

UNION OF AFRICAN PARLIAMENTS

CONSTITUTION

ADOPTED IN ABIDJAN

The 13th of February 1976

Amended in Nouakchott

The 10th of February 1977

PREAMBLE

We Speakers and Representatives of African Parliament meeting in Abidjan from 11 to 13 February 1976;

FAITHFUL to the spirit, principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter and that of the Organization of African Unity;

DESIROUS to see all African Parliaments united to ensure freedom, equality, justice and dignity to the African peoples;

CONSIDERING the common objectives of African Parliaments;

GUIDED by the common will to develop relations of co-operation and friendship among African Parliaments;

AWARE of the necessity to develop the Parliamentary Institution in Africa and enhancing its prestige;

DECIDED to strengthen ties and maintaining permanent exchanges among African Parliaments by establishing a Common Organization.;

DETERMINED to enforce the Abidjan Declaration of 27 January 1975,

HAVE DECIDED to establish the UNION OF AFRICAN PARLIAMENTS, and agreed on the following:

P A R T I

CONSTITUTION, HEADQUARTERS AND OBJECTIVES

ARTICLE 1

A regional organisation called "Union of African Parliaments" (U.A.P.) shall be established.

ARTICLE 2

The Headquarters of the Union shall be sited in Abidjan.

It may be transferred to any other city by decision of the Conference.

ARTICLE 3

The Union of African Parliaments shall have the following objectives:

- to contribute:

- to strengthening the role and enhance the prestige of the parliamentary institution by drawing inspiration from basic African values;
- to ensure that effective freedom, justice and democracy prevail;
- to encourage contacts between African Parliamentarians on one hand, and other Parliamentarians in the rest of the world on the other;
- to work towards the gradual establishment of a true legal African community based on political, economic social and cultural realities of the Continent;
- to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Organisation of African Unity for the establishment of a durable peace through dialogue, within the context of inter-African cooperation, and a policy of good neighbourliness, of non-alignment of peaceful co-existence and African grouping.

PART II

COMPOSITION OF THE UNION

ARTICLE 4

The Union of African Parliaments shall be composed of Parliaments of States, members of the Organization of African Unity, which shall accede to the present Constitution.

ARTICLE 5

Each Parliament shall constitute a National Group

ARTICLE 6

The National Group shall:

be duty bound to take all necessary measures to publicize and implement the decision, resolutions or recommendations of the Conference, and those of the Executive Committee.

participate in financing the UAP by paying an annual contribution, fixed according to a scale set by the Executive Committee.

takes all necessary measures for participating in the Union's deliberations with a view to maintain close ties with the General Secretariat to which it submits, every year, a report of its activities and a list of its members.

ARTICLE 7

Only Parliamentarians shall be members of the National Group.

However, former Parliamentarians or other African prominent figures who have rendered great services to the Union of African Parliaments, or to Africa, may be admitted to the Union as honorary members upon suggestion of a National Group.

PART III

BODIES OF THE UNION

ARTICLE 8

The Bodies of the Union shall be the conference, the Bureau, the Executive Committee and the General Secretariat

CHAPTER I : THE CONFERENCE

ARTICLE 9

The Conference shall be composed of delegates designated by National groups.

Countries where there is no Parliamentary system, as well as International and Inter-regional Organisations may attend the meetings of the Conference, if they shall apply for the status of observer.

ARTICLE 10

The Conference shall be the supreme body of the Union; it shall be responsible for all matters of policy and such activities as defined by this Constitution.

It shall discuss important questions concerning the Union, Africa and the world and shall transmit its recommendations to the Governments and organisations concerned.

It shall elect the President of the Union from among the Presidents of the national groups who shall be ex-officio Vice-Presidents.

It shall elect the members of the Executive Committee.

It shall adopt any modification or amendment to the Constitution.

ARTICLE 11

The Conference shall meet every year in ordinary session.

It may be convened in extra-ordinary session:

- by decision of the Bureau of the Union,
- at the proposal of the Executive Committee,
- at the request of two-thirds of the national groups.

