

International Peace Bureau Constitution

Approved unanimously by the IPB Board, 23 February 2022, & Council, 7 March 2022

1. Name

The name of the organization is the International Peace Bureau (IPB).

2. Legal Status

The IPB is an association as defined by Art.60 et seq of the Swiss legal code. Its legal domicile is Geneva.

3. Aims and Responsibilities

The IPB is an international non-governmental peace organization, an international worldwide network for peace and disarmament, working towards a world without wars and striving for global justice. It exists to serve the cause of peace by the promotion of disarmament, the non-violent prevention and resolution of conflicts, and international cooperation.

IPB is politically and religiously neutral, but it firmly believes that peace is best reached and maintained when all human communities from the local to the global level are governed according to democratic principles.

IPB affirms the importance of multilateralism and of working through the UN system. Members of the IPB commit themselves to working together as a network to share ideas, information, resources, and to create joint projects.

To realize these aims and commitments, the IPB maintains an International Board, which is responsible for:

- a. facilitating communication between groups and individuals working for peace, and aiding in the sharing of ideas, resources, and information;
- b. organizing international conferences and seminars;
- c. representing and assisting the membership at the United Nations, other

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- international forums, and diplomatic missions;
- d. issuing publications and other materials;
 - e. campaigning internationally on peace issues;
 - f. carrying out research;
 - g. working in liaison with offices representing IPB around the world; and
 - h. carrying out such other tasks as agreed by the membership and their representatives.

4. Equality and Diversity

- a. **Inclusivity:** We are committed to and welcome the inclusion and recognition of all, regardless of race, age, culture, ability, ethnicity or nationality, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, marital status, religious affiliation, socio-economic status, or any other part of an individual's identity. We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All members of the organization will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds.
- b. **Diversity:** We respect and welcome that our members, supporters, and those we come into contact with reflect a variety of perspectives, backgrounds and a wide range of lived experiences. We believe that the affirmation of this diversity is of both intrinsic and instrumental value to our work. To this end, we seek to foster inclusivity and diversity within our membership and throughout IPB's activities. We are committed to supporting a wide range of identities and social, cultural, and political needs in the development and planning of the IPB.
- c. **Commitment:** IPB is actively striving towards and committed to providing an inclusive space. Specifically, working towards an equal representation of regional and gender diversity within all levels of the organizations.

5. Membership

a. Categories

IPB has four categories of membership:

i. **Full members:**

1. National/international peace organizations
2. Local/area peace organizations
3. Individual members, including life members and honorary members.
4. Associated Members (for whom peace is one of many issues)

b. Eligibility

Any organization or individual who supports the aims of the IPB may apply for membership. All applicants must fill in an application form and submit it to the Secretariat.

c. **Granting/withdrawal of membership**

The admission of new organizational members shall be decided by a two-thirds majority of votes cast at a meeting of the Council. Provisional membership may be granted by unanimous decision of the Board. Membership may be withdrawn by the decision of the same majority of members on the grounds that:

- i. the policy of the organization is no longer in conformity with that of the IPB;
- ii. that it is no longer active;

Equivalent provisions may be invoked in the case of individual members

6. Structure and Officers

The IPB has three policy-making bodies: the Assembly, the Council, and the Board.

The role of the Presidents is to coordinate the work of the decision-making bodies and to be the chief representative of the IPB in its external relations.

The role of the Treasurer is to take final responsibility for the administration of IPB funds and all financial reports.

The board shall appoint an Executive Director. The IPB Council may appoint an Honorary President at any time.

7. The IPB Assembly

- a. **Role:** The Assembly is the highest policy-making body of the IPB. It is also a forum for the exchange of ideas, information and resources.
- b. **Composition:** It is open to Council members, individuals belonging to IPB member organizations, individual IPB members and observers.
- c. **Meetings:** It meets at least once every three years, at a location decided and announced by the board at least five months before the meeting.
- d. **Functions:** It lays down broad guidelines for the policy of the organization in the period ahead. It is responsible for electing, on the recommendation of the outgoing Board: up to two Presidents, Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, and the members of the Board. All the above will serve for a term of 3 years. They may be re-nominated and re-elected for a 2nd term of three years. After 6 years continuous service, an Officer, Board member or Council member must stand down for 3 years before standing again for that post. The Board will be elected from the members of the new Council.
- e. **Voting:** As far as possible decisions shall be taken by consensus. In the event of a divided Assembly, the IPB's by laws have to be consulted regarding the appropriate voting procedure.

8. The IPB Council

- a. **Role:** The role of the IPB Council is to implement the policies decided by the Assembly, and to guide the work of officers, the Board, and staff. The Council is also a forum for the exchange of ideas, information and resources among its members.

- b. Composition:** The Council is composed of: President, Treasurer, Vice-Presidents and members of the Board and elected Council members.
- c. Meetings:** The Council meets at least once a year, including in years in which there is an IPB Assembly.
- d. Functions:** The Council is responsible for:
 - i.** reviewing the previous year's work;
 - ii.** reviewing and approving the accounts of the previous financial year;
 - iii.** discussing the priorities of IPB's future work and drawing up an action plan on the basis of a recommendation from the board;
 - iv.** approving the budget for the ensuing year and deciding the annual membership fees;
 - v.** appointing auditors;
 - vi.** appointing IPB's consultants, which is an honorary title given to individuals who have distinguished themselves in the service of peace;
 - vii.** deciding upon all other matters submitted to it by the board;
 - viii.** dealing with emergency items, which may be added to the agenda with the consent of the Council; and
 - ix.** reporting all its decisions to the members via the minutes.

9. IPB Board

- a. Role:** The Board shall exercise the authority of the IPB between meetings of the Council, and shall be responsible for the practical management of the organization between meetings of the Council.
- b. Composition:** It shall consist of the President, the Treasurer, the Vice Presidents and elected Board members.
- c. Meetings:** The board shall meet at least three times a year, either in person or by online conferencing.
- d. Functions:** The board shall:
 - i.** appoint the Executive Director;
 - ii.** set up and dissolve working groups;
 - iii.** oversee the finances and take decisions on authorizations;
 - iv.** implement the decisions of the Assembly and Council;
 - v.** report annually to the Council on the work it has done; and
 - vi.** take all other necessary decisions.

9. Finance

- a. Fees:** members shall pay annual membership fees, whose levels are to be determined by the Council, which shall also approve provisions for those, unable to pay the full fee.
- b. Fundraising:** shall be the responsibility of all members and shall be addressed at all levels of policy-making. The IPB staff is expected to research, prepare and advance proposals for funding

c. **The financial year:** shall begin on 1st January and end on 31st December.

10. Constitutional Revision

The present Constitution may be revised by the Assembly, following a recommendation from the Council. Any proposal for revision must be submitted to the board at least 6 months in advance of the next Council and shall be circulated to the IPB membership at least 4 months in advance of the next Council, where it shall be discussed.

11. Dissolution

A proposal for dissolution of the IPB must be submitted to the Assembly under the same conditions as for proposals for the revision of the Constitution. To carry a proposal for dissolution, a majority of four-fifths of the votes cast shall be necessary. Any assets remaining after the payment of liabilities shall be transferred to an international peace organization with similar aims.

12. Language and Judicial Forum

The original language of this Constitution is English. Translations are welcomed in any language.