

## THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRACY AND ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE STATUTES\*

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance was established as an international intergovernmental organization by fourteen founding Members at a conference held in Stockholm on 27 February 1995. The Institute was registered in accordance with Article 102 of the United Nations Charter and has observer status in the UN General Assembly since 2003.

The PARTIES signatory hereto,

NOTING that the concepts of democracy, pluralism and free and fair elections are taking root worldwide;

NOTING that democracy is essential for promoting and guaranteeing human rights and that participation in political life, including government, is part of human rights, proclaimed and guaranteed by international treaties and declarations;

NOTING ALSO that the ideas of sustainable democracy, good governance, accountability and transparency have become central to policies for national and international development;

RECOGNIZING that strengthening democratic institutions, nationally, regionally and globally is conducive to preventive diplomacy, thereby promoting the establishment of a better world order;

UNDERSTANDING that democratic and electoral processes require continuity and a long term perspective;

WISHING TO ADVANCE and implement universally held norms, values and practices;

AWARE that pluralism presupposes actors and national and international organizations with distinctly different tasks and mandates that cannot be subsumed by others;

REALIZING that a meeting place for all those involved would sustain and advance professionalism and systematic capacity building;

CONSIDERING that a complementary international institute in this field is required;

HAVE AGREED as follows:

### Article I ESTABLISHMENT, LOCATION AND STATUS

1. The Parties to this Agreement hereby establish the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, as an intergovernmental organization, hereinafter referred to as the Institute.
2. The headquarters of the Institute shall be in Stockholm, unless the Council decides to relocate the Institute elsewhere. The Institute may establish offices in other locations as required to support its programme.
3. The Institute shall possess full juridical personality and enjoy such capacities as may be necessary to exercise its functions and fulfill its objectives, inter alia, the capacity to:

- a. acquire and dispose of real and personal property;
- b. enter into contracts and other types of agreements;
- c. employ persons and accept seconded personnel on loan;
- d. institute and defend in legal proceedings;
- e. invest the money and properties of the Institute; and
- f. take other lawful action necessary to accomplish the objectives of the Institute.

## Article II OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

1. The objectives of the Institute are:
  - a. to promote and advance sustainable democracy worldwide;
  - b. to improve and consolidate democratic electoral processes worldwide;
  - c. to broaden the understanding and promote the implementation and dissemination of the norms, rules and guidelines that apply to multi-party pluralism and democratic processes;
  - d. to strengthen and support national capacity to develop the full range of democratic instruments;
  - e. to provide a meeting place for exchanges between all those involved in electoral processes in the context of democratic institution building;
  - f. to increase knowledge and enhance learning about democratic electoral processes; and
  - g. to promote transparency and accountability, professionalism and efficiency in the electoral process in the context of democratic development.
2. In order to accomplish the foregoing objectives, the Institute may engage in the following type of activities:
  - a. develop networks globally in the sphere of electoral processes;
  - b. establish and maintain information services;
  - c. provide advice, guidance and support on the role of government and opposition, political parties, electoral commissions, an independent judiciary, the media and other aspects of the electoral process in a pluralistic democratic context;
  - d. encourage research and the dissemination and application of research findings within the Institute's sphere of competence;
  - e. organize and facilitate seminars, workshops and training on free and fair elections in the context of pluralistic democratic systems; and
  - f. engage in other activities related to elections and democracy as the need arises.

## Article III COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

1. The Institute may establish cooperative relationships with other organizations, including international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, with a view to furthering the objectives of the Institute.
2. The Institute may also invite organizations with which it shares similar objectives in democracy building, to enter into a strategic partnership for mutual cooperation on a medium or long-term basis.

## Article IV MEMBERSHIP

1. Members of the Institute are Governments of States Parties to this Agreement.
2. To qualify for membership, States need to:

- a. subscribe to the objectives and activities of the Institute, as stated in Article II, undertake to further these objectives and support activities and to assist the Institute to carry out its programme of work;
  - b. demonstrate, by example in their own State, their commitment to the rule of law, human rights, the basic principles of democratic pluralism and strengthening democracy; and
  - c. undertake to engage in the governance of the Institute and share in the financing responsibility, in accordance with Article V.
3. Membership may be suspended for members who no longer meet the requirements of paragraph 2 of this Article. A decision on suspension is taken by the Council by a two-thirds majority.

#### Article V FINANCE

1. The Institute shall obtain its financial resources through such means as voluntary contributions and donations by governments and others; programme sponsorship or project funding; publications and other revenue; interest income from trusts, endowments and investments.
2. Members are encouraged to support the Institute by annual contributions, programme sponsorship, project funding and/or other means.
3. Members shall not be responsible, individually or collectively, for any debts, liabilities or obligations of the Institute.

#### Article VI ORGANS

The Institute shall consist of a Council, a Board of Advisers and a Secretariat.

