



## Constitution of the World Disability Union (WDU)

The Organizations of Persons with Disabilities to the present Constitution, having assembled in Istanbul in October 2011 at the Founding Assembly of the World Handicapped Union called by the March 2011 Conference of Representatives of the Organizations of Persons with Disabilities, Recognizing that the ultimate goal and aspiration of the global community of persons with disabilities is the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Declaring that the realization of human rights and sustainable development at a global level is not possible without the full inclusion of all persons, including persons with disabilities, in this effort.

Guided by international human rights standards adopted by the United Nations, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Fully aware that in an age of global immigration and cross-cultural integration, a better understanding of all cultures is imperative in order to explore culturally sensitive and appropriate local actions.

Having considered that a global, representative and democratic collaboration of all local, regional, national, and international Organizations of Persons with Disabilities which work for the promotion of the rights of Persons with Disabilities and base their activities on the principles of the United Nations and universal human rights is required to realize a human society devoid of physical and social disabling barriers against persons with impairments.

Affirming the need for a common global forum to facilitate the exchange and sharing of information, experiences, training programmes and best practices and for fostering access to and sharing of accessible and assistive technologies, and experience between the disability movements of developing and developed countries, to facilitate coordination between and among local, regional, and national disability organizations, and to stimulate global advocacy to advance the rights of persons with disabilities.



Having considered that, as a cultural bridge between the eastern and western worlds, the city of Istanbul is conveniently situated as a common venue for connecting and combining the experiences of the vast number of world cultures in which local organizations of persons with disabilities operate.

Determined to advance and strengthen the global disability rights movement through the establishment and strengthening of bonds between the Northern, Southern, Eastern and Western hemispheres, and encompassing persons with disabilities from countries of all levels of economic and human development.

Hereby establish an international organization to be known as the World Disability Union, and adopt the present Constitution of the World Disability Union as its supreme instrument of governance and reference.

#### **Article 1: Name of the Union:**

The name of the Union is World Disability Union, abbreviated as WDU.

#### **Article 2: Headquarters of the Union:**

The Headquarters of the Union is in Istanbul AND Sharjah U.A.E.

#### **Article 3: Working Area and Duration of Work of the Union:**

The working area of the Union is the territory of the countries of its Members and Associate Members. The Union will remain in operation until such time as it is dissolved in accordance with the terms of this Constitution under Article 36.

#### **Article 4: Rights, Powers and Concessions of the Union:**

The Union is an international non-governmental organization having legal personality and owns rights, powers and concessions of international non-governmental organizations with respect to its tasks and services. The Union reserves the right to open training centers, local administrative colleges, or other offices for the purpose of providing training services to the Members and Associate Members of the Union.



### Article 5: Definitions:

For the purpose of this constitution, the terms set forth below shall have the following meaning ascribed to them:

- **“Union”** means the World Disability Union.
- **“UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities”** or **“CRPD”** means the international human rights treaty adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2006, which was opened for signature on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2007 and entered into force on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2008 following ratification by the 20<sup>th</sup> state party.
- **“Discrimination”** means any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability, which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. It includes all forms of discrimination, including denial of reasonable accommodation.
- **“Member”** means an NGO duly established in accordance with the applicable laws of the country in which it is registered, and which is admitted by the General Assembly as a Member to the Union, having met the fundamental conditions for Membership as prescribed under this Constitution.
- **“Persons with Disabilities”** includes persons who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society equally with others.
- **“Associate Member”** means any individual, institution, university, administrative or executive unit of a local or national government, international organization, or any other organization other than an NGO, which is admitted by the General Assembly as an Associate Member to the Union, which is not entitled to be elected to the organs of the Union or vote.



- **“Honorary Member”** means an individual chosen by the Board of Directors from among the persons who have had or may have made substantial contributions to advancing the human rights of persons with disabilities and facilitating their full inclusion and participation in society, and to the aims and services of the Union, who is not entitled to be elected to the organs of the Union or vote, and not required to pay the fee prescribed under this Constitution.
- **“Individual Associate Member”** means an individual Associate Member.
- **“Reasonable Accommodations”** means necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to Persons with Disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- **“Disability”** includes the many ways in which people with perceived impairments are excluded from full participation in society due to social, economic, legal, and political and environment barriers.
- **“Specialized Institutions”** means institutions operating in all fields that may contribute to rehabilitation, equal opportunity and full participation of Persons with Disabilities in society.

#### Article 6: Objectives of the Union:

The World Disability Union shall aim to:

- a) Enhance awareness of the human rights of persons with disabilities through national and community based member organizations and guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- b) Promote the recognition of the inherent dignity of Persons with Disabilities and their full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- c) Promote the social model of disability, which understands disability as a result of interaction between the person with an impairment and external barriers, and work toward the adoption of this model by all states.



