

**ASIA PACIFIC LEAGUE OF ASSOCIATIONS
FOR RHEUMATOLOGY
(APLAR)**

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

Approved by General Assembly 22 September 2008

**CONSITTUTION AND BY-LAWS OF
ASIA PACIFIC LEAGUE OF ASSOCIATIONS FOR RHEUMATOLOGY
(APLAR)**

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ARTICLE 1

1. Name, Domicile and other Legal Stipulations

- 1.1 The South East Asia and Pacific Area League Against Rheumatism (SEAPAL) was established in 1963 under the terms of the Constitution and By-Laws of the International League of Associations for Rheumatology (ILAR) with a Constitution accepted by the General Assembly of ILAR. The geographical area of SEAPAL is the Asia Pacific Region as defined by the General Assembly of SEAPAL in 1988, at the 6th SEAPAL Congress of Rheumatology in Tokyo, Japan.
- The name “South East Asia and Pacific Area League Against Rheumatism” was changed by the unanimous vote of the General Assembly to “Asia Pacific League Against Rheumatism” and its acronym from “SEAPAL” to “APLAR” in 1989. It was again changed in 1994 to “Asia Pacific League of Associations for Rheumatology,” with the acronym “APLAR” being retained.
- 1.2 The location of the registered office of APLAR shall be determined by that of the Executive Secretariat.
- 1.3 The organization shall be designated by the acronym “APLAR” in all official documents and other contexts, regardless of the language in which such documents may be framed.
- 1.4 The official language of APLAR shall be English; however, any other language from the Asia Pacific area may be used as a supplementary language, if approved by the General Assembly of APLAR by a simple majority vote.
- 1.5 Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 1.4, the reference language for this Constitution and By-Laws and for any regulation enacted by APLAR, any other legal document relating to APLAR, and its activities shall be in English.

ARTICLE 2

2 Objectives

- 2.1 The aims of APLAR shall be to stimulate and promote the awareness, knowledge, and the means of prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and relief of symptoms of rheumatic diseases. For this purpose, rheumatic diseases shall be defined as diseases of the connective tissues and disorders of the musculo-skeletal system. The branch of medicine concerned with these diseases is referred to as Rheumatology.
- 2.2.0 In furtherance of these aims, APLAR shall:
- 2.2.1 Foster cooperation between different countries and geographical areas through existing national organizations concerned with the objectives of APLAR;
- 2.2.2 Encourage and assist in the formation of such organizations in countries of

geographical areas where none exist;

- 2.2.3 Sponsor, organize or patronize international congresses and other meetings appropriate to the aims and objectives of APLAR, provided that the affiliated organization having its domicile in the country in which the meeting of the Congress is to take place has given its consent and also that the appropriate national organization, where such exists, has also given its consent;
- 2.2.4 Monitor and assist in the scientific activities of all meetings and congresses arranged in the name or under the sponsorship of APLAR;
- 2.2.5 Encourage publication of scientific proceedings of such meetings whenever feasible and of such other material concerned with the nature, treatment, social and other relevant aspects of rheumatic diseases as may be deemed appropriate;
- 2.2.6 Stimulate scientific research into all aspects of rheumatic disease as mentioned above. However, no international clinical studies involving the name and support of APLAR and its Committees shall be undertaken without prior approval of the Executive Committee;
- 2.2.7 Establish and maintain contact with the central and/or regional offices of international organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) and such other international agencies as may be concerned with some or all of the objectives of APLAR;
- 2.2.8 Act regionally to promote in all respects the objectives of APLAR.

ARTICLE 3

3. Membership

- 3.1 APLAR shall be an association of national organizations interested in and concerned with the aims and objectives of APLAR, such organizations consisting primarily but not exclusively of medical scientific societies or associations. The latter includes allied health professional societies or associations.
- 3.2 A national organization shall submit an application for affiliation to APLAR, in writing to the Secretary General of APLAR.
- 3.3 Subject to the provisions of Article 3.4, affiliation to APLAR shall be open to national organizations interested in and concerned with the aims and objectives of APLAR and which shall be prepared to abide by the terms of this Constitution and By-Laws. Only one national organization from one country or special political administrative region can seek affiliation to APLAR. Individuals shall not be eligible for direct membership to APLAR whether or not there is a national organization interested in the rheumatic diseases in his/her country of citizenship or domicile.
- 3.4 **Associate Members:** Under certain circumstances as determined by the Executive Committee, APLAR can offer associate membership to national

allied health professional societies or associations and social leagues including arthritis foundations seeking affiliation with APLAR. Associate members of national organizations are permitted to attend the General Assembly and send observers as delegates but without voting rights. A reduced annual or non-paying membership, as determined by the General Assembly, may be applied to associate members.

