



**UNITED CITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS  
MIDDLE EAST AND WEST ASIA SECTION  
(UCLG-MEWA)**

# **CONSTITUTION**

Amended and adopted at the  
UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau, Council and General Assembly Joint Meeting  
held on 10 April 2013 in Tehran, Iran

# UNITED CITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS MIDDLE EAST AND WEST ASIA SECTION (UCLG-MEWA) CONSTITUTION

Adopted by UCLG-MEWA General Assembly, 5 May 2004, Paris, France  
Amended by UCLG-MEWA General Assembly, 15 December 2007, Istanbul, Turkey  
Amended by UCLG-MEWA General Assembly, 16 December 2010, Diyarbakir, Turkey  
Amended by UCLG-MEWA General Assembly, 10 April 2013, Tehran, Iran

## **Preamble**

We, as members of the General Assembly of IULA-EMME – International Union of Local Authorities, Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East Regional Section, representing local governments in the Middle East and West Asia over, serving the populations of rural and urban communities; small, medium and large towns, metropolises and regions; in accordance with the Constitution of the World Organization of the United Cities and Local Governments which is the continuation of IULA – International Union of Local Authorities; gathered in Paris, France on 5 May 2004, in order to endorse the Constitution of the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments, Middle East and West Asia Section (UCLG-MEWA in short) which is the continuation of IULA-EMME – International Union of Local Authorities, Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East Regional Section.

## **Recalling:**

- the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and particularly the principle recognized in Article 21, that the will of the people is the basis of the authority of government;
- the considerable work achieved by the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) since 1913 and the World Federation of United Towns and Cities (UTO) since 1957 in developing municipal international relations and strengthening local government worldwide;
- the United Towns Charter adopted by UTO in 1957;
- the IULA Worldwide Declaration of Local Self-Government, adopted by IULA in 1985 and amended in 1993, and ratified by the UTO in 1994;
- the Final Declaration of the World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities adopted in Istanbul in 1996;
- the Habitat Agenda and the Declaration on Cities and other Human Settlements in the New Millennium, Agenda 21 and the Political Declaration of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and the Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals;

## **Considering:**

- that the world is being reshaped by changing economic, technological, demographic, environmental and social forces;
- that the traditional role of the State is profoundly affected by the above trends and that States cannot centrally manage and control the complex integrated cities and towns of today and tomorrow;
- that population growth and the continuing process of urbanization makes the task of local governments, both rural and urban, more complex but all the more essential;
- that in this changing world, the essential value of democracy, grounding government's legitimacy in the people, remains stronger than ever;
- that local government is one of the main foundations of any democratic society, being the level of government closest to the people;

## **Recognising:**

- the vital role of local government as a force for sustainable development, good governance, sustainable urbanization and promotion of the rights of the citizen;
- the vital role of local government as a force for promoting Human Rights -civil and political, social and economic - as recognized, codified and endorsed by the United Nations;
- local government's responsibility to take an active role in responding to the challenges facing humanity; to fight strongly against poverty, ignorance, intolerance, discrimination, exclusion, insecurity, environmental degradation and cultural leveling;

- the vital role of local government as a force for peace and solidarity between peoples;
- the diversity of democratic ways and means by which local communities can achieve these objectives;
- that local democracy is not just a formal value but must be continuously updated and revised, ensuring genuine equality and participation open to all, men and women;

**Emphasising:**

- that strengthening local government in any country strengthens the entire nation and the world community by ensuring more effective and democratic public policies;
- that Municipal International Cooperation and decentralized cooperation, partnership, twinning, international local government diplomacy, sister city links, and mutual assistance through capacity-building programmes and international municipal solidarity initiatives, are a vital contribution to the construction of a peaceful and sustainability developed world;
- that the more united local governments are, at national, regional and world level, the stronger they are in voicing the will of the communities they serve;

**Committed to:**

- local democracy and autonomy, i.e. to the principles of democratic decentralization and subsidiarity in the spirit of inter-connecting spheres of government;
- citizen-centered, participative local governance within the principles of decentralization and subsidiarity;
- high ethical standards of public service, efficiency, effectiveness and transparency;
- partnership with the international community and other spheres of government, civil society and other key stakeholders;

