

IHEU Bylaws

Adopted by the General Assembly on 8 June 2009 in London, England, and replacing the Bylaws adopted in 1952 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, and most recently amended in 2004 in Kampala, Uganda.

1. Introduction

1.1. The name of the organization is International Humanist and Ethical Union, abbreviated IHEU.

1.2. Humanism is a democratic and ethical life stance that affirms that human beings have the right and responsibility to give meaning and shape to their own lives. It stands for the building of a more humane society through an ethics based on human and other natural values in a spirit of reason and free inquiry through human capabilities. It is not theistic, and it does not accept supernatural views of reality.

2. Objects

2.1. The purpose of IHEU is to promote Humanism throughout the world, to develop Humanism as a life stance, to represent organized Humanism in international bodies, to defend human rights and the rights of humanists, to develop organized Humanism in every part of the world and to build a strong and effective global organization.

3. Membership

3.1. Membership is open to humanist organizations and individuals worldwide.

3.2. Member organizations must have objects consistent with Bylaw 2, and adhere to these Bylaws.

3.3. Individuals who agree with the objects set out in Bylaw 2 may become non-voting supporters of the IHEU.

4. General Assembly

4.1. The General Assembly is the policy making body of the organization. It is made up of representatives of Member Organizations and Sections, and the Executive Committee members. Its business shall be carried out in English and may be transacted by correspondence.

4.2. The General Assembly shall adopt and amend Internal Rules that shall include detailed provisions for the implementation of the Bylaws.

4.3. The Executive Committee shall call a General Assembly at least once in each calendar year.

4.4. An emergency General Assembly may be called at shorter notice by the Executive Committee, and the Executive Committee shall do so on receipt of a request from Member Organizations holding one fifth of the General Assembly votes provided that the calling Member Organizations come from at least three different countries.

5. Executive Committee

5.1. The Executive Committee is responsible for managing the IHEU in accordance with the Bylaws and the Internal Rules and the policies and directives of the General Assembly. The Executive Committee members shall be elected by the General Assembly, and shall be Directors or Trustees of the IHEU.

6. Sections

6.1. IHEU can organize sections by geographical regions or other criteria. A section can be an independent legal body.

7. Congress

7.1. An international Congress shall be convened by the General Assembly not less than once in five years.

8. Finances

8.1. The Executive Committee is responsible for budget and accounts and reports to the General Assembly. All members must pay annual dues.

8.2. The Endowment Fund shall contribute to the long-term financing of the organization. The capital shall only be used in dire need.

9. Legal status

9.1. The IHEU is a non-profit organization incorporated in the State of New York, USA and registered there as a charity with 501(c)(3) status.

9.2. The headquarters is located in England, where IHEU is a corporation registered with Companies House.

10. Amendments and dissolution

10.1. The General Assembly can lay down, change and revoke Bylaws consistent with the provisions of the Certificate of Incorporation by a two-thirds majority of the votes at the General Assembly on condition that two months notice of the proposed change has been given to all Member Organizations.

10.2. A decision to liquidate the corporation may be carried by a two thirds majority of the votes at the General Assembly on condition that no less than six months notice has been given to all Member Organizations together with the reasons for such a proposal and recommendations on the disposal of the assets remaining upon liquidation, being in accordance with the purpose of the corporation and any other consideration arising from the Certificate of Incorporation and subject to the approval of the Supreme Court of the State of New York.