- 3.5 **Provisional affiliation** may be granted by the Executive Committee of APLAR, subject to ratification by the next General Assembly of APLAR, to a national organization applying for membership. The annual dues for provisional membership shall be the same as those determined for full membership. Provisional members of national organizations are permitted to attend the General Assembly and send observers as delegates but without voting rights.
- 3.6 Any organization affiliated with APLAR shall, by virtue of that affiliation, also be affiliated with ILAR, subject to ratification in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws of ILAR.
- 3.7 If applications for affiliation are received from more than one organization in a country, including an application from an organization in a country which already has an affiliated organization, the Executive Committee of APLAR shall be required to meet with representatives of the organizations concerned, in an endeavor to promote a solution acceptable under the terms of the Constitution and By-Laws of APLAR. If the reconciliation proves impossible, the contending organizations shall be entitled to present their claim at the next meeting of the General Assembly of APLAR and the decision of the General Assembly in this matter shall be final and binding on the contending organizations.
- 3.8 **Corporate membership** shall provide an opportunity for APLAR to develop closer liaison and cooperation with pharmaceutical companies and other enterprises concerned with the benefit of rheumatic patients, and who are prepared to abide by the terms of this Constitution and By-Laws. Representatives of corporate members may not attend the General Assembly without an invitation from the Executive Committee. Corporate members shall not have voting rights.
- 3.9 An affiliated national organization or corporate member may terminate affiliation to APLAR at the end of a calendar year by sending to the Secretary General of APLAR a prior notice six (6) months in advance. With the exception of circumstances governed by Article 3.7, the affiliation of national organizations to APLAR may be terminated only if the national organization fails to abide by the terms of this Constitution and By-Laws, or acts in a manner which may be in conflict with the aims and objectives of APLAR, or fails to pay the required dues within three (3) years. A motion for disaffiliation shall require endorsement and shall require adoption by the Executive Committee of APLAR by a simple majority vote. Disaffiliated member national organizations shall not be eligible for application for APLAR membership in the ensuing three (3) years.
- 3.10 As a mark of distinction, individuals who in the past have rendered outstanding service in accomplishment of the objectives of APLAR may be elected to honorary membership of APLAR. Nomination of candidates for honorary membership may be made by national organizations, provided that

such nominations shall be submitted to the Secretary General in writing. The President is also empowered to make nominations to the Executive Committee. Honorary membership of APLAR shall be awarded by the President of APLAR at the Opening Ceremony of an APLAR Congress with citation of the merits and the outstanding service rendered by the individual.

- 3.11 A member of the Executive Committee of APLAR or ILAR with current voting rights is not eligible for nomination of honorary membership of APLAR.
- 3.12 National organizations may submit, in writing, nominations for honorary membership to ILAR to the Secretary General of APLAR as under the conditions of Article 3.10

ARTICLE 4

4. Meetings

- 4.1 A full member national organization of APLAR may submit to the Secretary General a written application to host the APLAR Congress of Rheumatology at the earliest six (6) years and at the latest four (4) years ahead of the said Congress with a general outline of current and future congress facilities, and an estimated current and future cost of the various accommodations and transportation available. The host country should provide financial support where possible for the President, President Elect, Immediate Past President, Vice Presidents, Treasurer and Secretary General to attend the Congress when such assistance is needed. The Organizing Committee shall exercise utmost care to avoid double funding of any individual.
- 4.2 The APLAR Congress will be held at least every two (2) years or more frequently as determined suitable by the General Assembly.
- 4.3 Before an APLAR Congress is awarded to a particular member national organization, some agreed principle on financial accountability and scientific program arrangements shall have been reached between the Executive Committee and Scientific and Educational Committee of APLAR, the Executive Committee of the member national organization and its prospective Congress Organizing Committee.
- 4.4 When requested, the Executive Committee of APLAR can provide US\$20,000 as seed money to the Organizing Committee of an APLAR Congress. This amount must be paid back without any deduction. APLAR will be financially responsible for the Congress. Expenses incurred in organizing the APLAR Congress by the local organization committee and/or member national organizations will be funded from within the Congress registration and sponsorship income.

ARTICLE 5

5. Funds

- 5.1 Funds needed by APLAR shall be raised by annual dues from affiliated organizations. Funds may be augmented by income derived from investment, property and trusts held in the name of APLAR.
- 5.2 APLAR shall be empowered to solicit and accept contributions of financial or other support from any individual or organization, provided that any action taken is ratified by the Executive Committee of APLAR without undue delay.
- 5.3 The Executive Committee will, on the advice of the Treasurer of APLAR, present at each ordinary meeting of the General Assembly a proposition concerning the annual dues paid. Affiliated organizations shall be liable to pay dues at the rate so agreed, from January 1, immediately following such decision and annually thereafter until December 31, immediately following the next ordinary meeting of the General Assembly.
- 5.4 In December of each year the Treasurer shall be required to send notices of dues for the ensuing year to each affiliated organization and these dues shall be paid to the Treasurer within ninety (90) days after December 31 of each year.
- 5.5 If an affiliated organization has not paid its dues within six (6) months after December 31 of any year, then the right of the delegate representing that country to vote at meetings of the General Assembly of APLAR shall be suspended as long as the payment remains in arrears. If dues have not been paid within two (2) calendar years from the due date, affiliation to APLAR of the national organization shall no longer be eligible to receive any of the benefits to which it is entitled until all arrears of dues have been paid. A member national organization shall be disaffiliated if dues have not been paid within three (3) calendar years from the due date, and a motion for disaffiliation has been endorsed and adopted by the Executive Committee by a simple majority vote. Suspension of voting rights and suspension of affiliation may be waived on the recommendation of the Executive Committee if, in their opinion, there have been unavoidable reasons for non-payment.
- 5.6 Corporate members of APLAR, in accepting affiliation, shall be deemed to have entered into a legally binding contract with APLAR to pay without delay such subscriptions as may fall due for the whole period of the affiliation. Subscription dues for corporate members shall be fixed at a minimum rate under Article 5.3, but corporate members are encouraged to contribute to APLAR with sums in excess of this minimum rate.
- 5.7 The financial year of APLAR shall be the calendar year.
- 5.8 The Executive Committee shall be empowered to regulate the detailed administration of the funds of APLAR on the advice of the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be empowered to delegate his/her administrative responsibility to the Executive Secretariat. Funds not immediately required or needed for the purposes of APLAR may be invested and any investment may be realized or otherwise turned to account as may any or all of the property or assets of APLAR as may be thought expedient with a view to promote its objectives.
- 5.9 The income and property of APLAR shall be applied solely toward the promotion of the objectives of APLAR as set out in this Constitution and By-Laws and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise by way of benefit to individual

