



## **The East Asia Local and Regional Government Congress Nara Charter**

### **Preamble**

We, the representatives of local and regional governments in East Asia, which have conducted exchanges that date back through more than a millennium, have convened in the year 2010 here in Nara, the birthplace of the ancient Japanese capital of Heijokyo commemorating its 1,300<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Recognizing that we share many cultural heritages, we have agreed to the following.

In the context of increasing globalization, the stable prosperity and progress of East Asia is predicated upon enhancing understanding, cooperation, and partnership while respecting our diversities, fostered by the history and culture of our respective regions.

To deepen mutual understanding among the diverse communities in East Asia, there must be continuous exchanges covering a wide range of areas.

Because of our close relationship with local residents, we, the local and regional governments know firsthand the realities and challenges facing our communities, and the candid discussion of such issues will promote true mutual understanding among us, the local and regional governments.

Therefore, there is a need for local and regional governments to assemble regularly to update one another on the realities and challenges of our regions, discuss common issues, promote deeper understanding, and explore possibilities for cooperation.

By thus convening on a regular basis, we, the local and regional governments can enrich our knowledge, improve our administrative capacities, strengthen friendship and trust amongst ourselves, and furthermore contribute to the stability of relations among nations in East Asia and, ultimately, to the stable development of East Asia as a whole.

### **Article 1: Establishment**

In order to achieve the objective of the Preamble, we hereby establish the East Asia Local and Regional Government Congress (hereinafter referred to as “the Congress”).

### **Article 2: Objectives**

The objectives of the Congress are:

- (1) To engage in candid exchange of views and deepen mutual understanding concerning the challenges relevant to the regions of East Asia, such as promoting regional economic development, improving the quality of living standards, addressing environmental issues and population aging, preserving cultural heritages, promoting tourism, providing quality education, and encouraging exchanges among future generations; and
- (2) Through exchange of views in the Congress, to strengthen the administrative capacities of Member Governments to solve the issues facing their respective regions.



### **Article 3: Activities**

The activities of the Congress shall be:

- (1) To meet on a regular basis;
- (2) To provide information to further mutual understanding among Member Governments and promote higher levels of administrative capacities; and
- (3) To engage in other activities as would help to achieve the objectives of the Congress.

### **Article 4: Membership**

1. Members of the Congress shall be the local and regional governments which sign this Charter (hereinafter referred to as “Charter Governments”) and all other local and regional governments which are approved for membership in the Congress in accordance with Article 5 below.
2. Each Member Government shall be represented by the head of its executive body.
3. Charter Governments are shown in the attached Table.

### **Article 5: Admission**

1. Local and regional governments wishing to apply for membership to the Congress shall submit to the Secretariat their written application with letters of endorsement from two or more current Member Governments.
2. Approval for membership shall be based on the unanimous consent of Charter Governments.
3. Membership shall be effective as of the day approval is granted.

### **Article 6: Withdrawal**

Members wishing to withdraw from the Congress may do so by submitting to the Secretariat a written notice of withdrawal.

### **Article 7: The Congress Meeting**

1. The Congress Meeting shall be held once a year in principle.
2. The Congress Meeting shall be attended by the representative of each Member Government. When a representative is unable to attend, an authorized delegate may attend on their behalf.
3. The Congress Meeting shall be called by the representative of the Member Government holding the Congress Meeting.
4. The Congress Meeting shall be chaired by the representative of the Member Government holding the Congress Meeting.

