

# **Convention on the Establishment of a Global Dryland Alliance**

## **Preamble**

The Member States,

*Recognizing* that food security has throughout history been the foremost concern of mankind,

*Aware* that countries in dryland regions are at a significantly greater risk from global climate change, population growth and socio-economic upheavals;

*Concerned* about the fragility of food security in dryland countries;

*Convinced* that the way forward for dryland countries is to put a greater emphasis on scientific research and technological progress in dryland farming to achieve a satisfactory level of food security;

*Recognizing* that the design and implementation of food security programs for dryland nations requires immediate action as well as a long-term vision insuring sustainability;

*Keen on* international cooperation in using the resources to enhance the agricultural output and to achieve closer collaboration with the international organisations as well as the financial institutions interested in promoting food security at the global and regional levels;

*Stressing the need* for cooperation among dryland countries and for the coordination of their policies to enhance food security levels, individually and collectively, to address the challenges they face;

*Have agreed to:*

## **Chapter 1**

### **General Provisions**

#### **Article 1**

#### **Definitions**

For the purposes of this Convention:

- (a) The abbreviation “GDA” stands for the Global Dryland Alliance;
- (b) The abbreviation “CCPR” stands for the Committee for Crisis Prevention and Response;
- (c) The term “Crisis” refers to a food crisis which occurs when rates of hunger and malnutrition rise sharply at local, regional or national levels usually due to variations in food supply and demand or to natural disasters and environmental problems;
- (d) The term “Executive Council” refers to a body comprising representatives of each of the Alliance Members duly authorised to make decisions on behalf of the Member State they represent on matters within the scope of the mission and objectives of GDA;
- (f) The term “Executive Director” designates an individual who is appointed by the Executive Council, amongst the citizens of the Member States, to head the GDA Secretariat.
- (h) The term “Interim Secretariat” refers to the secretariat that will carry out secretariat functions until the GDA Secretariat is established.
- (i) The term “Member”/Members refers to a State(s) that is a Party to this Convention;
- (j) The term “Partner” designates any State, international organization, multilateral organization, research institution, non-governmental organization, private sector or other entity that has been invited by, and has accepted the invitation of, the Executive Council to become a Partner of the GDA in accordance with the procedures and criteria set forth by the Executive Council.
- (k) The term “General Secretariat” refers to the administrative offices of the GDA.
- (l) The term “Voluntary Fund” refers to a monetary fund that collects the voluntary contributions, donations and gifts that are granted by the member states or their associates to fund the GDA objectives and enable it to exercise its functions.
- (m) The term “Depositary” designates or refers to a State or an international organization, to whom the depositing of the Convention is entrusted.
- Peer review:** A joint assessment process among the member states of an organization to ensure that the standards of quality and efficiency in a given field are respected.

## **Article 2**

### **Objectives**

#### **The Alliance shall:**

1. Work to enhance their food security by improving their individual capabilities to prevent food crises and to develop GDA's response capabilities to crises through mutual cooperation and assistance using their individual and collective resources as and when required.
2. Maintain, enhance and develop their individual and collective capacities to combat the threat of food shortages; commission research and implement measures to develop new solutions to their common food security problems and; provide mutual assistance in exceptional circumstances.
3. Consult each other and convene, if necessary, when a member state perceives the imminence of a threat to the food security of one or more of the Members or of the Alliance as a whole.

## **Article 3**

### **Scope and legal Status**

1. The Parties, hereby, establish the Global Dryland Alliance, subject to and governed by this Convention, as an intergovernmental organization with full legal personality, enjoying such legal capacity as may be necessary for the exercise of its functions and powers, and the fulfilment of its purposes, including in particular, and without prejudice to the general scope of powers,:
  - (a) to sign treaties, agreements and contracts;
  - (b) to dispose of them in all forms of legal management, in accordance with the laws of the State in which the funds, assets and rights are implemented;
  - (c) to purchase, sell, lease, improve, and invest assets;
  - (d) to engage in and respond to legal proceedings.
2. The GDA is an alliance of the States that are, or may subsequently be, party to this Convention.

## **Article 4**

### **Mandate**

1. In order to achieve the goals of the Alliance specified in Article 2, the GDA shall carry out the following major activities:

- (a) Identify, review and suggest improvements in Members' planning processes and in particular, policies with the aim to enhance food security;
- (b) Actively engage in research and technological innovation relevant to the Members' needs in the use of water and energy for agricultural purposes and for food security;
- (c) Evaluate research and formulate proposals for the implementation of development programs in member states and enhance their food security;
- (d) Take pre-emptive measures to anticipate and avert food Crisis situations;
- (e) Adopt joint policies and take measures to mitigate and address Members' food security threats;
- (f) Develop the capacity of Member states to enable each Member as well as the Alliance to respond to and manage food security crises;
- (g) Facilitate and coordinate the participation of the GDA Members in international and multilateral food security related efforts and projects; and
- (h) Broaden the dissemination of the benefits of the latest research and technological innovation among members for the purpose of reducing malnourishment, hunger and poverty.