members or organizations affiliated to APLAR. However, nothing shall prevent the payment in good faith of reasonable and proper remuneration and authorized out-of-pocket expenses to any officer or servant of APLAR or to any officer or other individual member of organizations affiliated to APLAR in return for any authorized service actually rendered to APLAR. No officer or other individual member of organizations affiliated to APLAR shall be appointed to any salaried office in APLAR or any office of APLAR paid by fees. No remuneration or other benefit in money shall be given by APLAR to any individual member of an affiliated organization except by way of repayment of authorized out-of-pocket expenses.

- 5.10 Notwithstanding the stipulation in Article 5.9, the Executive Committee may enter into a contract with an individual member to perform specific duties for an agreed remuneration provided that the national bodies are notified and no objection is raised. Such a contract would be subject to ratification by the General Assembly.
- 5.11 To raise funds for fellowships, research, or for other projects as suggested by the Executive Committee and ratified by the General Assembly, a Finance Committee may be created. The Chairperson of the Finance Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee of APLAR for adoption by the General Assembly of APLAR.
- 5.12 The Chairperson of the Finance Committee shall submit a report of the funds raised and used to attain specific objectives of APLAR to the ordinary meeting of the General Assembly of APLAR.
- 5.13 The President, Secretary General and Treasurer of APLAR, shall each submit an annual account of their secretarial expenses to the Executive Committee of APLAR. When considered appropriate, the Executive Committee shall reimburse the office bearer on an annual basis.
- 5.14 Funds or capital invested or placed under a trustee and generating profit or interest for support of scientific, social and other activities shall not be amortized for whatever reasons, except monies in the Treasury.

ARTICLE 6

6. General Assembly

- 6.1 The highest authority of APLAR shall be vested in the General Assembly. This shall consist of the following voting members:

President, President Elect, Immediate Past President, the two (2) Vice Presidents, Treasurer, Secretary General, and one delegate representing each affiliated member national organization.

The following shall be entitled to attend and participate in all discussions and deliberations at the meeting of the General Assembly as non-voting members:

Co-opted members of the Executive Committee, Deputy Secretary General, Chairperson of the Finance Committee, Chairperson(s) of the Scientific and Education Committee, Chairperson(s) of Subcommittees,

and other committees (as specified in the regulations), COPCORD Coordinator, Editor-in-Chief of the official journal of APLAR and a second delegate representing each affiliated member national organization.

- 6.2 Before each meeting of the General Assembly, the delegates and the deputy delegates shall be required to present their credentials to the Secretary General.
- 6.3 An ordinary meeting of the General Assembly shall be convened at least once every two (2) years on the occasion of APLAR Congress and on such other occasions as the Executive Committee shall determine. The Secretary General shall be required to give prior notice at least six (6) months in advance of any meeting of the General Assembly by airmail letter and email sent to each member national organization. The notice shall also be sent by the Secretary General to the Chairpersons of the Finance, and Scientific and Education Committees, COPCORD Coordinator, Editor-in-Chief of the official journal of APLAR, other Committees and Subcommittees as specified in the Regulations, requesting preparation of a report on the activities under their responsibility. These reports shall be sent to the Secretary General three (3) months before the General Assembly for copying and circulation to the delegates of the member national organizations. These reports will not be read at the meeting of the General Assembly, but the officers in question shall be required to present a summary of the reports and to answer questions at the meeting of the General Assembly.
- 6.4 On matters of exceptional urgency when a decision has to be ratified by the General Assembly between the biennial APLAR Congress and distance and cost prohibit the General Assembly from convening, the Executive Committee shall carry out a postal vote or referendum, provided that the delegates or alternate delegates of the member national organizations are notified by airmail and email by the Secretary General of APLAR and given at least three (3) months in advance for consideration of the proposals put forward by the Executive Committee. A letter in favor or not of the proposals of the Executive Committee, signed by the member national organization representatives, shall be construed as equivalent to a delegate's vote at the General Assembly at APLAR Congresses. All decisions or elections by the postal General Assembly of APLAR shall be determined subject to Article 6.10. The Secretary General of APLAR shall inform the member national organizations of the results of the postal voting at the latest one (1) month after the deadline for the voting. All correspondence, if requested, shall be treated as confidential by the Secretary General.
- 6.5 The Agenda for the General Assembly meeting, with precise wording of all resolutions and propositions to be considered, shall be dispatched by airmail and email to each affiliated organization not later than three (3) weeks before the date of the meeting. As far as possible, the Secretary General shall also send along with the Agenda, Minutes of the last General Assembly meeting, Statements of Accounts of APLAR, Secretary General's Report, and any other information relevant to the Agenda.
- 6.6 The following business shall be transacted at any ordinary meeting of the General Assembly:
- 6.6.1 Accreditation of Delegates

