

CONSTITUTION
OF THE
FEDERATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN

1. NAME AND STATUS

The name of the organisation shall be **THE FEDERATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN**. The said organisation shall be a corporate body, having perpetual succession.

2. HEAD OFFICE

The head office shall be at such places where the National Conference shall from time to time determine.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTS

(a) The names and objects of the Federation shall be:

To bring the women of South Africa together; to secure full equality of opportunity for all women, regardless of race, colour or creed; to remove social, legal and economic discrimination
and /

and disabilities; to work for the protection of the women and children of this land; to secure social and economic justice for women, and particularly for working women; to promote and advance the interests of women in relation to their employers.

(b) The Federation shall stand for:

- (i) The removal of all legal disabilities relating to women, and the changing of all laws and customs that deny women equal rights as women, including equal rights over their children;
- (ii) Equal pay for equal work and equal opportunities for employment;
- (iii) The improvement of living conditions, including the provision of proper homes, compulsory and free education, nursery schools, clinics, maternity services and hospitals, confinement allowances and maternity leave
for /

for all working women;

(iv) The securing of full democratic rights to women, including the right to vote and be represented and elected on all councils and other Government bodies;

(v) The co-operation with other organisations with similar aims in South Africa and throughout the world.

(c) The Federation shall furthermore be empowered to do such lawful things as may appear to be in the interests of members of the organisation, and women in general, which are not inconsistent with the objects of any matters specifically provided for in this Constitution.

4. LOCUS STANDI

(a) The Federation shall have the power to sue and be sued in its own name.

(b) In any legal proceedings, whether by action, application or other process, brought /

brought by or against the Federation, the President for the time being shall be the person empowered to institute or defend such proceedings (as the case may be) in her own name.

- (c) The President shall only be so empowered providing that a resolution of the National Executive Committee so empowering her, be first had and obtained.

5. VESTING OF PROPERTY

- (a) All property, whether movable or immovable, of the Federation, and whether already possessed or which may in the future be acquired by the Federation, shall be vested in the Federation and may be dealt with by the National Executive Committee, as hereinafter provided.
- (b) All immovable property which may in the future be acquired by the Federation shall be registered in the name of the Federation.
- (c) All dealings with the immovable property
of /

of the Federation shall be under the signature of the President and General Secretary of the National Executive Committee then in office, after being duly authorised thereto by the National Executive Committee.

6. MEMBERSHIP

- (a) The Federation shall be open to organisations, or organised groups of women whose members are above the age of 18 years.
- (b) Application for admission or re-admission to membership shall be accompanied by the entrance fee and the annual subscription, and shall be lodged in writing with the General Secretary.
- (c) Every application for membership shall be considered by the National Executive Committee within one month of the receipt thereof by the said General Secretary.
- (d) The National Executive Committee's decision in regard to an application
for /

for membership shall be final. The applicant shall be notified in writing of the Committee's decision and shall have the right to re-apply for admission after the expiry of one year in the event of the Committee refusing such application.

- (e) An applicant to whom admission to membership is refused, shall be entitled to a refund of the entrance fee and subscription fee tendered by it on application.

- (f) The entrance fee which shall accompany an application, shall be the amount of R and the annual subscription which shall also accompany the said application, shall amount to R The National Executive Committee shall not consider any application where the entrance and subscription fees are not simultaneously tendered.

7. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Any affiliate or member may resign by giving
at /

at least one month's written notice to the General Secretary, providing that no resignation shall take effect until all moneys due to the Federation by the member concerned, have been paid and settled.

8. NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(a) The Management of the affairs of this Federation shall, subject to the provision of clause 9 of this Constitution, be vested in a National Executive Committee.

(b) Following the establishment of this Federation by the National Conference in terms of clause 9 hereof, the National Executive Committee shall be constituted by election in terms of clauses (c) and (d) hereunder.

(c) The National Executive Committee shall be elected at the National Conference. The said election shall be on nomination proposed and seconded and voted on by a majority at the said Conference.

