

STATUTES

CHAPTER I AIM – MEANS – DURATION

ARTICLE 1

This Federation of associations is hereby created for the purpose of defending and implementing the principles stated in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

It insists that men and women should enjoy equal access to rights which are fundamental and inseparable from the human condition: all men and all women are entitled to have those rights respected and to be able to exercise them effectively within a framework of equal representation and participation in a democratic society.

Children must benefit from specific rights and protection.

The Federation works towards peace and the effective, universal and indivisible implementation of conventions, international covenants, and all international and regional instruments concerning civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

It strives to promote democracy and the consolidation of the Rule of Law, a just international social and economic order, and sustainable development which respects the environment.

In particular, it fights against injustice, illegality, the arbitrary, corruption, impunity, intolerance, breaches of the right to asylum and economic and social rights, all acts of violence and sexual mutilation, torture, forced disappearances, war crimes, genocide, all crimes against humanity and all violations of humanitarian rights.

It opposes all violations of the fundamental principal of equality between human beings and all forms of racism and discrimination, in particular based on sex, gender identity and sexual orientation, customs, state of health or disability, political, philosophical and religious opinions, nationality and social status.

It strives for the respect of individual liberties with regard to the use of computerised data and fights against any violation of human dignity, integrity, equality or liberty resulting from abusive use of new technology or the use of medical techniques.

ARTICLE 2

The name of this association is FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DES LIGUES DES DROITS DE L'HOMME (INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS) and its acronym is FIDH. Its registration conforms with the French law of 1 July 1901.

There is no limit on the duration of its activities.

Its registered office is located at PARIS 75011, 17 passage de la Main d'Or. It can be transferred to any other location in Paris by the decision of the International Bureau, pending ratification at the next earliest Congress, and to any other location by the decision of the Congress.

The Federation's year begins on 1 January and ends on 31 December.

ARTICLE 3

FIDH is a universal movement that brings together non governmental organisations for the defence and promotion of human rights.

FIDH acts throughout the world, the organisations of which it is composed acting in their respective countries, whenever they are notified of a violation of the principles stated in Article 1 which is to the detriment of individuals, communities and peoples.

FIDH supports the actions of its members and shall be their intermediary in relations with international organisations. FIDH shall coordinate joint actions.

FIDH contributes to the prevention of human rights violations, to the protection of victims of such violations and to the sanctioning of the perpetrators of the violations, as well as to the promotion of human rights.

FIDH's forms of action are, in particular: investigation and trial observation missions, interventions before public and legal authorities, raising public awareness, judicial co-operation programmes and other activities geared towards training and increasing awareness, appealing to intergovernmental organisations.

APPLICATION: ARTICLE R1 OF INTERNAL REGULATIONS

CHAPTER II
COMPOSITION - ADMISSION - RADIATION - EXCLUSION

ARTICLE 4

FIDH includes all organisations, excluding individuals, that adhere to this Constitution, pay their subscription and have been approved by the Congress upon proposal by the International Bureau.

In addition, member organisations of FIDH must:

- Include in their own constitutions a commitment to the defence of the principles stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as to their total independence from, namely, all governments, political parties and religious organisations.
- Have as their mission to promote in their own countries the principles stated in Article 1 of this Constitution, fully respecting the guarantee of independence written into their constitutions.
- Forbid any representative or member of a local, national or international executive political power to hold an executive or representative position in their organisation.

They shall keep FIDH informed regularly of their activities and, within the framework of their co-operation and under conditions set out in Internal Regulations, shall interact with FIDH in carrying out missions and actions defined in Article 3.

They shall contribute to the movement and its visibility, and publicly display their membership in FIDH.

APPLICATION: ARTICLE R2 OF INTERNAL REGULATIONS

ARTICLE 5

FIDH is composed of:

- Affiliate members: they are full members who have voting rights in the Congress and pay a contribution. There can only be one Affiliate Member for each member state of the United Nations. However, the Congress may, on the proposal of the International Bureau, following a vote with a two-thirds majority, and after consultations with the member already affiliated to the FIDH, confer the status of Affiliate Member upon an additional organisation in the same country if it has a two-thirds majority vote of members present or represented. Moreover, the Congress may, upon recommendation by the International Bureau, confer the status of affiliated member on an organisation belonging to a state or community that does not hold a seat in the United Nations.
- Correspondent Members: they are members of FIDH who play a consultative role in the Congress and pay a contribution. There can be several Correspondent Members for each country or community. They are admitted after consultation, where necessary, with the Affiliate and Corresponding Members of the country concerned.
- Associate Members: they are members of FIDH who play a consultative role in Congress and pay a contribution. This status is reserved for groupings of organisations whose goals and methods fit with those of FIDH .

