STATUTES OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF ACATs (FIACAT)

(amended on 1st May 2026)

Article 1 — Name

The association shall bear the name "International Federation of ACATs", hereinafter referred to as "FIACAT". ACAT stands for "Action des chrétiens pour l'abolition de la torture" (Christians for the Abolition of Torture).

In an inclusive and gender-equal approach, the use of masculine forms for titles and functions in this document shall be interpreted as gender-neutral; this is intended solely to ensure greater readability. Whenever these titles and functions are held by a woman, they may be expressed in the feminine.

Article 2 — Registered Office

FIACAT's registered office is located in the Val-de-Marne department. It may be transferred by a simple decision of the Bureau, which shall inform the General Assembly at its next ordinary session.

Article 3 — Purpose

3.1 FIACAT, by its own means, fights against:

1. torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
2. the death penalty;
3. enforced disappearances;
4. extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions.

FIACAT federates and supports the ACATs.

3.2 To achieve these aims, FIACAT:

1. ensures the international and regional representation of the ACATs;
2. supports and extends the action of the ACATs at the international level;
3. acts particularly with respect to:
   a. intergovernmental organisations and other international and regional institutions;
   b. Churches and faith-based organisations;
4. strengthens the capacities of the ACATs so that they become key civil-society actors capable of raising public awareness and having an impact on the authorities in their countries;
5. contributes, where necessary, to the protection and defence of ACATs and their members who are threatened as a result of their mission;
6. maintains links among the ACATs, facilitating exchanges and collaboration between them;

7. maintains, with other non-governmental organisations pursuing the same aims, such collaborative relationships as it deems appropriate;
8. undertakes or supports all actions that further its aim and are within its means.

Article 4 — The ACATs

The ACATs are independent associations, operating at the level of a State, whose purpose is to fight, by all appropriate means and throughout the world, against torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, against the death penalty, enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions. There may be only one ACAT per country. The ACATs are independent of FIACAT, of one another, of States, and of Churches or faith-based organisations. They adhere to the values of FIACAT as defined in its Charter.

Article 5 — Affiliated ACATs

5.1 Affiliation

The affiliation of an ACAT is decided by the General Assembly by a two-thirds majority. The Bureau receives the affiliation application, examines it, and issues an opinion before presenting the application to the General Assembly.

To become affiliated, an ACAT must demonstrate to the General Assembly that it has effective capacity for action, a sufficient organisational structure, and must accept the following conditions:

1. The statutes of affiliated ACATs must be consistent with the purpose and rules defined in these Statutes.
2. Affiliated ACATs must accept and comply with these Statutes and the FIACAT reference texts listed in Article 7 of these Statutes, which govern the functioning of FIACAT, the relations between FIACAT and affiliated ACATs, and among the ACATs themselves.
3. Affiliated ACATs shall pay an annual membership fee whose amount and payment arrangements are set by the General Assembly.

When an ACAT in the process of affiliation is admitted as a member ACAT by the General Assembly, its membership of FIACAT becomes effective at the close of the General Assembly at which its membership was decided.

The conditions for affiliation remain necessary for the maintenance of each ACAT's affiliation.

Only affiliated ACATs that are up to date with their membership fee shall have deliberative voting rights within the General Assembly. An ACAT that obtains an exemption for the payment of its membership fee shall be deemed to be up to date.

5.2 Loss of Affiliated ACAT Status

Loss of affiliation may result from:

1. **Voluntary resignation,** dissolution or cessation of operations of an affiliated ACAT, decided by its General Assembly and notified in writing to FIACAT by its President or by a duly authorised representative.
2. **Suspension** of an affiliated ACAT, pronounced by the Bureau, which shall notify its decision in writing to the ACAT concerned. The grounds are:
    a. repeated failure to pay the membership fee within the prescribed deadlines, unless an exemption has previously been granted by the Bureau after justification, or failure to comply with any of the other conditions for affiliation set out in Article 5.1;

b. any serious act causing moral or material harm to FIACAT or to other affiliated ACATs;

c. dissolution or cessation of operations of the ACAT in question.