*Ordain and establish the Constitution of IULA-EMME – International Union of Local Authorities, Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East Regional Section as the Constitution of the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments, Middle East and West Asia Section (UCLG-MEWA), within the context of the amendments below, as follows:*

**NAME, HEADQUARTERS AND LEGAL STATUS**

**Article 1**

**The International Union of Local Authorities, Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East Regional Section** (in short IULA-EMME), established in 1987 by the Decree of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Turkey, is hereby renamed through these amendments of the present Constitution, as the **World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments, Middle East and West Asia Section**, governed by the laws of the Republic of Turkey, being a non-profit organization, with full legal and operational capacities, and will be called in short as '**UCLG-MEWA**'.

Its legal seat shall be based at **Yerebatan Cad. No:2, Sultanahmet, 34110, Istanbul, Turkey**. UCLG-MEWA shall be a non-profit international organization implementing its activities with no affiliation to any political opinion.

**The geographical region** of UCLG-MEWA shall cover the following countries (in alphabetical order): Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

**OBJECTIVES**

**Article 2 Mission**

The mission of UCLG-MEWA, in parallel to the World Organization is:  
To be the united voice and world advocate of democratic local self-government, promoting its values, objectives and interests, through cooperation between local governments, and within the wider international community.

## **OBJECTIVES**

### **Article 3 Objectives**

To achieve this mission, UCLG-MEWA shall pursue the following objectives:

- a. To promote strong and effective democratic local self-government throughout the region;
- b. To promote unity and cooperation amongst members;
- c. To ensure the effective political representation of local government to the international community, in particular the United Nations and its agencies;
- d. To be the regional and worldwide source of key information and intelligence regarding local government;
- e. To be the regional and worldwide source of learning, exchange and capacity-building, supporting the establishment and strengthening of free and autonomous local governments and their national associations;
- f. To promote economic, social, cultural, vocational and environmental development and service to the population based on the principles of good governance, sustainability and social inclusion;
- g. To promote race and gender equality, and to combat all forms of discrimination that are illegal with regard to international law, and/or illegitimate in relation to the values and policies of the organization;
- h. To be a strong democratic organization, reflecting in its composition and functioning the diversity of the local spheres of governance;
- i. To promote decentralized cooperation and international cooperation between local governments and their associations;
- j. To promote twinning and partnerships as a means for mutual learning and friendship between peoples;
- k. To develop policies, programmes and initiatives within the framework of the World Organization's mission, values and objectives, which imply seeking appropriate means to implement them, within the internal rules of the organization.

### **Article 4 Tasks**

In pursuance of these objectives, UCLG-MEWA shall undertake such tasks and enterprises as may be determined appropriate and desirable in order to achieve its missions and objectives, including in particular:

- a. Engaging actively in lobbying and advocacy work to promote the role and status of local government in the international arena and to influence international policy making;
- b. Developing and promoting policies and positions on issues of key interest and importance to local government before the international community;
- c. Collaborating actively with the United Nations and its agencies, and other relevant international organizations;
- d. Developing initiatives and action programmes based on the principles of local self-government and international cooperation, particularly through decentralized cooperation/development projects between local governments and associations of local governments, seeking funding and the creation of financial tools to support these projects;
- e. Building an international platform of exchanges and partnerships, in order to strengthen the capacities of local governments and their associations;
- f. Supporting a strong network of local government members and developing services and global products to meet their needs and demands;
- g. Becoming a major world source of information on local self-government, localities, international solidarity and the exchange of know-how;
- h. Disseminating information amongst its members, through publications, seminars and new information technologies, on the situation and the evolution of local government all over the world;
- i. Organizing congresses, other events and activities, and increasing the number of members, in order to reinforce the Regional Section's political influence and its financial autonomy.

## **Article 5 Adherence to principles of international law and United Nations decisions**

In pursuing its mission, objectives and tasks, and in dealing with issues of membership and other decisions under this constitution, UCLG-MEWA shall act in accordance with, and be guided by, the principles of international law and relevant decisions of the United Nations on recognition of states and other related matters.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

### **Article 6 Categories of membership**

In parallel with the World Organization, UCLG-MEWA consists of following categories of members:

- a. Local government members;
- b. Country representatives;
- c. International organization members;
- d. Associate members;
- e. Honorary members.