2. The GDA may perform additional functions and tasks as needed and when required by the Executive Council.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Member States and Partners**

## **Article 5**

### **Member States**

The Members of the GDA are the States whose territories are covered at 50% by dryland area and that are at risk of food insecurity and are willing and able to commit to the objectives and activities of the Alliance.

## **Article 6**

### **Partners**

1. The Executive Council may invite any State, international organization, multilateral organization, research institute, non-governmental organization, private sector, or any other entity to be a Partner of the GDA.
2. Partners may, in accordance with the Executive Council's decisions, participate in the activities of the Alliance.
3. The aim of inviting Partners shall be to promote the Alliance's collaboration on initiatives of mutual interest with States having food security concerns as well as with organizations and entities that engage in or operate food security programs.

## **Article 7**

### **Partnerships**

1. The GDA may, in order to meet its objectives, entertain cooperation relationships with other organisations, including international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations and the private sector of the Member states and of other countries.
2. The GDA may also work with organisations pursuing similar objectives on strategic partnerships for mutual cooperation on medium and long-term basis.
3. Partnerships shall constitute a means to facilitate the dissemination of best practices, technical know-how and of field proven solutions developed by the GDA.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Policies Review and coordination**

## **Article 8**

### **Commitment to Engage in peer and collaborative Policy Review**

1. Policy review process is based on a number of principles, of which the most important are peer and collaborative review. Members shall, on an ongoing basis, participate in a process of mutual policy review and dialogue as part of the process of cooperation to enhance the food security for their populations of member states. This process will facilitate the dissemination of best practices and ensure that the Members' expertise and experience be shared amongst them.

2. The Executive Council shall, on the basis of a proposal from the Executive Director, define the objectives of, and the processes involved in, Member policy reviews.

## **Article 9**

### **Review Objectives**

1. Review processes shall be organized with the assistance of experts, scientists and scholars appointed to this end by the Executive Committee. The process will involve reviewing policies and making recommendations with the objective of upgrading the systems in place in Member states to contribute to:

(a) Improving food security for the citizens as well as the residents of the Member states;

(b) Achieving agriculture sustainability and scarce resources preservation;

(c) Expanding and organizing the knowledge base of the Members and evaluating the adequacy and suitability of the existing education systems (including agricultural extension services) with regards to food production, transportation, storage and consumption;

(d) Evaluating the extent to which scientific and technological advancement can be employed to achieve progress on matters of food security;

(e) Attaining optimal capacity in food production and in the use of water and energy resources;

(f) Improving accessibility to agriculture and food industries financing.

2. The findings and recommendations of each completed review process shall be documented in the form of a comprehensive report that analyses the existing policy structures and suggests measures to address the problems and coordinate policies with a view to serve the objectives of the Alliance.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Research, Science and Technology**

## **Article 10**

### **Commitment to Collaboration in Research and Technological Innovation**

1. In order to foster the development and sharing of knowledge among dryland countries, GDA shall support research and technological innovation aimed at improving the capacity of the Members in relation to food security and water stewardship.

Work in research and technological innovations fields shall focus on filling the gaps in important knowledge spheres as well as on addressing the problems of the implementation apparatus, while ensuring to make the best use of the research and initiatives undertaken by other organizations and entities to avoid duplication.

2. The GDA research and innovation program shall be financed *inter alia*. This shall include, among other sources, the Alliance Voluntary Fund. Funding may be directed to international or multilateral organisations, research institutes, academic institutions, private sector entities, and individual scientists, as warranted by the Executive Council decisions whenever necessary.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Mutual Assistance**

#### **Article 11**

##### **Mutual assistance aims**

The Alliance aims to address the root causes of food insecurity rather than merely tackling its symptoms. Members shall be committed to preparedness and mutual assistance as decided by the Executive Council in order to respond to Crises and to manage shortfalls in access to food supplies that may occur from time to time in any of the Member States.

#### **Article 12**

##### **Crisis Prevention, Management, and Response Procedures**

1. The Alliance shall establish the CCPR. Members shall set up, coordinate and implement Crisis prevention and response mechanisms via the Executive Council and the CCPR. The Executive Council, acting on the advice of the CCPR, and as it sees appropriate, shall decide on the minimum food stock levels and other preventive measures, in compliance with the principles set out in this Chapter in relation to mutual assistance.

