

World Brahman Federation

Constitution

Preamble

1. World Brahman Federation, abbreviated as WBF, is an international organization of Brahmans. The organization is based in North America and registered in the state of New York as a not-for-profit- organization.

2. The objective of the WBF is to promote social, cultural, educational, and religious links between Brahmans of the world, and to uplift the international Brahman community. The WBF will put a special emphasis on educating the younger generation not only in Brahman values but modern education and encourage them to become excellent citizens of the country where they live. The WBF will collaborate with like-minded Brahman organizations of the world and help them to achieve that objective.

3. It is understood that WBF strongly disapproves the evils of Hindu caste system. WBF promotes respect for all human beings and is against all types of discrimination. WBF takes pride in its own identity and believes that we can have respect for different cultures only if we have respect for our own.

4. The WBF will be operated in accordance with this constitution, referred to as the WBF Constitution.

5. For brevity, in this document, only the pronoun ‘he’ is used which will also refer to “she”.

6. For brevity, the isolated word “President” in this document refers to the President of the WBF. The Presidents of other organizations are referred explicitly by the name of that organization.

7. If a referred fraction of membership is not an integer, the fraction will be rounded up to the next integer. For example, $\frac{1}{3}$ of 16 will be taken to be 6 and $\frac{1}{3}$ of 15 will be taken to 5.

8. This constitution will be regarded as a draft until approved. It must be approved by the current Executive Committee (EC) and then by the General Body (GB) by a simple majority vote. Until the draft is approved, the GB is defined to be all the current members of the WBF. The current President will ensure that all members of the EC and then the GB get a suitable and reasonable opportunity to consider the draft constitution and give their vote either by post or by authentic email.

9. A copy of the approved constitution and signed by the current President, the current General Secretary, and the writer of this draft, should be retained at a suitable place. This signed copy will be regarded as the authentic version of the constitution. It is understood

that an obvious typographical error can be corrected by the EC before the authentic version is finalized. Such a correction will not be regarded as an amendment in the constitution but the GB must be informed of the correction.

10. It is recognized that the WBF was conceived and founded in the year 2000 at the BSNA World Brahman Convention by the Brahman Samaj of North America (BSNA), All India Kanyakubja Board, (AIKB), All India Brahmin Mahasabha (AIBMS), and Brahmin International (BI) under the leadership of Mr. Nirmalendu Choubey who will act as the President of the WBF until a President is elected in accordance with the constitution. The four organizations BSNA, AIKB, AIBMS, and BI are recognized as the Founding Organizations.

11. This constitution was finally approved on Sept. 15, 2008 in accordance with Sec. 8 of the Preamble as given above. The approved constitution giving bylaws and operational guidelines starts on the next page. The preamble must be read along with the constitution.

Authenticity of the draft verified and confirmed by

Vinod Tewary
(Writer of the draft)

Date: Dec. 30, 2008

Abhayanand Mahraj
General Secretary, WBF

Date: Dec 30, 2008

Nirmalendu Choubey
Founder President, WBF

Date: Dec. 30, 2008

WBF Constitution: Bylaws and guidelines for operation

1. Structure of the WBF

i. The WBF will consist of a Nucleus and several Regional Constituent Organizations (abbreviated as RCOs) as described in Sections 6 and 9 below. The Nucleus will be entirely located in North America. The RCOs will be set up by the President in different regions of the world. The regions of the world where RCOs will be created, will be decided by the President based upon considerations of efficiency, viability in terms of numbers, strength, and support of the local community.

ii. For the purpose of organizational efficiency, the President may constitute two Nuclear Constituent Organizations (NCOs): WBF- Canada and WBF-Mexico for members residing in Canada and Mexico respectively. These two constituent organizations will be parts of the WBF and will be governed by the constitution of the WBF as described below:

