

**Statutes<sup>1</sup>**  
**of the**  
**Association**  
**of the**  
**Staff of the United Nations Environment Programme**  
**in**  
**Geneva**  
**- 'UNEGSA'**

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<sup>1</sup> As adopted, with amendments, by the General Assembly of UNEGSA at its first meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2018.

## Preamble

The Association of the staff of the United Nations Environment Programme in Geneva, Switzerland:

Referring to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948, and in particular to article 20, paragraph 1, and article 23, paragraph 4, concerning freedom of association and the right to form and to join trade unions;

Further referring to the international norms adopted in respect of labour law, as established in various instruments of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), particularly in ILO Convention (No. 87) concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, ILO Convention (No. 51) concerning Protection of the Right to Organise and Procedures for Determining Conditions of Employment in the Public Service, ILO Convention (No. 154) concerning the Promotion of Collective Bargaining and ILO Recommendation (No. 143) concerning Protection and Facilities to be Afforded to Workers' Representatives in the Undertaking;

Recalling the objectives of the Charter of the United Nations, and in particular, among its provisions, Article 101, paragraph 3, and convinced that their attainment requires the genuine participation of the staff and its organisations as well as the broadest possible promotion of solidarity staff members;

Desiring to promote the harmonious development of an international civil service inspired by the greatest impartiality, integrity and devotion to the cause of international co-operation;

Aware of the interests of international civil servants, and also of those of the organisations belonging to the United Nations family, in particular of the staff of the United Nations Environment Programme in Geneva, including the staff of the Secretariats of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in Geneva that are administered by the United Nations Environment Programme;

Considering its mission to defend and promote the collective and individual interests of all staff members; to promote the principles of solidarity and democracy among staff members; to defend the independence, status and safety of international civil servants;

Anxious to maintain and reinforce the unity of the staff of United Nations Environment Programme in Geneva, including the staff of the Secretariats of the MEAs administered by the United Nations Environment Programme in Geneva, with other staff of the United Nations and institutions in Geneva, and with the UN staff based in other duty stations, as a single and united body of agents of the international civil service;

Considering the constitutional links between all entities of the United Nations system, including the United Nations Environment Programme, as well as the Secretariats of the MEAs

administered by the United Nations Environment Programme, and the existing common standards governing the conditions of service of their staff in Geneva;

Mindful of the need to unify their efforts;

Hereby agree to establish an Association of the staff of the United Nations Environment in Geneva, the Statutes of which are set forth hereunder.

## Chapter I

### NAME AND OFFICES

#### Article 1

The Association of the staff of the United Nations Environment Programme (hereinafter referred to as the "UN Environment Programme") based in Geneva, shall be known as the '**UN Environment Geneva Staff Association (UNEGSA)**', and shall have its offices at the International Environment House No.1 (IEH1), 11-15, chemin des Anémones, 1219 Châtelaine, Geneva, Switzerland.

## Chapter II

### DEFINITIONS

#### Article 2

Under the present Statutes:

- the "Association" shall mean the Association of the staff of the UN Environment Programme staff in Geneva, known as the 'UN Environment Geneva Staff Association (UNEGSA)';
- the "Staff" shall mean the Geneva-based staff of the UN Environment Programme, including the staff of the Secretariats of the MEAs administered by the UN Environment Programme; and shall include staff in the Professional (P) and higher categories (D) ("Professional category"), staff in the "General Service category" (G);
- "Member" shall mean a person who satisfies the requirements of membership in the Association as set forth in Chapter IV of these Statutes;
- "Associate Member" shall mean all other personnel than Staff working at the UN Environment Programme in Geneva, such as interns, long-term seconded staff, consultants, etc., who may not be eligible to be a Member *per se*, in accordance with Article 4 below.

## Chapter III

### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

#### Article 3

The aims and objectives of the Association shall be:

- (a) To defend and promote the legitimate professional, social and economic interests of all staff members of the United Nations Environment Programme in Geneva, including of MEAs' Secretariats administered by the UN Environment Programme, and including staff members formerly employed;
- (b) To represent its Members in all negotiations and consultations, whether within the UN Environment Programme or interagency;
- (c) To coordinate the activities of its Members and take any joint action that is in the general interest of its Members;
- (d) To ensure mutual assistance between its Members;
- (e) To promote the social, cultural and economic interests of the staff members as a whole through cooperative undertakings;
- (f) To cooperate and ensure coordination with all federations of international civil servants associations, staff associations or unions or entities throughout the United Nations family with similar objectives.

## **Chapter IV**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

#### Article 4

1. Nominal membership shall be open to any persons employed as staff members of the UN Environment Programme in Geneva, including staff members of MEAs' Secretariats as administered by UN Environment in Geneva, holding a valid UN employment contract, i.e. whose terms and conditions of service, or essential elements thereof, are determined by the relevant United Nations common system bodies.

