

PREAMBLE : Tunis Declaration of November 21, 1991

" The General Directors of the Mediterranean countries news agencies who are participating in an international symposium called " Communication in the Mediterranean and the future " in Tunis between 19 and 21 November 1991 as part of a meeting organized because of the 30th anniversary of the Tunisian News Agency (TAP) :

1. Conscious of old and Omni-directional ties between the two shores of the Mediterranean;

- Believing in the future development of closer information in this region between the news agencies of the countries on the shores of the Mediterranean;
- Stressing that information and communication will be able to play a basic role in the realization of the consciousness that it is necessary to strengthen the ties between Mediterranean countries;
- Believing that issues like democratization, human rights, socio-economic, cultural and scientific development, the environment, migration (and) peace and security in the Mediterranean could be subject to ties and dialogue between these agencies;
- Declaring that it is necessary to achieve this communication with the desire of contributing to Mediterranean information and in the framework of free transfer of information;
- Thinking that meetings between Mediterranean countries news agencies at predetermined intervals will strengthen dialogue and cooperation among them and direct them to other areas of interest;
- Declare their intention to set up a working group constituted of LUSA (Portugal), AA (Turkey) and SANA (Syria) and coordinated by TAP (Tunisia) with the aim of strengthening inter-agency cooperation.

This Committee will be charged with investigating possibilities and ways of achieving the common objectives defined at the Tunis symposium, such as setting up a union or club of Mediterranean news bulletin creating a directory of the Mediterranean news agencies and developing technical relations ".

Mindful of these exhortations, the signatories news agencies of the Tunis Declaration met in a Constituent General Assembly in Istanbul on October 2, 1992 and adopted a Statute. On June 7 and 8, 1993, during the General Assembly held in Damascus it was agreed to entrust the Follow-

up Committee to revise and enrich the Statutes with the special cooperation of MAP. A draft edition was discussed on April 7, 1994, in Damascus by the Follow-up Committee. The provisions have been revised by the third Alliance's General Assembly, on June 26-27, 1994, in Rome, as follows:

CHAPTER ONE : DEFINITION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ALLIANCE

CHAPTER TWO : MEMBERSHIP

CHAPTER THREE : STRUCTURE OF THE ALLIANCE

CHAPTER FOUR : GENERAL PROVISION

* CHAPTER ONE: DEFINITION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ALLIANCE

ARTICLE 1 : DEFINITION

An association known as the "Alliance of Mediterranean News Agencies" is hereby created and called "AMAN".

ARTICLE 2 : OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Alliance are specified in the Tunis Declaration. The Alliance will be non-political.

* CHAPTER TWO: MEMBERSHIP

ARTICLE 3 : MEMBERS

3.1 - The founding members are the signatory agencies of the Tunis Declaration, and precisely : Anadolu Ajansi (AA), Agence France Presse (AFP), Agence Mauritanienne d'Information (AMI), Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata (ANSA), Algerie Presse Service (APS), Agenzia EFE (EFE), Al

Jamahiryah News Agency (JANA), Agencia de Informacao (LUSA), Maghreb Arabe Presse (MAP), Middle East News Agency (MENA), Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA), Tunis Afrique Presse (TAP), Palestinian News Agency (WAFA).

3.2 - Mediterranean News Agencies which did not take part in the Tunis meeting and consequently were not signatories to the Tunis Declaration can apply to the General Assembly for membership.

3.3 - A candidate agency must first fulfill the following requirements:

- a) It shall formally accept and undersign the Tunis Declaration and the Statutes of the Alliance.
- b) It shall be recognized as the agency representative of the internationally-recognized country in question.
- c) It shall represent a country belonging to the Mediterranean area or a country having continuous and privileged relations with the Mediterranean basin.
- d) Its Statutes and activity shall not carry any religious or racial contents.
- e) A candidate agency must answer a questionnaire for application for membership.

3.4 - The Alliance can admit observers. At the time the Statutes were adopted observers were the Federation of Arab News Agencies and the Inter Press Service.

New observers can be an Alliance/Federation/Union/Association of newsagencies.

New observers can be admitted by a resolution of the General Assembly.

Observers can take part in General Assemblies without the right to vote; they cannot be elected to the Follow-up Committee.