The suspension shall be communicated to all ACATs and submitted for consideration by the next General Assembly, which shall decide on the course of action to follow. The suspension takes effect on the date the decision is notified to the ACAT concerned.

3. **Exclusion** of an affiliated ACAT, pronounced by the General Assembly. It shall state the grounds for its decision and notify it in writing, after having given the President of the ACAT in question, or their duly authorised representative, the opportunity to be heard. The arrangements for exclusion are specified in the Internal Rules.

For the General Assembly to take such a decision, it must refer to serious grounds, in particular a breach of the conditions of affiliation or any serious act causing moral or material harm to FIACAT or to other affiliated ACATs.

4. The decision of exclusion taken by the General Assembly shall be pronounced by a two-thirds majority of the affiliated ACATs present or represented.

5. An ACAT that loses affiliated status, for whatever reason, has no entitlement to FIACAT's associative assets or to membership fees already paid.

Article 6 — Non-Affiliated ACATs

FIACAT helps non-affiliated ACATs to build the organisation and structure that would allow them to be active in their country with a view to meeting the conditions for affiliation.

By decision of the Bureau, non-affiliated ACATs may be:

1. **ACATs in the process of affiliation:** these are already structured and active ACATs that are developing their organisation with a view to affiliation. ACATs in the process of affiliation are ACATs that FIACAT recognises as such, even if their level of organisation is not yet sufficient for them to become fully affiliated. These ACATs must commit to complying with these Statutes and other reference texts. The affiliation process is limited to 3 years;

2. **Supported Groups:** these are locally constituted groups whose structure is not yet established, but which FIACAT supports and collaborates with.

Article 7 — Reference Texts

The General Assembly may adopt, on the proposal of the Bureau, texts that regulate in greater detail the functioning of FIACAT, the relations between FIACAT and the ACATs, and among the ACATs themselves. These texts are binding.

In addition to these Statutes, the reference texts are:

1. **the FIACAT Charter,** which sets out the ideals, principles, convictions and aspirations that underlie the existence of FIACAT;

2. **the Good Governance Charter,** which sets out the principles, rules and spirit that must guide FIACAT and the ACATs in better achieving their common objectives, and the commitments that the ACATs undertake towards FIACAT and towards one another;

3. **the Internal Rules,** which specify these Statutes, in particular their modalities of application and interpretation;

4. **the FIACAT Code of Conduct,** which recalls the values of FIACAT.

Article 8 — Amendment of the Statutes and Other Reference Texts

1. A proposal to amend the Statutes, the FIACAT Charter or the Good Governance Charter must come from the Bureau or from at least one fifth of the affiliated ACATs.

After all affiliated ACATs have had advance knowledge of the proposed amendment, an extraordinary General Assembly shall be convened. It may deliberate validly on the matter only if the quorum of two thirds of affiliated ACATs is reached. Failing that, within two months, a second extraordinary General Assembly may be convened, for which no quorum shall be required, unless the proposed amendment concerns the purpose of FIACAT, in which case the quorum shall be set at one half of affiliated ACATs.

The extraordinary General Assembly shall decide by a two-thirds majority of the affiliated ACATs present or represented.

2. The Internal Rules are amended by the Bureau. These amendments shall be communicated to the ACATs immediately. At the request of at least one fifth of affiliated ACATs, the amendment to the Internal Rules shall be submitted for approval by the General Assembly, which shall deliberate by an absolute majority.

Article 9 — Relations Between FIACAT and Affiliated ACATs, and Collaboration Among ACATs

The Good Governance Charter governs the relations between FIACAT and affiliated ACATs, and the collaboration among the ACATs. In particular, the Good Governance Charter provides for:

- the representation of ACATs before international and regional institutions;
- the organisation of joint actions between FIACAT and the ACATs, including the rules for managing the international and regional representation of such joint actions;
- the procedure to follow for ACATs to cooperate when taking action in a country where another ACAT is established.

