



CONSTITUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S ALLIANCE (IWA)

[Adopted by the IWA First General Assembly
on July 6, 2011 in Manila, Philippines]

Preamble

We, women from Asia, Africa, Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, North America and Oceania, united in building an anti-imperialist, militant women's movement in the 21st century, hereby proclaim the formation of the International Women's Alliance (IWA).

We believe that the intensified imperialist aggression against our peoples, our lives, and livelihood has resulted in the further exploitation and oppression of women.

We believe that imperialism and its puppet states have been reversing many of the gains for which women before us have fought and died.

We believe that in order to realize our vision for a just and democratic society, void of patriarchal and other reactionary values, we must unite, draw in more women, and intensify our struggle towards the defeat of imperialism and all reaction.

Through this alliance we resolve to:

Build a movement to further draw in women and men to the struggle for justice, freedom and peace, to advance our struggle to overcome all forms of economic, political and socio-cultural oppression that will promote the rights of women, and fight against gender discrimination, racism, sexual violence and abuse, and the neglect and denial of our health and reproductive rights;

Build a movement to further unite the oppressed and exploited women from all parts of the world and link local struggles and campaigns against imperialism with the struggle of peoples of the world;

Build a movement to mobilize women, as well as men, from all over the world to build a society that will guarantee women's rights and ensure our meaningful participation and development as equals;

Build a movement that will move forward the peoples' struggle for national and social liberation and the full emancipation of women, and that will guarantee a life without exploitation and exploitation, one that is protective of the world's natural resources and the environment.

Article I Aims and Purposes

1. Build an anti-imperialist women's movement that will draw women, particularly the oppressed and exploited women of the working class, in their numbers to fight and resist imperialist plunder and war as it intensifies the exploitation and oppression of the peoples of the world, and that will strengthen the peoples' movement for national and social liberation and full emancipation of women;
2. Build and develop a broad international women's movement for social change, justice, genuine peace, freedom and equality that is deeply rooted among the masses of women workers of all nationalities, peasant and rural women, indigenous and minority nationalities, urban poor, the unemployed, migrants and refugees, youth, professionals, academicians, differently-abled women, LGBTQ and other marginalized and discriminated women;
3. Assert women's rights in economic, political and socio-cultural spheres;
4. Fight to end all forms of discrimination, violence and marginalization of women;
5. Expose and oppose imperialist discourses and structures that feed on, shape and intensify feudalism, patriarchy and other reactionary values that impede the exercise of women's rights, equality and freedom;
6. Build and strengthen international cooperation, mutual support and sharing of strategies among women organizations, networks, alliances, institutions and individuals;
7. Encourage and support the building of local anti-imperialist women's organizations, networks and alliances, and encourage coordination and cooperation in the national and regional levels of women's organizations in the form of campaigns, joint activities, coalition building, and establishing regional coordinating bodies that will undertake campaigns on issues concerning and affecting women and strengthen their organizational capabilities;
8. Raise consciousness among women and men on the root causes of women's oppression and exploitation through theoretical study and practice;
9. Expose and oppose anti-women policies and laws, and reactionary women's groups that create divisions among women and derail and co-opt women's struggles;
10. Link up and unite with other progressive and social movements in the struggle against imperialism and all reaction.

Article II **Name**

The name of the alliance shall be the International Women's Alliance (IWA), hereafter referred to as the Alliance.

**Article III
Definition**

In this Constitution, unless the context otherwise requires, the words below shall have the meaning set opposite each of them respectively:

Constitution -----	the Constitution of the Alliance
Assembly -----	the General Assembly of the Alliance
EC -----	the Executive Council of the Alliance
Member -----	the member of the Alliance

**Article IV
Scope, Logo and Headquarters of the Secretariat**

Section 1. Scope

The Alliance shall cover the whole world. We will reach the working and oppressed classes of all regions of the world.

