

# ***Caritas Internationalis***

## **STATUTES**

### **ARTICLE 1**

#### ***Purpose and Juridical Status***

1.1 *Caritas Internationalis* is a public canonical juridical person dedicated to the service of the poor and to the promotion of charity and justice.

1.2 As an entity that participates at the heart of the ecclesial community in the mission of the Church, *Caritas Internationalis* is committed to fostering communion between the universal Church and the particular Churches in the exercise of charity, and also among the faithful, in pursuit of the common good.

1.3 The specific task entrusted to *Caritas Internationalis* is to assist the Supreme Pontiff and the Bishops in their ministry of charity. *Caritas Internationalis* carries out this task by attending to the poorest and most needy, assisting in humanitarian emergencies, and helping to spread charity and justice in the world in the light of the Gospel and of the teaching of the Catholic Church.

1.4 *Caritas Internationalis* may also carry out works of international advocacy within the limits established by the competent ecclesial authority. To this end, *Caritas Internationalis*, in cooperation with other competent bodies when possible, studies the problems arising from poverty in the world, investigates the causes and proposes solutions in accordance with the dignity of the human person. Above all, *Caritas*

*Internationalis* is committed to enlightening the minds of Catholics and all people of good will, so that they may recognize their obligations to the poor and fulfil those obligations freely and responsibly.

1.5 To these ends, *Caritas Internationalis* promotes cooperation among its members, without diminishing their due autonomy, by carrying out tasks of encouragement, coordination, representation and capacity building.

## **ARTICLE 2**

### ***Name & Legal Status***

*Caritas Internationalis* is a public canonical juridical person (CIC 116-123), erected by Blessed John Paul II by means of the Chirograph *Durante l'Ultima Cena* of 24 September 2004. It is governed not only by universal canon law and by its own canonical legislation, in particular the General Decree of 2 May 2012, these Statutes and Internal Rules, but also by the laws of Vatican City State.

## **ARTICLE 3**

### ***Registered Office***

The Registered Office of *Caritas Internationalis* is located in Vatican City. Any transfer of the Registered Office of *Caritas Internationalis* to another location would require the prior approval of the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* and of the Secretariat of State.

## **ARTICLE 4**

## ***Members of the Confederation***

4.1 *Caritas Internationalis* is a confederation of Catholic charitable organizations that are, in general, national *Caritas* agencies. The rights and obligations of individual Member Organizations of *Caritas Internationalis* are set out in articles 5 and 6 below.

4.2 National charitable organizations whose statutes have been approved by the local Episcopal Conference or by its equivalent in law or, in the case of a country consisting of a single diocese, by the Diocesan Bishop or by his equivalent in law, are eligible for membership of *Caritas Internationalis*, following acceptance by the General Assembly and ratification by the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*.

4.3 Where an Episcopal Conference or its equivalent in law expressly wishes it, membership of *Caritas Internationalis* may also be requested by charitable organizations which operate in territories consisting of more than one State, in cases where a Catholic hierarchy exists in only one of them, or to charitable organizations which operate in territories consisting of a substantial part of a single State.

4.4 The withdrawal of approval or authorization by the competent Episcopal Conference or by its equivalent in law leads to automatic loss of membership.

## **ARTICLE 5**

### ***Rights of Member Organizations***

The main rights of the Member Organizations are:

- a) to elect the organizational structures of *Caritas Internationalis* and to belong to them;
- b) to take part in planning programmes of mutual cooperation and confederation services at the international and regional levels;
- c) to contribute to the strategic direction of *Caritas Internationalis*;
- d) to be informed at least annually about international developments and the implementation of the *Caritas Internationalis* strategic plan and work plan;
- e) to be supported in their work;
- f) to see their activities integrated within the universal Church's commitment to the promotion of integral human development;
- g) to evaluate and monitor the activities of *Caritas Internationalis*, in accordance with the Statutes and Internal Rules;
- h) to have their autonomy respected by *Caritas Internationalis* and its organs, within the legal framework of *Caritas Internationalis*;
- i) to be informed at least annually about the economic and financial state of *Caritas Internationalis*, and to be supplied,

on request, with whatever clarifications may be necessary and to raise any specific questions that may arise.

