
- refuses to comply with the provisions of the Constitution, the rules of the Professional Code or the decisions of the General Assembly.

## **Subscriptions**

### *Article 16*

Active members, candidate members and associate members shall pay a subscription in the amount fixed for each category by the General Assembly on the proposal of the Executive Committee.

The subscription is waived for honorary members.

Members who are in arrears by one year in the payment of their subscriptions lose their rights under this Constitution. They do not recover their rights until they have paid the subscription.

Any member who has failed for two consecutive years to pay the subscription shall be expelled from the Association by decision of the Executive Committee, on the proposal of the Executive Secretary or the Treasurer. The decision to expel a defaulting member may not be made unless a reminder has been sent to the member by the Treasurer after the end of the second financial year and has remained unanswered for at least forty-five days after its dispatch.

In certain cases, the Executive Committee may suspend the application of these penalties in the light of the specific circumstances.

**Article 17**

Any member expelled from the Association by decision of the Executive Committee and the Disciplinary Board may appeal to the General Assembly, whose decision shall be final.

**ORGANS****Article 18**

The organs of the Association shall be the following:

1. the General Assembly,
2. the Executive Committee,
3. the Bureau,
4. the Disciplinary Board.

**Article 19**

The organs of the Association shall take their decisions without any discrimination whatsoever.

**Article 20**

The members of the Association who form part of the Bureau, the Executive Committee or the Disciplinary Board shall perform their functions in all impartiality and with the sole object of helping the Association to achieve its purposes. Any member who disregards this rule for personal reasons or in the interests of any group other than the Association shall be liable to expulsion.

**General Assembly*****Definition*****Article 21**

The General Assembly shall be the sovereign organ of the Association.

***Functions*****Article 22**

1. The General Assembly shall determine the policy of the Association.
2. It shall adopt the Professional Code, the Rules of Procedure and all necessary regulations, as well as any amendments to those instruments.
3. It shall determine the size of the Executive Committee, and elect the Executive Committee and the Bureau.

4. It shall appoint the members of the Disciplinary Board.
5. It shall set up such committees and working groups as it may consider necessary and shall define their terms of reference.
6. It shall fix the amount of the subscription and may decide to levy special contributions, if necessary.
7. It shall approve the accounts and adopt the budget of the Association.

### *Sessions*

#### *Article 23*

1. The General Assembly shall hold an ordinary session annually in May, June or July.
2. A special session of the General Assembly may be held at any time, either in pursuance of a decision taken at the ordinary session or on being convened by the Executive Committee acting on its own initiative or at the request of at least one-fifth of the members of the Association.
3. The General Assembly shall in any case hold a special session to deal with questions regarding:
  - (a) the amendment of the Constitution, the Rules of Procedure or the Professional Code;
  - (b) the dissolution of the Association.

#### *Article 24*

Any amendment to the Constitution, the Rules of Procedure or the Professional Code must be proposed by the Executive Committee or by at least ten members of the Association before it can be submitted to the General Assembly.

### **Executive Committee**

#### *Definition*

#### *Article 25*

The Executive Committee shall be the organ responsible for administering the Association between two meetings of the General Assembly. It shall implement the policies established by the General Assembly and carry out its decisions.

## *Composition*

### *Article 26*

1. The Executive Committee shall consist of eleven to fifteen active members or candidate members of the Association, chosen so as to ensure an equitable linguistic and professional distribution.
2. Its members shall be elected for one year. They shall be eligible for re-election.
3. The exercise of the functions of member of the Executive Committee, or of chairman of a committee or working group of the Executive Committee or of the General Assembly shall be incompatible with the exercise of the same functions in a professional association whose objects are the same as or similar to those of the Association.
4. In the event of the death or resignation of one of its members, the Executive Committee shall appoint a substitute for the remainder of the term of office.
5. Members of the Executive Committee may not sit on the Disciplinary Board.

