UNITED NATIONS FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION

Constitution, with annexes, signed at Quebec October 16, 1945
Entered into force October 16, 1945

60 Stat. 1886; Treaties and Other International Acts Series 1554

CONSTITUTION OF THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

PREAMBLE

The Nations accepting this Constitution, being determined to promote the common welfare by furthering separate and collective action on their part for the purposes of raising levels of nutrition and standards of living of the peoples under their respective jurisdictions, securing improvements in the efficiency of the production and distribution of all food and agricultural products, bettering the condition of rural populations, and thus contributing toward an expanding world economy, hereby establish the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, hereinafter referred to as the “Organization”, through which the Members will report to one another on the measures taken and the progress achieved in the fields of action set forth above.

ARTICLE I

FUNCTIONS OF THE ORGANIZATION

1. The Organization shall collect, analyse, interpret, and disseminate information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture.

1 For 1946–1959 amendments, see 12 UST 980; TIAS 4803. For 1961 amendments, see 13 UST 2616; TIAS 5229. For 1963 amendments, see 14 UST 2203; TIAS 5506. For 1965 amendments, see 17 UST 457; TIAS 5987. For 1967 amendment, see 18 UST 3273; TIAS 6421.
2. The Organization shall promote and, where appropriate, shall recommend national and international action with respect to

   (a) scientific, technological, social, and economic research relating to nutrition, food and agriculture;

   (b) the improvement of education and administration relating to nutrition, food and agriculture, and the spread of public knowledge of nutritional and agricultural science and practice;

   (c) the conservation of natural resources and the adoption of improved methods of agricultural production;

   (d) the improvement of the processing, marketing, and distribution of food and agricultural products;

   (e) the adoption of policies for the provision of adequate agricultural credit, national and international;

   (f) the adoption of international policies with respect to agricultural commodity arrangements.

3. It shall also be the function of the Organization

   (a) to furnish such technical assistance as governments may request;

   (b) to organize, in cooperation with the governments concerned, such missions as may be needed to assist them to fulfil the obligations arising from their acceptance of the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Food and Agriculture; and

   (c) generally to take all necessary and appropriate action to implement the purposes of the Organization as set forth in the Preamble.

**ARTICLE II**

**MEMBERSHIP**

1. The original Members of the Organization shall be such of the nations specified in Annex I as accept this Constitution in accordance with the provisions of Article XXI.

2. Additional Members may be admitted to the Organization by a vote concurred in by a two-thirds majority of all the members of the Conference and upon acceptance of this Constitution as in force at the time of admission.

**ARTICLE III**

**THE CONFERENCE**

1. There shall be a Conference of the Organization in which each Member nation shall be represented by one member.

2. Each Member nation may appoint an alternate, associates, and advisers to its member of the Conference. The Conference may make rules concerning the participation of alternates, associates, and advisers in its proceedings, but
any such participation shall be without the right to vote except in the case of an alternate or associate participating in the place of a member.

3. No member of the Conference may represent more than one Member nation.

4. Each Member nation shall have only one vote.

5. The Conference may invite any public international organization which has responsibilities related to those of the Organization to appoint a representative who shall participate in its meetings on the conditions prescribed by the Conference. No such representative shall have the right to vote.

6. The Conference shall meet at least once in every year.

7. The Conference shall elect its own officers, regulate its own procedure, and make rules governing the convocation of sessions and the determination of agenda.

8. Except as otherwise expressly provided in this Constitution or by rules made by the Conference, all matters shall be decided by the Conference by a simple majority of the votes cast.

**ARTICLE IV**

**FUNCTIONS OF THE CONFERENCE**

1. The Conference shall determine the policy and approve the budget of the Organization and shall exercise the other powers conferred upon it by this Constitution.

2. The Conference may by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast make recommendations concerning questions relating to food and agriculture to be submitted to Member nations for consideration with a view to implementation by national action.