3.5 - The application for admission must be addressed to the Follow-up Committee, which will proceed to submit it to the next General Assembly.

3.6 - A resolution of the General Assembly for the admission of new members and observers requires a three quarters majority of the members present.

ARTICLE 4 : LOSS OF MEMBER STATUS

Every member can withdraw from the Alliance by addressing a written communication to the Follow-up Committee.

The General Assembly, upon request of the Follow-up Committee, can decide to exclude a member or to suspend his member rights in case of:

- Loss of conditions required for admission;
- Serious violation of the Statutes;
- Delayed payment of the membership fee.

The relevant resolution of the General Assembly requires a three quarters majority of the members present.

ARTICLE 5 : MEMBERSHIP FEES

5.1 - The General Assembly, may fix the amount of the annual membership fee according to the different categories of members, as specified in article 3.1.

5.2 - The Alliance can accept on approval of the General Assembly donations from member news agencies and international organizations.

5.3 - Membership fees and donations will be kept in a bank account opened in the name of the Alliance, in the country of the Secretary General, in a convertible currency.

* CHAPTER THREE: STRUCTURE OF THE ALLIANCE

ARTICLE 6 : STRUCTURE

The structure of the Alliance is the following:

The General Assembly

- The President
- The two Vice-Presidents
- The Secretary General
- The Follow-up Committee

ARTICLE 7 : THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

7.1 - The General Assembly consists of all the members of the Alliance; it is the highest authority to take decisions and define actions.

7.2 - The Alliance holds at least one ordinary General Assembly every year, alternatively on the Northern and the Southern shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Within the context of this guideline, each yearly session shall be held in the country of the member agency which, with the consent of the General Assembly, has voluntarily taken the commitment to host it.

7.3 - The General Assembly may be convened in extraordinary session upon request of the President, or at least of three member agencies.

7.4 - Both the ordinary and the extraordinary sessions are called and chaired by the President or, in case of his incapacity or impediment, by one of the two Vice-Presidents and can be held only in the presence of at least half of the member agencies.

7.5 - Each founding or ordinary member agency has one vote.

7.6 - The sessions of the General Assembly are open. They may also be convened in camera, without the attendance of the observers, once agreed upon by the majority of those present.

ARTICLE 8 : ORDINARY SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. The ordinary session of the General Assembly;

Appoints the President and the two Vice-Presidents of the Alliance

- Elects the Secretary General;
- Decides on admission, exclusion or suspension of members
- Approves the annual budget;
- Evaluates the reports proposed by the Follow-up Committee and any other business it may deem necessary;
- If necessary, appoints a special committee with the specific task of examining controversies on the interpretation or the enforcement of the Statutes.

1. Resolutions of the General Assembly in ordinary session are taken by a majority of the members present.

8.3 - However, decisions by the General Assembly on:

- Appointment of the President and Vice-Presidents;
- Election of the Secretary General require a qualified majority of two thirds of the members present;

While:

- Admission of new member agencies to the Alliance;
- Admission of new members to the Alliance requires a qualified majority of three-quarters of the members present.

ARTICLE 9 : EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

9.1 -The General Assembly in extraordinary session decides on :

- Amendment of the Statutes
- Dissolution of the association
- Other questions which do not fall within the scope of the ordinary General Assembly.

9.2 - Resolutions of the General Assembly in extraordinary session are taken by a majority of three-quarters of the members present.

ARTICLE 10 : THE PRESIDENT AND THE TWO VICE-PRESIDENTS

10.1 - The President shall be appointed for a term of one year. He shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the member agency which hosts the current General Assembly. He shall stay in office till the opening of the next ordinary General Assembly.

10.2 - The President represents the Alliance, calls and presides over meetings of the General Assembly and Follow-up Committee; he has other authority received by the General Assembly.

10.3 - The two Vice-Presidents shall be appointed for a term of one year. They shall be the Chief Executive Officers of the two member agencies which have, respectively, (1) assumed the

previous presidency (First Vice-President) and (2) proposed to host the following meeting of the General Assembly (Second Vice-President).

10.4 - The President and the two Vice-Presidents may delegate their authority to a representative of the same agency.

