ASSOCIATION
OF LOCAL AUTONOMY

STATUTE

of
the Association

for
“Local Autonomy”
PREAMBLE

OF THE ASSOCIATION

FOR

“LOCAL AUTONOMY”

Pursuant to the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, of the European Charter of Local Self-Governance and the Legal Framework that laid the foundation for an autonomous local power; but also in the name of citizens which we represent in our local levels; due to the present situation we find ourselves, which reveals violations of local autonomy, reiterated continuously by the local power in the recent years; and by analyzing the truncated performance of the decentralization reform in our country; in the capacity of the Chairmen elected from several local units in the Republic of Albania, we have decided to establish the Association for “Local Autonomy”.

By revealing that the present associations of local units operating in our country are not exercising their role for the improvement of the serious and severe situation in which democracy and local autonomy are found, the establishment of this Association for “Local Autonomy” appears as a necessity to represent in one item only the major issue of preserving the constitutional principle in the exercise of local governance according to the principle of local autonomy. Only in this manner, we can positively elaborate the challenge for the establishment and consolidation of good local governance in Albania, by establishing a representation level of citizens and a return of trust to the local public sector, by creating a “governance model”, orientating for governance in central level.

During the most recent years, we have observed decision taking of Central Government producing premises for narrowing the space of the local elected people in the exercise of their public responsibilities, in open objection with the principles of the Constitution and the European Charter of local Self-Governance.

The experience of slams between local governance and central governance, not only has not been worth to the deepening of decentralization reform, but, on the contrary, it has limited the previous local space. Such a thing is observed in both the limitation of competences in the fulfillment of functions, as well as in the limitation and reduction of financial resources. Local governances nowadays have less local authority in the exercise of their functions and less
financial resources. The features of legal initiatives in these years regarding local power have been:
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- Conflict of competences between local and central power;
- Laws and sub-legal acts not complying with the Constitution of the Republic of Albania and with the European Charter of Local Autonomy, by generating constitutional “conflicts”. For this reason, several initiatives of local power are noted in order to protect the principles of autonomy at the Constitutional Court and other initiatives are under process for issues of this nature;
- Limitation of financial, fiscal and regulatory instruments enabling an autonomous and real exercise of functions.

The Association for “Local Autonomy”, represents a voluntary and independent union of several local units of Albania, which aims at maintaining and strengthening local autonomy, aiming at strengthening and development of democratic structures and mechanisms in the organization and operation of local units and execution of the principles of the European Charter of Local Autonomy; execution of the constitutional principle of power decentralization in local governance; to contribute in the protection of common interests of local governance units, aiming at strengthening the rights and freedoms of these units and resolution of community problems, being closer to them; with no purpose of benefit; where adherence is made upon free and independent will.
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The representatives of several local units in the Republic of Albania (elected directly from their community), decided to establish the Association for “Local Autonomy”, which shall function according to the rules stipulated in the statute approved by them, taking into account that:

- Autonomy of local units is also the build-up of personal freedoms;
- Freedom of local authorities is affected day by day from the violations made by the central power;
- The elected members are the voice of people representing the relevant local units, being in direct and continuous contact with the community and daily reality;
- The bodies of local governance units are entitled to be organized in associations, in conformity with the respective legislation for associations;
- The bodies of local government units may undertake initiatives of local public interest for any issues which are not prohibited by law or which have not been exclusively given by law to another state body;
Organizations”; and Law No. 8789, dated 07.05.2001 on the “Registration of Non-for-Profit Organizations”.

The scope of the association is: the right and effective capacity of local communities in order to regulate and conduct, according to the law, under their responsibility, a considerable part of public issues of local character.

The scope of the Association’s activity is: to contribute for the protection of common interests of local self-governance units (municipalities/communes/districts), aiming at the strengthening and development of democratic structures and mechanisms in their organization and operation; the execution of the principles of the Constitution of the Republic of Albania and European Charter of Local Autonomy; and in the sensibilization of the community, institutions and all involved stakeholders in this direction. Its activity shall be expanded throughout all the local units in the territory of the republic of Albania, which have become members of the Association.

In order to reach its purpose, the association performs these activities:

a. Protects the common interests of local government units in the Republic of Albania, aiming at the achievement and development of democracy and true decentralization of governance for the achievement of European standards of local self-governance, according to the principles of the Constitution and European Charter of Local Autonomy.

b. Establishes direct connections with different institutions for the protection of interests of local governance bodies, by becoming the main actors in drafting decentralization policies for local government.

c. Represents local units which have adhered in it in the relations with different Albanian and foreign bodies, inside and outside the country.

d. Enables the discussion of common problems in the forums of the association, aiming at finding practical solutions, and the exchange of different and best experiences between local units between them.

e. Facilitates the establishment of contacts between local units and their partners outside the country, such as: analogue associations, international institutions, aiming at the exchange of information and development of joint cooperation programs.
The Association realizes its purposes through democratic means and ways, by cooperating with different institutions, different local and international bodies acting in the field of local self-governance.