Article 10 — Governing Bodies

The functioning of FIACAT is primarily ensured by three bodies:

- the General Assembly
- the Bureau
- the International Secretariat

Article 11 — General Assembly

1. The General Assembly is the supreme decision-making body of FIACAT.

The General Assembly has exclusive competence for:

a. the election of the President of FIACAT and the other members of the Bureau, as well as their possible removal. Removal may not take place without inviting the members concerned to a hearing;

b. the affiliation or exclusion of an ACAT;

c. the adoption of the multi-annual strategic plan and the annual action plan;

d. the approval of the activity report, the accounts, and the budget;

e. the appointment of the Statutory Auditor;

f. the amendment of the Statutes, the FIACAT Charter and the Good Governance Charter;

g. the determination of the amount of the annual membership fee and its payment arrangements;

h. the voluntary dissolution of FIACAT.

2. The General Assembly is composed of one representative from each affiliated ACAT and the President of FIACAT.

The representative of an affiliated ACAT is the person designated for that role by the affiliated ACAT.

Only the representatives of an affiliated ACAT and the President of FIACAT have deliberative voting rights.

Each representative may be assisted by an alternate, also designated by the affiliated ACAT, without this adding any vote (one vote per ACAT, regardless of the number of members present). The alternate may, on a mandate from the representative, act in their place with the same powers.

An affiliated ACAT may grant its voting power to the representative of another affiliated ACAT by informing the FIACAT International Secretariat. The representative of an affiliated ACAT may not hold more than two proxies from other affiliated ACATs.

To attend the General Assembly, members must be up to date with their membership fee. Fees must have been paid before the quorum is calculated.

3. The following may attend the General Assembly without deliberative voting rights:

   a. the alternate of each representative;

   b. one other member of each affiliated ACAT;

   c. a delegation of ACATs in the process of affiliation and supported groups;

   d. members of the Bureau;

   e. members of the International Secretariat;

   f. specialised assistants as defined in Article 15.4 of these Statutes;

   g. any other person invited by the President of FIACAT to the General Assembly.

4. The ordinary General Assembly meets annually, on the convocation of the President. The General Assembly may be convened in extraordinary session, either on the initiative of the Bureau or at the request of at least one fifth of affiliated ACATs.

The General Assembly, whether ordinary or extraordinary, may meet in person, by correspondence, electronically or by any other means.

The date and, where applicable, the venue or other mode of convening the General Assembly shall be determined by the Bureau at least three months in advance and communicated to the ACATs within the same period.

In addition to the provisions of these Statutes, any procedure ensuring the regularity of General Assembly meetings and the validity of decisions and votes shall be described in the Internal Rules.

5. Except for the special provisions of Articles 8.1 and 17 of these Statutes, the General Assembly may deliberate validly only if more than half of the affiliated ACATs are present or represented. Failing that, a second meeting shall be convened within two months, without any quorum being required to deliberate.

Deliberation shall concern the items on the agenda, which is proposed by the Bureau in accordance with the procedures described in the Internal Rules.

6. The General Assembly adopts its resolutions by an absolute majority of votes cast, except in cases where these Statutes require a special majority.

In the counting of votes, all votes are equal. In the event of a tied vote, a second vote shall be held; if the tie persists, the vote of the President of FIACAT shall be the casting vote.

Article 12 — Bureau

1. The Bureau is the administrative body of FIACAT.

Its mission is to:

a. administer FIACAT;

b. approve the annual accounts and submit them for approval by the General Assembly;

c. develop a multi-annual strategic plan and translate it into an annual action plan for implementation by the International Secretariat, and submit it for approval by the General Assembly;

d. propose an annual budget and submit it for approval by the General Assembly;

e. present an annual activity report and submit it for approval by the General Assembly;

f. present the candidacy of a new ACAT to the General Assembly and issue an opinion on the candidacy;

g. propose the appointment of a Statutory Auditor;

h. implement the decisions of the General Assembly and subsequently report on them;

i. where appropriate, designate one or more Vice-Presidents from among its members, define their mandate and responsibilities, and revoke them;

j. elect a Treasurer of FIACAT from among its members for a two-year term;

k. appoint or dismiss the Executive Director;

l. delegate or withdraw responsibility from a specialised assistant or expert.

