

ARCHIVISTS WITHOUT BORDERS INTERNATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL CHARTER

I. Background

This International Charter establishes an independent network of non-profit legal entities committed to coordinating themselves with the aim to achieve common goals in the field of archives administration and document management as defined below.

The international network Archivists without Borders derives from the formation of the association Archivists without Borders in the year 1998, in Barcelona (Spain), the progressive internationalisation of which gave rise to the creation of sections in various countries. By being organised as legal entities, those sections ceased to belong organically to the original association and are now invested with independence and their own legal personality. This International Charter seeks to strengthen and consolidate this process, creating a transverse coordination structure.

II. General goals

The goals which drive the actions of Archivists without Borders International are based on the following principles:

- Archives and the defence of human rights:
 - Assurance and defence of human rights through the protection and conservation of the archives and documents produced by public and private bodies. The information contained in documents provides a knowledge of the truth, testimonial evidence of events which have occurred, and identification of heritage assets, among other values, simplifying the recognition of the cultural identity of peoples and shaping their historic memory.
- Access to public documents in democratic political systems:
 - Raising of the awareness of society in relation to the interest of conserving and using public and private archives since this favours respect for the rights of persons and simplifies the participation of citizens in the policies unfolded by democratic political systems. The knowledge of the accords and decisions of democratic governments and, generally, the administrative transparency of the public administrations favours the awareness and involvement of the citizenry with respect to economic, social, cultural, scientific and technological development, driving the growth of countries at the same time.
 - Favouring of the declassification of and access to the documents of the public administrations as an inalienable right of the policies of democratic governments with the aim to respect the rights of the

citizenry.

- Cooperation projects in the sphere of archives administration:
 - Lending of support to projects involving the organisation, processing, conservation and recovery of the archives and documentary holdings of the bodies and entities of the countries which, considering their political, economic, social or cultural circumstances, have a need for the cooperation of NGOs specialised in archives administration with the aim to obtain collaboration on the improvement of their internal administrative organisation. Within this framework, archives administration methodology will be applied according to the doctrine issuing from the international bodies and, moreover, it will be sought to monitor the archives administration policies of the countries to which cooperation is provided.

- Conservation of the world documentary heritage:
 - Protection, conservation and dissemination of the knowledge of the world documentary heritage in danger of extinction or irreversible damage, through the unfolding of programmes that promote actions aimed to safeguard and recover archives and documents. In this respect, it is necessary to study and provide the restoration, digitisation and computerisation techniques which are most appropriate for each type of documentary medium, according to the specific needs and climatic conditions of each territorial area.

- Training:
 - To promote the archives administration function through the specialised training of the persons who are to manage the archives and documentary holdings in order to assure the preservation and conservation of documents and the dissemination of their knowledge among the citizenry. Moreover, considering the speed with which changes and technological innovation are occurring in electronic and digital documents and other formats in this sphere, specific training will be promoted in connection with the advances of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

- Collaboration with archivists and kindred professionals, and promotion of the relations with the entities that work for the defence of human rights:
 - Fostering of social relations and solidarity between archivists and other professionals allied to our sphere of action in order to promote the awareness among professionals of the need to cooperate and collaborate on the protection, respect and defence of human rights.
 - Collaboration and promotion of collaboration with social entities committed to the defence of human rights in order to foster programmes of joint action aimed to increase our efficiency and to favour the optimum benefit from cooperative work.

III. Name and logotype of Archivists without Borders

The non-profit legal entities which adhere to this International Charter have the right to use the name “Archivists without Borders” and the logotype or anagram which is specified below. The name and the logotype or anagram are the property of the association under Spanish law Archivists without Borders.

The logotype or anagram is formed by a globe of the world and a document, in the colours green and orange, respectively. Beside it on the right are the initials AwB (Archivists without Borders), and beneath it is the full name *Archivists without Borders*, written in one of the official languages of the place of registration of the adhered legal entity. Each non-profit legal entity shall add, beneath the name *Archivists without Borders* or its equivalent in another language, the name of the country where its registered office is located.

