

CANADIAN POLISH CONGRESS
CPC BY-LAWS
PREAMBLE FROM 1944

The delegates of Canadians of Polish origin congregated at the convention in Toronto, Ontario, on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th days of September, 1944, cognizant of their obligations to Canada, and also to the Nation of their brothers and ancestors -- Poland, celebrating their loyal service to Canada, remembering also the union of our hearts and blood with our motherland Poland, resolve the better attainment of our obligations as citizens of Canada, the better defense of the Polish name and, the rendering of a better organized assistance to our brother Poles, call into being the permanent organ of cooperation of Canadians of Polish origin.

Within the framework of the multi-cultural society of Canada, our obligation is to transfer to the present and future generations the thousand-year cultural heritage and principle of coexistence which has for ages guided the Polish Nation.

Bonds of blood and origin joining us to mother Poland place on us the duty of defending always and everywhere the rights of the Polish Nation and of every Pole to freedom, and independent and individual decision as to his own fate.

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GENERAL

Par. 1

The name of the organization is:

- * in the Polish language: KONGRES POLONII KANADYJSKIEJ
- * in the English language: CANADIAN POLISH CONGRESS
- * in the French language: CONGRÉS CANADIEN POLONAIS

Par. 2

The area of jurisdiction of the Canadian Polish Congress is Canada.

Par. 3

The Headquarters of the Canadian Polish Congress is the City of Toronto in the Province of Ontario. Each general convention of the Congress may -- for a specified period of time -- establish a different headquarters for the Congress in Canada.

Par. 4

For documentary purposes the Canadian Polish Congress uses the round, pressed and dry seal with the inscription: KONGRES POLONII KANADYJSKIEJ -- CANADIAN POLISH CONGRESS -- CONGRÉS CANADIEN POLONAIS.

Par. 5

1. The Canadian Polish Congress, identified also by the word "Congress" is an association of organizations of Poles in Canada, lay and religious of all faiths -- legally functioning on Canadian soil.

2. The Congress is a Polish Canadian organization. In its activities the Congress is guided by Canadian law, the good of Canada, of Canadian Poles and of the Polish Nation.

3. The Canadian Polish Congress maintains a continued contact and exchange of views with Polish organizations in the free world, which base their activity on an ideology consistent with the basis of activity of the Canadian Polish Congress.

Par. 6

The objects of the Canadian Polish Congress are:

to represent Polish Canadians

to defend the well-being of Polish-Canadians

to co-ordinate and otherwise support the work of Polish Canadian organizations in Canada

to take a keen and active interest in all aspects of Canadian life and to strive to assure members of the Polish group full participation in the political, economic and cultural life of Canada

to nurture, strengthen and extend Polish culture based on Polish traditions and beliefs

to render assistance to new Polish immigrants in adjusting to life in Canada

to support organizations and associations of youth of Polish origin with reference to Polish history, culture and national traditions
to familiarize Canadian society with the contribution of Poles to the culture and civilization of Canada and the rest of the world
to strengthen the bonds between Polish Canadians and the rest of Canadian society based on the policy of multi-culturalism
to care for the rights and defend the good name of the Polish nation and to propagate the historic truth about Poland
to propagate and defend the rights of the Polish Nation to independence and full freedom in accordance with the principles of the Declaration of the Rights of Man of the United Nations
to maintain and enhance contact with the Polish Nation while retaining full independence from the authorities of the Polish People's Republic and their agents.

Par. 7

The material means necessary to achieve the above objects by the Canadian Polish Congress are:

membership fees and dues
donations, collections campaigns and special events on behalf of the Congress
voluntary offerings and bequests

its own assets, both real and other

MEMBERSHIP

Par. 8

A Polish organization or association either lay or religious of any faith, legally active in Canada may be an ordinary member of the Canadian Polish Congress. An organization within the meaning of this Constitution is an independent organization, or a district branch of central organization functioning in one Province or all of Canada. (par. 5).

Par. 9

No organization or association acting to the detriment of the Polish Nation, Canadians of Polish origin, Canada and its democratic system or cooperating with a similar organization or association, or organization with a communist ideology or propagating a totalitarian system may be a member of the Canadian Polish Congress.

Par. 10

An organization or association which wishes to become an ordinary member of the Canadian Polish Congress, applies for membership in writing to the Congress. To apply for membership, it is necessary to annex a copy of the resolution of the organization and a certified copy of the constitution of the organization or association.

Par. 11

The Head Executive Board of the Canadian Polish Congress, after verifying the opinion of the appropriate Branch, decides as to acceptance or rejection of the application. An appeal from a rejection of the application lies to the General Convention of the Congress by the Branch or the organization. In the case of an organization outside of the Branch, it is empowered to appeal in writing to the General Convention of the Congress.

