

## ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

### § 1 **The name of the Association is Kansainvälinen Romanikirjailijaliitto.**

In international communications, the unofficial English-language name of the Association is **International Romani Writers' Association** and its place of domicile is Helsinki.

### § 2 **Purpose of the Association**

The Association shall be referred to herein as "The Association".

The purpose of the Association is to strengthen the solidarity and creative ability of the Roma writers' culture, to develop the Romany language as a language of modern literature, as well as make the Romas' own voice heard, and make Roma literature a respected and well-known part of European culture. Herein, 'Roma writer' refers to a Roma writer of fiction.

### § 3 **The official languages of the Association shall be Finnish, English and the worldwide Romany language.**

### § 4 **The Association shall operate as follows:**

The Association is an independent, international, non-profit, idealistic Association, which shall achieve its goals by

- defending the freedom of speech and publication, and other rights that form the foundation of a writer's work
- promoting the works of Roma writers in various languages following their publication
- monitoring Roma writers' copyrights
- acting for the development of the legislation of the field
- representing Roma writers as a profession and issuing expert statements
- maintaining contacts with other national and international writers' and cultural organisations in matters concerning joint endeavours
- making Roma literature and language known by organising functions and seminars, and by engaging in information and publishing activities and
- acting as a link between Roma writers strengthening the position of Roma literature, language, and culture throughout the world.

### § 5 **Membership**

Association members are ordinary or honorary members.

Ordinary members shall be a Roma writer, who has published works of fiction, proposed by the Board of Directors and approved by a meeting of the Association. An ordinary member shall pay

the membership dues, the amount of which shall be decided at the Annual General meeting. Ordinary membership shall be sought by applying to the Board of directors in writing. Honorary members shall be those deserving people who promote the aims of the Association and Roma literature. Honorary members shall not pay membership dues. The Association meeting shall nominate honorary members acting on the suggestion of the Board of Directors. To become an ordinary member, a Roma writer must have published works of fiction. Membership shall be applied for by applying to the Board of Directors in writing. The Association meeting shall accept and nominate ordinary members from those recommended by the Board of Directors or other members of the Association. The membership of an ordinary member shall begin immediately upon payment of the first membership dues.

## **§ 6 Resignation and Dismissal of Members**

A member shall resign by informing the Board of Directors in writing. If a member shall repeatedly fail to pay the membership dues, he can be dismissed from the Association. The dismissal of a member shall be decided at a meeting of the Association. The reinstatement of a member shall be handled in a meeting of the Board of Directors and the Association.

## **§ 7 Board of Directors**

The Association shall have a Board of Directors composed of a chairman and 4 (four) members and 2 (two) deputy members, elected at the Annual General Meeting, and which shall be responsible for the administration of the Association. The Annual General Meeting shall elect a chairman, who shall be called the Chairman of the Association, for a period of three years. The period of office for a member of the Board of Directors shall be two years. However, two members shall resign each year. The first time shall be settled by lot to determine which two members of the Board of Directors shall serve only one year. The term of office of a deputy member is only one year. The Board of Directors shall choose a vice-chairman from amongst its numbers, as well as a secretary and treasurer; the latter two may also be appointed from outside the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors may also employ other necessary officials. The Board of Directors shall meet at the invitation of the Chairman, or, in the event that he is unable to attend, the Vice Chairman, when he feels there is good reason, or when at least half of the members of the Board of Directors shall so request it. The Board of Directors shall have a quorum when two of its members, in addition to the Chairman or Vice Chairman, are present. Votes shall be decided by an absolute majority. Should

the vote be a tie, the Chairman shall cast the deciding vote. However, in an election, the tie shall be decided by lot.

**§ 8 The Duties of the Board of Directors are:**

- to prepare an agenda for the Association meetings and to carry out the decisions of the said meetings
- to administer the day-to-day affairs of the Association and to represent the Association
- to handle other matters which are the duty of the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors shall have a quorum when at least two members in addition to the Chairman or Vice Chairman are present.

**§ 9 Official Association Signatories**

The official Association signatories shall be the Chairman of the Board of Directors, the Vice-Chairman, the Secretary, and the Treasurer. Any two may jointly sign the name of the Association.

**§ 10 Financial Period and Audit**

The Association's operating year and financial period shall be the calendar year. The final accounts must be completed annually by the end of January following which, and before February 15th, the final accounts must be presented for inspection.

Two auditors and two deputy auditors shall be elected at the September meeting for a period of one year to inspect the accounts and the administration of the Association.

**§ 11 Association Meetings**

The Association's Annual General Meeting shall be held annually on a date determined by the Board of Directors between January and May.

An extraordinary meeting shall be summoned when a meeting of the Association so decides, or when the Board of Directors shall decide there is reason to so do, or when at least one-tenth of the members of the Association shall request a meeting by presenting a written proposal to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors can decide to summon such a meeting at the earliest on month, and at the latest three months, after such a request has been received by the Board of Directors. Ordinary and honorary members have the right to vote in the Association's meetings.

## **§ 12      Summoning a Meeting**

The Board of Directors may summon meetings of the Association at least one month earlier in writing. Other notifications to the members shall be sent by post. In the absence of the Chairman and Vice Chairman, a member of the Board of Directors shall be chosen to chair the meeting. The chairman of a statutory meeting shall be chosen each time from amongst the Association's members.

## **§ 13      Annual General Meeting**

The Annual General Meeting is the statutory meeting of the Association. The following matters shall be handled in the meeting:

- declare the meeting open
- elect a chairman, secretary, two inspectors of the minutes, and, if necessary, two vote counters
- verify the legality of the meeting and that there is a quorum
- accept the agenda of the meeting
- present the final accounts, annual report, and auditors' report
- decide on the adoption of the final accounts, and grant freedom of responsibility to the Board of Directors and any others
- confirm the operating plan and budget
- determine the amount of the membership dues and fee to join the Association
- elect a Chairman and other members of the Board of Directors
- elect two auditors and their deputies every third year, decide on any other business presented to the meeting by a member or member of the Board of Directors providing a written proposal has been made to the Board of Directors in good time, so that it may be included in the summons to the meeting.

## **§ 14      Holding an Election**

Elections held in a meeting shall be decided by a simple majority, unless elected unanimously. Members of the Board of Directors shall be elected by sealed ballot. In votes, matters shall be decided by a simple majority of the votes.

Other votes in both the statutory and other meetings shall be held in the manner just mentioned, or in some other suitable fashion. In elections and all other matters, except those mentioned in

§14, the vote shall be decided by a simple majority of the votes. Should a regular vote be tied, it shall be decided by lot, and in all other matters the Chairman shall cast the deciding vote. In a statutory meeting, a member may vote as a proxy for one absent member.

**§ 15 Changing the Articles of Association and Dissolving the Association**

The decision to change the Articles of Association or dissolve the Association must be made in a meeting of the Association by a majority of at least three-quarters (3/4) of the votes cast. The notice of a meeting must mention that the Articles of Association are to be changed or that the Association is to be dissolved.

Should the Association be dissolved, the Association's funds shall be used in a manner determined by the meeting in the promotion of the Association's goals. In the event the Association ceases to exist, the funds shall be used in the same way.