### **Article 7 Local Government Members**

Local government membership of UCLG-MEWA shall be open to:

- a. Individual cities and local governments.
- b. Local governments as Program members, in addition to individual membership, in order to provide multi-faceted capacity development support to individual members who would like to take part in programs or projects implemented by UCLG-MEWA.
- c. National/regional associations of local government.

### **Article 8 Country-Representatives**

Country representatives of UCLG-MEWA, recognized in accordance with the provisions of this constitution, shall be accepted as members by the decision of the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau.

### **Article 9 International organization members**

International organization membership of UCLG-MEWA shall be open to international local government organizations which represent specific categories of local governments, and/or whose purposes relate to specific sectoral or thematic issues.

### **Article 10 Associate members**

Associate membership of UCLG-MEWA shall be open to organizations which, though not themselves local government organizations, are strongly concerned with or involved in local government matters.

### **Article 11 Honorary members**

Honorary membership may be granted to individuals or institutions who have rendered distinguished service to UCLG-MEWA or to the cause of democratic local government. Nominations for Honorary membership shall be made by the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau and approved by the UCLG-MEWA Council.

## **RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS**

### **Article 12**

Members may participate in the various activities and programmes of the organization and have equal access to information, data and documentation on local government matters and the activities and decisions of the organization.

### **Article 13**

Members undertake to support, promote and adhere to the World Organization's mission, values and objectives.

#### **Article 14      Membership fees**

Local government members, international organization members and associate members shall pay an annual membership fee. The UCLG-MEWA Council, upon proposal of the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau, shall decide on the amount of the respective membership fees. The membership fees for local government members shall take the following into consideration:

- a. the number of inhabitants represented by the member;
- b. the state of the country's economic development.

The formula for membership fees shall be included in the General Rules of Procedure.

#### **Article 15**

Membership fees shall be paid in accordance with the General Rules of Procedure. Membership shall become effective upon receipt of the new member's first payment.

#### **Article 16**

Any member may resign at any time by giving a minimum of six months written notice to the Secretariat as defined in General Rules of Procedure, provided that such a member shall remain liable to pay any outstanding membership dues, including any appropriate pro rata share.

#### **ADMISSION**

#### **Article 17**

Applications for local government, international organization and associate membership shall be decided by the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau, whose task is to ensure that applicants meet the relevant requirement for membership. All applicants for membership must undertake to support, promote and adhere to UCLG-MEWA and the World Organization's mission, values and objectives.

#### **Article 18**

An applicant complying with the relevant requirements for membership has a right to apply for membership directly. On the decision of UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau, the application is submitted for UCLG Executive Bureau and World Council's approval.

#### **Article 19      Membership Issues**

In order to solve issues related to membership, one shall apply to UCLG-MEWA Ombudsman.

#### **EXCLUSION**

#### **Article 20**

A member is liable to exclusion or suspension:

- a. if it breaches the obligations and principles set out in this Constitution;
- b. if, without the consent of the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau, membership fees are more than one year in arrears;
- c. if it no longer fulfils other conditions of membership set out in this Constitution.

#### **Article 21**

Prior to the decision to exclude or suspend a member, UCLG-MEWA Secretariat General shall send the necessary notification to the member and the report shall be submitted to the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau. The relevant decision shall rest on the recommendation of the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau, World Council and the World Executive Bureau, with the World Council, which shall decide by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast by World Council members in attendance.

#### **Article 22**

A member whose exclusion is proposed shall be given at least two months written notice of the relevant World Council meeting. The member shall be invited to make his written observations

known before the World Council and shall be entitled to attend and speak at the meeting of the World Council dealing with the question.

#### **Article 23**

The same procedure shall apply to a member whose suspension is proposed. The suspension shall apply for the period until the next World Council where the decision will be taken whether to lift the sanction or, on the contrary, exclude the member.

### **METROPOLITAN SECTION AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS SECTION OF UCLG**

#### **Article 24**

UCLG-MEWA Regional Section shall work in close cooperation with the Metropolitan Section and Regional Governments Section of the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments.