2. All other personnel working at the UN Environment Programme in Geneva, such as interns, long-term seconded staff, consultants, etc., may not be eligible to be a Member *per se* but the Association shall include consideration of their welfare, and a status of Associate Member shall be available to them. Associate Members may participate in activities, meetings and events of the Association but may not vote.

3. All Members shall:

- (a) abide by the present Statutes;
- (b) act in the interests of the Association and portray the organisation in good standing;

- (c) endeavour to attend General and Extraordinary sessions of the General Assembly of the Association.

4. No Member shall be held individually liable for obligations entered into by the Association.

5. Applications for membership shall be made by completing, signing and sending an application form to the Executive Committee of the Association, which shall submit the application to the General Assembly for approval. Applications shall specify whether the membership will be solely nominal or will involve the payment of a fee, and in the latter case whether the fees shall be paid on a yearly or a monthly basis.

6. Being a due-paying fee Member shall involve the right to vote in accordance with Article 23 below on arrears; a nominal Member may participate in all activities, events or meetings of the Association but may not vote. However, Members or Associate Members not earning a salary (e.g. interns) shall, in no event, pay membership fees.

7. Fee-paying membership involves the payment of annual or monthly fees, depending on the length of the employment contract, as determined by the General Assembly or by the Executive Committee pursuant to Article 22 below.

8. Members may withdraw from the Association by giving written notice. Withdrawal will take effect within 30 (thirty) days of receipt of the notification. A refund of any dues paid in advance shall be made to any Member leaving the Association, calculated from the end of the month in which the 30 (thirty) day-notice of withdrawal from the Association expires.

## **Chapter V**

### **ORGANS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

#### Article 6

The functions of the Association shall be exercised through the General Assembly and its Executive Committee.

#### The General Assembly

#### Article 7

1. The General Assembly shall be the highest organ of the Association and shall consist of its Members.
2. Each Member shall have one vote.

## Article 8

1. The General Assembly shall hold two ordinary sessions a year. An extraordinary session may be convened by the Executive Committee or upon the request of three Members. The reports of the General Assembly shall be distributed to all Members.
2. Notification of the meeting shall be made no less than 15 (fifteen) working days before an ordinary session and, except in case of emergency, no less than 5 (five) working days before an extraordinary session. The Executive Committee is competent to decide whether there is a case of emergency.

## Article 9

The General Assembly shall have the following tasks:

- (a) To define the policy of the Association;
- (b) To consider any matter referred to it by the Executive Committee or by Members;
- (c) To approve the admission of a new Member or the suspension of the rights of a Member whose conduct is in violation of the letter or spirit of the present statutes;
- (d) To establish the Association's work programme and, in particular, recommend to the Members individual or collective actions to be taken;
- (e) To adopt the annual budget of the Association, to fix the contribution of each Member and approve the accounts of the Association;
- (f) To elect the Members of the Executive Committee;
- (g) To nominate 2 (two) auditors.

## Article 10

The General Assembly may establish subsidiary bodies to assist it in carrying out its duties. It shall define their terms of reference and elect the officers.

## Article 11

1. The presence of two thirds of the Members of the Association shall form a quorum for a General Assembly.
2. However, if the quorum is not reached, the General Assembly may take decisions subject to ratification within 5 (five) working days; this period may be reduced to 24 (twenty-four) hours in the case of an emergency. A decision shall become final if the total of votes cast against during the session and the ratification procedure does not reach a majority.

## Article 12

All decisions of the General Assembly shall be made by a simple majority of votes cast, unless otherwise provided in these statutes. Abstentions shall not be considered a vote.

### The Executive Committee

#### Article 13

The Executive Committee shall be the executive body of the Association. It shall act in accordance with the policy of the Association and shall be responsible for the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the General Assembly. To that end, it shall handle the day-to-day operations of the Association, and may establish any such sub-committees as may be required for the implementation of the programmes and activities of the Association.

#### Article 14

The Executive Committee shall have the following 7 (seven) Members, and their alternates:

- (a) President (his/her alternate shall be the Vice-President)
- (b) Vice-President (+ alternate)
- (c) General Secretary (+ alternate)
- (d) Assistant General Secretary (+ alternate)
- (e) Treasurer (+ alternate)
- (f) Information and Liaison Officer (+ alternate)
- (g) Social and Welfare Officer (+ alternate).

#### Article 15

1. The seven Members of the Executive Committee, and their respective alternates, shall be elected by secret ballot by the General Assembly for a period of 1 (one) year as the representatives of the Association. The candidates shall be presented by any of the Staff of UN Environment in Geneva, including the Staff from MEAs' Secretariats in Geneva. The Executive Committee may comprise more than one Member of the same UN Environment Division's Branch or MEA Secretariat.
2. The seven Members of the Executive Committee, and their alternates shall be elected by a simple majority from amongst the candidates.
3. The Executive Committee shall elect from amongst its Members a president, a vice-president, a general secretary, an assistant general secretary, a treasurer, an information and liaison officer, and a social and welfare officer, as well as their respective alternates (except for the President whose alternate shall be the Vice-President).