Section 2. Logo

The three women at the center of the logo express power, militancy and steadfast resolve towards internationalism. The women’s symbol represents women united under the banner of internationalism and anti-imperialism. The colors of the logo represent diversity, beauty and creativity.

Section 3. Headquarters of the Alliance

The Assembly shall decide on the location of the Headquarters of the Alliance.

**Article V
Membership**

Section 1. Types of Members

1. Criteria for Regular Members
 - a. Membership of the Alliance shall be open to all grassroots women’s organizations, sections of local trade unions and other organizations that promote women’s concerns, networks, and alliances of women’s organizations that subscribe to the

Constitution of the Alliance and adhere to the principles of the Manila Declaration of Unity, and all plans, policies and resolutions approved by the Assembly.

- b. Commitment to perform the rights and duties of a member.
- c. Payment of membership fee and annual dues.

2. Criteria for Associate Members

- a. Any women's institution or group that provides programs for women shall qualify for associate membership in the Alliance.
- b. Adherence to the Constitution of the Alliance, the principles of the Manila Declaration of Unity, and all plans, policies and resolutions approved by the Assembly.
- c. Payment of membership fee and annual dues.

3. Criteria for Individual Members

- a. An individual who has distinguished herself in her respective field may be invited to become an individual member of the Alliance, provided that she does not belong to an existing member organization of IWA.
- b. Adherence to the Constitution of the Alliance, the principles of the Manila Declaration of Unity, and all plans, policies and resolutions approved by the Assembly.
- c. Payment of membership fee and annual dues.

Section 2. Admission to the Alliance

An applicant shall submit a letter of intention for membership to the Alliance through a member organization of the Alliance. The member organization shall in turn submit such application together with their letter of recommendation to the Executive Council for deliberations. The EC shall be mandated by the Assembly to approve or disapprove the application and report its decision to the General Assembly.

Section 3. Rights of Members

The members of the Alliance shall enjoy the following rights:

1. For Regular Members:

- a. To attend the General Assembly of the Alliance or any special meeting called for specific purpose.

- b. To vote and be voted into any leadership position. Each member organization may send up to five (5) delegates to the Assembly. However, the vote of a regular member organization shall be equivalent to ten (10) votes.
 - c. To register a dissenting opinion, criticism and suggestion to any constituted body of the Alliance.
 - d. To seek support from the Alliance on any issue, problems and needs of their organization or its members.
 - e. To appeal to the EC on any matter concerning the Alliance.
2. For Associate Members:
- a. To be entitled to all the rights stated above except that they cannot be voted into any leadership position.
 - b. To be entitled to voting rights. Each Associate Member vote shall be equivalent to five (5) votes.
3. For Individual Members:
- a. To be entitled to all rights stated above except they cannot be elected into any leadership position. However, they can be consulted and give advice on important matters pertaining to the Alliance.
 - b. To be entitled to voting rights. Her vote shall be equivalent to one (1) vote.

Section 4. Duties and Responsibilities

The members of the Alliance shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Uphold the Constitution, policies, rules and regulations of the Alliance.
2. Attend and actively participate in the activities, campaigns and work of the Alliance.
3. Maintain regular and up-to-date communications with the Secretariat.
4. Pay the membership fee and annual dues promptly.
5. Uphold and respect the principle of independence and initiative of all member organizations.
6. Not to hold public criticism of other member organizations; instead such criticisms should be done between member organizations in private.

Section 5. Disaffiliation

Any member may withdraw its/her membership at any time. Resignation shall be in writing, with explanation, and shall take effect upon receipt and action of the EC.

Section 6. Suspension of Membership

The EC shall have the right to suspend a member for violations of the core principles of the Constitution.

Any suspended member shall have the right of appeal.

Article VI Instrumentalities

Section 1. Instrumentalities

To facilitate and ensure its effective and efficient operation, the Alliance shall have the following instrumentalities:

1. General Assembly
2. Executive Council
3. Secretariat

Section 2. General Assembly

The General Assembly shall serve as the highest policy and decision-making body of the Alliance. It shall have the right to decide all matters concerning the Alliance.

