

Constitution of the SAARC Academy of Ophthalmology

Preamble

The eight SAARC Countries including its new Member Afghanistan share many commonalities; geographic and environmental, cultural and religious, Linguistic and social. Most of them are economically at the same level of development. In terms of health, they have very similar demographics and very similar Health Indicators. They also share similar challenges, all countries are at the cross road of change from communicable diseases to non communicable diseases. All suffer from the Social consequence of ignorance, disease and deprivation. It is therefore high time that health professional of these countries join hands to develop common goals, objectives & strategies and convert the current over whelming health challenges into fruitful opportunities, where health interventions will not only achieve freedom from illness but also ensure a bright future by bringing peace, progress and prosperity to the entire region. It is in this context that the SAARC Ophthalmological Society is revived again under a new name of SAARC Academy of Ophthalmology.

Article 1: Name:

The name of the Academy will be the SAARC academy of Ophthalmology, hereinafter called the SAO.

Article 2: Address

The Address of the Academy shall be the address of the Secretary General of the Society.

Article 3: The Emblem

The Emblem of the SAARC Academy of ophthalmology is a diagrammatic picture of the eye and has the alphabets SAO which stand for "SAARC Academy of Ophthalmology" (SAO).

Article 4: Objectives

The aims of the Academy shall be:

- 1.1 To promote the science and art of Ophthalmology for the benefit of all people of the region.
- 1.2 To encourage and promote close co-operation and collaboration between Ophthalmological Societies of SAARC countries and other Regional and global organizations with similar aims.
- 1.3 To encourage and promote prevention of blindness activities and restoration of sight through teaching, research, public awareness programs, service or any other way deemed appropriate by the Council.
- 1.4 To organize regional congress or such other educational and scientific activities of SAARC Academy of Ophthalmology for advancement of eye care knowledge and standards in the region.
- 1.5 Take all necessary measures to stimulate and encourage ophthalmic research in the region and arrange for its publication and global dissemination in the SAARC Journal of Ophthalmology.
- 1.6 To support and undertake charitable work in the area of Ophthalmology for public benefit.
- 1.7 To raise funds and obtain financial assistance through donations, sponsorships or otherwise for the attainment of any or all of the objectives.
- 1.8 To do all such other things incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objectives or any of them.

2. Article 5 : Members

2.1 The National Ophthalmological Societies of the SAARC Countries and Subspecialty groups in Ophthalmology shall be eligible for Membership of the Academy

2.2 Membership Fees and Subscriptions:

2.2.1 Applicants for membership shall pay an entrance fee upon admission and thereafter Annual Subscriptions.

- 2.2.2 Each Member organization of the Academy shall pay an Annual Subscription of a Minimum of US\$200 / Country Currency / Member / Year.
- 2.2.3 A National Society or Organization of the region, desiring to become a Member of the Academy shall pay an entrance Fee of US200 on Council's Approval of their application to become a Member.
- 2.2.4 Any Member country whose subscriptions fall into arrears for four years shall be suspended from Membership of the Academy.
- 2.2.5 Council shall restore Membership of a Member country when all such dues to the Academy are settled in full.
- 2.3 All valid Members in good standing shall have the right to participate in the activities of the Academy including the right to vote in the General Assembly.
- 2.4 All Members must observe and comply with the Article of this Constitution and the Bye-Laws and directions issued by the Council from time to time.
- 2.5 No Member country or its representatives shall bring or attempt to bring the name of the Academy into disrepute.

2.6 Termination of Membership shall be by resignation or expulsion

- 2.6.1 Resignation of Members from the Academy may be effected by sending words of their desire to the Council through simple correspondence. The resignation however, shall take effect only at the beginning of the next Meeting or Congress.
- 2.6.2 A Member Organization may be expelled from the Academy subject to the approval of the General Assembly for committing any of the following breaches.
- i. Infringement of Constitution
 - ii. Violation of Local Law
 - iii. False use of the name of the Academy in unlawful acts impairing its reputation.
- 2.6.3 Resignation or expulsion shall not affect any liability due to the Academy by the Member.

3. Article: Organizational Structure:

- 3.1 The Supreme Authority of the Academy shall be vested in the SAARC council.
- 3.2 The Council shall act collectively. The Council may be so represented by the joint signatures of the President or one of the Vice-Presidents and the Secretary General.
- 3.3 The secretary general will be executive officer of the academy and will be responsible for all the official correspondence, notices and Administration.

