

CHAPTER 468

CONGRESS OF RELIGIONS

Act No. 13 of 1970. AN ACT TO INCORPORATE THE CONGRESS OF RELIGIONS.

[12th March, 1970.]

Short title. 1. This Act may be cited as the Congress of Religions Act.

service possessing a spiritual background that also galvanises the energies of the community as a whole.

Incorporation of the Congress of Religions. 2. (1) From and after the date of the commencement of this Act, the members for the time being of the Congress of Religions (hereinafter referred to as the "Congress") and such and so many persons as shall after that date be admitted members of the Congress shall be and are hereby constituted a body politic and corporate (hereinafter referred to as the "Corporation") with the name of "The Congress of Religions".

4. The governing body of the Corporation shall, subject to the rules in force for the time being of the Corporation as hereinafter provided, be the Council consisting of such members with such qualifications and who shall exercise such powers as the said rules shall direct. The first Council of the Corporation shall be the Council of the Congress of Religions for the time being consisting of Messrs. D. L. F. Pedris, T. R. Rustomjee, E. W. Kannangara, Alhaj S. M. A. Raschid, Mrs. Grace Wijeyekoon, Messrs. Oliver L. Abeyesekera, C. V. Wigneswaran, U. L. M. Farook, Theodore Abesekera, F. H. P. Joseph, Dr. Lucien Dharmaratne, Col. R. Sabanayagam, Messrs. S. Somasunderam, Ben J. Thiedeman, M. R. Unni Nayar, A. C. Nadarajah, S. T. Molligoda, M. M. Jayah, V. S. M. de Mel, Alhaj M. M. Cassim, Rev. Fr. S. T. Balasuriya, Messrs. S. C. Banker, C. Thanabalasinham, D. R. Gunasegaram, M. Kanagasabay, K. Kanagaratnam, Commander A. G. Devendra, Rev. Fr. V. de P. Gnanapragasam, Messrs. K. Sivapalan, C. B. Walgampaya, S. Sankarakumaran, Anurudha Ratwatte, S. H. M. Sahidu, S. Gunadhira and Commander D. C. Ingleton.

The Council.

(2) The Corporation shall, in the said name and for the purpose hereinafter mentioned, have perpetual succession, and may by the said name sue and be sued in all courts, and shall have full power and authority to use a common seal and to alter the same at its discretion.

General objects of the Corporation. 3. The general objects for which the Corporation is constituted are hereby declared to be—

- (c) to establish and maintain an Inter-Religions Council composed of the religious leaders of the community to resolve acrimonies and allay suspicion among religious denominations;
- (b) to sponsor action that promotes mutual understanding between religious denominations;
- (c) to sponsor action that promotes religious amity based on such mutual understanding; and
- (d) while not by any means undermining the value of sectarian or secular social service, to sponsor a form of

5. The affairs of the Corporation shall be administered by an executive body called the Executive Committee composed of the office-bearers of the Congress as are eligible under the rules of the Corporation and it shall consist of such number of members with such qualifications exercising such powers and for such periods as the said rules shall direct.

The Executive Committee.

Debts due and payable to Corporation.

6. All debts and liabilities of the Congress existing at the time of coming into operation of this Act shall be paid by the Corporation hereby constituted, and all debts due to and subscriptions and contributions payable to the Congress shall be paid to the Corporation for the purposes of this Act.

expulsion of members, for the conduct of the duties of the Executive Committee and of the various officers, agents and servants of the Congress, for the procedure to be observed at meetings, for convening meetings, for the transaction of the business of the Congress, for the administration and management of the property of the Congress, for the determination of the subscription payable by members and the collection of such subscriptions, and otherwise generally for the management of the affairs and the accomplishment of the objects of the Congress. Any such rule may at such a meeting be amended, added to or repealed.

Power of Corporation to hold property.

7. The Corporation shall be able and capable in law to receive and to hold property both movable and immovable, which may be vested in it by virtue of any purchase, grant, gift, testamentary disposition or otherwise; and all such property shall be held by the Corporation for the purposes of this Act and subject to the rules for the time being of the Corporation with full power (subject to any trust attaching to such property and to the law regulating such trusts) to sell, mortgage, lease, exchange or otherwise dispose of the same.

10. The rules set out in the Schedule* to this Act shall for all purposes be the rules of the Corporation:

Rules in the Schedule to be the rules of the Corporation.

Provided, however, that nothing in this section contained shall be held or be construed to prevent the Corporation at all times hereafter from making fresh rules or from altering, amending or adding to the existing rules or to rules which are hereafter made by the Corporation.

Seal of Corporation.

8. The seal of the Corporation shall not be affixed to any instrument whatsoever except in the presence of the Board of Trustees, the General Secretary and a member of the Executive Committee of the Congress duly authorized for the purpose under the rules thereof, who shall sign their names to the instrument in token of their presence, and such signing shall be independent of the signing of any person as a witness,

11. No rule in the Schedule* to this Act nor any rule which may hereafter be passed at a meeting shall be altered, added to, amended or rescinded, except by a vote of the majority of the members present and voting at a general meeting of the members of the Congress.

Amendment, &c.. of rules.

Power to make rules.

9. It shall be lawful for the Corporation from time to time at any general meeting of the members and by a majority of the members present and voting, to make, subject to the provisions of sections 10 and 11, rules for the admission, withdrawal or

12. Nothing in this Act contained shall prejudice or affect the rights of the Republic, or of any body politic or corporate, or of any other persons, except such as are mentioned in this Act, and those claiming by, from, or under them,

Savings of rights of the Republic and others.

* Schedules omitted.—Private enactment.