- d) Identify and facilitate the removal of social, economic, legal, political and environmental barriers that inhibit the full and effective participation of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by Persons with Disabilities.
- e) Ensure the advancement of the rights of Persons with Disabilities and their enforcement in line with universal standards.
- f) Promote economical and technical cooperation, benefiting from knowledge, experience and mutual technology in this regard, and dialogue and exchange among its Members.
- g) Improve the quality of life of the Persons with Disabilities through Organizations of Persons with disabilities, including Specialized Institutions.

#### **Article 7: Universal Standards on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:**

The World Disability Union recognizes and reaffirms international human rights standards, in particular those set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Covenants on Civil and Political and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the European Convention on Human Rights.

#### **Article 8: General Principles:**

All Members and Associate Members undertake to ensure and promote the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all Persons with Disabilities without discrimination on the basis of disability and recognize the following general principles to guide the work of the Union:

- a) Respect for individual independence and autonomy of persons with disabilities including their self-respect and the freedom to make their own choices, non-discrimination and equality.
- b) Elimination of social, economic, legal, political and environmental barriers that inhibit the full exercise of rights by Persons with Disabilities.
- c) Equality and empowerment of women with disabilities.



- d) Respect for the evolving capacity of children with disabilities and respect for their right to preserve their identities.
- e) Full and effective participation and inclusion in society for Persons with Disabilities.
- f) Prevention of abuse, violence and harassment against Persons with Disabilities.
- g) Effective and equal enjoyment of educational, economical, technological and health opportunities by Persons with Disabilities.
- h) Raising public awareness about the human rights situation of Persons with Disabilities and discrimination experienced by them.

### **Article 9: Organs of the Union:**

#### **9.1. Organs of the Union:**

- a) General Assembly
- b) Board of Directors
- c) Board of Supervisors

#### **9.2. Committees and Commissions of the Union:**

- a) Committee of Advisors
- b) Committee on Disability Rights Research and Strategy Development
- c) Expert Commissions

#### **9.3. Election Principles of Union Organs, Committees and Commissions:**

Members of the organs other than the General Assembly, committees, and commissions will be elected with consideration being given to equitable geographical distribution, representation of the different forms of civilization and of the principal legal systems, balanced gender representation and the participation of persons with disabilities based on their works in the field of disability and competence.

#### **9.4. Accessibility:**



Meetings of the organs other than the General Assembly, committees, and commissions may be held as face-to-face assembly, or with the participation of any number of members or all members through remote voice and/or visual data transfer as a teleconference, video conference, or electronic meeting.

### **Article 10: General Assembly:**

#### **10.1. Delegates of the General Assembly:**

Each member shall be represented by two (2) delegates in the General Assembly. Each member shall also designate two (2) alternate delegates for the General Assembly.

#### **10.2. Duties and Powers of the General Assembly:**

The General Assembly is the most competent decision making body of the Union, and its duties and powers are:

- a) To discuss and adopt the Biannual Investment Plan and the Annual Working Programme in accordance with the Investment Plan.
- b) To discuss and approve or reject the Annual Activity Report.
- c) To discuss and decide on Membership and Associate Membership applications to the Union.
- d) To adopt the budget and final account, to make transfers between the units which effectuate corporate coding of the budget and the first levels of functional classification.
- e) To determine credit decisions.
- f) To decide on sale, purchase, rental and exchange of immovable properties.
- g) To determine the fee tariff to be applied to the services performed by the Union.
- h) To accept conditional grants.
  
- i) To decide on the peaceful settlement of disputes regarding the receivables of the Union the amount of which are between 2.000 us dollar and 10.000 us dollar.



- j) To decide on Union investments to be constructed by means of build-operate or build-operate-transfer models.
- k) To elect the Union President, first, and second deputy presidents and secretary members, and the members of Board of Directors and Board of Supervisors of the Union.
- l) To decide on the establishment of organs and units under the Union's organization.
- m) To adopt the amendments to the Constitution as necessary.
- n) To adopt the regulations to be issued by the Union.
- o) To settle any disputes between the President of the Union and the Board of Directors.
- p) To elect and dissolve the Board of Directors when necessary.
- q) To determine the membership free rates.
- r) To determine the membership fee categories based on one of the national development or income level indexes published by independent international organizations, with a view to ensuring fairness.

### **10.3. Meeting and Decision Quorum of the General Assembly:**

The General Assembly of the Union meets every year in April at the Headquarters of the Union. The first meeting of each year is called as the opening meeting. The General Assembly meets with participation of at least majority of the total number of the Members and decides based upon the majority of the participants. The decision quorum shall not be less than one fourth (1/4) of the total number of members of the General Assembly. In cases where the quorum is not satisfied, the President adjourns the meeting to 25 (twenty-five) days later. The second meeting is conducted with the attendance of members not fewer than (a) one fourth (1/4) of the total number of members of the General Assembly, or, (b) twice the aggregate number of members of the Board of Directors and the Board of Supervisors, whichever is greater, and decisions are taken by simple majority

Of the participants. The General Assembly members may appoint other members elected by their own institutions as proxy. The General Assembly members may cast their votes in written form, by means of sending them from their institutions



to the Union Presidency provided that the subject of vote is limited to decisions concerning the dissolution of the Union or amending the Constitution. The President of the Union will call for an extraordinary meeting upon the request in writing of one fifth (1/5) of the members, the Board of Directors, or the Board of Supervisors, or when she/he deems necessary in emergencies. The General Assembly members are informed in writing on the call for an extraordinary meeting together with the agenda at least fifteen (15) days prior to such meeting, and the meeting is announced to the public through various ways. Any subject other than the ones causing the extraordinary meeting to be made shall not be discussed in these meetings.