Members of the Association for “Local Autonomy” may be all the local units within the territory of the Republic of Albania, which accept its statute and try to realize the purposes and mission of the association. Local units, as members of the association are represented in the leading forums of the association through the chairman of the local unit.

As per above, this Association is presented as a premise to prohibit any actions which affect the exercise of functions and competences of local units, which severely damage the decentralization reform and bring, as a result, flagrant violation of local autonomy.

As responsible representatives of the electorate we represent in the capacity of the chairmen of several municipalities/communes/districts of Albania, we consider the membership in this Association for “Local Autonomy” an important condition to guarantee development in the proper direction of local democracies, by complying with local autonomy in governance.

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PART ONE: GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1

The Association for “Local Autonomy”, is a union of local units of the Republic of Albania, which aims at contributing in the protection of common interests of local governance units, aiming at strengthening the rights and freedoms of these units and resolution of community problems, being closer to population masses. This association does not have a religious character or profit purposes, where adherence is made upon free and independent will.

Article 2

The name of the association is the “Association for Local Autonomy” – briefly “ALA”.

The association is a legal person.

The association has its seal and emblem.

Association for Local Autonomy

The seal of the association also has all the above-mentioned elements of the emblem and in the round background of the seal, it is written: “Association for Local Autonomy”.

The association has its own bank account.

Article 3

The association has its headquarters in Tirana, at Rr. “Lekë Dukagjini” at “Aba Business Center” and develops its activity across the whole territory of the Republic of Albania.
Article 4

The association exercises its activity for an indefinite period of time, starting from the date of taking the decision for registration as a legal person at the Judicial District Court, Tirana and registration as taxable person at the NRC offices.

PART TWO: Scope and field of activity

CHAPTER ONE
SCOPE OF THE ASSOCIATION

Article 5

The scope of the Association is to contribute for the protection of common interests of local governance units of the Republic of Albania, aiming at the strengthening and development of democratic structures and mechanisms in the organization and operation of local units; and the execution of the principles of the European Charter of Local Autonomy. The Association for “Local Autonomy” performs its activity based on the applicable Albanian legislation.

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CHAPTER II
OBJECT OF ACTIVITY

Article 6

In order to reach its purpose, the association performs these activities:

a. Protects the common interests of local government units in the Republic of Albania, aiming at the achievement and development of democracy and true decentralization of governance for the achievement of European standards of local self-governance, according to the principles of the Constitution and European Charter of Local Autonomy.

b. Establishes direct connections with different institutions for the protection of interests of local governance bodies, by becoming the main actors in drafting decentralization policies for local government.

c. Represents local units which have adhered in it in the relations with different Albanian and foreign bodies, inside and outside the country.
d. Enables the discussion of common problems in the forums of the association, aiming at finding practical solutions, and the exchange of different and best experiences between local units between them.

e. Facilitates the establishment of contacts between local units and their partners outside the country, such as: analogue associations, international institutions, aiming at the exchange of information and development of joint cooperation programs.

Article 7

7.1 The “ALA” realizes its purposes through democratic means and ways. For the realization of its purposes, the association cooperates with the Assembly of the Republic of Albania, the Government of the Republic of Albania, Ministries and different governmental and non-governmental bodies, and with international bodies operating in the field of local self-governance.

7.2 In addition, it also follows other activities for the realization of its purposes, which may be:

a. Different introductory and debating activities with members of the association;
b. Publication of the monthly “Journal of the Association for Local Autonomy”;
c. Conduct of surveys for different common problems with members of the association;
d. Makes aware public opinion through mass media, etc.

PART THREE
MEMBERSHIP OF THE ASSOCIATION

Article 8

The members of the Association for “Local Autonomy” may all be local units inside the territory of the Republic of Albania, which accept its statute and try to realize the purposes and mission of the association, and duly pay the quotation.

Local units, as members of the association, are represented in the leading forums of the association through the chairman of the local unit.

Article 9

The member of the association has these rights:
- to be represented and appointed in the leading forums of the association according to the rules provided in the statute;
- to participated in all the activities organized by the association;
- to be regularly informed about the progress of association’s activity;
- to benefit from different services rendered by the association about its members.

Article 10

The member of the association has these duties:

a. To regularly participate in the meetings of the association and freely express his opinions about the progress of the association’s activity by making suggestions for the drafting of the program of activities and improvement of the statute.
b. To implement and propagandize the statute, mission and scopes of the association, by being directly involved in the fulfillment of its objectives;
c. To regularly pay once a year the annual quotation from the independent budget of the local unit, according to the conditions stipulated by the General Assembly.

