



Charter

of the

Asian Parliamentary Assembly

(APA)

The Charter was adopted, in principle, at the First Session of the APA Plenary in November 2006. Amendments were elaborated in the meeting of the Executive Council, 17-18 November 2007, Tehran, and recommended to the 2nd plenary of the APA. The 2nd Plenary of the APA, 19-20 November 2007, Tehran, the Islamic Republic of Iran, adopted its Charter as herewith annexed on this Monday, 19th of November 2007.

Charter of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA)

Preamble

Convinced that the pursuit of peace based upon justice and international cooperation is vital for the preservation of human society and civilization;

Reaffirming the devotion of Asian countries to the spiritual and moral values which are the common heritage of their peoples and the true source of individual freedom, political liberty and the rule of law, principles which form the basis of all genuine democracy;

Believing that, for the maintenance and further realization of these ideals and in the interests of economic and social progress, there is a need for a closer unity among Asian Countries;

Responding to this need and the expressed aspirations of their peoples in this regard, it is necessary forthwith to create an Assembly which will bring together Asian countries into closer association with a view to their eventual integration into an Asian parliamentary union;

We, therefore, the present members of the Association of Asian Parliaments for Peace (AAPP), see the need for the transformation of AAPP to Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) and do hereby declare, on behalf of parliaments we represent, the following:

General Rules

Article 1: Establishment of APA

The Association of Asian Parliaments for Peace (AAPP) is hereby transformed into the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), hereafter called "the Assembly". The Charter of the AAPP is accordingly replaced by this Charter.

Article 2: Principles of Establishment of APA

All Member Parliaments,

Emphasizing on the equality of all members;

Recognizing the national authority, sovereignty, peaceful coexistence and non-interference in their internal affairs;

Believing in friendship and peaceful settlement of conflicts;

Encouraging and promoting human rights and opposing terrorism and recognizing the rights and freedom of nations;

Emphasizing on the necessity of full-fledged cooperation with regard to sustainable development and protection of the environment;

Trying to create common organizations aimed at providing infrastructures and encouraging economic development through taking advantage of regional commonalities;

Believing in the benefits of harmonizing laws and legal practices from among the members of the Assembly, taking into consideration the diversities of Asian cultural, political and economic experiences, with the view to achieving common legislations;

Express their willingness to establish the Asian Parliamentary Assembly.

Article 3: Objectives of the Establishment of APA

The Objectives of the APA are as follows:

1. Promoting freedom, social justice, peace, security and friendship to meet the objectives of the Assembly;
2. Sharing access to up-to-date knowledge in various areas and promoting such knowledge among the members in order to promote the progress and equality of its members;
3. Exploiting cooperatively vast human and natural resources and securing the interests of all members and recognizing their permanent authority on their natural resources;
4. Providing welfare facilities for the health and nutrition of its members' population; and
5. Contributing to integration among the Asian nations in order to utilize the potentialities of the region.

Article 4: Membership of the APA

Membership of the APA is open to National Parliaments of the Sovereign States of Asia.

National Parliaments of the Sovereign States of Asia may at any time submit their application for joining the APA. The application will be circulated to the Member Parliaments and shall be approved by 2/3 majority of the Assembly.

Basic Organs and Structure

Article 5: Basic Organs of the APA

A: Basic APA Organs:

The APA shall be composed of the Plenary, the Executive Council, the Bureau of Assembly, the Standing Committees and the Secretariat.

Activities of the APA Organs and establishment of subsidiary bodies shall be regulated by the APA Rules of Procedure.

B: Organizational Structure of the APA:

The organization of the hierarchy structure shall be arranged in a democratic manner indicating clearly the specific composition, function, powers and Rules of Procedure to reach balance, harmony and effectiveness of the APA work, as an institution, all, shall be subject to the approval of the Plenary.

The Plenary

Article 6: Members and Observers of the Plenary

As the most important organ, the Plenary shall be composed of appointed delegates of the Member Parliaments, who are elected by their respective national parliaments for a two-year term of office.

Other Asian Parliaments, regional and international organizations may attend the Sessions of the Plenary of the APA as Observers upon approval by the Executive Council.

Article 7: Authority of the Plenary

The Plenary may approve decisions, resolutions and declarations or submit reports on general policies of the APA and on other subjects related to its activities.

Article 8: Number of Votes

In the Plenary, each member parliament shall have one vote and has two delegates plus additional delegates determined as follows:

- Countries with population between 1 million up to 50 million will have two additional delegates,
- Countries with population between 50 and 200 million will have three additional delegates,
- Countries with population between 200 and 500 million will have four additional delegates, and
- Countries with population over 500 million will have five additional delegates,

Article 9: Sessions of the Plenary

The Plenary shall hold at least one annual ordinary session. In case of emergency, and upon request of any of the Member Parliaments and approval of majority of Member Parliaments, an extraordinary session shall be held.

Article 10: Executive Council

Executive Council shall be composed of one APA delegate from each Member Parliament.

Executive Council shall meet at least twice a year: once, immediately before the meeting of the Plenary, and the other normally about three months prior to the meeting of the Plenary at the previous host country.

Article 11: Bureau of the Assembly

The Assembly shall have a President, four Vice-Presidents, and one Rapporteur, taking into consideration equitable regional distributions.¹

The President of the Assembly shall be elected from amongst the presidents or speakers of the Member Parliaments for a one or two-year term of office, depending on the decision of the host parliament, by the majority vote of the delegates of the Member Parliaments. The President shall be eligible for one consecutive reelection.

The President shall be elected during the first meeting of each term of office for the upcoming

period.

Article 12: Legal Entity

The Asian Parliamentary Assembly is a legal entity represented by its President.

Article 13: Voting

All decisions of the Assembly shall require a majority vote of the delegates of the Member Parliaments present and voting, unless the Plenary decides by simple majority of the delegates that on a specific subject a higher majority is required.

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- 1 - With due regard to a balance in regional representation, Asia is grouped into the following five sub-regions:
- a) West Asia: Bahrain, Cyprus, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, ...
 - b) Southeast Asia: Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, ...
 - c) South Asia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, ...
 - c) East Asia and the Pacific: China, Fiji, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Kiribati, Mongolia, Palau, Republic of Korea, Tonga,...
 - e) Central Asia and the CIS: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, ...

Secretariat

Article 14: Provisional Secretariat

The venue of the Secretariat shall be in the country of the elected president of the Assembly.

The host country shall be responsible for providing the required facilities for the Secretariat and convening of the sessions of the Assembly.

Article 15: Permanent Secretariat

Major terms of reference of the Secretariat are as follows:

- Maintaining communication with members and preparing for the sessions of the Assembly,
- Following up the implementation of the decisions of the Assembly, and
- Protecting the documents of the APA.

Article 16: Establishment of the Specialized Commissions

The Assembly may create special commissions to deal with any subject of interest.

Article 17: Rules of Procedure of the Assembly

The Assembly shall adopt its rules of procedure which have to be in accordance with the Charter.

Official Languages

Article 18: APA Official and Working Languages

The official languages of the APA are Arabic and English and its working language is English.

Amendment

Article 19: Amendment of the Charter

Amendments of this Charter shall require the approval of at least 2/3 of the Member Parliaments present and voting in the Plenary.