ARTICLE 6

Admission to FIDH is decided, after recommendation by the International Bureau, by a majority vote of members present or represented.

However, the International Bureau is entitled to confer provisional membership status. Provisional admission simply entitles the member to participate in FIDH activities and excludes the right to vote. Provisional membership can not be conferred in the three months prior to a meeting of Congress. If there is already an FIDH member organisation in the country in question, its views shall be solicited beforehand. If the member organisation expresses a negative opinion, the International Bureau can only propose admission after a two-thirds majority vote.

APPLICATION: ARTICLE R3 OF THE INTERNAL REGULATIONS

ARTICLE 7

FIDH membership status may be withdrawn by removal, exclusion or by resignation.

Any member organisation of FIDH that has not fulfilled its administrative or financial obligations, or that has been singled

out for its inactivity, may be subject to removal. The removal is submitted to the Congress by the International Bureau after the defaulting organisation has been given notice to fulfil its obligations and to provide explanations at least nine months before the first day of Congress.

Any member organisation of FIDH may be excluded if it violates the provisions of Article 1 of the Constitution and if it no longer meets the admission criteria laid out in Article 4 of the Constitution. Only the Congress is empowered to pronounce the exclusion of a member organisation of FIDH and the organisation must be invited to attend.

A resignation must be presented, by the appropriate body, in a letter or any other written form, receipt of which can be acknowledged by the Executive Bureau. A resignation is only possible if the organisation has not been suspended and the Executive Bureau has not commenced exclusion procedures. A resignation between two Congresses does not alter contribution payments which still have to be made. A resignation must be presented at the latest two months before the first day of Congress. The Congress will record formally the legality of the resignation.

ARTICLE 8

The International Bureau, on the proposal of the Executive Bureau or of the President of FIDH, may take it upon itself to suspend the rights of any FIDH member. The Congress is also entitled to take this course of action.

A suspension may only be pronounced for the same reasons that would justify an exclusion and if the interests of FIDH are seriously compromised.

A suspension can only be pronounced after the organisation concerned has been given the opportunity to present an explanation and defend its actions.

A suspension cannot last for more than six consecutive months. It can, however, be reapplied once for the same length of time if considered appropriate by the International Bureau, after the organisation has been given the opportunity to present an explanation.

If the interests of FIDH continue to be compromised and the reasons for suspension persist, the suspension can be extended until the next Congress by special decision of the International Bureau, the organisation having been given the opportunity to present its explanations.

For the duration of the suspension, a suspended organisation is not at liberty to take advantage of its FIDH membership and cannot perform any function within FIDH or on behalf of FIDH.

The next Congress is the only sovereign body entitled to judge the lawfulness and relevance of the suspension measure in any case.

APPLICATION: ARTICLE R4 OF THE INTERNAL REGULATIONS

CHAPTER III CONTRIBUTIONS – RESOURCES

ARTICLE 9

Bearing in mind the strict requirements of independence as required of the member organisations under article 4 of these statutes, FIDH resources are made up of:

- Income from its assets
- Contributions and membership fees from its members
- Subsidies granted by States, international and national organisations
- Donations, the use of which is authorised by the International Bureau
- Extraordinary revenue
- The product of sales and payments for services rendered

A record of incomings and outgoings is kept and appears annually in an appended statement of accounts.

ARTICLE 10

The amount of annual membership fees is determined by the International Bureau. The membership fees contribute to the functioning and development of FIDH.

APPLICATION: ARTICLE R5 OF THE INTERNAL REGULATIONS

CHAPTER IV
INTERNATIONAL BUREAU – EXECUTIVE BUREAU – PRESIDENT

ARTICLE 11

Between each Congress, the FIDH is run by an International Bureau elected by Congress in the circumstances laid down in Article 22 of the Constitution.

