

## **INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN LAWYERS**

**Fédération Internationale Des Femmes Juristes – Federación Internacional de Abogadas – Federazione Internazionale Donne Avvocato CONSTITUTION AS AMENDED THROUGH NOVEMBER 2017**

### **ARTICLE I NAME**

The official name of this Organization shall be in English, French and Spanish language as follows:

- § International Federation of Women Lawyers
- § Fédération Internationale Des Femmes Juristes
- § Federation Internacional de Abogadas.

In abbreviated form, the organization may be referred to as FIDA in all languages.

### **ARTICLE II OFFICIAL HEADQUARTERS**

#### **Section 1**

The official headquarters of the organization shall be located at the office of the Incumbent President for her respective term of office.

#### **Section 2**

There shall be a permanent office of the organization for the filing and preserving of the permanent records of the organization, in New York City or its immediate vicinity within reasonable accessibility to the United Nations.

#### **Section 3**

The official secretariat shall be the permanent office. (Added 1975 at Hamburg.)

### **ARTICLE III NATURE OF ORGANIZATION**

The Organization shall be a non-political and a non-profit organization.

### **ARTICLE IV OBJECTS**

**Section 1** The objects of this organization are:

- a) To establish friendly international relations on a basis of equality and mutual respect of all peoples;
- b) To promote the study of comparative law;
- c) To promote the principles and aims of the United Nations in their legal and social aspects;
- d) To enhance and promote the welfare of women and children, realizing that in the women's and children's well-being depends the happiness of the home and the strength of society;
- e) To consider socio-economic condition which affect women and children; (added 1990 at Cartagena).

**Section 2** To realize these objects the Organization will:

- a) Further the dissemination of knowledge of the laws of the various countries;
- b) Advance the opportunities for women in the political, civil and educational fields as well as in industry, business and the professions, particularly the legal profession;

- c) Seek the passage of legislation for the advancement of women and the protection of women and children;
- d) Work for equal rights of women under the law and human rights for all in every country possible;
- e) Provide and open forum for the discussion of all matters affecting women and children;
- f) Promote the organization of national associations of women lawyers wherever necessary;
- g) Cooperate with organized juridical associations in order to create better relations in the legal profession;
- h) Affiliate with other legal organizations upon recommendation of the Executive Council and upon approval of the majority of members in General Convention assembly.

## **ARTICLE V MEMBERSHIP**

Membership in this organization shall consist of individual members, affiliate organizations, student members, patrons and honorary members.

### **Section 1**

- a) individual members shall be women: 1) admitted to the practice of law in their respective countries; or 2) they shall have the right to vote in accordance with the by-laws.
- b) Affiliate organizations shall be organizations of women lawyers affiliating with the federation. Affiliates shall have the right to vote. Affiliate organizations must be non-political and non-profit and must be independent of and not subject to the control of any government. (Amended 1975 at Hamburg.).
- c) Student members shall be women law students who expect to practice law. They shall be non voting but may be admitted to individual membership with the right to vote upon being admitted to practice;
- d) Patrons shall be either men or women interested in the advancement of women in the legal profession. Women patrons who are duly qualified and admitted to practice of law shall have voting rights. Non-lawyer patrons shall not be entitled to vote;
- e) Honorary members shall be outstanding women lawyers whom the organization desires to honour. They may or may not have voting rights, according to the terms of the resolutions conferring such honour upon them.

### **Section 2**

In countries having no affiliates, individual members may form a local branch or branches of FIDA, as the numbers of members and geographic conditions require, for the purpose of more effective cooperation with each other in furthering the aims of FIDA.

### **Section 3**

Individual members and patrons may become Life Members of Life Patrons upon payment of requisite dues.

## **ARTICLE VI OFFICERS**

### **Section 1**

- a) The Executive Officers of the Organization shall consist of a President, First Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, United Nations Representative, and six Directors. The First Vice President shall be from the same region as the President. (Amended 1975 at Hamburg and 1982 at Caracas.);

b) Regional Officers: There shall be in addition, nine regional officers known as Second to Tenths Vice Presidents, who shall be elected as far as possible from these geographic areas: Africa, Central America, including the Caribbean Islands, North America, South America, Asia, Australasia, Europe and the Middle East;

c) Country Vice Presidents: There shall also be a Vice President for each country in which the Federation has membership;

d) Editors: There shall be an Editor-in-Chief, Associate Editor and eight regional editors from the geographic areas enumerated in sub-division (b) as far as possible, who shall be appointed by the President (Amended 1982 at Caracas.); e) There shall also be a Parliamentarian and a Historian.

## **Section 2 – Term of Office**

All officers shall serve for three years (Amended 2017 at Freeport, The Bahamas) or until their successors shall have been duly elected and qualified or appointed. For the purposes of rotations for the office of President, the countries in which FIDA has membership shall be divided into five regions as follows (Amended 1982 at Caracas.):

§ Africa, which shall include Middle East;

§ North America, which shall include the United States, Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean countries;

§ South America, which shall include Central America;

§ Asia, which shall include Australasia,

§ and Europe.