Par. 12

1. The Canadian Polish Congress is the spokesman for the aspirations and needs of the Polish Community in Canada.
2. The organization or association becoming a member of the Congress maintains its independence as an organization within the framework of its constitution.
3. Any amendments or additions to the constitution of a member organization, must be submitted by it without delay to the Head Executive Board of the Congress. The Head Executive Board of the Congress after familiarizing itself with the amendments (additions) and after obtaining the opinion of the appropriate Branch of the Congress, renders a decision. An appeal from this decision lies to the Council of the Congress.

Par. 13

1. Member organizations of the Congress have the right:
to have the use of the institutions, programs and general support of the Congress.
to participate in the General Convention of the Congress.
2. members of organizations of the Congress, Canadian citizens, have an active right of election to the Executive of the Congress.

Par. 14

The obligations of member organizations of the Congress are:

to support the aims of the Congress (par. 6)
to carry out resolutions and directives of the Executive
of the Congress, to pay dues to the Congress regularly

Par. 15

An organization loses its rights to membership if:

- * it withdraws from the Canadian Polish Congress
- * it goes into liquidation
- * it loses its rights of membership

Par. 16.

By resolution of the General Convention on the motion of the Head Executive Board,

an organization may lose its membership if it is in arrears of payment of membership dues
for two years

it does not carry out the resolutions of the Convention or the directives of the Executive
of the Congress

becomes a member of an organization or association with aims contrary to the aims of the
Congress or it pursues activities inconsistent with those aims (par. 9).

Par. 17

Until such time as the resolution to deprive an organization or association of its
membership is considered by the next General Convention, the Head Executive Board
may suspend the rights of a member. An appeal from this decision lies to the Committee
for the Resolution of Conflicts.(par. 42 pt. 5).

THE AUTHORITIES OF THE CONGRESS

Par. 18

a. The authorities of the Congress are:

The General Convention
Council of the Congress
Head Executive Board
Chief Supervisory Committee

Committee for the Resolution of Conflicts

- b. The term of office of the Executive of the Congress is two years.
- c. Only those persons who are ordinary members of a member organization of the Congress and are Canadian citizens, can be elected to any position in the Congress.

Par. 19

The general Convention is the highest authority of the Canadian Polish Congress. The place and date of the General Convention is designated by the Head Executive of the Congress after consultation with the Executives of the Districts in the event that the General Convention has not previously fixed a date. The ordinary General Convention takes place every two years in the last quarter of the calendar year. The General Convention is called by the Head Executive Board.

u>Par. 20

In the event that the General Convention is not called by the Head Executive Board within the designated time, the decision as to the manner of calling the General Convention is taken by the Council of the Congress.

Par. 21

An Extraordinary Convention must be called by the Head Executive Board upon demand by 1/3 of the members of the Congress who represent not less than 1/3 of the total valid votes represented in the previous General Convention, or as a result of the resolution of the Council of the Congress. In important circumstances the Head Executive Board may call an Extraordinary General Convention on its own initiative.

Par. 22

1. The General Convention is composed of delegates of member organizations in the numbers set out in the regulations. In the deliberations may take part the members of the Council of the Congress, the Head Executive Board and the Head Supervisory Committee of the Congress, with an advisory vote and with the right to submit resolutions.

2. A paid employee of the Head Executive Board of the Congress, of the Executive Board of the Branch, or of the Executive Board of a member organization cannot be a delegate of his organization to a General Convention of the Congress and such person cannot be elected to any of the authorities of the Congress.

Par. 23

Within the competence of the General Convention fall the following:

The establishment and acceptance of the ideological basis of the Canadian Polish Congress, consistent with the provisions of the by-law herein, as well as the formulation of regulations to execute the above resolutions

A resolution of the General Convention is confirmed by a majority of 3/4 of the votes of the delegates. In the event that the 3/4 majority of votes is not obtained, the previous resolution remains in force

The acceptance of reports of the Executive of the Congress and the auditor, and granting to the Head Executive Board of absolution

The election of the Head Executive, the Head Supervisory Committee, the Committee for the Resolution of Conflicts and the Auditor

The setting of a budget, fees or other membership requirements

The authorization to the Head Executive Board to borrow, and to purchase and dispose of real property

The withdrawal of rights of membership

The change of the by-laws

The liquidation of the Canadian Polish Congress

The rendering of a final decision in all matters of the Congress

Par. 24

1. The general Convention is validly constituted upon the attendance of delegates representing at least one-half of the mandates of the Congress

2. A majority of votes cast is required to pass a resolution of the General Convention, except in those cases where a qualified majority is required by this Constitution.