2. The Executive Council, acting on the advice of the CCPR, is the body that decides whether a particular event or events impose the activation of the mutual assistance commitment as set out in this Chapter.

The Executive Council also determines the course of mutual assistance to be followed in response to some specific event/events brought to its attention by one or more of the GDA Members.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Funding**

#### **Article 13**

##### **Mandatory Contributions**

1. Members of the Global Dryland Alliance shall establish an equitable basis for the mandatory contributions collected for funding the GDA's approved budget.
2. Quotas for the charged contributions will be calculated on the basis of an indicative scale, which shall be according to the Gross National Income of the Member State and its economic capacity to contribute to the Alliance budget.
3. The Executive Council may also accept monetary or in-kind contributions for day-to-day expenses, including Secretariat expenses, from interested Members and Partners. With the Executive Council concurring, such contributions may be restricted or unrestricted in nature.
4. The Executive Council adopts the quotas of the Member States' contributions, calculated on the basis of the above mentioned indicative scale after their ratification by the Member States. Any modification of these quotas shall be made by the Executive Council and with the concurring of the Member States.
5. The Executive Council may also accept monetary or in-kind contributions - not restricted in nature-, from Member States and Partners interested in funding day-to-day expenses, including Secretariat expenses.
6. The Executive Council may also accept donations, grants or other monetary or in-kind contributions -not restricted in nature-, from Member States or Partners interested in funding the GDA missions and activities or in implementing its programs and actions.

#### **Article 14**



## **Audit Committee**

1. The Executive Council shall appoint external financial auditors to conduct periodic audits, at least annually, of the Alliance's financial operations, and make reports of such audits accessible to all Members.
2. The Executive Council shall constitute an audit committee composed of no less than three representatives from amongst the Member states to be appointed by the Executive Council at the beginning of every year to review annual audit reports.
3. The committee members shall attempt to unanimously adopt resolutions. However, committee members are encouraged to record their justification for their dissenting vote in the minutes. The decision making of the audit committee shall proceed by majority votes. In the event of a tie, the chairman of the committee shall have the deciding vote.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Organs**

#### **Article 15**

#### **The Executive Council**

1. The Executive Council is the decision-making body of the GDA and shall be comprising one representative for each Member state.
2. The Executive Council shall meet at least twice a year in the GDA headquarters. It can also meet with the concurring of the Member States in at a location different from the GDA headquarters provided there are sound reasons for that change.
3. The chairmanship of the Executive Council shall rotate among the Members on annual basis in alphabetical order based on the English alphabet.
4. The Executive Council shall have the authority to amend this Convention, the decision-making, the interpretation of the provisions of this Convention and to apply them.
5. The Executive Council shall invite Partners, from time to time, to attend meetings to debate issues of interest and make the most of their contributions.
6. The Executive Council shall make its decisions by a vote of the majority of the Members present at a meeting, unless it decides, through the regular voting procedure, that another voting rule shall apply to decisions on some specific

subjects. The decisions on the GDA budget, the approval to fund non-administrative activities through mandatory assessed contributions, the adoption of financial norms and rules, the criteria for Accession of other countries to this Convention and the appointment of the Executive Director shall, in all cases, be made by the consensus of all Members entitled to vote.

7. A Member state that is in arrears in the payment of their mandatory assessed contributions, in an amount that equals or exceeds the contributions due for two preceding years, shall lose its right to vote in the Executive Council unless the Executive Council decides that the inability to pay is attributable to conditions beyond the concerned Member's control.

8. No meeting of the Members or of the Executive Council shall take place unless the required quorum has effectively been reached

9. The Executive Council may establish any subsidiary organs if they deem it necessary for the exercise of their functions. Resolutions issued by the Executive Council in this regard shall determine the functions and tasks of the established bodies.

## **Article 16**

### **The General Secretariat**

1. The Executive Council shall establish an Interim Secretariat to carry out the Alliance secretariat functions under the authority of the Executive Council and the supervision and tutelage of the Executive Director. The Secretariat shall be in charge of implementing the GDA's work plan and of achieving its objectives.

2. The Executive Council shall appoint through voting an Executive Director with four-year tenure for a maximum of two consecutive terms. The Executive Council may, at will, relieve the Executive Director of his duties.

3. Awaiting the set-up of the General Secretariat, an Interim Secretariat shall serve and perform the functions of the permanent Secretariat. The most senior officer of the Interim Secretariat shall act as the Executive Director of the GDA for that period.