All officers, except the President, shall be eligible for re-election for a subsequent term, but in no case, shall be any executive officer serve for more than two consecutive terms in the same office. The office of the President shall be filled by rotation among the regions and within the regions by rotation among the various countries within that region. No country, having once had the honour of having the Presidency and a general Convention may again have such honour unless there is no member in any other country in that region, qualified, ready and willing to undertake the Presidency. When there is no qualified person in any country in that region, qualified, ready and willing to undertake the Presidency, it shall go to the next region in line therefore. No region offering a qualified President may be by-passed out of consideration for the preference of any member. (Amended 1979 at Santa Fe.)

## **Section 3 – Election of Officers**

The Executive Officers, the Historian, the Parliamentarian, the Regional Vice Presidents shall be elected Viva Voce or by secret ballot as may be decided upon by the Convention, at the last business meeting of the General Convention, by plurality vote of the country delegations present, duly registered and accredited. (Amended 1982 at Caracas). The outgoing international President, if possible, shall serve as Parliamentarian for the next ensuing term.

## **Section 4 – Selection of Country Vice Presidents**

In those countries where an affiliate organization exists or where there are organized local groups or chapters in individual members, the affiliate in good standing and/or the local groups or chapters of individual members, shall nominate to the President within 60 days, a suitable person to serve as Country Vice President chosen by vote of the affiliate membership or by vote of the individual members comprising the local group or chapters. (Amended 1982 at Caracas) If the affiliate or the group or chapter of individual members fails to make the nomination requested within the time limit, the President shall appoint the Country Vice President. In countries where neither an affiliate nor an organized group or chapter of individuals exists, the President shall appoint an appropriate Country Vice President, but may take into consideration, but no be bound by, the choice of the members in such country.

## **Section 5**

All other officers shall be appointed by the President.

## **Section 6 – Vacancies**

In the case of the absence or inability of the President to act, the First Vice President and then the Regional Vice Presidents, in their order, shall perform the duties of the President. Vacancies occurring in any other office, shall be filled for the balance of the unexpired term by the Executive Council. Should an elected officer be incapable of discharging the duties of her office, the Executive Council shall designate a replacement for the duration of the incapacity.

## **Section 7**

Only members in good standing may hold office, elective or appointive, in the organization.

## **ARTICLE VII EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

### **Section 1**

There shall be an Executive Council to be comprised of the following: The President, the First Vice President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the United Nations Representative, and six Directors, at least three of whom shall be, when possible, former Presidents or Executive Officers of FIDA, if any. (Amended 1967 in Monrovia) (Further amended 1982 at Caracas), the Parliamentarian, the Historian, and the Regional Vice Presidents (Further Amended 2017 at Freeport, The Bahamas). During the lifetime, the Honorary Life President upon whom the honour was conferred with voice and vote at the 1964 Convention, shall be one of these Directors.

### **Section 2**

The Executive Council shall conduct the affairs of the organization in accordance with this Constitution and By-Laws and the policies that may be adopted by the organization from time to time.

### **Section 3**

The Executive Council shall have regular meetings before or after the General Convention as shall be determined by the Council itself. Special meetings may be called at any time by the President and must be called by her upon written request of any three members of the Executive Council. Seven members of the Council shall constitute a quorum at any meeting (Amended 2017 at Freeport, Bahamas).

### **Section 4**

Voting by correspondence shall be allowed on all matters that call for decision by the Executive Council and may take the place of special meetings. Proposals may be coursed on the initiative of and by any member of the Executive Council to all other members thereof. All members of the Council shall submit their votes in writing within the time requested, to the initiator of the proposal, who in turn shall report the result of the voting to the President and the Secretary. Copies of all papers and correspondence in connection with the proposal and the voting record thereon shall be sent to the Corresponding Secretary and the Administrative Office in New York and shall become part of the permanent record of the Federation and termed “Minutes of the Special Meeting by Correspondence” and be dated as of the time specified for receipt of votes. (Amended 1975 in Hamburg and 1982 in Caracas)

### **Section 5**

Past Presidents shall be entitled to attend meetings of the Executive Council which are held at any time of a general convention but shall have no voting rights. (Amended 1990 at Cartagena)

## **ARTICLE VIII CONVENTIONS AND MEETINGS**

### **Section 1**

General Conventions shall be held every three years (Amended 2017 at Freeport, The Bahamas) and unless circumstances dictate otherwise, in the country of the current President. The President shall choose the date and the place subject to review by the Executive Council. Should it become necessary to hold the Convention in other than the country of the current President, the Executive Council shall decide the time and place (Amended 1982 at Caracas) .

## **Section 2**

Regional Conventions and seminars or meeting in cooperation with other associations may be held at such place and date as may be determined by the Executive Council upon recommendations of a Regional or Country Vice President, to discuss a limited program on specified subjects. No Regional Convention may be held less than 6 months before the General Convention. (Amended 1982 at Caracas) Proposals and programs and all financial arrangements including registration fees and hotel reservations shall be submitted for approval to the Executive Council, well in advance and such meetings shall be open to all members, although in a regional meeting only members of the particular region may vote. Financing therefore shall not involve any expenditure from the International treasury. All members of the Executive Council shall be ex-officio members of the Committee for such a meeting. All rules adopted by the Federation for its General Conventions shall be binding on such meetings. Resolutions adopted at such meetings shall be advisory only and not binding on the Federation but may be affirmed and/or modified or rejected by action at the next General Convention. (Amended 1975 at Hamburg)

## **Section 3**

Meetings during General or Regional Conventions may be Plenary or otherwise, as the particular activity of the specific subject under discussion may demand.

