

# **STATUTES of SEDOS**

## **- Revised and Approved Version 2014 -**

### **Art. 1 - Definition**

An association with the name *SEDOS (Service of Documentation and Study)* has been constituted, through which Religious Institutes or Societies of men and of women, and other recognized associations within the Church which apply and are accepted by the General Assembly, come together to join forces in order to serve the Church more effectively in its missionary activity.

To this end, SEDOS offers its members the opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences related to their missionary work, and to obtain practical orientations, with the help of information, documentation, studies and seminars aimed at fostering reflection and initiatives on the part of the member organisations, and furthering projects that these take on together, by the facilitation of communication between the General leadership of the different Institutes, Societies and Associations as a service to the mission and to evangelisation.

### **Art. 2 – Organisation**

The organs of the SEDOS Association are:

1. The General Assembly (Art. 6) – which is a decision-making body.
2. The Executive Committee (Art. 8) – which is an administrative body.
3. The President (Art. 9) – who is the Legal Representative.
4. The Permanent Secretariat (Art. 14) - which provides the necessary services.
5. *Ad hoc* Working Groups and Seminars (Art. 16) – which represent the operational structure.

### **Art. 3 - Offices of Administration**

The legal and administrative office of SEDOS is found in Rome in Via dei Verbiti, 1 - 00154 Rome, Italy.

### **Art. 4 - Juridical Status**

SEDOS is a private, non-profit-making Association.

The President represents the common interests of the member institutes, in accordance with the directives of the General Assembly, or, in urgent cases, those of the Executive Committee.

### **Art. 5 - The Constitutive Members**

1. In order to become a constitutive member of SEDOS, an institute must satisfy the following conditions:

- a. It must be involved in missionary work;
- b. It must make an official request to the President;
- c. It must be accepted by the unanimous vote of the Executive Committee or the absolute majority of the General Assembly.
- d. It must agree to pay the annual subscription.
- e. It must agree to participate in the activities undertaken by SEDOS.

2. The constitutive members have the right:

- a. To present to the Assembly specific proposals in relation to joint projects.
- b. To participate in all SEDOS activities;
- c. To receive all documents prepared by the Secretariat;
- d. To request information from the Executive Director.

## **Art. 6 - General Assembly**

1. The General Assembly is the deliberative organ of SEDOS that sets out its policy and makes decisions.
2. The General Assembly is made of the Superiors General of the member institutes, or their delegates, and the members of the Executive Committee.
3. The meetings of the General Assembly take place at regular intervals, and whenever they are requested by the President.
4. An Extraordinary Assembly may be convoked by the President or at the request of one-third of the members of the Executive Committee.
5. The General Assembly defines the specific objectives of the other structures of SEDOS and is responsible for developing them. Moreover:
  - a. It evaluates the motions that are presented to it;
  - b. It examines the reports on the activities of SEDOS;
  - c. It elects the President, the vice-President, six Councilors, and the Bursar whose terms of office last three years (cf. Art. 12);
  - d. It ratifies the appointment of the Executive Director;
  - e. It approves regulations and publishes them;
  - f. It takes decisions in relation to changes in the Statute, when there is a majority of two-thirds of the members present;
  - g. It establishes the criterion for defining the annual subscription that every member institute is obliged to pay;
  - h. It examines the budget and financial report presented by the Bursar.

## **Art. 7 - System of Voting**

1. All members must be notified of the date, place and time of the General **Assembly at least four months in advance. Decisions taken at the General** Assembly will be valid when they are supported by two-thirds of the members present.  
If an Extraordinary assembly is convoked, the agenda is sent out **four weeks prior to the date** of the Extraordinary Assembly. At an Extraordinary Assembly, every decision taken will be valid if it is supported by two-thirds of the members present.
2. In order to learn the opinion of all the constitutive members (this may also concern changes to be made to the Statutes), SEDOS may also decide to adopt a postal voting system. In such cases, a period of reflection of approximately one month will be given to those who are consulted in order to express their opinion.
3. In order to modify the Statutes, a majority of two-thirds is required. Elections are conducted in accordance with Art.12. A vote by a show of hands may be used, unless the Statutes have provided otherwise or at least two members of the assembly request a secret vote. Every member Institute, Society and Association has a right to one vote.
4. The President may ask another person to be the moderator of the assembly.
5. The minutes of the Assembly are taken by a member of the Executive Committee who acts as secretary of the Assembly. The minutes are signed by the President and by the Executive Director.