3. To pass a resolution with respect to a change of the bylaw, to refer for discussion by the General Convention a resolution with respect to a change of the by-law submitted without keeping within the limitations in par. 48, part 1 of the by-law, to withdraw membership rights and to pass a resolution with respect to an ideological basis, a majority of 3/4 votes cast is required

4. To pass a resolution liquidating the Canadian Polish Congress is required a majority of 3/4 of the votes cast, representing at least 3/4 of the total number of a valid votes of the Congress.

Par. 25

The Council of the Congress is composed of the following:

Presidents or their nominees, of Head Executives (Central), of member organizations containing three or more branches which are members of the Congress
Presidents of branches of the Canadian Polish Congress or their nominees
The President of the Canadian Polish Millennium Fund or his nominee.

Par. 26

The Council of the Congress is an organ constituted to ensure that the Congress functions within its authority and in accordance with its mandate. Accordingly within its competence lie the following:

- to ensure that the resolutions of the General Convention are carried out
- to call the General Convention in the event that it is not called by the Head Executive Board within the time prescribed by the by-law, or for other reasons
- to ratify the regulations of the Congress and their amendments (par.28, pt.7)
- to interpret the language of the Statute and regulations of the Congress
- to resolve other administrative matters submitted to the Council by the Head Executive Board
- to review appeals from decisions of the Committee for the Resolution of Conflicts
- The Authority granted within the meaning par. 12, pt. 3, and par. 38 of this by-law
- The Council fulfills its obligations in accordance with the regulations governing the Council.

Par. 27

The Head Executive Board:

is the chief executive authority of the Canadian Polish Congress
directs all its matters and represents the Congress with respect to authorities and third parties

Par. 28

In particular, the Head Executive Board:

carries out the resolutions of the General Convention and the Council of the Congress
administers the estate of the Congress
holds in trust funds entrusted to it within the framework of the budget allotted by the
General Convention, or in accordance with the desires of the contributors
represents Canadians of Polish origin with respect to Canadian Federal authorities or
authorities of Polish communities in other countries
prepares resolutions for the General Convention of the Congress
gives a direction to the organizational aims of Canadians of Polish origin and fulfils the
aims of the Canadian Polish Congress (par. 6)
prepares projects of regulations of the Congress and their amendments and presents them
for ratification by the Council (par. 26, pt. 3)

Par. 29

The Head Executive Board is composed of:

The President

A first Vice-president, who is the executive officer and deputy president

Two or more Vice-presidents

Regional vice-presidents for regions of the Congress in Canada

Secretaries, general and recording

Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer

At least five members of the Executive.

All functions of the Head Executive Board are fulfilled gratuitously.

Par. 30

The President of the Head Executive Board, pursuant to the by-law:

represents the Congress ensures that the resolutions of the Conventions, the Council and
the Head Executive Board of the Congress are carried out

opens the General Convention and chairs the convention until such time as the chairman
of the Convention is elected calls meetings of the Head Executive Board and chairs its
meetings ensures that other members of the Executive fulfil their functions in a proper
manner

Par.31

1. The Vice-presidents of the Head Executive Board take the place of the President of the
Head Executive Board in case of necessity and fulfil obligations placed upon them by the
Executive and the President.

2. Regional Vice-presidents represent the Head Executive Board in their regions and ensure that the resolutions and recommendations of the General Conventions of the Council of the Congress and that of the Head Executive Board are carried out. They maintain a liaison between the Polish community in their regions and the Head Executive Board

3. The Recording Secretary keeps records of meetings and assists the General Secretary in his functions

Par. 32

1. The General Secretary of the Head Executive Board is responsible for the office and documents of the Congress and carries out the resolutions and decisions of the Executive and the President.

2. The Recording Secretary keeps records of meetings and assists the General Secretary in his functions.

Par. 33

a. The Treasurer of the Head Executive Board:

is responsible for the collection of membership dues to the Congress

is responsible for vigilance over the special funds of the Congress

is responsible for the bookkeeping and financial matters of the Congress

b. The deputy Treasurer carries out the work assigned to him by the Treasurer.

Par. 34

The members of the Head Executive Board fulfil obligations placed upon them by the Head Executive.

Par. 35

Within the limit of its needs the Head Executive Board may call to assist it, on a permanent or temporary basis, committees and advisors from outside the membership of the Executive. The Executive defines the objectives and framework of action of the committee as well as the objects of its activity.

Par. 36

The meeting of the Head Executive Board should be called at least once a month.