4. Article 7: The SAARC Council

- 4.1 Members of the SAARC council shall consist of regional secretaries from the Member countries of the Academy. At least one regional secretary should be nominated by the national ophthalmic society and the others shall be nominated by the SAARC Council. In case where one member is from a particular country, he/she will be nominated by their national body.
- 4.2 On a poll, votes may be given by secret ballot or by raise of hands.
- 4.3 The Biennial General Meeting of the SAARC council shall be held on the occasion of each Congress of the Academy. All other General Meetings of the SAO council shall be called Extraordinary General meetings. All Biennial Council Meetings shall be chaired by the President of the Academy or in his absence by one of the Next Senior Vice-President automatically.
- 4.4 Notice of General Meetings shall be sent to Members of the General council at least 14 days before the Meeting, Any accidental Non- Receipt of a Notice by any Member shall not invalidate the Proceedings of the Meeting.
- 4.5 The quorum of the council Meeting shall be 15% of the Members of the entire council. If there is no quorum the President shall postpone the Meeting for 30 Minutes, and start the Meeting irrespective of the numbers present.
- 4.6 The business of the council assembly Meeting shall be:
 - 4.6.1 To confirm and discuss matters arising from the Minutes of the previous council or any extraordinary General Meeting.

- 4.6.2 To receive from Secretary General a Report on the activities of the Academy.
- 4.6.3 To receive from The Treasures the Statement of Accounts of the Academy.
- 4.6.4 To endorse the appointment of the Principal Office – Bearers and Members of the Council.
- 4.6.5 To decide on any resolution to amend the constitution and on other resolutions which have been duly submitted to the meeting as provided for under Article – 15.
- 4.6.6 To receive the Report on the next Congress of the Academy.
- 4.6.7 To discuss any other items on the agenda duly put up by the Council.
- 4.7. Upon receiving written requests of one third of the Members of the council, the Secretary – General shall call for an Extraordinary Meeting, at which discussion and resolutions shall be confined to the specific purpose for which it is specially convened.
- 4.8 All questions should be submitted to the council except amendments to the Constitution or change in the of name of the Academy or its dissolution shall be decided by a simple majority of votes. In the event of equality of votes the president shall have a casting vote

5. Article 8: The Council

5.1 Composition

The Council of the Academy shall consist of the following:

1. President
2. Senior Vice- Presidents 1,2 & 3
3. Secretary General
4. Deputy Secretary General
5. Treasurer
6. Chairperson Scientific Committee
7. Regional Secretaries from the Member Organizations

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| i. India | 5 |
| ii. Pakistan | 3 |
| iii. Bangladesh | 3 |
| iv. Nepal | 2 |
| v. Sri Lanka | 2 |
| vi. Bhutan | 1 |
| vii. Maldives | 1 |
| viii. Afghanistan | 1 |

8. The immediate Past Congress Presidents of the Congresses

9. The Immediate Past Secretary General

10. The President of the next Congress

11. Representatives of ICO

12. Representatives of WHO

13. Representatives of IAPB

14. Representation from subspecialties of SAARC Countries (one each)

The President

- i. The President of the Academy shall be elected by council by a vote of simple majority. The President's term of office shall be two years from the conclusion of one Congress to the conclusion of the next Congress, but shall be eligible for re-election for a maximum of one more term
- ii. The President shall take the Chair at all General Meetings of the Academy and all other meetings of the Council
- iii. The President shall have the right to call meetings of the Council
- iv. The President shall have a casting vote if necessary in addition to his vote as a Member of Council

The Senior Vice – Presidents

- i. The Senior Vice Presidents (I), (II) and (III) shall be elected by Council. The shall hold office for a term of two years, and shall be eligible for re-election for one more term.
- ii. All duties powers and responsibilities of the President shall in his absence devolve upon the senior Vice-President 1 or 2 or the Council shall appoint any Member of Council to act for the President in case all the above three officers are not present.

The Secretary General

- i. The Secretary General shall be elected by Council. His term of office shall be four years. He shall be eligible for re-election for two more such terms.
- ii. He shall be responsible for all correspondence of the Academy
- iii. He shall be responsible for calling the meetings of the Council
- iv. He shall also prepare a report on the activities of the Academy to present the Council.

Deputy Secretary General

He shall perform all duties assigned to him by the Secretary General and will officiate for him in his absence.

The Treasurer

- i. The Treasurer of the Academy shall be elected by the Council and he shall be the custodian of the funds and accounts of the Academy, and shall be accountable to Council and the General Assembly. His term of Office shall be for four years and he shall be eligible for re-election for two more such terms.
- ii. He shall be responsible for collecting the subscriptions of Members, and other income of Academy, and shall issue receipts promptly.
- iii. He shall present a Statement of Accounts of the Academy to the Council and the General Assembly.
- iv. He shall prepare and present to Council and the General Assembly as estimated a budget for the next two years.

- v. All cheques of the academy shall be signed by the Treasurer and one of the Following, The President, One of the Vice Presidents or the Secretary General.

Chairperson Scientific Committee

- i. He shall coordinate the scientific program with the Chairperson Scientific Committee of the National Society where the scientific meeting is being held.