## **ARTICLE 6**

### ***Duties of Member Organizations***

The main duties of the Member Organizations are:

- a) in all their activities, including those concerned with international cooperation and partnership, to comply with Catholic teaching, canon law, and the requirements of the competent ecclesial authorities;
- b) to ensure that their Statutes are in harmony with those of *Caritas Internationalis*, and to meet the minimum standards of governance as defined in the Internal Rules;
- c) in all their activities, including those concerned with international cooperation and partnership, to comply with the norms of conduct and the criteria defined in the Statutes and Internal Rules of *Caritas Internationalis* and with internationally agreed principles and standards;
- d) to harmonize their international activities with those of *Caritas Internationalis*, to accept and actively support coordination by the General Secretariat in such operations, and to accept representation by *Caritas Internationalis* in international relationships;
- e) to accept and respect the procedures established by these Statutes and Internal Rules for the resolution of disputes between Member Organizations and between Members and *Caritas Internationalis*;

- f) to pay statutory fees and jointly finance the organizational structures and activities of *Caritas Internationalis*.

## **ARTICLE 7**

### ***Organizational Structures***

7.1 *Caritas Internationalis* has the following organizational structures:

- the General Assembly;
- the Representative Council;
- the Executive Board;
- the General Secretariat.

7.2 Member Organizations are grouped into geographical Regions.

## **ARTICLE 8**

### ***Regions***

8.1 The Member Organizations from the different Regions, as determined by the General Assembly, meet in Regional Conferences with the aim of promoting and harmonizing their work within the Region, in accordance with the priorities determined by the General Assembly.

8.2. Each Regional Conference is to elect its Regional President and to establish its headquarters.

8.3 Regional Conferences, with the agreement of the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*, may establish regional cooperation bodies, where and when needed, whose function, in coordination with the General Secretariat of *Caritas Internationalis*, is to promote the work of the Region and to promote cooperation among Member Organizations of the Region.

**ARTICLE 9**  
***General Assembly***

9.1 Member Organizations gather every four years in ordinary session for the General Assembly.

9.2 The General Assembly is the highest internal governing body of *Caritas Internationalis*.

9.3 Each Member Organization is represented by an official delegation of not more than two persons, one of whom is appointed by the Member Organization as head of the delegation.

9.4 The General Assembly's responsibilities are:

- a) to set the strategic and financial frameworks of *Caritas Internationalis* for the next four years;
- b) to decide on the admission of new Member Organizations and the exclusion of Member Organizations, the creation of new Regions, and the modification or suppression of existing Regions;
- c) to elect the President and the Treasurer;
- d) to ratify the election onto the Representative Council, by the Regional Conferences, of Member Organizations;
- e) to ratify the election of the two Vice Presidents of *Caritas Internationalis* by the incoming Representative Council;

- f) to ratify the election of the Secretary-General and that of the member of the Executive Board chosen by the incoming Representative Council;
- g) to receive and discuss the report on the implementation of the strategic plan for the period since the previous General Assembly;
- h) to set the amount of membership fees;
- i) to approve the financial report and budget for the period since the previous General Assembly;
- j) to approve amendments to the Statutes and to the Internal Rules and to submit them to the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* for final approval of the Holy See.

9.5 With regard to collegial acts (CIC 119) - unless the Statutes or the Internal Rules provide otherwise, and as long as a majority of those who must be summoned to the General Assembly are present – what is decided by an absolute majority of those present is binding. Further details regarding procedures of the General Assembly are set forth in the Internal Rules.

## **ARTICLE 10**

### ***Representative Council***

10.1 The Representative Council is the highest internal governing body of *Caritas Internationalis* during the period between General Assemblies.

10.2 It consists of the President and the Treasurer elected by the General Assembly, the Regional Presidents as *ex officio* members, and delegates from the Member Organizations, one



from each, elected by the Regional Conferences and ratified by the General Assembly. The minimum membership of the Representative Council is sixteen and the maximum is twenty-two.

10.3 The Representative Council elects the two Vice Presidents of *Caritas Internationalis* from among the Regional Presidents, subject to the ratification of the General Assembly. One of the Vice Presidents is elected First Vice President.

10.4 The Representative Council elects the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General is not a member of the Representative Council. He / she participates in the meetings of the Representative Council with full speaking rights but without a vote.

10.5 The Commission for Legal Affairs and the Finance Commission are statutory commissions. The Finance Commission is chaired by the Treasurer. The chairperson of the Legal Affairs Commission participates in the meetings of the Representative Council with full speaking rights but without a vote.

