

CONSTITUTION ASSOCIATION OF THE PALESTINIAN COMMUNITY IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Article 1: Name

An Association is hereby established to be known as the ASSOCIATION OF THE PALESTINIAN COMMUNITY IN THE UNITED KINGDOM (hereafter referred to as "The Association").

Article 2: Objects

1. The Association is established as a non-profit making body.
2. The Association will strive to:
 - a) Keep alive Palestinian identity, culture and heritage among the Palestinian Community in the UK;
 - b) Provide social, cultural and educational services for the Palestinian Community in the UK;
 - c) Foster good relations between Palestinians in the UK, the host Community and Arab and other communities; and
 - d) Generally assist the Palestinian Community in the UK, in Palestine and elsewhere.
3. In furtherance of its objects, The Association will:
 - a) Encourage co-operation among the Palestinians and Arabs in the UK and elsewhere;
 - b) Encourage research and study in all matters pertaining to Palestine and Palestinian affairs;
 - c) Endeavour to provide facilities for study, meeting and recreation for the Palestinian Community in the UK;
 - d) Endeavour to provide bursaries, scholarships and other financial or other educational courses or training;
 - e) Endeavour to acquire, maintain and administer premises for the use and enjoyment of its members; and
 - f) Endeavour to raise funds to achieve its objects in the UK and elsewhere.

Article 3: Patron and Board of Trustees:

1. The Patron of the Association shall be the Chief Diplomatic Representative of the State of Palestine for the time being in the United Kingdom. If at any time there is no such representation, the Patron will be appointed by the Executive Committee.
2. There shall be a Board of Trustees consisting of:
 - (a) The Patron of the Association who will be the President of the Board.
 - (b) The current Chairman of the Executive Committee.
 - (c) Former Chairmen of the Executive Committee, provided their total number at any one time shall not exceed three. Ex-Chairmen shall retire by rotation.
 - (d) An Honorary Legal Adviser appointed by the Executive Committee, and two other members chosen by the Board of Trustees for a two years term. They shall be eligible for re-election.

The Board shall meet at the invitation of its President and/or the request of the Chairman of the Executive Committee, but in all cases shall meet at least twice a year, to consider the affairs of

the Association and other matters calling for its decision in pursuance of Paragraph 3 of this Article. At each meeting, the Chairman of the Executive Committee shall report about the activities of the Association. The quorum for a valid meeting shall be simple majority of total membership, and decisions and recommendations shall be taken by a simple majority of those present. In the event of a tie, the proposal shall be deemed rejected."

3. The Board of Trustees shall:

- (a) Decide all matters related to the interpretation of this Constitution;
- (b) Decide on any such matters as is referred to it by the Executive Committee;
- (c) Decide finally on any matter or situation not provided for by this Constitution; and
- (d) Generally ensure observance of the Objects of the Association and its continuity for the benefit of the Palestinian Community and as provided in Articles 2 and 3.
- (e) make such recommendations to the Executive Committee as it deems appropriate to fulfil or promote the objects of the Association.

Article 4: Membership:

1. Membership of the Association shall be of two categories:

- a) FULL MEMBERSHIP: which comprises both Individual and Family membership. Any person of Palestinian origin who is resident in the United Kingdom and who has reached the age of 18 years may apply for Full Membership of the Association on an Individual or Family basis. Family Membership extends to a spouse and children under 18 years only; and
- b) ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP: any person of Palestinian origin who is not resident in the United Kingdom and who satisfies the other conditions set out in (a) above may apply for Family or Individual Associate Membership of the Association.

2. Full Paid-up Members, excluding dependants, shall have the right to vote, and the right to be elected as Members of the Executive Committee.

Associate Members are not entitled to vote or sit on the Executive Committee.

3. Application for Membership shall be submitted to the Secretary of the Executive Committee on the Application Form for membership provided for that purpose. Acceptance of Applications shall be in the discretion of the Executive Committee who may not be required to give any reasons for its decision. Any decision to refuse membership shall be referred to the Board of Trustees for final determination.

4. The Annual Fee for Full and Associate Membership shall be determined by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may from time to time vary the Membership Fee, and such variation may not be deemed an amendment of these Articles. The membership fee is payable in full in advance of acceptance of application, and shall be refunded if the application is rejected. Thereafter, the fee is payable in full within three months of the date of notice of renewal. Failing such payment membership will expire. The Executive Committee shall have power to exempt any member from payment of the annual subscription.

5. The Executive Committee shall have power to extend Honorary Membership to members who have rendered invaluable services to the Association and/or to the Community.

Article 5: The Executive Committee:

1. There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of 10 members which shall include:

- a) A Chairman
- b) A Vice Chairman
- c) A Secretary
- d) A treasurer
- e) 6 other members.

2. The Executive Committee shall have the power to co-opt up to five other members from the membership of the Association. Co-opted members shall be deemed full members and shall hold office until the General Meeting following their co-option at which elections for the Executive Committee shall be held. They shall be eligible for election and re-co-option, as the case may be.

3. The Chairman and Members of the Executive Committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting, and shall hold office for two years, but are eligible for re-election. The Vice-chairman, Secretary and Treasurer shall be appointed by the Executive Committee from its Members.

4. The Executive Committee shall meet regularly once a month and shall hold Meetings as and when required and shall determine its own procedures. The quorum shall be at least half the membership of the Committee, and the Chairman of the Meeting will have the casting vote in the case of a tie. If a quorum is not achieved, the Chairman shall have the power to take action and proceed with the meeting after consultation with the Executive Committee Members present.

5. The Executive Committee shall have power to appoint Sub-Committees to perform any activities of the Association.

6. The Patron of the Association shall be invited to all Executive Committee Meetings and when he attends shall preside the Meeting if he so wishes.

7. The General Union of Palestine Students (GUPS) shall have observer status at all Executive Committee Meetings and shall be invited to send an Observer at all such Meetings.

Article 6: Annual General Meeting:

1. There shall be an Annual General Meeting of the Association held between May and July each year.

2. The Annual General Meeting will:

- a) receive and approve the Executive Committee's report for the past year
- b) receive and approve the Treasurer's Report for the past year and the Estimated Budget for the next year
- c) elect the Chairman and members of the Executive Committee in an election year
- d) deal with any other business.

3. At least one third of the Fully Paid-up Memberships attending an Annual general Meeting or an Extra-ordinary General Meeting shall constitute a quorum. If a quorum is not achieved at a Meeting, the Meeting shall be postponed for thirty minutes to proceed thereafter by the attending members provided their number is at least thirty.

4. Voting shall be by simple majority by show of Voting Cards, save that a motion for the amendments of this Constitution shall require two-thirds majority of those present and voting. The Chairman shall have a casting vote in case of a tie. Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution are not subject to change. Proxy Voting is not permissible.

5. An Extra-ordinary General Meeting may be called at any time:
 - a) by the Executive Committee, or
 - b) at the request of at least one third of the Members of the Association.
6. 21 days clear notice of an AGM or an Extra-ordinary General Meeting, with an Agenda shall be given to all Members of the Association.
7. The General Union of Palestine Students (GUPS) shall have observer status at all Annual General Meetings and shall be invited to send an Observer at all such Meetings.

Article 7: Financial Provisions

1. The funds of the Association shall consist of the membership fees, the proceeds of its activities and functions, and donations. No donation may be accepted if it is made subject to conditions which conflict with or impair the aims and objects of the Association.
2. The Executive Committee shall establish such bank account or accounts as it may deem appropriate and shall designate signatories as shall be required for the withdrawal from such accounts or making any undertaking involving financial commitments.
3. The financial year of the Association shall be the calendar year. The first financial period shall close on 31st December 1991.
4. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the proper keeping of the Association's Accounts and shall have the power to give receipts for all moneys paid to him on the Association's account and shall administer the funds of the Association in accordance with the instructions of the Executive Committee.
5. The Accounts of the Association shall be audited annually by Independent Auditors.
6. The Treasurer may, with the prior approval of the Executive Committee, receive on behalf of the Association gifts whether in the form of permanent endowment or otherwise for the general purpose of the Association.

All sums of cash at any time standing to the credit of the Association's bank accounts and not required for immediate working purposes shall be invested by the Executive Committee in the name of the Association Subject to any special Trusts attached thereto, any such sum may be invested in securities for the time being authorised by law for the investment of trust funds or in other such investments (including the purchase of freehold or leasehold land) as the Executive Committee shall select.

7. All the proper costs, charges and expenses of and incidental to the management of the Association shall first be defrayed out of the income of the Association.
8. The Executive Committee shall have power to appoint and pay salaries to full time or part time employees.
9. Applications for bursaries, scholarships or other financial support shall be submitted to the Executive Committee, and shall be considered by the Executive Committee which shall have power to recommend grants and loans to applications up to such amounts as the budget from time to time permits.

Article 8: Acquisition and disposal of land:

The Association may acquire land by purchase or otherwise and may (subject to the consents for the time being by law required) exchange, sell and charge freehold and leasehold property for occupation for the purposes of the Association.

Article 9: Dissolution:

If at any time the Association is dissolved, its assets, if any, shall be donated to the Palestinian Crescent Society.

Article 10: By Laws/Rules:

The Executive Committee shall have power to make Rules and/or By Laws to determine procedures and anything authorised under this Constitution provided that such By Laws and/or Rules do not conflict with this Constitution.

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