## **Chapter 8**

### **The Financial and Procedural Provisions**

#### **Article 17**

##### **Financial Resources**

1. The GDA shall be financed through:
  - a. assessed contributions from member states;
  - b. voluntary contributions provided by Member States to the Voluntary Fund;
  - c. voluntary contributions, including intellectual property and in-kind gifts, provided by non-governmental sources, the private sector and partners;
  - d. the sale of publications;
  - e. interest income from trusts and endowment;
  - f. innovative Financing; and
  - g. any other available sources for access in compliance with the financial rules and regulations to be adopted by the Executive Council.
2. Members are encouraged to support the GDA through annual voluntary contributions of core funding, active engagement in its activities and through other appropriate means.

#### **Article 18**

##### **Headquarters**

1. The GDA shall have its headquarters in Doha, State of Qatar. The General Secretariat shall be located at the headquarters. The meetings of the Executive Council and the advisory council shall take place at the headquarters unless otherwise decided by the Executive Council.
2. The Executive Council may deem it necessary to elect to open regional office(s) to better fulfil the GDA's objectives.

## **Article 19**

### **Languages**

The official and working languages of the GDA shall be Arabic, English, and French. All final documentation related to the GDA's programs shall be issued in all the three languages.

## **Article 20**

### **Privileges and Immunities**

1. The GDA and its officials shall enjoy, in the territory of each of its Member states-except for the citizens of the state in question-, the legal capacity, privileges and immunities necessary for the exercise of the GDA functions and the accomplishment of its objectives,.

2. The legal status of the GDA headquarters in the host state and the privileges and immunities that should be granted to GDA personnel in the host state shall be determined in accordance with a Host Agreement to be concluded between the GDA and the host state.

3- The privileges and immunities thus granted shall allow the GDA personnel to perform their duties fully and independently. When deemed necessary, the GDA and other Member states shall conclude agreements on a bilateral basis that provide for privileges and immunities for GDA personnel from those Member states.

## **Chapter 9**

### **Final Provisions**

## **Article 21**

### **Implementation**

1. The Members shall take all necessary measures, including any necessary legislative measures, to implement this Convention and the decisions taken by the Executive Council, as well as any other policies and programs adopted by the Alliance

2. In order to fulfil its obligations under this Convention, each Member shall designate or establish a national authority to serve as the national focal point for effective liaison with the GDA and the other Members.

3- The implementation or interpretation of the provisions of this Agreement is subject to full compliance with and non-violation of laws, rules or regulations in force in Member States.

## **Article 22**

### **Settlement of Disputes**

In the event of disputes arising from or relating to this Convention, the disputing Member states or groups of Member states (parties) shall enter into consultations for the purpose of finding an amicable solution. If no such solution is forthcoming, the dispute or conflict is resolved by diplomatic means.

## **Article 23**

### **Accession and Ratification**

1. The Parties shall ratify this Convention in compliance with its legal requirements. The Convention shall enter into force for the States that have ratified it and whose ratifications have been deposited.
2. The Members may invite any other State, whose adherence will contribute to further or support the principles of this Convention, to accede to this Convention. The State so invited may become a Party to the Convention by depositing its instrument of Accession and adherence with the Depositary. The depositary will notify each of the Parties of the instruments of accession he receives.
3. No section in this Convention shall be interpreted as in any way limiting or detracting from the obligations assumed by any State under other treaties or conventions.

## **Article 24**

### **Entry into Force**

This Convention shall come into force upon Ratification by five (5) of the signatories.

## **Article 25**

### **Withdrawal**

Any party wishing to withdraw from this Convention shall notify the GDA Secretariat and all Member Focal Points in writing. Withdrawal shall be effective twelve months from the date of the written notification. All rights and obligations of the withdrawing Member shall cease as of the effective date of withdrawal.

## **Article 26**

### **Depositary**

1. The Depositary of this convention shall be the State of Qatar.
- 2- The original copy of this Convention shall be deposited at the Depositary
- 3- The depositary shall transmit to the designated national bodies of the Member States certified copies of this Convention.
3. Unless otherwise provided for in the present Convention, any notification or communication from any Member under the present Convention shall be transmitted to the Depositary stating the names of the Member(s) for which it is intended.
- 5- The depositary shall inform the relevant member (s) of the notification, and the Member shall, then, confirm reception.

**DONE AND SIGNED in Doha on Fifteen October two thousand seventeen** in a single original of which the Arabic, English and French are equally authentic.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned plenipotentiaries, being duly authorized by their respective governments, have signed the present Convention.