The International Bureau is made up of:

- A President, who can be re-elected to the same position only once.
- Fifteen Vice-Presidents. The Vice Presidents must be of different nationalities and may be re-elected to the same position only twice.
- Five Secretaries General who, if possible, should be of different nationalities and may be re-elected to the same position only twice.
- A Treasurer who can be re-elected to the same position only twice.
- Honorary Presidents nominated by the Congress. They have consultative status in the International Bureau.

Term limits will not include terms served prior to the adoption of the present Constitution.

The International Bureau and the Executive Bureau are made up of a cross-section of men and women with the aim of providing equal representation.

No one can apply for a position in the International Bureau if they do not belong to an affiliated member organisation of FIDH. No one can apply for a position in the International Bureau if their candidature has not been put forward by at least one of the affiliated members of FIDH including the organisation of which she/he is a member.

Candidatures, which can only be presented for one of the positions in the International Bureau, must reach the Executive Bureau at the latest three months before the first day of Congress. However, a candidature for the position of President of the FIDH does not preclude an applicant from presenting a candidature for one of the other positions in the International Bureau.

In the event of the President's resignation, death or impediment between two Congresses duly recorded by the International Bureau ruling by a simple majority of its members present or represented, the International Bureau will provide for a replacement until the next Congress.

In the event of the resignation, death or duly recorded impediment, in the same circumstances as the President, of another of the members of the International Bureau (except the Secretary General and the Treasurer), he/she will be replaced by the first unelected candidate if he/she obtained majority of votes. If no one is in such situation, the International Bureau shall then elect, on the proposal of the Executive Bureau and by an absolute majority of its members present or represented, a person whose mandate will expire at the same time as the mandate of their predecessor. In the case of the impediment of the Secretary Generals or of the Treasurer, he/she shall be replaced by the International Bureau through a vote.

No member of the International Bureau except the President can be replaced within six months before the Congress.

APPLICATION : ARTICLE R12 OF THE INTERNAL RULES

ARTICLE 12

The International Bureau shall meet regularly, at least three times a year in a place that it shall determine. The committee meeting shall be called by the President or at the request of at least one third of its members. Its agenda shall be determined by the executive bureau, unless one of the members of the international bureau requests, with at least 45 days' notice, the inclusion of a matter on the agenda; the inclusion of the matter shall then be legitimate.

The President must circulate the agenda at least one month in advance, accompanied where possible by background documentation on the matters covered.

In an emergency, the executive bureau may exceptionally call a meeting of the international bureau on a specific agenda with a minimum of 15 days' notice.

An international bureau member may represent a fellow member. Each member of the international bureau may represent no more than two committee members in addition to him/herself.

At least one third of the international bureau members must be present or represented in order for the meeting to be quorate. In the event of a tie in the voting, the President shall have a casting vote.

Between two international bureau meetings, the executive bureau may decide to consult the members of the international bureau in writing on specific matters requiring a rapid response. In this case, the executive bureau shall inform the international bureau members of any proposed decision and shall decide the procedures for consulting them.

No member may be absent for more than three consecutive international bureau meetings without an excuse deemed to be valid by the international bureau. The latter, having summoned the member in question and informed him/her of the measure taken, may decide to remove the member and replace him/her.

The International Bureau shall determine the main strategic goals and orientations, within the framework of the political orientations defined by the Congress. The international bureau shall hear the annual reports on the moral and financial situation of the Federation, approve the annual accounts prepared by the executive bureau and appoint the auditors.

The proceedings of international bureau meetings shall be minuted.

APPLICATION: ARTICLE R6 OF THE INTERNAL REGULATION

ARTICLE 13

The international bureau shall elect between 1 and 5 Deputy Secretaries-General who shall participate in executive bureau meetings with consultative status.

The Deputy Secretaries-General must belong to FIDH member organisations and, as far as possible, be of different nationalities. The international bureau may terminate their mandates once they have been called to present their observations.

The executive bureau consists of the President, Secretaries-General, Deputy Secretaries-General and the Treasurer. The President, Secretary Generals and Treasurer only are entitled to vote. The Vice Presidents attend the meetings.

The executive bureau shall prepare the agenda and support the activities of the International Bureau. It shall help examine dossiers to be considered by the International Bureau. The Executive Bureau, whenever necessary shall help follow-up decisions of the International Bureau and report back on its activities to the international bureau. It shall meet upon the invitation of its President as often as necessary and in principle at least once a month. The President must call a meeting if requested to do so by at least half the executive bureau members.

