

# WORLD PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION STATUTES

*Reviewed and approved by the Extraordinary General Assembly in Prague,  
Czech Republic, on 22 September, 2008.*

## Section I - Definition of the Association and of its Members

### Item 1 – Definition

The World Psychiatric Association is an international association, originally consisting of the member societies of the previous International Organization of World Psychiatric Congresses. The WPA consists of all psychiatric Societies that have been admitted pursuant to the requirements of Item 8.

### Item 2 – Legal status

The WPA was established in 1950 as a non-profit organization and functions in compliance with the Swiss Civil Law and its registered office is in Geneva, Switzerland.

### Item 3 –

The English text of these Statutes will be definitive.

### Item 4 –

The application of the present Statutes will be determined by the By-laws.

### Item 5 – Purposes:

The purposes of the WPA are to:

- (i) Increase knowledge and skills necessary for work in the field of mental health and in the care for the mentally ill;
- (ii) Improve the care for the mentally ill;
- (iii) Prevent mental disorders;
- (iv) Promote mental health;
- (v) Preserve the rights of the mentally ill;
- (vi) Promote the development and observance of the highest ethical standards in psychiatric care, teaching and research;
- (vii) Promote the development of the highest quality standards in psychiatric care, teaching and research, as well as the observance of such standards;
- (viii) Promote non-discrimination (parity) in the provision of care of the mentally ill;
- (ix) Protect the rights of psychiatrists.

The WPA will achieve these purposes by:

- A. Advancing cooperation among its Member Societies and Sections;
- B. Facilitating international exchanges of information with respect to the problems of mental disorders and mental health;
- C. Cooperating with national and international, governmental and non-governmental organizations active in fields relevant to WPA purposes;
- D. Organizing world congresses of psychiatry and other WPA scientific meetings on matters relevant to WPA purposes;
- E. Preparing and distributing publications;
- F. Developing, implementing and evaluating educational programs and materials;
- G. Developing a continuing medical education accreditation system in collaboration with Member Societies and other pertinent institutions;
- H. Promoting and conducting collaborative research;
- I. Developing consensus statements on issues of relevance to the WPA and psychiatry;
- J. Establishing task forces to deal with specific issues;
- K. Raising funds and accepting donations;
- L. Organizing educational activities for physicians, mental health professionals and the public.
- M. Any other means harmonious with achieving the purposes of WPA.

Item 6 – Languages:

English will be the working language of the Association. Other languages (including Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish) may be used in official matters depending on specific needs and circumstances.

Item 7 – Logo:

The logo of the WPA consists of a representation of the Greek letter *psi* and the earth globe in crimson red. The logo may be supplemented by the name of the Association in English or any other of the languages specified in item 6.

Item 8 – Member Societies:

Psychiatric Societies whose goals and ethical standards are consonant with those of the WPA are eligible for full membership of WPA if they submit an official application in accordance with the By-laws.

A Psychiatric Society is a medical society concerned with the prevention and treatment of mental disorders and with the promotion of mental health.

To be considered for admission as a Member Society, a psychiatric society must be national in coverage and deal with the whole field of psychiatry.

Regional associations with a majority of members residing in countries that do not have a psychiatric society are eligible for admission.

International Federations of societies are not eligible for admission to WPA as Member Societies but may be admitted as Affiliated Associations.

The decision to admit a Psychiatric Society to the WPA is made by the General Assembly (by a simple majority of votes of those present and voting) on the recommendation of the Executive Committee.

Termination of membership can be effected by resignation or by decision of the General Assembly, by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.

The Executive Committee may suspend a Member Society following provisions in the By-laws.

Item 9 – Affiliated Associations:

Associations whose goals are consonant with those of the WPA and which are not eligible as Member Societies of the WPA may be accepted as WPA Affiliated Associations by the General Assembly in accordance with the By-laws. Decisions about the cessation of status as Affiliated Association can be made by the General Assembly with a simple majority of those present and voting. The Executive Committee may suspend the affiliated membership of an Association if it considers that its continuing membership could impede the achievement of WPA's purposes.