## **Section 4**

A majority of the members and affiliates in good standing duly registered and accredited, and present at a General or Regional Convention shall constitute a quorum at all regular business meetings. Section 5 Voting shall be by delegation of the different countries duly represented at the Convention. Only countries having independent status shall be recognized for purposes of voting. Territories and possessions shall not have separate vote, but shall vote collectively with the parent country as set forth in Article VIII. Sec. 4 of the By-laws. Only members and affiliates in good standing may vote. (Corrected 1975 at Hamburg)

## **ARTICLE IX COMMITTEES**

### **Section 1**

There shall be three classes of Committees.

§ Administrative Committees, as hereinafter enumerated;

§ Standing Committees as set forth in the By-Laws, which may be changed from time to time as the need arises, by action of the Executive Council, without constitutional amendment;

§ and Special Committees to be appointed by the President for particular needs and problems.

### **Section 2**

The Administrative Committees shall be as follows:

A) Committee on Language Coordination;

B) Committee on Protocol;

C) Nominations Committee;

D) Credentials Committee;

E) Resolutions Committee.

### **Section 3**

The Committee on Language Coordination shall be comprised of the Country Vice Presidents. It shall be their duty to appoint one or more members in good standing from their respective countries to translate into the language of the country all proceedings of meetings Regional or General, reduce same to writing and circulate among their own members. It shall also be the duty of these coordinators to translate important proceedings taken in their own countries or at Regional Conventions into one or more of the three official languages and submit same to the Executive Council.

### **Section 4**

The Committee on Protocol shall be composed of not more than eleven members, two of whom shall be appointed by the President from members of the country in which the General or Regional Conventions are held, the other nine to be the Regional Vice Presidents. This Committee shall study the customs of the various countries relative to public functions, make permanent record of same and see that they are observed. No function of the organization shall be planned or take place without the assistance and supervision of this Committee or a member thereof.

### **Section 5**

All nominations for elective office shall be made by a Nomination Committee of not less than five and not more than seven members, not more than two of whom may be from the Executive Council and not more than one of whom shall represent the same country. They shall be appointed by the President as far in advance as feasible, and all appointees shall signify their acceptance in writing. (Amended 1977 in Lagos) Vacancies on the Nominating Committee by failure of a member thereof to attend the General Convention may be filled by the President at the Convention.

### **Section 6**

The Credentials Committee shall be formed as soon as feasible before the General Convention. It shall consist of the Treasurer who shall act as Chairman, and two members representing different geographic regions to be named by the President. It shall examine the standing and credentials of members, members of delegations, and nominees for office and shall report its finding to the Convention without delay prior to the meeting of the Nominations Committee and the voting by General Assembly. (Amended 1977 at Lagos) Section 7 The Resolution Committee shall be appointed by the President on the first day of the General Convention. It shall be comprised of three members from three different geographic areas and shall prepare in final form the resolutions submitted to it by the working committees to be presented at the final business session of the Convention. It shall also work with the Language Coordination Committee to translate these resolutions into the three official languages.

## **ARTICLE X AMENDMENTS**

The Constitution may be amended at a General Convention of the organization by a two-thirds vote of the members in good standing duly registered and accredited, and present, provided that the amendment or amendments to be voted upon have been mailed in writing to each member of the organization in good standing, at least 60 days prior to the date of such Convention. But nothing herein contained shall prevent the General Convention from making additional changes in the Proposed Amendments, as they see fit.

### **BY-LAWS As Amended, November, 2017**

#### **Article I Admission to Membership**

##### **Section 1 – Members shall be admitted as follows:**

(a) Individual Members and Student Members may be admitted upon application sponsored by an Officer or member of the organization in good standing, and approved by the Membership Committee.

(b) Affiliate organization applications shall be sponsored by an Officer or Member of the organization in good standing, and approved by two-third votes of the Executive Council.

(c) Patrons may be admitted upon recommendation by an Officer or Member in good standing and approved by Executive Council.

(d) Each application for membership above-mentioned must be accompanied by the current annual dues.

(e) Honorary Membership may be bestowed by resolution passed by a two-third vote of the members at a General Convention.

## **Section 2**

No honorary office hereinafter conferred by the Federation upon any person shall carry with it membership or voting rights in the Executive Council (Amended 1982 at Caracas).

## **Section 3**

Organizations or Bar Associations of Women Lawyers affiliating with the Federation shall indicate in the names of their respective affiliates, the country and local of their organizations. The words "FIDA" or "International Federation of Women Lawyers" may not be used in the names of their respective organizations nor can they call themselves a branch thereof. They may however note on their stationery that they are affiliated with the Federation. The term "branch of" referring to the International Federation of Women Lawyers, may be used only by local associations of individual members of FIDA (Amended 1977 at Lagos).

## **Article II Dues and Fees**

### **Section 1**

Dues and fees for all categories of membership shall be established and/or changed, as required, by the Executive Council at its regular meeting before the General Convention. By so doing, the Executive Council shall take into consideration the economic realities of any existing situation. The Executive Council shall report any changes in dues and fees to the membership in Convention Assembly and shall publish all such changes in the first publication issued to members after the close of the General Convention (Amended 1971 in Chile).