- 6.6.2 Apologies
- 6.6.3 Summary of the Minutes of the last meeting and business arising there from
- 6.6.4 Submission of the summary of the Secretary General's Report
- 6.6.5 Consideration of the Statement of Accounts and Balance Sheet from the Treasurer and the Auditor's Report
- 6.6.6 Consideration of the Report from the Chairperson of the Finance Committee and adoption of the appointment by the Executive Committee of the incoming Chairperson of the Finance Committee
- 6.6.7 Consideration of the Report from the Chairperson(s) of the Scientific and Education Committee of APLAR and adoption of the appointment by the Executive Committee of the incoming Chairperson(s) of the Scientific and Education Committee.
- 6.6.8 Consideration of the Report from the Coordinator of COPCORD and adoption of the appointment by the Executive Committee of the incoming Coordinator of COPCORD.
- 6.6.9 Consideration of the Report from the Editor-in-Chief of the official journal of APLAR and where appropriate the appointment by the Executive Committee of a new Editor-in-Chief of the official journal of APLAR.
- 6.6.10 Consideration of the Report of the other Committees and Subcommittees (as specified in the Regulations) and adoption of the appointment of their Chairpersons (or equivalent positions) by the Executive Committee
- 6.6.11 Ratification of decisions taken by the Executive Committee
- 6.6.12 Decision on the recommendations of the Executive Committee with regards to annual dues to be paid during the ensuing years
- 6.6.13 The venue and probable date for the next APLAR Congress
- 6.6.14 Consideration of applications for affiliation from national organizations and ratification of provisional member national organizations to full membership
- 6.6.15 Nomination and appointment of Chairpersons of Standing Committees and Subcommittees of APLAR as necessary
- 6.6.16 Nomination and appointment of the President and President Elect, to serve on the ILAR Executive Committee. In the event that the President of APLAR becomes the Chairperson of the ILAR Executive Committee, approval will be given by the APLAR General Assembly for him / her to hold both positions simultaneously.
- 6.6.17 Election of Office Bearers and co-opted members
- 6.6.18 Consideration of other business raised within the terms of this Constitution and By-Laws, consideration of contingency or urgency matters (see Article 6.4)

- 6.7 An extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly shall be convened if requested by at least one-third of the delegates to the General Assembly. The Secretary General shall be required to give notice and Agenda papers for extraordinary meetings in the same way as for the ordinary meetings.
- 6.8 The delegates from an affiliated organization may submit a formal resolution at any meeting of the General Assembly of APLAR provided that not less than three (3) months before the date of the meeting, due notice is given in writing to the Secretary General together with a copy of such resolution so that copies may be sent immediately to each affiliated organization.
- 6.9 With the exception of business enumerated in Article 6.4 and 6.6, all business transacted at the General Assembly meeting shall be determined “Special” and thus not to be raised without due notice. Under these circumstances, a vote may only be taken when the chairperson of the meeting considers the matter to be of exceptional urgency and importance.
- 6.10 A quorum shall be deemed to exist for the General Assembly when at least two-thirds of the delegates eligible to vote are present. All decisions and elections at the meeting of the General Assembly shall be determined by a simple majority vote unless otherwise specified by this Constitution and By-Laws.
- Deputy delegates shall not be entitled to vote unless their delegates are absent and they have been accredited. Proxy voting shall be allowed, provided that notice has been given by the member national organization of the inability of its delegate or deputy delegate to attend the meeting. In the event of a tie in votes, an extra vote by the chairperson of the meeting shall decide. Votes may be given confidentially in writing if any member of the General Assembly so requests.
- 6.11 The Minutes of an Executive Committee and General Assembly meeting shall be sent out to members of the Executive Committee, Office Bearers and delegates to the General Assembly not later than three (3) months after the General Assembly meeting by the Secretary General of APLAR.

ARTICLE 7

7. ILAR

7.1 ILAR Executive Committee

7.1.1 APLAR shall be represented in the ILAR Executive Committee by the President and President Elect of APLAR.

7.1.2 In the event of a meeting of the Executive Committee of ILAR being held outside the Asia Pacific region, it is important that APLAR is represented. If for any reason the President or President Elect of APLAR is/are not able to attend, the Secretary General of APLAR shall arrange for a delegate representing APLAR to carry a proxy vote to the meeting of the Executive Committee of ILAR.

