

## **SOCIETY FOR THREATENED PEOPLES SWITZERLAND – STATUTES**

Adopted at the founding Members' Assembly on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May 1989 in Bern and last revised at the annual Members' Assembly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 2014 in Ostermundigen.

### **1. Name and domicile**

Under the name of:

**Gesellschaft für bedrohte Völker Schweiz  
Société pour les peuples menacés Suisse  
Società per i popoli minacciati Svizzera  
Societad per ils pievels periclitads Svizra  
Society for Threatened Peoples Switzerland**

And with its domicile in Ostermundigen, there exists a charitable Society in accordance with Article 60 et seq. of the Swiss Civil Code.

### **2. Purpose**

The Society for Threatened Peoples Switzerland campaigns for the preservation and advancement of the cultural, social, economic, linguistic, political and religious diversity of human ways of life.

It acts against any attempt to destroy or impede the life, ecological livelihood, security, self-determination, full development opportunities or autonomy of any peoples or ethnic minorities.

The society supports such threatened peoples with the aim of achieving their legal, political, social and cultural acceptance, equality and security.

### **3. Activities**

The Society for Threatened Peoples Switzerland fulfils its purpose through the following activities in particular:

- a) Supporting self-help endeavours and related projects in Switzerland and abroad
- b) Raising public awareness in Switzerland
- c) Establishing contact between representatives and organisations of ethnic minorities and threatened peoples, organisations and inhabitants of Switzerland
- d) Facilitating collaboration and coordination of activities between organisations and institutions in Switzerland that work with the same purpose
- e) Providing documentation on the theme of ethnic minorities and threatened peoples

- f) Participating in the shaping of public opinion and decision-making
- g) Collaborating with private and public institutions in Switzerland and abroad, as well as with international organisations, particularly with other countries' Societies for Threatened Peoples

#### **4. Membership**

Every natural or juridical person supporting the aims of the Society for Threatened Peoples Switzerland can become a member of the Society.

The members are bound to pay an annual membership fee, which is set at the Members' Assembly.

Membership is possible at any time and begins with payment of the membership fee. Withdrawal is possible at the end of each Society year and takes place via prior written notice to the Board of Directors or the Branch office.

Membership expires if the membership fee is not paid despite repeated written demands.

A member who counteracts the aims of the Society or damages the reputation of the Society through his/her behaviour can be excluded, under consideration of his/her right of hearing, by decision of the Board of Directors. It is possible to take recourse against exclusion at the Members' Assembly.

#### **5. Funds**

The Society for Threatened Peoples Switzerland finances its activities through:

- Membership fees
- Donations
- Contributions from institutions and companies
- Contributions from public authorities
- Other sources

#### **6. Organs**

The Society's organs are:

- The Members' Assembly
- The Board of Directors
- The Auditing Commission

The Board of Directors can also decide to appoint the following organs:

- A Branch office
- An Executive Board
- An Advisory Committee
- Regional groups

## **7. Members' Assembly**

The Members' Assembly is the highest organ of the Society for Threatened Peoples Switzerland. It convenes at least once per year. It can also be convened by the Board of Directors or at the request of a fifth of the members.

The date of the Members' Assembly must be announced to the members at least four weeks in advance. The invitations stating the items for the agenda must be issued at least two weeks in advance.

The Members' Assembly has the following duties and competencies:

- a) Election of the members of the Board of Directors for a period of office of two years in each instance
- b) Election of the Auditing Commission for a period of office of one year in each instance
- c) Acceptance of the annual report and approval of the annual accounts
- d) Changes to the statutes
- e) Decision-making regarding the allocation of the Society's funds in the case of its dissolution in accordance with Article 17
- f) Decision-making regarding all commercial operations referred to it by the Board of Directors
- g) Motions from members
- h) Election of a president for a period of office of two years

All members have a vote at the Members' Assembly. The Members' Assembly decides by simple majority, whereby the Chairperson has the casting vote in the event of a tie, with the exception of Articles 16 and 17.

## **8. Board of Directors**

The Society's Board of Directors is composed of at least five and at most nine members, who comprise the Board of Directors in keeping with Article 69 of the Swiss Civil Code.

