



## **WLCU Regional BYLAWS USA & CANADA**

### **CHAPTER 1. NAME AND MAIN OFFICE**

#### **Article 1. NAME OF THE ORGANISATION**

The World Lebanese Cultural Union (WLCU) Geographic-Regional Council (GRC) for **USA** and **Canada** is one of six Regional Councils and the exclusive affiliate of the World Lebanese Cultural Union (WLCU). WLCU was established in Mexico in 1960, is recognized as INGO associated with DPI of the UN and accredited at the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations. WLCU is an independent civil institution, non-governmental, non-political, non-racial, non-religious and non-profitable, duly recognized as the sole representative of the Lebanese expansion in the World. WLCU, also referred to as "Union" within this constitution, is governed by its statutes and its by-laws and its organisms are entitled to bear the name of the State/City/Province of the country in which it is located along with its name.

#### **Article 2. MAIN OFFICE ADDRESS**

The office and its mailing address may be transferred from time to time in accordance with the location of a newly elected President and Secretary-General until such as time when the GRC has a permanent address. The GRC shall have a PO Box address instead of a residential address and must be registered (both the WLCU name and Logo) with the authorities of the relevant country.

## **CHAPTER 2. AIMS AND MEANS**

### **Article 3. ITS OBJECTIVE**

a. To enhance and promote the spirit of allegiance and patriotism among members of the Union and through the countries in which they live, and to share actively for the benefits of those countries in the fields of education, culture and society.

b. To consolidate the ties of friendship and concord among its members and hence promote the links of friendship and mutual understanding among the countries in which members of the Union live.

c. To create and promote the ties of friendliness and mutual understanding and enhance such ties among all those countries and Lebanon, and encourage the cultural, social, touristic and economic activities which are of mutual interest between Lebanon and the countries of residence, on one side, and among Lebanese citizens and the Lebanese descendants, on the other side.

d. To promulgate the Lebanese heritage in countries of residence of the Union members and promulgate countries among themselves and in Lebanon

e. To acquaint people of Lebanon's civilization and of the integral role it has played throughout its history in the service of humanity, and safeguards the Lebanese existence and entity in order to enable Lebanon to pursue its efforts in the service of world peace and understanding among peoples.

f. To fostering faith, peace and understanding among peoples by encouraging members of the Union to serve their communities irrespective of any, personal or material gain, and seek to promote the standards of moral values in the field of commerce, public works and private life.

g. Establishing and administering National Lebanese Information Centers to provide both the Lebanese and wider communities in both USA and Canada, with the appropriate facilities and services to foster and enhance the aims and objectives of the WLCU.

h. To support, respect and promote the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to declare that its Mission Statement is consistent with those principles, as appears above and hereafter, and to achieve, by all means possible, the attainment of the objectives of the Charter of the United Nations for all peoples throughout the world through the organization of the WLCU.

#### **Article 4.**

The Union aims also to achieve its objectives with respect to:

- a. Respecting the entity, independence and sovereignty of Lebanon as a final homeland for all the Lebanese citizens.
- b. Promoting the distinctive Lebanese identity of citizens from Lebanese origin.
- c. Granting facilities and services available to the Lebanese emigrants and their descendants.

### **CHAPTER 3. MEMBERSHIP AND AFFILIATION**

#### **Article 5.**

- a. The Union is composed of branches, clubs, associations, leagues, institutions and federations, joining Lebanese Citizens and descendants of Lebanese origin who believe in Lebanon as a final homeland for all compatriots and who are not affiliated to other institutions whose objectives contradict the Lebanese entity.
- b. The aforementioned chapters of the Geographical Region shall formalize their membership by contributing to the administrative expenses of the Regional Council such sum each year as determined by the executive committee. A chapter shall not be entitled to its rights and privileges as a member unless the membership fees are paid at least three months prior the annual general meeting.
- c. The GRC President of WLCU, at his/her discretion, may issue honorary membership cards to a non-member who is in good standing at the request of the latter.