7.2 **ILAR Congress**

- 7.2.1 A full member of APLAR may submit a request in writing to the Secretary General of APLAR to host the ILAR Congress of Rheumatology at the earliest six (6) years before an ILAR Congress is scheduled to be held in the Asia Pacific region or at the latest one (1) year before an APLAR Congress preceding an ILAR Congress.
- 7.2.2 The Executive Committee, comprising the Immediate Past President, the President, the President Elect, the two Vice Presidents, Secretary General, Treasurer, Chairperson of the Finance Committee, Chairperson of the Scientific and Educational Committee, COPCORD Coordinator, one (1) representative from each of the member national organizations hosting the next two APLAR Congresses and the eight co-opted members of the Executive Committee, shall nominate one (1) venue from the applications received for submission to the General Assembly for adoption. In the event of a tie in votes, an extra vote by the President shall decide. Votes may be given confidentially in writing.
- 7.2.3 Before an ILAR Congress is awarded to a particular member national organization, some agreed principle on financial accountability and scientific program arrangements shall have been reached between ILAR, APLAR and the national organization, based on Article 4.3 of the Constitution and By-Laws of APLAR.

ARTICLE 8

8. **Executive Committee**

- 8.1 The Executive Committee of APLAR shall consist of the President, President Elect, Immediate Past President, the two (2) Vice Presidents, Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General, Treasurer, Chairperson(s) of the Finance and Scientific and Education Committees, the Coordinator of COPCORD, one (1) representative from each of the member national organizations hosting the next two APLAR Congresses, and the eight co-opted members of the Executive Committee.
- 8.2 **President**
- 8.2.1 The President, at the end of his/her term of office, shall automatically be succeeded by the President Elect.
- 8.2.2 The President shall serve for a term of two (2) years and shall not be eligible for re-election.
- 8.2.3 The President shall represent APLAR in a position as determined by the Constitution and By-Laws of ILAR and shall be required to attend all meetings of the Executive Committee of ILAR wherever they are held.
- 8.2.4 Should the President, for any reason, be unable to complete his/her term of office, the President Elect of APLAR shall succeed to his/her office including his/her position within ILAR.

8.2.5 The President shall preside at all meetings of the Executive Committee and General Assembly. In his/her absence, the Chair shall be taken by the President Elect, or failing that, by one of the Vice Presidents or another member of the Executive Committee.

8.2.6 The President, with the help of the Secretary General and the Treasurer, shall present periodical reports on the working of APLAR to the members of the General Assembly and Executive Committee.

8.3 **President Elect**

8.3.1 The President Elect shall be elected by the General Assembly for a term of two (2) years. An individual is ineligible for nomination as President Elect if he/she has held this office before, either in his/her own right or in succession to someone else.

8.3.2 Ideally, the candidate for President Elect shall be an individual who in the past has shown ability in leadership, organization, good international communication and motivation.

8.3.3 The President Elect is a member of the Executive Committee of ILAR based on the Constitution and By-Laws of ILAR.

8.3.4 Should the President Elect, for any reason, be unable to complete his/her term of office, an extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly shall convene as soon as possible in order to elect a new President Elect who will succeed as President when the President's term of office is completed.

8.3.5 Only medically qualified individuals active in the field of rheumatology are eligible for President Elect.

8.3.6 The President Elect shall act on behalf of the President at any time the latter is unable to act and at such times as the President shall direct.

8.3.7 At the earliest, one (1) year and at the latest, three (3) months before the next General Assembly, each member national organization may submit in writing to the Secretary General and President one (1) candidate for President Elect of APLAR for nomination by the Executive Committee and election by the General Assembly of APLAR. A copy of a one-page resume and a supporting statement from the candidate shall be accompanied by the submission. Should no submission from member national organizations be received, the Executive Committee shall convene a meeting as soon as possible and at the latest one (1) month before the General Assembly to nominate a suitable candidate to this position.

8.4 **Immediate Past President**

8.4.1 After completing his/her term of office, the President will remain for another period of two (2) years as a member of the Executive Committee as Immediate Past President. The Immediate Past President will assist the President on various matters occurring during his/her term of office without directive authority.

8.4.2 Should the Immediate Past President, for any reason, be unable to complete

his/her term of office, the position shall remain vacant until the current President completes his/her term of office.

8.5 **Vice Presidents**

8.5.1 Two Vice Presidents representing national member countries of APLAR shall be elected by the General Assembly of APLAR, for a term of not more than two (2) years and shall not be eligible for re-election.

8.5.2 The Vice Presidents shall support the President in his/her duties in internal and external affairs.

8.5.3 Should a Vice President be unable to complete his/her term of office, the Executive Committee shall be empowered to appoint a temporary successor to hold office until the next meeting of the General Assembly.