1. Functions
 - a. Define the thrust, policies and programs of the Alliance.
 - b. Revise, amend or rescind the Constitution.
 - c. Decide membership reaffirmation, admission, suspension or termination.
 - d. Elect the members of the Executive Council.
 - e. Accept, review, alter or reverse the report and resolutions of the Executive Council.
 - f. Adopt the financial report and budget for the term.

g. Resolve any other matter the Assembly would see fit.

2. Participation and Credentials

- a. All bona fide members of the Alliance shall compose the General Assembly.
- b. Each member organization may be represented by two (2) to five (5) delegates inclusive of one (1) voting delegate. Each delegate shall bear the credentials of her organization.
- c. Each Associate Member shall be represented by one (1) or two (2) delegates who shall bear the credentials of her institution or organization.
- d. Individual Members may attend the General Assembly.
- e. The General Assembly reserves the right to refuse credentials that in its opinion are not authentic and thereby refuse to accept its bearer(s) as delegate(s).

Section 3. Assembly

The Assembly shall be held once in four (4) years in such place, date and time agreed by the Executive Council.

However, the Executive Council or the Secretariat, may call for an Extraordinary Assembly when necessary:

1. Upon the request of the simple majority of the regular members of the Alliance.
2. Such meeting shall be held within twelve (12) weeks after the receipt of the request, unless the request is accompanied by a later suggested date, or
3. Upon the resolution by the Executive Council and ratified by a simple majority of the postal votes cast or any other means such as faxes or emails by the members of the Alliance.

A notice specifying the place, date and time of the Assembly or Extraordinary Assembly and a preliminary agenda shall be sent to all members at least twelve (12) weeks prior to the Assembly and six (6) weeks for an extraordinary one.

Section 4. Executive Council

The Executive Council shall be the highest executive and supervisory body of the Alliance, in-between the General Assembly. It may exercise all powers of the Alliance, provided that in exercising those powers and in discharging its functions, it shall be bound by the Constitution

and the policies set by the Alliance in the Assembly. The EC may make policies in cases where there are none, subject to the ratification of the Assembly.

1. Functions of the Executive Council:

- a. Manage the affairs of the Alliance.
- b. Execute and assess the policies, plans and programs of the Assembly and draw up an annual plan of action
- c. Create and directly supervise a Secretariat to attend to the day-to-day functions of the Alliance.
- d. Plan and organize internationally-coordinated campaigns and activities for women.
- e. Draft positions and plans on issues concerning and involving women.
- f. Recommend applications for membership to the Alliance for approval of the General Assembly.
- g. Make interim decisions when the Assembly is not in session.
- h. Draft the agenda and convene the Assembly.
- i. Recommend policies and policy guidelines to the Assembly.
- j. Receive and discuss proposed amendments to the Constitution.
- k. Prepare the annual narrative and financial report, budget and plan of the Alliance.
- l. Create regional and thematic task forces as the need arises.
- m. Represent and speak on behalf of the Alliance in any functions, public gatherings and media releases.
- n. Perform other tasks as may be assigned by the Assembly.

The Executive Council shall not administer or govern all or any of the members of the Alliance and shall have no authority whatsoever to decide on issues internal to any member organization or on issues of controversy among several participating organizations. It may make requests or proposals that are subject to the decision of all or any of the participating organizations.

2. Composition of the Executive Council:

Nine (9) members shall constitute the Executive Council – Chairperson, Vice Chairperson for Internal Affairs, Vice Chairperson for External Affairs, Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General, Treasurer, Auditor, and two (2) Members.

