



## **Report of the Meeting of the APA Working Group on Statutory Documents**

**8 December 2024**  
Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain

### **Final Report**

The Meeting of the APA Working Group on Statutory Documents was held on 8 December 2024 on the sideline of the Standing Committee on Economic and Sustainable Development in Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, and Chaired by the Council of Representatives of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Parliamentary delegations from following member countries participated in the Meeting:

Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Cambodia, India, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Qatar, Russia, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, and UAE.

#### **1- Adoption of Agenda:**

The Member Parliaments unanimously adopted the Draft Agenda ([Attachment I](#)).

#### **2 - Remarks by the Secretary General:**

SG updated participants on the latest developments ever since the WG establishment and the last two sessions of WG. He also shed light on the prospect of the future of the WG ([Attachment II](#)).

#### **3- Consideration of the proposed amendments to the Article 8 (Number of Votes) and Article 13 (Voting) of the APA Charter:**

##### **The following topics were discussed and approved:**

- Based on the proposal of delegation of Qatar, during the meeting of Standing Committee on Budget and Planning in Doha, participants addressed the Articles of 8 and 13 of the APA Charter respectively.
- The issue of equal payment and equal voting rights were addressed and agreed by all participants.
- Based on Article 8 of APA Charter the number of delegates remains unchanged.
- It was confirmed that decisions at the Standing committee be taken by consensus.

- It was decided to review Article 5 of the Charter as well as Rule 15 of Rules of Procedure and update the title of the four existing Standing Committees in next meeting of the Working Group to be held on the sideline of Standing Committee on Political Affairs in Baghdad.

#### **4 -Any other matters**

No issue was raised.

Attachment I

## Asian Parliamentary Assembly

### APA Working Group on Statutory Documents



(on the sidelines of the Standing Committee on Economic and Sustainable Development)

Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain

8-9 December 2024



### Draft Agenda

(12/2/2024 by APA Secretariat)

#### 1- Adoption of Agenda

#### 2 - Remarks by the SG

#### 3- Consideration of the proposed amendments to the Article 8 (Number of Votes) and Article 13 (Voting) of the APA Charter

The Shura Council of Qatar proposes the meeting to consider the above Agenda item and offers the following explanation for it:

Based on the experiences from previous meetings and voting processes on draft resolutions, The proposal to amend the two Articles of the Charter in the Agenda is crucial to address certain challenges and improve the principles and guidelines governing our parliamentary cooperation. This amendment aims to update the current framework in line with recent developments and to enhance the collective decision-making process, ensuring that our discussions align with the values and objectives of the Assembly. Additionally, the amendment will contribute to greater transparency and fairness in the proceedings, allowing all members to participate more effectively in the discussions.

#### 4 -Any other matters

## Attachment II



### **APA Working Group on Statutory Documents**

#### **Remarks by the Secretary-General**

**Dear Colleagues,  
Distinguished Delegates,**

Since I took over as APA Secretary-General, I have been deeply committed to advancing the reform process within the APA. I firmly believe that, as a dynamic organization, the APA must continuously develop revitalization programs and prioritize them on its agenda.

To accelerate the reform process, the APA Executive Council decided to establish a working group on Statutory documents in October 2019 in Rize, Türkiye. This WG comprising eight members was tasked with revising and updating the APA's Statutory Documents in an attempt to strengthen the role of APA as an inter-parliamentary organization.

Following establishment of the WG, Parliament of Kuwait invited WG members and a limited number of interested countries to Kuwait City for its first session in February 2020. For this meeting, the Secretariat received an extensive number of proposed amendments to nearly all articles and rules within the Basic Documents (Charter, Rules of Procedure, and Financial Regulations). These amendments were primarily submitted by 5–6 WG members and a few interested countries.

Unfortunately, the planned meeting in Kuwait was canceled due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Two years later, in October 2021, the First Session of the WG was convened in Ürgüp, Türkiye.

In my opening remarks at the First Session, I underscored the WG's significant workload and emphasized the following key points:

- The WG bears the responsibility of producing a comprehensive set of legal draft documents that requires two-thirds majority vote of both the Executive Council and the Plenary.
- The APA Charter, as the basic document of the organization, represents its identity, while the Rules of Procedure define its decision-making mechanisms. Therefore, any proposed amendments must be supported by compelling justification, addressing both form and content.
- Finally, the WG should prioritize only essential changes and avoid unnecessary modifications to the current APA statutory documents.

Following extensive discussion during the First Session, the participants could only address amendments of 5 Articles of the APA Charter. Noting that the APA Charter has 19 Articles, revising of the Charter at this pace will take long years.

**Dear Colleagues,  
Distinguished Delegates,**

This slow progress in revising the APA Charter is not solely due to the heavy workload. The additional challenge of securing hosts for WG meetings further complicates the process. For instance, it took nearly two years, from October 2021 to July 2023, for the Secretariat and the APA's term presidency to arrange the Second Session of the WG.

At the Second Session of the WG held in Tehran, I highlighted that the APA's 16-year history underscores the need for progress. The establishment of the WG in 2019 marked an initial step toward developing an inclusive and comprehensive plan to revitalize the APA, encourage greater member contributions, and promote inter-parliamentary cooperation.

In November 2023, following the Second WG Session in Iran, I presented a report to the Executive Council in Antalya, Türkiye. At this meeting, it was announced that the National Assembly of Kuwait would soon invite WG members to the Third Session. However, as you are aware, Kuwait's Parliament was dissolved in May 2024, casting uncertainty over the Third Session's fate.