## *Functions*

### *Article 27*

1. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the conduct of the business of the Association between sessions of the General Assembly. For this purpose, the Committee shall distribute the tasks and responsibilities among the members of the Association and employ the remunerated staff necessary for the smooth functioning of the Secretariat.
2. It shall ensure observance of the Constitution. It shall prepare the draft budget and, if it thinks fit, shall recommend to the General Assembly that it change the rate of subscription or ask for a special contribution.
3. It shall examine candidatures and admit new members.
4. It shall report to the General Assembly on its work and on the Association's activities during the past year.
5. It shall transmit to the General Assembly appeals against decisions on penalties and expulsion, and requests for reinstatement.
6. It shall study the reports of committees and transmit them, with its observations, to the General Assembly.
7. It shall set up working groups for the study of particular problems.
8. It shall collect, publish and communicate to the members of the Association all information of a professional, technical or administrative character which it considers useful.
9. It shall transmit to the members of the Association any offers of employment which it may receive.

### *Meetings*

#### *Article 28*

The Executive Committee shall meet on being convened by the President or the Executive Secretary. It shall fix the date and place of its meetings.

### **Bureau**

#### *Article 29*

The Bureau shall consist of the President, the two Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer and the Executive Secretary of the Association.

### *President*

#### *Article 30*

The President of the Association shall also be the Chairman of the Executive Committee and shall take office immediately on election.

### *Vice-Presidents*

#### *Article 31*

In case of need, one of the Vice-Presidents shall replace the President in the exercise of his or her functions.

### *Treasurer*

#### *Article 32*

1. The Treasurer shall keep the Association's accounts.
2. The Treasurer shall satisfy him- or herself that the members have paid their subscriptions within the time-limits prescribed in Article 15 and shall communicate to the Executive Committee the names of defaulting members.
3. In case of need, the Committee may appoint one of its members as Acting Treasurer.

### *Executive Secretary*

#### *Article 33*

1. The Executive Secretary shall take the necessary steps to give effect to the decisions of the Executive Committee and of the General Assembly. In particular, the Executive Secretary shall arrange for records to be kept of the meetings of those two organs and shall keep up to date a list of the members of the Association.

2. In case of need, the Committee may appoint one of its members as Acting Executive Secretary.

### *Replacement of a member of the Bureau*

#### *Article 34*

In the event of the death or resignation of the President, of one of the two Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer or the Executive Secretary, the Executive Committee shall appoint one of its members as Acting President, Vice-President, Treasurer or Executive Secretary.

### **Disciplinary Board**

#### *Composition*

#### *Article 35*

The Disciplinary Board shall consist of three active members of the Association chosen by the General Assembly on the grounds of their competence and impartiality.

#### *Functions*

#### *Article 36*

The Disciplinary Board shall examine all proposals for disciplinary action which may be submitted to it. Its proceedings shall be secret and the documents examined shall be treated as confidential. It shall communicate its decision to the Executive Committee which shall inform the members of the Association.

### **FINANCE**

#### **Financial year**

#### *Article 37*

The financial year shall run from 1 April to 31 March.

#### **Funds**

#### *Article 38*

The Association's funds shall consist primarily of membership subscriptions, but may also be derived from special contributions, donations, collections, profits from the sale of its publications, and any gifts and legacies.

## **Expenditure**

### ***Article 39***

The Association's expenditure shall consist *inter alia* of administrative and secretarial costs, travelling and representation expenses of members of the Executive Committee, charges for printing and postage of publications, subscriptions to other professional bodies, fees and taxes.

## **OBLIGATIONS**

### **Financial commitments**

### ***Article 40***

The Association shall be legally bound by the joint signatures of two members of the Executive Committee, one of whom must be the Treasurer.

### **Other obligations**

### ***Article 41***

The Association shall be bound by the joint signatures of two members of the Executive Committee, one of whom must be a member of the Bureau.

### ***Article 42***

The members of the Association shall be collectively responsible for its acts and obligations.

## **DISSOLUTION**

### ***Article 43***

The dissolution of the Association may be decided by the General Assembly convened for that purpose in special session or, if a quorum is not obtained, by a vote by correspondence. A decision to dissolve the Association may be taken only by a majority of two-thirds of the active members and candidate members of the Association. The General Assembly shall decide on the disposal of the Association's assets.

## **ENTRY INTO FORCE**

### ***Article 44***

The present Constitution shall enter into force on 26 May 1963.

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