CONSTITUTION
OF THE AFRICAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATION
FOR STANDARDIZATION
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THE CONSTITUTION
OF THE AFRICAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATION
FOR STANDARDIZATION (ARSO)

(As adopted at the Founding Conference
of ARSO held in Accra, Ghana in
January 1977 and signed by the delegates
of 17 African countries)
THE CONSTITUTION OF THE AFRICAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR STANDARDIZATION

Preamble

The National Standards Bodies on whose behalf this constitution is signed:

Determined to promote standardization activities in Africa and to strengthen the African voice, contribution and participation at international level in the field of standardization,

Recognizing the desirability of elaborating regional standards particularly with respect to products of interest to Africa,

Convinced that these can best be achieved by the establishment of an African Regional Organization for Standardization,

HEREBY agree as follows:

Article I

Establishment

1. There is hereby established an organization to be known as the African Regional Organization for Standardization, (hereinafter referred to as the "Organization") which shall operate in accordance with this Constitution.

2. The abbreviated name of the Organization shall be "ARSO".

Article II

Objectives and functions of the Organization

1. The objectives of the Organization shall be:

   (a) to promote standardization activities in Africa;

   (b) to promote the harmonization of the views of its members and their contribution and participation at the international level in the field of standardization;

   (c) to elaborate regional standards; and
(d) to promote social, industrial and economic development and provide consumer protection and human safety by advocating and establishing activities concerning standardization in Africa.

2. For the purposes enumerated in paragraph 1 of this Article the Organization shall through its organs seek to:

(a) harmonize standards so as to facilitate trade among African countries;

(b) elaborate regional standards for Africa with particular references to products which are of interest to Africa;

(c) promote and co-ordinate standardization, quality control, certification marking, and metrology activities and practices in Africa;

(d) promote the exchange of experts and information, co-operation in the training of personnel in standardization and the use of laboratory and research facilities;

(e) co-ordinate the views of its members at the ISO, IEC, OIML and other international organizations concerned with standardization, quality control, certification marking and metrology; and

(f) provide services relating to standardization and allied matters to the members of the Organization.

Article III
Membership

1. Membership of the Organization shall be open to the national standards body of each member state of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the Organization of African Unity and where no such body exists in a state referred to in this Article membership shall be open to a government body concerned with standardization designated for that purpose by the government of that State.

2. Eligible bodies may acquire membership of the Organization in accordance with the provisions of paragraphs 2, 3, 4 and 5 of Article XIX of this Constitution.
Article IV
Organs of the Organization

The Organization shall have the following organs:

1. The General Assembly;
2. The Council;
3. The General Secretariat; and
4. Such other bodies and technical committees as may be established by the General Assembly or the Council.

Article V
Officers of the Organization

There shall be the following principal officers of the Organization:

The President
The Vice President
The Secretary General

Article VI
Working Languages

The official working languages of the Organization shall be English and French.

Article VII
General Assembly - Composition and functions

1. The General Assembly which shall be the supreme organ of the Organization, shall consist of the members of the Organization.
2. The General Assembly shall elect from among its members the President and Vice President of the Organization. The terms of office of the President and Vice President shall be for three years. They shall not immediately be eligible for re-election.
3. (a) The General Assembly shall meet at least once every three years as directed by the President of the Organization and may hold extraordinary meetings at the request of the President or two thirds of its members;
(b) The president of the Organization shall preside over all meetings of the General Assembly and where for any reason he is unable to do so the Vice President of the Organization shall preside over such meetings;

(c) Each member of the General Assembly shall have one vote at the meeting of the General Assembly;

(d) The General Assembly shall subject to this Article, adopt its own rules of procedure for all its meetings including rules relating to time, place, notice of meetings, quorum, voting and the conduct of business thereat and at other times.

4. (a) For the purposes of the foregoing each member of the Organization shall designate one person to represent it on the General Assembly who may be accompanied by alternates. Provided that no person shall represent a member of the General Assembly which is elected as President, or Vice President of the Organization as such, unless he be a national of the country of such member.

(b) In designating its representative to the General Assembly, a member of the Organization shall have regard to the desirability of designating persons who are competent in matters relating to the objectives of the Organization.

5.1 The General Assembly shall:

(a) determine the general principles and policies governing the activities of the Organization;

(b) review and approve the programme of activities of the Organization;

(c) determine the annual contributions to be paid by the members of the Organization;

(d) select the headquarters of the Organization;

(e) establish such other subsidiary organs as it may deem necessary for the purpose of achieving the objectives of the Organization and prescribe for such bodies rules for the conduct of their activities;
(f) taking into account sub-regional and linguistic consideration, elect from among its members six members to serve on the Council;

(g) perform such other functions as may be necessary for the achievement of the objectives of the Organization.

