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**Sultani Decree No. 14/2000**  
**Issuing the Civil Associations Law**

**Sultanate of Oman**

We, Qaboos bin Said, Sultan of Oman

After examining the basic law of the state issued by the Sultani Decree no. 101/96,

And the law regulating clubs and associations in the Sultanate issued in January 1972,

And taking into consideration the public interests,

have issued the following decree:

**Article (1)**

The attached Civil Associations Law shall enter into force.

**Article (2)**

The law regulating clubs and associations in the Sultanate referred to above and any provisions violating the provisions of this law or contradicting them shall be cancelled.

**Article (3)**

This decree shall be published in the Official Gazette. It shall enter into force as of the date of publishing it.

Qaboos bin Said

Sultan of Oman

Issued on: 7 Thu al-Qi'da 1420 AH

Corresponding to: 6 February 2000

# **Civil Associations Law**

## **Chapter One**

### **Definitions and General Provisions**

#### **Article (1)**

In applying the provisions of this law, the following words, wherever they appear in this Law, shall have the meanings assigned to them herein below, unless the context otherwise indicates:

The Ministry: Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour & Vocational Training

The Minister: The Minister of Social Affairs, Labour & Vocational Training

The Association: Any permanent group of natural persons organized to achieve purposes other than profit making and aiming at performing social, cultural or charitable activities. This includes associations, social and cultural clubs established by private institutions, companies or organizations, regardless of name given to them, even if physical sports are among their activities, unless sports are the main activity of the association or the club.

#### **Article (2)**

The provision of this law shall not apply to associations and cultural and artistic clubs registered under special laws.

#### **Article (3)**

The Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour & Vocational Training shall be the administrative body responsible for associations.

#### **Article (4)**

The fields of activities of associations are as follows:

1. Providing care for the orphans
2. Child and mother care
3. Women's services
4. Care for old aged people
5. Care for handicapped and people with special needs
6. Any other fields or activities the Minister proposes to add after obtaining the approval of the Council of Ministers.

No association shall undertake more than one activity without the prior approval of the Minister.

## **Article (5)**

Associations shall not be allowed to interfere in politics, to form political parties or to interfere in religious issues. They shall stay away of tribal and political sects. They shall not practice the following:

- a. Any activity other than that specified in their basic law;
- b. They shall not participate or join an association, commission or club based outside the country without the prior approval of the Minister;
- c. Hold public festivals or public lectures without obtaining a prior permission from the Ministry;
- d. Allow gambling or alcohol in their premises.

## **Chapter Two**

### **The Establishment of Associations**

## **Article (6)**

Any association shall have a written bylaw signed by the founding members. The number of founding members shall not be less than 20.

Any association shall have offices well equipped to practice its activities.

## **Article (7)**

The bylaws of associations shall contain the following information:

- a. The name of the association, its aims, means to achieve the aims, geographic scope of its activities, the center of its management which shall be located in the Sultanate of Oman. No association shall name itself with a name that could be confused with another association. No association shall give itself a foreign name.
- b. The names of the Founding members, their titles, their age, their nationality, their religion, their profession, and their place of residency;
- c. The financial resources of the association, means of utilizing and using these resources and the beginning and end of the financial year of the association;
- d. The governing bodies of the association, the competencies of each, means of selecting members and of removing them or means of terminating membership, the quorum of the general assembly and the board of directors and quorum for the legitimacy of their decisions.
- e. The name of the persons who represent the association;
- f. Conditions of membership and the rights and duties of members especially with regard to attending the meetings of the general assembly and voting in these meetings; the age of the members shall not be less than 18 years old and they shall not be convicted of a crime or a felony of honor of dignity unless their rights have been restored;
- g. Procedures for internal financial auditing;

- h. Procedures for amending the bylaws of the association, its merging, its divisions and procedures for establishing branches;
- i. Procedures for dissolving voluntarily of the association and the party to whom shall the assets of the association go in case of dissolving it.

#### **Article (8)**

The bylaws of the association shall not state any name of any association to whom its assets shall be transferred to if such an association is not registered according to the provisions of this law.