#### Article 11: Board of Directors:

##### **11.1. Members of the Board of Directors:**

Board of Directors of the Union is composed of eleven (11) full and five (5) alternate members elected for four (4) years among the members of the General Assembly. The President of the Union elected by the General Assembly in accordance with the procedures stipulated under Article 15.1 serves as one of the eleven (11) full members of the Board of Directors. The elections of Board of Directors shall be carried out in the opening meeting and by secret ballot. The members of the Board of Directors shall be elected from among the individual representatives of Members of the General Assembly. The member whose terms of office expire may be re-elected. In case of discharge of a member of the Board of Directors for any reason prior to completion of the term of office, an alternate member shall be called upon to take the place of the discharged member. Those whose General Assembly memberships are terminated also lose their Board of Directors membership.

##### **11.2. President of the Board of Directors:**



The President of the Union shall also be president of the Board of Directors. In the absence of the President, this duty shall be performed by the First Deputy President or a member of the Board of Directors designated by the President of the Union. In the event that the Board of Directors of the Union is dissolved an extraordinary General Assembly meeting called by the Secretary General shall be held within thirty (30) days following dissolution, and in the interim the duties belonging to the Board of Directors shall be carried out by the President of the Union until a new Board of Directors is formed.

### **11.3. Duties and Powers of the Board of Directors:**

The Board of Directors of the Union is the decision making and executive body of the Union and makes practical decisions and implements the annual working schedule and the Union budget in line with the Union's Constitution and General Assembly resolutions. Other duties and powers of the Board of Directors are to:

- a) Examine and submit to the General Assembly of the Union the Investment Plan and Working Schedule together with the Budget and Final Account.
- b) Discuss and approve or reject the Annual Activity Report.
- c) Decide on the existence of public interest in expropriation activities to the benefit of the Union.
- d) Determine resource allocation in the case of unanticipated allowances.
- e) Effect transfers between the second levels of the functional classifications within the budget.
- f) Impose fines specified by law.
- g) Decide on the amicable settlement of the cases with a value of up to 2.000 (two thousand) us dollar.
- h) Implement the General Assembly resolutions regarding the purchase, sale, rental and exchange of immovable properties.
- i) Make recommendations to the General Assembly or the President on policies, strategies and operations of the Union.



- j) Determine the duties and job descriptions of the Secretary General of the Union, The Director of the Union, managers of the units (Editor in Chief, Financial Services Director, etc.) and other personnel.

#### **11.4. Meetings of the Board of Directors and Meeting and Decision Quorums:**

The Board of Directors of the Union shall meet at least once (1) per month with the quorum of simple a majority of its members, in the designated place, on the designated day and time, and decides on resolutions with the majority of the participants. The President may call the Board of Directors for a meeting in emergency situations. The agenda of the Board is drafted by the Secretary General. Board members may propose an agenda topic before and during the meeting.

#### **11.5. Management Principles:**

The Board of Directors shall continuously strive for the development and establishment of a democratic, participatory and transparent organizational administration in line with the Union purposes.

### **Article 12: Board of Supervisors:**

#### **12.1. Members of the Board of Supervisors:**

The Board of Supervisors is composed of five (5) full members and three (3) alternate members to be elected from among the members of the General Assembly for two (2) years. A person may not simultaneously hold the offices of both the member of the Board of Supervisors and member of the Board of Directors. Elections of the Board of Supervisors are held in the opening meeting and ballots are cast in secret. The Board of Supervisors shall elect from its members by secret ballot its Chairman. Members whose terms of office expire may be re-elected. In the event that any Board of Supervisors membership is discharged before the completion of the term of office for any reason whatsoever, an associated alternate member shall be called upon to substitute for the discharged member.



## **12.2. Duties of the Board of Supervisors:**

The Board of Supervisors shall conduct inspections to ensure that the Union acts in accordance with the objectives set forth in this Constitution and conducts its operations consistent with the fulfillment of its objectives, and the account book, accounts and records are kept in accordance with the legislation and the Union's Constitution and Regulation, the principles and procedures of which inspections shall be in accordance with those prescribed under the Union's Constitution and Regulations, at regular intervals not exceeding six (6) months, and submit the outcomes of such inspections in the report form to the Board of Directors and to the General Assembly at their respective meetings.