No proxy voting may take place within the executive bureau.

The executive bureau may decide to appoint representatives to assist it in its task. Upon invitation from the President, the representatives (chargés de mission) or any relevant persons may take part in the work of the executive bureau or the international bureau, though without voting rights.

ARTICLE 14

The President of the FIDH represents the FIDH in all aspects of civil life and may go to court.

To implement FIDH activities and support the FIDH statutory bodies, the President shall rely on the Executive Directorate of the International Secretariat, which operates under the responsibility of the President. For important political decisions, the President shall rely on the members of the International Bureau and the Executive Bureau, in compliance with their respective mandates.

In case of impediment of the President, one of the Secretaries-General shall have the same powers.

ARTICLE 15

The international secretariat, under the authority of the international bureau, shall give its assistance to the activities of the statutory bodies of the FIDH and implements their decisions.

The International Secretariat shall be administered by the Executive Directorate, that shall sit on the International Bureau and the Executive Bureau in a consultative capacity.

The relevant members of the international secretariat may attend meetings of the international and executive bureau.

TITLE V CONGRESS

ARTICLE 16

The FIDH congress comprises Affiliate members, correspondent members and associate members. Only Affiliate members who are up to date with their subscriptions shall be entitled to vote, subject to the provisions hereinafter. The correspondent members and associate members shall have a consultative vote. Members of the outgoing international bureau are entitled to sit in congress without voting rights.

FIDH members are represented in congress by a maximum of three representatives. Each organisation shall have one vote, irrespective of the number of its representatives actually present.

An Affiliate organisation of the FIDH may represent a fellow organisation, but no organisation may represent more than two Affiliate organisations in addition to itself. Proxies must reach the Executive Bureau at least eight days before the first day of the congress, failing which they shall be deemed inadmissible.

Suspended members and members whose removal or exclusion have been requested shall retain the option of being represented in congress.

ARTICLE 17

The date of the congress shall be determined by the international bureau at least nine months in advance and shall be communicated to FIDH members within the same deadline.

The agenda for congress shall be established by the international bureau, which shall also appoint the congressional committee and chairpersons.

The congressional committee shall comprise the following:

- the Chairperson;
- between one and three Secretaries-General appointed by the international bureau;
- the Chairperson of the FIDH member organisation hosting the congress;
- five Representatives of FIDH member organisations plus two Deputies, representing as far as possible the different geographical regions in which the FIDH is present;
- the Executive Directorate, who shall have no voting rights.

At their first meeting, the congressional officers shall appoint a Rapporteur.

The international bureau shall, subject to the provisions hereinafter, establish the procedure for the agenda and appoint the chairpersons for the session.

The FIDH congress shall meet at least every three years, with the possibility to extend this period by three months if circumstances so require, at a place decided by the international bureau.

An extraordinary meeting of the congress will be convened at the request of an absolute majority of the international bureau members or the Affiliate members.

APPLICATION: ARTICLE R7 OF THE INTERNAL REGULATION

ARTICLE 18

All documents relating to the organisation of the congress, elections, reports presented or draft resolutions shall be circulated by the executive bureau at least two months before the first day of congress.

ARTICLE 19

Before the first plenary session, the congressional committee shall meet to ascertain whether the powers of the members of congress are in order. Where necessary, it shall examine any objections of whatever nature concerning the composition of congress.

It shall submit to congress, before any debate, all objections that have been referred to it or that it has raised itself. Congress shall rule on these objections by public ballot, by a simple majority of members present or represented and in accordance with the internal regulation.

The same shall apply for suspended organisations, with congress empowered to decide whether to maintain the suspension for the duration of its work.

The organisation whose presence has been questioned shall not be entitled to vote until congress has taken its decision.

Congress may exceptionally, at the request of the executive bureau and by a two-thirds majority of members present or represented, add one or more items to the agenda. These items shall not be discussed until after the vote on the statutory reports referred to in article 20 below. Congress must vote on this point in its opening session, but after the decisions on any objections raised as to the composition of congress.

APPLICATION: ARTICLE R8 OF THE INTERNAL REGULATION

ARTICLE 20

The Congress shall decide on the policy orientations of FIDH.