(d) /

- (d) In electing the National Executive Committee, the majority of members to be elected must be ordinarily resident within 25 kilometers of the headquarters of this Federation.

- (e) The National Executive Committee shall consist of a President, six vice-Presidents, Treasurer, Secretary General, and 20 ordinary members. Members of the National Executive Committee shall hold office for one year and thereafter until the next election of members at the National Conference.

- (f) Vacancies in the office of President, vice-President and Treasurer of the National Executive Committee shall be filled by election in the National Executive Committee, amongst its members.
The National Executive Committee shall have the power to coopt members to itself.

- (g) A member of the National Executive
Committee /

Committee shall vacate her seat in any of the following circumstances:

- (i) On resigning, suspension or expulsion from membership of the Federation;
 - (ii) On absenting herself without the permission of the National Executive Committee from three consecutive meetings of the National Executive Committee;
 - (iii) On resignation from the National Executive Committee by giving one month's written notice to the General Secretary;
 - (iv) On ceasing to be a member of the Federation in good standing.
- (h) The President, vice-President; Treasurer and Secretary General of the National Executive Committee shall vacate office:
- (i) On resignation by giving one month's written notice to the National Executive Committee;

(ii) /

- (ii) On a majority resolution by ballot of the National Executive Committee.

- (i) In the event of such resignation, the National Executive Committee shall have the power by a majority ballot to fill the office of the President, vice-President or Treasurer who has resigned. In such event the said officer shall hold office for the unexpired portion of the period of office of her predecessor.

- (j) The National Executive Committee shall meet at least once every three months on a date to be fixed by the President, such date to be fixed by the President in conjunction with the General Secretary insofar as this be possible. Special meetings of the National Executive Committee shall be called by the President whenever it is deemed advisable or by a requisition signed by not less than 3 members of the National Executive Committee, in which event the meeting shall be called within 14 days of the receipt of this requisition by
the /

the President.

(k) Members of the National Executive Committee shall be notified in writing of the time and place of the meeting by the General Secretary at least 14 days before the date of such meetings, provided that short notice of not less than 24 hours, may, in the discretion of the President, be given in respect of extra-ordinary meetings. To every notice of a meeting an agenda shall be attached. Unless otherwise provided herein, all matters for consideration by the National Executive Committee shall be decided on motion duly seconded and voted upon by a show of hands.

(l) The quorum for a meeting of the National Executive Committee shall be not less than 7 members of the Committee, including officials. In the event of any meeting not being quorate, the meeting shall stand adjourned indefinitely and may be resumed only after due notice has been given to all members of the National Executive Committee.

(m) /

- (m) The Management of the affairs of the Federation shall be vested in the National Executive Committee between meetings of the National Conference and shall have the following powers:
- (i) To engage and dismiss, except where otherwise provided in this Constitution, any employees of the Federation, including the General Secretary, to fix their remuneration and to define their duties;
 - (ii) To appoint from time to time such sub-committees as it may deem fit for the purpose of investigating and reporting on any matter referred to such sub-committee by the National Executive Committee;
 - (iii) To establish regional committees in any area, including the defining of the area of jurisdiction of regions, and in this regard, shall have the power and duty
to /

to draw up a separate document concerning the Rules, Regulations and Constitution of such regional committees. The said Rules, Regulations and Constitution shall be confirmed by the National Conference at its subsequent gathering. Pending such confirmation, the regional committee shall have the power and duty to conduct itself in terms of the Rules, Regulations and Constitution as prescribed by the National Executive Committee;

(iv) To acquire and deal in property in the manner set out in clause 5(c) hereof.

(v) To open and operate a banking account in the name of the Federation;

(vi) To do all such things as are in the opinion of the National Executive Committee in the interests of the Federation and which are consistent with
its /

its aims and objects as set
out above.