3. The Conference may by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast submit conventions concerning questions relating to food and agriculture to Member nations for consideration with a view to their acceptance by the appropriate constitutional procedure.

4. The Conference shall make rules laying down the procedure to be followed to secure:

   (a) proper consultation with governments and adequate technical preparation prior to consideration by the Conference of proposed recommendations and conventions; and

   (b) proper consultation with governments in regard to relations between the Organization and national institutions or private persons.

5. The Conference may make recommendations to any public international organization regarding any matter pertaining to the purpose of the Organization.

6. The Conference may by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast agree to discharge any other functions consistent with the purposes of the Organiza-
tion which may be assigned to it by governments or provided for by any arrangement between the Organization and any other public international organization.

ARTICLE V

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The Conference shall appoint an Executive Committee consisting of not less than nine or more than fifteen members or alternate or associate members of the Conference or their advisers who are qualified by administrative experience or other special qualifications to contribute to the attainment of the purpose of the Organization. There shall be not more than one member from any Member nation. The tenure and other conditions of office of the members of the Executive Committee shall be subject to rules to be made by the Conference.

2. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 1 of this Article, the Conference shall have regard in appointing the Executive Committee to the desirability that its membership should reflect as varied as possible an experience of different types of economy in relation to food and agriculture.

3. The Conference may delegate to the Executive Committee such powers as it may determine, with the exception of the powers set forth in paragraph 2 of Article II, Article IV, paragraph 1 of Article VII, Article XIII, and Article XX of this Constitution.

4. The members of the Executive Committee shall exercise the powers delegated to them by the Conference on behalf of the whole Conference and not as representatives of their respective governments.

5. The Executive Committee shall appoint its own officers and, subject to any decisions of the Conference, shall regulate its own procedure.

ARTICLE VI

OTHER COMMITTEES AND CONFERENCES

1. The Conference may establish technical and regional standing committees and may appoint committees to study and report on any matter pertaining to the purpose of the Organization.

2. The Conference may convene general, technical, regional, or other special conferences and may provide for the representation at such conferences, in such manner as it may determine, of national and international bodies concerned with nutrition, food and agriculture.

ARTICLE VII

THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

1. There shall be a Director-General of the Organization who shall be appointed by the Conference by such procedure and on such terms as it may determine.
2. Subject to the general supervision of the Conference and its Executive Committee, the Director-General shall have full power and authority to direct the work of the Organization.

3. The Director-General or a representative designated by him shall participate, without the right to vote, in all meetings of the Conference and of its Executive Committee and shall formulate for consideration by the Conference and the Executive Committee proposals for appropriate action in regard to matters coming before them.

**Article VIII**

**Staff**

1. The staff of the Organization shall be appointed by the Director-General in accordance with such procedure as may be determined by rules made by the Conference.

2. The staff of the Organization shall be responsible to the Director-General. Their responsibilities shall be exclusively international in character and they shall not seek or receive instructions in regard to the discharge thereof from any authority external to the Organization. The Member nations undertake fully to respect the international character of the responsibilities of the staff and not to seek to influence any of their nationals in the discharge of such responsibilities.

3. In appointing the staff the Director-General shall, subject to the paramount importance of securing the highest standards of efficiency and of technical competence, pay due regard to the importance of selecting personnel recruited on as wide a geographical basis as is possible.

4. Each Member nation undertakes, insofar as it may be possible under its constitutional procedure, to accord to the Director-General and senior staff diplomatic privileges and immunities and to accord to other members of the staff all facilities and immunities accorded to non-diplomatic personnel attached to diplomatic missions, or alternatively to accord to such other members of the staff the immunities and facilities which may hereafter be accorded to equivalent members of the staffs of other public international organizations.

**Article IX**

**Seat**

The seat of the Organization shall be determined by the Conference.