Congress shall give priority to hearing:

- the President's report on past activities,
- the Secretaries-Generals' report,
- the Treasurer's report and the Auditor's report

After discussion, the Affiliate members of the FIDH shall vote on the President's report, the Secretary-Generals' report and the Treasurer's report by a simple majority of members present or represented.

Congress shall examine the draft resolutions that have been submitted to it by the international bureau or that have been sent to the executive bureau no less than three months before the first day of congress. No other draft resolutions can be examined by or voted on in congress. However, if a draft resolution deals with matters involving events that have occurred less than three months before the first day of congress, then it shall be submitted to a vote by congress.

All members of congress are all entitled to propose amendments to draft resolutions. Such amendments shall be examined by the congressional committee, which shall report and give its opinion according to the provisions in the internal regulation.

Congress shall vote on draft resolutions by public ballot. All FIDH affiliate members take part in votes on draft resolutions.

Decisions taken by congress shall be minuted.

APPLICATION: ARTICLE R9 OF THE INTERNAL REGULATION

ARTICLE 21

Congress shall hear the international bureau's report on proposed removals, exclusions and admissions.

The organisation in question shall be entitled to speak.

Affiliate members of the FIDH shall vote on each of the international bureau's proposals in turn concerning removals, exclusions and finally admissions, in accordance with the internal regulation.

APPLICATION: ARTICLE R10 OF THE INTERNAL REGULATION

ARTICLE 22

Congress shall in its first session appoint all necessary scrutineers.

Elections to the international bureau shall be held by secret ballot.

For the position of President and Treasurer, the candidates who receive the largest number of votes by the affiliate members (present or represented) shall be elected; for the position of Vice President, the persons whose names are among the 15 candidates who have received the largest number of votes shall be elected; for the position of Secretary General, the persons whose names are among the 5 candidates who have received the largest number of votes shall be elected" In the event of a tied vote, the person from the less represented gender is elected. If they are both coming from the same gender, the older candidate is elected.

Organisations that have joined during congress shall not be entitled to vote.

The Congress alone can nominate honorary presidents.

APPLICATION: ARTICLE R11 OF THE INTERNAL RULES

ARTICLE 23

Congress has sole authority to amend the present statutes.

An amendment to the statutes can only be put to congress at the proposal of the international bureau or at the proposal of at least 1/5 of the affiliated members of the FIDH.

Any proposed amendment to the statutes must reach the international bureau at least six months before the first day of congress and be sent to members within the period defined in article 18 of the statutes.

The statutes can only be amended by a three-fifths majority of votes cast and provided that at least two-thirds of Affiliate members are present or represented in congress. In the absence of a quorum, a second meeting may be held and the statutes may be amended irrespective of the number Affiliate members present or represented.

The present statutes shall be complemented by an internal regulation, which shall be discussed and amended by the international bureau on a three-fifths majority of votes cast, provided that at least half the international bureau members are present or represented. However, the first internal regulations shall exceptionally be adopted at the same time as the present statutes.

ARTICLE 24

The FIDH's fixed assets may only be sold or mortgaged by a decision of congress, provided that at least half the Affiliate members are present or represented upon the first summons and irrespective of the number of Affiliate members present or represented upon the second convocation, and by a two-thirds majority of Affiliate members present or represented.

In an emergency, a decision to sell or mortgage the FIDH's fixed assets may be taken by the international bureau.

On the proposal of the executive bureau, the international bureau's deliberations concerning any acquisitions, exchanges and disposals of buildings necessary for the furtherance of the federation's aims, any mortgages on the said buildings, any leases in excess of nine years and any loans must be approved by a three-fifths majority of international bureau members, with the proviso that at least half the international bureau members must be present or represented.

ARTICLE 25

Any congress held to decide on the dissolution of the federation must be specially convened. It must include at least three-fifths of Affiliate members, either present or represented. Its decisions shall be passed on a two-thirds majority.

If the first meeting is not quorate, a second meeting may be called which will then be held at least twelve hours later. Decisions by the second meeting shall be made by a two-thirds majority, irrespective of the number of Affiliate members present or represented.

In the event of dissolution, congress shall appoint one or more auditors to liquidate the federation's assets. They shall donate the federation's net assets to one or more similar national or international organisations pursuing the same aims as the federation.