## Article 6.

The Union includes the aforementioned members that are disseminated throughout all the provinces and Territories of Canada, all the states of the USA.

a. Chapters of the Geographical Region shall consist of branches, clubs, associations, youth committee/leagues, institutions and federations having at least thirty members who have a common interest or purpose, in good standing and hold valid and current membership cards. Each member is entitled to one vote in the election of the Branch Board. No one is permitted membership in more than one branch. A branch shall be registered with the local authorities of USA and Canada (federal or provincial or state). A branch is then approved and recognized by their respective State or provincial council and subsequently by the Geographic-Regional Council, which authority shall refer all necessary documents to the Secretary-General for registration and formal recognition. Chapters and Provincial / State / National Councils shall have PO Box addresses instead of residential addresses.

### b. USA

WLCU State Councils - Each State Council shall be composed of the President or one (1) delegate from each chapter. From amongst them they shall elect a President and Committee in accordance with the requirements of their respective State Constitution. State Council Presidents are members of the World Council.

### c. Canada

WLCU Provincial Councils - Each provincial Council shall be composed of the President or one (1) delegate from each chapter. From amongst them they shall elect a President and Committee in accordance with the requirements of their respective provincial Constitution. Provincial Council Presidents are members of the World Council.

d. In the presence of only two chapters in one provincial or State Council, they shall form a Provincial or State Council composed of two chapters, the Council shall alternatively be presided every year by rotation between the Presidents of the two chapters. The chapter President who enjoys age seniority shall assume the Presidency the first year.

## **CHAPTER 4 - The geographic Regional Committee and the Geographic Regional Council - Elections:**

### **Article 7**

- a. The Geographic Regional Committee for USA and Canada shall be composed of the Presidents of the State and Provincial Councils. The Geographic Region Committee members are duly members of the Geographic Regional Council (GRC). They shall elect, not necessarily only from amongst themselves, the Executive Committee of the GRC. The Commissioners shall be appointed by the Executive Committee after consultation with the Board of Trustees.
  
- b. The Geographic Regional Council consists of, but not limited to, the following positions:

#### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Regional President

Regional Vice President

Regional Secretary General (appointed according to article 8.a)

Assistant Regional Secretary General (appointed according to article 8.a)

Regional Treasurer

Advisors

#### **COMMISSIONERS and members**

Two Representatives with the Local Authorities

Regional Commissioner for the Youth

Regional Commissioner for Ladies of Lebanese descent

Regional Commissioner for Information and Communications.

Regional Commissioner for Social Affairs.

Regional Commissioner for Cultural and Heritage Affairs

Regional Commissioner for Finance.

Legal Advisor

Chairperson of the board of trustees

The commissioners shall also be members of the International Committees of the WLCU.

If a State Council does not exist; or has not been formed i.e. a State then, the Chapter of the WLCU or equivalent in that State shall be entitled to have its President as delegates on the Geographic-Regional Committee.

If any member of the Executive Committee and delegates to the Geographic-Regional Council is convicted of an indictable offense; or fails to comply with any of the provisions of this constitution; or conducts himself or herself in a manner considered to be injurious or prejudicial to the character or interests of the Geographic-Regional Council, the Geographic-Regional Council shall consider whether the person's representation on the Council shall be terminated. The person concerned shall be given a full and fair opportunity of presenting their case and if the Council resolves by ordinary majority to remove the person, the Secretary-General shall inform the person in writing of their removal from the Council.