- a. The NCOs will be autonomous organizations for all their internal matters subject to provisions given in this section.
- b. Each NCO will make their own constitution or by-laws which must be consistent with the WBF constitution as determined by the WBF.
- c. The members of the NCOs will be regarded as the Nuclear members of the WBF as defined later in Sec. 2 below. Normally each nuclear member of the WBF residing in Canada or Mexico will be a member of the NCO of that country subject to rules and operations of that NCO. However, if a nuclear member does not want to join the NCO of his country, he can become or remain a direct member of the WBF.
- d. Each NCO will decide its own method of governance and its governing body and the leaders will be elected by poll or by consensus through a democratic process by the members of that NCO. The specific process will be determined by the NCO itself but must be reported to the WBF and approved by the WBF.
- e. The Chief (President or the equivalent position holder) of each NCO will be a member of the WBF EC defined in Sec. 7 below. In case the Chief of an NCO is unable to attend a meeting of the WBF EC, he can designate a nominee to attend that meeting.
- f. Each NCO will determine its own membership dues, keep and control its funds, and handle its own financial matters. A reasonable percentage of the membership dues as determined by the NCO and the WBF will be paid to the WBF. If needed, an NCO can ask the WBF for financial or any other support. The WBF will consider the request sympathetically and help the NCO to whatever extent possible.
- g. The NCO will make all decisions in matters confined to their own organizations but all such decisions must be consistent with the WBF constitution and must be reported to the WBF.

- h. The NCOs can also make a decision regarding their dealings with other organizations and people outside their country but such decisions must be approved by the WBF.
- i. In case an NCO makes a decision that is regarded by the WBF to be inconsistent with the WBF constitution or against the interest of the WBF, the WBF may ask the NCO to reconsider and/or revise the decision. In an extreme case, the WBF may dismantle the governing body of that NCO, or even the NCO itself. Any decision of the WBF that involves dismantling an NCO will be regarded as a structural change and must be taken in accordance with Sec. 14 of this constitution.

2. The membership of the WBF is open to Brahmans and like-minded organizations all over the world. Presently, WBF has the following categories of membership:

i. Nuclear membership:

Nuclear membership will be offered to individuals on application and payment of prescribed dues. Nuclear membership will be restricted to residents of North America. The spouse of a Nuclear member will also be regarded as a Nuclear member subject to the condition of residence in North America. Nuclear membership will be in the following categories:

a. Annual Nuclear membership: This will be valid for one full or part of the calendar year.

b. Life Nuclear membership: This will be for the whole life of the member.

c. Invited Nuclear membership: This will be offered to some distinguished individuals of the community for a specific period for the purpose of strengthening the organization.

ii. Honorary membership: This will be offered to some distinguished individuals of the community anywhere in the world in recognition of their contributions to community and the society in general for a specific period or for the whole life.

iii. Organizational membership

Organizational membership is a corporate membership which will be offered to the Founding Organizations and other like-minded Brahman organizations and associations, on application and payment of prescribed dues. In the interest of promoting Brahman values, WBF may waive the membership dues for certain organizations. Subject to availability of resources, the WBF will provide financial and other support to such member organizations.

iv. Affiliate membership

It is offered to individuals who are members of a member organization defined in (iii), on payment of prescribed dues. It is expected that these dues will be less than that for full membership to ensure that WBF does not compete with any existing like-minded Brahman organization. Dependent family members of affiliate members will also be treated as affiliate members.

iv. Regional membership: This will be offered to individuals who live outside North America and will be valid for the RCO operating in the region of residence of the member. Immediate and dependent family members of Regional members will also be regarded as members in the same category.

3. The General Body of the WBF

The General Body, abbreviated as GB, will consist of all the Nuclear members as defined in Sec. 2 (i) plus the Regional Presidents, General Secretaries, and the Treasurers (or those holding equivalent responsibilities) of the RCOs as defined in Sec. 6 below. In addition, the GB can also include some co-opted members as decided by the President from time to time. The co-opted membership will be offered for a specific period not exceeding one year unless renewed by the President. The number of co-opted members can not exceed 1/2 of the number of the Nuclear members. The co-opted members can be from anywhere in the world.

