

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

INTERNATIONAL
CONFEDERATION OF
CHRISTIAN FAMILY
MOVEMENTS

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CONSTITUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN FAMILY MOVEMENTS

I. ITS NATURE

DEFINITION

Article 1.

The Confederation is composed of the Christian Family Movements and other organizations that fulfil the requirements established in this Constitution.

OBJECTIVES

Article 2.

The objective of the Confederation is to promote, encourage and help the Christian Family Movements so that the organizations and their members live their human and Christian vocations and bear witness to the essential values of the family, based upon the faith as announced by the Gospel and proposed by the teachings of the Catholic Church. The Confederation shall support the expansion of the Christian Family Movement in those countries where it is established and will try to establish it where it does not exist.

MEMBERS

Article 3.

The Confederation shall be composed of three types of members:

Full Members

Associate Members

Supporting Members

- 3.1. Full Members of the Confederation are Christian Family Movements which have a national organization or its equivalent, according to the geographical or cultural characteristics of the country, and who accept this Constitution;
- 3.2. The movements that meet the following basic characteristics shall be considered Christian Family Movements, even though they may be called by another name;
 - 3.2.1 They shall be organized in small groups of couples, families, solo parents, widows, etc. who seek to become genuine family communities, who meet regularly participating in a formative process of Observe, Judge, and Act in the light of God's Word;
 - 3.2.2 They shall witness and minister to all families, especially to those in difficult situations such as the suffering and the poor;
 - 3.2.3 They shall share and work together as a team of couples, solo parents, widows, etc. and Chaplains to promote mutual growth;
 - 3.2.4 The family shall be the object and subject of evangelization as a result of a Christian formative process based on apostolic action.
- 3.3 Associate Members are lay organizations which share the Christian ideals of the Confederation and which are involved in working for the family;

- 3.4 Supporting Members are those organizations or centers which share the Christian ideals of the Confederation and which are involved in the study, research and promotion of the family.

FUNCTIONS OF THE CONFEDERATION

Article 4.

The Confederation shall coordinate the activities of all its members with their active collaboration. It requires this unity in order to fulfil the following:

- 4.1. To promote the Christian life and spirit of the families of the world through its members;
- 4.2. To motivate its members so that they may become aware that there are various types of families and their apostolate should be open to all of them;
- 4.3. To be the prophetic voice of families who have no voice in denouncing every form of injustice that afflicts and impedes them from fully realizing their function and mission;
- 4.4. To help its members to perceive the problems of the family using the resources of science and human knowledge in order to develop critical discernment so that they are capable of promoting just social conditions that make more effective the mission of building the Kingdom of God;
- 4.5. To promote the extension of the Christian Family Movement to those countries where it does not exist, in order to fully realize its world wide character.

II. ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURES

ON THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Article 5.

Each country shall design a national structure to respond to its local needs and those of the families it serves. The organizational structure, the statutes, the Bylaws and any other organizational document shall be sent to the Executive Secretariat of the Confederation for its knowledge and archives.

ON THE CONTINENTAL LEVEL

Article 6.

Each continent shall be organized in such a way as to group together all of its countries with the aim of achieving more effective communication among its members, and the exchange of experiences, methods of operation and formation.

Every three (3) or four (4) years, the members who constitute the continental structure shall elect by a majority vote a couple to preside over the organization.

The elected Continental President Couple shall appoint with the consensus of his Bishop or religious Superior a priest as their Chaplain who together with them shall form the President Continental Team. They may be re-elected only once.

If for any reason they cannot hold an election at the end of their term, they shall continue to be Continental President Couple with the approval of the President Team of the Confederation until an election can be held.

Regions or Sub-Regions shall be established by the Continental President Team when the geographic situation warrants it, with the approval of the President Team of the Confederation.

When the conditions of the Continent warrants it, the Continental President Team shall appoint representatives of Solo Parents who together with the Regional and Sub-Regional Couples, shall form a part of it.

The Continental structures shall establish procedures for their elections. They shall also establish criteria for nomination to the Continental Team, all with the approval of the President Team of the Confederation.

FUNCTIONS OF THE CONTINENTAL PRESIDENT TEAM

Article 7.

The Continental President Team shall have among others the following functions:

- 7.1. To promote interaction between the Christian Family Movements in their area;
- 7.2. To promote and expand the life and spirit of the Christian Family Movement through the National Teams;
- 7.3. To represent the Confederation at the Continental level;
- 7.4. To represent the Christian Family Movements of its Continent at the General Assembly of the Confederation;
- 7.5. To process applications for membership in the Confederation of the Christian Family Movements located within their geographical area. These applications shall be sent to the President Team of the Confederation to be submitted to the General Assembly;
- 7.6. To cooperate with other organizations concerned with the family, especially with those who are Associate or Supporting Members of the Confederation.

OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Article 8.

The General Assembly is the governing body of the Confederation.

- 8.1. It is composed of the following members:
 - 8.1.1. The Continental President Teams of Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, North America and Oceania;
 - 8.1.2. The President Team of the Confederation;
 - 8.1.3. The Past President Team of the Confederation;
 - 8.1.4. The Executive Secretariat as a non-voting member;
 - 8.1.5. Persons invited by the President Team of the Confederation as non-voting members.
- 8.2. The functions of the General Assembly are:
 - 8.2.1. To deliberate, decide and advise on issues of interest to its members;
 - 8.2.2. To publicly express its position on questions of international concern;
 - 8.2.3. To adopt resolutions which commit its members;
 - 8.2.4. To elect the President Couple of the Confederation and to ratify the nomination of the Chaplain and Vice-President Couple;
 - 8.2.5. To decide on the admission of new members to the Confederation;
 - 8.2.6. To decide on the exclusion of members when they do not comply with Article 3;
 - 8.2.7. To amend the Constitution;
 - 8.2.8. To establish the dues which shall be paid by the members to support the Confederation;
 - 8.2.9. To elect the couple who will preside over the sessions of the Assembly.
- 8.3. The ordinary meeting of the Assembly shall be held every three (3) years.

An extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly may be convened by the Executive Secretariat or by at least two thirds (2/3) of the Continental Teams when the need arises.

The quorum of the General Assembly will consist of representatives of two thirds (2/3) of the voting members or their proxies following at least one (1) month notice of the time and place of the meeting.

ON VOTING

Article 9.

Each Continental President Team shall have one (1) vote for each five (5) Full Members or fraction of five (5) Members that they represent in the General Assembly.

The Past President Team shall hold the right of one (1) vote.

The President Team shall hold the right of one (1) vote except in the case of a tie when their vote shall have double value.

In order to elect the President Couple of the Confederation, to adopt any resolutions, to admit new members, to exclude members, or to take positions on questions of international concern, it will be necessary to obtain a majority of at least two thirds (2/3) of the votes cast.

To amend this Constitution it is required:

- 9.1. To have included the proposed amendment on the agenda when notice of the meeting is given;
- 9.2. To obtain at least two thirds (2/3) of the votes cast for each amendment.

ON THE PRESIDENT COUPLE OF THE CONFEDERATION

Article 10.

The President Couple of the Confederation shall be elected by the General Assembly for a three (3) year period, eligible for re-election only once.

ON THE INTERNATIONAL CHAPLAIN

Article 11.

The International Chaplain should be a priest appointed by the President Couple of the Confederation with the consensus of the Apostolic See.

This appointment must be communicated to the General Assembly when elected, or later by letter as soon as possible for their ratification. Together with the President Couple of the Confederation he will form part of the President Team of the Confederation.

ON THE PAST PRESIDENT TEAM

Article 12.

When the new President Couple of the Confederation is elected and they have appointed their Chaplain, the outgoing President Team shall be known as the Past President Team. As such, they shall form part of the General Assembly and the Executive Secretariat.

ON THE VICE-PRESIDENT COUPLE

Article 13.

The President Couple on election shall inform the Assembly of the nomination of a Vice-President Couple. The Assembly shall ratify the nomination of this couple. They shall form part of the Executive Secretariat and shall replace the President Couple of the Confederation during the temporary or permanent absence of both spouses.

ON THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

Article 14.

The Executive Secretariat is the group that the President Team of the Confederation shall have to support them in their work. It shall be composed of the following:

- 14.1. The President Team of the Confederation;
- 14.2. The Past President Team;
- 14.3. The Vice-President Couple.

Each person of these categories shall have the right to one (1) vote. The following persons shall also form part as non-voting members:

- 14.4. The Chaircouples of the Committees;
- 14.5. The couples and persons appointed by the President Team of the Confederation.

ON THE FUNCTIONS OF THE PRESIDENT TEAM OF THE CONFEDERATION

Article 15.

The functions of the President Team of the Confederation are the following:

- 15.1. To implement the directions and decisions of the General Assembly;
- 15.2. To represent and be the voice of the Confederation at the international level;
- 15.3. To establish and maintain relations with international organizations of any nature;
- 15.4. To promote the expansion of the Christian Family Movement in countries where it already exists and to expand it to those where it does not exist,
- 15.5. To present to the General Assembly the proposals for admission received from the Continental Teams and from other international organizations;
- 15.6. To process correspondence, to issue publications, to visit countries and to promote research on family problems and issues;
- 15.7. Whenever the need arises to establish Committees to promote specific activities at the international level. The chaircouples of these committees shall be appointed by the President Team of the Confederation and shall form part of the Executive Secretariat;
- 15.8. To appoint the couples or persons who collaborate with them in their daily work and who will form part of the Executive Secretariat;
- 15.9. To chair the meetings of the Executive Secretariat;
- 15.10. To chair the World Assembly of Families.