8.5.4 At the earliest, one (1) year and at the latest, three (3) months before the next General Assembly, each member national organization may submit in writing to the Secretary General and President one (1) candidate for one (1) of the two Vice Presidents of APLAR for nomination by the Executive Committee and election by the General Assembly of APLAR. A copy of a one-page resume and a supporting statement from the candidate shall be accompanied by the submission. Should no or only one (1) submission from member national organizations be received, the Executive Committee shall convene a meeting as soon as possible and at the latest one (1) month before the General Assembly to nominate up to two (2) suitable candidates to these positions.

8.6 **Treasurer**

8.6.1 The Treasurer of APLAR shall be elected by the General Assembly for a term of not more than two (2) years and shall be eligible for re-election for one (1) more term.

8.6.2 At the earliest, one (1) year and at the latest, three (3) months before the next General Assembly, each member national organization may submit in writing to the Secretary General and President one (1) candidate for Treasurer of APLAR for nomination by the Executive Committee and election by the General Assembly of APLAR. A copy of a one-page resume and a supporting statement from the candidate shall be accompanied by the submission. Should no submission from member national organizations be received, the Executive Committee shall convene a meeting as soon as possible and at the latest one (1) month before the General Assembly to nominate a suitable candidate to this position.

8.6.3 The Treasurer of APLAR shall have custody of all monies and other property and assets of APLAR including the Finance Committee. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the collection of all monies due and owing to APLAR including dues from the member national organizations and in the disbursement of the same pursuant to the contracts and obligations of APLAR or on the order of the Executive Committee.

8.6.4 For expenditure exceeding US\$10,000, the Treasurer shall consult the Executive Committee.

8.6.5 In managing investments made on behalf of APLAR and in all other matters

concerning the administration of investments, property and other assets of APLAR, the Treasurer shall be subject to the President and the Executive Committee.

8.6.6 The Treasurer shall be responsible for the accurate keeping of books of account and of all transactions of APLAR and these books shall be audited at the end of each year by the auditors. Not later than April 1 of each year the Treasurer shall submit by mail to the Executive Committee the Statements of Accounts and the Balance Sheet for the previous year, duly approved and signed by the Auditors. The Statement of Accounts and Balance Sheet shall be circulated to all members of the General Assembly and the Treasurer shall ask the members of the General Assembly for adoption of the Balance Sheet.

8.6.7 In the event that the Treasurer is unable to complete his/her term of office, the Executive Committee shall appoint a successor to hold office until the next meeting of the General Assembly.

8.7 **Secretary General**

8.7.1 The Secretary General, at the end of his/her term, shall automatically be succeeded by the Deputy Secretary General.

8.7.2 The Secretary General shall serve for a term of not more than two (2) years and shall not be eligible for re-election under any circumstances.

8.7.3 The Secretary General shall notify member national organizations of their affiliation to APLAR and shall notify individuals of their election to office, their appointment to committees, or their nomination to honorary membership of APLAR or ILAR, and notify members of the Executive Committee and the General Assembly of the date, time and place of all meetings and congresses.

8.7.4 In the event that the Secretary General is unable to complete his/her term of office, he/she shall be succeeded by the Deputy Secretary General.

8.7.5 The Secretary General shall ascertain annually that all member national organizations report on the change of office bearers of their national society of rheumatology and notify the Executive Committee of any changes.

8.7.6 The Secretary General shall send a report by airmail and email to all members of the General Assembly one (1) month before the next session of the General Assembly. The Secretary General shall read a short summary of the report during the General Assembly of APLAR, but shall answer all questions pertaining to the written report circulated.

8.7.7 The Secretary General shall see that the By-Laws are complied with, propose to the Executive Committee any necessary amendments, edit appropriate text and arrange that they be legally checked.

8.8 **Deputy Secretary General**

8.8.1 At the earliest, one (1) year and at the latest, three (3) months before the next General Assembly, each member national organization may submit in writing to the Secretary General and President one (1) candidate for Deputy Secretary General of APLAR for nomination by the Executive Committee and election by the General Assembly of APLAR. A copy of a one-page resume and a

supporting statement from the candidate shall be accompanied by the submission. Should no submission from member national organizations be received, the Executive Committee shall convene a meeting as soon as possible and at the latest one (1) month before the General Assembly to nominate a suitable candidate to this position.

8.8.2 The Deputy Secretary General shall support the Secretary General in his/her duties. He/she shall prepare himself/herself to take over the position of Secretary General when the latter's term expires.

8.8.3 In the event that the Deputy Secretary General is unable to complete his/her term of office, the General Assembly shall elect a new Deputy Secretary General, as nominated by the Executive Committee, as soon as possible at the next meeting of the General Assembly or an extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly.

8.9 **Chairperson of the Finance Committee**

8.9.1 Shall be nominated by the Executive Committee and ratified by the General Assembly for a term of not more than two (2) years, and is not eligible for reappointment for a further term.

8.9.2 Shall be responsible for raising funds for APLAR scholarships and fellowships, research and educational programs in rheumatology and related disciplines, or for other projects as suggested by the Executive Committee and ratified by the General Assembly.

8.9.3 May appoint individuals to serve as Vice Chairperson, Secretary and any other members of the Finance Committee.

8.9.4 Shall work closely with the Treasurer on finance matters. However, the custody of all monies and other property and assets of APLAR shall remain the responsibility of the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall also be responsible for the collection all monies solicited by the Finance Committee, and in the disbursement of the same pursuant to the contracts and obligations of APLAR or on the order of the Executive Committee.