## **12.3. Duty to avail all Information, Documents and Records to the Board of Supervisors:**

All kinds of documents, information and records shall be disclosed or given to the Board of Supervisors by the Union's authorized representative upon the request of the members of the Board of Supervisors. Union Members shall grant Supervisors unrestricted access to their headquarters, enterprises and attachments.

## **Article 13: Committee of Advisors:**

### **13.1. Structure of the Committee of Advisors:**

The Committee of Advisors shall act as the advisory organ to all other organs of the Union, and shall be composed of 99 (Ninety-Nine) members elected by the Board of Directors upon nomination by the President from academicians, professionals and other persons who have excelled in the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities. Only natural persons may be elected for membership to the Committee of Advisors, with an indefinite term of membership. Members shall receive no compensation for their services but must be reimbursed for their travel and accommodation expenses while engaged in business of the Committee of Advisors.



### **13.2. Functions of the Committee of Advisors:**

The Committee of Advisors shall:

- a) Make recommendations to the President on policies, strategies and operations of the Union.
- b) Assist in the evaluation of all proposals and ideas for Union activities, initiatives, events, and publications.

### **Article 14: Committee on Disability Rights Research and Strategy Development:**

#### **14.1. Functions of the Committee:**

The Committee on Disability Rights Research and Strategy Development (“Committee”) shall carry out the functions hereinafter provided:

- a) Identification of social, economic, legal, political and environmental barriers that inhibit the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by Persons with Disabilities, and developing strategies for the removal thereof and ensuring equal opportunities.
- b) Developing strategies to enhance access to health and rehabilitation services by Persons with Disabilities.
- c) Proposing law, policy and good practices to address barriers experienced by Persons with Disabilities in accessing health, education, labor and social security and conducting research in these fields.
- d) Development of mid- and long-term plans to enhance the social rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- e) Developing and implementing effective public awareness campaigns and activities.
- f) Cooperating with local and international organizations that operate in the field of improving the full participation of Persons with Disabilities in society and conduct joint studies.
- g) Monitoring and assessing the success of plans devised both by the Committee and other organizations in the fields of prevention of disability and rehabilitation.



- h) Organizing meetings and symposia on access to health and rehabilitation services.
- i) Collecting appropriate information, including statistical and research data, to formulate and implement policies to give effect to the Convention on the rights of Persons with Disabilities, consistent with legally established safeguards to ensure confidentiality and respect for the privacy of persons with disabilities.
- j) Preparing guidelines detailing the features of the reports of Members and Associate Members.
- k) Proposing events, activities and conferences for the Union.
- l) Reporting annually to the Secretary General of the Union on Committee activities.

#### **14.2. Number of Committee Members:**

The Committee shall be composed of twelve (12) experts.

#### **14.3. Nomination of Committee Members:**

The Committee members shall be elected from a list of the candidates nominated by the Member. Elections shall take place in the sessions of the General Assembly by secret ballot.

#### **14.4. Committee Elections:**

The first election shall be held six (6) months at the latest following the date this Constitution enters into force. The Secretary General of Union, by sending a letter to the Members at least four (4) months before each election date, shall request them to nominate their candidates within two (2) months. After that, the Secretary General shall prepare a list of the names of all candidates nominated by these means in alphabetical order together with the names of the Members who nominated these candidates, and submit this list to the General Assembly.



#### **14.5. Terms of Office of Committee Members:**

The Committee Members shall be elected for a period of four (4) years. The members shall be eligible for re-election once.

#### **14.6. Vacancy of Memberships:**

In the event that more than half of the Committee members dies or resigns from membership or declares for any other cause that he or she cannot perform his/her duties, a new election shall be held at the first General Assembly provided that the notification periods stipulated under Article 14.4 are satisfied, and other experts possessing the required qualifications and meeting the requirements set out in the relevant provisions of this Article shall be elected to serve for the remainder of the term of vacant memberships.

#### **14.7. Rules of Procedure of the Committee:**

The Committee shall establish its own rules of procedure and will be guided by international best practices.

#### **14.8. Relationship between the President and the Committee:**

The President of the Union shall provide the necessary personnel and facilities for the purpose of enabling the Committee to effectively perform its functions, and shall convene its first meeting.

#### **14.9. Remuneration of Committee Members:**

The Committee members formed in line with this Constitution will be remunerated from the resources of the Union with the consent of the General Assembly, provisions and conditions of which are to be set by the General Assembly by taking into account the importance of the responsibilities carried out by the Committee.

#### **14.10. Cooperation among Members and the Committee:**



All Members and Associate Members shall cooperate with the Committee in the performance of its duties and assist its members. The Committee shall take into consideration methods and tools for strengthening national capacities to implement the mission of the Union, including international cooperation in its relations with Members and Associate Members.

#### **14.11. Relationship between the UN and other relevant Institutions:**

In order to support the effective application of this Constitution and the international cooperation within the scope of this Constitution, Specialized Institutions and other organs of the United Nations have the right to representation as observers with respect to review of provisions of this Constitution that fall under their respective jurisdictions. The Committee may invite the specialized institutions or other competent organs it may deem appropriate in order to obtain expert advice on the application of Constitution in the areas that fall under the powers of said specialized institutions and other competent organs. The Committee may invite specialized institutions and other organs of the United Nations to present reports on the application of the Constitution in the areas in which they operate.