BYLAWS

Article 16.

Bylaws shall be developed by the Executive Secretariat, which shall communicate them to the General Assembly for their approval. These Bylaws shall set out in particular the conditions under which the Confederation

and the governing bodies shall operate.

III ON THE WORLD ASSEMBLY OF FAMILIES

Article 17.

A World Assembly of Families shall be convened every three (3) years before or after the General Assembly and shall be open to all its members and other family organizations invited by the Executive Secretariat.

The Secretariat will choose a subject of international interest related to the family according to the tradition and methodology of the Confederation.

IV FINANCES

Article 18.

As a voluntary organization the Confederation will be non-profit. The resources of the Confederation shall consist of the financial contributions given by its members, subsidies and donations.

V SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS

Article 19.

The Confederation has been enriched by the valuable experience of the Marriage Encounter and of engaged couples, sons and daughters and family encounters, which constitute instruments of the Christian Family Movement for the formation of its own members and other married couples, a portion of whom may be encouraged to join the Christian Family Movement and form new groups. A

Committee for the promotion of marriage encounter will be established to motivate members to use this instrument.

Considering the importance of marriage preparation and the history of the Christian Family Movement involvement, a Committee shall also be established to study new methods to exchange information and promote marriage.

VI GENERAL RESOLUTIONS

Article 20.

All matters not dealt with in this Constitution shall be decided by the General Assembly.

ORIGINAL TEXT

Article 21.

The Spanish and English texts of this Constitution shall be the original texts.

INTERIM RESOLUTION

Article 22.

During the three (3) years following the adoption of this Constitution it may be amended by a simple majority of the General Assembly.

FINAL RESOLUTION

This Constitution shall become effective on the 1st of September of 1984.

BYLAWS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN FAMILY MOVEMENTS

I. ON THE CONTINENTAL LEVEL

Article No. 1.

The organization, the structures and the election of the Continental President Couple stipulated in Article No. 6. of the Constitution, shall be governed by the Bylaws adopted by the Continental Team (CONTEAM) in accordance with their own structure, after consultation with the national teams of their Continent.

Article No. 2.

One copy of the bylaws adopted by the continent shall be sent to the Executive Secretariat (EXSEC) for their information and archives.

Article No. 3.

When the General Assembly has decided on the continent where the next ordinary meeting is going to be held, the Continental Team shall have a period of six (6) months to designate the country of their Continent in which the meeting shall take place and to advise the Executive Secretariat accordingly.

II. OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Article No. 4.

The General Assembly shall be convened by the Executive Secretariat with at least one (1) year's notice, stating the place and approximate dates of the meeting.

Article No. 5.

The Executive Secretariat shall send the tentative agenda for the General Assembly to each one of its members at least two (2) months in advance of the meeting.

Article No. 6.

The extraordinary meetings of the General Assembly may be convened by at least two thirds of the Continental President Teams. For this purpose each Continental President Team shall have only one vote.

Article No. 7.

The quorum of the General Assembly will consist of representatives of two thirds of the members with the right to vote.

Article No. 8.

In order to be recognized as a member of the General Assembly, at least two of the three members of the team should be present or represented.

Article No. 9.

The President Teams may be represented at the General Assembly by proxies duly identified by credentials signed by the holders. No team or any of its members may represent another team or any of its members. A voting member of any team must be represented by persons from the same continent.

Article No. 10.

Those matters that according to the Constitution do not require two thirds of the votes for approval, may be adopted by a majority of the votes present. In case of a tie the votes of the President Team of the International Confederation of Christian Family Movements shall have double value.

Article No. 11.

At each ordinary meeting of the General Assembly the Continent where the next ordinary meeting shall take place must be selected.

Article No. 12.

When the quorum is verified and before the meeting begins, the General Assembly, either in ordinary or extraordinary meetings, shall elect the couple who shall preside over the meeting from among those present. No member with the right to vote may preside over the Assembly meetings.

Article No. 13.

The Executive Secretariat shall be the secretary of the meeting. A copy of the minutes of the meeting, signed by the President Team of the Confederation, must be sent to each member of the General Assembly.

III OF THE ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT COUPLE

Article No. 14.