### **Section 2**

Any member may be declared not in good standing for non-payment of dues by the Treasurer, but such a member may be reinstated upon recommendation of the Membership Committee, after payment of a reinstatement fee \$1.00 together with the back dues. The Executive Council may suspend for a limited period or totally waive back dues of delinquent members when so warranted by circumstances.

### **Section 3**

Upon authorization of the Executive Council, or by a majority vote in a General Convention, dues of individual members and affiliate organizations may be waived for a period to be determined by the Executive Council upon the recommendation of the Vice-President of the country concerned.

### **Section 4**

Any association of women lawyers calling itself a "branch" of the International Federation of Women Lawyers, must submit a list of all its members and their addresses to the Treasurer together with applications for individual membership signed by each of such members and the current individual dues. No member of such "branch" shall be considered or be a member of the Federation or have voting rights whose individual fees are not fully paid (Added 1977 at Lagos).

## **Article III Fiscal Year**

### **Section 1**

The fiscal year of the organization shall begin on the first day of September and shall end with the last day of August of the following year.

### **Section 2**

Dues of all classes of membership shall become delinquent after April 1st, and if not paid by the opening business session of the next convention, the member may be declared not in good standing after notice of delinquency. Article IV Indebtedness Except as otherwise specifically provided in these By-Laws, no indebtedness other than necessary expenses for office supplies, postage stamps, dues for continued affiliation with any other organization and the mailing of La Abogada Internacional and Newsletter, and the sundry office expenses of the United Nations Representative to U.N. Headquarters, shall be incurred by any officer or member, except by vote of the Executive Council. Article V Duties of Officers Section 1 The duties of the officers shall be such as are implied by their respective titles and such as are stated in these By-Laws. All officers shall make a permanent record of their work and shall turn it over to their successors at the Triennial Convention (Amended 2017 at Freeport, The Bahamas) or at the expiration of their term of office. They shall also make a report at the Triennial Convention (Amended 2017 at Freeport, The Bahamas).. Section 2 The President shall preside at all conventions and meetings of the organization and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees. She shall perform all other duties as usually pertain to the office of the President.

### **Section 3**

The Regional Vice-Presidents shall act as liaison officers between their regions and the Executive Council and shall report for consideration by the Council, problems arising in their regions and any need for changes or reorganization. They shall submit report of their activities at the General Convention. Where a country is not represented by a Country Vice President, it shall be the duty of the Regional Vice President to act and perform the duties of a country Vice-President for such country.

### **Section 4**

It shall be the duty of each Country Vice-President to organize in her respective country, a branch of the International Federation of Women Lawyers, or to secure as Affiliate organization member thereof, the recognized Women Lawyers Association of the particular country. In those countries in which women are not accorded equal rights with men in the legal profession, the Country Vice President should work towards organizing either a branch of the Federation or a National Association of Women Lawyers to become affiliated with the Federation. If a national organization already exists, such Vice-President should assist the national organization whenever possible.

### **Section 5**

The Secretary shall take or have taken the minutes of the plenary sessions of the General Conventions and all meetings of the Executive Council, regular or special, and send condensed versions thereof of actions taken and decisions made to the Editor to be printed in our publications for information to the members. She shall keep such minutes and the record of executive meetings by correspondence. If any, during her term and at the expiration of her term, she shall send this record to the administrative office to be filed with the permanent records. She shall send list to each Country Vice President of all the individual members in that country and the names and addresses of the affiliates, if any, in such country. She shall carry on such official correspondence as the President may direct. She shall seek the assistance of the Language Co-ordination Committee to translate the minutes as necessary, or as directed by the President (Amended 1982 at Caracas).

### **Section 6**

The Treasurer shall be authorized by the Executive Council to establish in the name of the International Federation of Women Lawyers a bank account with a reputable bank to be conducted in US dollars. The signatories to such account shall



be any one of the President, the Vice-President and the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall collect all dues, receive and hold all monies belonging to the organization and pay by cheque signed by herself or by either of the other authorized officers all bills upon authorization by the Executive Council. Payments of a recurrent administrative nature such as the cost of collection of dues shall not require specific authorization. She shall be bonded by the organization. She shall keep all itemized record of all receipts and expenditures and give a written report of the same at each meeting of the Executive Council and an audited report at each General Convention of the organization. She shall send notice of dues October 1st and April 1st, to those members who remain unpaid. She shall also notify delinquent members on April 1st of their liability of suspension if their dues are unpaid by the opening business session of the next Convention. The Treasurer shall provide a current list of members in good standing to the President, General Secretary, Representative to the United Nations, the Editor and to such other chairman of Committees as may have need thereof, or as the President may direct. Her office shall also furnish the official stationery and membership certifying their membership and showing the date to which their dues are paid (Amended 1982 at Caracas). The Scholarship Facilitation Fund shall be kept separate from the General Treasury Funds and be drawn upon only with the approval of the Executive Council. The Treasurer is empowered to accept contributions towards scholarship and to deposit any such contributions in said fund. The Treasurer shall turn over to her successor as soon as practicable after vacating her term of office, all books, records, papers and monies, and receive a listed receipt therefore. On the opening day of the General Convention, the President shall appoint two members from two different regions to audit the Treasurer's account prior to the reading of her report at the bus mess meeting. In the event of dissolution of the Federation, any money remaining in the Treasury or any Scholarship or Facilitation Fund, shall not be divided among the members, but shall be turned over to the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) except that scholarships already established shall be continued if possible (Added 1967 in Monrovia and amended 1975 in Hamburg). The Treasurer shall pay all life membership dues collected into a separate account, or accounts labelled life membership accounts, in savings banks paying the highest interest rate then prevailing. Only the interest from such account may be used for current expenses and only if necessary. The principal or any part thereof may not be invaded for any purpose without the unanimous consent of the Executive Council.