#### **14.12. Report of the Committee:**

The Committee shall present annual reports to the General Assembly of the Union regarding its activities, and may present recommendations and general advice based on the review of reports and information obtained from Members. Such recommendations and general advice shall be included in the Committee report along with statements of Members and Associate Members, if any.

### **Article 15: Presidency:**



### **15.1. Election of the Presidency:**

General Assembly shall meet and elect from its members by secret ballot the Union's President, the First, Second, and Third Deputy Presidents and Secretary Members for a four (4) year term. The same candidate shall not be elected to the Union Presidency for more than two (2) successive terms.

### **15.2. Powers of the President:**

The President of the Union shall be the head of the Union's management and the representative of its legal entity. The power to spend the Union's budget is vested under the President of the Union. The General Assembly of the Union shall be presided by the President of the Union, or by the First Deputy President if the President is not present, or by the Second Deputy President if the President of the Union and First Deputy President are not present. However, the General Assembly meeting where the annual activity report is handled and discussed shall only be presided by the President of the Union or by the First Deputy President. In the event that the memberships in the Presidency Council are discharged due to resignation by the members, death of the members, or due to some other reason, a new member shall be elected to fulfill the remainder of the term. The President of the General Assembly is obliged to maintain order during the convening of the General Assembly.

### **15.3. Duties of the President of the Union:**

Duties of the President of the Union shall be as follows:

- a) To operate the Union and to protect its rights and interests.
- b) To prepare, implement, monitor and examine the Investment Plan and Working Schedule together with the Budget and Final Account and submit to the General Assembly the Annual Activity Report to be prepared in relation to these instruments.
- c) To represent the Union or to assign an agent in that respect.
- d) To preside over the General Assembly and the Board of Directors of the Union.



- e) To manage the movable and immovable properties of the Union.
- f) To follow up and collect the incomes and receivables of the Union.
- g) To execute contracts upon receiving the resolutions of the authorized organs.
- h) To implement the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Board of Directors of the Union.
- i) To appoint the personnel of the Union.
- j) To supervise the Union.
- k) To accept unconditional grants on behalf of the Union.
- l) To perform the tasks and exercise the powers given to the Union by laws which do not require and decision of General Assembly or Board of Directors of the Union.

#### **15.4. Investment Plan and Work Programme:**

The President of the Union shall prepare the Annual Investment Plan Work Programme before the beginning of the year concerned for submission to the General Assembly. The Work Programme constitutes a basis for the preparation of the budget and shall be discussed and approved by the General Assembly before the adoption of the budget.

#### **15.5. Activity Report:**

The President of the Union shall prepare an Activity Report detailing activities performed in accordance with the Work Programme, goals and time tables, performance criteria, the reasons for deviation from such goals, and the status of payables of the Union. Activity Report shall also include activities regarding associate organizations and enterprises, and Union partnerships, and reviews thereof. Activity Reports shall be presented by the President of the Union to the General Assembly at the first meeting of the term. A copy of the report shall be transmitted to the Ministry of the Interior and made public.

#### **Article 16: Expert Commissions:**



Expert commissions may be established to further the aims of the Union. Such expert commissions shall act in accordance with the aims of the Union. The expert commissions are established upon the decision of the General Assembly. Members of the commissions shall be elected by the General Assembly and the number of members for each commission shall not exceed five (5). Each commission member shall be selected from the representatives of different Members. Working procedures and principles of expert commissions shall be prescribed by an internal by law adopted by the General Assembly.

### **Article 17: Organization and Personnel of the Union:**

#### **17.1. Organization of the Union:**

The Union's organizational structure shall consist of the offices of Secretary General of the Union, Director of the Union, Chief Clerk of the Union, Financial Services Unit and other offices and units to be determined by the General Assembly of the Union.

#### **17.2. Personnel of the Union:**

The Secretary General of the Union, the Director of the Union, managers of the units (Editor in Chief, Financial Services Director, etc.) and other personnel shall be appointed by the President of the Union. The appointments of Director and Manager of the units shall be communicated to the General Assembly by the President of the Union. The Union may employ personnel or employees on a full or part time basis, consistent with the service needs of the Union. The President of the Union is authorized to appoint the Personnel or employ them in accordance with the Constitution. The authority to sign on behalf of the President may be given to the personnel with the approval in writing of the President.

