



# STATUTES

CHILD RIGHTS CONNECT

GENEVA

## **PREAMBLE**

Child Rights Connect began its activities as an informal group under the name of “Ad Hoc NGO Group for the drafting of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child” in 1983. At the Founding Assembly on October 23, 1998, the General Assembly formed as “NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child” by adopting its statutes under articles 60-79 of the Swiss Civil Code referring to associations. The statutes were revised and adopted by the General Assembly on November 23, 2007. Amendments of articles 14 and 20 were approved by the General Assembly on June 29, 2010. The amendment of the statutes replacing “NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child” with the new name “Child Rights Connect” was approved by the General Assembly on March 11, 2013.

A general revision of the statutes was undertaken by the Executive Committee starting in June 2014 and the present statutes were adopted by the General Assembly on March 4, 2016.

## **I NAME, HEADQUARTERS, DURATION AND PURPOSE**

### **Article 1**

Child Rights Connect is a non-profit association of NGOs governed by the present statutes and by Articles 60-79 of the Swiss Civil Code. It is politically neutral and non-denominational.

### **Article 2**

The headquarters of Child Rights Connect is in the Canton of Geneva (Switzerland).

The duration of Child Rights Connect is unlimited.

### **Article 3**

The purpose of Child Rights Connect is to advocate for and support the full implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols for the realisation of children’s rights worldwide. Child Rights Connect does this by convening and engaging with civil society and other relevant actors, by fostering cooperation, and by empowering children’s rights defenders, including children, to meaningfully participate in global advocacy for children’s rights at different levels.

## **II MEMBERSHIP**

### **Article 4**

Membership of Child Rights Connect is open to civil society organisations and networks of NGOs, which are committed to the vision of Child Rights Connect and the purpose as stated in article 3.

### **Article 5**

Member organisations are obliged to fully adhere to the statutes, organisational policies and rules of Child Rights Connect and to pay the membership fees.

Member organisations are expected to actively participate in the activities of Child Rights Connect.

### **Article 6**

Requests to become a member organisation must be addressed to the Executive Committee of Child Rights Connect in writing. The Executive Committee recommends applicants complying with the

Child Rights Connect membership criteria to the General Assembly. The General Assembly approves the admission of new member organisations by a simple majority vote.

#### **Article 7**

Member organisations can terminate their membership through a written resignation, notifying the Executive Committee at least six months before the end of the financial year of Child Rights Connect.

Membership may be terminated by the General Assembly by a simple majority vote upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee for good cause.

In all cases of termination of membership, the membership fee for the year of termination remains due.

### **III FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

#### **Article 8**

The financial resources of Child Rights Connect are derived from

- Membership fees
- Donations and legacies
- Public and private grants
- Revenue from events conducted by Child Rights Connect
- Any other resources authorised by the law.

#### **Article 9**

Only the assets of Child Rights Connect can be used for obligations and commitments contracted in its name. Members have no personal liability.

Members of the Executive Committee are also personally liable for their illicit acts.

### **IV GOVERNANCE ORGANS**

#### **Article 10**

Child Rights Connect includes the following organs:

1. The General Assembly
2. The Executive Committee
3. The Secretariat.

### **V GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

#### **Article 11**

The General Assembly is the supreme organ of Child Rights Connect. It consists of all members of the association.

#### **Article 12**

The General Assembly has the authority and duty to:

- Approve and amend the statutes
- Admit and terminate membership

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- Elect the members of the Executive Committee and the president
- Appoint a Statutory Auditor for the accounts
- Grant discharge to the Executive Committee
- Approve the formation and dissolution of Working Groups
- Approve the strategic plan
- Approve the annual reports and financial statements
- Validate the annual plans and budgets
- Set the annual membership fees
- Decide to dissolve Child Rights Connect.

### **Article 13**

The General Assembly holds its ordinary meeting once a year. Member organisations are expected to attend and actively participate in General Assembly meetings.

It may hold extraordinary meetings when necessary by the request of the Executive Committee or by the written request of minimum of one fifth of the member organisations of Child Rights Connect.

Meetings can be held physically or at distance, and votes can be conducted virtually.

The president shall inform the members of the date and the draft agenda of the General Assembly in writing at least eight weeks in advance.

Member organisations can propose additional agenda points for the agenda minimum six weeks prior to the meeting. The president includes these agenda points in the final agenda.

The members shall register to attend or to vote by proxy at the General Assembly four weeks prior to the meeting.

The detailed information, including enclosures, shall be sent to each member at least 10 days prior to the date of the meeting.

### **Article 14**

The General Assembly meeting is chaired by the president of Child Rights Connect. If the president is not available, the General Assembly is chaired by the vice president, the secretary, or the treasurer.

### **Article 15**

The General Assembly meeting is considered valid, if a minimum of one third of the voting member organisations are represented either physically or by proxy.

If the quorum is not reached, a renewed General Assembly meeting – conducted with physical presence or remote participation - is organised one month later, which is valid, irrespective of the number of members represented.

### **Article 16**

Decisions of the General Assembly are taken by a simple majority vote of the member organisations represented (physically or by proxy).

Decisions concerning the amendment of the statutes or the dissolution of Child Rights Connect require the approval of a two-thirds majority of the member organisations represented (physically or by proxy) at the General Assembly meeting.

**Article 17**

Every member organisation has one vote in the General Assembly, if the membership fee for the previous year has been paid according to the regulations for membership fees.

Any voting member organisation that is unable to attend the General Assembly may appoint another voting member organisation to vote on their behalf (voting by proxy). Voting by proxy has to be announced to the Secretariat in writing a minimum of seven days prior to each General Assembly meeting.