## **Section 7**

The Representative to United Nations shall be the official representative of the Federation at the United Nations Headquarters. She shall be the Chairman of the United Nations Committee and shall be empowered to designate, either the members of the Committee or any other competent member of the organization in good standing, to serve as Alternates to the meetings which she does not personally attend, and as accredited liaison representatives and delegates to United Nations organs and/or specialised agencies and meetings thereof. Each year after the United Nations' Schedule of Meetings is published, she shall send to all the members a schedule of all such meetings open to FIDA. She shall promptly notify all Vice-Presidents of various United Nations meetings scheduled to be held in their respective countries. She shall give a summary of her activities and the activities of her Committee at each General Convention (Amended 1975 at Hamburg).

## **Section 8**

The Editor-in-Chief shall be the Chairperson and the Associate-Editor, the Vice-Chairperson of the Editorial Board which shall consist of all the Editors (Amended 1982 at Caracas).

(a) The Editorial Board shall control and supervise the compilation and mailing to all members of FIDA, the libraries and others on our mailing lists. "The La Abogada Newsletter" to be issued four times a year (quarterly). The newsletter shall contain news about the activities of the Federation and its members and articles of special interest written by the members and other items pertinent to and in furtherance of the objectives of the Federation (Amendment made at Caracas 1982 but misnumbered). Within one month at the maximum after the General Convention, a one or two page newsletter listing the names and addresses of all newly elected officers shall be sent by minimum air mail to all members. This newsletters shall contain a brief resume of what transpired at the Convention and action taken. From time to time, as the President deems necessary, similar brief newsletter containing important news for the membership shall be sent by minimum air mail to all members.

(b) The Outgoing President shall have the right and privilege of choosing a special Editor to compile, edit, publish and distribute "La Abogada Internacional" (bi-lingual, if possible) to be issued every three years (Amended 2017 at Freeport,

The Bahamas) as soon after the General Convention and the work of the Federation for the prior three years (Amended 2017 at Freeport, The Bahamas) and must contain, among other matters, the resolution adopted at the Convention and decisions made and action taken by the Executive Council both at the Convention and during the past three years. (Amended 2017 at Freeport, The Bahamas)

(c) Regional Editors shall be responsible for forwarding to the Editorial Board, all reports of activities in their Regions and news item of interest to the membership.

(d) Proposed budgets for the cost of publications and the mailing thereof shall be submitted for approval to the Executive Council as soon as practical after the General Convention. The amount of the authorized budget shall not be made payable to any Editor but the Treasurer shall pay only for materials actually furnished and services actually rendered directly to those furnishing the materials and services upon the presentation of bills thereof. In no event may the Treasurer pay more than the authorized total amount without special permission from the Executive Council (Amended 1979 at Santa Fe).  
Section 9 It shall be the duty of the Historian to collect and preserve data and papers on the works and interest of the organization, present to the General Convention a brief summary report and thereafter turn same for safekeeping to the Recording Secretary. Section 10 The duties of the Parliamentarian are such as are indicated by the title.

## **ARTICLE VI Standing Committees**

### **Section 1**

There shall be Standing Committees for the following items:

(i) Comparative Laws

(ii) Constitution and By-Laws

(iii) Convention

(iv) International Hospitality

(v) Membership

(vi) Public Relations

(vii) Scholarship Facilitation

(viii) United Nations

(ix) Ethics (Amended 1975 at Hamburg);

(x) Follow up Committee on Laws for the Protection of Children (Amended 1979 at Santa Fe).

### **Section 2**

The newly elected President shall appoint the chairperson for each Committee other than the United Nations Committee, and the Public Relations Committee as soon as possible after the electiOn, even before the closing of the Convention, if feasible. Each chairperson shall select the members.

### **Section 3**

The Comparative Laws Committee shall comprise a Chairperson appointed by the President and nine Vice Presidents. It shall be the duty of the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson to solicit and collect from the Country Vice-Presidents information about, and papers on the laws of each Member Country on the particular topic or topics facets of the laws

chosen by the President for study at the forthcoming convention, such as The Law of Domestic Relations, Inheritance, Juvenile Law, Labour Legislation, etc.

#### **Section 4**

The Convention Committee shall have charge of all convention arrangements and the agenda and social programme thereof and the compilation of and delivery to the newly elected Editor-in-Chief of papers, photographs and other materials about and resulting from the convention, including resolutions adopted for publication in the Abogada and future newsletters. The Chairperson appointed by the President shall appoint sub-committees for convention hospitality, convention publicity and photography of material for the Editor, and shall work with the Public Relations Committee on releases for the Press.

