

INTERNATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL UNION

STATUTES OF CONVENTION

I. OBJECTS OF THE UNION AND CONDITIONS OF ADMISSION

1. The purpose of the Union is:

(1) To facilitate the relations between astronomers of different countries where international co-operation is necessary or useful.

(2) To promote the study of astronomy in all its departments.

2. The admission of countries to the Union shall be subject to the Regulations of the International Research Council.

II. NATIONAL COMMITTEES

3. A National Committee shall be formed in each of the countries belonging to the Union. It shall be formed under the responsibility of the principal Academy of the country concerned, or of its National Research Council, or of some other national institution or association of institutions, or of its Government.

4. The functions of the National Committees shall be to promote and co-ordinate in their respective countries the study of the various branches of Astronomy, more especially in relation to their international requirements.

They shall be empowered to propose singly or jointly with other National Committees questions falling within the purview of the Union for discussion by the Union.

The National Committees shall nominate delegates to represent them at the meetings of the Union.

III. ADMINISTRATION OF THE UNION

5. The work of the Union shall be directed by the General Assembly of the delegates.

6. The Bureau of the Union shall consist of a President, not more than five Vice-Presidents, and a General Secretary, who shall be elected by the General Assembly, and hold office until the end of the second General Assembly following that of their election; provided that the first President and three of the first Vice-Presidents (as determined by the drawing of lots) shall retire at the end of the first General Assembly following that of their election. The retiring members are re-eligible.

This Bureau shall be the Executive Committee of the Union.

The five Vice-Presidents shall be chosen so as to represent the different branches of Astronomy.

In case of any vacancy occurring among its members, the Executive Committee shall have power to fill up such vacancy. Any person so appointed shall hold office until the next General Assembly, which shall then proceed to an election. The member thus elected shall complete the term of office of the person whose place he takes.

There shall be an Administrative Office, which, under the direction of the General Secretary, shall conduct the correspondence, preserve the archives, prepare and issue the publications sanctioned by the Union, and administer its funds.

IV. STANDING COMMITTEES

7. The General Assembly shall appoint Standing Committees, for the study of special branches of Astronomy, the encouragement of collective investigations, and the discussion of questions relating to international agreements or to standardization.

The Standing Committees shall present reports of their work to the Union.

8. The President and the members of each Committee are elected by the General Assembly on the nomination of the Executive Committee of the Union. They hold office until the end of the next ordinary General Assembly, and are re-eligible.

When a Standing Committee is composed of members appointed partly by the Astronomical Union and partly by some other Union connected with the International Research Council, it shall have the power to elect its own President.

Standing Committees shall draw up their own by-laws. They may co-opt other members by a majority of two-thirds. Such co-opted members need not necessarily be delegates, but shall be subjects of one of the countries adhering to the Union.

9. With the sanction of the Executive Committee, a Standing Committee may issue its publications independently. A Standing Committee may entrust any part of its work to any national institution or to individuals.

V. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

10. The General Assembly shall, as a rule, hold an ordinary meeting once every three years. The date and place of the meeting, unless determined by the General Assembly at its previous meeting, shall be fixed by the Executive Committee, and communicated at least four months beforehand to the adhering organizations.

11. For special reasons, the President of the Union, with the consent of the Executive Committee, may summon an extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly. He must do so at the request of one-third of the votes of the countries adhering to the Union.

12. All members of the National Committees may attend the meetings and take part in the discussions of the General Assembly without power of voting.

The President of the Union may invite scientific men, who are not delegates, to attend a meeting of the General Assembly, provided they are subjects of one of the adhering countries or of a country entitled to adhere. Such invited guests may take part in the discussions, but shall have no power of voting.

Members of any committees who are not delegates (Article 8) shall have the right to attend those meetings of the General Assembly which deal with the subjects referred to the Committee.

13. The agenda of business to be transacted at a meeting shall be determined by the Executive Committee and communicated to the adhering organizations at least four months before the first day of the meeting. No question which has not been placed on the agenda shall be discussed, unless a proposal to that effect be approved by one-half of the countries represented at the General Assembly.

VI. FINANCE AND VOTING POWER

14. The Executive Committee shall prepare an estimate of the budget for each of the years intervening between two General Assemblies. A Finance Committee, nominated for the purpose by the General Assembly, shall examine this estimate together with the accounts for the preceding years. This Committee shall submit separate reports on the two questions to the General Assembly, which, having considered these reports, shall fix the unit of contribution for the succeeding period. The contributions due from the adhering countries, and their corresponding voting powers, are determined by the population of the country according to the following scale:

| Population | No. of votes | No. of units of contribution |
|----------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------|
| Less than 5 millions | 1 | 1 |
| Between 5 and 10 millions | 2 | 2 |
| " 10 and 15 " | 3 | 3 |
| " 15 and 20 " | 4 | 5 |
| Over 20 millions | 5 | 8 |

Each country is at liberty to include in its population the inhabitants of its colonies or protectorates, their number being that indicated by its Government. Self-governing Dominions (South Africa, Australia, Canada, New Zealand) have separate voting power according to the above scale.

The contribution to be levied during the first period of the Convention shall not exceed 500 gold francs per annum per unit*.

In each country the organization adhering to the Council shall be responsible for the payment of the contribution.

15. The income of the Union is to be devoted to:

(1) Cost of publication and expenses of administration.

(2) Cost of reduction and discussion of observations, including the payment of assistants.

Funds derived from donations shall be used by the Union, in accordance with the wishes expressed by the donors.

If any country withdraws from the Union it resigns at the same time its rights to a share in the assets of the Union.

16. At the General Assemblies votes upon scientific questions shall be decided by a majority of votes cast by the delegates present and voting. In questions of administrative character, and all questions not purely scientific, the vote shall be taken by countries, each country having the number of votes designated in Article 14. In case of doubt as to the category to which a question belongs, the Chairman of the meeting shall decide. Votes taken in Committee shall be counted individually and not by countries. When there is an equal division of votes, the Chairman shall in all cases have a second or casting vote.

17. In questions of an administrative character which appear on the agenda a country not represented at a meeting may forward its vote to the President by post, and such vote shall be counted if received before the vote is taken.

* 5·18 gold francs = 1 dollar (New York).

VII. REGULATIONS

18. The General Assembly may draw up regulations for the conduct of its business, the general duties to be assigned to the officers of the Union, and all matters not provided for in the Convention.

Each Standing Committee may draw up its own regulations, which shall be approved by the General Assembly before coming into force.

No regulation shall be made, either by the General Assembly or by the Standing Committees, which violates the terms of the present Convention.

VIII. DURATION OF CONVENTION AND MODIFICATIONS

19. The present Convention shall remain in force until December 31, 1931. It may then, with the assent of adhering countries, be continued for a further period of twelve years.

20. No change shall be made in the terms of the Convention except with the approval of two-thirds of the votes of the adhering countries.

21. The French text (of which the above is a translation) shall be considered to be the authoritative text.