Article 11

Membership in the Association terminates:

a. Upon the voluntary leaving of the member;

b. Upon his/her dismissal, when the member has violated the statute and has acted contrary to the objectives and scopes of the association. Dismissal is made by the general Assembly of the Association, in the presence of 2/3 of the members of the Assembly and 50% + 1 votes.

PART FOUR:
BODIES OF THE ASSOCIATION

Chapter III
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Article 12
The General Assembly of members is the highest body of the association, which is called once a year or when 1/5 of association members require it. The decisions are taken upon the majority of votes of the members who are present in the meeting. In cases when eventual amendments to the statute or the dismissal of a member shall be elaborated, at least 2/3 of members should be present and to be voted with 50% + 1 votes. The call of the General Assembly is made known to the members with information means or special resources, at least 30 days before the Assembly is held by the management Council, which preliminary approves the materials to be elaborated by the General Assembly.

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Article 13

The General Assembly has these competences:

a. Elects the Chairmanship of the Association, which is composed of the Cahirman and two Sub-Chairmen;
b. Elects the members of the Management Council of the Association
d. Elects the members of the Control Commission;
e. Approves the financial resources of the Association
f. Reviews and approved the amendments to the Statute of the Association;
g. Decides for the dismissal of a member according to the conditions stipulate in this statute;
h. Takes decision about the dissemination of the association;
i. Determines the quota of membership.

CHAPTER IV
MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Article 14

The Management Council conducts the activity of the association during the period between two General Assemblies. The management Council consists of 17 members (The Chairman of the association and other members of the association), but it shall always be an odd number. The Management Council gets together once in three months. The first meeting of the Management Council takes place within the following month, after the General Assembly. Upon the request of 1/3 of its members, it can get together more often.
All the members of the Council are appointed by the General Assembly. The Chairman of the local Unit of Tirana Municipality, as the capital city of the Republic of Albania, is always a member of the management Council. The Management Council shall provide representation, according to the population, geography diversity, political forces involved in local governance.

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Article 15

The Management Council of the Association has these competences:

a. Approves the Annual report of the Association;
b. Drafts the policies of the Association;
c. Approves the annual budget of activities;
d. Represents the association through its Chairmanship in relation to Albanian Authorities or foreign partners;
e. Organizes and attends the works for the execution of duties stipulated by the General Assembly;
f. Decides and announces and prepares the meeting of the General Assembly;
g. Takes decision about the acceptance of new members;
h. Appoints the Executive Director
i. Appoints the Accountant of the Association;

CHAPTER V
CHAIRMANSHEIP OF THE ASSOCIATION

Article 16

The chairmanship of the association consists of the Chairman of the Association and two Deputy Chairmen. The selection criteria for the members of the chairmanship are determined according to the third paragraph of Article 14 of this Statute. The Chairmanship of the association conducts the General Assembly. The chairmanship, when deeming it necessary, selects the representative group of the association in relation to Albanian authorities and foreign partners. In the selection of such group, the Chairmanship respects the rules provided in Article 14 paragraph three.

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CHAPTER VI
THE CHAIRMAN

Article 17

The chairman of the association has these competences:

a. Chairs the meetings of the Management Council;
b. Represents the association in relation to Albanian authorities and foreign partners;
c. Chairs the General Assembly until the election of the new chairmanship;
d. The chairman of the association along with the chairmanship drafts the annual reports of the association’s activity.

CHAPTER VII
DEPUTY CHAIRMEN

Article 18

The Deputy Chairmen of the association, in the absence of the Chairman chair the meetings of the Management Council.
In addition, the deputy chairmen upon the authorization of the Chairman of the association represent the association in relation to Albanian authorities and foreign partners.

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CHAPTER VIII
PERMANENT FORUMS

Article 19

Permanent Forums consist of the representatives of local units, who are specialists of the respective fields.

Permanent Forums get together when they have issues to discuss according to the notifications delivered by the chairmanship or the executive Director.

These forums take under review and suggest solutions for issues according to the respective fields determined as follows hereunder:
- The Forum of Economy and Local development;
CHAPTER IX
CONTROL COMMISSION

Article 20

The Control Commission is composed of 3-5 persons. These are members of the association and external experts in auditing and accounting. This Commission controls the financial activity of the association, cash box balance, settlement of quotations, different settlements in the form of assistance.

The Commission exercises control once a year in the period which matches one month before the General Assembly.

The Control Commission is entitled to perform more than one control during the year, upon the request of the Management Council.

The Control Commission informs once a year the Management Council regarding the expenditure method of financial means.

