

**CHARTER
OF
THE FORUM OF HEADS OF ELECTION MANAGEMENT
BODIES OF SAARC COUNTRIES**

We, the Heads of Election Management Bodies/Representatives of AFGHANISTAN, BANGLADESH, BHUTAN, INDIA, MALDIVES, NEPAL, PAKISTAN AND SRI LANKA;

CONFIRMING our abiding faith in the objectives and principles of SAARC contained in the SAARC charter;

RECOGNIZING that the Election Management Bodies of SAARC countries can benefit from one another's experience and mutual cooperation; and

REALIZING that such cooperation may be strengthened through a permanent common Forum of the Heads of Election Management Bodies of SAARC Countries;

DO HEREBY

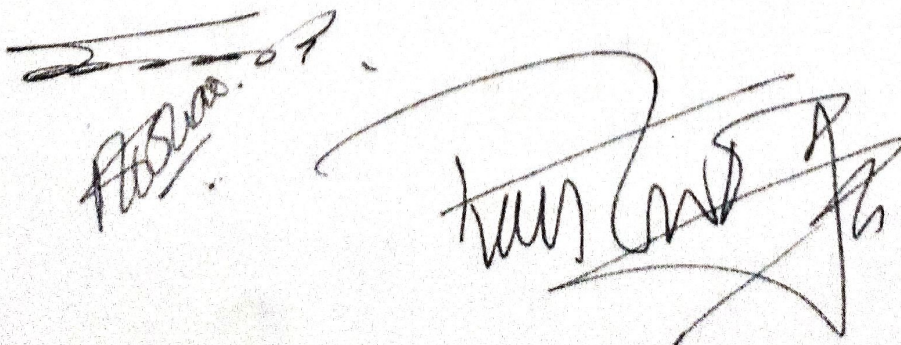
AGREE to establish an organization to be known as the Forum of Heads of Election Management Bodies of SAARC Countries, hereinafter referred to as the Forum, with the following objectives, and institutional and other arrangements;

Article-1

OBJECTIVES

Objectives of the Forum shall be to:

- a) promote contact among the Election Management Bodies of the SAARC countries;**
- b) share experiences with a view to learning from each other; and**
- c) cooperate with one another in enhancing the capabilities of the Election Management Bodies towards conducting free and fair elections.**



Article – 2

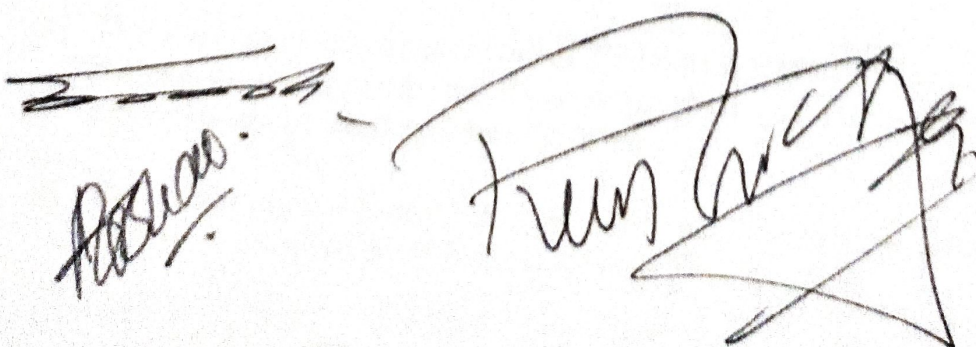
ORGAN OF THE FORUM

The operational arm shall be the Council of the Forum of Heads of Election Management Bodies of SAARC countries.

Article – 3

COUNCIL

- (a) The Council shall be the supreme authority of the Forum and comprise the Heads of the Election Management Bodies of SAARC Countries, or such other Election Commissioner / Member / authorized representative as may be deputed by the Head of the concerned Election Management Body.
- (b) The Council shall meet at least once a year in one of the Member countries selected, as far as possible, on the basis of alphabetical rotation; the place and dates to be determined by the Council. The meetings of the Council will be held with all members attending.
- (c) The Head of the Election Management Body of the Host Country shall be the Chair of the Council from commencement of one meeting to the commencement of the next, and will also discharge secretariat functions during this period.
- (d) The Council shall;
 - (i) Approve the programmes of the Forum;
 - (ii) Decide subjects for discussion in any Conference / Meeting of the Forum;
 - (iii) Consider and decide all matters concerning the Forum and Conduct of the Council;
 - (iv) Frame Rules for the conduct of the business of the Forum; and
 - (v) Fix the date and venue of Conferences/Meetings of the Forum.
 - (vi) Adopt an acronym and Logo for the Forum, if possible by circulation.



Article – 4

FUNDING ARRANGEMENT FOR MEETINGS

- a) Expenses on local hospitality, logistic support and internal travel for any meeting of the Forum shall be borne by the Election Management Body hosting the meeting.
- b) Expenditure on international travel shall be borne by the respective visiting delegations.

