

# Statute of Amnesty International

*As amended by the 28th International Council, meeting in Morelos, Mexico, 11 to 17 August 2007*

## VISION AND MISSION

1. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL's *vision* is of a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments. In pursuit of this vision, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL's *mission* is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of these rights.

## CORE VALUES

2. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL forms a global community of human rights defenders with the principles of international solidarity, effective action for the individual victim, global coverage, the universality and indivisibility of human rights, impartiality and independence, and democracy and mutual respect.

## METHODS

3. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL addresses governments, intergovernmental organizations, armed political groups, companies and other non-state actors. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL seeks to disclose human rights abuses accurately, quickly and persistently. It systematically and impartially researches the facts of individual cases and patterns of human rights abuses. These findings are publicized, and members, supporters and staff mobilize public pressure on governments and others to stop the abuses. In addition to its work on specific abuses of human rights, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL urges all governments to observe the rule of law, and to ratify and implement human rights standards; it carries out a wide range of human rights educational activities; and it encourages intergovernmental organizations, individuals, and all organs of society to support and respect human rights.

## INTEGRATED STRATEGIC PLAN

4. There will be at all times for AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL an Integrated Strategic Plan covering a period of six years.

## ORGANIZATION

5. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL is an organization based on worldwide voluntary membership and it shall consist of sections, structures, international networks, affiliated groups and international members.
6. Ultimate authority for the conduct of the affairs of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL is vested in the International Council. The primary functions of the International Council are:
  - (i) to focus on strategy;
  - (ii) to set AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL's vision, mission and core values;
  - (iii) to determine AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL's Integrated

- (iv) Strategic Plan including its financial strategy;
  - (v) to establish systems and bodies of governance and delegation for the movement, to elect members to those bodies, and to hold those bodies and their members accountable;
  - (vi) to evaluate the movement's performance against its agreed strategies and plans;
  - (vii) to hold sections, structures and other bodies accountable.
7. There is an International Executive Committee. The primary role of the International Executive Committee is to provide leadership and stewardship for the whole of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL worldwide. The functions of the International Executive Committee are:
- (i) to take international decisions on behalf of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL;
  - (ii) to ensure that there is a sound financial policy for AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL and that the financial policy is consistently implemented across the international organization;
  - (iii) to ensure implementation of the Integrated Strategic Plan;
  - (iv) to make any necessary adjustments to the Integrated Strategic Plan and other decisions of the International Council;
  - (v) to ensure compliance with the Statute;
  - (vi) to ensure human resources development;
  - (vii) to hold sections, structures and other bodies of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL accountable for their functioning by presenting reports to the International Council;
  - (viii) to perform the other functions conferred on it by the Statute.
8. The day-to-day affairs of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL shall be conducted by the International Secretariat headed by a Secretary General under the direction of the International Executive Committee.
9. The office of the International Secretariat shall be in London or such other place as the International Executive Committee shall decide and which is ratified by at least one half of the sections.
10. Responsibility for AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL work on abuses of human rights in any country or territory, including the collection and evaluation of information, and the sending of delegations, lies with the international governing bodies of the organization, and not with the section, structure, groups or members in the country or territory concerned.

## **SECTIONS**

11. A section of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL may be established in any country, state, territory or region with the consent of the International Executive Committee. In order to be recognized as such, a section shall:
- (i) prior to its recognition have demonstrated its ability to organize and maintain basic AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL activities;
  - (ii) submit its Statute to the International Executive Committee for approval;
  - (iii) pay such annual fee as may be determined by the International Council;
  - (iv) be registered as such with the International Secretariat on the decision of the International Executive Committee.

Sections shall take no action on matters that do not fall within the stated vision

and mission of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. The International Secretariat shall maintain a register of sections. Sections shall act in accordance with the core values and methods of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, as well as any Integrated Strategic Plans, working rules and guidelines that are adopted from time to time by the International Council.

## **STRUCTURES**

12. An AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL structure is an AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL national or regional body established by the International Executive Committee, to promote and implement the movement's vision and mission. The purpose of a structure is to coordinate a sustained programme of human rights activities and consolidate its national or regional organization. A structure must consist of at least a board and active volunteers, unless otherwise determined by the International Executive Committee, and must meet any other criteria determined by the International Executive Committee.

## **INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS**

13. An AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL "International Network" exists to promote and implement the movement's vision and mission, primarily on the basis of a specific theme or identity.

An International Network must meet the following requirements:

- (i) have AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL members from at least five different sections and/or structures;
- (ii) have AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL members from at least two International Secretariat programme regions;
- (iii) be theme or identity based;
- (iv) have terms of reference that meet the Statute and core values of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL;
- (v) have terms of reference approved by the International Executive Committee;
- (vi) be formally recognized by, and registered with, the International Executive Committee.