The assets of the association may not be transferred to any other association working in a different field without the prior approval of the Minister.

#### **Article (9)**

The founding members shall elect from among themselves the first board of directors for a term of one year. The board shall authorize from among its members a person or more to act on its behalf in conducting the registration procedures. The registration application shall be submitted to the Ministry stating the location of the association together with copies of the following documents signed by the president of the board and the coordinator:

1. List of founding members' names and a list of the board of directors names.  
The lists shall contain the names, titles, age, profession, nationality, place of residency and religion of members.
2. Minutes of meeting of the founding board
3. Minutes of meetings of the first board of directors
4. The decision of the board to authorize the person in charge of registration
5. The bylaws of the association

A certificate issued by concerned bodies stating that there is no objection on any member of the founding members shall be attached to the above documents.

#### **Article (10)**

The Ministry shall register the association by registering its bylaw in the special register for this purpose. A summary of the bylaw shall be published free of charge in the official gazette. The association shall have its legal personality upon publishing its registration in the official gazette.

#### **Article (11)**

The Ministry shall have the right to refrain from registering any society if it deems that the society does not need its services or in case there are other associations fulfilling the needs of the society with regard to the requested activity of the association. It may refrain from registering an association in case its registration violates the security of the state or its welfare or for any other reasons according to the decision of the Ministry.

The applicant shall be notified by registered mail of the denial decision. The decision shall be justified and those affected by the decision shall have the right to complain to the Minister during one month as of the date of receiving the denial notification referred to above. The decision of the Minister shall be considered as final.

**Article (12)**

Provisions of articles 10 and 11 shall apply on any amendment to the bylaws of the association.

**Article (13)**

No association shall have property rights or any other rights of real estate other than the necessary rights to achieve the aims its was established to achieve without a prior permission of the Minister.

**Article (14)**

No branches shall be established and the location of the association shall not be changed without the prior approval of the Minister. The request to open branches or to change the premises shall be submitted to the Ministry at least 30 days prior to any action.

**Article (15)**

The association shall keep the following records and books:

1. A register of the names of members and their membership fees
2. Minutes of meetings of the board of directors and the general assembly
3. Accounting books recording the income and the costs and donations together with supporting documents.
4. Any other books or registers the Ministry deems necessary to be kept at the premises of the association.

**Article (16)**

The name of the association, its address and its registration number shall be mentioned in all books and records and on the printed materials of the association.

**Article (17)**

The associations shall be under the supervision of the Ministry. This supervision includes monitoring the activities of the association and ensuring their compliance with the laws, bylaws of the association and the decisions of the general assembly. The supervision shall be made by investigators to be assigned by the Minister for this purpose. They shall have the right to enter the premises of the association and to examine their registers, books, documents and correspondences.

**Chapter Three**  
**The General Assembly**

**Article (18)**

The general assembly shall be formed of all members who paid their due amounts according to the basic law of the association and who have been members for at least six months with the exception of the first meeting.

#### **Article (19)**

The general assembly shall convene upon an invitation by the board of directors or a written request submitted to the board by a number not less than one-third of the members of the general assembly who have the right to attend the meeting or by an invitation by the Ministry. It shall convene at the premises of the association. The board may specify another place for the convening of the general assembly meeting. The place shall be specified in the invitation letter.

#### **Article (20)**

The agenda of the meeting shall be attached to the invitation letter to attend the general assembly meeting. The meeting shall not look into matters not listed on the agenda without the approval of the number of members stated in article (19).

#### **Article (21)**

The ordinary general assembly shall convene once every year within a period of three months as of the end of the financial year of the association to look into the following:

1. The report of the board of directors on the activities of the ended year and the action plan of the coming year;
2. The general budget and final accounts of the ended year and the draft budget of the coming year;
3. The report of the auditor;
4. Election of a new board and filling vacant seats
5. Assigning the auditor and specifying his remuneration in compliance with the state financial auditing law
6. Any other issues deemed necessary by the board.