Item 10 – Regular and Special Individual Members, Fellows and Affiliated Individual Members:

- A. Regular Individual Members: Every psychiatrist who is a regular and enlisted psychiatrist member of any WPA Member Society is *de facto* a regular individual member of the WPA.
- B. Special Individual Members: A qualified psychiatrist may apply for Special Individual Membership of the WPA if he/she resides in a country without a Member Society. This provision shall not affect the status of already admitted Special Individual Members.
- C. Affiliated Individual Members: Other health professionals and scientists may apply to become Affiliated Individual Members of the WPA.
- D. Fellows: Special Individual Members in good standing for five years who have made important contributions to the goals of the WPA can apply to become Fellows of the WPA.

Regular, Special and Affiliated Individual Members and Fellows are expected to participate in the activities and scientific meetings of the Association, to share the goals of the WPA and to adhere to its ethical standards (i.e., the Madrid Declaration and other WPA ethical documents).

Special and Affiliated Individual Members and Fellows are entitled to receive information directly on the activities of the Association and will receive other services according to the By-laws and to the decisions of as decided by the WPA Executive Committee.

Regular, Special and Affiliated Individual Members and Fellows have no voting rights.

Termination of Special and Affiliated Membership or Fellowship can be effected by resignation or decision of the Executive Committee.

Item 11 – Honorary Members, Honorary Fellows and Presidential Commendations:

Honorary Membership may be conferred upon individuals who have excelled in their service of the World Psychiatric Association.

Honorary Fellowship can be conferred upon individuals who have made a particularly important contribution to the achievements of WPA goals.

Termination of Honorary Membership or Honorary Fellowship can be effected by resignation or by decision of the General Assembly.

The President can, after consultation with the Executive Committee, confer a presidential commendation to individuals who contributed in a significant manner to the work of the WPA.

## Section II - The General Assembly

### Item 12 – Definition and Composition:

The General Assembly is the governing body of the WPA.

The General Assembly is composed of the delegates of Member Societies.

The President chairs the General Assembly. In his or her absence it will be chaired by the President–Elect and in the absence of both, by a member of the Executive Committee. The members of the Executive Committee and Zone Representatives shall attend the Assembly on an ex-officio basis, without the right to vote.

Members of the Council, Honorary Members, Honorary Fellows, Section Chairpersons (or their representatives), members of the Standing and Operational Committees, representatives of full and ad-hoc Affiliated Associations and ad-hoc Member Societies, may attend the General Assembly as observers.

### Item 13 – Meetings of the General Assembly:

The General Assembly meets every third year. An Extraordinary General Assembly may be convened at any time by the Executive Committee or at the request of one fifth of the Member Societies.

### Item 14 – The Accreditation Committee:

The Accreditation Committee validates the delegates of the Member Societies and other participants in the Assembly and recommends to the General Assemblies the voting strength allocated to them, in accordance with the Statutes and By-laws.

The Accreditation Committee consists of four members, including the Secretary General who will chair it, the Secretary for Finances and two more members appointed by the President after consultation with the Executive Committee.

### Item 15 – Agenda:

The Executive Committee draws up the agenda to be placed before the General Assembly.

### Item 16 – Voting process:

Unless stated differently, all decisions of the General Assembly will be made by a simple majority vote of the Member Societies present and with voting rights. There will be no voting by proxy.

The General Assembly following the recommendations of the Accreditation Committee will confirm the number of votes granted to each Member Society.

### Item 17 – Functions of the General Assembly:

The General Assembly:

- A. Determines the policies of the WPA.
- B. Decides on the admission of Member Societies and Affiliated Associations and on the termination of their membership or affiliation.
- C. Sets the membership dues and approves the accounts of the Association closed at the 31<sup>st</sup> of December of the previous year, upon recommendation of the Executive Committee.
- D. Receives the reports of the Executive Committee concerning the work of the WPA.
- E. Elects on the occasion of each Ordinary General Assembly half of the Secretaries of the Executive Committee for a term of office of six years, and the President-Elect (Vice-President), who will serve the second three years of his or her term as President.
- F. Elects on the occasion of each Ordinary General Assembly Zone Representatives in accordance with item 22 so that continuity and change are guaranteed.
- G. Confers Honorary Memberships and Honorary Fellowships, upon recommendation of the Executive Committee.
- H. Decides on the creation or dissolution of Sections.
- I. Decides on changes of Statutes and By-laws.
- J. Decides on the dissolution of the Association.