### **WORLD ORGANISATION OF UNITED CITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND UCLG-MEWA**

#### **Article 25**

Regional sections of the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments are independent legal entities, functioning according to the Constitution of the World Organization, authorized to establish their own constitution and executive and governing bodies. Regional section autonomously sets its own policies and administers its own affairs, provided these are not contrary to the Constitution of the World Organization.

#### **Article 26**

Regional sections are part of the World Organization's general and operating structure. They do not preclude direct membership in the World Organization, but provide the World Organization with all kind of support within their agreed geographical area in pursuing its mission and objectives.

#### **Article 27**

Regional sections co-ordinate and facilitate membership in their geographical area. With their members, they provide support to the policies and activities decided by the governing bodies of the World Organization. They perform a policy, programming and administrative activity within the World Organization, and coordinate the electoral processes, within the framework of this Constitution.

#### **Article 28**

UCLG-MEWA is the continuation of the International Union of Local Authorities, Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East Regional Section (in short IULA-EMME), established in 1987 by the Decree of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Turkey.

#### **Article 29**

In order to ensure the institutionalization and recognition of the World Organization under its new name, the regional sections of IULA–International Union of Local Authorities will serve as regional sections of the World Organization.

#### **Article 30**

The World Organization is not liable for debts and liabilities of the regional sections, nor shall regional sections have liability for debts and liabilities of the World Organization.

#### **Article 31**

The World Organization and UCLG-MEWA shall coordinate, at world and regional level, the multilateral activities of its members for which it has received a mandate.

## **GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

### **Article 32**

The governance of UCLG-MEWA is executed by:

- a. the General Assembly;
- b. the Council;
- c. the Executive Bureau;
- d. the Presidency, composed of President and Co-presidents;
- e. the Treasurer;
- f. the Ombudsman;
- g. the Secretary General.

## **UCLG-MEWA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

### **Article 33      Function**

UCLG-MEWA General Assembly is the supreme organ of UCLG-MEWA. It has responsibility for the overall policy, direction and oversight of the organization. In particular, the General Assembly shall:

- a. give guidance on the general policy direction of the organization;
- b. receive the report of activities and financial report submitted by the UCLG-MEWA Council;
- c. elect members of the UCLG-MEWA Council from among the local government members, and appoint UCLG-MEWA members to be proposed for UCLG World Council and for UCLG World Executive Bureau;
- d. deal with all matters placed on its agenda by the UCLG-MEWA Council;
- e. adopt any revisions to the UCLG-MEWA Constitution;
- f. decide on the dissolution and the liquidation of UCLG-MEWA.

### **Article 34      Composition**

The UCLG-MEWA Assembly shall comprise all members of UCLG-MEWA, through their duly appointed representatives.

### **Article 35      Sessions**

The UCLG-MEWA General Assembly shall be convened in the same year as the UCLG World Congress. The UCLG-MEWA Council may convene extraordinary sessions for General Assembly when necessary.

The announcement of ordinary and extraordinary meetings must be sent to members at least one month in advance, indicating the agenda items and are published in UCLG-MEWA website.

The session will be chaired by the President of UCLG-MEWA President / one of the Co-Presidents, the Treasurer / the Ombudsman or his/her representative who will direct the discussions and give attendees a chance to speak. The Secretary General will act as the Secretary of the General Assembly, noting the resolutions passed in the meeting minutes.

### **Article 36      Participation and Voting**

Each member shall assign a delegate to represent it at the General Assembly and may also assign a substitute. The latter may only participate in the meeting if the named delegate is absent. The substitute should hold a political mandate.

All members are entitled to participate in the sessions and to express their opinions and proposals publicly. If there are numerous requests to participate, the Chairman may moderate their length. The Chairman may also grant participating members the right to respond.

Local Government members who are up to date in payments of their membership fees, up until the year preceding the meeting, shall have voting rights in the General Assembly.



Each local government member or his/her representative shall have one vote, the same shall also be valid for international organization members and associate members and .Honorary members shall not have voting rights in the General Assembly.

#### **Article 37**

Each voting member of the General Assembly shall have an equal vote.

#### **Article 38**

Except in special cases provided for in the Constitution, decisions of the General Assembly shall be taken by a simple majority of the votes cast.