## **CHAPTER 5 - Authorities and Terms**

### **Article 8. Authorities of the GRC and term of the Executive Committee**

- a. The Geographic-Regional Council shall propose names of suitable candidates for the positions of Regional Secretary General and Assistant Regional Secretary General to the World Secretary General for approval and appointment. The RSG will also act as a board secretary. The term of the RSG and his assistant extends until the end of the term of the world president.
- b. The Executive Committee of the Geographic-Regional Council:
  - I. The term of the President and the Executive Committee members shall be for a two (2) year term and able to stand for re-election at the end of the first term. The elected President may be elected to only two (2) consecutive terms. The President is ineligible for re-election until two (2) years have elapsed following his re-elected term.
  - II. If a State or provincial Council President or delegate ceases to hold his/her position on their respective State or provincial Council, he/she shall automatically forfeit his/her position on the Geographic-Regional Council and shall be replaced by the newly elected President or delegate, with the exception of the members of the Executive Committee who are elected for two years.

c. Members of the Union living in the above mentioned Geographical Region shall commit themselves to honor the Union's objectives and shall be subject to the provisions of this constitution immediately after their affiliation to the Union. The conditions of affiliation of the branches, clubs, associations, leagues, institutions and federations will be stipulated upon their application for membership.

The Geographical -Regional Council (GRC) is empowered to execute:

e. The decisions of the World Conference, and to coordinate the work and decisions of the provincial and State Councils to ensure cooperation and integration between all parties

f. The Geographical- Regional Council (GRC) shall document their internal regulations having consideration for the objectives of WLCU and abiding by the World Constitutional Basic Bylaws and World Internal Regulations and civil laws of the host countries. A copy of the regulations shall be signified to the World Secretariat General

## **Article 9. Authorities of The President**

The Power and duties of the President of the Geographic Regional Council for USA & Canada of the World Lebanese Cultural Union:

1. The President is the most senior official of the World Lebanese Cultural Union in this Geographical Region.
2. The President will at all times be the sole spokesperson for and on behalf of the World Lebanese Cultural Union for USA & Canada.
3. The President of the Geographic-Regional Council for USA & Canada shall at all times represent the world President in this Geographical Region, unless the World President is here present in person.
4. In the event of a need arising for a delegation to travel outside this Geographical Region on World Lebanese Cultural Union business/congress, then the President shall head such a delegation and lead all discussions for the benefit of the Geographical Region of USA & Canada and the World Lebanese Cultural Union in general.

5. The President of the Geographic-Regional Council:

- a. Shall represent the Council judicially and administratively before all public and private bodies.
- b. Shall preside over sessions of the Geographic-Regional Council.
- c. Shall convoke the ordinary and extraordinary sessions of the Geographic-Regional Council for USA & Canada through the RSG.
- d. As a member of the World Council, shall implement or ensure the implementation of the decisions of the World Council and the Geographic-Regional Council, and to supervise the activities of the State and provincial Councils in this Geographical Region.
- e. Shall exercise any other powers necessary and conferred upon the President by the constitution of this Geographical Region in order to realize the objectives of the World Lebanese Cultural Union and this Geographical Region of the World Lebanese Cultural Union.

6. The President has the power to delegate responsibilities to other members of the Council.

#### **Article 10. Powers and duties of the Vice-President**

- a. To replace the President in case of absence, physical impediment, resignation or death.
- b. To support and assist in all facets of the organization as requested by the President.

#### **Article 11. President Office vacancy**

Should the office of the President become vacant due to resignation or death then the Vice-President shall assume the responsibilities and duties of that office until the election of a new president, which must take place within ninety days from the date of the President's resignation or death.



## **Article 12. Duties of the Assistant Regional Secretary General**

- a. To replace the Regional Secretary-General in case of absence.
- b. To assist the Regional Secretary-General in his/her duties.

## **Article 13. Duties of the Treasurer**

- a. To collect revenues and issue receipts.
- b. To pay expenses.
- c. To prepare annual budgets.
- d. To operate bank account/s and co-sign checks with President or Secretary-General. Checks shall be co-signed by any two of: President, Secretary-General and Treasurer.
- e. To keep proper sets of books relating to funds of the Council.
- f. To present an audited annual statement and balance sheet to the Council.
- g. To execute any other relative function assigned by the President of the Council.