## **AFFILIATED GROUPS**

14. Groups of not less than five members may, on payment of an annual fee determined by the International Council, become affiliated to AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL or a section thereof. Any dispute as to whether a group should be or remain affiliated shall be decided by the International Executive Committee. An affiliated adoption group shall accept for adoption such prisoners as may from time to time be allotted to it by the International Secretariat, and shall adopt no others as long as it remains affiliated to AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. No group shall be allotted a prisoner of conscience detained in its own country. Each section shall maintain and make available to the International Secretariat a register of affiliated AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL groups. Groups in a country, state, territory or region without a section shall be registered with the International Secretariat. Groups shall take no action on matters that do not fall within the stated vision and mission of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. Groups shall act in accordance with the core values and methods of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, as well

as any Integrated Strategic Plans, working rules and guidelines that are adopted from time to time by the International Council.

## **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP**

15. An individual member of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL is any person who contributes to the advancement of the mission of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, who acts in accordance with the core values and policies of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, and who has been recognized and registered as a member by an AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL section, structure or affiliated group by virtue of payment of annual dues or having been granted a dues waiver.
- Individuals residing in countries, states, territories, or regions where there is no section or structure and who are not members of an affiliated group, may, on payment to the International Secretariat of an annual subscription fee determined by the International Executive Committee, become international members of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. In countries where a section or structure exists, individuals may become international members of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL with the consent of the section or structure and of the International Executive Committee. The International Secretariat shall maintain a register of such international members.

## **INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL**

16. The International Council shall consist of the members of the International Executive Committee and of representatives of sections and structures and shall meet at intervals of not more than two years on a date fixed by the International Executive Committee. Only representatives of sections and structures shall have the right to vote at the International Council.
17. All sections and structures shall have the right to appoint one representative to the International Council. In addition, a section may appoint:
- |                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| more than 250 members    | 1 representative  |
| more than 2,500 members  | 2 representatives |
| more than 15,000 members | 3 representatives |
| more than 40,000 members | 4 representatives |
| more than 80,000 members | 5 representatives |
- or, if a section so chooses:
- |                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 10 – 49 groups      | 1 representative  |
| 50 – 99 groups      | 2 representatives |
| 100 – 199 groups    | 3 representatives |
| 200 – 399 groups    | 4 representatives |
| 400 groups and over | 5 representatives |

Only sections having paid in full their annual fee as assessed by the International Council for the two previous financial years shall vote at the International Council. This requirement may be waived in whole or in part by the International Council.

If a section has not provided its standardized financial report to the International Secretariat within three months of the final date for submission on each of the last two occasions such a report was required, the section is not entitled to vote at the International Council. This requirement may be waived in whole or in part by the International Council.

18. The International Executive Committee may invite to the International Council delegates from international networks and other individuals as non-voting participants.
19. A section or structure unable to participate at an International Council may appoint a proxy or proxies to vote on its behalf and a section represented by a lesser number of persons than its entitlement under Article 17 hereof may authorize its representative or representatives to cast votes up to its maximum entitlement under Article 17 hereof.
20. Notice of the number of representatives proposing to attend an International Council, and of the appointment of proxies, shall be given to the International Secretariat not later than one month before the meeting of the International Council. This requirement may be waived by the International Executive Committee.
21. A quorum shall consist of the representatives or proxies of not less than one quarter of the sections and structures entitled to be represented.
22. The Chairperson of the International Council and an alternate shall be elected by the preceding International Council. The Chairperson or, in his or her absence, the alternate, shall preside at the International Council. In the absence of the Chairperson and the alternate, the Chairperson of the International Executive Committee or such other person as the International Executive Committee may appoint shall open the proceedings of the International Council which shall elect a Chairperson. Thereafter the elected Chairperson, or such other person as the Chairperson may appoint, shall preside at the International Council.
23. Except as otherwise provided in the Statute, the International Council shall make its decisions by a simple majority of the votes cast. In case of an equality of votes the Chairperson of the International Council shall have a casting vote.
24. The International Council shall be convened by the International Secretariat by notice to all sections and structures not later than 90 days before the date thereof.
25. The Chairperson of the International Executive Committee shall at the request of the Committee or of not less than one third of the sections and structures call an extraordinary meeting of the International Council by giving not less than 21 days' notice in writing to all sections and structures.
26. The International Council shall elect a Treasurer, who shall be a member of the International Executive Committee.
27. The agenda for the meetings of the International Council shall be prepared by the International Secretariat under the direction of the Chairperson of the International Executive Committee.