### Section III - The Board and the Zone Representatives

#### Item 18 – The Board:

The Board of the WPA comprises the WPA Zone Representatives. The members of the Executive Committee will be invited to attend the meetings of the Board.

The Board considers and advises the Executive Committee and the Assembly on the work of the WPA, including in particular, (1) its efforts to strengthen collaboration among Member Societies in the WPA zones; (2) the admission or suspension of Member Societies; (3) the creation of Sections; (4) the Plan of Action of the Executive Committee, including its financial aspects; (5) WPA budget and accounts; (6) the agenda of the General Assemblies; and (7) the report of the Nomination Committee concerning candidates for elective posts and recommendations concerning the voting procedures.

#### Item 19 – Board meetings:

The Board will meet at least on the occasion of World Congresses of Psychiatry. Board meetings or teleconferences may be held between World Congresses of Psychiatry.

The Zone Representatives will appoint among themselves the chairperson of each meeting of the Board. A Zone Representative cannot chair two consecutive meetings of the Board.

The WPA Secretary General will draw the agenda of the Board meetings after consultation with its members and the Executive Committee.

The quorum for the Board meetings will be half plus one of its members.

#### Item 20 – The Zone Representatives:

The WPA has 18 Zone Representatives who represent the 18 zones of the four Regions of the WPA. The

General Assembly in accordance with the By-laws elects them.

To facilitate their work, they will be kept informed about any official contacts between the WPA Executive Committee and the Member Societies in their Zone. They will in turn keep the WPA Executive Committee informed about their collaboration with Member Societies, their needs, functioning and achievements.

Item 21 – The role of Zone Representatives:

The Zone Representatives should play a key coordinating role within their Zone, they shall encourage collaboration among Member Societies in their zone and stimulate their participation in all WPA activities. They shall disseminate WPA related information and WPA educational materials within their zones. They shall support collaboration with societies in other zones and assist the Executive Committee in ascertaining the needs of societies and the ways in which these needs can be met.

Zonal Representatives of the same Region are encouraged to work together and explore arrangements that are institutionally functional.

Zone Representatives report to and advise the Executive Committee on policies and activities in their zones.

Item 22 – Election of the Zone Representatives:

Zone Representatives are elected for an initial period of three years and they can stand competitively for reelection for a second period of three years. The term of office of the newly elected Zone Representatives begins at the end of the General Assembly which has elected them, and finishes at the end of the subsequent General Assembly, when new Members are elected.

#### Section IV - The Executive Committee

Item 23 – The Executive Committee:

The powers of the WPA between General Assemblies are vested in the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee implements the decisions of the General Assembly, administrates the WPA resources, ensures that WPA statutory functions are carried out by all officers and staff, produces, updates and supervises the application of the Manual of Procedures and prepares the materials for the General Assemblies.

The Executive Committee shall have eight members, including the President, the President-Elect (Vice-President), the Secretary General and five secretaries with defined functions (for Finances, Sections, Meetings, Publications, and Education). The members of the Executive Committee are elected for a period of six years (in a staggered manner).

The quorum for the meetings of the Executive Committee is five members, including the President and/or the President-Elect (Vice-President). The decisions of the Executive Committee are based on a simple majority vote.

In case of parity of votes, the President or in case of his or her absence, the President-Elect (Vice-President) has the casting vote.

Item 24 – The President:

The President chairs all meetings of the General Assembly and the Executive Committee, and is responsible for the implementation of the decisions of these bodies.

The President will promote the activities of the different components of the Association and their mutual collaboration to achieve the goals of the WPA.

The President will seek funds to support the work of the WPA and can authorize others to do the same.

The President convenes the Executive Committee and decides upon its agenda after consultation with its members.

The President nominates the chairpersons and the members of the Standing and Operational Committees, when not otherwise specified in the Statutes or By-laws, as well as Special Advisors to the President, upon recommendation by the Executive Committee.

