



CONSTITUTION OF THE **INTERNATIONAL RURAL CHURCHES** **ASSOCIATION**

Ratified and enacted 26th September 2010

I. NAME

The name of the organisation is the “International Rural Churches Association” utilising the acronym of “IRCA”

II. BASIS

The International Rural Churches Association is a network of people with a passion for rural communities, based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We share our stories of struggle and our stories of hope, joined by our reliance on the land and sea for our livelihood and by determination and hope because of faith in the triune God. Our vision is to be a voice for the rural community worldwide and to encourage sustainable rural communities and practices.

III. MEMBERSHIP AND AFFILIATION

1. Any regional or national rural networks which express their agreement with the Basis upon which IRCA is founded and satisfy such criteria as the leadership group or Conference gathering may prescribe, keeping in mind the breadth of the church catholic, shall be eligible for membership of IRCA.
2. Admission as an individual member shall be by approval of the leadership group of IRCA.
3. The Secretary will keep a current roll of membership and affiliations as approved by the leadership group of IRCA.

IV. MEETINGS

1. Conferences of IRCA shall be held every 4 years where practicable with consideration given to holding conferences in different parts of the world to encourage diversity of thought and understanding.
2. The leadership group shall meet between Conferences in order to organise the logistics of such conferences. These meetings will be held using any technologies available and, where funds allow, face to face at a location agreed upon by the leadership group.
3. All meetings of IRCA shall observe the “consensus model.”

V. GOVERNANCE

1. IRCA shall be governed by a leadership group comprising the Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, immediate ex-chairperson, immediate ex-secretary and immediate ex-treasurer. Additional members of the leadership group may be co-opted as required taking in account the need for diversity of tradition, culture, gender and geography.
2. The Conference or the leadership group may adopt and amend By-Laws not inconsistent with this Constitution for the functioning of its committees, boards, working groups and commissions.

VI. ASSETS AND INCOME

As a non-profit entity, the assets and income of IRCA shall be applied solely in furtherance of its above-mentioned objects and no portion shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the members or affiliates of IRCA except as bona fide compensation for services rendered or expenses incurred on behalf of IRCA.

VII. OFFICERS AND ROLES

IRCA shall include the following officers: Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. The term of office for these officers shall be from conference to conference whilst each retains the confidence of the body of IRCA.

1. Role description of the Chairperson

- Chair meetings of IRCA. Where the Chairperson is unable to chair the meeting, the meeting shall be chaired by the immediate ex-Chairperson
- Encourage and support Office Bearers and Association members in responsibilities and tasks
- Represent IRCA to International, Regional, National, and Denominational Councils and leaders
- Oversee appropriate safeguard/auditing processes.
- Take other appropriate actions between meetings in the interest of IRCA.

2. Role description of the Secretary

- General correspondence.
- Regular liaison with representatives.
- Maintain a roll of membership and affiliations.
- Maintain an approved record of proceedings
- Manage minor administration finances.
- Oversee appropriate safeguard/auditing processes.
- Take other appropriate actions between meetings in the interest of IRCA.

3. Role description of the Treasurer

- General control of the finances of IRCA, including the examination of the books, accounts and records of all officers, committees and persons who handle any of the financial affairs of IRCA.
- Deposit all monies received in the name and credit of IRCA in such depositories as the leadership group may designate from time to time.
- With approval of the leadership group, disburse or cause to be disbursed the funds of IRCA and, with the approval of the leadership group, have authority to invest and re-invest funds and to sell, exchange, assign and transfer securities and other property belonging to IRCA.
- Render to the leadership group an account of all transactions as Treasurer upon request and shall present a full financial report to the the quadrennial Conference.

VIII. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

1. The Chairperson, with the approval of the leadership group, shall appoint six months prior to the quadrennial conference, a Nomination Committee, to consist of not less than two members of the leadership group who shall select from among the membership of IRCA persons willing to serve as officers of IRCA.
2. Nominations for officers may also come from the floor of the quadrennial conference.
3. The election of officers shall take place at the quadrennial conference.
4. The Nomination Committee shall not be barred from nominating a member of the Nominating Committee to hold office.
5. No proxy voting shall be allowed.
6. If a vacancy occurs in any office, the leadership group shall appoint an officer for the balance of the unexpired term.

IX. AMENDMENTS

1. Amendments to this Constitution may be made at the quadrennial conference or any other meeting of the leadership group. Such amendments by the leadership group must be ratified at the next quadrennial conference.

X. DISSOLUTION

1. IRCA may be dissolved by affirmation of two-thirds of the full membership of IRCA. Notice of intent to dissolve shall be submitted to all members of IRCA in writing at least thirty (30) days before being acted upon.
2. Upon dissolution of IRCA for any reason whatsoever, any remaining property of IRCA shall be distributed to the World Council of Churches.