### **Article 8: Executive Committee**

1. An executive committee shall be established to facilitate the operations of the Congress.
2. The executive committee shall consist of the Charter Governments.
3. The executive committee shall determine:
  - (1) Amendments to the Congress Charter;
  - (2) Admission of new members;

- (3) Dates and venues of the Congress Meetings;
  - (4) The agenda of the Congress Meetings;
  - (5) Admission of special members; and
  - (6) Other matters relating to the smooth operation of the Congress.
4. The chairperson of the executive committee shall be elected from among its members.
  5. The executive committee shall, in principle, meet in conjunction with the Congress Meeting. If necessary, the chairperson shall convene additional meetings.
  6. The quorum of the executive committee shall consist of one half of the members currently serving on the committee.
  7. With the exception of Clauses 3 (1) and (2) above, decisions of the executive committee shall be made by a majority vote, with the chairperson casting the deciding vote in the event of a tie. Decisions relating to Clauses 3 (1) and (2) above shall be made by unanimous consent of all members, including those not present at the meeting on that day.
  8. The provisions of Clause 2 of the preceding Article shall apply mutatis mutandis to the executive committee.

#### **Article 9: Special Membership**

1. Organizations and individuals wishing to apply for special membership in the Congress shall submit to the Secretariat their written application with letters of endorsement from two or more current members of the executive committee.
2. Organizations and individuals granted special membership may participate, with the right to speak, in the Congress Meetings.
3. Special membership shall continue unless it is terminated by withdrawal.

#### **Article 10: Guests**

1. Guests shall be recommended and invited by the representative of the Member Government holding the Congress Meeting.
2. Guests may participate in the Congress Meeting and give presentations on the theme(s) for which they have been invited.

#### **Article 11: Expenses**

In principle, expenses relating to the holding of the Congress Meeting, as well as lodging expenses for the participating delegates, shall be borne by the Member Government holding the Congress Meeting. Member Governments participating in the Congress Meeting shall bear the cost of air and other travel and transportation associated with their delegates attending the Congress Meeting. However, this shall not exclude the Member Government holding the Congress Meeting from requiring Member Governments participating in the Congress Meeting, at their own discretion, to bear lodging and other expenses.

#### **Article 12: Reports**

1. The Member Government which held the Congress Meeting shall, in principle within 3 months of the Congress Meeting, send a report of the Congress Meeting to each Member Government.
2. Member Governments which receive such report can forward copies to their central



government and other relevant organizations, as well as to make the said report known to the general public.

**Article 13: Secretariat**

1. A Secretariat shall attend to the administrative matters relating to the Congress.
2. The Secretariat shall be situated in the Nara Prefectural Government.
3. The Secretariat shall be composed of the director and their staff.
4. The Secretariat shall be responsible for:
  - (1)Receiving of documents relating to application for membership or withdrawal;
  - (2)Compilation and provision of information relating to the management of the Congress;
  - (3)Administrative support to the Member Government holding the Congress Meeting;
  - (4)Keeping of records and managing public relations; and
  - (5)Other administrative matters necessary for the operation of the Congress.

**Supplementary Provision**

This Charter shall come into effect on October 7, 2010.

**Supplementary Provision**

This Charter shall come into effect on November 6, 2012.

**Supplementary Provision**

This Charter shall come into effect on October 1, 2015.

Table: Charter Governments

(Attached Table)

People's Republic of China	Republic of Indonesia	Republic of the Philippines	Republic of Korea	Socialist Republic of Viet Nam	Japan
Jiangsu Province Anhui Province Henan Province Shaanxi Province Gansu Province Xian City Luoyang City Yangzhou City Huangshan City Dunhuang City	Province of Yogyakarta Special Region	Aurora Province	Gyeonggi-do Province Chungcheongnam-do Province Gongju City Seosan City Buyeo County Jeollanam-do Province Gyeongsangbuk-do Province Gyeongju City	Quang Nam Province	Aomori Prefecture Yamagata Prefecture Fukushima Prefecture Niigata Prefecture Toyama Prefecture Fukui Prefecture Gifu Prefecture Shizuoka Prefecture Mie Prefecture Shimane Prefecture Kochi Prefecture Kumamoto Prefecture Nara Prefecture Niigata City Nara City Tenri City Kashihara City Asuka Village

\*Countries are put in alphabetical order