2. In addition to the President, the Bureau is composed of eight members. In the event of a vacancy arising during a term of office, the Bureau may fill the vacancy by co-opting a member from among the members of the affiliated ACATs, until the next session of the General Assembly. If the Bureau's mandate has not yet expired, the General Assembly shall hold an intermediate election, in accordance with the election procedures provided for in the Statutes and the Internal Rules, to designate the new member or members as replacements. The mandate of the newly elected person shall run until the end of the mandate of the person they replace. This does not constitute a new four-year mandate.

Every full member of the Bureau shall have deliberative voting rights within the Bureau.

3. The President and the other members of the Bureau are elected by the General Assembly. Unlike the President, the other members of the Bureau are elected for a four-year mandate. Every two years, the General Assembly renews half of the Bureau members.

Only a candidate put forward for election by an affiliated ACAT shall be eligible for the Bureau. Candidates for election to the Bureau must be chosen in accordance with the conditions set out in the Internal Rules. The mandate of an elected member takes effect at the close of the General Assembly that elected them.

A member serving a mandate may be removed by the General Assembly for due cause and after having been invited to a hearing. Beforehand, the Bureau may have decided, by a two-thirds majority, to suspend

their mandate and shall have notified them in writing. The Bureau must bring the matter to the General Assembly within two months.

4. The Bureau meets at least once every six months, in person, by correspondence, electronically or by any other means, on convocation by the President.

The Executive Director attends its meetings ex officio, unless otherwise indicated by the President, and has an advisory vote.

The Bureau may be convened in extraordinary session at the request of at least three members.

5. The Bureau may deliberate validly only if more than half of its members are present. Failing that, a second meeting with the same agenda may be convened within the following fifteen days, without any quorum being required to deliberate.
6. The Bureau takes its decisions by consensus, unless one of its members requests a vote; in that case, the decision is taken by a majority of the members present.

In the counting of votes, all votes cast are equal. In the event of a tied vote, a second vote shall be held; if the tie persists, the vote of the President of FIACAT shall be the casting vote.

7. Bureau members serve on a voluntary basis. Expenses incurred in carrying out their mandate may be reimbursed upon presentation of supporting documents and in accordance with FIACAT's financial management rules.

Article 13 — President of FIACAT

The President of FIACAT is elected by the General Assembly for a two-year mandate. They may not serve more than three consecutive mandates. The President is a member of the Bureau, which they lead and whose work they coordinate.

The President of FIACAT has competence to:

a. convene the General Assembly;
b. report to the General Assembly on the activities and directions of FIACAT;
c. convene the Bureau;
d. report to the representatives of the affiliated ACATs on decisions taken by the Bureau;
e. represent FIACAT in all civil matters;
f. authorise expenditure in accordance with the budget adopted by the General Assembly;
g. refuse certain revenues and donations.

The election of the President of FIACAT by the General Assembly shall be conducted separately from the election of the other Bureau members.

Only a candidate put forward for the election by an affiliated ACAT shall be eligible as President of FIACAT. Candidates for the presidential election must be chosen in accordance with the conditions set out in the Internal Rules.

In the event of a vacancy in the presidency, the Bureau shall within six months organise an intermediate election through an extraordinary session of the General Assembly. Pending this election, the Bureau shall appoint an interim President from among its members, charged with taking decisions deemed strictly necessary for the functioning of FIACAT. This appointment shall be communicated immediately to all ACATs. The interim President shall report on their mission at the ordinary General Assembly that reviews the activities and accounts of the period covered by the interim.