5.2 At the end of each of its meetings the General Assembly shall adopt a Report.

5.3 The General Assembly may delegate any of its powers and functions provided for in this Article to the Council.

Article VIII
Council, composition and functions

1. (a) The Council shall consist of the President and the Vice President of the Organization and the six members of the Organization elected for that purpose. The elected members of the Council shall each designate a person to represent it on the Council.

   (b) Half of the first Council members shall retire after 2 years and the remaining half after 3 years. Thereafter, Council members shall be elected for a term of 3 years and shall be eligible for re-election.

   (c) The Council may as it deems necessary, and for such periods as it may determine co-opt other members and/or persons to assist it in the consideration of a particular matter.

2. The Council shall meet as often as may be necessary for the efficient discharge of its functions and the President of the Organization shall preside at its meetings.


4. Subject to the directions of the General Assembly, the Council shall:
(a) direct, review, control and co-ordinate the financial, technical and other activities of the General Secretariat and other subsidiary organs of the Organization;

(b) approve after consulting the members of the Organization, the budget of the Organization;

(c) submit for the approval of the General Assembly a report on the activities of the Organization and an annual report on the activities of the Organization to each member of the Organization;

(d) make rules governing the financial, administrative and other activities of the Organization;

(e) determine the representation of the Organization at meetings to which the Organization is invited;

(f) appoint the Secretary General of the Organization, who shall hold office at the pleasure of the Council and subject to the provisions of this Constitution prescribe his powers, duties and functions, and determine the other offices and the technical divisions of the General Secretariat;

(g) establish other subsidiary organs including Technical Committees as it may deem desirable for the purpose of achieving the objectives of the Organization and prescribe for such organs rules for the conduct of their activities; and

(h) perform such other functions as may be delegated to it by the General Assembly.

5. The Council may refer particular questions for the decision of the members of the Organization without the necessity of calling a meeting of the General Assembly and the views of the members of the Organization may be conveyed by letter or cable.
Article IX

Technical Committees

1. The Council may establish Technical Committees and prescribe their functions.

2. Members of the Organization, which are interested in the activities of a Technical Committee may be represented on the Technical Committee.

3. A technical Committee shall determine within the limits of its functions, its own programme of work.

Article X

The General Secretariat, Secretary General and functions

1. The General Secretariat shall:
   (a) subject to the general directions of the Council, be entrusted with the administration of the Organization;
   (b) keep up-to-date with current developments in standardization and metrology and other matters that may be of interest to the Organization and keep the members of the Organization informed of such developments;
   (c) submit to the Council the programme of activities, budget and accounts of the Organization;
   (d) prepare and submit to the Council, an annual report on the activities of the Organization;
   (e) submit to the Council draft rules governing the financial, administrative and other activities of the Organization;
   (f) provide secretarial services to the General Assembly, the Council and the subsidiary organs of the Organization, and convene their meetings in accordance with this Constitution and rules of procedure that may be made thereunder; and
(g) Implement the decisions of the General Assembly and the Council and perform any other functions that may be delegated to it by the Council.

1. The Secretary-General who shall be the head of the General Secretariat, shall be responsible for the discharge of his functions to the Council and shall be entitled to attend in an advisory capacity all meetings of the General Assembly, the Council, and the subsidiary organs of the Organization.

2. The Secretary-General or any person acting for the time being as Secretary-General, shall act on behalf of the Organization for the purposes enumerated in Article XI of this Constitution.

3. In the performance of his duties, the Secretary General shall not seek nor receive instructions from any member of the Organization nor from any authority external to the Organization, except as specifically provided for in this Constitution or as directed by the Council or the General Assembly. He shall refrain from any acts which might reflect adversely on his position as an international official responsible only to the Council of the Organization.

4. Each member of the Organization shall respect the international character of the responsibilities of the Secretary General and his staff and shall not seek to influence them in the discharge of their responsibilities.

**Article XI**

**Status of the Organization**

1. The Organization shall have capacity to enter into contracts, sue and be sued and acquire and dispose of immovable or movable property.

2. The Organization shall enter into an agreement with the government of the country where its headquarters is situated concerning the provision of premises, facilities, services, privileges and immunities for the purpose and efficient operation of the Organization.
Article XII

Co-operation and affiliation with States and organizations

The Organization shall through the Secretary General seek co-operation with States and organizations which are desirous of assisting the Organization or its members in achieving the objectives of the Organization and such States and organizations may, subject to paragraph 2 of this Article, be invited to attend meetings of the General Assembly, the Council and other organs of the Organization without the right to vote.

2. The General Assembly shall approve the affiliation of the Organization with the organizations referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, and the Council shall approve the establishment of technical relations between the Organization and the States and organizations referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article.

Article XIII

Financial Resources of the Organization

The resources of the Organization shall consist of the annual contributions of the members of the Organization determined by the General Assembly in accordance with clauses 5.1.c of Article VII and fees charged by the Organization for services performed by it.