10.6 The principal functions of the Representative Council are:

- a) to take governance decisions, other than those reserved to the General Assembly, that prove necessary for the promotion of the work of *Caritas Internationalis*;
- b) to approve the four-year work plan of *Caritas Internationalis* within the strategic framework;
- c) to approve the annual work plan and the annual report of the Secretary-General;

- d) having consulted the Treasurer, the Finance Commission and the Support Commission, to approve the annual financial statement and the annual budget prepared and presented by the Executive Board, in accordance with the four-year financial framework;
- e) to approve *Caritas Internationalis* policies and general procedures;
- f) to undertake any other function explicitly assigned to it by the General Assembly, or necessary for the good governance of *Caritas Internationalis*.
- g) one year before the date determined for an ordinary General Assembly, to establish a Candidates Committee responsible for preparing lists of those eligible for the offices of President, Secretary-General and Treasurer.

10.7 The Representative Council is to meet at least once a year and more often if necessary, at a time and place determined by the Council, or in some other manner determined by the Council.

10.8 The Representative Council may be consulted electronically or in writing by the President and is to conduct its business using technology available to all its members.

10.9 The Representative Council may meet in extraordinary session if the majority of its members, consulted in writing by the President, agree on the need, time, and place of such a session.

10.10 With regard to collegial acts (CIC 119) – unless the Statutes or the Internal Rules provide otherwise, and as long as a majority of those who must be summoned to the

Representative Council are present – what is decided by an absolute majority of those present is binding. Further details regarding procedures of the Representative Council are set forth in the Internal Rules.

## **ARTICLE 11** ***Executive Board***

11.1 As the executive arm of the Representative Council, the Executive Board takes the steps required to implement the decisions of the Representative Council, to facilitate the ordinary work of the General Secretariat and to foster the work of *Caritas Internationalis*.

11.2 It is composed of seven members:

- a) the President of *Caritas Internationalis*, as *ex officio* member and Chairman of the Executive Board;
- b) the first and second Vice Presidents of *Caritas Internationalis*, as *ex officio* members;
- c) one delegate elected by the Representative Council;
- d) three individuals appointed by the Supreme Pontiff.

11.3 The Executive Board has the following functions:

- a) to act as the executive arm of the Representative Council, and to carry out its decisions and directives;

- b) to take decisions needed to facilitate the work of the General Secretariat in response to the requests of the Secretary-General as well as on its own initiative;
- c) to review documents that *Caritas Internationalis* proposes to publish, and to submit them for final approval to the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*;
- d) to oversee the work of the Secretary-General;
- e) to identify the need for acts that exceed the limits and the manner of ordinary administration, and the need for alienation of goods belonging to the stable patrimony, and to recommend such acts to the Representative Council.

11.4 The Executive Board is to meet at least four times a year, in the manner it decides.

11.5 The Executive Board may be consulted electronically or in writing and is to conduct its business using technology available to all its members.

11.6 The Executive Board may meet in extraordinary session if at least five of its members, consulted in writing, in the way established in article 5.11 of the Internal Rules, agree on the need, time, and manner of such a session.

11.7 All the members of the Executive Board participate *ex officio* in the meetings of the General Assembly and the Representative Council. The members of the Executive Board who are not members of the Representative Council take part in its sessions with full speaking rights but without a vote. The members of the Executive Board participate in the meetings of the General

Assembly with full speaking rights, but without a vote, unless for a particular session of the General Assembly they have been accredited as representatives of a national *Caritas* agency.

11.8 With regard to collegial acts, provided that at least five members of the Executive Board are present, what is decided by an absolute majority of those present is binding. Further details regarding procedures of the Executive Board are set forth in the Internal Rules.

## **ARTICLE 12**

### ***President***

12.1 The President:

- a) leads the Confederation;
- b) is the highest representative of *Caritas Internationalis*;
- c) is the person primarily responsible for relations with the competent offices of the Holy See;
- d) is responsible for ensuring that the activity of *Caritas Internationalis* observes fully the requirements of universal canon law, as well as the particular canon law directly pertaining to *Caritas Internationalis*, and the law of Vatican City State.

- e) chairs the sessions of the General Assembly, the Representative Council and the Executive Board;
- f) votes only when voting is tied;
- g) is an *ex officio* member of all committees and commissions of the governing structures of *Caritas Internationalis*.

12.3 The President may delegate specific duties of governance to a Vice President or, if necessary, to a Regional President or to a member of the Executive Board.

12.4 The President is elected for a period of four years, starting his / her mandate at the close of the General Assembly that elected him / her and continuing until the close of the following ordinary General Assembly. The President may not be elected for more than two terms, whether consecutive or not.

### **ARTICLE 13** ***Vice Presidents***

13.1 The Vice Presidents represent and promote *Caritas Internationalis* and carry out other duties, by agreement with the President and under his authority.