Article 14 — Treasurer of FIACAT

The Treasurer is responsible for the financial management of FIACAT. They are elected by the Bureau from among its members for a two-year term, with a maximum of three consecutive terms. The office of Treasurer may not be combined with that of President or Vice-President. The Treasurer manages the federation's funds and securities.

In this capacity, the Treasurer:

a. prepares the annual projected budget and submits it to the Bureau;

b. monitors the proper execution of the budget;

c. approves financial transactions;

d. provides an opinion on any proposal involving new expenditure not included in the projected budget;

e. ensures that at the end of each financial year the accounting documents, in particular the balance sheet and the income statement, are drawn up;

f. submits these accounting documents to the Bureau for approval before they are adopted by the General Assembly;

g. reviews the accounting documents presented to and approved by the General Assembly.

All signatures affixed in the exercise of their functions shall be made with the authorisation of and under the cover and responsibility of the President.

Article 15 — International Secretariat and Specialised Assistants

1. The International Secretariat is the management body of FIACAT.
2. The International Secretariat is headed by an Executive Director, recruited by the Bureau following a call for applications.
3. The Executive Director acts under the authority of the President. All International Secretariat staff fall under their authority.
4. To carry out FIACAT's missions and activity programmes, the Bureau may call upon specialised assistants. A specialised assistant should, as far as possible, be a member of an affiliated ACAT. A specialised assistant is a volunteer who receives a specific title and a defined, time-limited mission, which may be renewed. They shall report on this mission to the Bureau. Expenses incurred in carrying out their mission may be reimbursed upon presentation of supporting documents and in accordance with FIACAT's financial management rules.

Article 16 — Resources

1. The resources of the Federation come from:
   a. membership fees from the ACATs;
   b. support contributions;
   c. donations and bequests;
   d. grants;
   e. funding obtained through project proposals submitted to partners and donors;
   f. any other legal sources consistent with these Statutes.
2. The integration of these resources is subject to acceptance by the Bureau.

Article 17 — Extraordinary General Assembly and Dissolution

1. An extraordinary General Assembly must be convened to address the following matters:
   a. Amendment of the Statutes;
   b. Replacement of the President before the end of their mandate;
   c. Dissolution of FIACAT.

Subject to the special provisions set out in these Statutes, the arrangements for holding such an assembly shall be identical to those governing the organisation and functioning of an ordinary General Assembly.

2. A proposal to dissolve FIACAT must come from the Bureau or from at least one fifth of the affiliated ACATs. An extraordinary General Assembly must then be convened within 3 months.
3. The General Assembly convened to decide on the dissolution of FIACAT may deliberate validly on the matter only if the quorum of two thirds of affiliated ACATs is reached. Failing that, a second General Assembly shall be convened within 2 months, for which a quorum of one half of affiliated ACATs shall be required.
4. In the case of deliberation concerning dissolution or amendment of the Statutes, the General Assembly shall decide by a two-thirds majority of votes cast.
5. The dissolution of FIACAT shall not entail the dissolution of the ACATs affiliated with it.
6. The disposition of the assets of the dissolved association shall be entrusted by the General Assembly to commissioners designated by it. Any surplus assets shall be distributed among the affiliated ACATs.

Article 18 — Final and Transitional Provisions

1. In the previous statutes, the General Assembly was referred to as the "International Council" and the Bureau as the "International Bureau". Their names have been changed by these Statutes.
2. The duration of mandates, expressed in years, is to be understood as running from one General Assembly to the next and not in a strict calendar sense.
3. By way of exception, at the 2028 General Assembly, as all Bureau mandates will be coming to an end, and in addition to the election of the President, two separate ballots shall take place to elect the eight Bureau members: first, a ballot for four four-year mandates; second, a ballot for four two-year mandates.

All candidacies submitted to the General Assembly for the eight Bureau seats shall be deemed to apply to both ballots. Candidates not elected in the first ballot shall remain candidates for the second.

4. English or other language versions may be produced under the responsibility of the Bureau, but the authentic text is the French version as deposited with the competent authorities.

These revised Statutes enter into force on **1st May 2026**