4. The Board of Directors

i. The Board of Directors, abbreviated as BOD, will consist of certain distinguished members of the community as described later in this section.

ii. The main task of the BOD will be to advise the President on the long term planning and growth of the WBF, its interface with other organizations, welfare of the Brahman community, and any other matters referred to the BOD by the President. In view of the important role envisioned for the BOD, it is necessary not to limit their scope by involving them into routine operations of the WBF. Hence the BOD will not have any executive responsibilities or authority. The President will consult the BOD on various matters at his discretion from time to time to seek its advice and also keep the BOD informed about the state of the WBF. The advice of the BOD will not be a binding on the President but it is expected that the President will consider the advice seriously and will not go against it without valid reasons.

iii. The BOD will consist of the Regional Presidents (or those holding equivalent responsibilities) of the RCOs and the Presidents of the Founding Organizations or their nominees. The RCOs have been defined in Sec. 6 below. In addition, the President will appoint more members of the BOD as needed. These members will be distinguished members of the community with excellent reputation and a commitment to the

community. The members appointed by the President will not be normally members of the WBF EC.

iv. The President will be the Chairperson of the BOD. The President will also appoint a Deputy Chairperson of the BOD from amongst its members. All meetings of the BOD will be chaired by the President or, in his absence, by the Deputy Chairperson. If neither of them are available to chair a particular meeting of the BOD, one of the BOD members will chair that meeting with the consent of other members of the BOD.

v. A meeting of the BOD will be normally called by the President or his designee. Any member of the BOD can ask the President to call a meeting to discuss any particular issue but the President will not be bound to accept that suggestion unless it is supported by 1/3 of the total membership of the BOD not counting the President.

5. Officers of the WBF

i. The President will appoint the following officers of the WBF from amongst the elected Cabinet: one Executive Vice President (abbreviated as EVP), one or more Vice Presidents (abbreviated as VPs), one General Secretary (abbreviated as GS), and one Treasurer. In addition, the President can appoint more officers from the elected Cabinet for specific tasks in the interest of organizational efficiency. The election of the Cabinet is described in Sec. 11 below.

ii. The duties of all the officers will be as assigned by the President. The EVP will have additional responsibilities as given below.

iii. The EVP will deputize for the President whenever the President or his designee is not available. If the President is unable to perform his duties for a certain period, the EVP will act as the President during that period. If for any reason the President leaves the WBF, the EVP will become the President during the remainder of the President's term.

6. Regional Officers

i. The President will form RCOs all over the world as described in Sec. 9 and appoint a Regional President for each RCO. In the selection of the RCO, the President will seek the opinion of the local members or local prospective members of the RCO.

ii. The Regional President of each RCO, in consultation with the President, will then appoint a Regional Vice President, a Regional General Secretary, and a Regional Treasurer. In addition more officers can be appointed by a Regional President in consultation with the President as needed for organizational efficiency.

iii. The duties of the Regional President will be assigned by the President. The duties of all other Regional Officers will be assigned by the corresponding Regional President in consultation with the President.

7. The Executive Committee of the WBF

i. The Executive Committee, abbreviated as EC, of the WBF will consist of the President and the elected Cabinet as defined in Sec. 11 below plus all the NCO Presidents plus some more members as defined in Sec. 7 (ii) below. The President will be the Chief of the EC.

ii. The President can appoint up to two additional members of the EC with or without specific portfolio from outside the elected cabinet. These members can be from anywhere in the world but must be members of the GB. These members can be selected if there is a clear need as determined by the President and approved by the existing EC. The President must also obtain approval from the GB within 12 months of their appointment.

iii. If any vacancy (except for the position of the President) is created in the cabinet, the President can fill the vacancy by appointing a person with the approval of the existing EC. The President must obtain approval from the GB within 12 months of the appointment.

iv. The procedure described in (iii) above can be used to fill more than one vacancies provided the number of such special appointments at any time does not exceed 3/4th of the total strength of the original elected cabinet. If the number of vacancies created is more than 3/4th of the total strength of the original elected cabinet, the additional vacancies must be filled through a mid-term election as described in Sec. 11 below, within 180 days from the date the vacancy occurs. If the remaining term of the cabinet is less than 180 days, then no mid-term election will be held and the vacancy will remain.