### **UCLG-MEWA COUNCIL**

#### **Article 39      Function**

The UCLG-MEWA Council is the principal basic decision and policy-making body of UCLG-MEWA. It decides UCLG-MEWA's basic policies and ensures that general policies decided by the General Assembly are implemented.

#### **Article 40**

The UCLG-MEWA Council shall conduct its activities in accordance with this Constitution and the decisions of the General Assembly.

#### **Article 41**

The duties and authorities of the UCLG-MEWA Council shall be as follows:

- a. to elect the UCLG-MEWA President, the Co-Presidents, the Treasurer and the Ombudsman;
- b. to elect members of the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau from among its members;
- c. to approve the annual budget and accounts submitted by the Executive Bureau;
- d. to decide on applications, and make recommendations to the World Council for the suspensions and cancellations of membership;
- e. to decide on the level of membership fees;
- f. to appoint any committee to consider particular problems and issues concerning UCLG-MEWA, or to deal with any matters or issues it deems appropriate, and delegate tasks accordingly. UCLG-MEWA Council may delegate this function to the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau;
- g. to decide upon the general framework of the role and functions of the UCLG-MEWA Ombudsman.

#### **Article 42      Composition**

The UCLG-MEWA Council shall comprise the following members:

- a. the President, the Co-Presidents, the Treasurer and the Ombudsman;
- b. up to 45 local government members elected by the General Assembly, for the term between two ordinary sessions of the General Assembly;
- c. a political representative of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, which hosts the seat of UCLG-MEWA Secretariat General;
- d. the Secretary General (non voting and ex officio);
- e. designated representatives of international local government organizations and associate members.

The Mayors or Deputy Mayors and Presidents or Vice-Presidents of regional authorities (or those holding equivalent office) and the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of associations, representing members of UCLG-MEWA, may participate in the UCLG-MEWA Council (non-voting). The members of the UCLG-MEWA Council fulfill their function without remuneration.

### **Article 43**

Representatives in the UCLG-MEWA Council must hold an authorized managerial mandate from their local government.

### **Article 44     Substitutes**

Each member of the UCLG-MEWA Council may have one duly appointed standing substitute. As a member with voting right, the latter may only attend meetings in the absence of the full member. The substitute should hold a political mandate or be an executive.

### **Article 45     Sessions**

The UCLG-MEWA Council shall meet once a year; it may meet extraordinarily as convened by the President or at the request of at least one third of its members.

The announcement of ordinary and extraordinary meetings shall be sent to members of the UCLG-MEWA Council or shall be published in UCLG-MEWA website at least one month in advance, indicating the agenda items.

The session will be chaired by the UCLG-MEWA President / one of the Co-Presidents / the Treasurer/ the Ombudsman or his/her representative who will direct the discussions and give attendees a chance to speak. The Secretary General will act as the Secretary of the UCLG-MEWA Council, noting the resolutions passed in the meeting minutes.

All members of the UCLG-MEWA Council are entitled to participate in the sessions and to express their opinions and proposals publicly. If there are numerous requests to participate, the Chairman may moderate their length. The Chairman may also grant participating members the right to respond.

### **Article 46     Voting**

Each member of the UCLG-MEWA Council has one vote.

### **Article 47**

Except in special cases provided for in the Constitution, decisions of the UCLG-MEWA Council shall be carried by a simple majority of the votes cast. In case of equal voting, the President of the session shall have a casting vote.

## **UCLG-MEWA EXECUTIVE BUREAU**

### **Article 48     Function**

The UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau is responsible for initiating proposals and carrying out the decisions of the UCLG-MEWA Council and for any other matter delegated to it by the UCLG-MEWA Council. It is in charge of UCLG-MEWA's administrative and financial management. It prepares the meetings of the UCLG-MEWA Council and of the UCLG-MEWA General Assembly.

### **Article 49**

The UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau shall in particular:

- a. approve and submit the annual budget, accounts and reports to the UCLG-MEWA Council;
- b. appoint the Financial Management Committee;
- c. assign Secretary General to appoint the independent external auditors for the organization;
- d. be empowered to enter into agreements for the acquisition, alienation and encumbering of property, the creation or transfer of interests in which require public registration and to enter into agreements whereby UCLG-MEWA acts as surety or undertakes to be severally liable as co-debtor, agrees to answer for another party or provides security for any debt of another party;
- e. make recommendations on approval, suspension or exclusion of membership to UCLG-MEWA Council and World Executive Bureau;

- f. make recommendations to the UCLG-MEWA Council for deciding on membership fees;
- g. appoint the Secretary General.