**Article X**

**Regional and Liaison Offices**

1. There shall be such regional offices as the Director-General with the approval of the Conference may decide.
2. The Director-General may appoint officials for liaison with particular countries or areas subject to the agreement of the government concerned.

ARTICLE XI

REPORTS BY MEMBERS

1. Each Member nation shall communicate periodically to the Organization reports on the progress made toward achieving the purpose of the Organization set forth in the Preamble and on the action taken on the basis of recommendations made and conventions submitted by the Conference.

2. These reports shall be made at such times and in such form and shall contain such particulars as the Conference may request.

3. The Director-General shall submit these reports, together with analyses thereof, to the Conference and shall publish such reports and analyses as may be approved for publication by the Conference together with any reports relating thereto adopted by the Conference.

4. The Director-General may request any Member nation to submit information relating to the purpose of the Organization.

5. Each Member nation shall, on request, communicate to the Organization, on publication, all laws and regulations and official reports and statistics concerning nutrition, food and agriculture.

ARTICLE XII

COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

1. In order to provide for close cooperation between the Organization and other public international organizations with related responsibilities, the Conference may, subject to the provisions of Article XIII, enter into agreements with the competent authorities of such organizations defining the distribution of responsibilities and methods of cooperation.

2. The Director-General may, subject to any decisions of the Conference, enter into agreements with other public international organizations for the maintenance of common services, for common arrangements in regard to recruitment, training, conditions of service, and other related matters, and for interchanges of staff.

ARTICLE XIII

RELATION TO ANY GENERAL WORLD ORGANIZATION

1. The Organization shall, in accordance with the procedure provided for in the following paragraph, constitute a part of any general international organization to which may be entrusted the coordination of the activities of international organizations with specialized responsibilities.

2. Arrangements for defining the relations between the Organization and any such general organization shall be subject to the approval of the Con-
ference. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article XX, such arrangements may, if approved by the Conference by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast, involve modification of the provisions of this Constitution: Provided that no such arrangements shall modify the purposes and limitations of the Organization as set forth in this Constitution.

**Article XIV**

**SUPERVISION OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

The Conference may approve arrangements placing other public international organizations dealing with questions relating to food and agriculture under the general authority of the Organization on such terms as may be agreed with the competent authorities of the organization concerned.

**Article XV**

**LEGAL STATUS**

1. The Organization shall have the capacity of a legal person to perform any legal act appropriate to its purpose which is not beyond the powers granted to it by this Constitution.

2. Each Member nation undertakes, insofar as it may be possible under its constitutional procedure, to accord to the Organization all the immunities and facilities which it accords to diplomatic missions, including inviolability of premises and archives, immunity from suit, and exemptions from taxation.

3. The Conference shall make provision for the determination by an administrative tribunal of disputes relating to the conditions and terms of appointment of members of the staff.

**Article XVI**

**FISH AND FOREST PRODUCTS**

In this Constitution the term "agriculture" and its derivatives include fisheries, marine products, forestry, and primary forestry products.

**Article XVII**

**INTERPRETATION OF CONSTITUTION**

Any question or dispute concerning the interpretation of this Constitution or any international convention adopted thereunder shall be referred for determination to an appropriate international court or arbitral tribunal in the manner prescribed by rules to be adopted by the Conference.

**Article XVIII**

**EXPENSES**

1. Subject to the provisions of Article XXV, the Director-General shall submit to the Conference an annual budget covering the anticipated expenses of the Organization. Upon approval of a budget the total amount approved
shall be allocated among the Member nations in proportions determined, from
time to time, by the Conference. Each Member nation undertakes, subject to
the requirements of its constitutional procedure, to contribute to the Organiza-
tion promptly its share of the expenses so determined.

2. Each Member nation shall, upon its acceptance of this Constitution, pay
as its first contribution its proportion of the annual budget for the current
financial year.