Further resources such as technical assistance, grants and gifts may be derived from the United Nations, the specialized agencies, other governmental organizations and institutions, governments and non-governmental organizations. Acceptance by the Organization of offers of such further assistance shall in every case be subject to the decision of the Council, in consultation with the Secretary General, and in accordance with the relevant provisions of the rules governing the financial management of the Organization.
Article XIV

Obligations of members of the Organization

Members of the Organization shall co-operate in every way so as to assist the Organization to achieve its objective. They shall in particular:

(a) Pay promptly their annual contributions which shall be in respect of every calendar year and such fees as may be due from them for services rendered to them by the Organization;

(b) Facilitate the collection, exchange and dissemination of information by the organs of the Organization;

(c) Submit all necessary reports and information required by the organs of the Organization; and

(d) Make available training, research, testing and other facilities on such terms as may be agreed with the appropriate organ of the Organization.

Article XV

Amendments of the Constitution

1. This Constitution may be amended on the proposal of the General Assembly, the Council or of at least five members of the Organization.

2. The Secretary General shall notify all members of the Organization of the proposed amendment at least three months prior to the meeting of the General Assembly where the proposed amendment is to be considered.

3. No amendment shall be effective unless approved by at least two thirds of the entire membership of the Organization.

Article XVI

Withdrawal, suspension and cessation of membership

1. Any member of the Organization may withdraw from the Organization at any time after the expiration of one year from the date on which it became a member of the Organization by
Having written notice of its withdrawal to the Secretary General which shall forthwith inform all members of the Organization of the receipt of such notice of withdrawal.

Withdrawal shall become effective one year from the date of receipt by the Secretary General of the notice of withdrawal:

Provided that any member of the Organization withdrawing from the Organization shall nevertheless remain liable for the fulfilment of its financial obligations to the Organization including the payment of contributions in respect of the entire year in which the notice of withdrawal takes effect.

3. (a) The Council may suspend a member of the Organization who fails to meet its financial obligations towards the Organization as may be prescribed in the rules concerning the financial management of the Organization.

(b) The suspension of a member of the Organization shall not relieve that member from the fulfilment of its financial obligations incurred prior to its suspension unless otherwise decided by the Council.

(c) During the suspension of a member of the Organization it shall not hold office in the Organization, participate in the activities of the organs of the Organization nor receive documents and publications of the Organization.

(d) The suspension of a member of the Organization shall be revoked upon the payment by it of the arrears of its financial obligations to the Organization; such a member shall thereupon enjoy all the facilities and privileges of a member of the Organization.

(e) A suspended member of the Organization who does not meet his financial obligation to the Organization for three consecutive years shall automatically cease to be a member of the Organization.

(f) The suspension, revocation of a suspension or cessation of membership with respect to a member of the Organization shall be communicated by the Secretary General to all other members of the Organization.
Article XVII
Settlement of disputes

Any dispute that may arise concerning the interpretation of application of any of the provisions of this Constitution which cannot be settled by the members of the Organization concerned shall be submitted to the General Assembly whose decision shall be final.

Article XVIII
Dissolution

The Organization may on the proposal of the General Assembly, the Council or at least one-fourth of the members of the Organization be dissolved by an affirmative vote of three-fourths of all the members of the Organization. The General Assembly shall appoint a committee for the orderly dissolution of the Organization.

Article XIX
Final provisions

1. The Constitution of which the English and French texts are equally authentic shall be deposited with the Secretary General after the Secretariat is formed but before this it shall be deposited with the Executive Secretary of the ECA.

2. This Constitution shall be applied provisionally when signed on behalf of at least eight of the standards bodies referred to in Article III of this Constitution.

3. This Constitution shall enter into force six months from the date of its provisional application if ratified, accepted or approved on behalf of at least eight of the standards bodies referred to in Article III of this Constitution.

4. Instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval shall be deposited with the Secretary General after the Secretariat is formed but before this it shall be deposited with the Executive Secretary of the ECA.
5. A standards body referred to in Article III of this Constitution which is desirous of becoming a member of the Organization after the coming into force of this Constitution may do so by depositing with the Secretary General its instrument of accession to this Constitution after the Secretariat is formed but before this it shall be deposited with the Executive Secretary of the ECA.

6. The Secretary-General shall transmit certified copies of this Constitution and information concerning ratification, acceptance, approval or accession to this Constitution to members of the Organization, all member states of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the Organization of African Unity.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned being duly authorized have signed this Constitution on the dates appearing under their signatures, on behalf of their respective standards bodies.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned being duly authorized have signed this Constitution on the dates appearing under their signatures, on behalf of their respective standards bodies:

Les soussignés dûment autorisés ont signé cette Constitution aux dates qui paraissent sous leurs signatures au nom de leurs organismes respectifs de normalisation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
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<td>F. Elneny</td>
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<td>Benjamin Dalby</td>
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Ministère du Commerce et de l'Industrie
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