Candidates for the presidency of the Confederation shall fulfil the following requirements:

- 14.1 Be an active member of a Christian Family Movement;

- 14.2 Have had experience as national leaders of a Christian Family Movement, or as continental or international leaders of the Confederation;
- 14.3 Express in writing their commitment to accept the presidency in case of being elected.

Article No. 15.

Only Members of the General Assembly with the right to vote can present nominations for candidates to the presidency of the Confederation. The names of the candidates nominated to the presidency of the Confederation should be circulated to the members of the General Assembly at least two months in advance.

Article No. 16.

When the election process to elect the President Couple is about to start, the President Couple of the General Assembly shall act as President of the electoral process.

Article No. 17.

Each member of the General Assembly shall cast a ballot for each vote that it has in accordance with the Constitution. Before proceeding to count the votes, the President of the electoral process shall certify that there are as many ballots as votes are present or represented in the Assembly. The President of the electoral process shall count the votes.

Article No. 18.

If after three rounds of voting no couple has been elected, on the fourth round only the two couples which have received the highest number of votes shall be presented as candidates. If after the fifth round no couple has been elected, on the sixth round the President Couple can then be elected by a simple majority of the votes.

IV. ON THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

Article No. 19.

The President Team shall appoint the couples and persons of the Executive Secretariat who shall cooperate locally with them in their work and who shall make up the local Executive Secretariat “LOCAL EXSEC”.

Article No. 20.

The local Executive Secretariat, together with the other members, shall make up the full Executive Secretariat : “FULL EXSEC”.

Article No. 21.

The meetings of the Full Executive Secretariat (FULL EXSEC) shall be convened by the President Team whenever they feel it necessary.

Article No. 22.

The decisions of the Executive Secretariat stipulated in the Constitution must be taken in their presence of at least two thirds of the votes and by majority of the votes present. In the case of a tie the votes of the President Team shall have double value.

V. ON THE PRESIDENT TEAM

Article No. 23.

For the President Team of the Confederation to present to the General Assembly a request for admission of a Movement as Full Member, it must have followed the following procedure:

- 23.1. The request must have been sent by the corresponding Continental President Team;
- 23.2. The constitution of the proposed Movement must be enclosed;
- 23.3. The Continental President Team must certify that the proposed Movement meets the basic characteristics stated in Articles 3.1 and 3.2 of the Constitution.

Article No. 24.

For the President Team of the Confederation to present to the General Assembly a request for admission of candidates as Associate Members and/or Supporting Members, it must have ascertained that the candidates meet the basic characteristics stated in Articles 3.3. and 3.4. of the Constitution.

Article No. 25.

To be able to chair a Special Committee, the couple must have had national, continental or international experience in the matters that the Committee must coordinate.

Article No. 26.

For the President Team of the Confederation to present to the General Assembly a request for exclusion of a Movement as Full Member, it must have followed the following procedure:

- 26.1. The request must have been sent by the corresponding Continental President Team;
- 26.2. The Continental President Team must have certified that the proposed Movement no longer meets the basic characteristics stated in Articles 3.1. and 3.2. of the Constitution.

Article No. 27.

For the President Team of the Confederation to present to

the General Assembly a request for exclusion of candidates as Associate Members and/or Supporting Members, it must have ascertained beforehand that the Movements no longer meet the basic characteristics stated in Articles 3.3. and 3.4. of the Constitution.

VI. ON THE WORLD ASSEMBLY

Article No. 28.

When the country that shall host the World Assembly of Families and the General Assembly of the Confederation has been appointed in accordance with Article No. 5. of these Bylaws, the National Team of the Christian Family Movement of the country shall appoint the couple that shall preside over the Committee for the World Assembly "COMWAF".

Article No. 29.

The president couple of the COMWAF shall appoint the couples and persons that shall work with them in organizing the World Assembly and the General Assembly and shall appoint the sub-committees that are necessary to carry out the work.

Article No. 30.

The Executive Secretariat (EXSEC) shall be in charge of all matters related to the content as well as the program of the World Assembly.

Article No. 31.

The funding of the costs of the WAF and the GAIC may be obtained by the COMWAF and the Executive Secretariat. The funds obtained by the COMWAF must be used exclusively to pay the organization and the development expenses. The funds obtained by the

Executive Secretariat may be used to pay for organizational expenses as well as the fares and other costs of travel for the members and operating expenses of the Executive Secretariat.

VII. GENERAL RESOLUTIONS

Article No. 32.

These Bylaws shall become effective as soon as the General Assembly of the Confederation approves them.

Article No. 33.

The General Assembly shall provide the authentic interpretation of these Bylaws by a simple majority of the votes.