3. The financial year of the Organization shall be July 1 to June 30 unless
the Conference should otherwise determine.

ARTICLE XIX
WITHDRAWAL

Any Member nation may give notice of withdrawal from the Organization
at any time after the expiration of four years from the date of its acceptance
of this Constitution. Such notice shall take effect one year after the date of
its communication to the Director-General of the Organization subject to the
Member nation's having at that time paid its annual contribution for each year
of its membership including the financial year following the date of such
notice.

ARTICLE XX
AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION

1. Amendments to this Constitution involving new obligations for Member
nations shall require the approval of the Conference by a vote concurred in by
a two-thirds majority of all the members of the Conference and shall take
effect on acceptance by two-thirds of the Member nations for each Member
nation accepting the amendment and thereafter for each remaining Member
nation on acceptance by it.

2. Other amendments shall take effect on adoption by the Conference by a
vote concurred in by a two-thirds majority of all the members of the
Conference.

ARTICLE XXI
ENTRY INTO FORCE OF CONSTITUTION

1. This Constitution shall be open to acceptance by the nations specified in
Annex I.

2. The instruments of acceptance shall be transmitted by each government
to the United Nations Interim Commission on Food and Agriculture, which
shall notify their receipt to the governments of the nations specified in Annex
I. Acceptance may be notified to the Interim Commission through a diplo-
matic representative, in which case the instrument of acceptance must be
transmitted to the Commission as soon as possible thereafter.

3. Upon the receipt by the Interim Commission of twenty notifications
of acceptance the Interim Commission shall arrange for this Constitution
to be signed in a single copy by the diplomatic representatives, duly authorized thereto, of the nations who shall have notified their acceptance, and upon being so signed on behalf of not less than twenty of the nations specified in Annex I this Constitution shall come into force immediately.

4. Acceptances the notification of which is received after the entry into force of this Constitution shall become effective upon receipt by the Interim Commission or the Organization.

**Article XXII**

**FIRST SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE**

The United Nations Interim Commission on Food and Agriculture shall convene the first session of the Conference to meet at a suitable date after the entry into force of this Constitution.

**Article XXIII**

**LANGUAGES**

Pending the adoption by the Conference of any rules regarding languages, the business of the Conference shall be transacted in English.

**Article XXIV**

**TEMPORARY SEAT**

The temporary seat of the Organization shall be at Washington unless the Conference should otherwise determine.

**Article XXV**

**FIRST FINANCIAL YEAR**

The following exceptional arrangements shall apply in respect of the financial year in which this Constitution comes into force:

(a) the budget shall be the provisional budget set forth in Annex II to this Constitution; and

(b) the amounts to be contributed by the Member nations shall be in the proportions set forth in Annex II to this Constitution: Provided that each Member nation may deduct therefrom the amount already contributed by it toward the expenses of the Interim Commission.

**Article XXVI**

**DISSOLUTION OF THE INTERIM COMMISSION**

On the opening of the first session of the Conference, the United Nations Interim Commission on Food and Agriculture shall be deemed to be dissolved and its records and other property shall become the property of the Organization.
ANNEX I

NATIONS ELIGIBLE FOR ORIGINAL MEMBERSHIP

Australia .......................... India
Belgium ............................... Iran
Bolivia .................................. Iraq
Brazil .................................. Liberia
Canada ................................. Luxembourg
Chile .................................. Mexico
China .................................. Netherlands
Colombia ............................... New Zealand
Costa Rica ............................. Nicaragua
Cuba .................................. Norway
Czechoslovakia ......................... Panama
Denmark ............................... Paraguay
Dominican Republic .................... Peru
Ecuador ................................. Philippine Commonwealth
Egypt .................................. Poland
El Salvador ............................. Union of South Africa
Ethiopia ............................... Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
France ................................. United Kingdom
Greece ................................. United States of America
Guatemala ............................. Uruguay
Haiti .................................. Venezuela
Honduras ............................... Yugoslavia
Iceland ..................................

