

World Federation of scientific Workers

Constitution

Adopted by
Constituent Congress

1946

Constitution

Preamble.

THE primary aim of the scientific bodies which subscribe to the constitution of the World Federation of Scientific Workers is the increase of human welfare through the application and development of science. Scientists can no longer passively acquiesce in the misuse of science, which not only brings about unnecessary suffering and waste but also impedes the advancement of science itself. Science can only be fully used for the betterment of mankind in an era of peace and international co-operation and scientists have, therefore, a responsibility greater than that of the ordinary citizen in maintaining stable political relations between nations. The men and women who are associated in the World Federation of Scientific Workers recognise this and believe that the long tradition of international collaboration and free intercourse that has distinguished scientific activities in the past forms a good basis for the furtherance of their aims in the future.

The past few years have witnessed in many countries the growth of organizations of scientific workers. While these vary in structure and specific objectives they are alike in recognising that the scientists should and can play a special role in the cause of world peace and in the improvement of human welfare. The World Federation of Scientific Workers has been formed in order to create an effective machinery which can be used by these various organizations for mutual assistance. This will include the promotion of the fullest utilization of science for the welfare of mankind and that freedom in science which is required for its unhindered growth. Further, the World Federation will strive for the improvement of the conditions under which scientists work as an essential condition for the proper development and application of science. The Federation will offer assistance to individual member organizations in formulating their policies and, when there is substantial agreement between the participating organizations, it will be able to speak for them all. Finally, it is hoped that the existence of the Federation will stimulate the formation of national organizations in these countries where, as yet, no means exist whereby scientists can express corporately their views on the policies adopted by their governments.

The work of the Federation will have two aspects. It is necessary to collect data on how science may be applied and on how social, economic and political conditions affect the application of science. Then there is the task of developing an informed public opinion, which shall ensure that governments adopt appropriate policies. This implies a considerable amount of education of the public in the understanding of what can be achieved by the application of science and, also, an integration of the natural and social sciences.

It is believed by the members of the World Federation of Scientific Workers that the only way to prevent mass destruction by the misuse of science is through the elimination of war as an instrument of national policy. War, or the threat of war, can be prevented only if the peoples of the world understand the causes of war and are able and willing to ensure that those causes are removed. Science properly applied can remove or lessen the poverty, disease and ignorance which in some measure are always among the causes of war. International organizations set up to combat these evils will receive the fullest support of the W.F.S.W.

However, no matter how good the international organizations may be, it will still be necessary to influence national policies if war is to be avoided. For this reason also the world Federation of Scientific Workers hopes to foster the growth of socially conscious groups of scientific workers in all countries where they do not as yet exist.

These, then, are some of the considerations which have been borne in mind in the preparation of the Constitution. Its purpose is to ensure that the Federation shall be a democratic body of scientists which shall develop into a progressive and forceful influence working for a new and better world.

Name.

1. The Federation formed under this constitution shall be called THE WORLD FEDERATION OF SCIENTIFIC WORKERS.

Objects.

2. The aim of the Federation shall be to promote understanding and co-operative action between the member organizations in order to assist the Federation and its constituent members in carrying out the following functions:—

- (a) To work for the fullest utilization of science in promoting peace and the welfare of mankind, and especially to ensure that science is applied to help solve the urgent problems of the time.
- (b) To promote international co-operation in science and technology in particular through close collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- (c) To encourage the international exchange of scientific knowledge and of scientific workers.
- (d) To preserve and encourage the freedom and co-ordination of scientific work both nationally and internationally.
- (e) To encourage improvements in the teaching of the sciences and to spread the knowledge of science and its social implications among the peoples of all countries.
- (f) To achieve a closer integration between the natural and social sciences.
- (g) To improve the professional, social and economic status of scientific workers.
- (h) To encourage scientific workers to take an active part in public affairs, and to make them more conscious of and more responsive to, the progressive forces at work within society.

Office.

3. There shall be set up an Office of the Federation which shall be situated at such place as may be determined from time to time by the Executive Council.

Powers.

4. The Federation shall take such action as is consistent with its Constitution. It shall not have the right to instruct, but only to advise the member organizations as to their actions or policies.

Members.

5. Membership shall be open, subject to the provisions of clause 6, to any organization of scientific workers or any group of such organizations within any country so long as such body supports the objects and abides by the Constitution of the Federation.

6. Organizations seeking membership shall make application to the Executive Council for admission to the Federation. The Executive Council shall decide whether or not an organization applying for membership of the Federation is a *bona fide* organization of scientific workers. The decision of the Executive Council shall not be inconsistent with the following rulings, and with such other similar rulings as the General Assembly may make from time to time.

- (a) A scientific worker is considered to be a suitably qualified person engaged in professional work in natural or social science, fundamental or applied, including the teaching of science.
- (b) A suitably qualified person is considered to be a person holding a university degree or any recognised equivalent.
- (c) The question as to whether persons engaged in border-line fields of work are to be regarded as scientific workers shall be considered in the light of the accepted status of the particular field of work in the country to which the organization seeking membership of the Federation belongs. If such subjects are covered by the National Academy of Sciences, or its equivalent, in the country concerned, then they would normally rank as scientific subjects for the purpose of this clause.
- (d) An organization which includes in its membership persons who, while engaged in scientific work, are not fully qualified, may be members of the Federation but voting rights and subscriptions to the Federation shall be determined by the number of fully qualified members.
- (e) Where an organization consists of several sections, one or more of which are scientific sections and the remainder non-scientific, only the scientific sections can be admitted to membership of the Federation.
- (f) Organizations in any one country or group of countries may either federate into one body which may seek membership of the Federation, or the individual organizations may apply for membership of the Federation. The decision of the Executive Council as to whether or not an organization or group of organizations shall be admitted to membership of the Federation shall be subject to the approval of the next General Assembly.

7. The foundation members of the Federation shall be those organizations which participated in the Inaugural Assembly of the Federation (London, 1946) and which agree to support the objects and constitution by ratifying the constitution before the first General Assembly, and also any other organization which may be admitted to membership and who ratify the Constitution before the first General Assembly.

8. The Executive Council shall have power to nominate individual scientists as corresponding members in those countries where suitable scientific organizations do not exist. Such nominations shall be subject to ratification by the Assembly.

9. The Executive Council shall have power to recommend to the Assembly the expulsion of any organization or individual for any reason thought sufficient by the Executive Council. The power of expulsion shall rest with the Assembly alone.

10. Any member organization may resign from membership by rendering six months written notice so long as its subscription is fully paid up to the date at which the resignation takes effect.

Subscriptions.

11. The subscriptions of member organizations shall be based on a fixed percentage of the subscription derived by the organizations from their scientific workers. This percentage shall be fixed by the Assembly from time to time.

12. The subscriptions of member organizations shall be paid yearly in advance and shall become due on the 1st of January each year. If an organization is accepted into membership of the Federation on some other date than the 1st of January, it shall pay for the first year that fraction of the annual dues calculated on a *pro rata* basis for the period between the date of acceptance into membership and the end of the current year, the payment to be due from the date of acceptance into membership.

13. Any member organization that becomes more than one year in arrears with its subscription shall be liable to be declared no longer a member, though due consideration will be given to difficulties arising from special circumstances.

The Assembly.

14. The Assembly shall be the supreme governing body of the Federation.

15. One ordinary meeting of the Assembly shall be held at least once every two years, and at this meeting the election of the Executive Council shall be held and a report by the Council shall be presented to the Assembly, together with a financial statement signed by auditors. The auditors, who must be chartered accountants, shall be appointed by the Executive Council.

16. An emergency Assembly may be called at any time by the Executive Council and the Executive Council shall convene such an Emergency Assembly on receipt of a request by member organizations of the Federation representing not less than one-third of the membership. The reason for the request must be given at the time of calling for the meeting of the Assembly.