#### Article VII THE COUNCIL

1. The Council shall be composed of one representative of each Member.
2. The Council shall meet once a year in ordinary sessions. An extraordinary session of the Council shall be convened upon the initiative of one-fifth of its Members.
3. The Council shall adopt its rules of procedure.
4. The Council shall:
  - a. elect one Chair and two Vice Chairs;
  - b. appoint the Secretary-General, for a term of up to five years, subject to renewal;
  - c. appoint individuals to the Institute's Board of Advisers; and
  - d. appoint the Auditors.
5. The Council shall:
  - a. give the overall direction to the Institute's work;
  - b. review progress in meeting its objectives;
  - c. approve the annual work programme and budget;
  - d. approve the audited financial statements;
  - e. approve new Members by a two-thirds majority;
  - f. approve suspension of Members by a two-thirds majority;
  - g. issue by laws and guidelines, as required;
  - h. set up committees and/or working groups, as required; and
  - i. perform all other functions necessary to promote and protect the interests of the Institute.

6. The Council shall in principle take decisions by consensus. If no consensus is reached, despite efforts made, the Chair may decide to proceed to a vote. A vote shall also be held if so requested by a Member. Except where this Agreement provides otherwise, a decision shall be taken by a simple majority of the votes cast. Each Member shall be entitled to one vote, and in the case of an equality of votes, the Chair may cast the deciding vote. Between Council meetings, decisions may be taken by written procedure.
7. The Council may invite observers to its meetings.
8. The Council shall appoint a Steering Committee composed of the Council Chair and the two Vice Chairs, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board of Advisers and a representative of the country in which the Institute has its headquarters. The Secretary-General shall be an ex-officio member of the Steering Committee. The Council may appoint other individuals to serve on the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee shall prepare meetings of the Council and act to further the interests of the Institute between Council meetings. The Council may delegate matters to the Steering Committee.

#### Article VIII THE BOARD OF ADVISERS

1. The Institute shall be assisted by a Board of Advisers of up to 15 members who shall be eminent personalities or experts from a wide variety of backgrounds. They shall be selected on the basis of their accomplishments and experience, whether professional or academic, in areas of importance for the activities of the Institute such as the field of law, electoral processes, politics, political science, peace building, conflict management and civil society. They shall serve in their personal capacities and not as representatives of governments or organizations. A member of the Board of Advisers shall be appointed for a term of up to three years and may be reappointed.
2. Members of the Board of Advisers shall be invited to perform tasks to strengthen the Institute and its mission and to enhance the quality and impact of its programme. They may be invited to represent the Institute and in other ways contribute to its activities. The Institute may organize an annual forum with the Board of Advisers and may also arrange meetings at national and/or regional level.
3. The Board of Advisers shall elect among themselves a Chair and a Vice Chair who will also be members of the Steering Committee. The members of the Board of Advisers may particularly be invited to comment and give advice on membership issues and on the selection of the Secretary-General.

#### Article IX THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND THE SECRETARIAT

1. The Institute shall have a Secretariat headed by a Secretary-General who shall be responsible to the Council.
2. The Secretary-General shall in particular:
  - a. provide strategic leadership for the Institute;
  - b. report on the overall implementation of the Institute's activities; and
  - c. represent the Institute externally and develop strong relations with Member States and other constituencies.
3. The Secretary General shall appoint staff as required to carry out the programme of the Institute.

Article X  
STATUS, PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES

The Institute and its officials shall enjoy status, privileges and immunities comparable to those set out in the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations of 13 February 1946. The status, privileges and immunities of the Institute and its officials in the host country shall be specified in a headquarters agreement. The status, privileges and immunities of the Institute and its officials in other countries shall be specified in separate agreements concluded between the Institute and the country in which the Institute performs its functions.

Article XI  
EXTERNAL AUDITORS

A financial audit of the operations of the Institute shall be conducted on an annual basis by an independent international accounting firm in accordance with international auditing standards.

Article XII  
DEPOSITARY

1. The Secretary General shall be the Depositary of this Agreement.
2. The Secretary-General shall communicate all notifications relating to the Agreement to all Members.
3. The Secretary-General shall communicate to all members the date of entry into force of amendments in accordance with Article XIV paragraph 2.

Article XIII  
DISSOLUTION

1. The Institute may be dissolved, if a fourfifths majority of all Member States determines that the Institute is no longer required or that it is no longer able to function effectively.
2. In case of dissolution, any assets of the Institute which remain after payment of its legal obligations shall be distributed to institutions having objectives similar to those of the Institute as decided by the Council.

Article XIV  
AMENDMENTS

1. This Agreement may be amended by a two thirds majority vote of all the Parties to it. A proposal for such an amendment shall be circulated at least eight weeks in advance.
2. Amendments will enter into force thirty days after the date on which two-thirds of the Parties have notified the Depositary that they have fulfilled the formalities required by national legislation with respect to the amendments. It shall then be binding on all Members.

Article XV  
WITHDRAWAL

1. Any Party to this Agreement may withdraw from it. A Party wishing to withdraw from this Agreement, shall give written notice to the Depositary six months in advance of its formal notification, to allow the Institute to inform the other Parties to this Agreement and to initiate discussions as required.