The President chairs the Nomination Committee and appoints its members, with the approval of the Executive Committee.

The President presides over the World Congress of Psychiatry.

The President represents the Association in all official matters.

The President reports to the Executive Committee.

Item 25 – The President-Elect (Vice-President):

The General Assembly elects the President-Elect (Vice-President) for a period of six years, of which he or she serves as President-Elect (Vice-President) for three years and as President for three years.

The President-Elect (Vice-President) shall chair the Standing Committee on Planning.

In the absence of the President, or if the President is unable to carry out his or her functions, the President-Elect (Vice-President) shall preside over the meetings of the Executive Committee, the Nomination Committee, and the General Assembly. The President-Elect (Vice-President) will represent the President in his or her absence or upon his or her request in all official functions.

The President-Elect (Vice-President) reports to the Executive Committee.

Item 26 – The Secretary General:

The Secretary General is elected by the General Assembly for a term of six years.

The Secretary General is the head of the WPA Secretariat and is responsible for the administrative tasks of the WPA.

The Secretary General, in close collaboration with Zone Representatives, ensures that the members of the WPA are kept well informed of the discussions and decisions of the Executive Committee and of other WPA Committees and of the General Assembly, and relates all concerns and opinions of the members to these bodies. The Secretary General coordinates the work of the Zone Representatives and serves as liaison between them and the WPA governing bodies.

The Secretary General is responsible for the minutes of the meetings of the Executive Committee, the Board, the Council and the General Assemblies.

The Secretary General chairs the Accreditation Committee.

The Secretary General reports to the Executive Committee.

Item 27 – The Secretary for Finances:

The General Assembly elects the Secretary for Finances for a term of six years. The Secretary for Finances is responsible for the implementation of policies concerning finances, investments, fund raising, auditing of the accounts as well as for the prudent expenditure of the WPA funds. The Secretary for Finances presents, after consultation with Zone Representatives, the WPA yearly budget to the Executive Committee for approval and supervises its management. In case of discrepancies between Zone Representatives and the Executive Committee, a meeting of the Board will take place if requested by at least one third of the Zone Representatives, in order to reconsider the WPA budget.

The Secretary for Finances will chair the Operational Committee on Finances and will be a member of any Finance Committee appointed by the President.

The Secretary for Finances presents a report to each meeting of the Executive Committee and the General Assembly.

Item 28 – The Secretary for Meetings:

The General Assembly elects the Secretary for Meetings for a term of six years. The Secretary for Meetings oversees the coordination of all official scientific meetings of the WPA. The Secretary for Meetings is responsible for the development of proposals for hosts of World Congresses of Psychiatry and helps in all aspects of the organization of other scientific meetings.

The Secretary for Meetings will chair the Operational Committee on Scientific Meetings.

The Secretary for Meetings reports to the Executive Committee.

Item 29 – The Secretary for Education:

The General Assembly elects the Secretary for Education for a term of six years. The Secretary for Education coordinates the educational activities of the Association and ensures the distribution of educational programs of the WPA in cooperation with the Zone Representatives, collaborating also as necessary with the Secretaries for Sections and for Meetings, the Executive Committee and Member Societies.

The Secretary for Education will chair the Operational Committee on Education.

The Secretary for Education reports to the Executive Committee.

Item 30 – The Secretary for Publications:

The General Assembly elects the Secretary for Publications for a term of six years. The Secretary for Publications is responsible for implementing the editorial policies of the WPA and maintains oversight of its publications. The Secretary for Publications will be a member of any publication committee appointed by the Executive Committee.

The Secretary for Publications will chair the Operational Committee on Publications.

The Secretary for Publications reports to the Executive Committee.

Item 31 – The Secretary for Sections:

The General Assembly elects the Secretary for Sections for a term of six years. The Secretary for Sections is responsible for the implementation of WPA policies concerning the work of the Sections, and for the coordination of their work.

The Secretary for Sections serves as adviser to the Sections in the planning of Section Symposia or other activities.



The Secretary for Sections coordinates and facilitates inter-sectional collaboration and collaboration of the sections with the member societies.