8. Operations of the WBF

i. All the decisions pertaining to the WBF including RCOs will be taken by the President of the WBF or on his behalf.

ii. All the decisions of the President regarding the operation of the WBF, NCOs or RCOs but not regarding calling a meeting in certain circumstances as given in see Sec. 10 below, must be pre-approved by the EC except in urgent situations, when the President can take a decision on his own. Whether a situation is urgent requiring a Presidential decision or not will be determined by the President with or without any consultation. Such decisions must be reported to the EC as soon as possible

iii. The EC will decide on an issue by a simple majority after a vote conducted by the Chairperson of that meeting who will be normally the President as given (vi) below. The votes of the EC members must be disclosed to the GB. The Chairperson will advise the EC about his stand in advance of the voting. His stand can be in favor of the issue, against an issue, or neutral. The Chairperson will not vote on an issue except, if he wishes, he can give the decisive vote in the event of a tie or an equalizing vote to

maintain the status quo on an issue in the event if the difference of votes between two sides is just one.

iv. In the event of a tie the status quo will be retained but the issue can be presented to the EC again for discussion and voting after at least one week. In case of a situation in which EC can not reach a decision and which the President determines to be urgent, he can take a decision himself.

v. All decisions of the President and/or the EC can be changed by the GB.

vi. All the meetings of the EC and GB will be normally chaired by the President or his designee who would normally be the EVP except as prescribed in Sec. 10 below.

vii. The President can appoint advisory or functional committees and their Chairpersons for specific tasks and for specific periods. The Chairpersons of these committees can be invited to be honorary members of the EC. The honorary members of the EC may be invited to the EC meetings. They can only take part in the discussion of an issue and give their advice to the EC. They will not be treated as members of the EC for any purpose such as voting or fulfilling the requirements of the quorum of the EC.

viii. The operational year of the WBF will normally be a calendar year. This can be changed by the President for specific cases for reasons of operational convenience.

ix. In any voting process, each member will cast just one vote.

9. Regional Constituent Organizations

A. Officers of the RCOs

i. The Regional President of each RCO will be selected by the President as given in Sec. 6 (i).

ii. The Regional President of each RCO will select a Regional Vice President and a suitable number of other Regional Officers of the RCO subject to the approval of the EC until they are decided in accordance with Sec. 9-C given below.

B. Regional Executive Committees

The Regional President will form a Regional Executive Committee consisting of all the Regional Officers of that RCO and some more members as needed for efficient running of the organization subject to the approval of the EC.

C. Regional Byelaws of the RCOs

- i. Each Regional Executive will draft Regional Byelaws for its own RCO which must be approved by the EC only to ensure that they are consistent with the overall principles and objectives of the WBF.
- ii. The Regional Byelaws will define the Regional General Body of the RCO and the method for selection of Regional Officers and the Regional Executive through a local election. These Regional Officers including the Regional President and the Regional Executive will not need approval of the EC.

D. Operations of the RCOs

- i. The RCOs are considered to be part of the WBF and, subject to availability of resources, will be provided financial and other support by the WBF. They will be governed by the rules of the WBF except as indicated in Sec. 9-D (ii) below.
- ii. The RCOs will be autonomous in all operational matters that deal strictly with that RCO including financial matters. All regional decisions of an RCO will be made by its Regional Executive Committee subject to review and approval by the EC with the sole objective to ensure conformity with the WBF.
- iii. Any activity including financial matters of the RCO which affect the WBF outside that Region will be controlled by the EC.