The Branch office can also invite especially interested members and other interested parties to attend the meetings of the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors is the managerial organ of the Society for Threatened Peoples Switzerland and is accountable to the Members' Assembly. The Board of Directors constitutes itself. It has every competence that is not explicitly reserved for another organ, including in particular:

- a) General business management, insofar that this is not transferred to a Branch office
- b) Establishing the basic directions of the activities of the Society for Threatened Peoples Switzerland within the framework of the purpose of the Society
- c) Decision-making about the creation of an Advisory Committee and the election of its members, as well as decision-making about the creation of a Branch office and election of its managerial staff
- d) Approval of the annual budget
- e) Decision-making about projects and activities in Switzerland and abroad
- f) Acceptance of the annual report and the annual accounts for the attention of the Members' Assembly
- g) Preparation of the Members' Assembly
- h) Decision-making about the membership of the Society for Threatened Peoples Switzerland in other organisations
- i) Transfer of individual fields of work or activities to members of the coordination group, regional groups, other Society members, groups of members, or third parties
- j) Awarding honorary memberships and honorary presidencies

At least three members of the Board of Directors have to be present in order that the Board of Directors has a quorum. The Board of Directors decides by simple majority, whereby the Chairperson has the casting vote in the event of a tie. It meets at least twice per year by invitation of its Chairperson.

## **9. Auditing Commission**

The Members' Assembly elects an Auditing Commission that fulfils the prerequisites for conducting a limited audit. The Auditing Commission can be re-elected.

The Auditing Commission conducts a limited audit. The Members' Assembly, the Board of Directors or the Branch office can give the Auditing Commission additional auditing tasks.

## **10. Branch office**

The Branch office, potentially constituted by the Board of Directors, acts as the executive organ of the Society for Threatened Peoples Switzerland. It carries out all activities necessary for the Society's everyday operations and has regular contact with the Board of Directors and the members of the Society.

The Branch office comprises at least one elected employee who is not a member of the Society's Board of Directors.

The Branch office constitutes itself. The employees of the Branch office are paid for their work if possible.

### **11. Executive Board**

The Board of Directors can appoint an Executive Board (EB) and mandate it with specific tasks. The EB regularly reports to the Board of Directors about its work. The EB consists of persons who are elected by the Board of Directors, as well as one person from the Branch office who can work on the EB in an advisory capacity. The EB constitutes itself. The EB decides by simple majority, whereby the Chairperson has the casting vote in the event of a tie. It meets at least six times per year by invitation of its Chairperson.

### **12. Advisory Committee**

The Board of Directors can decide to appoint an Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee provides professional and media support for the Society for Threatened Peoples Switzerland. It is composed of persons who have engaged in one way or another for the Society's purpose and are willing to support the Society with their name and their expert knowledge, internally and in public.

### **13. Regional groups**

The Board of Directors can agree upon the foundation of regional groups for the Society for Threatened Peoples Switzerland.

### **14. Non-profit status**

The Society for Threatened Peoples Switzerland is a non-profit association. The Society is not allowed to use funds for activities other than those that serve the Society's purpose. Neither is it allowed to benefit persons through administrative tasks that are alien to the purpose of the Society or through disproportionately high remuneration.

## 15. Liability

The Society's liabilities are exclusively limited to the Society's assets. Members' liability cannot exceed the membership fee.

## 16. Changes to the statutes

The Members' Assembly can change these statutes, with the exception of Article 17 Paragraph 2, if two thirds of the members in attendance agree. Any change to the statutes must be announced in conjunction with the invitation to the Members' Assembly.

## 17. Dissolution

The Society can be dissolved by the Members' Assembly in the case of a two-thirds majority of the members in attendance and prior announcement in the invitation. In the case of dissolution, profit and capital shall be donated to another non-profit or public-purpose (and thus tax-exempt) juridical person with domicile in Switzerland, pursuing similar goals to the Society for Threatened Peoples Switzerland. This provision is compulsory and cannot be changed by the Members' Assembly.

Ostermundigen, 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 2014

Ruth-Gaby Vermot-Mangold  
President

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