Any nominated proxy organisation may only vote on behalf of a maximum of two other member organisations.

Votes are by show of voting cards and show of proxy cards.

Voting can take place by secret ballot, if at least one member organisation requests it.

**Article 18**

The General Assembly can admit observers from other NGOs, international or governmental organisations. Observers can participate in the General Assembly with an advisory role. They have no vote.

**VI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE****Article 19**

The Executive Committee is mandated by the General Assembly to provide strategic guidance, as well as managerial and fiduciary oversight, to the secretariat of Child Rights Connect and to represent Child Rights Connect externally.

The Executive Committee has the authority and responsibilities as specified in the Terms of Reference for the Executive Committee, approved by the General Assembly.

The Executive Committee is accountable to the General Assembly.

**Article 20**

Members of the Executive Committee are elected by the General Assembly from among individuals from member organisations by a simple majority vote.

Candidates for the Executive Committee have to be nominated by a member organisation and seconded by at least one additional member organisation.

Members of the Executive Committee are acting in their personal capacity.

Members of the Executive Committee are elected for a term of two years, which can be renewed twice, i.e. a maximum of six years. After three full terms, a minimum of one year must elapse before the person can be nominated again.

**Article 21**

The president is elected by the General Assembly from among the members of the Executive Committee by a simple majority vote.

The term of office of the president is two years with the possibility of re-election for one additional term, i.e. a maximum of four years.

**Article 22**

The Executive Committee is composed of a minimum of seven and a maximum of eleven members. The Executive Committee can add up to a maximum of three additional members by co-option.

There can be no more than one person from each member organisation standing for elections to the Executive Committee.

**Article 23**

The Executive Committee meets at least three times a year or more often, if the interests of Child Rights Connect require.

Regular meetings are initiated upon invitation of the president. Additional meetings can be summoned by written request of at least three members of the Executive Committee.

**Article 24**

The Executive Committee is chaired by the president of Child Rights Connect. If the president is not available, the Executive Committee is chaired by the vice president, the secretary, or the treasurer.

The director of Child Rights Connect is an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee with a consultative status and has no vote. Other employees of Child Rights Connect can be invited as non-voting members for consultation, information and to take minutes of the meeting.

The Executive Committee can summon closed meetings at its discretion.

**Article 25**

An Executive Committee meeting reaches a quorum when at least half of the members are present either physically or by teleconference.

**Article 26**

Decisions of the Executive Committee are taken by consensus or by a simple majority vote. In case of deadlock, the chairperson shall have the casting vote.

**Article 27**

The Executive Committee establishes a bureau consisting of the president, a vice president, a secretary and a treasurer.

The terms of office of the members of the bureau are two years with the possibility of re-election for two additional terms, i.e. a maximum of six years.

**Article 28**

The bureau coordinates the work between the Executive Committee and the Secretariat.

The bureau and the members of the bureau have the authority and responsibilities as specified in the Terms of Reference.

## **VII SECRETARIAT**

### **Article 29**

Child Rights Connect has a Secretariat, which, under the guidance of the Executive Committee, is entrusted with the implementation of the strategic plan as well as the operational and financial management of Child Rights Connect, according to the decisions of the Executive Committee and the General Assembly.

### **Article 30**

The director is appointed by the Executive Committee and is responsible to ensure the professional management and administration of the Child Rights Connect network, its programmes, its office and the Secretariat staff.

## **VIII WORKING GROUPS**

### **Article 31**

A minimum of three Child Rights Connect member organisations can form into a working group, in order to collaborate on issues related to the purpose, mission and strategy of Child Rights Connect.

Working groups commit to operate in the framework of the Child Rights Connect regulations for working groups.

### **Article 32**

Working groups are confirmed or dissolved upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee by a simple majority vote of the General Assembly.

### **Article 33**

Working groups appoint a convenor or two co-convenors. Any person representing a member organisation, who is part of the working group, can be elected as convenor. The convenor is appointed for a minimum of two years. This term can be renewed twice.

In the case of two co-convenors, the working group appoints a contact person for the General Assembly, the Executive Committee and the Secretariat of Child Rights Connect for planning, reporting and coordination purposes.

## **IX STATUTORY AUDITOR**

### **Article 34**

The General Assembly appoints or confirms an independent Statutory Auditor every year, for a maximum term of five years, who shall audit the accounts and prepare the report for the General Assembly, in conformity with Swiss law.

The Statutory Auditor is entitled to demand, at any time, the presentation of the accounting books and documents.

**X GENERAL PROVISIONS****Article 35**

Child Rights Connect is legally bound by joint signature of two representatives of the Executive Committee or authorised employees of the Secretariat, as defined in the financial policy and the signatory procedures. The financial policy and signatory procedures are validated by the Executive Committee.

**Article 36**

The financial year commences on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January and ends on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December.

**XI DISSOLUTION****Article 37**

The dissolution of Child Rights Connect can only be decided by a General Assembly specially convened. The call for such a General Assembly has to be announced at least one month in advance of the suggested date for the General Assembly.

A majority of three-quarters of the votes of members represented is required to decide on dissolution.

**Article 38**

Should Child Rights Connect be dissolved, the General Assembly shall designate the body in charge of the liquidation of its assets. The available assets have to be transferred to a non-profit organisation pursuing public interest goals similar to those of Child Rights Connect, and likewise benefiting from tax exemption. Under no circumstances can the assets be returned to the founders or members, nor may they use a part or a total of assets for their own benefit.

These statutes were adopted by the General Assembly of March 4, 2016.