## **Article 14. Duties of the Regional Secretary-General**

- a. To carry out all responsibilities pertaining to this office such as drafting of documents, implementation of the resolutions of the Geographic-Regional Council for USA & Canada.
- b. To draw up the minutes of each Council meeting and forward to each Council member within thirty days of the relevant meeting.
- c. To support and assist the Regional President in the facets of the President's functions and responsibilities.
- d. To fulfill all duties assigned to him/her by the President.
- e. The Regional Secretary-General or his appointed Assistant shall supervise all the elections of this Geographical Region.

f. Shall assist the World Secretary General upon the latter's delegation. The WSG summons the RSG to the Secretariat General to provide a progress report on any assignment.

g. The Regional Secretary-General cannot be removed from office unless he/she violates these regional bylaws of USA & Canada, or fails to fulfill the duties assigned to him/her.

h. The World President may dismiss the Regional Secretary General upon the justified recommendation of the World Secretary General and If the Regional Secretary-General is found to have acted contrary to his/her obligations under this constitution.

i. The Regional Secretary-General and or his/her assistant shall coordinate between the United Nations Headquarters in New York, the WLCU NGO Committee and the World Secretary General.

#### **Article 15. GRC meetings**

a. The Geographic-Regional Council USA & Canada of the World Lebanese Cultural Union shall hold its ordinary session at least once each year. The Quorum shall consist of 75% of its members or their representatives, otherwise, by attendees of the second session, irrespective of their number, which will be held, under normal circumstances, after two hours of the posted time of the first meeting.

b. The Geographic-Regional Council shall convene an extraordinary session upon written request of two members specifying the reasons for such a session and directing their written request to the Secretary-General. The President shall instruct the Secretary-General who will then invite the Council to convene within thirty (30) days. The Quorum of an extraordinary session shall consist of 75% of its members or their representatives, otherwise, by attendees of the second session, irrespective of their number, which will be held, under normal circumstances, after two hours of the posted time of the first meeting.

## **CHAPTER 6: Geographic Committee & Geographic Regional Council (GRC)**

### **Article 16. The WLCU & The GRC**

The relationship between the World Lebanese Cultural Union and the Geographic Regional Committee and the Geographic Regional Council for USA & Canada shall be as follows:

- a. Presidents of the State Councils throughout USA and the provincial Councils of Canada form the Geographic-Regional Committee of North America.
- b. The Geographic-Regional Council for USA and Canada (elected by the Geographic Regional Committee) shall be the exclusive affiliate and representative of the World Lebanese Cultural Union in North America
- c. All chapters, clubs, branches and organizations that wish to become financial members of the World Lebanese Cultural Union in North America must apply through their local State Council in the USA or Provincial Council in Canada.
- d. The Geographic-Regional Council for USA & Canada, shall at all times give due consideration to the spirit of the World Lebanese Cultural Union constitution and by-laws. The GRC should participate in all World Council meeting and World Congress of the WLCU and to be an active part of the World decision-making.
- e. The World Council of the World Lebanese Cultural Union also shall at all times give due consideration to the worldwide community of Lebanese origin by demonstrating unity, loyalty, honesty and commitment to the objectives of the constitution of the World Lebanese Cultural Union.

## **CHAPTER 7. ADMINISTRATION and DUES**

### **Article 17.**

The President and executive committee of the Geographic-Regional Council shall determine the method and required documentation for a chapter to become a part of World Lebanese Cultural Union:

- a. An application for establishing an affiliated branch shall be submitted to the Secretariat General upon its endorsement by either the provincial or the State Council; whichever is applicable in the country of the applicant.
- b. The provincial or State Council shall forward the application to the Secretariat General by no later than two months from the date of its receipt, otherwise the branch affiliation application may be submitted by the branch directly to the Secretariat General.
- c. Each Branch shall pay a minimum of US\$100.00 for World Treasury, US\$100 for the State Treasury, and US\$100.00 for the Regional Treasury in annual dues to the World treasury no later than the end of the month of February. The Youth organizations shall pay half the amount or \$50.00 annual dues to the World treasury.
- d. The Geographic-Regional Council for USA & Canada of the World Lebanese Cultural Union shall as soon as is practicable, employ an “Administrative Clerk” for a minimum of 20 hours per week.