#### **Article 50**

The UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau shall be entitled to make policy decisions between meetings of the UCLG-MEWA Council within existing policy guidelines on matters that cannot reasonably await the next meeting of the UCLG-MEWA Council.

#### **Article 51**

The UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau shall exercise all other powers that are not reserved to the UCLG-MEWA General Assembly and the UCLG-MEWA Council. The President or the Secretary General, under the terms set out herein, shall act as the legal representatives of UCLG-MEWA.

#### **Article 52      Composition**

The UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau shall comprise the following membership:

- a. the President, the Co-Presidents, the Treasurer and the Ombudsman;
- b. up to 30 members elected by the UCLG-MEWA Council from among its members, for the term between two ordinary sessions of the General Assembly;
- c. a political representative of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, which hosts the seat of UCLG-MEWA Secretariat General;
- d. the Secretary General (non voting and ex officio);
- e. designated representatives of international/regional organization members (non-voting).

The Mayors or Deputy Mayors and Presidents or Vice-Presidents of regional authorities (or those holding equivalent office) and the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of associations, representing members of UCLG-MEWA, may participate in UCLG-MEWA Council (non-voting).

The Executive Bureau may co-opt up to 3 non-voting members for different purposes, which may include the representative of the host of the next congress of UCLG-MEWA.

The members of the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau fulfill their function without remuneration.

#### **Article 53**

Representatives in the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau must hold an authorized managerial mandate from their local government.

#### **Article 54      Substitutes**

Each member of the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau may have one duly appointed standing substitute. As a member with voting right, the latter may only attend meetings in the absence of the full member. The substitute should hold a political mandate or be an executive.

#### **Article 55      Sessions**

The UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau shall meet once a year; it may meet extraordinarily as convened by the President or at the request of at least one third of its members.

The announcement of ordinary and extraordinary meetings shall be sent to members of the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau or shall be published in the UCLG-MEWA website at least one month in advance, indicating the agenda items.

The session will be chaired by the UCLG-MEWA President / one of the Co-Presidents, the Treasurer/ the Ombudsman or his/her representative who will direct the discussions and give attendees a chance to speak. The Secretary General will act as the Secretary of the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau, noting the resolutions passed in the meeting minutes.

All members of the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau are entitled to participate in the sessions and to express their opinions and proposals publicly. If there are numerous requests to participate, the Chairman may moderate their length. The Chairman may also grant participating members the right to respond.

#### **Article 56     Voting**

Each voting member of the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau has one vote.

#### **Article 57**

Except in special cases provided for in the Constitution, decisions of the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau shall be taken by a simple majority of the votes cast. In case of equal voting, the President of the session shall have a casting vote.

### **THE PRESIDENCY**

#### **Article 58**

The Presidency, comprising the President and up to 5 Co-Presidents, the Treasurer and the Ombudsman is elected by the UCLG-MEWA Council for a renewable term between two ordinary sessions of the UCLG-MEWA General Assembly. The members of the Presidency may be re-elected. The Treasurer and the Ombudsman shall participate in the work and deliberations of the Presidency.

The Founding President and the Immediate Past President are the non-voting members of the Presidency by nature.

UCLG-MEWA Presidency functions in parallel to the system of the Presidency of the World Organization.

The members of the Presidency fulfill their function without remuneration.

#### **Article 59**

Candidacies for the President and Co-Presidents may be presented by:

- a. the Executive Bureau; or
- b. at least 6 Local Government members from different cities and/or national/regional associations of local authorities.

#### **Article 60     President**

The President is the principal representative of UCLG-MEWA and chairs the meetings of the UCLG-MEWA General Assembly, UCLG-MEWA Council and UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau. She/He shall ensure the continuity of the policies of the organization between meetings of the Executive Bureau.

#### **Article 61     Co-Presidents**

The Co-Presidents assist the President in carrying out her/his responsibilities and when necessary assume the role of President.