#### **Section 5**

The International Hospitality Committee shall be composed of a chairperson appointed by the President and all the Regional Vice-Presidents whose duty shall be to give information and advice about their regions to members seeking to travel therein. All request for information and advice shall be directed to the Chairperson who in turn will forward same for answer to the Regional Vice-Presidents of the region wherein the requesting member expects to travel.

#### **Section 6**

The Public-Relations Committee shall be composed of the First Vice-Presidents as chairperson, and all the country vice-presidents whose duty shall be under the direction and guidance of the First Vice-President to disseminate information about the Federation, its activities and the resolutions adopted, and the means or steps to be taken in their respective countries to implement the resolutions. It shall have full and sole authority and responsibility for all press release and publicity about the organization.

#### **Section 7**

The United Nations Committee shall be composed of the United Nations Representative as chairperson, and an Alternate U.N. Representative to be appointed by the President upon the advice and with the consent of the United Nations Representative and such other persons as the United Nations Representative shall designate or request. Where the U.N. Representative resides within the orbit of the United Nations Headquarters in New York, the Alternate shall reside within the orbit of the U.N. Headquarters in Geneva and vice versa. At least two members of the committee must be resident within commuting distance of the New York Nations Headquarters.

#### **Section 8**

Non-lawyer patrons may be invited to serve on the Convention, and Scholarship Facilitation Committees.

#### **Section 9**

The follow-up committee on Laws for the Protection of Children shall monitor and follow-up changes in laws and new laws passed in the various countries for the welfare of children. It shall comprise of an overall chairperson to be appointed by the President and such additional persons as the Chairperson may select, and all Country Vice-Presidents whose duty shall be to follow up and report current legislation about children in their respective countries. At each Convention, the Chairperson shall give a written report of the changes and additions in the various countries in such legislation affecting children.

### **ARTICLE VII – Elections**

#### **Section 1**

The Nominations Committee shall present written nominations for elective offices at least two days in advance of the date on which voting is to take place. These shall be formally presented at the last business meeting of the General Convention following which, nominations may be made from the floor.

## **Section 2**

All candidates for office shall give written consent to their candidacy.

## **Section 3**

All elective officers shall be elected at the last business meeting of the Convention and shall continue in office for three years (Amended 2017 at Freeport, The Bahamas) or until their successors are elected or appointed. They shall be installed at the regular closing banquet of a General Convention,.

## **Section 4**

Any person desiring executive offices must be or become an individual member.

## **Section 5**

No member who has not attended at least one prior Convention may be elected to executive office (Amended 1975 in Hamburg).

## **ARTICLE VIII – Conventions and Meetings**

### **Section 1**

Meetings and Conventions and the Quorum therefore shall be held as provided for in Article VIII of the revised Constitution.

### **Section 2 Preparation of Provisional Agenda:**

The Provisional Agenda shall be prepared by the Convention Committee not later than ninety days before the opening of a Regional or General Convention as the case may be. The Provisional Agenda shall be communicated to the members of the Federation and invited observers not later than sixty days before the opening of a Regional or General Convention. Any member in good standing desiring inclusion of an item in the agenda shall communicate with the Regional Vice-President through her Country Vice-President. Such item shall be accompanied by an explanatory memorandum, basic documents and draft resolution covering the item. Every agenda must provide at least one half day for a General Meeting not open to the public at which the delegations may present and discuss matters of interest to FIDA.

### **Section 3 Preparation of Final Agenda:**

The Convention Committee shall prepare on the basis of the provisional agenda, a final agenda.

### **Section 4 Voting**

(a) At a General or Regional Convention, voting shall be by delegations of the different countries present. All countries having affiliates or ten or more individual members where there are no affiliates, shall be entitled to two votes. All countries having no affiliates and less than ten individual members shall have one vote. Where countries have affiliates plus five or more individual members, the affiliates shall have one vote, and the individual members collectively, one vote. Where a country has more than one affiliate, the affiliates shall decide among themselves how to cast the vote or votes to which they are entitled.

(b) Affiliates shall send a current list of the names and addresses of their officers and members in good standing to the Treasurer at least 60 days before the General Convention. No affiliate member not on the list sent may be accepted as a delegate or permitted to vote for the affiliates unless she brings with her to the Convention duly authenticated credentials authorizing her, signed by two current officers of the affiliates (Amended 1979 at Santa Fe). Affiliates shall send current lists of the names and addresses of their officials and of their members in good standing to the Treasurer as needed and at least 60 days before a General Convention. No affiliate member not on the last list so sent may be accepted as a delegate or

permitted to cast a vote for or with that affiliate unless she brings with her to the Convention, duly authenticated credentials authorizing her, signed by two current officers of the affiliate (Amended 1975 in Hamburg).

(c) Delegations and/or individual members shall agree in advance on the manner in which votes shall be cast and shall designate one of the members to cast the vote or votes. Should there be a dissension within a delegation or among individual members to the extent that the manner of casting its votes cannot be determined, its vote or votes shall be nullified.

(d) Voting for any particular country shall be confined to members who are resident and domiciled therein. A member absent from her country for two or more consecutive years, or who has acquired foreign citizenship, may not cast a vote for that country. In appropriate cases, the Executive Council may waive this provision.

(e) No member joining at the Convention may vote at that Convention (Amended 1975 at Hamburg).