PART FIVE:
ADMINISTRATION OF THE ASSOCIATION

CHAPTER X
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The executive Director has these competences:

a. Conducts the activity for the implementation of daily duties of the association;
b. Drafts the plan of the activities of the association along with the respective budget and submits it for approval to the management council;
c. Reports to the bodies of the association for the activities carried out;
d. is liable for the administrative actions of the association
e. is liable for recruiting staff members after the approval of the Management Council
f. prepares and attends the meetings of the general Assembly; proposes the agenda for Assembly
meetings; maintains the protocol in the meetings of the Assembly and submits the decisions
taken by the General Assembly.

CHAPTER XI
EXECUTIVE STAFF

Article 22

The composition and the number of staff members is determined upon the decision of the
management Council. The staff works full time and executes the decisions of the association
bodies.

CHAPTER XII
THE ACCOUNTANT

Article 23

The accountant of the Association is appointed by the Management Council and has the duty to
keep the cashbox, to reveal the settlement of quotations and other financial resources of the
association according to this statute. He is liable for various financial transactions and expenses
made for the realization of activities.

PART SIX:
MEANS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Article 24

The means for the fulfillment of its purposes are realized by the association through the
quotations from the independent budget of local units, according to the conditions stipulated by
the General Assembly.

Other sources are the donations of each citizen willing to contribute for the achievement of the
scopes of the association. In addition, other sources may be the material and financial assistance
and assistance by different associations and bodies inside and outside the country, various sponsorizations and income from the services provided by the association.

Income realized by the association should be used only for the realization of activities which are anticipated in the scope and field of activity, determined in this statute. No form of profit distribution or financial and material benefit is allowed from the income and benefits of the association, except the obligations in the form of wages, payments, rewards and profits of the and compensations stemming from the job contract or other contracts similar to it or for the coverage of expenses made upon order and on behalf of the association.

The association is entitled to perform economic activities aiming at the achievement of purposes and objectives stipulated by the statute. If the association benefits revenues from the performance of economic activity, they are spent only for the purposes and objectives provided in this statute.

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**PART SEVEN:**
**TERMINATION OF THE ASSOCIATION**

**Article 25**

The association terminates in these cases:

a. Upon the decision of the General Assembly, specifically called;
b. When the purpose of the association has been fulfilled or there is no more opportunity to be fulfilled;
c. Upon the decision of the competent court when the association has deviated from the stipulated scope in the statute or when it has started to perform illegal activities.

**Article 26**

The decision of the general Assembly for the termination of the association is taken with 2/3 votes in the presence of the general number of its members.

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**Article 27**

The amendments to the founding act are made by the General Assembly. Its decision is taken 50% + 1 votes of 2/3 of the general number of its members.
The decisions of the General Assembly related to the amendments in the act of incorporation and the statute of the association are submitted to the court within 30 days from the date of decision taking.

**Article 28**

The association is entitled to be transformed, to unite or disseminate upon the decision of the General Assembly. This decision is taken with 50% + 1 votes of 2/3 of the general number of its members.

The above decision is submitted to the Court within 30 days from the date of decision taking.

**Article 29**

After receiving the decision for the termination of the association, the management Council follows the respective procedures according to the applicable legal stipulations and follows the actions at Court for the deregistration of the Association.

**Article 30**

This statute comes into force on the date of decision taking for the registration as a legal person of the association at Tirana Judicial District Court.

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**FOUNDING MEMBERS**

1. **Artan Shkëmbi**  
   Chairman of Pogradec Municipality (signature)

2. **Rustem Strugaj**  
   Chairman of Puka Municipality (signature)

3. **Edi Rama**  
   Chairman of Tirana Municipality (signature)

4. **Vangjush Dako**  
   Chairman of Durrës Municipality (signature)
5. Niko Peleshi  (signature)  Chairman of Korça Municipality

6. Qazim Sejdini  (signature)  Chairman of Elbasan Municipality

7. Flamur Bime  (signature)  Chairman of Gjirokastër Municipality

8. Bardhi Meli  (signature)  Chairman of Patos Municipality

9. Fadil Nasufi  (signature)  Chairman of Berat Municipality

10. Syrja Ormenaj  (signature)  Chairman of Ura Vajgurore Municipality

11. Artur Kurti  (signature)  Chairman of Kuçova Municipality

12. Vladimir Vezuli  (signature)  Chairman of Q. Leskovik Commune, Kolonja

13. Ylli Stambolliu  (signature)  Chairman of Gradishtë Commune, Lushnja

14. Mark Zhuri  (signature)  Chairman of Temal Commune, Shkodra

15. Harilla Mile  (signature)  Chairman of Q. Çlirim Commune, Fier

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