In order to maintain a regional representational balance, members of the Presidency shall not be allowed to have more than three Co-Presidents from the same country.

#### **Article 62     Founding President and Immediate Past President**

Founding President and Immediate Past President shall be considered among the honorary members of the UCLG-MEWA Presidency by nature. They shall be invited to the meetings but have no right to vote.

### **Article 63**

Members of the Presidency shall hold a local electoral mandate from a local government. They must also be at the head of:

- a. a local government or
- b. a national / regional association of local governments.

In the case offices described under a) or b) are lost; their function within the Presidency will automatically be deemed to have terminated. In this case, the person elected to the same post in the concerned local authority shall become the new member of the Presidency, and continue until the completion of the term between two ordinary sessions of the General Assembly.

### **Article 64**

Members of the Presidency have the right to resign

## **FINANCIAL ISSUES**

### **Article 65**

UCLG-MEWA shall derive its finances from membership fees (individual and Program), income from activities, grants and other legal sources.

### **Article 66**

The operational and financial year will coincide with the calendar year and will be closed on 31 December each year. The accounts should be closed on 31 December each year.

### **Article 67     The Treasurer**

The Treasurer is responsible for the oversight of the financial strategy, accounting and management of UCLG-MEWA's finances. Every year, she/he shall present to the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau:

- a. the accounts of the previous financial year, certified by an independent external auditor appointed by the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau which shall be submitted to the UCLG-MEWA Council for final approval;
- b. the budget for the next financial year;
- c. other significant financial reports.

The Treasurer fulfils his/her functions without remuneration.

### **Article 68     The Financial Management Committee**

The Financial Management Committee shall be appointed by the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau. Chaired by the Treasurer, the Committee is composed of 5 representatives. It meets with a minimum of 3 members.

The members of the Financial Management Committee fulfill their function without remuneration.

The Financial Management Committee's role is to advise the Treasurer and the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau on financial matters. The Committee shall be consulted on the preparation and execution of the budget, and may propose a mechanism for internal audit to the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau including the appointment of a maximum of 3 Honorary Auditors.

### **Article 69**

Individuals or local governments who believe to be affected negatively by the decisions and implementations of the UCLG-MEWA governing bodies shall apply and ask for a solution from UCLG-MEWA Ombudsman.

UCLG-MEWA Ombudsman is elected by the UCLG-MEWA Council for the same term as of the governing bodies.

The duties and responsibilities of the UCLG-MEWA Ombudsman consist of the following:

- a. To mediate between persons and local authorities affected by the work and operations of the UCLG-MEWA governance organs;
- b. To evaluate the requests about the accordance of the Regional Section's duties in terms of its objectives delineated in its Constitution and make recommendations accordingly;
- c. To provide information at the Executive Bureau meetings and to submit periodic reports in the meetings of the Council and the General Assembly;
- d. To take action, together with the Secretariat General, in order to establish a country level Local Government Ombudsman in the countries in the MEWA region;
- e. To take action, together with the Secretariat General, in order to establish a Local Government Ombudsman in each city in the countries in the MEWA region;
- f. To take action, together with the Secretariat General, in order to raise awareness about Local Government Ombudsman in the countries in the MEWA region;
- g. To mediate on the problems which may arise in evaluating the membership requests for UCLG-MEWA;
- h. To mediate on the problems between UCLG-MEWA and its cooperation partners;
- i. To mediate on the problems between UCLG-MEWA and its sub-regional offices and UCLG World Secretariat;
- j. To take action, together with the Secretariat General, in order to establish the institution of Ombudsman within the UCLG World Organization and the Regional Sections;
- k. To promote the creation of a sense of solidarity, the implementation of the principles of good governance, the unity and cooperation among the UCLG-MEWA members;
- l. To make effort about establishing strong and effective democratic local government in the MEWA region;
- m. To promote decentralize international co-operation among Local governments and their associations.

## **THE SECRETARY GENERAL**

### **Article 70**

The Secretary General is the basic executive body of UCLG-MEWA. She/he directs the daily activities of UCLG-MEWA and carries out the decisions of the UCLG-MEWA General Assembly, the UCLG-MEWA Council and the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau. The Secretary General manages the Regional Section under the guidance of the Presidency and the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau.

