

## CHARTER OF THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES

*22 March 1945*

### ARTICLE I

The League of Arab States is composed of the independent Arab states which have signed this Charter.

Any independent Arab state has the right to become a member of the League. If it desires to do so, it shall submit a request which will be deposited with the Permanent Secretariat General and submitted to the Council at the first meeting held after submission of the request.

### ARTICLE II

The League has as its purpose the strengthening of the relations between the member-states, the coordination of their policies in order to achieve co-operation between them and to safeguard their independence and sovereignty; and a general concern with the affairs and interests of the Arab countries. It has also as its purpose the close co-operation of the member-states, with due regard to the Organisation and circumstances of each state, on the following matters:

- A. Economic and financial affairs, including commercial relations, customs, currency and questions of agriculture and industry.
- B. Communications; this includes railroads, roads, aviation, navigation, telegraphs and posts.
- C. Cultural affairs.
- D. Nationality, passports, visas, execution of judgments and extradition of criminals.
- E. Social affairs.
- F. Health affairs.

### ARTICLE III

The League shall possess a Council composed of the representatives of the member-states of the League; each state shall have a single vote, irrespective of the number of its representatives.

It shall be the task of the Council to achieve the realisation of the objectives of the League and to supervise the execution of agreements which the member-states have concluded on the questions enumerated in the preceding Article, or on any other questions.

It likewise shall be the Council task to decide upon the means by which the League is to co-operate with the international bodies to be created in the future in order to guarantee security and peace and regulate economic and social relations.

### ARTICLE IV

For each of the questions listed in Article II there shall be set up a special committee in which the member-states of the League shall be represented. These committees shall be charged with the task of laying down the principles and extent of co-operation. Such principles shall be formulated as

draft agreements to be presented to the Council for examination preparatory to their submission to the aforesaid states.

Representatives of the other Arab countries may take part in the work of the aforesaid committees. The Council shall determine the conditions under which these representatives may be permitted to participate and the rules governing such representation.

#### **ARTICLE V**

Any resort to force in order to resolve disputes between two or more member-states of the League is prohibited. If there should arise among them a difference which does not concern a state's independence, sovereignty, or territorial integrity, and if the parties to the dispute have recourse to the Council for the settlement of this difference, the decision of the Council shall then be enforceable and obligatory.

In such case, the states between whom the difference has arisen shall not participate in the deliberations and decisions of the Council.

The Council shall mediate in all differences which threaten to lead to war between two member-states, or a member-state and a third state, with a view to bringing about their reconciliation. Decisions of arbitration and mediation shall be taken by majority vote.

#### **ARTICLE VI**

In case of aggression or threat of aggression by one state against a member-state, the state which has been attacked or threatened with aggression may demand the immediate convocation of the Council.

The Council shall by unanimous decision determine the measures necessary to repulse the aggression. If the aggressor is a member-state, his vote shall not be counted in determining unanimity.

If, as a result of the attack, the government of the state attacked finds itself unable to communicate with the Council, the state's representative in the Council shall request the convocation of the Council for the purpose indicated in the foregoing paragraph. In the event that this representative is unable to communicate with the Council, any member-state of the League shall have the right to request the convocation of the Council.

#### **ARTICLE VII**

Unanimous decisions of the Council shall be binding upon all member-states of the League; majority decisions shall be binding only upon those states which have accepted them. In either case the decisions of the Council shall be enforced in each member-state according to its respective laws.

#### **ARTICLE VIII**

Each member-state shall respect the systems of government established in the other member-states and regard them as exclusive concerns of those states. Each shall pledge to abstain from any action calculated to change established systems of government.

#### **ARTICLE IX**

States of the League which desire to establish closer co-operation and stronger bonds than are provided for by this Charter may conclude agreements to that end.

Treaties and agreements already concluded or to be concluded in the future between a member-state and another state shall not be binding or restrictive upon other members.

#### **ARTICLE X**

The permanent seat of the League of Arab States is established in Cairo. The Council may, however, assemble at any other place it may designate.

#### **ARTICLE XI**

The Council of the League shall convene in ordinary session twice a year, in March and in September. It shall convene in extraordinary session upon the request of two member-states of the League whenever the need arises.

#### **ARTICLE XII**

The League shall have a permanent Secretariat-General which shall consist of a Secretary-General, Assistant Secretaries and an appropriate number of officials.

The Council of the League shall appoint the Secretary-General by a majority of two thirds of the states of the League. The Secretary-General, with the approval of the Council, shall appoint the Assistant Secretaries and the principal officials of the League.

The Council of the League shall establish an administrative regulation for the functions of the Secretariat-General and matters relating to the staff.

The Secretary-General shall have the rank of Ambassador and the Assistant Secretaries that of Ministers Plenipotentiary.