IV. International Coordination Council

The coordination of Archivists without Borders International will be carried out according to the guidelines of the International Coordination Council (ICC), for the purpose of maintaining as far as possible criteria of global action for the set of adhered legal entities.

The lines of action established by the ICC shall be centred preferentially around:

- countries which have suffered political or social repression within the framework of totalitarian political systems that have deprived persons of their individual rights or their collective rights as peoples, where it is necessary to fight for the knowledge of the truth of events, for its defence before the judicial authorities and for the re-establishment of social peace.
- countries subjected to situations of war or generalised violence, or affected by natural catastrophes or catastrophes of any other nature which may entail a serious risk of disappearance of their documentary heritage.
- countries which have a documentary heritage in imminent danger of loss or degradation.

The ICC has the authority to guide the common strategies of Archivists without Borders International, to coordinate the efforts of the various legal entities which form Archivists without Borders International, to promote projects aimed to achieve the common goals, and to assess their functioning. In all cases it will be required to report annually to the ICC on the projects which the legal entities plan to carry out.

The ICC is formed by the presidents of each legal entity belonging to Archivists without Borders International, one of whom will be elected president, another vice-president and another secretary of the ICC for a period of four years without prejudice to the possibility of their being re-elected one more time.

The president, vice-president and secretary of the ICC form the Executive Committee, which is in charge of carrying out and promoting the resolutions and goals of the ICC. The exercise of the offices of president, vice-president and secretary will be of honorary character and in no case may it be remunerated.

The meetings of the ICC will take place with a periodicity of not over one year and the quorum will be formed by one-half of its members. The attendance of the president or the vice-president and of the secretary of the Executive Committee is required.

Considering the international character of Archivists without Borders International, special efforts will be made to hold non-presential meetings in order to achieve a greater participation and coordination.

The meetings will be called by the secretary at the behest of the president, at least 30 days in advance.

The ICC passes its resolutions by simple majority of votes of the persons in attendance. In the event of a tie, the president holds the decisive casting vote.

The resolutions of the ICC shall be recorded in the Minutes Book and the Minutes shall be signed by the secretary and the president. At the beginning of each meeting of the ICC, the Minutes of the previous meeting shall be read for their approval or rectification, as appropriate.

V. Penalisation system

The breach of the goals and basic lines of action by the legal entities of Archivists without Borders International will lead to the imposition of one of the following penalties:

- written warning
- temporary suspension as a member of Archivists without Borders International, which will also involve the suspension of the right to use the name and logotype or anagram identifying Archivists without Borders International
- expulsion from Archivists without Borders International, which will also entail the prohibition to use the name and logotype or anagram identifying Archivists without Borders International.

The penalty will be decreed by the ICC and the legal entity in question will be informed previously of the penalisation process, holding the right to be heard before the penalty is imposed. The penalty will be made public and it will be made known to all the members of Archivists without Borders International.

VI. Modification of the International Charter

This International Charter may be modified by means of a proposal of amendments submitted by any of the legal entities which belong to Archivists without Borders International, as long as such proposal has been approved by the assembly of the legal entity which seeks the change. Moreover, the proposal of amendments shall be submitted to the president of the ICC together with the signed support of two more legal entities belonging to AwB. Upon fulfilment of these requirements, the secretary of the ICC will make known the proposal to all the legal entities belonging to Archivists without Borders International and, within a maximum time of six months, the president

will call the ICC in order to vote on each of the proposed amendments. For the approval of an amendment, the favourable vote of two-thirds of all the members of the ICC will be required.

VII. Adhesion and commitment

The requests for adhesion to this International Charter should be addressed to the president of the ICC, who will submit them for approval. In the event that the majority of members approve the adhesion of a new legal entity, such entity shall undertake a commitment to comply faithfully with the International Charter.

VIII. Transitory provision

The entities without legal personality which adhered to the International Charter on the date of its approval shall obtain legal personality before 31 October 2011 in order to be able to continue to be members.