

**GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR GRANTING RECOGNITION
BY SAARC TO NGOS/ORGANIZATIONS OR PROFESSIONAL BODIES
IN THE SAARC REGION AS SAARC RECOGNIZED BODIES¹**

GUIDELINES

- i) The Non-governmental Organizations, other interested organizations and professional bodies seeking recognition as SAARC Recognized Bodies should be based in the SAARC Member Countries. These organizations and professional bodies should be of recognized national standing and registered with national authorities as per national laws.
- ii) The organizations and professional bodies seeking the status of SAARC Recognized Bodies should be non-political and secular in character. They should have a constitution or equivalent instrument outlining their goals, details on their institutional set up and operational modalities. They should also have an established office with an Executive Officer.
- iii) The aims and purpose of these organizations/professional bodies should be in conformity with the spirit, purpose and principles of the SAARC Charter. These bodies should be concerned with matters relevant to the process of promoting social, economic and cultural development in the region.

PROCEDURES

- i) All interested organizations, including non-governmental organizations and professional bodies seeking recognition as a SAARC Recognized Body, shall submit an application to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the country in which the Headquarters of the organization is located. In case the application is received direct by the SAARC Secretariat, the Secretary General will consult the Member Country in which the organization is based. Such an application should be supported by the constitution of the organization professional body or an equivalent instrument. If the Secretary General is satisfied that the concerned organization/professional body fulfills the relevant criteria, he may recommend to the Standing Committee and the Council of Ministers to accord the SAARC recognition to the applicant organization/professional body on case by case basis.
- ii) Once the Secretary General's recommendation on the application is approved, he would convey the decision to the concerned organization/professional body.
- iii) The recognition accorded to the organizations/professional bodies would be reviewed after every three years and may be renewed depending on the performance of these bodies and activities organized by them to realize aims and objectives.
- iv) The Secretariat may recommend to the Standing Committee withdrawal of recognition with regard to the specific Bodies which fail to comply with the guidelines and their obligations.²

¹ Approved by the 19th CoM (Male, 29-30 Nov. 1997) at the recommendation of 24th SC (Male, 28-27 Nov. 1997)

² Added by the 35th CoM (Maldives, 20 February 2014) at the recommendation of 40th SC (Maldives, 19 Feb. 2014)

- v) Recognized Bodies are required to make a formal request at least three months prior to the expiry date of recognition for continuation of recognition.³
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³ Ibid [2]

RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF SAARC RECOGNIZED BODIES¹

1. RIGHTS OF SAARC RECOGNIZED BODIES

- i) The SAARC Recognized Bodies would be authorized to use the SAARC nomenclature and logo. While using the nomenclature and logo, these bodies will, however, clearly specify that they are “SAARC Recognized Bodies” to distinguish them from “SAARC Regional Apex Bodies”.
- ii) The Member States may facilitate the issuance of visa to the Chairpersons and Executive Members of such SAARC Recognized Bodies.
- iii) In line with the spirit of the Charter, SAARC Recognized Bodies may propose regional and sub-regional projects in their respective fields, keeping the SAARC Secretariat informed.²

2. OBLIGATIONS OF THE SAARC RECOGNIZED BODIES

- i) SAARC Recognized Bodies shall consist exclusively of members who are nationals of the Member States.
- ii) SAARC Recognized Bodies should have a constitution or equivalent instrument. A copy of such instrument will be made available to the SAARC Secretariat.
- iii) SAARC Recognized Bodies would undertake suitable activities to promote social, economic and cultural developments in the region as envisaged in the SAARC Charter.
- iv) In addition to their specific goals and objectives, as outlined in the Guidelines for according recognition to SAARC Recognized Bodies, these organizations/bodies shall work to promote people-to-people contact in the SAARC region, greater interactions amongst professionals from the Member Countries of SAARC and endeavour to strengthen the process of social, economic and cultural development of the SAARC region as envisaged in the SAARC Charter.
- v) The SAARC Recognized Bodies shall endeavour to supplement the official SAARC process and refrain from indulging in competition with various official agencies also working on issues of common interest to the people in the Member Countries.
- vi) SAARC Recognized Bodies will uphold their aims and objectives, as well as identity and integrity.

¹ Approved by the 27th CoM (Dhaka, 1-2 Aug. 2006) on the recommendation of 32nd SC (Dhaka, 31 Jul.- 1 Aug. 2006)

² Added by the 35th CoM (Maldives, 20 Feb. 2014) on the recommendation of 40th SC (Maldives, 19 Feb. 2014)

- vii) SAARC Recognized Bodies will have an established office and sound financial status.
- viii) SAARC Recognized Bodies will hold regular meetings to consider the activities and keep the SAARC Secretariat informed about these activities. They will be required to submit an annual report on their activities to the SAARC Secretariat.
- ix) Recognized Bodies should inform the Secretariat about their activities in advance and should make the outcome documents of the activities available soon after the events. The same will be shared with the Member States.³
- x) SAARC Recognized Bodies should maintain accountability and transparency. They will ensure that funds provided are only used for their intended purpose and are properly accounted for.
- xi) SAARC Recognized Bodies should have adequate and appropriate procedure for financial reviews and the audit of the Accounts should be conducted annually by the panel of independent auditors and should be made public through Annual Reports.

³ Ibid [2]