In a final effort to maintain momentum, the First APA Bureau Meeting, held alongside the Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs in Moscow in September 2024, decided to continue holding WG meetings alongside the Standing Committee sessions. Subsequently, the Second APA Bureau Meeting in Doha, on the sidelines of the Standing Committee on Budget and Planning in November 2024, confirmed that the WG would convene alongside the Standing Committee on Economic and Sustainable Development here in Manama. This WG meeting will focus on Article 8 (Number of Votes) and Article 13 (Voting) of the APA Charter.

**Dear Colleagues,  
Distinguished Delegates,**

In conclusion, I wish to emphasize the following critical points:

1. In my capacity as Secretary-General, I firmly believe that the challenges facing the APA are less about reforming its Basic Documents and more about the lack of political will among some members to fully engage in and financially support the organization's activities. It took 17 years to agree on an annual financial contribution from all members, finalized only last month in Doha, Qatar.
2. An active and dynamic organization with a multinational Secretariat requires consistent and meaningful participation from all members, not only in its activities but also through financial contributions.
3. I strongly believe that we should limit ourselves to addressing the two Charter Articles of 8 and 13 and leave the rest for the future. We should also call on the next Executive Council Meeting to focus on payment of the annual assessed contributions by their members, if we are to achieve objectives envisaged in the Charter and wrap up the function of the WG on Statutory Documents.

Thank you very much for your attention.

# Asian Parliamentary Assembly

## APA Working Group on Statutory Documents

Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain  
8-9 December 2024



## Background Paper

Updating the objectives and reforming the rules of procedure governing an international organization is a critical endeavor in addressing emerging challenges. For this reason, the APA, like other dynamic international organizations, took proactive steps by establishing this Working Group as a reform mechanism to update its statutory documents.

1. During the APA Executive Council Meeting in October 2019, held in Rize, Türkiye, participants unanimously decided to revise and update the APA Statutory Documents to revitalize its role as an inter-parliamentary organization. This decision remains the sole mandate and point of reference for the Working Group (WG).
2. The purpose of the WG is to update the APA Statutory Documents to create a more efficient and systematic framework. This objective remains its primary focus.
3. The WG comprises members from Türkiye, Iran, Iraq, Russia, Cambodia, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Palestine.
4. Following the Executive Council's decision, the Parliament of Kuwait invited the WG members to convene the First Session of the WG in Kuwait City in February 2020. However, the meeting was canceled due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in January 2020.
5. The First Session of the WG was eventually held in October 2021 in Ürgüp, Türkiye. Hosted and chaired by the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye, the meeting was attended by parliamentary delegations from Bahrain, Iran, Kuwait, Palestine, and Türkiye.

as WG members, along with delegations from Indonesia, Jordan, Pakistan, and the UAE in their capacity as “interested countries.”

6. During the First Session, the WG adopted procedures for considering and adopting amendments to the relevant documents. The WG also agreed to address the basic documents in the following order: Charter, Rules of Procedure, and Financial Regulations.
7. Over two sessions, participating delegations extensively discussed the draft amendments to the APA Charter, successfully revising the text up to Article 5. The Chairperson announced that the next WG meeting would be held alongside the Executive Council meeting in Türkiye.
8. At the 13th APA Plenary in January 2023 in Antalya, Türkiye, H.E. Professor Şentop, APA President, emphasized in his opening statement the necessity of revising the current structure and regulations, enhancing institutional efficiency, and addressing payment contributions to transform the APA into a significant parliamentary forum.
9. Following this, the APA Secretary-General sent several communications to APA members seeking their input on the WG’s progress on statutory documents.
10. The Second Session of the WG on Statutory Documents took place on July 11, 2023, in Tehran, hosted and chaired by the Islamic Parliament of Iran. Delegations from Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Palestine, Russia, and Türkiye participated as WG members, while delegations from Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, China, Cyprus, India, Indonesia, Lebanon, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the UAE, and Vietnam attended as “interested countries.”
11. At this session, the APA Secretary-General highlighted that the 16-year track record of APA programs demonstrates the need for further progress. The establishment of the WG in October 2019 in Rize marked an initial step to develop an inclusive plan encouraging greater contributions from all members and promoting parliamentary cooperation.
12. During the Second Session, some countries emphasized the importance of addressing APA’s revitalization and capacity-building issues, while others expressed concern that focusing on structural and revitalization topics might not yield tangible outcomes. The

Chairperson tasked the APA Secretariat with summarizing the meeting for the Executive Council to guide future actions.

13. The Secretariat presented the Second Session's report to the Executive Council in November 2023 in Antalya, Türkiye. The Executive Council was tasked with determining the date, venue, and host for the Third Session of the WG on Statutory Documents.
14. In the absence of the Kuwaiti delegation, the Bahraini delegation announced that the National Assembly of Kuwait would soon invite the WG members to the Third Session.
15. On May 10, 2024, the Parliament of Kuwait suspended (dissolved), leaving the fate of the Third Session uncertain.
16. At the First APA Bureau Meeting on the sidelines of the Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs in September 2024 in Moscow, the Bureau decided that WG meetings would be concurrent with Standing Committee meetings in 2024.
17. At the Second APA Bureau Meeting on the sidelines of the Standing Committee on Budget and Planning in November 2024 in Doha, it was decided that a WG meeting would be held alongside the Standing Committee on Economic and Sustainable Development in Bahrain on December 8-9, 2024. During this meeting, discussions would focus on Article 8 (Number of Votes) and Article 13 (Voting) of the APA Charter.

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