The first Secretary-General of the League is named in an annex to this Charter.

#### **ARTICLE XIII**

The Secretary-General shall prepare the draft of the budget of the League and shall submit it to the Council for approval before the beginning of each fiscal year.

The Council shall fix the share of the expenses to be borne by each state of the League. This may be reconsidered if necessary.

#### **ARTICLE XIV**

The members of the Council of the League as well as the members of the committees and the officials who are to be designated in the administrative regulation shall enjoy diplomatic privileges and immunity when engaged in the exercise of their functions.

The buildings occupied by the organs of the League shall be inviolable.

#### **ARTICLE XV**

The first meeting of the Council shall be convened at the invitation of the head of the Egyptian Government. Thereafter it shall be convened at the invitation of the Secretary-General.

The representatives of the member-states of the League shall alternately assume the presidency of the Council at each of its ordinary sessions.

#### **ARTICLE XVI**

Except in cases specifically indicated in this Charter, a majority vote of the Council shall be sufficient to make enforceable decisions on the following matters:

- A. Matters relating to personnel.
- B. Adoption of the budget of the League.
- C. Establishment of the administrative regulations for the Council, the committees and the Secretariat General.
- D. Decisions to adjourn the sessions.

#### **ARTICLE XVII**

Each member-state of the League shall deposit with the Secretariat-General one copy of treaty or agreement concluded or to be concluded in the future between itself and another member-state of the League or a third state.

#### **ARTICLE XVIII**

If a member state contemplates withdrawal from the League, shall inform the Council of its intention one year before such withdrawal is to go into effect.

The Council of the League may consider any state which fails to fulfill its obligations under the Charter as separated from the League, this to go into effect upon a unanimous decision of the states, not counting the state concerned.

#### **ARTICLE XIX**

This Charter may be amended with the consent of two thirds of the states belonging to the League, espec order to make firmer and stronger the ties between the member-states, to create an Arab Tribunal of Arbitration, and to regulate the relations of the League with any international bodies to be created in the future to guarantee security and peace.

Final action on the amendment cannot be taken prior Final action on an amend . . hich the motion to the session following the session in which the motion was initiated.

If a state does not accept such an amendment it may withdraw at such time as the amendment goes into effect, without being bound by the provisions of the preceding Article.

#### **ARTICLE XX**

This Charter and its annexes shall be ratified according to the basic laws in force among the High Contracting parties.

The instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretariat-General of the Council and the Charter shall become operative as regards each ratifying state fifteen days after the Secretary-General has received the instruments of ratification from four states.

This Charter has been drawn up in Cairo in the Arabic language on this 8th day of Rabi' II, thirteen hundred and sixty four H. (March 22, 1945), in one copy which shall be deposited in the safe keeping of the Secretariat-General.

An identical copy shall be delivered to each state of the League.

### **(1) Annex Regarding Palestine**

Since the termination of the last great war the rule of the Ottoman Empire over the Arab countries, among them Palestine, which had become detached from that Empire, has come to an end. She has come to be autonomous, not subordinate to any other state.

The Treaty of Lausanne proclaimed that her future was to be settled by the parties concerned.

However, even though she was as yet unable to control her own affairs, the Covenant of the League (of Nations) in 1919 made provision for a regime based upon recognition of her independence.

Her international existence and independence in the legal sense cannot, therefore, be questioned, any more than could the independence of the other Arab countries.

Although the outward manifestations of this independence have remained obscured for reasons beyond her control, this should not be allowed to interfere with her participation in the work of the Council of the League.

The states signatory to the Pact of the Arab League are therefore of the opinion that, considering the special circumstances of Palestine and until that country can effectively exercise its independence, the Council of the League should take charge of the selection of an Arab representative from Palestine to take part in its work.

### **(2) Annex Regarding Cooperation with Countries Which Are Not Members of the Council of the League**

Whereas the member states of the League will have to deal in the Council as well as in the committees with matters which will benefit and affect the Arab world at large;

And whereas the Council has to take into account the aspirations of the Arab countries which are not members of the Council and has to work toward their realization;

Now, therefore, it particularly behooves the states signatory to the Pact of the Arab League to enjoin the Council of the League, when considering the admission of those countries to participation in the committees referred to in the Pact, that it should spare no effort to learn their needs and understand their aspirations and hopes; and that it should work thenceforth for their best interests and the safeguarding of their future with all the political means at its disposal.

**(3) Annex Regarding the Appointment of a Secretary General of the League**

The states signatory to this Pact have agreed to appoint His Excellency Abdul-Rabman 'Azzam Bey, to be Secretary-General of the League of Arab States.

This appointment is made for two years. The Council of the League shall hereafter determine the new regulations for the Secretary-General.