(f) In the case of a country that has both an affiliate and individual members, an individual member claiming the right to exercise the complete voting rights of that country when no affiliate delegate is present, must have a signed consent from the affiliate, duly authenticated by two current officers of the affiliate, authorizing hereto vote for the affiliate.

### **ARTICLE IX – Amendments**

These Bylaws may be amended at a General Convention of the Federation by a majority vote of the members in good standing, duly registered, accredited and present, provided that the amendment or amendments to be voted upon shall have been mailed to each member of the organization in good standing, at least 60 days prior to the date of such Convention. But nothing herein contained shall prevent the General Convention from making additional changes in the proposed amendments as they deem fit.

### **ARTICLE X Parliamentary Procedure**

Roberts' Rules of Order shall apply in all cases not provided for in the constitution and By-Law of the Federation. The Federation shall, by a majority, vote members in good standing, duly registered and accredited, and present in a General Convention; it shall adopt its own Convention rules. Such rules shall stand for each succeeding Convention unless altered by a majority vote at the Convention.

### **Appendix III**

International Federation of Women Lawyers Convention Rules

- § Rule 1 – Credentials and Credentials Committee
- § Rule 2 – Eligibility for Participation in Conventions
- § Rule 3 – Officers: Presiding Officer; Parliamentarian; Chairman
- § Rule 4 – Convention and resolutions Committee
- § Rule 5 – Quorum
- § Rule 6 – Speakers
- § Rule 7 – Points of Order
- § Rule 8 – Time Limit of Speeches
- § Rule 9 – Motions and Amendments
- § Rule 10 – Procedural Motions
- § Rule 11 – Order of Procedural Motions
- § Rule 12 – Voting Rights
- § Rule 13 – Majority Required
- § Rule 14 – Votes
- § Rule 15 – Languages
- § Rule 16 – Open and Closed Meetings
- § Rule 17 – Records of Proceedings
- § Rule 18 – Publicity
- § Rule 19 – Banquets and Dinners

- § Rule 20 – Visitors and Guests
- § Rule 21 – Regional Conventions
- § Rule 22 – Supplementary Agenda Items
- § Rule 23 – Additional Final Agenda
- § Rule 24 – Delegations

#### **Rule 1: Credentials and Credentials Committee**

A. The Credentials Committee prior to voting shall submit a report, in writing, of the number of votes to which each country or delegation is entitled pursuant to SubSection 5 or Article 8 of the By-Law.

B. The Credentials Committee shall have the power to request lists of members with their addresses from all affiliates who have not yet filed such lists with the Treasurer and the General Secretary. Each affiliate shall notify the chairman at least one month in advance of the convention of the name or names of persons authorized to sign credentials for that affiliate. The Committee shall set up its own form for affiliate credentials and distribute same to the affiliates in advance of the Convention.

C. Credentials for proposed delegates shall be submitted by Country Vice-Presidents and/or officer of affiliates to the Treasurer and the other members of the Credentials Committee as far in advance of the opening session of the Convention as possible.

#### **Rule 2: Eligibility for Participants in Conventions**

Any properly accredited member or members of a delegation shall be entitled to attend meetings and participate in them subject to the Constitution and ByLaw. With the permission of the President or Presiding Officer, observers invited to a meeting or convention, may participate in the general discussion, but without the right to vote.

#### **Rule 3: Officers**

A. The President of the Federation shall act as Presiding Officer of the Convention. In her absence, during a sitting or any part thereof, the First Vice-President or one of the Regional Vice-Presidents taken in rotation shall preside.

B. The Convention shall elect a Parliamentarian if the duly elected one is not present at the Convention.

#### **Rule 4: Convention and Resolutions Committees**

A. The Convention Committee shall meet periodically throughout each session of the Convention to review the progress of the Convention and its Committees and to make recommendations for furthering progress.

B. The Resolutions Committee may revise the resolutions submitted by the Working and Standing Committees, changing the form but not the substance, prior to presentation for voting.

#### **Rule 5: Quorum**

A majority of the members in good standing, duly registered, accredited and present at a General or Regional Convention shall constitute a quorum.

#### **Rule 6: Speakers**

A. The Presiding Officer shall call upon speakers in the order in which they have expressed their desire to speak; she may call a speaker to order if her observations are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

B. Generally, no delegation or member shall be called to speak a second time on any question except for clarification, until all other members desiring to speak have had an opportunity to do so.

C. At plenary meetings, the Chairman of a committee may be accorded precedence for the purpose of explaining the conclusions arrived at by the body concerned.

#### **Rule 7: Points of Order**

During the discussion on any matter, and notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 6, a member may at any time raise a point of order, and the point of order shall be immediately decided by the Presiding Officer. Any member may appeal against the ruling of the Presiding Officer and any discussion on the point of order shall be governed by the procedure stated in the succeeding rules (other rules are also relevant). The ruling of the Presiding Officer shall stand unless overruled by a majority of votes cast. A member speaking on a point of order may speak only on this point, and may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion before the point was raised.

#### **Rule 8: Time Limit of Speeches**

A Presiding Officer may limit the time allowed to each speaker unless the Convention decides otherwise.

#### **Rule 9: Motions and Amendments**

A. A motion or amendment shall not be discussed until it has been seconded.

B. No motion may be withdrawn if an amendment to it is under discussion unless amended and seconded or has been adopted. Any amendment shall be voted on, before the resolution which it is intended to amend.