- a. The Chairperson of the Alliance shall represent and speak on behalf of the Alliance in any functions, public gatherings and media releases, stand as signatory representative for the Alliance in legal documents and statements, and preside over EC meetings.
 - b. The Vice Chairperson for Internal Affairs shall manage the membership of and recruitment to the Alliance.
 - c. The Vice Chairperson for External Affairs shall handle efforts in networking and building relationships with women’s movements, and other progressive and anti-imperialist movements.
 - d. The Secretary General shall directly work with the Secretariat in managing the day-to-day work of the Secretariat.
 - e. The Deputy Secretary General shall assist the work of the Secretary General and the Secretariat.
 - f. The Treasurer shall be in charge of fundraising efforts, accounting for the annual financial report, budget and plan.
 - g. The Auditor shall assist the Treasurer in the accounting of finances.
3. Term of Office:

The members of the EC shall hold office until the end of the succeeding Assembly.

Section 5. The Secretariat

1. The Secretariat shall be appointed by the EC to do staff functions to assist the Executive Council.
2. The Secretariat shall manage the day-to-day affairs of the Office of the Alliance.
3. The basing of the Secretariat shall be decided upon by the EC.
4. The Secretariat shall be directly accountable to the EC.
5. The term of office of the Secretariat shall be co-terminus with the EC, unless appointed again by the newly-elected EC.
6. The Secretariat shall submit narrative and financial reports to the EC for submission to the Assembly.

Article VII Meetings

Section 1. General Assembly

The General Assembly of the Alliance shall be held once every four (4) years.

Section 2. Executive Council

The Executive Council shall meet at least once a year in such a place, date and time as the EC shall fix and if practicable prior to the Assembly and other activities of the Alliance.

Appropriate notice, along with the proposed agenda, shall be sent six (6) weeks before the meeting.

Section 3. Decisions and Quorum

1. Provided all the requirements and period stated in notifying the members for the said meetings are met, those in attendance in the said meeting shall constitute a quorum.
2. In principle, the decisions of the Alliance shall be by consensus. In instances where a division of the house is necessary, a simple majority of the members present, there being a quorum, shall be necessary to adopt a motion or resolution.
3. However, in the EC, majority plus one (1) of the members shall be required to constitute a quorum.
4. If a member of the EC cannot personally be present in the meeting, she may request a proxy to replace her during the meeting. A written authorization should be presented to the EC at the start of the meeting.
5. If for some reason, a member of the EC cannot attend the meeting, she can use modern electronic means to participate in the meeting.

Section 4. Elections

Election for the positions stated in this Constitution will be done during the regular session of the General Assembly. Election shall be by secret ballots and supervised by a three (3)-member Election Committee to be appointed by the Assembly.

Article VIII Finance

Section 1. Sources

The funds of the Alliance shall be derived from membership fees and dues and fundraising projects approved by the General Assembly.

Section 2. Dues

The annual dues of the Alliance shall be determined by the Assembly. The implementing policies and guidelines shall be done by the EC.

Section 3. Budget

The budget of the Alliance and the corresponding financial plan shall be prepared by the Executive Council, in consultation and concurrence with the guidelines set by the Assembly.

Section 4. Disbursement

Funds may be withdrawn in accordance with the financial regulations and approved budget of the Alliance.

Section 5. Accounts

The Treasurer shall document the accounts of the Alliance and submit a financial report to the EC and the Assembly.

Article IX Registration

The Executive Council is authorized to register the Alliance in compliance with requirements necessary for IWA to operate as a legal entity.

Article X Dissolution

Section 1. Dissolution

The Alliance may be dissolved by a two-thirds (2/3) votes of its members through a special assembly or by postal voting.

Section 2. Assets and Properties

In the event of dissolution, all assets and properties of the Alliance, after payment of all costs and liabilities, shall be donated to a similar organization.

Article XI
Amendments

This Constitution may be amended by two-thirds (2/3) majority votes cast at the General Assembly.

Any proposed amendment must be submitted to the Executive Council eight (8) weeks before the Assembly. The Executive Council shall distribute copies of the proposal/s received to all members for their perusal at least four (four) weeks before the Assembly.