### **Article 18: Membership in the Union:**



### **18.1. Membership Types:**

- a) **Honorary Membership:** is granted to dignitaries people with disabilities in their community or around the world are granted membership shall be granted upon the approval of the Union Board of Directors.
- b) **Institutions of Disabilities:** all institutions working with persons with disabilities are entitled to participate in the union by submitting an application and have the right to have tow vote in the General Assembly.
- c) **Individuals working in the Field of Persons with Disabilities:** in honor of the workers in the field of persons with disabilities and the service of this category are entitled to participate in the general assembly but they are not entitled to vote.
- d) **People with Disabilities:** any person with disability has the right to be a member of the WDU by submitting an official application, and he is entitled to vote in the General Assembly. He has the right to submit any proposal or give his opinion on the subjects of the Union.
- e) **Advisory Committee:** A group of specialists in different fields are selected to conduct special studies and research for people with Disabilities, each according to his specialization, and to provide advice to the Union.

### **18.2. Admission of Member:**

One NGO per disability group per country which subscribes to the objectives of the Union and is willing to join the Union may become a Member of the Union, and in the event that more than one NGO per disability group per country applies for Membership, each disability group may become a Member of the Union as a National Disability Organizations Coalition Group which shall have a single vote, following:

- a) The affirmative decision of their own board of directors or equivalent executive organ.
- b) The adoption of the Union's Constitution.
- c) The submittal of a written application for membership to the Union by the duly authorized legal representative of the candidate.
- d) The approval by the General Assembly of the Union.



### **18.3. Admission of Associate Members:**

Any institution, university, administrative or executive unit of a local or national government, or any other organization other than an NGO which subscribes to the objectives of the Union and is willing to join the Union may become an Associate Member of the Union, following:

- a) The affirmative decision of their own board of directors or equivalent executive organ.
- b) The adoption of the Union's Constitution.
- c) The submittal of a written application for membership to the Union by the duly authorized legal representative of the candidate.
- d) The approval by the General Assembly of the Union.

### **18.4. Admission of Individual associate Member:**

Any person with legal capacity may become an Associate Member of the Union following the submittal of a written application and approval by the General Assembly of the Union.

### **18.5. Legal Person Members and Associate Members:**

All Members and Associate Members, other than individual Associate Members, should be a legal person duly established and registered in accordance with the applicable laws of the country in which it is registered.

### **Article 19: Rights, Powers and Responsibilities of the Members:**

19.1. Members, Associate Members, and Honorary Members shall have the right to be present and represented and right of speech at all meetings of the organs of the Union, and to enjoy the Union's services.

19.2. Only Members shall be entitled to participate in the Union's management, be elected to the organs of the Union, and vote at the elections and resolutions at the organs of the Union.



19.3. Membership, Associate Membership or Honorary Membership in the Union does not affect the right of the Honorary Member, Member, or Associate Member, or the duly authorized representatives of the Member or Associate Member to participate in the work of other foundations or federations.

19.4. Members and Associate Members are responsible for contributing to the expenses of the Union by paying their membership fees in the amount prescribed under this Constitution.

19.5. The Union's legal personality is liable for any kind of Constitution, Regulation and Commitments made on behalf of the Union. Such liability is limited to the Assets of the Union and such liability shall not, by any means, be attributed to the legal personalities of the Members, Associate Members, or Honorary Members.

#### Article 20: Obligations of Members:

##### **20.1. Performing Activities within the Objectives and Activity Areas of the Union:**

The Union shall take all effective measures necessary for the achievement of its objectives. The Union, to that end, will perform comprehensive adaptation and rehabilitation services and programmes, particularly relating to health, education, recruitment and social services. The Union acknowledges that the Persons with Disabilities have the right to work equally with the others in a labor market fully accessible to Persons with Disabilities. The Union will specifically exert utmost efforts for the development and implementation of policies that will enable Persons with Disabilities to benefit effectively from the right to work. The Union acknowledges that Persons with Disabilities have the right to enjoy a humane quality of life with adequate food, clothing and accommodation both for themselves and for their families, to enable the continuous enhancement of their life conditions. Members and Associate Members will exert utmost efforts to take the necessary steps with the aim of encouraging realization and protection of such rights. The Union will exercise the utmost effort to ensure that administrations recognize political rights of the Persons with Disabilities and the



right to exercise such rights as equal to the others. Additionally, The Union acknowledges that Persons with Disabilities have the right to participate in the social, cultural and religious and all other aspects of life fairly and equally to persons without disabilities. The Union will exert the utmost effort to ensure that national administrations take all necessary measures for the accomplishment of the foregoing.

### **20.2. Statistics and Data Collection:**

Members and Associate Members undertake to collect necessary information, including statistical and research data, for the purpose of furthering the objectives of the Union.

### **20.3. International Cooperation:**

Members and Associate Members acknowledge the importance of international cooperation and its promotion, in support of national efforts, for the realization of the objectives of the Union, and to advance the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons with disabilities. To this end, Members and Associate Members shall undertake appropriate measures to enhance international cooperation. These activities may include, but are not limited to:

- a) Working to ensure that international cooperation, including international development programmes, are inclusive of and accessible to Persons with Disabilities.
- b) Facilitating and supporting capacity building, including through the exchange and sharing of information, experiences, training programmes and best practices.
- c) Promoting cooperation in research and access to scientific and technical knowledge.
- d) Providing, as appropriate, technical and economic assistance, including by facilitating access to and sharing of accessible and assistive technologies and through technology transfer.