ANNEX II

BUDGET FOR THE FIRST FINANCIAL YEAR

The provisional budget for the first financial year shall be a sum of 2,500,000 U.S. dollars, the unspent balance of which shall constitute the nucleus of a capital fund.

This sum shall be contributed by the Member nations in the following proportions:

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<thead>
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<th>Nation</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
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<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Done at Quebec, Canada, this sixteenth day of October, one thousand nine
hundred and forty-five, in the English language, in a single copy which will
be deposited in the archives of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations and of which authenticated copies will be transmitted by the
Director-General to the governments of the nations enumerated in Annex I
to this Constitution and of Members admitted to the Organization by the
Conference in accordance with the provisions of Article II.

In witness whereof we have appended our signatures:

For Australia:
    ALFRED STIRLING

For the Kingdom of Belgium:
    A. WAUTERS

For Bolivia:
    V ANDRADE
    Subject to ratification in accordance
    with the Constitution [translation]

For Brazil:
    L OUIRVIAL FONTES

For Canada:
    JAMES G. GARDINER

For Chile:

For China:
    P. W. TSOU

For Colombia:
    The Plenipotentiary of Colombia signs
    the present agreement ad referendum, subject to ratification in accordance
    with Colombian constitutional procedure
    GUILLERMO ELISEO SUÁREZ

For Costa Rica:

For Cuba:
    ENRIQUE PEREZ-CISNEROS
    Subject to approval by the Senate
    [translation]

For Czechoslovakia:
    FRANTISEK PAVLÁSEK

For Denmark:
    HENRIK KAUFFMANN

For the Dominican Republic:
    MARIO B. DE MOYA

For Ecuador:
    L. N. PONCE
    Subject to ratification, in accordance
    with the Ecuadorian Constitution
    [translation]

For Egypt:
    ANIS AZER

For El Salvador:

For Ethiopia:

For France
    TANGUYPRIGENT
    ANDRÉ MAYER

For Greece:
    NICHOLAS G. LÉLY

For Guatemala:
    ENRIQUE LOPEZ-HERRARTE
    Ad. Referendum

For Haiti:
    E BAKE

For Honduras:
    JULIÁN R. CÁCERES

For Iceland:
    THOR THORS

For India:
    G. S. BAJPAI

For Iran:

For Iraq:
    ALI JAWDAT

For Liberia:
    F. A. PRICE

For the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg:
    HUGUES LE GALLAIS

For Mexico:
    MANUEL J. ZEVARA
    Subject to ratification in accordance
    with the Mexican Constitution

For the Kingdom of the Netherlands:
    S. L. MANSOHT

For New Zealand:
    DAVID WILSON
For Nicaragua:
   ALBERTO SEVILLA SACASA
   Ad-Referendum

For the Kingdom of Norway:
   ANDERS FJELSTAD

For Panama:
   J E. HEURTEMATTE

For Paraguay:

For Peru:
   J CHAVEZ
   Ad referendum

For the Philippine Commonwealth:
   MAXIMO KALAW

For Poland:
   ST MIKOLAJCZYK

For the Union of South Africa:
   P. R. VILJOEN

For the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:

For the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland:
   On signing the present constitution, I declare that the acceptance of the constitution by the government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland includes all colonies and overseas territories of His Majesty, and all territories under His Majesty’s Protection, or in respect of which His Majesty has accepted a mandate from the League of Nations which is being exercised by His Government in the United Kingdom.
   ROGER MAKINS

For the United States of America:
   CLINTON P. ANDERSON

For Uruguay:
   Ad referendum of legislative ratification in accordance with the corresponding constitutional provisions [translation].
   JUAN FELIPE YRIART

For Venezuela:
   The Plenipotentiary of Venezuela signed the present agreement ad referendum and therefore it will not become effective with respect to Venezuela until ratified by the public powers of the nation in accordance with Venezuelan constitutional procedure.
   M A FALCÓN-BRICEÑO

For Yugoslavia: