

Statutes

International Humanitarian Studies Association

Designation

The name of the association shall be International Humanitarian Studies Association, hereafter referred to as IHSA. The IHSA is a non-profit, non-governmental association established in accordance with Dutch law. IHSA is registered with the Dutch Chamber of Commerce on (date) and bears the registration number (number). The Secretariat / Headquarters of the IHSA will be based in the Hague at the International Institute of Social Studies.

Article 1: Purposes

The International Humanitarian Studies Association (IHSA) is a non-profit, non-governmental association for academic purposes. Its function is to support and sustain a system of scholars, students, policy makers and professional practitioners in the field of humanitarian studies regardless of their ideological opinion, school of thought, scientific discipline or origins.

Article 2: Aims and objectives

2.1 The goal of IHSA is to strengthen and advance global networks of universities, specialised research centres, inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations and individuals engaged in the analysis of and the day-to-day implementation of humanitarian thoughts and actions. The areas of interest to IHSA are:

- causes, dynamics and effects of humanitarian crises and famine;
- experience of crisis-affected communities, refugees and internally displaced people;
- the politics and discourse of humanitarian crises and response;
- political, military and humanitarian interventions;
- legal issues pertaining to humanitarian affairs, including protection, access, international humanitarian law and human rights;
- humanitarian aid policies, practices and organisations (local, national and international);
- humanitarian architecture and governance;
- the role of Academia and its interaction with policy planners and practitioners;
- disaster preparedness, prevention, risk reduction, and early warning;
- the linkages between humanitarian assistance and rehabilitation, resilience, development, peacebuilding and security, particularly in protracted crises; and
- aid worker security, remote management and the digitisation of aid.

Areas of interest will change over time as humanitarian crises and policy contexts change. IHSA aspires to provide a forum for discussion and information exchange between

associations, organisations and institutions with similar interests. It will build on, and strengthen, the link between scholars and practitioners which has been an important feature of humanitarian studies.

2.2 To achieve these ends, IHSA shall:

- Provide a platform for researchers and practitioners for debate, dialogue and exchange;
- Promote the advancement of knowledge on humanitarian crises and response;
- Lead debate on the nature and role of humanitarian studies;
- Facilitate the dissemination of research findings and evidence on humanitarian crises;
- Encourage exchange and cooperation between universities, specialised research centres, intergovernmental organisations and non-governmental organisations.

IHSA aspires to cooperate with networks, associations, organisations and institutions with a similar orientation.

2.3 To reach these aims and objectives IHSA will undertake the following activities:

- Organize the World Conference on Humanitarian Studies every two years.
- Study groups and workshops on key topics or themes identified at the conference. Members can initiate study groups which meet in the years between conferences. The study group can submit a proposal for funding for these meetings to the IHSA board. A subcommittee of the board will assess the proposals.
- An updated and well-maintained website. The website will include information on: ongoing and new research initiatives; reports and articles; information about training courses, training materials; and jobs. The website will offer a place for exchange of information about courses on humanitarian studies and offer portals and links to these courses. It will also have a searchable list of members so that members with similar interests can link up. A key objective of the website will be the exchange of information.
- An active Facebook group, for direct communication between academics, practitioners and others interested in humanitarian issues. Members can also post information about their research activities, operational programmes, challenges faced, reports, publications and events and ask questions from fellow members.
- Continuation of the Humanitarian Studies book series. Ideally, publication subsidies will be found to ensure the books are affordable for all members.
- Advocate for the funding of humanitarian studies, including reaching out to donors, trusts and foundations agencies with information on where and on what topics humanitarian research is needed.
- Seek grants for conference participation (in particular for members from the south and for students who have to travel far to participate).
- Seek affiliations with Journals on Humanitarian Studies, preferably those who allow open access. IHSA will actively promote open access and encourage publication by its members.
- Promote the ethics and security of research in humanitarian crises

Article 3: Membership

Affiliation

3.1 The IHSA has membership. Membership is open to scholars or professionals active in policy, teaching, research and/or the practice of humanitarian action and its related domains as described above. All those who participate regularly in activities of the IHSA are expected to be members. There will be the option to become a individual member or a institutional member.

Individual membership:

Anyone with an interest in humanitarian studies, or who subscribes to the objectives and interests of IHSA, can become a member. Individual members can therefore include academics, researchers, policy makers, practitioners, and human rights workers. They can also represent a range of disciplines, for example: politics, sociology, anthropology, law, health and nutrition, as well as humanitarian and development studies. Efforts will be made by the board to ensure good geographical representation amongst the membership.

Institutional membership:

Institutional members will similarly be those who conform to the objectives and interests of the IHSA. Institutions can include universities, think-tanks, international and local NGOs and UN and other international or regional organisations. Although private sector institutions are increasingly involved in humanitarian assistance programmes, IHSA will consider carefully whether profit-making objectives and responsibilities towards shareholders are compatible with humanitarian concerns. Government members are not recommended as they would compromise the independence of IHSA and some NGOs may be unwilling to join.

3.2 All membership applicants register on the IHSA website by filling out the registration form. After payment is made the individual or organisation becomes a member.

3.3 An annual membership fee shall be charged. The General Assembly will determine the level of membership fees.

3.4 Honorary members shall be individuals appointed by the President on the advice of the Executive Committee. Honorary Members shall be selected on the grounds of outstanding contributions to humanitarian scholarship and action, with due regard to a balance of regional and disciplinary representation.

Rights and obligations

3.5 All members shall respect the principles upon which the IHSA is founded, and contribute to its purposes.

3.6 All members are part of the General Assembly and are entitled to take part in the activities of the IHSA. They have the right to participate, directly or indirectly, in the decision making of IHSA. These rights include:

- the right to vote in the election of officers
- the right to be elected as an officer/committee member
- the right to make proposals and/or suggestions regarding IHSA's policies and programmes
- the right to comment on the work of the officers

3.7 To remain members in good standing, members must have paid their membership dues. The membership fees will be set by the Executive Committee and can be augmented, after approval by the General Assembly, with a notice of at least 6 months. The Executive Committee will also decide on membership benefits

Termination of membership

3.8 Membership can be terminated

- by letter/email of registration addressed to the Secretary General
- by decision of the Executive Committee taken with a two-thirds majority
- by cessation of payment of the subscription during 2 years

Article 4: Governance

4.1 IHSA shall consist of the following governing bodies:

- a. The General Assembly is the highest political body, consisting of all members of the IHSA. It will meet bi-annually and decides upon the policy direction of the IHSA, rules and regulations concerning membership and activities, financial justification of annual expenditure and budget planning, and the composition of the executive bodies.
- b. The Board of Governors will consist of approximately 15 IHSA members elected by the GA. Its task is to have quarterly meetings (possibly via skype) to prepare policy for the GA's approval, to implement policies agreed upon, to conduct financial management and a funding strategy, and to oversee projects the IHSA engages in.
- c. The Executive Committee will consist of the President of the IHSA, the Secretary General, and a financial officer. Its tasks shall include: daily management of the IHSA, preparing and proposing policies to the Board of Governors and carrying out the policies established by the GA; proposing the (amended) membership dues to the Board of Governors and the General Assembly; acting on matters of urgency, and reporting on activities periodically to the Board of Governors and the GA
- d. The Secretary General will be supported by a small IHSA Secretariat. The Secretariat will administer the functioning of the IHSA.

4.2. The Board of Governors and the Executive Committee shall be elected by the General Assembly for a term of 4 years. Attention will be paid to geographical and organisational characteristics of the candidates. The officers can be re-elected for follow-up terms. Members of the Board of Governors and the Executive Committee can be nominated prior to each bi-annual World Conference of Humanitarian Studies which occasion will include a GA.

4.3 Ad hoc sub-committees may be created at the discretion of the Board of Governors upon recommendation of the Executive Committee, to make recommendations and take action on particular matters. The Programme Committee on the World Conferences of Humanitarian Studies is an example in case.

4.4 The Executive Committee shall meet at least 6 time per year (or alternatively have a skype meeting). It shall take its decisions by a majority vote of those present and voting, the chairperson having the casting vote in case of a tie. When unable to attend meetings, Executive Committee members should give their comments through email.

4.5 Members of the Executive Committee and the Board of Governors can resign by submitting a letter to the Secretary General which will be transmitted to the GA.

Article 5: The president

5.1 The IHSA President shall represent the IHSA both internally and externally, and shall have general responsibility for the implementation of the IHSA's policy. S/he shall chair the meetings of the Board of Governors and the EC.

5.2 The IHSA President shall hold office for a 4-year term. The president can be re-elected for a second term.

5.3 In case of a vacancy for the post of President, the Board of Governors upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee shall appoint an Interim President until the end of the uncompleted term, should it consider it necessary to fill the office.

Article 6: Secretariat and headquarters

6.1 The Secretary-General of the IHSA is appointed for a 4-year term; the term is renewable without limit. S/he shall be in charge of the administrative affairs of the IHSA and shall make periodic reports on organisation, membership, finances, programmes, activities and accomplishments.

6.2 The Secretary-General shall draw up a budget each calendar year for approval by the GA through the Board of Governors, and shall provide for approval of the GA through the Board of Governors an annual financial report.

6.3 The Secretary-General can draw upon a small Secretariat for administrative support and management of the IHSA.info website.

Article 7: Programme Committee World Conference of Humanitarian Studies

7.1 The series of World Conferences of Humanitarian Studies is a core product of the IHSA, established as of 2009 and conducted in a bi-annual set-up.

7.2 The location of each conference shall be chosen at least 2 years before it is due to be held. Proposals shall be invited from all members at least 2,5 years before it is due. The choice shall give due attention to the need for diversity of locations and unlimited admission to the country of all participants, regardless of nationality, is essential.

7.3 The programme committee is responsible for the development and supervision of the content/focus/planning of the world conference. Its composition shall give due regard to diversity of national/regional representation, gender, and different fields within humanitarian studies. All its members must already be IHSA members in good standing, as well as of high professional reputation. The programme committee will be formed 2 years prior to the conference.

7.4 The organization of the conference will be in the hands of a Local Organizing Committee, to be appointed by the country invited to organise the conference, drawing upon local capabilities and facilities.

Article 8: Amendments to statutes

8.1 Proposals for amendments to the statutes may be made by any member of the IHSA and ought to be send to the Secretary-General.

8.2 The Secretary-General shall inform the Board of Governors and the Executive Committee of the proposals received, and shall subsequently circulate them among all members of the General Assembly, together with a brief explanation of their rationale. The amendments shall be adopted if approved by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at the General Assembly.

Article 9: Dissolution of the Association

9.1 Dissolution of the IHSA shall be decided by the General Assembly. An extraordinary session of the GA can be called for.

9.2 The proposal for a dissolution shall be submitted to the meeting of the General Assembly. The dissolution shall be declared when two thirds of the members has participated in the meeting or postal vote, and that at least two-thirds of those participating have approved it.

9.3 In the event of dissolution, the net assets of the IHSA shall be transferred to an international organisation or institution whose objectives are similar to those of the IHSA, or shall be assigned to other uses considered consistent with the IHSA aims and objectives. The use of the assets shall be decided by the Board of Governors and the Executive Committee and the President is mandated to execute its decision.