#### **20.4. Commission Works:**

Members shall conduct effective works in the fields of activity of the Union within such commissions as the Plan, Budget and Expertise Commissions established by the General Assembly Union.

#### **20.5. Membership Fee:**

#### **Article 21: Termination of Membership:**

##### **21.1. Resignation from Membership:**

Members, Associate Members or Honorary Members may resign from Union Membership by a resolution taken by their own institution's governing body and in accordance with its internal rules. However, such Member or Associate Member is obliged to pay its debts to the Union within 1 (one) month from the date when the decision to resign is made. Individual Associate Members may resign from Union Membership at will.

##### **21.2. Removal from Membership:**

In the event that any of the conditions below are detected, the Board of Directors may submit a proposal to the General Assembly for the Member's or Associate Member's removal from membership, in which case the Member or Associate Member shall be invited to the General Assembly meeting to entertain the right to present a defense:

- a) Not meeting the requirements for membership prescribed under Article 18 after being admitted to Membership or Associate Membership.
- b) Violating the provisions of the Constitution.
- c) Failing to pay the membership fee for two consecutive years.

#### **Article 22: Accounting and Financial Provisions:**



## **22.2. Budget and Final Account:**

The budget of the Union details income and expense projections for one fiscal year and the following two (2) years, and the rules and principles governing the application thereof. The budget year mirrors that of the Gregorian calendar. No extra-budgetary expenditures are allowed. The President of the Union and the Union Director appointed thereby as expenditures officer are responsible for ensuring that budget allowances are spent efficiently, prudently and appropriately. General Assembly of the Union Discusses and adopts the budget at the annual meeting.

## **22.2. Finalization and Entry into Force of the Budget:**

The provisions of the Regulation on the Budget and Accounting shall be applicable on matters relating to the finalization and entry into force of the budget.

## **22.3. Purchase, Sales, Procurement and Accounting Affairs:**

The Union Headquarters in Istanbul is subject to Law 2886 on State Procurement, Law 4734 on Public Procurement, Law 4735 on Public Procurement Agreement, and the Law 5018 on Public Financial Management and Auditing under Turkish law.

The Union Headquarters in Sharjah U.A.E. is subject to Law of United Arab Emirates

## **22.4. Books to be maintained by the Union:**

The Union shall maintain its books in accordance with the Regulation on the Budget and Accounting.

## **22.5. Revenues of the Union:**

- a) Membership Fees.
- b) Returns received for the services rendered by the Union or by the non-compulsory bodies of the Union.
- c) Grants that are transferred from public bodies and institutions to the Union.
- d) Grants allocated to the Union by local administrations.



- e) Remuneration paid to the Union in consideration of projects, initiatives, services, campaigns, organizations, co-ordinations, and other activities.
- f) Unconditional aid and donations granted to the Union from national and international funds.
- g) Revenues received in consideration of services rendered, including training and publishing services carried out by the Union.
- h) Profit shares obtained from Union partnerships and enterprises.
- i) Revenues generated from renting, purchasing or other utilization of movable and immovable properties of the Union.
- j) Rent and interest incomes of the Union.
- k) Donations and any other source of revenue of the Union.

#### **22.6. Expenditures of the Union:**

- a) Expenses to be made for the purpose of performing the Union's services.
- b) Any salary, wage, allowance, attendance fee, transportation allowance, training expenses concerning services and any other expenses paid to the personnel of the Union or the members of its elected organs.
- c) Expenses to be made for the enforcement and collection of the fees to be received in consideration of services and other incomes.
- d) Expenses to be made for the supply, construction, maintenance and repair of the service buildings, facilities, equipment's and supplies of the Union.
- e) Other costs related to interest payments, finance cost and insurance expenses.
- f) Expenses related to legal and enforcement proceedings.
- g) Attorney fees, consultant fees and auditor's fees.
- h) Copyright fees, fees for courses, lectures, seminars and conferences, costs of publications.
- i) Costs of services performed jointly with the public and private bodies and other project costs.
- j) Contribution fees to be paid to the local, national and international unions which have been established or will be established or the local administrative bodies having similar objectives to the Union.
- k) Expenses related to representations, ceremonies and accommodation.



l) Other expenses connected to the fulfillment of the purposes of the Union.

## **Article 23: Reports of Members:**

### **23.1. Progress Reports:**

Each Member shall, within two (2) years of the Constitution entering into force for the Member, submit to the Committee through the Presidency of the Union a thorough report on the situation and progress made in their country with respect to the objectives of the Union.

### **23.2. Reports Requested by the Committee:**

Members shall then, upon the request of the Committee, present reports at least every four (4) years.

### **23.3. Reports Submitted by Associate Members:**

Submittal of such reports is optional and not mandatory for Associate Members.

### **23.4. Features of the Reports of Members:**

The Committee shall set forth all rules governing the content of the reports. Members shall prepare such Reports in an open and transparent manner, and comply with the provisions prescribed under Committee guidelines and this Constitution. Reports may point out the matters or challenges affecting the level of achievement of objectives within the scope of this Constitution.