#### **Article (22)**

The general assembly may convene to look into the following matters:

1. amending the bylaws of the association;
2. The termination of the membership of some or all board members and replacing them;
3. The merger of the association with another association working in the same field of activity;
4. Dissolving the association if it becomes incompetent to achieve its aims or the aims of its members; if it becomes unable to fulfill its financial commitments; if it uses its financial means for aims other than those it was established to fulfill; if it commits a huge violation to the provisions of this law or its internal bylaws.
5. To annul one of the decisions of the board of directors.

6. Other important and urgent issues the Minister may deem necessary to discuss.

A decision by the Minister shall be issued in case of merging the association or dissolving it.

**Article (23)**

The Minister shall be informed of each meeting of the general assembly at least 15 day prior to the meeting by a written notification to be sent to the Minister together with the agenda of the meeting and related papers and documents. The Ministry may assign whoever it deems necessary to attend the meeting.

**Article (24)**

A member may authorize another member to attend the general assembly meeting on his behalf according to the bylaws of the association. A member may not represent more than one member in the general assembly meeting.

**Article (25)**

The general assembly meeting shall not be considered legal if not attended by the absolute majority of its members. If this number is not attained, the meeting shall be postponed. The second meeting shall be held within a period of 15 days as of the day of the first meeting according to the bylaws of the association.

The second meeting shall be legal if attended by a number not less than 10% of the members.

**Article (26)**

The decisions of the ordinary general assembly shall be issued by the absolute majority of attending members. The decisions of the extraordinary general assembly shall be issued by the majority of its members unless the bylaws of the association requires a higher majority.

**Article (27)**

A member of the general assembly may not participate in the discussions or voting on issues presented for discussion if he has a personal interest or relation with issues under discussion, with the exception of the elections of the board of directors.

**Article (28)**

The Ministry shall be informed of the results of the meeting and a copy of the minutes of the meeting shall be sent to the Ministry within 15 days as of the date of the meeting. The minutes shall contain the decisions taken in the general assembly meeting.



## **Chapter Four**

### **The Board of Directors**

#### **Article (29)**

Every association shall have a board of directors. The members of the board shall not be less than five or more than 12 members. The term of the board shall be two years.

The board of directors shall handle the affairs of the association and shall be responsible for its activities.

#### **Article (30)**

A board member of an association may not become a board member of another association working in the same field without a prior approval from the Minister or the person authorized by him. A board member may not work for a wage in the association.

#### **Article (31)**

The Ministry may assign a representative to attend the board meeting and to give his opinion regarding an issue of public interest he deems necessary to be discussed. The representative shall have the right to discuss the issue of concern but shall not have the right to vote on it.

#### **Article (32)**

The Ministry shall be informed of the results of the board meeting and its decisions by sending a copy of the minutes to the Ministry within a period of 15 days as of the date of each meeting.

#### **Article (33)**

The Minister shall have the right to annul the decisions of a board meeting if the meetings convenes in violation to this law or the bylaws of the association. He may annul a decision issued by the board in case this decision is controversial without annulling the remaining decisions. In this case, other decisions remain valid. The board of directors shall be informed of the decision within a period of maximum one month as of the date of notifying the Ministry with the minutes of meetings of the board and the decisions issued at the meeting. Otherwise, the meeting and its decisions shall be valid.

#### **Article (34)**

The Minister, by a justified decision, may assign a temporary director for a period of not more than two years, or a temporary board of directors to handle the affairs of the association in one of the following cases:

1. If the number of the board members becomes less than the number needed for the proper convening of the board;

2. If the general assembly does not convene for two consecutive years without an excuse acceptable by the Minister.
3. If the board commits violations that require such a procedure and after notifying the board in writing with the importance of correcting the situation and the elapse of one month without taking any corrective measures.

#### **Article (35)**

The board of directors and those responsible for its activities shall deliver to the new director or board, the moment they are assigned, all the assets of the association, its records and its documentation. Such handing over shall not release the board or the responsible persons from their responsibility for any violation that has taken place.