Article – 5

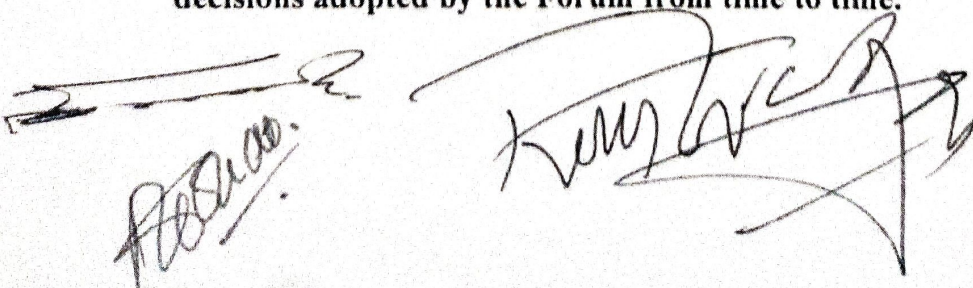
GENERAL PROVISION

- a) Decisions at all levels of the Forum shall be taken on the basis of unanimity;
- b) Bilateral and contentious issues should be excluded from the deliberation of the Forum.
- c) The Agreement shall not affect the right of any of the Forum members to interact, cooperate or enter into MoU with other members of the Forum or any other organizations.

Article – 6

INTERACTION AND COORDINATION

- a) The Forum may establish and maintain relations with other regional and international Electoral Organizations. The Council, in agreement with the organizations concerned, shall determine the nature and forms of such relations;
- b) The chairperson, or a member EMB as decided by the Chairperson, will represent the Forum, at their own cost, in meetings of similar other associations or bodies, when invited.
- c) The members of the Forum will implement recommendations and decisions adopted by the Forum from time to time.

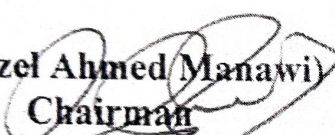
Two handwritten signatures in black ink are present at the bottom of the page. The signature on the left is more compact and stylized, while the one on the right is larger and more fluid, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

DISSOLUTION

- a) A member of the Forum may leave the Forum after due written notification of its decision.
- b) The Forum may be dissolved by a resolution of the Council.
- c) Upon such dissolution, the Council shall further decide concerning the disposal of the assets and payment of liabilities of the Forum.

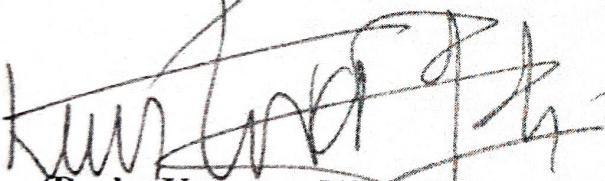
In faith whereof We Have Set out Hands Hereunto.

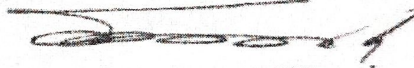
DONE In New Delhi, on this the 1st Day of May the year Two Thousand Twelve.


(Fazel Ahmed Manawi)
Chairman

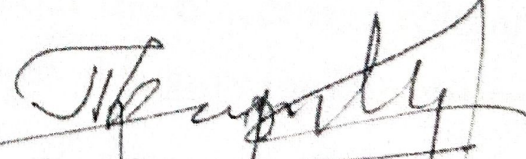
Independent Election Commission
AFGHANISTAN

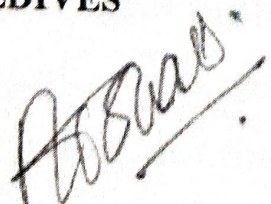

(Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad)
Chief Election Commissioner
BANGLADESH

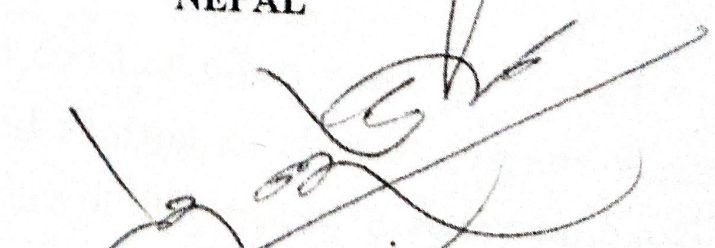

(Dasho Kunzang Wangdi)
Chief Election Commissioner
BHUTAN


(S. Y. Quraishi)
Chief Election Commissioner
INDIA


(Ibrahim Waheed)
Commissioner
Election Commission
MALDIVES


(Neel Kantha Uprety)
Chief Election Commissioner
NEPAL


Justice (R) Muhammad R. Essani
Member, Election Commission
PAKISTAN


(Mahinda Deshapriya)
Commissioner of Elections
SRI LANKA