## **Art. 8 - The Executive Committee**

1. The Executive Committee of SEDOS is made up of the President, the vice-President, the Executive Director, the Bursar, and six to nine other Executive Committee Members. Ideally, there will be a balanced number of women and men represented on the Executive Committee. The members are elected in accordance with Art. 12 of these Statutes.
2. The Executive Committee puts into effect the policies adopted by the Assembly for the day to day running of SEDOS. To this effect it:
  - a. Proposes the date and the agenda for the meetings of the General Assembly to which it presents the motions that it believes to be important in terms of the objectives of SEDOS;
  - b. Admits new institutes as members in accordance with Art. 5c;

- c. Appoints the Executive Director;
  - d. Examines the annual financial report and the budget;
  - e. Interprets the Statutes.
3. The Executive Committee, at its own discretion may postpone provisional matters to the next regular meeting of the Assembly, or come to a decision on the matter in line with some other procedure, such as, a postal vote, or by convoking a special meeting.
  4. The Executive Committee meets at least five times a year, or when it is convoked by the President or by the Executive Director.
  5. The Coordinators of the different *ad hoc* Working Groups, or other experts, may be invited to the meetings of the Committee as the need arises. Decisions may be taken with a simple majority of the votes cast. Where there is equality of votes, the President has the faculty of deciding. In the absence of the President, the vice-President may exercise the responsibility. In the absence of both of these, the Executive Director may exercise it.

#### **Art. 9 - The President**

1. The President is to be a Supreme Moderator who must exercise the responsibility in person. When this is not possible, the vice-President will assume the responsibility.

##### *The President:*

- a. Has the power of signature and is the Legal Representative in relation to third parties and in court, and represents SEDOS in its relations with other organisations.
- b. Convokes and presides at the General Assembly.

#### **Art. 10 - The Vice-President**

1. The vice-President is a Supreme Moderator. If the President is the Supreme Moderator of a male institute, the vice-President will be the Supreme Moderator of a female institute.
2. If the President is the Supreme Moderator of a female institute, the vice-President will be the Supreme Moderator of a male institute.

#### **Art. 11 – The Bursar**

The Bursar is responsible for the administration of the funds of SEDOS. As such, he or she:

- a. prepares the budget in collaboration with the Executive Director;
  - b. presents the budget to the Executive Committee and to the General Assembly for its approval.
  - c. receives the annual contributions;
  - d. makes sure that the Secretariat stays within the budget and checks the expenditure;
  - e. presents the annual financial balance sheet, following the same procedure that applies in the case of the budget.
2. At the request of the Executive Committee, the Bursar gives an account of the present financial state of SEDOS.

#### **Art. 12 – Elections**

The President, the vice-President, the Bursar and the six to nine other Executive Committee Members are elected for a period of three years. They may be re-elected, but for no more than one more period of three years.

The election procedure is determined by the Executive Committee. The election takes place during the General Assembly closest to the date of expiry of each office.

The election is carried out by the raising of hands, unless a secret ballot is requested.

#### **Art. 13 - Vacant Offices**

If for any reason, the President resigns, the vice-President takes over the office until the next ordinary General Assembly, at which the new President will be elected for a period of three years.

If for any reason another member of the Executive Committee resigns, the vacancy will be filled within three months by means of a postal vote. The person who receives a relative majority will be deemed elected and will hold the office until the end of the term of the person he or she is elected to replace

#### **Art. 14 - *Permanent Secretariat***

The Permanent Secretariat provides office services to each of the SEDOS structures. In particular:

- It makes available to the member institutes information, documentation, and studies relative to the stated objectives of SEDOS;
- It responds to the daily needs of the other groups;
- It coordinates the work of the other groups;
- It prepares the papers necessary for the meetings of those groups and sends out the minutes of each.

In order to assist the Secretariat to reach these objectives, the institutes that are members of SEDOS agree to actively cooperate with the projects approved by the assembly, especially by making available to the Secretariat priests and men and women religious.

The Secretariat is directed by an Executive Director, who is elected in accordance with Art. 12 of this Statute, that refers to the President.

#### **Art. 15 - *The Executive Director***

The Executive Director is responsible for the details of the internal organisation of the Secretariat and its day to day management, and for the management of the staff. Moreover, he or she,

- prepares the projects that are to be presented to the Assembly, at the request of the President;
- prepares, convokes and moderates the meetings of the Executive Committee;
- attends the meetings of the General Assembly and presides over the Executive Committee;
- carries out all the offices entrusted to him/her by the General Assembly or by the Executive Committee;
- reports to the General Assembly on his/her activities.

#### **Art. 16 - *Working Groups***

Working Groups and *ad hoc* seminars may be set up spontaneously around a topic of significant and common interest.

They may take a position publicly on certain questions, after consultation with the Executive.

#### **Art. 17 - *Finances***

The financial resources of SEDOS come from:

- The contributions made by the member institutes;
- Subventions, donations and bequests offered SEDOS;
- Fees for services given to associates.

SEDOS has a current bank account. The Executive Director and the Bursar have the power of signature.

**Art. 18 - *Deprivation of membership***

It is possible for an institute to cease to be a constitutive member, either when SEDOS revokes its membership, or the institute fails to pay its subscription for two consecutive years, once due notice has been served by the Bursar.

**Art. 19 - *Extinction***

In the event of SEDOS having to be dissolved, a General Assembly will appoint one or more liquidators who will decide upon the distribution of the property, with due regard to the spirit of SEDOS.