Regional Secretary

- i. There shall be Regional Secretaries representing Member Organization of the Academy.
- ii. The Regional Secretaries of Member Organization shall be nominated by the Member organization, and elected by Council to serve on Council for Two years and shall be eligible for re-election provided his parent organization is agreeable for one more term. At least one regional secretary will be nominated by national society from the refractive countries.
- iii. The Regional Secretary shall be responsible for disseminating information from the Academy to the Ophthalmologists and others eye care workers in his organization and his country.
- iv. He shall also be responsible for gathering information from his country or region for the Academy
- v. He shall be responsible for his parent organization paying its subscriptions

8.2. Election of Main Office Bearers.

- 1. President
- 2. Senior Vice Presidents- I
- 3. Senior Vice President-II
- 4. Senior Vice President -III
- 5. Secretary General
- 6. Deputy Secretary General
- 7. Treasurer
- 8. Chairperson Scientific Committee

- 8.2.1. Not less than six weeks before the next Council Meeting, the Secretary – General shall call for nominations from all Council Members for the above posts when election for any of them is due.
- 8.2.2. Nominations will be closed not less than four weeks before the next Council Meeting.
- 8.2.3. The names of valid candidates will be circulated to all Council Members not less than two weeks before the next Council Meeting.
- 8.2.4. Only Council Members from countries having good standing shall be eligible to vote.
- 8.2.5. Voting shall be by secret ballot either by show of hands either in person.

8.3. Functions

The Functions and powers of the Council shall be:

- 8.3.1. To nominate and elect office bearers of the Council
- 8.3.2. To plan and organize the activities of the Academy.
- 8.3.3. To prepare the budget and oversee the finance of the Academy.
- 8.3.4. To set up Bye-Laws for the smooth running of the Academy, Council may amend, add or delete such by Laws as it deems necessary.
- 8.4. The Council shall meet at least once in two years at the venue and time of the Congress.
- 8.5. The President and the Secretary – General are empowered to call a Council Meeting at any time if they deem it necessary in extraordinary circumstances.
- 8.6. The Secretary – General shall give notice of the date, time, venue and agenda of the Council Meeting in writing by facsimile or e-mail at least fourteen days before the meeting.
- 8.7. The President on suggestion from council may from time to time appoint such Sub-Committees of the Council as may be deemed necessary and shall determine their terms of reference, powers duration and composition.

8.8. The office of any member of Council shall become vacant as that member

1. Becomes bankrupt
2. Becomes of unsound mind or passes away
3. Resigns his office by one Month's notice in writing to the Secretary – General.
4. Is removed by the Academy at a General Meeting on the recommendation of the Council.
5. Is absent from two consecutive Council Meetings without valid reasons.
6. Such resignation or expulsion shall not affect any liability to the Academy by the Member.

8.9. Any vacancy in Council occurring in the intervening years between two General Assemblies shall be filled by Council, the appointment being held temporarily until the next General Assembly.

8.10. The quorum for a Council Meeting shall be 15% of the Council Members.

Article 9: Congresses

9.1. The Academy shall hold a Congress every two years.

9.2. Council shall decide on the Location of the Congress four years before the due date.

9.3. The Member organization of the chosen location for a Congress shall be entrusted with the organization of the Congress including the dates of the Congress with the Guidelines of Council and in particular the Secretary – General.

9.4. The organizers shall be guided by Council on the regulations and protocol regarding the conduct of the Congress including the quantum of the registration fee.

9.5. At the conclusion of the closing of accounts of each Congress, the Organizing Member shall pay the Academy 20% of the profits of conducting the Congress.

9.6. The Organizers of a Congress shall present to Council a financial statement within 3 months after the Congress.

Article 10: SAARC Academy of Ophthalmology Special Lectures

- 10.1. There shall be named lectures at each Congress of the Academy. Council is empowered to inaugurate new such lectures to honor of exceptionally outstanding Contributions of SAARC Ophthalmology
- 10.2. Council shall appoint a subcommittee of five members to recommend named lectures and vet nominations from member countries for these lectures and to recommend to Council their choice.
- 10.3. Council is empowered to accept donations for an endowment fund to inaugurate new named lectures.

Article 11: SAO Awards

- 11.1. Council shall appoint a subcommittee of five members to recommend various SAO awards and recommend nominations for such awards to the Council.
- 11.2. Institution of New Awards: Council is empowered to start new awards as it deems necessary.
- 11.3 Patrons and Friends of the Academy: Council may appoint individuals, Institutions or Organizations who have made significant contributions to the Academy either in cash or kind as Patrons or Friends of the Academy.

Article 12: Dissolution of the Academy

- 13.1. The Academy shall not be dissolved except with the consent of two thirds of the members of the General Assembly at a General Meeting convened lawfully to discuss the matters.
- 13.2. In the event of dissolution of the Academy the disposal of the assets of the Academy shall be decided by the General Assembly which may elect persons charged with the responsibilities of dissolution.

Article 14: Articles and By – Laws

The Council shall have the power to make, alter or rescind any Articles or Bye Laws they deem necessary, or useful for the furtherance of the objectives of the Society.