13.2 In the event of the incapacity, grave impediment or death of the President, the First Vice President assumes the Presidency as outlined in the Internal Rules.

### **ARTICLE 14** ***Secretary-General***

14.1 The Secretary-General is responsible for implementing the *Caritas Internationalis* strategic plan, for economic management and other tasks assigned to him / her by the General Assembly,

the Representative Council, the Executive Board, or the President.

14.2 The Secretary-General manages the General Secretariat. He is accountable to the Executive Board and relates to it through the President or a Vice President duly delegated by the President for this purpose.

14.3 The Secretary-General represents *Caritas Internationalis*, in cooperation with the President and with his consent.

14.4 The Secretary-General is responsible for ensuring that the entire activity of the General Secretariat corresponds to the general requirements of canon law and civil law, as well as to the General Decree of 2 May 2012 and to the Holy See's particular requirements for *Caritas Internationalis*.

14.5 The Secretary-General is responsible for ensuring that written correspondence is carried out in a regular and timely manner with the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*, with the Secretariat of State and, where their respective competences are concerned, with every other Dicastery, agency or competent office of the Roman Curia and the Governorate of Vatican City State.

14.6 The Secretary-General is responsible for ensuring communication between the Holy See and the President, and also, via the President, between the Holy See and other bodies of *Caritas Internationalis*. To this end, he maintains frequent contact with the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*, with the Secretariat of State and, where their respective competences are concerned, with every other Dicastery, agency or competent office of the Roman Curia and the Governorate of Vatican City State, keeping the Executive Board informed.

14.7 The Secretary-General is elected for a period of four years, starting his work at the close of the General Assembly that ratified his election and continuing until the close of the following ordinary General Assembly. The Secretary-General may not be elected for more than two full terms, whether consecutive or not.

**ARTICLE 15**  
***General Secretariat***

The General Secretariat is the organizational structure under the direction of the Secretary-General. The members of the General Secretariat carry out the duties assigned to them by the Secretary-General.

**ARTICLE 16**  
***Legal Representation***

16.1 The Secretary-General is the legal representative of *Caritas Internationalis*.

16.2 The Registered Office of *Caritas Internationalis* is also the Registered Office of the General Secretariat for all purposes connected with personnel management and operation and with the accompanying juridical and jurisdictional effects.

**ARTICLE 17**  
***Approval of Candidates***



Due to the special relationship between *Caritas Internationalis* and the Holy See, the list of candidates for the offices of President, Secretary-General and Treasurer must be sent to the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* at least three months before the General Assembly at which the election is to take place, so that the names may be submitted for prior approval to the Supreme Pontiff. The names of the candidates may be made public only after they have been approved by the Supreme Pontiff.

## **ARTICLE 18**

### ***Ecclesiastical Assistant***

18.1 Having consulted the President of *Caritas Internationalis*, the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* appoints the Ecclesiastical Assistant for a four-year term, on a renewable basis, beginning at the time of the General Assembly.

18.2 The Ecclesiastical Assistant fosters a spirit of communion among the members of the Organization and with the Holy See, he accompanies reflection on theological matters and promotes the Catholic identity of *Caritas Internationalis*.

18.3 The Ecclesiastical Assistant participates by right at the meetings of all the governing bodies of *Caritas Internationalis*, with full speaking rights but without a vote.

## **ARTICLE 19**

### ***Treasurer***

19.1 The Treasurer is elected by the General Assembly and is an *ex officio* member of the Representative Council.

19.2 The duties of the Treasurer are:

- a) to inform the Representative Council and the Executive Board of the financial and budgetary implications of their decisions;
- b) to advise the Representative Council and the Executive Board on policies and decisions for the provision of reserve funds to secure the long-term financial viability of *Caritas Internationalis*;
- c) to present first to the Executive Board, and then to the Representative Council and the General Assembly, financial statements that satisfy the requirements of canon law and civil law and that have received the prior approval of the Support Commission;
- d) having consulted the Support Commission, to inform the Executive Board and the Representative Council whether or not the Secretary-General administers the financial resources and other temporal goods of *Caritas Internationalis* in accordance with canon law and civil law, and with the policies adopted by the Representative Council.

19.3 The Treasurer is elected for a four-year term, starting his / her work at the close of the General Assembly that elected him / her and continuing until the close of the following ordinary General Assembly. The Treasurer may not be elected for more than two full terms, whether consecutive or not.