#### **Article (36)**

The director of the temporary board shall handle the affairs of the association according to the competencies of the board. He shall call the general assembly to convene after the expiry of the period specified in the assignment decision and submit a report of the state of affairs of the association. The general assembly shall elect a new board of directors at the same session.

### **Chapter Five The Finances of the Association**

#### **Article (37)**

The finances of the association consist of:

1. Membership fees
2. Donations, grants and endowments (with the prior approval of the Minister)
3. Money collected from activities.
4. Government donations
5. Other revenues (with the prior approval of the Minister)

#### **Article (38)**

Every association shall have an annual budget and final accounts. If the expenditures of the association are above 10 thousand riyals, the board of directors must submit the accounts to an authorized auditor together with supporting documentation for auditing and to submit a report on the accounts at least one month before the convening of the general assembly in its annual meeting. A copy of the final accounts, the general budget, the report of the auditor and the report of the board shall be attached to the invitation letter to the general assembly meeting.

#### **Article (39)**

The association shall deposit its cash money in its name at one of the certified banks in Oman. It shall notify the Ministry with the name of the bank.

#### **Article (40)**

The association shall spend its funds to achieve its purposes. The board of directors, upon the approval of the Minister, may utilize the surplus amounts to ensure a constant source of income for the association given that this source does not affect the activities of the association.

**Article (41)**

The association may not get involved in financial predictions.

**Article (42)**

No association shall be allowed to receive funds from a foreign person or a foreign foundation. It may not transfer funds to a foreign person or foundation without the prior approval of the Minister with the exception of amounts to pay the prices of equipment and tools necessary for the association to practice its activities and the prices of books and printed material on the condition that these materials comply to the publications law.

**Article (43)**

The fixed and transferable assets of the association are the property of the association. No member shall have a right to this property. The removed member, the resigned member, and the member whose membership has terminated for any reason may not claim any amount of the funds of the association.

**Article (44)**

The association may not collect funds from the public or hold festivals and charitable markets except for the purpose of achieving their aims. They may not do so without a prior permission and license from the Minister.

The Minister shall issue a decision specifying the rules and procedures for giving such a license.

**Article (45)**

The Ministry may assign amounts in its budget to grant assistance to associations registered according to the provision of this law and according to rules and conditions specified by the Ministry with this regard. Among the bases for granting assistance for associations are:

1. The extent to which the association needs assistance to furnish its offices;
2. The extent of assistance the association needs to achieve its aims and to implement its activities;
3. The extent to which the association contributes to humanitarian services related to its activities;
4. If the association implements a social or a cultural project serving the social aims;

5. The periodic reports prepared by the Ministry on the activities of the association and the extent the association comply to this law, its executive procedures and to its internal bylaw.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Merging the Association and Dissolving it**

#### **Article (46)**

The Minister may decide to merge one association or more working in the same field of activity in one association in order to coordinate services provided by these associations or for any other reasons the Minister sees as achieving the purpose of the association. The Minister shall issue a justified decision of merging specifying the procedures for merging. He shall notify the concerned association with the merging decision when such decision is issued.

The board of directors of the association which a merging decision has been taken with its regard and its employees shall not have the right to take any procedure or decision related to the affairs of the association the moment they are notified of the merging decision. They shall hand over the fixed and transferable assets of the association and its documentation and special records to the association which they merged in.

#### **Article (47)**

The association may be dissolved by a justified decision to be taken by the Minister in the following cases:

1. If it proves unable to achieve the purposes and aims it was established to achieve;
2. If it spends its funds for reasons other than those specified in its aims;
3. If the general assembly does not convene for two consecutive years;
4. If the association commits a huge violation to this law, or its regulations or if it violates the public order and norms.

The association shall be notified of the dissolving decision in writing. The decision shall be published in the official gazette.

#### **Article (48)**

The responsible persons of the association in which a dissolving decision has been taken against it and its employees shall not be permitted to perform any act or to use the funds of the association the moment they are notified of the dissolving decision.