10. Meetings

i. The meetings of the WBF as well as NCOs and RCOs and all their committees can be of two types: P-meetings or E-meetings. The P-meetings are those in which participants are physically present and/or can directly interact with each other at the same time. The E-meetings are those in which participants discuss an issue and cast their votes remotely through an electronic medium such as e-mail, fax, or telephone. Video meetings, teleconferences, and online chat type group meetings will be regarded as P-meetings.

ii. Meetings of EC and GB

a. Normal meetings: A meeting of the EC and the GB will be normally called by the President or his designee with appropriate notice which is normally one month for P-meetings and three days for E-meetings. In urgent situations the meeting can be called at shorter notices. These will be called normal meetings.

b. Exceptional and Extraordinary meetings:

A. Exceptional EC meeting: In exceptional cases an EC meeting can be called by the EVP or the GS with the concurrence of at least two other members of the EC. The consent, presence or the participation of the President is not essential for such exceptional

meetings but he must be informed and invited to the meeting. Such a meeting can also be called by any two member of the EC with the concurrence of at least half the number of members of the EC including themselves. The presence or the participation of the President or the EVP is not essential for such exceptional meetings but they must be informed and invited to the meeting.

B: Exceptional GB meeting: In exceptional cases, a P or E meeting of the GB can be called by the EVP or the GS with the concurrence of at least three other members of the EC. The meeting will be chaired by the person calling the meeting. The consent, presence or the participation of the President is not essential for such exceptional meetings but he must be informed and invited to the meeting.

C. Extraordinary GB meeting: In extraordinary cases, a P or E meeting of the GB can be called by any member of the GB with written concurrence of at least the larger of 10 or 1/10 of the total number of members of the GB. The meeting will be chaired by the person calling the meeting. The consent, presence and participation of any member of the EC is not essential for these meetings but they must be invited to the meeting.

iii. On each issue, a member can vote in its favor or against it, or give a neutral vote. In P-meetings, if a person does not vote, his vote will be counted as a neutral vote.

iv. The quorum for the EC meetings will be 3/4 of the EC membership. The Regional officers who are members of the EC will not constitute the quorum but must be invited to all meetings.

v. The quorum for the GB meetings except the Exceptional and Extraordinary meetings defined in Sec. 10 (iia) and (iib) will be the larger of 20 or 1/10 of the total number of GB members plus at least 4 members of the EC not counting the chairperson. The quorum for the Exceptional and Extraordinary meetings will be 3/4 of the GB members.

vi. The quorum in E-meetings will be counted in terms of the number of members who voted. The quorum in P-meetings will be counted in terms of the people present.

vii. All the decisions in a normal GB meeting, except the decisions involving structural or constitutional changes will be made by a simple majority vote. The Chairperson will not vote on an issue except, if he wishes, he can give the casting vote in the event of a tie or an equalizing vote to maintain the status quo on an issue in the event if the difference of votes between two sides is just one. In case of a tie, the status quo can be continued or a decision can be taken by the President.

viii. All the decisions in the Exceptional and Extraordinary GB meetings defined in Sec. 10 (iia) and (iib) or those decisions in these meetings, which involve a change in any operation or structure of the WBF must be approved by 3/4 of the members constituting the meeting not the Chairperson who will not vote.

ix. In general the rules and protocol of the meetings, as well as all their operational procedures will be determined by common sense and standard procedures. Any uncertainties or confusion will be resolved by the President or the Chairperson of the meeting with or without any consultation.

11. Elections and the Election Supervisory and Advisory Committee

i. The elections will be supervised and monitored by the Election Supervisory and Advisory Committee, abbreviated as ESAC.

ii. ESAC will consist of three members. One of the ESAC members will be designated as the Chairperson of the ESAC. The members and the Chairperson of the ESAC will be selected by the then current President and approved by the then current EC. Any member or the Chairperson of the ESAC can be removed by the procedure described in Sec. 12.

iii. The task of the ESAC will be to conduct, manage, supervise and monitor the elections and to advise the President about all aspects of the elections. The ESAC will inform the then current President about its plans for conducting the elections. The President can advise the ESAC to revise the plans which the ESAC will consider but the final decision on all aspects of the elections will rest with the ESAC.

iv. The ESAC will also seek out suitable persons and, at its discretion, bring those names to the attention of the GB. This will be only for the information of the GB. The ESAC will have no authority to nominate or choose a person for any elected position.