19.4 The Treasurer is not to hold concurrently any other office or role in *Caritas Internationalis* or to be a member of the General Secretariat.

## **ARTICLE 20**

## ***Disputes regarding work relationships***

Any dispute regarding work relationships between *Caritas Internationalis* and its officers and employees, including work relationships with the Secretary-General, as well as any dispute regarding cooperation agreements or relationships entered into by *Caritas Internationalis* in any way and in any form, falls under the competence of the Labour Office of the Apostolic See (ULSA) according to its own statutory procedures (cf. Art. 11-20), even if the individuals concerned are not Vatican employees or otherwise treated as such.

### **ARTICLE 21**

#### ***Support Commission***

21.1 The Support Commission is composed of three or more members competent in legal, economic, organizational and technical matters, appointed by the Supreme Pontiff. The Support Commission may also, if the Holy See deems it necessary, comprise a College of Auditors.

21.2 The task of the Support Commission is to assist the Secretary-General, the Treasurer, the Legal Affairs Commission and the Finance Commission, so as to ensure that the entire activity of *Caritas Internationalis* is carried out in compliance with the norms of canon law and of Vatican City State, and especially in accordance with the requirements of the General Decree of 2 May 2012. The Members of the Support Commission may attend meetings of both the afore-mentioned Commissions and also meetings of the General Assembly, the Representative Council and the Executive Board, with full speaking rights but without a vote.

21.3 The Support Commission is to forward to the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* – and through the Pontifical Council and with

its agreement, to the Secretariat of State and the competent Dicasteries of the Roman Curia – the required information on juridical and economic matters.

21.4 The Support Commission is to draw up its own Internal Rules, which require the approval of the Holy See and are to be communicated to the governing bodies of *Caritas Internationalis*.

## **ARTICLE 22**

### ***Temporal Goods***

22.1 The temporal goods of *Caritas Internationalis*, as a public canonical juridical person, are ecclesiastical goods (CIC 1257 §1).

22.2 The ordinary administration of the financial resources and other temporal goods of *Caritas Internationalis* falls under the competence of the Secretary-General, guided by the Executive Board, in accordance with the Code of Canon Law, the laws of Vatican City State, the General Decree of 2 May 2012, the Statutes, the Internal Rules, and the policies adopted by the Representative Council.

22.3 It also falls to the Secretary-General to execute acts of extraordinary administration in accordance with instructions received from the Executive Board. The authorization, limits and procedures for acts of extraordinary administration are established by the Representative Council with the approval of the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*.

22.4 For any form of alienation of goods constituting the stable patrimony of *Caritas Internationalis* whose value exceeds the amount set by the Holy See, the approval of the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* is required (cf. CIC 1291).

22.5 For the annual external audit, internationally recognized external auditors are appointed by the Representative Council. Internal auditors may be appointed in the manner established by the Internal Rules.

22.6 The Holy See may request an audit at any time and may also establish a College of Internal Auditors (cf. Art. 21.1 and General Decree of 2 May 2012, Art. 6. 5°).

### **ARTICLE 23**

#### ***Funding***

In general, *Caritas Internationalis* is funded through:

- a) the annual subscription fees of the Member Organizations;
- b) the registration fees paid for participation in the General Assembly and other meetings;
- c) donations, legacies, subsidies and project funding.

### **ARTICLE 24**

#### ***Amendments to the Statutes***

24.1 The provisions of the present Statutes and Internal Rules may be amended by the General Assembly on the basis of a two-thirds majority vote of the Member Organizations present, according to Article 9.5 of these Statutes.

24.2 Modifications to these Statutes and Internal Rules must be submitted to the Holy See for approval (cf. General Decree of 2 May 2012, Articles 1 §1 and 2. 1°-2°).

## **ARTICLE 25**

### ***Dissolution***

25.1 *Caritas Internationalis* can only be dissolved by the Holy See (cf. CIC 120 and 320 §1, and General Decree of 2 May 2012, Articles 1 §1 and 2. 1°-2°). Dissolution may be proposed to the Holy See by the General Assembly on the basis of a two-thirds majority vote of the Member Organizations present. For a valid decision, two-thirds of the Member Organizations of *Caritas Internationalis* must be present in the General Assembly taking this decision.

25.2 In the event of dissolution, its temporal goods devolve to the Holy See to be used in the service of the poor.

## **ARTICLE 26**

### ***Internal Rules***

The application of the provisions of the present Statutes is in general determined by the Internal Rules, which are an integral and binding part of the said Statutes.

From the Vatican, 2 May 2012