#### Article 16



In the event of a vacancy, the Executive Committee may co-opt a member, or his/her alternate, from among the Members of the Association for the period remaining until the next ordinary General Assembly which, where relevant, shall be requested to confirm the choice.

#### Article 17

The Executive Committee shall meet on a monthly basis or, between ordinary sessions, upon convocation by the President.

#### Article 18

The Executive Committee shall establish its rules of procedure and the financial rules of the Association.

### **Chapter VI**

#### **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

#### Article 19

1. The President:
  - (a) shall be the spokesperson for the Association;
  - (b) shall preside over all meetings of the General Assembly and Executive Committee;
  - (c) shall certify payments approved by the Executive Committee;
  - (d) shall deal with and sign the correspondence of the Association.
  
2. The Vice-President:

shall assist the President and replace him/her in his/her absence.
  
3. The General Secretary:
  - (a) shall be the Secretary to all meetings of the General Assembly and the Executive Committee;
  - (b) shall keep a record of each meeting, as well as the files of the Association;
  - (c) shall distribute all documents;
  - (d) shall have any other related responsibilities as are entrusted to him/her by the President and the Executive Committee.
  
4. The Assistant General Secretary:

shall assist the General Secretary in all matters and replace the General Secretary in his/her absence.

5. The Treasurer:

- (a) shall maintain the accounts of the Association and submit them to the Executive Committee;
- (b) shall deposit the funds of the Association with the bank(s) approved by the Executive Committee;
- (c) shall issue receipts for all monies received;
- (d) shall make all payments approved by the Executive Committee;
- (e) shall prepare the financial report to be presented to the General Assembly;
- (f) shall manage the contributions.

6. The Information and Liaison Officer shall:

- (a) gather all new information concerning Staff (publications, benefits, entitlements, etc.) and make available relevant extracts as appropriate to facilitate the work of the Executive Committee;
- (b) liaise with other staff associations, unions and federations on issues and concerns of Staff as appropriate and circulate relevant information to Members; and
- (c) assist the President in preparing the action programme.

7. The Social and Welfare Officer

- (a) be the Chairperson of a Social and Welfare Sub-Committee appointed by the Executive Committee;
- (b) coordinate the work of a Social and Welfare Sub-Committee, which shall be responsible for organizing the Association's social activities, including matters of a recreational nature;
- (c) explore possibilities of being affiliated to recreational centres and other facilities (library, etc);
- (d) assist the Treasurer in preparing activities to generate funds;
- (e) prepare an annual report of the Social and Welfare Sub-Committee showing its activities.

## **Chapter VII**

### **FINANCES**

#### Article 20

1. The Association shall be financed by regular yearly or monthly contributions of its Members and by voluntary contributions, donations or bequests. The acceptance of any offer to which conditions are attached shall be subject to approval by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Executive Committee.
2. The annual contributions shall be paid during the month which follows the adoption of the Association's annual budget.

#### Article 21

Withdrawals of money shall require the combined signatures of the Treasurer and the President (or, in his/her absence, the Vice-President).

#### Article 22

1. The yearly or monthly contributions of each Member shall be fixed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Executive Committee.
2. The Executive Committee shall determine specific fees, if any, for Associate Members with an income.

#### Article 23

A Member which is in arrears with its contributions by the opening date of an ordinary session of the General Assembly may, by decision of the General Assembly, be deprived of its right to vote or present candidates to the Executive Committee at that session.

#### Article 24

The accounts of the Association shall be submitted on an annual basis to the auditors, who shall report directly to the General Assembly.

## **Chapter VIII**

### **ENTRY INTO FORCE**

#### Article 25

These Statutes shall come into force upon their adoption by the General Assembly at its first meeting.

## **Chapter IX**

### **AMENDMENTS OR DISSOLUTION**

#### Article 26

Any amendment to these Statutes shall be adopted by the General Assembly by a two-thirds majority of the Members present and voting.

#### Article 27

1. The Association may be dissolved upon a decision by a two-thirds majority of the Members of the Association.
2. Such decision can only be taken if all Members are present or represented; each Member present cannot have more than one proxy.
3. In the case of dissolution, the assets of the Association shall be disposed of in accordance with the scale of contributions.
4. The archives shall be handed over to a Member designated, with its agreement, by the General Assembly.

## **Chapter X**

### **DEPOSIT OF THE STATUTES**

#### Article 28

These Statutes, in the English and French languages, both texts being equally authentic, shall be deposited at the offices of the Association. Certified copies shall be furnished to all Members.