## **CHAPTER 8. AMENDMENT OF THIS CONSTITUTION**

### **Article 18.**

This constitution can be amended by a two-thirds majority of the members of this Geographic-Regional Council for USA & Canada of the World Lebanese Cultural Union, at any Extraordinary or General Meeting in accordance with the following:

- a. The proposal for amendment must be as formally submitted in writing by any chapter or any member of this Geographic-Regional Council to the President.
- b. Notice of intention to submit a proposal to amend this constitution of this Geographic-Regional Council must be received by the President in writing sixty (60) days before the proposed Extraordinary or General Meeting together with a copy of the proposed amendment.
- c. The President of the Geographic-Regional Council shall forward the proposed amendment to all members of this Geographic-Regional Council, to be received by them thirty days before the date of the Extraordinary or General Meeting.

d. Voting is to be carried out either by secret ballot or by a show of hands. Members unable to attend the meeting may appoint any other Council member by proxy to vote on their behalf. Online voting may also be available once the technical facilities have been setup.

e. Proxy votes can be granted for any voting purposes by the individual or chapter member eligible for such vote. Proxy notice should be confirmed in writing to the delegated voter, and a copy of the same written confirmation of proxy must be also received by the Regional Secretary-General no later than twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting during which the voting is expected to take place.

## **CHAPTER 9: BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Article 19: Description:** The Board of Trustees shall operate as a “Consultative Committee”.

The purpose of the Board of Trustees shall be to provide meaningful advice and consultation to the Board of Directors regarding the mission, vision and values of the Organization, and to provide significant Moral and financial support to the WLCU.

**Article 20: Members:** The Board of Trustees shall be formed and consists of permanent members within the relevant Region:

- Past World Presidents
- Past Vice World Presidents
- Past Regional Presidents,
- Past Regional Secretaries General

**Article 21: Modus Operandi of the Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees shall convene under the chairmanship of

a) The most senior of its members, to elect a Chairperson.  
The Annual or ordinary meetings shall be called through the RSG, one month before its assigned date.

b) The Chairperson is also a voting member of the Geographic-Regional Council

c) The Board of Trustees shall, under normal circumstances, meet annually at the same location and at the same time as the annual GRC meeting to agree on naming or electing its new Chairperson for a two-year term, and to provide comments on any subject proposed by the GRC or the Secretariat General including agreements, protocols, and contracts.

d) In case of absence the Chairperson, the most senior attending member shall chair the meeting.

e) The Regional Secretary General or his Assistant shall be the reporter to the Board of Trustees.

f) The reporter shall write the minutes of the meetings and submit them to the GRC.

g) Quorum for the meetings shall be the absolute majority of the registered members. All decisions shall be taken by the majority of the attending members.

h) President of the GRC or his delegates may attend the meetings

i) The Board of Trustees gives the necessary directives for consolidating cooperation between Lebanon and the Geographical region of USA & Canada

j) The Board of Trustees does not have jurisdiction over media issues or issuing press releases of any sort.

**Article 22: Dissolution of the Board of Trustees:**

The Geographic Regional Committee can dissolve the Board of Trustees by a two third majority if found in violation of the WLCU regulations, in violation of the decisions of the World Conference or the World Council or for any damages caused to the WLCU.

**GENERAL RULES:**

1. The official language of this constitution is English.
2. This constitution shall come into effect immediately.
3. Until such time as the Geographic-Regional Council appoints its own Arbitration Committee, all decisions regarding any disputes shall be undertaken by this GRC and all decisions shall be final.