

Organisational Document of ALL INDIA FORUM FOR RIGHT TO EDUCATION (AIFRTE)

[As amended in Third National Council Meet held in Bangaluru from 7th to 9th February 2014]

The aims and objects, organisational structure, membership and procedures of the ALL INDIA FORUM FOR RIGHT TO EDUCATION (AIFRTE) are laid down in this document.

Aims and Objects

AIFRTE is dedicated to the cause of establishing a fully free and state-funded Common Education System 'from KG to PG' including Common School System based on Neighbourhood Schools up to class XII. Such an education system should be capable of building a democratic, socialist, secular, egalitarian, just, enlightened and humane society in the country in conformity with the values enshrined in the Constitution of India.

For achieving the aforesaid purpose, AIFRTE a) opposes commercialisation of education and demands equitable education for all which includes affirmative action and social justice; b) opposes communalisation of education and stands for religious, linguistic and cultural diversity; c) opposes commoditisation of education either by the domestic or the global capital and stands for an education system which strengthens the democratic rights of the people and sovereignty of the nation while also enriching the international perspective of the society; and d) opposes market orientation of education and stands for social orientation of the very purpose of education.

Organisational Structure

AIFRTE is presently evolving. With the spread and intensification of the movement for Right to Education in the country, the various requirements of its organisational structure would steadily become apparent and need to be given concrete forms as the process moves forward. AIFRTE is a Forum of various organisations, groups, movements and individuals. Its organisational structure, therefore, cannot be very rigid, specific and demanding which is normally expected of an organisation. Keeping these two considerations in view, the following structure is adopted.

1. **National Council:** Representatives of AIFRTE's member-organisations and invited individual activists, educationists and other intellectuals constitute the National Council. It meets once in a year. The National Council is the highest forum of the organisation. The National Council shall elect a National Executive including a Presidium and a Secretariat from amongst its members. However, between two meetings of the National Council, the National Executive and between two meetings of the National Executive, the Presidium will be functioning on its behalf.

It is provided that the National Executive/ Presidium can grant membership to new organisations and it is further provided that such grant of membership shall be ultimately ratified by the National Council. The member-organisations can nominate up to two representatives each to be the members of the National Council. In addition, the National Executive/ Presidium may identify and nominate some activists, educationists and other

intellectuals as special invitees of the National Council in their individual capacity. Necessary efforts will be made to ensure, as far as possible, an adequate representation of women, the deprived and oppressed sections, the disabled, and those from various diverse regions of the country in the National Council.

2. **Presidium:** In the organisational structure, the Presidium will play a leading role in building AIFRTE's vision and its policy making. Normally, it will have from five to eleven members. It shall convene the meetings of the National Council and National Executive. It shall have the power to invite representatives of new organisations and individuals to attend National Council and National Executive meetings as observers/ special invitees. It shall also have the power to make necessary changes in the composition of the Secretariat, not amounting to more than 20% of its prevailing strength, in view of the changing circumstances. However, these changes shall be subject to ratification at the next meeting of the National Executive.
3. **National Executive:** The National Executive shall elect the Chairperson of AIFRTE from among the members of the Presidium as elected by the National Council. The National Executive shall also elect the Organising Secretary, Treasurer, Office Secretary and other functionaries from among the members of Secretariat as elected by the National Council. The National Executive will be primarily responsible for policy making and formulation of the programmatic framework of AIFRTE, along with other responsibilities assigned to it elsewhere in this document.
4. **Secretariat:** It will comprise a minimum of five and a maximum of eleven Secretaries. The Secretariat will have the principal responsibility for co-ordination, implementation and communication of AIFRTE's policies and programmes. The other functionaries in the Secretariat shall work in co-ordination with the Organising Secretary.
5. **Board of Advisers:** The Presidium shall nominate eminent persons from different fields of knowledge and peoples' movements as Advisers at its discretion.
6. **Meetings:** The Presidium shall meet at least once every three months, the National Executive shall meet at least once in six months and the National Council shall meet at least once in a year. The decisions at all such meetings shall be taken by democratic method. However, all attempts will be made to arrive at a consensus. The Presidium can also have its meetings through teleconference or by exchanging e-mails as may be facilitated by the Secretariat on request by any member of the Presidium. The Secretariat shall have its meetings according to its needs.
7. **State and District-Level Structures:** Similar organisational structure may prevail at the State and District-levels as well, as and when the respective units are formed in due consultation with the National Executive/ Presidium.
8. **Manifesto:** AIFRTE shall have a Manifesto which will lay down its basic premises, values and the aims and objects, along with policies. [The Manifesto is yet to be drafted and approved.]

9. **Membership:** a) Only those organisations shall be made members of AIFRTE who agree with its Manifesto/Aims and Objects and are keen to take part in building a nation-wide people's movement for the same. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) shall not be eligible to become members of AIFRTE. [However, if and when required, AIFRTE may work on specific issues of common concern with such NGOs or other groups and also undertake joint programmes with them.] b) Members of the member-organisations are considered to be members of AIFRTE and individuals who are taken into National Executive in their individual capacity are also considered to be members of AIFRTE.
10. **Basic Positions:** As long as the Manifesto is not finalized, only such individuals and organisations shall be eligible to become AIFRTE's members who agree with its aforementioned Aims and Objects and also accept the following four Basic Positions:
- There is no place whatsoever for trade or profiteering, Foreign Direct Investment (F.D.I.), international funding and/or Public Private Partnership (P.P.P.) at any level of education.
 - There is also no place in the education system for any form of communalism or majoritarianism – religio-cultural, regional, linguistic or racial – or for negation, dilution or distortion of India's rich diversity.
 - Education is the Constitutional obligation of the Government (from Centre and States to local bodies) and there is no place in education for discrimination in any form whatsoever. Social justice to the oppressed and deprived sections and the disabled should be organically built into the education system. It is the responsibility of the state to establish a well-founded nationwide, fully state-funded, public education system at all levels from pre-primary to higher education, including professional education and research. It implies, among others, the replacement of the present 'Right to Education Act, 2009' by a genuine Act to establish a fully state-funded Common School System based on the concept of Neighbourhood School – governed in decentralized, democratic and participative mode.
 - The aim of education is to build a democratic, socialist, secular, egalitarian, just, enlightened and humane society based on diversity, plurality and equality of persons and various social sections, as envisioned in Constitution of India.
11. **Newsletters and Publications:** The National Executive/Presidium may create appropriate bodies and positions and make the necessary appointments for administering and editing newsletters, website, e-mail groups and publishing committees.
12. **Finance and Bank Account:** A Bank Account shall be maintained by AIFRTE preferably in the name of the organisation which will be operated by any two out of the three or four authorised signatories jointly, necessarily including either the Organising Secretary or the Treasurer, provided that all the authorised signatories are drawn from the National Executive. The Organizing Secretary shall approve the proposed expenditure and the Treasurer shall maintain the accounts and present the same to the National Executive from time to time.

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Chairperson
ALL INDIA FORUM FOR RIGHT TO EDUCATION (AIFRTE)