### **Article 71**

The Secretary General is elected and discharged by the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau.

### **Article 72**

The Secretary General is fully authorized for and in charge of the employment of the Secretariat General's personnel.

### **Article 73**

In his/her daily activities, the Secretary General has a general authorization to represent UCLG-MEWA on behalf of the UCLG-MEWA Presidency and UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau.

### **Article 74**

The Secretary General, as the legal representative of UCLG-MEWA, is authorized to work with banks and other credit institutions, to order payments and execute all kinds of contracts as allowed under civil, mercantile and administrative law.

The Secretary General may also represent UCLG-MEWA before public administrations and courts, and have power to appoint legal counsel and court attorneys.

## **CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS**

### **Article 75**

The electoral procedure rules, valid for the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments are also applicable for UCLG-MEWA.

### **Article 76**

The amendments to the electoral procedure rules shall be compatible with the rules of the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments.

## **LIABILITY**

### **Article 77**

UCLG-MEWA is liable as a legal entity only to the extent of its assets; members are not individually liable for such corporate debts and liabilities.

## **GENERAL RULES OF PROCEDURE**

### **Article 78**

The UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau approves the Secretariat General Rules of Procedure, which shall deal with details concerning the internal operation and regulation of UCLG-MEWA. General Rules of Procedure shall be ratified by the UCLG-MEWA Council.

### **Article 79**

Any point which is not dealt with in this Constitution shall be ruled by the law of the Republic of Turkey.

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION, MERGER, DISSOLUTION AND LIQUIDATION**

### **Article 80**

Any proposal for a revision of the Constitution or the merger, dissolution or liquidation of UCLG-MEWA shall emanate from the UCLG-MEWA Executive Bureau or at least six local government members.

### **Article 81**

On the amendment of the Constitution, the members of UCLG-MEWA shall be notified in writing or through the web site of the proposals at least two months before the meeting of the UCLG-MEWA General Assembly at which they shall be considered.

### **Article 82**

No decision on amendments to the Constitution or merger, dissolution or liquidation of UCLG-MEWA shall be adopted in the UCLG-MEWA General Assembly unless it is approved by a two-thirds majority of the valid votes cast.

### **Article 83**

If less than two-thirds of the local government members were represented at the first meeting, the UCLG-MEWA General Assembly shall at the subsequent meeting be entitled to make a binding decision irrespective of the number of the local government members represented.

### **Article 84**

In the event of dissolution, the UCLG-MEWA General Assembly shall make the necessary and adequate arrangements to determine the destination of the goods and rights of UCLG-MEWA. The UCLG-MEWA General Assembly will also make arrangements related to the ending, winding down and liquidation of any pending activity of UCLG-MEWA.

The net residues resulting from the liquidation will be given directly to a non-profit public or private entity in the same territory, and active in a similar field, to UCLG-MEWA, or dedicated to charity.

UCLG-MEWA will be dissolved by decision of its members explicitly expressed in a special session of the UCLG-MEWA General Assembly called to this effect. At least two thirds of the local government members need to be in agreement, as established in article 82 of this Constitution and according to the causes contained in pertinent articles.

## **OFFICIAL LANGUAGES**

### **Article 85**

The official language of UCLG-MEWA shall be English. In time, the UCLG-MEWA Council or UCLG-MEWA Secretary General, taking into account the development of membership and resources available, may make subsequent decisions on using Turkish and Arabic languages which are commonly used in the region, in addition to French and Spanish which are the other 2 official languages of the World Organization.

## **FINAL PROVISIONS**

### **Article 86**

This Constitution is based upon, and shall be interpreted with reference to the Constitution of the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments, approved in Paris, France on 5 May 2004, and amended by the Extraordinary General Assembly, 26 April 2010, Chicago, USA.

With regard to all matters not mentioned in this Constitution, reference shall be made to the Constitution of the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments.

### **Article 87**

UCLG-MEWA Presidency, Executive Bureau, Council, General Assembly members and those perform a duty in governing bodies of World Organization fulfill their function without remuneration.

### **Article 88     Date of Effectiveness**

The amendments made in this Constitution with 88 articles according to relevant conditions shall be effective upon the approval by UCLG-MEWA General Assembly.