9. POWERS AND DUTIES OF OFFICE BEARERS AND OFFICIALS

- (a) The President shall preside at all meetings of the National Executive Committee and the National Conference of the Federation; enforce observance of the Constitution of the Federation; sign minutes of meetings after confirmation thereof; and generally exercise supervision of the affairs of the Federation and perform such other duties as by usage or custom pertain to such office. She shall have a deliberative vote at all meetings, but shall not have a casting vote in the event of an equality of voting.
- (b) The vice-President shall perform such functions of the President as the President may, temporarily or permanently, be unable to perform.
- (c) In the event of both the President and the vice-President being unable to temporarily or permanently perform
their /

their duties, the National Executive Committee shall appoint a member of the National Executive Committee to act as President and to hold office until the President or vice-President is able to assume such duties or in the event of the President and vice-President being permanently unable to perform their duties, until a new President or vice-President has been elected in accordance with this Constitution.

(d) The Treasurer shall be in charge of all moneys and assets of the Federation and shall sign all cheques drawn on behalf of the Federation. Together with the General Secretary, she shall present quarterly statements of finance to the National Executive Committee. She shall also generally exercise supervision of the financial affairs of the Federation and perform such other duties as by usage and custom pertain to such office.

(e) The General Secretary of the Federation shall have the following duties:

(i) /

- (i) To receive requests for meetings of the National Executive Committee;
- (ii) To issue notices of meetings;
- (iii) To conduct all head office correspondence of the Federation;
- (iv) To keep originals of letters received, copies of those dispatched and at each meeting of the National Executive Committee to lay on the table such correspondence as has ensued since the previous meeting;
- (v) To attend all meetings of the National Executive Committee and record minutes of the proceedings;
- (vi) To issue official receipts for all moneys received by the Federation;
- (vii) To prepare and present a quarterly financial report to meetings of the National Executive Committee
and /

and to perform such other duties as are imposed by the Constitution or as the National Executive Committee may direct. She shall have no voting powers at meetings of the National Executive Committee.

(f) The General Secretary shall take the necessary steps to ensure that a register of members is maintained and that proper books of account of the Federation are kept, to have such books audited and to prepare a consolidated annual balance sheet and statement of income and expenditure and to submit or make available such information to members.

(g) The General Secretary may resign on giving one month's notice in writing to the National Executive Committee and the office may be terminated on similar period of notice being given to the General Secretary by the National Executive Committee. The General Secretary may be summarily discharged by the National Executive Committee

for /

for a serious neglect or dereliction of duty or misconduct. In the event of the office becoming vacant, the National Executive Committee shall appoint a new General Secretary.

10. THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE

- (a) The National Conference shall be the highest governing body of the Federation. It shall in furtherance of the aims and objects of the Federation adopt general and specific policy measures by means of resolution that shall be implemented by the National Executive Committee.

- (b) The National Conference shall ordinarily meet at least once every year on a date to be fixed by the National Executive Committee, and which conference shall decide upon the venue of the next annual National Conference.

- (c) The National Conference shall conduct the following business:

(i) /

- (i) attend to its agenda;
 - (ii) attend to the credentials of representatives at the National Conference;
 - (iii) attend to amendments to the Federation's Constitution;
 - (iv) attend to reports from the National Executive Committee;
 - (v) attend to the auditor's report and the Federation's financial statements.
- (d) One delegate for every 25 members of an affiliated organisation or organised group of women shall be represented at the National Conference.
- (e) Each delegate shall have speaking rights as well as voting rights.
- (f) Special meetings of the National Conference shall be called by the President upon resolution of the National Executive Committee or upon a written requisition to /

to do so by not less than 50% of its members or affiliates. In the event of the President failing to call such special meeting, the National Executive Committee shall be empowered to nominate the convener of the said special meeting.

- (g) At least 2 months written notice of the National Conference shall be given to each member, provided that in the case of special or urgent meetings, short notice, but not less than 14 days, as decided by the President, shall be given.
- (h) To every notice of a meeting an agenda shall be attached, save and except in the case of special or urgent meetings when any matter connected with or incidental to such meeting may be discussed, debated and voted on.
- (i) Every matter for consideration by the National Conference shall be on motion duly seconded, and shall be decided by the majority of delegates present.