v. Normally the elections will be held once in three years. If necessary, and requested by the then current President, the ESAC can hold mid-term elections.

vi. A member of the ESAC can not concurrently hold any position in the WBF except the BOD membership.

vii. The GB will elect the President and the Cabinet by a simple majority through a direct vote.

viii. The Cabinet will consist of a minimum of eight and a maximum of 12 members. The actual number will be decided by the then current President before the elections. The maximum number can be increased if needed for organizational efficiency without requiring an amendment of the constitution by the then current President before the elections or the sitting President during mid-term.

ix. The elected Cabinet members will become the members of the new EC as described in Sec. 7 under the leadership of the elected President. The President will choose officers of the WBF as described in Sec 5 from the Cabinet.

x. A candidate for the Presidentship can, at his discretion, recommend to the GB the names of his choice for the Cabinet and also indicate his intended names for various officers if they get elected.

xi. Normally the elections should be organized such that the new President and the Cabinet can start at the beginning of a calendar year. If necessary for any reason, or if the elections are delayed, the start date can be changed without requiring a constitutional amendment.

12. Term of the elected and appointed officers and all other position holders

i. The term of the President and the elected Cabinet will be three calendar years. If the start date was not the beginning of a calendar year, their term will be the remaining part of that calendar year plus two more calendar years.

ii. The terms of all committees, except the ESAC, and any person selected by the President for any position will expire along with the normal term of the President and the EC.

iii. The term of the ESAC will be a maximum of four calendar years. If the ESAC starts during a calendar year, its term will be the remaining part of that calendar year plus three more full calendar years.

iv. No person can be a member of the ESAC consecutively for more than one term.

13. Recall, Resignation, and change in status of WBF officers and members.

i. Any member or officer of the WBF can resign from his status in the WBF.

ii. All such resignations will be accepted and approved by the President or his designee except the resignation of the President himself which will be accepted and approved by the EVP.

iii. Approval of any resignation can be delayed until the clearance of dues if any or for any special need of the WBF with the acceptance of the person resigning.

iv. Any person not elected by the GB but appointed by the President for any position, except the membership or Chairmanship of the ESAC, can be removed by the President for valid reasons with the approval of the EC. Members and the Chairperson of the ESAC can only be removed in a meeting of the GB as described in Sec. 10.

v. An officer of the WBF who is an elected member of the EC and appointed by the President for any office position can be removed from his office position by the President with the approval of the EC in a special meeting of the EC. The officer whose removal is considered must be invited to the meeting but he may or may not attend the meeting at his choice and will not be counted towards the quorum requirements. This meeting can be

chaired only by the President. This procedure is only for the removal of the officer from his office position. He will remain a member of the Cabinet and the EC.

vi. An elected member of the Cabinet can be removed only by the GB in one of the types of meetings defined in Sec. 10.

vii. The President can be removed only by the GB and only in an Exceptional or Extraordinary meeting defined in Sec. 10.

14. Changes and amendments to the Constitution and structural changes in the WBF:

i. Any change in this constitution, any modification, amendments or additions, or removal of any clause, section, or word from this constitution can be done by using the procedure given below. This procedure also needs to be followed for any structural change in the WBF as, for example, dismantling of an NCO mentioned in Sec. 1.

ii. Such changes can be made only by the GB in a meeting called specially for this purpose. The meeting can be a Normal, Exceptional or Extraordinary meeting as defined in Sec. 10, which also defines the quorum requirements of the meetings. The decision for change must be approved by 3/4 of the members constituting the meeting not counting the Chairperson who will not vote.

15. In any situation or on any issue which has not been described or sufficiently clarified in the Constitution, a decision will be taken by the President with the approval of the EC. The interpretation of any Section or provisions of the Constitution will be made by the President with the approval of the EC.

16. A decision regarding the dismantling of the WBF will be regarded as a structural change and must be approved as given in Sec. 14. After paying off all the dues, the remaining assets if any must be disposed off in a reasonable manner and the proceeds given into a recognized charity, preferably to a Brahman organization.