The Secretary for Sections will chair the Operational Committee on Sections.

The Secretary for Sections reports to the Executive Committee.

Item 32 – Election of members of the Executive Committee:

The members of the Executive Committee are elected by the General Assembly, in accordance with the By-laws. No elected member of the Executive Committee may serve for more than one 6-year term of office, either consecutive or non-consecutive, with the exception that any member, or former member, of the Executive Committee may be elected to the position of President-Elect (Vice-President). In no case may the immediate successor to the same position be elected from the same country.

Item 33 – Meetings of the Executive Committee:

The meetings of the Executive Committee will be held at least three times a year. The costs for the Executive Committee meetings, including travel expenses, accommodation, per diem and meeting facilities when not covered by other sources will be covered by WPA central funds.

Item 34 – Institutional Programmes

Institutional Programmes aim at achieving broad WPA purposes as stated in the WPA Statutes. Approval of the establishment or continuation of an Institutional Programme is granted by the Executive Committee and ratified by the General Assembly. Proposals for the establishment of an Institutional Programme should include a description of the rationale, the objectives, the steps of the implementation and the expected outcome of the programme, as well as a budget and the indication of sources of financial support. After an Institutional Programme is established, an annual report on its progress should be submitted to the Executive Committee for evaluation.

## Section V - The Standing Committees, Operational Committees, Task Forces and Presidential Advisors

Item 34 – The Standing Committees:

A. The Ethics Committee:

The Ethics Committee shall have the responsibility to identify and explore areas of ethical concern to psychiatry and to produce recommendations and draft consensus statements on ethical issues. It will not consider individual cases of complaints.

The Ethics Committee consists of four members and its Chairperson, and shall be appointed by the President upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee for an initial period of three years. Then, at the completion of this initial period, as a general guideline, not more than three and not less than two of the members of the Committee may be reappointed by the President upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee and the Chairperson for a second term of three years.

The Chairperson of the Ethics Committee shall report to the Executive Committee.

B. The Review Committee:

The Review Committee shall review individual complaints and other issues and initiate investigations on the violations of the ethical guidelines for the practice of psychiatry as stated in the Declaration of

Madrid, including its additional guidelines, in order to make recommendations to the Executive Committee as to any possible action.

The Review Committee consists of four members and its Chairperson and shall be appointed by the President based upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee for an initial period of three years. Then, at the completion of this initial period, as a general guideline, not more than three and not less than two of the members of the Committee may be reappointed by the President upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee and the Chairperson for a second term of three years.

Member Societies are obliged to cooperate with the Review Committee in the investigation of cases.

The Chairperson of the Review Committee shall report to the Executive Committee.

C. The Planning Committee:

The Planning Committee shall have the responsibility of reviewing the Statutes and By-laws, of preparing triennial Action Plans (including their financial aspects) to be presented through the Executive Committee to the General Assembly, and of planning for WPA's long-term development, its programs and resource utilization.

The Planning Committee shall consist of five members, including the immediate past President and the President-Elect (Vice-President), who shall chair the Committee.

The President, on recommendation of the Executive Committee shall appoint the members of the Committee on Planning for a period of three years. They will include two new members of the Executive Committee at the beginning of their term and one member of the Executive Committee whose term will end at the next General Assembly.

The Chairperson of the Planning Committee shall report to the Executive Committee.

D. The Nomination Committee:

The Nomination Committee makes proposals concerning elections for all elective posts of the WPA, in accordance with the By-laws.

The Nomination Committee consists of four members and the President of the WPA who will chair it. The members will be appointed for three years by the President after consultation with the Executive Committee. The Committee will include one member of the Executive Committee whose term will continue after the next General Assembly, and three additional members. Every effort will be made to achieve geographical balance.

The Chairperson of the Nomination Committee shall report to the Executive Committee.

Item 35 – Operational Committees:

Operational Committees are established to enhance organizational capacity in the various areas of work of the Executive Committee. The terms of reference and composition of the Operational Committees are presented in the By-laws.