(j) /

- (j) The quorum for meetings of the National Conference shall be not less than 50% of the members of the National Conference. In the event of the meeting of the National Conference not being quorate, the meeting shall stand adjourned until such time and place as the President may decide provided that the meeting must be called within one month. At such adjourned meeting, the delegates present shall form a quorum. Written notice of such adjourned meeting shall be given to members who were absent.

11. FINANCE

- (a) The funds of the Federation shall be vested in the National Executive Committee and shall be applied by it to the payment of expenses, the acquisition of property and towards the attainment of the objects as specified in this Constitution, and for any such other lawful purpose as may be decided upon by the National Executive Committee.
- (b) The funds received by the General Secretary on behalf of the Federation shall /

shall be deposited to its credit in a duly established banking account, within 7 days of receipt, at such bank or financial institution as decided upon by the National Executive Committee.

- (c) The National Executive Committee shall keep books and records and shall present financial reports to the National Conference in the manner as set out in the preceding clauses to this Constitution.
- (d) The Treasurer shall present financial statements quarterly as set out in the preceding paragraphs.
- (e) All payments made on behalf of the Federation shall require the prior approval of the National Executive Committee and shall be made by cheque signed by the President, Treasurer and General Secretary. In the event of any one or more signatories being unable to or unwilling to be a signatory to such cheques, the National Executive Committee may appoint such other signatories as it deems suitable provided that all cheques shall be signed by two persons /

persons who shall be either the General Secretary and/or delegates of the National Executive Committee.

- (f) Funds required for a petty cash account, which shall be kept in such form as the National Executive Committee may from time to time determine, shall be provided by the drawing of a cheque.

12. AMENDMENTS

Any of the provisions of this Constitution may be repealed, amended or added to in any manner by a majority of the National Executive Committee, subject to the approval at the next National Conference; or alternatively, by a majority decision of the National Conference. At least two months written notice of such amendment or repeal must be given to all affiliated members.

13. EXPULSION

- (a) The National Executive Committee shall have the power to expel or suspend relations with any affiliated organisation which, in the opinion of the National Executive /

Executive Committee has acted in a manner prejudicial to aims and objects and policies of the organisation.

- (b) The organisation shall be given an adequate opportunity of presenting its case to the National Executive Committee prior to any decision to expel or suspend relations with such organisation.
- (c) In the event of an organisation being expelled or suspended, such organisation may appeal against the decision of the National Executive Committee and such appeal shall be considered at the National Conference.

14. DISSOLUTION

- (a) The Federation may be dissolved at any time by resolution carried by two-thirds majority of the National Conference if for any reason the Federation is unable to continue functioning, providing that no such resolution shall be taken unless a ballot of members of the Federation shall have been /

been conducted and more than 60% of the members in good standing and participating in the ballot, so approved.

(b) In the event of a resolution for dissolution being passed, the following provisions shall apply:

(i) The available members of the Federation's last appointed National Conference shall appoint a liquidator to carry out the dissolution. Such liquidator shall be an independent person and shall be paid fees as may be agreed upon between the liquidator and the aforementioned available members.

(ii) The liquidator so appointed shall call upon the last office bearers and officials of the Federation to deliver to him the Federation's books of account, showing the Federation's assets and liabilities, together with a register of members showing
for /

for 12 months prior to the date as from which the Federation was unable to continue functioning, the subscription paid by each member as at the date of dissolution. The liquidator shall also call upon the said office bearers and officials of the Federation to hand to him all unexpended funds of the Federation and to deliver to him the Federation's assets and all documents necessary in order to liquidate the assets of the Federation.

(iii) The liquidator shall take the necessary steps to liquidate the debts of the Federation from its unexpended funds and other moneys realised from any assets of the Federation.

(iv) After payment of all debts of the Federation, the remaining Funds, if any, shall be disposed of by a decision of a ballot of the members of the Federation
who /

who were in good standing
as at the date of dissolution
in the manner agreed
upon by a ballot of
those members who were
in good standing at
the time.

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