ARTICLE 11 : THE FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE

11.1 - The Follow-up Committee is the executive body of the Alliance. It is responsible for the handling of the Alliance's administrative activities.

11.2 - The Follow-up Committee consists of the President, the two Vice-Presidents and the Secretary General.

11.3 - The competence of the Follow-up Committee is the following :

- To implement the General Assembly decisions;
- To fix the date and Venue of the General Assembly meetings, in accordance with the hosting agency;
- To draw up the draft agenda of the meeting and send it to the members at least three weeks prior to the meeting of the General Assembly;
- To prepare for the presentation by the President to the General Assembly reports on the activities of the Alliance;
- To present to the General Assembly membership and withdrawal applications from the Alliance.

11.4 - Resolutions of the Follow-up Committee shall be taken by simple majority of the members present. The President has a casting vote in the case of a tie.

11.5 - In the event of resignation of a member from the Follow-up Committee in between two General Assemblies, such member shall be replaced according to the following procedure:

a) If the vacancy affects the post of President, the new President shall be the first Vice-President;

- If the vacancy affects the post of first Vice-President, his position shall remain vacant till the next General Assembly;
- If the vacancy affects the post of second Vice-President, who has the task of hosting the next General Assembly, the Follow-up Committee is authorized to fill the vacancy by co-opting the senior Chief Executive Officer of any member agency ready to accept the commitment to host the General Assembly.

11.6 - The Follow-up Committee is called and chaired by the President or, in his absence, by the first Vice-President and must meet at least two months before the General Assembly, in order to prepare the agenda well in advance and distribute it to the member agencies at least three weeks prior to the General Assembly.

11.7 - If considered necessary, the Follow-up Committee may hold an extraordinary meeting.

11.8 - The quorum for the conduct of business within the Follow-up Committee is three.

ARTICLE 12 : THE SECRETARY GENERAL

12.1 - The Secretary General shall be elected for a term of three years, renewable.

12.2 - The applications for the Secretary General position shall be addressed to the Follow-up Committee before being submitted to the General Assembly.

12.3 - The responsibilities of the Secretary General are as follows :

a) To secure the continuity of the management between the General Assemblies.

- To secure the coordination between members.
- To prepare the necessary documents for decisions to be taken by the ordinary and the extraordinary General Assemblies.
- To secure the cooperation with other similar institutions.
- To keep the Alliance funds with the written consent of the President and supervise the implementation of the budget within the limits of the authorization given by the General Assembly.
- To present the annual budget to the General Assembly.

* CHAPTER FOUR: GENERAL PROVISION

ARTICLE 13 : REPRESENTATION

13.1 - Each member agency will be represented in the Alliance by its Director General. If prevented from attending, he can delegate his power to a representative from his agency.

13.2 - In the General Assembly and Follow-up Committee meetings each Director General may be accompanied by another member of the agency concerned without right to vote, the maximum from each thus being two persons.

ARTICLE 14 : LANGUAGES

14.1 - The working languages of the Alliance are Arabic, English and French. The language of correspondence is English.

14.2 - The Statutes are drawn up in three languages : Arabic, English and French. In the event of a dispute over translation, the English text will be the text of reference.

ARTICLE 15 : DISPUTES ON THE STATUTES

In case of disagreement in the interpretation of the Statutes, the General Assembly convened either in ordinary, or in extraordinary session appoints a committee formed by three delegates elected within the members, with the task of seeking a solution. The committee shall inform member agencies of its decision within a period of two months. Its decision will be discussed during the following General Assembly.

ARTICLE 16 : AMENDMENT OF THE STATUTES

The statutes can be amended only by the General Assembly, convened in extraordinary session, with a resolution taken by a majority of three-quarters of members present, according to articles 7.3 and 9.

ARTICLE 17 : DISSOLUTION

The Alliance can be dissolved only by the General Assembly convened in extraordinary session with a resolution taken by a majority of three-quarters of members present, according to articles 7.3 and 9.

ARTICLE 18 : OFFICIAL ADDRESS OF THE ALLIANCE

The official address of the Alliance shall be that of the Secretary General.

ARTICLE 19 : APPLICABLE LAW

In cases not expressly covered by this act, the French law will be applied.

ARTICLE 20 : ENFORCEMENT

The Statutes shall come into force once signed by the member agencies.