17. Each member organization may appoint delegates to attend the Assembly in accordance with the basis of representation decided from time to time by the Assembly.

18. Each member organization shall have a number of votes equal to the total number of delegates which it is empowered to send. The disposition of the voting strength shall be at the discretion of the delegation.

19. Decisions of the Assembly, except as provided for in Rule 34, shall be deemed operative only if both (a) the affirmative votes constitute two-thirds of the votes cast, (b) a majority of member organizations present vote in favour.

20. A quorum shall be formed by the presence of representatives of not less than half of the member organizations.

21. The business of the Assembly shall be prepared by the Executive Council and shall be conducted with the Standing Orders in force for the time being.

22. Motions for the Assembly agenda must be submitted in writing by member organizations and/or the Executive Council, not later than 6 months before the date of the Assembly. A preliminary Agenda shall be issued not later than 5 months before the Assembly. Amendments and nominations for the Officers and Executive Council must be submitted in writing not later than 4 months before the date of the Assembly, and the Final Agenda shall be issued not later than 3 months before the date of the Assembly. Member organizations shall be informed of the date of the Assembly not less than 8 months before the date of the meeting.

Emergency resolutions may in exceptional cases be tabled, provided that their submission to the Assembly is approved by any committee or body set up to conduct the Assembly meeting.

23. All corresponding individual members of the Federation shall be eligible to attend the Assembly and to speak, but shall not have the right to vote.

Executive Council.

24. The Executive Council shall consist of eight members elected on an individual basis and eight regional representatives, making a total of sixteen. The Regions shall be determined from time to time by the Assembly. The individual members of the Council shall include the following: President, two Vice-Presidents, two Honorary Secretaries, Honorary Treasurer, and two ordinary members.

25. The election of the Officers and individual members of the Executive Council shall be by ballot on a simple majority, at the Assembly. Each delegation shall be entitled to vote as in clause 18. Regional representatives shall be elected by ballot on a simple majority, by the delegates to the Assembly from the organizations within each Region, and not by the Assembly as a whole. When a Regional representative is unable to attend a meeting of the Executive Council, he shall be responsible for the appointment of a deputy.

26. The Executive Council shall have power to act on behalf of the Assembly between meetings. It shall be responsible for, and control, the functioning of the central office of the Federation.

27. Ordinary meetings of the Executive Council shall be held as and when the Council deems it necessary and shall be convened by the Secretary General. An extraordinary meeting shall be summoned by the Secretary-General on request from not less than three members.

28. The Executive Council shall elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman from among its members. The Chairman of the Executive Council need not necessarily be the President of the Federation.

29. One half of the voting members shall constitute a quorum.

30. The Secretary General shall attend the Executive Council *ex-officio* and shall not vote.

Officers.

31. If any member vacate his office in the interval between elections the Executive Council may appoint some person to fill his place until the next Assembly.

32. The officers of the Federation shall be those mentioned in Rule 24, and, in addition, a Secretary-General appointed by the Executive Council together with such Assistant Secretaries and others, appointed by the Executive Council, as the Executive Council or Assembly may from time to time determine.

33. Any officer of the Federation may be suspended or removed from office by a resolution of Assembly.

Change of Constitution.

34. The Constitution of the Federation may be changed only by resolution of the Assembly, provided that both (a) at least three-quarters of the votes are in favour, (b) a majority of the member-organizations present vote in favour.

Rules.

35. The Executive Council shall recommend the enactment, alteration or repeal of any rule or bye-law, and such enactment, alteration, or repeal shall, on approval by a meeting of the Assembly, take effect from the date of such approval.

Public Utterance.

36. No person shall make any utterance in the name of the Federation unless authorized by the Executive Council or some person nominated by the Executive Council for this purpose.

Working Languages.

37. The working languages of the World Federation of Scientific Workers shall be English and French.