#### **Rule 10: Procedural Motions**

Subject to the provisions of Rule 9 (A) any member may move at any time, for the suspension or adjournment of the meeting, the adjournment of the debate on any question or the deferment or discussion of an item, or the closure of the debate on an item. After such a motion has been made and explained by its proposer, only one speaker shall normally be allowed to speak in opposition to it and no further speeches shall be made in its support before a vote is taken.

#### **Rule 11: Order of Procedural Motions**

The following motions shall have priority over all other motions and shall be taken in the following order to:

(i) suspend the meeting;

(ii) adjourn the meeting;

(iii) adjourn the debate on an item;

(iv) defer the debate on an item; and

(v) for closure of the debate on an item.

#### **Rule 12: Voting Rights**

Voting shall be by delegation of the different countries; each delegation duly represented at the Convention being entitled to vote as provided for in Section 5 of Article 8 of the By-Law

#### **Rule 13: Majority Required**

Except as otherwise provided in these rules, or in the Constitution and By-laws of the Federation, decisions shall be by a majority of the votes cast. An abstention shall not be considered as a vote.

#### **Rule 14: Votes**

A. Voting shall be by roll call. A secret ballot shall be had if any delegation requests it. In the event of a secret ballot, the head of the delegation of each country shall be given the same number of ballots as the number of votes to which that country is entitled and shall be entitled to cast that number of ballots.

B. In the case of a tie vote for elective office, a second vote shall be taken at the same meeting. If the vote is still tied, the person nominated by the Nomination Committee shall take the office.

#### **Rule 15: Languages**

A. Languages English, Spanish and French are the working languages of a Convention.

B. Documents of the Convention shall be prepared and circulated in the English language and in the other two languages, if possible.

C. When possible, the English, Spanish and French languages shall be used in the deliberations of the convention committees and working groups. Speeches made in any of the three languages shall be interpreted into the other two, except where such interpretation is dispensed by common consent. Delegates may speak in language other than the working languages, but they must provide for interpretation of their speeches into one of the working languages according to their choice.

#### **Rule 16: Open and Closed Meetings**

A. The meetings of the Convention and of its Committees shall be held in the public unless the body concerned decides otherwise and except as provided in Section 2 of Article VIII of the By-Laws. Matters covering the internal business of the organization shall not be open to the public.

B. At all meetings not open to the public, all persons shall be excluded except member or members of delegations and the necessary members of the Secretariat.

#### **Rule 17: Record of Proceedings**

A. Minutes of the plenary meeting of the Convention shall be prepared by the Secretariat at the end of each day and presented to the body for approval at the opening of the following day.

B. Resolutions adopted by the Convention shall, if possible, be immediately translated in all the three official languages, and shall be printed in full in all the three languages in the post-convention issue of the Abogada.

#### **Rule 18: Publicity**

All publicity released at the Convention shall pass through the Committee on Public Relations which shall work in close cooperation with the Committee on Protocol. Photographs of attending delegates released to the Press shall be approved by the Committee on Public Relations and the Committee on Protocol prior to release. No individual member or delegate may make or be made to publish any statement relative to the Convention or the work of the Federation.

#### **Rule 19: Banquets and Dinners**

All seating arrangements at banquets and other functions of the convention shall be supervised by the Committee on Protocol. All dinner programmes, both as to menus and speakers shall be cleared with the Committee on Protocol. All



questions of what function family and friends may attend shall be passed upon by the Convention Committee. There shall be a specified order of seating at all banquets and dinners. Preference shall be given in the following order:

- (i) President of the organization;
- (ii) Invited dignitaries and officers of the organization;
- (iii) Members;
- (iv) Observers and guests.

#### **Rule 20: Visitors and Guests**

Friends and relatives of members wishing to attend the Convention may do so by registering immediately upon coming to the Convention. They shall pay the required registration fee, and shall present credentials to show proper sponsorship and relationship. They shall wear a ribbon or an emblem of a different color to distinguish them from regular members. They may attend open meetings of the Convention, but shall be seated in a separate part of the convention room.

#### **Rule 21: Regional Conventions**

These rules shall apply with the same force to all regional conventions.

#### **Rule 22: Supplementary Agenda**

Items Any regional officer or country vice-president may, at least 30 days before the date fixed for the General Convention, request the inclusion of supplementary items in the final agenda by making such request to the President in writing.

#### **Rule 23: Additional Final Agenda Items**

Items of an important and urgent character proposed for inclusion less than 30 days before opening of the General Convention may be added to the final agenda and considered upon a majority vote of the membership present.

#### **Rule 24: Delegations**

A. Affiliates and countries shall not be limited in the number of delegates at any convention, but all delegates shall vote in accordance with Section 5 of Article VIII of the By-Laws.

B. All individual member or members of affiliates shall attend as delegates. The status of observers shall be limited to invited non-members only.

C. The Executive Council may reduce or waive the convention registration fee for the delegates of countries having monetary difficulties. Constitution and By-laws Committee J. Aduke Moore — Chairman Dora A berlin — Co-chairman, Amor Melencio Herrera Vice-chairman, Gertrude Aberlin, Marie Whitesell Balboa, Elizabeth Landis.