8.9.5 May make recommendation to the Executive Committee on the formation of Subcommittees to satisfy the role of the Finance Committee.

8.10 **Chairperson(s) of the Scientific and Education Committee**

8.10.1 Shall be nominated by the Executive Committee and ratified by the General Assembly for a term of not more than two (2) years, and are not eligible for reappointment for a further term.

8.10.2 Shall advise the Executive Committee on such APLAR activities that are related to research and training in rheumatology and related disciplines.

8.10.3 Shall coordinate with the chairperson of the Organizing Committee of APLAR Congress of Rheumatology on the content of the scientific program of that congress.

8.10.4 May appoint individuals to serve as Vice Chairperson, Secretary and any other members of the Scientific and Education Committee.

- 8.10.5 May make recommendation to the Executive Committee on the formation of Subcommittees to satisfy the role of the Scientific and Education Committee.
- 8.10.6 Shall submit a report of activities to the ordinary meeting of the General Assembly of APLAR
- 8.11 **Coordinator of COPCORD**
- 8.11.1 ILAR and WHO's interest in the prevention of disability of musculo-skeletal disorders and attainment of improved health care through population data collection and education of the primary health care professionals led to the creation of the Community Orientated Program for the Control of Rheumatic Diseases (COPCORD).
- 8.11.2 The COPCORD Coordinator for APLAR shall be nominated by the Executive Committee for election by the General Assembly of APLAR. He/she shall be invited to attend the General Assembly.
- 8.12 **Representative of Member National Organizations Hosting the Next Two APLAR Congresses**
- 8.12.1 One (1) representative from each of the member national organizations hosting the next two APLAR Congresses shall be nominated as members of the Executive Committee. They shall be invited to attend the General Assembly.
- 8.13 **Co-opted Members of the Executive Committee**
- 8.13.1 Not more than eight co-opted members shall be appointed by the Executive Committee, each from one of the member national organizations which are not represented in the other positions of the Executive Committee. The co-opted members, though without voting rights, shall have the right to take part in all discussions and deliberations at meetings of the Executive Committee.
- 8.13.2 The member national organizations which are not represented in the other positions of the Executive Committee may submit in writing to the Secretary General one candidate for appointment by the Executive Committee as co-opted member for a period of not more than two (2) years. Reappointment of the same individual is permitted when his/her national organization re-submits the same candidate.
- 8.14 **Executive Committee Meetings**
- 8.14.1 The meetings of the Executive Committee shall take place at least once every two (2) years at the time of the APLAR Congress and on such other occasions as the Executive Committee shall determine. Additional meetings will be called at any other time by the President either on his/her own initiative or at the request of the majority of the office bearers. These may be face-to-face meetings or tele- or internet-conferences. All members shall receive a copy of the Minutes of the meeting.
- 8.14.2 The quorum shall consist of five (5) members with voting rights. Resolution may be passed by a simple majority of votes polled.

- 8.14.3 The Executive Committee, which shall be advised by the Scientific and Education Committee, shall have general supervision over the organization and scientific content of international congresses and other meetings organized under the sponsorship or auspices of APLAR. Reciprocally, the scientific committee of the organizing committee of an APLAR Congress of a host country shall in principle reach an agreement with the Executive Committee of APLAR on the content of the scientific program of the Congress.
- 8.14.4 The Executive Committee shall discharge day to day business and represent APLAR provided their actions are lawful and in accordance with this Constitution and By-Laws. In particular, the Executive Committee shall be responsible for the direction of activities of an Executive Secretariat, when such an office is created.
- 8.14.5 The Executive Committee may establish or change Regulations as it deems necessary subject to Article 8.14.6.
- 8.14.6 All acts and decisions of the Executive Committee shall be reported to the General Assembly for ratification at its next meeting.

ARTICLE 9

9. Executive Secretariat

- 9.1 The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the appointment and control of such staff as may be required.
- 9.2 The Executive Committee may appoint an Executive Secretary and provide for the details concerning the function and duties of the appointee and of other staff of an Executive Secretariat.
- 9.3 Besides the functions and duties enumerated in a regulation covering this appointment, the Executive Secretary shall have the following obligations:
- 9.3.1 To attend all meetings of the General Assembly and other meetings of the Executive Committee as determined by the Executive Committee with the right to take part in the deliberations but without the right to vote.
- 9.3.2 To record, if present, the minutes of the proceedings of such meetings.

ARTICLE 10

10. Standing Committees and other Committees

- 10.1 The Standing Committees of APLAR shall comprise the Finance Committee and Scientific and Education Committee. Subject to Articles 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 2.2.4, 2.2.5, 2.2.6 and 2.2.7, new Standing Committees or Subcommittees can be formed to satisfy the need for development of rheumatology in the APLAR region.

- 10.2 Chairpersons of Standing Committees shall be appointed by the Executive Committee, who in turn may appoint individuals to serve as members of the Standing Committees.
- 10.3 The Executive Committee may grant financial support to a Standing Committee or Subcommittee which is carrying out active and successful work.