ARTICLE 12

The structures and functioning of the Conference shall be defined by the Rules of Procedure.

CHAPTER III: THE BUREAU

ARTICLE 13

The Bureau of the Union shall be composed of the President and Vice Presidents of the Union.

ARTICLE 14

The meeting of the Bureau shall be convened by the President.

ARTICLE 15

The functions of the Bureau shall be to:

- convene the Conference and draw up the agenda;
- submit the nomination of the Secretary-General and his assistant to the Conference.
- take all necessary measures to achieve the aims of the Union in between the sessions of the Conference.
- strengthen co-operation with other international organisations.

ARTICLE 16

The structures and functioning of the Bureau shall be defined by the Rules of Procedure.

CHAPTER III: THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

ARTICLE 17

The Executive Committee shall be composed of one representative of each national group who may be replaced by a previously appointed alternate.

It shall elect a Bureau comprising:

- a chairman
- a vice-chairman
- a rapporteur.

The term of office of the Executive Committee and its Bureau shall cover the period between one ordinary session and the next.

ARTICLE 18

The Executive Committee shall meet twice a year in ordinary session.

It may be convened in extra-ordinary session upon the decision of the Bureau of the Union or at initiative of one or several national groups subject to the approval of the absolute majority of the national groups.

ARTICLE 19

The functions of the Executive Committee shall be to:

- draw up the agenda of the Conference;
- submit resolutions,
- study all matters referred to it by the bodies of the Union.
To that end, it may set up standing or ad hoc committees.
- propose the acceptance and donations and gifts,
- draw up the annual budget and submit it to the Conference for approval,
- designate, each year, from among its members, two auditors and, on the basis of their report, approve the accounts of the previous financial year;
- propose the admission of new members,
- propose the adoption of the staff Rules and Regulations,
- propose the convening of the Conference in extra-ordinary session in conformity with Article 11.

ARTICLE 20

The structures and functioning of the Executive Committee shall be defined by the Rules of Procedure.

CHAPTER IV: GENERAL SECRETARIAT

ARTICLE 21

The General Secretariat shall be the main liaison body between the National Groups and between the Union and International Organisations.

It shall consist of a Secretary-General and an assistant Secretary-General.

The General Secretariat shall:

- prepare the questions for submission to the Executive Committee, the Bureau and the Conference and shall distribute, in due course, the necessary documents;
- ensure the implementation of the decisions of the Executive Committee, the Bureau and the Conference;
- keep the records and collect documents relating to the aims of the Union.

ARTICLE 22

The Secretary-General and the Assistant Secretary-General shall be appointed by the Conference at the proposal of the Bureau and shall be under the authority of the President.

ARTICLE 23

The members of the General Secretariat shall be international civil servants.

PART IV

FINANCIAL SOURCES OF THE UNION

ARTICLE 24

The financial sources of U A P shall be:

- annual and voluntary contributions of National Groups,
- donations and gifts:

The scale of contributions by the national groups and the condition for the execution of the budget shall be defined in accordance with Financial Rules.

ARTICLE 25

The Secretary-General shall be answerable to the Executive Committee on matters relating to financial management of the Union.

ARTICLE 26

The Secretary-General shall define the Financial Rules which shall be approved by the Executive Committee.

He shall prepare the Union's budget.

ARTICLE 27

Any National Group that will fail to pay up its annual contribution to the Union shall lose its voting right.

CHAPTER V
FINAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 28

The present Constitution may be amended after such amendments have been submitted in writing to the Executive Committee six months before the holding of the Conference.

These amendments shall be approved by a two-third majority of the national groups.

ARTICLE 29

The present Constitution shall come into force at least six Parliaments shall have acceded to it.

The instruments of this accession shall be deposited with the Union's Headquarters.

ARTICLE 30

The Rules of Procedure, proposed by the Executive Committee for the approval of the Conference, shall determine the mode of application of the present contribution.

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