

No. 31139

MULTILATERAL

**Charter of the Commonwealth of Independent States (with
declaration and decisions). Adopted at Minsk on 22 Jan-
uary 1993**

Authentic text: Russian.

*Registered by Executive Secretariat of the Commonwealth of Independent
States, acting on behalf of the Parties, on 3 August 1994.*

MULTILATÉRAL

**Charte de la communauté des États indépendants (avec
déclaration et décisions). Adoptée à Minsk le 22 janvier
1993**

Texte authentique : russe.

*Enregistrée par le Secrétariat exécutif du Commonwealth des États indé-
pendants, agissant au nom des Parties, le 3 août 1994.*

[TRANSLATION — TRADUCTION]¹CHARTER² OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES

The States voluntarily united into the Commonwealth of Independent States (hereinafter referred to as Commonwealth),

proceeding from the historic community of their peoples and from the relations established among them,

acting in accordance with the universally recognized principles and norms of international law, the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations Organization, Helsinki Final Act³ and other documents of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe,

aspiring to ensure economic and social progress of their peoples by means of joint efforts,

with firm resolve to realize the provisions of the Agreement on Foundation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Protocol to this Agreement as well as the items of Alma Ata Declaration,

developing cooperation among their countries to ensure world peace and security, as well as with the aim to maintain civil peace and national accord,

¹ Translation provided by the Executive Secretariat of the Commonwealth of Independent States — Traduction fournie par le Secrétariat exécutif du Commonwealth des États indépendants.

² Came into force on 22 January 1994, i.e., one year after the Charter had been adopted, for the following States which had deposited their instrument of ratification with the Government of Belarus by that date, in accordance with article 41:

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Date of deposit of the instrument of ratification</i>
Azerbaijan.....	14 December 1993
Belarus	18 January 1994
Russian Federation	20 July 1993
Tajikistan.....	14 August 1993

Subsequently, the Convention came into force one year after the Charter had been adopted in respect of each of the following countries after they deposited their instrument of ratification with the Government of Belarus by that date, in accordance with article 41:

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Date of deposit of the instrument of ratification</i>
Uzbekistan.....	9 February 1994
(With effect from 9 February 1994.)	
Armenia	16 March 1994
(With effect from 16 March 1994.)	
Kyrgyzstan	12 April 1994
(With effect from 12 April 1994.)	
Georgia.....	19 April 1994
(With effect from 19 April 1994.)	
Kazakstan.....	20 April 1994
(With effect from 20 April 1994.)	
Republic of Moldova*	27 June 1994
(With effect from 27 June 1994.)	

* For the text of the reservation made upon ratification, see p. 98 of this volume.

³ *International Legal Materials*, vol. XIV (1975), p. 1292 (American Society of International Law).

wishing to provide conditions for preservation and development of cultures of all the peoples of member states,

aspiring to improve mechanisms and to enhance the efficiency of the Commonwealth cooperation,

have resolved to adopt the Charter of the Commonwealth and agreed upon the following:

CHAPTER I. PURPOSES AND PRINCIPLES

Article 1

The Commonwealth shall be based on sovereign equality of its members. The member states shall be independent and equal subjects of international law. The Commonwealth shall serve further development and enhancement of the relations of friendship, good neighbourhood, inter-ethnic accord, confidence, mutual understanding and mutually beneficial cooperation among member states.

The Commonwealth shall not be a state and shall not be supranational.

Article 2

The purposes of the Commonwealth shall be:

accomplishment of cooperation in political, economic, ecologic, humanitarian and other spheres,

the all-round balanced economic and social development of member states within the framework of common economic space, the interstate cooperation and integration,

ensurance of the rights and basic freedoms of individuals in accordance with the universally recognized principles and norms of international law and documents of CSCE,

cooperation among member states to ensure world peace and security, realization of effective measures aimed at the reduction of arms and military expenditures, elimination of nuclear and other kinds of mass extermination weapons, achievement of the general and complete disarmament.

promotion of freedom of communications, contacts and travels in the Commonwealth for the citizens of its member states,

mutual legal assistance and cooperation in other spheres of legal relations,

pacific settlement of disputes and conflicts among the states of the Commonwealth.

Article 3

With the view to attain the objectives of the Commonwealth and proceeding from the generally recognized norms of international law and from Helsinki Final Act, the member states shall build their relations in accordance with the following correlated and equivalent principles:

- respect for sovereignty of member states, for imprescriptible right of peoples for self-determination and for the right to dispose their destiny without interference from outside

- inviolability of state frontiers, recognition of existing frontiers and renouncement of illegal acquisition of territories,

- territorial integrity of states and refrain from any acts aimed at separation of foreign territory,

- refrain from the use of force or of the threat of force against political independence of a member state,

- settlement of disputes by peaceful means, which can cause no danger to international peace, security and justice,

- domination of international law in the interstate relations

- non-interference into domestic and foreign affairs of each other

- ensurance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, ethnic background, language, religion, political and other views,

- fulfilment in good faith of the obligations assumed in accordance with the documents of the Commonwealth, the present Charter being one of them.

- concern for the interests of each other and of the entire Commonwealth, rendering assistance in all the spheres of their relations based on mutual accord.

- bringing together the efforts and rendering support to each other with the aim to establish peaceful conditions of life for the peoples of the Commonwealth member states, to ensure their political, economic and social advancement,

- development of mutually beneficial economic, scientific and technical cooperation, the expansion of integrational processes,

- spiritual unity of their peoples, which is based on respect for their uniqueness, close cooperation in preservation cultural values and cultural exchange.

Article 4

The spheres of joint activity of the member states, based on equality of rights, and realized by common coordinating institutes in accordance with the obligations, assumed by the member states within the framework of the Commonwealth, shall be as follows:

- ensurance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

- coordination of foreign political activities,

- cooperation in formation and development of common economic space, common European markets, customs policy,

cooperation in development of transport and communication systems,
health care and protection of environment,
issues of social and migration policy,
struggle against organized criminality,
cooperation in the field of defence policy and protection of external frontiers.
The present list may be supplemented on the mutual agreement of member states.

Article 5

The multilateral and bilateral agreements in various spheres of relations among the member states shall be a fundamental legal base for the interstate relations.

The agreements concluded within the framework of the Commonwealth shall correspond to the purposes and principles of the Commonwealth, to the obligations of the member states under the present Charter.

Article 6

The member states shall assist in cooperation and development of links between state organs, public associations, economic structures.

CHAPTER II. MEMBERSHIP

Article 7

The original members of the Commonwealth shall be the states which have signed and ratified the Agreement on the Foundation of the Commonwealth of Independent States of December 8, 1991 and the Protocol to this Agreement of December 21, 1991 by the moment this Charter is adopted.

The member states of the Commonwealth shall be the original members which have assumed the obligations contained in the present Charter within one year after its having been adopted by the Council of Heads of States.

The membership of the Commonwealth is open to any state sharing the purposes and the principles of the Commonwealth and assuming the obligations under the present Charter, should all the members agree to it.