Par. 37

The Head Executive Board is responsible for its actions to the General Convention.

Par. 38

The Head Executive Board may suspend the rights and obligations of a member of the Executive upon proof of an abuse of his rights or of his not carrying out his duties as a member of the Executive. The suspended member may appeal to the Council of the Congress (par. 26, pt.7).

Par. 39

1. The Chief Supervisory Committee oversees the administration and use of the property, assets and funds of the Canadian Polish Congress as well as of the events organized by and actions carried out in the name of the Congress, reviews the regularity of the books, and proposes to the General Convention a resolution absolving the retiring Head Executive Board.

2. The Auditor, elected by the General Convention for a term of 2 years is responsible for the official supervision and control of the administration and management of the fiscal affairs of the Head Executive Board of the Congress and its organs in order to establish their correctness and conformity with the law.

Par. 40

The Chief Supervisory Committee is composed of a chairman, two members, and three alternates. At least two members of this Committee must be conversant with bookkeeping principles.

Par. 41

All costs incurred in connection with the execution of functions by the Auditor and by the members of the Supervisory Committee are borne by the Head Executive Board of the Congress.

Par. 42

The Committee for the Resolution of Conflicts functions in accordance with its regulations and has as its purpose the resolution of disputed matters:

between member organization

between member organizations or organizations on the one hand and organs of the Congress on the other hand, or between individual organs of the Congress, with the exception of the Convention and the Committee for the Resolution of Conflicts arising out of matter's within the competence of the authorities of the Congress any other disputed matters between members of the Congress, and organizations outside the Congress, in which both parties express agreement to the resolution of the conflict by the committee

arising out of the application of par. 17 of the Constitution of the Congress.

Par. 43

The Committee for the Resolution of Conflicts is composed of a chairman, six members and six alternates, being two members and two alternates from each of the Eastern, Central and Western regions of the Congress.

BRANCHES OF THE CONGRESS

Par. 44

Organizations belonging to the Congress may be organized territorially into branches.

Par. 45

The Head Executive Board creates and organizes a branch of the Congress where it deems appropriate. The structure of the branches is defined in a separate regulation.

AFFILIATION

Par. 46

1. Organizations and associations of Polish Canadians wishing to cooperate with the Head Executive Board of the Congress or with Executives of Branches in their general activities or for a special purpose, may submit in writing the proposal of their cooperation on the basis of affiliation, annexing thereto a copy of their Constitution. In such a case financial cooperation is defined by a special agreement.

2. An affiliated organization has the right to participate in an advisory capacity through

a delegate in the General Convention of the Congress and at meetings of the Branch. In connection with the above, it receives documents and reports in the same manner as an ordinary member of the Congress.

3. An affiliated organization has the right to the moral and financial support of its activities by the Congress and member organizations of the Congress.
4. An affiliated organization has the obligation to keep the Congress and its member organizations informed of its activities and submit its reports at the General Conventions of the Congress, and in the case of affiliation with a Branch of the Congress, to keep such Branch informed.
5. An affiliated organization must act in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution, the resolutions of the General Conventions and with the ideological principles of the Congress.

HONORARY DISTINCTIONS OF THE CANADIAN POLISH CONGRESS

Par.47

An honorary Award or Diploma of Distinction of the Congress may be bestowed on physical persons and legal entities especially deserving for their contributions to the welfare of Polish Canadians. A bronze, silver and gold Honorary Award is created. The manner of bestowing the Honorary Award and Diploma of Distinction of the Congress is set out in the "Regulations of Honorary Distinctions of the Canadian Polish Congress".

FINAL DISPOSITIONS

Par. 48

1. The Provisions of the Constitution may be amended by a majority of 3/4 of the votes represented at the General Convention. Members of the Congress must be advised of the proposed amendments at least three months before the General Convention.
2. Amendments to the Constitution proposed at a General Convention without observing the limitations set out in (par. 48, pt. 1), may be the matter of discussion and resolution at such General Convention only if a resolution for the presentation of such amendment for discussion is passed by a majority of 3/4 of the votes represented at the General Convention.

Par. 49

1. The Canadian Polish Congress may be liquidated by a resolution of the General Convention, passed by a majority of 3/4 of the votes cast representing at least 3/4 of all those entitled to vote within the Congress.

2. In the event that a resolution is passed to liquidate the Canadian Polish Congress, the General Convention will determine the manner in which the assets of the Congress are to be disposed of and it will choose a Committee for the Liquidation of Assets. The assets may be used only for social objectives of Canadians of Polish origin.

Par. 50

This Constitution and all its amendments and addenda are issued in three languages: Polish, English, and French.