### **23.5. Circulation of Reports:**

The Secretary General of the Union shall transmit its reports to all its Members and Associate Members. Members shall make these reports public in their respective countries and facilitate access to recommendations and general advice on said reports. The Committee shall, wherever it may deem appropriate, transmit its reports to Specialized Institutions, funds and programmes of the Union reports received from Members, together with the Committee's observations and recommendations.



#### **Article 24: Conference of Members:**

Members shall convene on a regular basis in a Conference of Members in order to review implementation of Union activities and to discuss its operation in accordance with this Constitution and Union Regulations. Conference shall be called to session by the Secretary General of the Union within six (6) months of the entry into force of this Constitution. Subsequent meetings shall be held every two (2) years by the Secretary General of the Union, or in accordance with decisions adopted at the Conference of Members.

#### **Article 25: Benefiting from Services of the Union:**

Members, Associate Members, all Persons with Disabilities and elderly persons domiciled in a Member country may benefit directly or indirectly from Union services, access information, participate in and contribute to Union activities in accordance with the principles of good faith. Participation and contribution of citizens and NGOs in planning and project activities conducted by the Union shall be ensured.

#### **Article 26: Drafting of Regulations:**

Principles and procedures regarding the application of this Constitution may be regulated in detail by Regulations to be adopted by the General Assembly of the Union, or Guidelines to be adopted by the Presidency of the Union in accordance with said Regulation.

#### **Article 27: Formalization of the Constitution and Amendments:**

The Constitution of the Union and Constitution amendments become formalized and enter into force upon proposal by one-fourths (1/4) of the Members, adoption by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members present in a meeting of the General Assembly convened by a simple majority, and attestation per Applicable Provisions.



#### **Article 28: Dissolution of the Union:**

The Union may be dissolved by the General Assembly, at a meeting attended by at least two-thirds (2/3) majority of its Members, with a decision taken by two-thirds (2/3) majority of Members present at the meeting. Dissolution of the Union shall be carried out by three (3) persons appointed by the Board of Directors. Dissolution proceedings shall be finalized within one (1) year. Assets of the Union shall be distributed in accordance with the decisions of the General Assembly of the Union and taking into account the rate of participation of each Member or Associate Member to Union assets.

#### **Article 29: Applicable Provisions:**

Relevant provisions in other laws in Turkish law shall be applicable provided that such application is limited with the services delegated to the Union by the Union Constitution in matters which the Law no 3335 Concerning the Founding of International Organizations in Turkish law or this Constitution do not prescribe, regarding work programmes, delegation of power, conflict between the Union and the President of the Union, removal from duty of union organs or the members thereof, inspection, annual activity report, budget and other financial matters, debt incurring except bond issuance, enterprise facility within the budget, debt or receivable set-off, foreign relations, relations with other organizations, correspondence, and the application of the revaluation rate in unions.

#### **Article 30: Establishment of Branches, Liaison Offices, Commercial Enterprises, Agencies, Commercial Agencies, Funds and Academic Departments:**

30.1. The Union may, subject to obtaining necessary permits or making notifications required by the Applicable Provisions, establish branches, liaison offices, commercial enterprises, agencies, commercial agencies, funds and academic departments in the countries where its Members or Associate Members are registered or where its Individual Associate Members are domiciled if such establishment is deemed necessary to further the aims of the Union. The decision to establish these shall be taken by the General Assembly.



30.2. If a decision to establish a branch is taken, the president of such branch is entitled with the authority to act in the name of the branch as the member of the General Assembly. Each branch which is established in accordance with this Article shall be represented in the General Assembly. The branches shall not exceed the scope of field of activity mentioned in this Constitution. The duties and powers of the branches shall be determined by a constitution.

**Article 31: Depositary:**

The President of the Union shall act as Depositary of the Constitution.

**Article 32: Signature:**

This Constitution shall be opened for signature by all Members and Associate Members at the Headquarters of the Union in Istanbul, Turkey as of October 30, 2011.

**Article 33: Reservations:**

Reservations incompatible with the objectives and purposes of the present Constitution shall not be permitted. Reservations may be rescinded at any time.

**Article 34: Entry Into Force:**

The present Constitution shall enter into force upon its adoption by the Board of Directors of the Union and approval of the related authorities. The Constitution will be submitted for the information of Members and Associate Members upon its entry into force. Every Member or Associate Member who has ratified the Constitution and has received an official confirmation becomes a Member or Associate Member of the Union.

**Article 35: Execution:**

This Constitution, consisting of 35 articles, is executed by the President of the Union.



**We, as the officials of the Organizations of the Persons with Disabilities, hereby accept, declare and undertake on behalf of our organizations and entities, the principles, values, objectives, content, aims, projects, activities, and our rights, powers, duties and responsibilities stated in this Constitution as the Members and Associate Members of the World Disability Union.**