## **INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

28. The International Executive Committee shall consist of the Treasurer and eight regular members, who shall be individual or international members of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. The regular members and Treasurer shall be elected by the International Council. Not more than one member in any section, structure or affiliated group, or international member of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL voluntarily resident in a country, state or territory in which there is no section or structure, may be elected as a regular member of the Committee, and once such a member has received sufficient votes to be elected, any votes cast for other members in that section, structure or affiliated

- group, or for international members resident in that country, state or territory, shall be disregarded.
29. The International Executive Committee shall meet not less than twice a year at a place to be decided by itself.
  30. Members of the International Executive Committee shall hold office for a period of two years and shall be eligible for re-election for a maximum tenure of three consecutive terms.
  31. The Committee may co-opt not more than two additional members who shall hold office until the close of the next meeting of the International Council; they shall be eligible to be re-co-opted once. Co-opted members shall not have the right to vote.
  32. In the event of a vacancy occurring on the Committee, it may co-opt a further member to fill the vacancy until the next meeting of the International Council, which shall elect such members as are necessary to replace retiring members and to fill the vacancy.
  33. If a member of the Committee is unable to attend a meeting, such member may appoint an alternate.
  34. The Committee shall each year appoint one of its members to act as Chairperson.
  35. The Chairperson may, and at the request of the majority of the Committee shall, summon meetings of the Committee.
  36. A quorum shall consist of not fewer than five members of the Committee or their alternates.
  37. The agenda for meetings of the Committee shall be prepared by the International Secretariat under the direction of the Chairperson.
  38. The Committee may make regulations for the conduct of the affairs of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL and for the procedure to be followed at the International Council, and may take such steps as it sees fit to establish and maintain a system of effective committees, including standing committees, intermediate structures, or other forums, in support of its functions.

## **INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT**

39. The International Executive Committee may appoint a Secretary General who shall be responsible under its direction for the conduct of the affairs of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL and for the implementation of the decisions of the International Council.
40. The Secretary General may appoint senior executive staff in close cooperation with the International Executive Committee, and may appoint all other staff as are necessary for the proper conduct of the affairs of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL.
41. In the case of the absence or illness of the Secretary General, or of a vacancy in the post of Secretary General, the Chairperson of the International Executive Committee shall, after consultation with the members of that Committee, appoint an Acting Secretary General to act until the next meeting of the Committee.
42. The Secretary General or Acting Secretary General and such members of the International Secretariat as may appear to the Chairperson of the International Executive Committee to be necessary shall attend meetings of the International Council and of the International Executive Committee and may speak thereat but shall not be entitled to vote.

## **TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

43. Membership of or affiliation to AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL may be terminated at any time by resignation in writing.
44. The International Executive Committee may impose sanctions (which may consist of a warning, intervention, temporary suspension or permanent exclusion or closure) on any section, structure, international network, affiliated group, or international member if in its opinion that section, structure, international network, affiliated group, or international member does not act within the spirit of the vision, mission, core values and methods set out in Articles 1, 2 and 3 or does not organize and maintain basic AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL activities, or does not observe any of the provisions of this Statute, and constitutes an immediate threat to the reputation, integrity or operation of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL.

None of these sanctions shall be imposed until the concerned section, structure, international network, affiliated group, or international member is informed in writing of the grounds of the sanctions. When closure of a section is the sanction under consideration, all other sections shall also be informed in the same manner before such an action is taken.

In the case of closure or permanent exclusion, the concerned section, structure, international network, affiliated group, or international member shall be provided with an opportunity to make its or such international member's case to the International Executive Committee within six months before the sanction of closure or permanent exclusion is imposed.

Once the International Executive Committee has decided to impose any sanction in respect of a section, structure, international network, affiliated group, or international member, the party concerned may appeal to the Membership Appeals Committee. This committee shall consist of five members and two alternate members who shall be elected by the International Council in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as provided for in Article 28 for the International Executive Committee.

During any period of temporary suspension, or once closure or permanent exclusion has been agreed, a section, structure, international network, affiliated group, or international member may no longer represent or use the name of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL.

## **FINANCE**

45. An auditor appointed by the International Council shall annually audit the accounts of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, which shall be prepared by the International Secretariat and presented to the International Executive Committee and the International Council.
46. No part of the income or property of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL shall directly or indirectly be paid or transferred otherwise than for valuable and sufficient consideration to any of its members by way of dividend, gift, division, bonus or otherwise howsoever by way of profit.

## **AMENDMENTS OF STATUTE**

47. The Statute may be amended by the International Council by a majority of not less than two thirds of the votes cast. Amendments may be submitted by the International Executive Committee or by a section or structure. Proposed

amendments shall be submitted to the International Secretariat not less than seven months before the International Council meets, and presentation to the International Council shall be supported in writing by at least five sections or structures. Proposed amendments shall be communicated by the International Secretariat to all sections and structures and to members of the International Executive Committee.

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