#### **Article (49)**

When the association is dissolved a liquidator shall be assigned for certain fees to be specified by the Ministry. Those responsible for the association shall deliver to the

liquidator all documents and special records of the association upon his request. Those responsible for the association, the bank and the employees of the association may not be allowed to use any of the funds of the association without a written order from the liquidator.

After liquidation, the liquidator shall distribute the remaining amounts according to the provisions of the internal bylaws of the association. When there are no such provisions, the Minister shall channel the amounts to a similar association or to more than one association registered according to the provisions of this law.

#### **Article (50)**

Those who prove to be responsible for the violations that led to the dissolving of the association may not be allowed to nominate themselves for the membership of the board of any other association for a period of 5 years as of the date of issuing the dissolving decision.

### **Chapter Seven**

#### **Associations of Public Purposes**

#### **Article (51)**

Associations of public purposes are those established to achieve public welfare. A decision from the Minister shall be issued, with the approval of the Council of Ministers, to consider an association as an association of public purpose.

#### **Article (52)**

The Council of Ministers shall issue a decision stating privileges of public purpose associations.

#### **Article (53)**

An association of public purpose may be assigned to manage a social organization under the supervision of the Ministry. It may implement one of its social projects according to the rules and conditions stated in the decision of the Minister for each such case separately.

### **Chapter Eight**

#### **Penalties**

#### **Article (54)**

Not contradicting any severer penalty stated in the Omani criminal law or any other law, a person who commits any of the following violations shall be punished by 6 months of imprisonment and of a fine not exceeding 500 riyals or by both penalties:

1. Any person who writes, submits, or holds back a record or book the law obliges him to issue, submit or hold back knowing that such contain incorrect

- information; any person who intentionally gives information to an unauthorized body, or hide information he should submit according to the law.
2. Any person who starts an activity prior to the registration of the association;
  3. Any person who performs an activity violating the purpose of the association; any person who spends its funds on activities that do not achieve the purposes of the association; any person who performs financial speculations with the funds of the association;
  4. Any person who allows other members whose names are not registered in the records of the association to participate in the management of the association or in the discussions of the general assembly;
  5. Any person who continues to participate in the activities of a dissolved association or dispose of its funds after being notified of the dissolving decision. Those responsible for the association and its employees shall be considered as notified of the dissolving decision upon informing the board of directors of the decision and upon publishing the decision in the official gazette.
  6. Any liquidator who distributes the funds of the association against the provisions of this law or the provisions of the dissolving decision.
  7. Any person who collects donations or accepts grants in violation of the provisions of this law. A decision may be taken to confiscate amounts collected by the Ministry to spend it on charitable actions.
  8. Any person from among the board of directors, the manager or the employees who refuses to hand over the funds, documents and books of the association to be merged to the association in which it has merged with or any person who refuses to hand over such to the temporary manager of board.

#### **Article (55)**

Without contradicting the provisions of article (54) above, any person who violates the provisions of this law or its executive procedures shall be punished by a fine of not more than 50 riyals.

#### **Article (56)**

The board of directors and the manager of the association, elected or assigned, shall be punished by penalties stated in article (55) if above violations were committed due to their negligence or carelessness in performing their duties.

#### **Article (57)**

The board of directors and the manager of the association, elected, assigned, or authorized, shall be personally held responsible for the compensation of all financial damage of the association resulting from violating their duties with their own financial means.

#### **Article (58)**

The Ministry may close the main offices of the association or any of its branches for a certain period of time to be specified by the Minister as a temporary procedure until a

temporary manager or board are assigned or until a merging or and dissolving decisions are taken.

**Article (59)**

Without contradicting the provisions of article (2), the provisions of this law shall apply to all existing associations when this law is issued. All associations shall amend their bylaws and submit registration applications according to the provisions of this law within a period of 6 months as of the date this law enters into force. Otherwise, the association shall be considered as dissolved.

**Article (60)**

Any association re-registered according to the provisions of this law, shall re-form its board of directors according to its bylaws within 3 months as of the day of re-registration.