ARTICLE 11

11. Audit Function

- 11.1 The audit function shall consist of two auditors who shall not be members of the Executive Committee of APLAR. The auditors shall examine the accounts and shall submit a written report of their findings to the General Assembly
- 11.2 A trust company may be appointed to take over the audit function.

ARTICLE 12

12. By-Laws and Guidelines

- 12.1 The Executive Committees shall have the power to make, vary, and repeal regulations for the conduct of the general affairs of APLAR, its officers and servants and for the dispatch of business of APLAR, provided that any such regulation is not inconsistent with the wording or spirit of the Constitution and By-Laws. The Executive Committee shall report at the next meeting of the General Assembly of APLAR on any regulations enacted.
- 12.2 Notice of any proposal to amend or alter this Constitution and By-Laws shall be sent to the Secretary General not less than six (6) months before the next ordinary meeting of the General Assembly. The substance of any such proposal shall appear on the agenda of the said meeting in the form of a motion and in such form it shall be circulated to all affiliated organizations at least six (6) months before the meeting. The quorum for such motion shall be two-thirds of the accredited votes entitled to be polled under the terms of Article 6.1 of this Constitution and By-Laws but subject to the provision that no individual person shall be entitled to cast more than two (2) votes. The motion shall be decided by a simple majority of the accredited votes polled in the accordance with these provisions.
- 12.3 A motion to dissolve APLAR must be approved by the General Assembly with two-thirds majority of the votes polled. Upon dissolution of APLAR any assets still existing shall be transferred to ILAR or if ILAR is no longer existing, to such institution with the same or similar aims as that of ILAR. If ILAR or other regional or national leagues are not in existence and no body or bodies has been specified by the resolution of dissolution, then the said property of APLAR shall be transferred to such bodies as may be determined by an international court of arbitration.

REGULATIONS

1. An Official APLAR Rheumatology Journal

- 1.1 A journal may be published under the patronage of APLAR, provided sufficient funds can be raised. The Editor shall be appointed by the Executive Committee and ratified by the General Assembly for a term of three (3) years, and is eligible for reappointment for a further term. He / She shall be invited to attend the General Assembly, and Executive Committee meetings as deemed necessary.

2. Subcommittees of the Finance Committee, Scientific and Education Committee and other Committees

- 2.1 The Executive Committee may form Subcommittees of the Finance Committee, Scientific and Education Committee, and other committees as it deems necessary. The Chairpersons of such committees or groups shall be invited to attend meetings of the General Assembly, and Executive Committee meetings as deemed necessary.

3. Finances

- 3.1 Members of the Executive Committee required to attend the annual Executive Committee of ILAR shall be reimbursed 50 percent of a full return trip economy air fare ticket by the Treasury if such assistance is needed and is not provided by ILAR or by any other funding source.

4. APLAR Patronage

- 4.1 A Meeting shall be granted APLAR patronage when fulfilling the following qualifications:
- 4.1.1 The Executive Committee of APLAR has been given full information about the program in ample time to consider it.
- 4.1.2 Before patronage is granted formally by the Executive Committee, the name APLAR shall not be used.
- 4.1.3 Both notice of the meeting and its preliminary programs have been sent to all member societies of APLAR.
- 4.1.4 APLAR observers appointed by the Executive Committee shall be welcomed as participants.
- 4.1.5 APLAR patronage will not normally be accompanied by financial support.

5. Nominations and Voting

- 5.1 With nominations for all congresses, and for officers representing APLAR or ILAR, due consideration shall be given to other member national organizations who have not held that Congress/office before.
- 5.2 **Procedures for nomination and election of an APLAR or ILAR Congress**

5.2.1 In the event of three or more venues submitted for an APLAR or ILAR Congress, the voting procedures shall be by progressive elimination. The first round will eliminate the venue with the lowest number of votes. Subsequent rounds of voting shall determine the winner. The votes shall be counted and announced by two scrutineers in front of the General Assembly. Votes may be given confidentially in writing if any member of the General Assembly so requests. In the event of a tie in votes, an extra vote by the President shall decide.

5.3 **Procedures for nomination and election of President Elect, Deputy Secretary General, Treasurer and the two (2) Vice Presidents of APLAR**

5.3.1 At the earliest, one (1) year and at the latest, three (3) months before a General Assembly, each member national organization may submit in writing to the Secretary General and President no more than one (1) candidate for one of the five (5) positions of President Elect, two (2) Vice Presidents, Treasurer and Deputy Secretary General of APLAR for election by the General Assembly. The submission shall be accompanied by a one-page resume and a supporting statement from the proposed candidate.

5.3.2 The Secretary General shall inform the Executive Committee of all nominations received by the closing date.

5.3.3 Each member national organization may only submit one (1) candidate to any of the five (5) positions as stated in 5.3.1

5.3.4 In the event that no nomination is made from member national organizations for the positions as stated in 5.3.1, the Executive Committee may nominate a suitable candidate to fill the position.

5.3.5 The voting procedure shall be by simple majority. In the event of a tie in votes, an extra vote by the President shall decide.