Item 36 – Appointments of Standing and Operational Committees Members:

The President of WPA seeks suggestions for the above Committees from Member Societies, the Council, the Executive Committee and the Board. The Committees listed in Item 34 under A through D above can, upon the approval of the Executive Committee, invite other experts to help them in particular tasks.

Item 37 – Task Forces and Special Advisors to the President:

The President may appoint Task Forces and Special Advisors to the President after consultation with the Executive Committee for specified tasks for a specified period of time.

#### Section VI - The Council

##### Item 38 – Composition and tasks of the Council:

The Council is composed of the previous Presidents of the WPA as life members, and the members of the immediately preceding Executive Committee (the Secretary General for a period of six years, the other members for a period of three years). The members of the Executive Committee will be invited to attend the meetings of the Council. The members of the Council will appoint among themselves the chairperson of each meeting of the Council. A member of the Council cannot chair two consecutive meetings of the Council. The Council offers recommendations and advice to the Executive Committee about any matters affecting the mission and strategy of WPA, and may propose items for the agenda of the General Assembly. The WPA President will draw the agenda of the meetings of the Council after consultation with its members and the Executive Committee.

##### Item 39 – Meetings of the Council:

The Council shall meet with the Executive Committee at the World Congresses of Psychiatry prior to the meeting of the General Assembly, and, will meet once a year with the Executive Committee between Congresses.

#### Section VII – Finances

##### Item 40 – Financial management:

The assets of the WPA will be utilized solely to meet its financial liabilities. The Executive Committee will be responsible for the financial management of the WPA in accordance with the WPA plans and budget.

##### Item 41 – Income and Expenditures:

The income of WPA includes membership fees, donations and funds accrued from Corporate Supporters, overhead charged on specific projects that WPA components are carrying out, technical support and service fees during congresses and scientific meetings, and royalties and revenues from WPA publications.

Expenditures include support for the establishment and functioning of a Secretariat, for meetings of the Executive Committee and other committees, for the work of Zone Representatives, for basic informational services for the WPA and for special projects carried out by various WPA components, when not covered by other sources.

##### Item 42 – Corporate Supporters:

Corporate Supporters are private or public institutions or individuals that help the WPA to achieve its goals providing financial and other support and are informed, as appropriate, of its activities.

##### Item 43 –

Members of the Executive Committee, the Council, the Board, and the Standing and Operational Committees and other Officers will not be paid any salary or fee for their services to the WPA, nor will they be personally liable for debts incurred by the Association.

## Section VIII - Statutes, By-laws and Manual of Procedures

### Item 44 – Definitions of Statutes, By-Laws and Manual of Procedures

The Statutes is the top normative instrument of WPA. It conceptually defines the nature, goals, organic and functional structures and the basic functional areas of WPA.

The By-Laws describe further and in some detail the content of the Statutes in order to establish major functional arrangements for the Association.

The Manual of Procedures is the most detailed of the WPA normative instruments. It contains specific operational guidelines aimed at promoting effectiveness and transparency in the works of WPA, fully respecting the provisions of the Statutes and By-laws.

### Item 45 – Amendments of the Statutes, By-laws and Manual of Procedures:

Recommendations for the change of the Statutes and By-laws can be made by the Executive Committee, the Board, the Council and by Member Societies. Any recommendations for changes in the Statutes and By-laws must be submitted to the Executive Committee at least six months before the meeting of the General Assembly and will be circulated to all Member Societies at least three months before the General Assembly. The Statutes of the WPA may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote taken in the General Assembly, and the By-laws by a simple majority of those present and voting.

Revisions of the Manual of Procedures are prepared and approved by the Executive Committee and ratified by the Board.

## Section IX - Dissolution of the Association

### Item 46 –

The dissolution of the WPA will be decided by the General Assembly at the request of the Executive Committee, or at the request of more than one half of the Member Societies. The General Assembly will, with a two-thirds majority, order the dissolution of the Association.

All sums remaining within the central funds of the WPA after liquidation will be distributed in accordance with the decisions of the General Assembly and the aims of the WPA, or will be handed over to an organization operating on similar principles. On no condition, however, will these funds be distributed among the members of the WPA or utilized on their behalf.

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