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Purpose of the RGB of Russia

The leaders of ISKCON Russia, which is a society under the legal title of 'The Centre of Societies for Krishna Consciousness on Russia,' ("COSKR") have recognized the need to establish a Regional Governing Body ("RGB") for the following purposes.

1. Increasing coordination of the overall preaching and development strategy in Russia.
2. Increasing coordination of the implementation of the ISKCON Governing Body Commission ("GBC") policies, guidelines and resolutions applicable for Russia.
3. Becoming the prime contact with the GBC and the GBC Executive Committee ("GBC EC").
4. Operationalizing Russia as one of the five contiguous GBC Areas and ensuring proper leadership by the GBC Zonal Secretaries, Zonal Supervisors, and Temple Presidents functioning effectively in their zones.
5. Where appropriate, making recommendations to the GBC for GBC legislation.
6. Making recommendations to any of the GBC Zonal Secretaries that are GBC members or any other ISKCON official functioning within Russia on matters concerning the affairs of ISKCON Russia.
7. Affirming Ministers of ISKCON Russia.
8. Convening Committees, et cetera, as deemed necessary for Russian leaders to effectively undertake their responsibilities.
9. Establishing and supervising offices of ISKCON Russia and allocating funding for their effective functioning. This includes assuring reports of these offices are regularly shared with the RGB and with Russian temples.
10. Resolving any conflicts within Russia that are beyond the scope of a single Russian Zone. This includes handling of complaints on regional matters raised by the GBC Body, the Zonal Councils, any ISKCON officials, any ISKCON bodies, or any individuals.
11. Where appropriate and necessary, undertaking disciplinary action, as permitted under ISKCON law, against ISKCON officials and/or other devotees serving in Russia.
12. Being regarded by the government authority in the Russian Federation as the official and only representative in Russia of ISKCON and the GBC in the context of faiths, public associations and other organizations operating in the Russian Federation.
13. Representing ISKCON Russia at international meetings, conferences, symposia, and more.

The RGB is to have legal status in Russian under the legal title of the Governing Body of Centralized religious organization "Center of Krishna conciseness societies in Russia" main state registration number: 1037739124807, registration number: 0000000118.

To this end, we propose to establish a Russian RGB with the following Rules and Regulations.

Membership

Composition of the RGB

The RGB shall be composed of:

- All the *ex officio* **GBC Zonal Secretaries** corresponding to the five Zones in Russia.
- All the *ex officio* **Zonal Supervisors.**
- The *ex officio* **President of COSKR.**
- The *ex officio* **Vice-President of COSKR**.
- The *ex officio* **Director of Bhaktivedanta Book Trust ("BBT") Russian branch.**
- The *ex officio* **Russian Minister of Communications.**
- The *ex officio* **Russian Minister of Government relationship.**
- The *ex officio* **Russian Minister of Legal Department.**

The above members shall all be Regular Voting Members of the RGB.

Rules for Election

The GBC Zonal Secretaries

These are *ex officio* positions: each of the GBC Zonal Secretaries shall be a member of the RGB by virtue of them being a GBC member caring for one of the specific Russian Zones. Thus, their term on the RGB entirely corresponds with their service as a GBC Zonal Secretary as per the annually appointments conducted at the Annual General Meeting ("AGM") of the ISKCON Governing Body Commission Society of West Bengal.

The Zonal Supervisors

These are *ex officio* positions: each of the GBC Zonal Supervisors shall be a member of the RGB by virtue of being appointed by the GBC member in their respective Russian Zones according to ISKCON law.

Other *ex officio* Members

The President and vice-president of COSKR, the Director of BBT Russian branch, the Russian Ministers of Communications, Government relationship, and the Legal Department shall all be *ex officio* members of the RGB.

Member discipline and removal

A member of the RGB could be placed on leave or removed if:

- they repeatedly fail to perform their assigned duties (as detailed in the "Responsibilities" section of this document), including but not limited to attendance at RGB meetings;
- they are in serious violation of ISKCON's laws, morals, or philosophical principles;
- their actions bring ISKCON into disrepute or jeopardy;
- they engage in criminal activity.

For the purpose of discipline, the **RGB** may use their discretion or act on a recommendation of another RGB member to deliver a warning to an alleged erring member. If the issue is not corrected, the RGB will deliver a second warning. After warning the same member a second time, if the problem continues, the RGB will convene a committee of 3 or 5 RGB members to hear all sides and make a recommendation.

During the deliberations of the committee, the allegedly erring member will lose their voting privileges.

The Regular Voting Members, except the alleged erring member, shall vote on the recommendations of the committee. A vote to remove a member requires a 2/3 majority to pass. This vote is however subject to the GBC veto further elaborated on in the "Voting" section of this document.

If the result of the voting is to discipline or remove a GBC member, the issue shall then be referred to the GBC Body for their further action.

General Rights and Responsibilities of the RGB and its Members

Rights

- To be advised of the issues which pertain to the whole region of Russia.
- To receive two weeks' notice of the date and agenda for the Biannual General Meeting ("BGM").
- To vote according to their conscience.
- To express any concerns and opinions, in a reasonable and respectful manner, on the issues put before the RGB as an equal participant and member of the RGB, regardless of seniority, position within the institution, asrama, gender, age or any other factor.

Responsibilities

- To ensure that the mission of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada as described in the Seven Purposes of ISKCON is promoted and achieved in Russia with the support of the individual GBC members, the GBC Zonal Supervisors, the Divisional Councils, the individual ISKCON corporations and the ISKCON corporations' officers across Russia.
- To promote cooperation and shared planning within ISKCON in Russia to achieve the the Seven Purposes of ISKCON.
- To ensure that the laws and policies of the GBC are upheld and implemented in Russia.
- To set policies, as appropriate for the Russian ISKCON Temples and communities, in line with the laws of the Russian Federation, global ISKCON GBC Laws and the teachings of His Divine Grace A C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.
- To ensure that the RGB is supported by adequate staff, including an Administrative Director chosen by the RGB by majority vote. Their terms and duties will be determined by the RGB.
- To ensure that there is a legally incorporated entity which can support the administrative functions of the RGB, and that it functions according to all local, state/provincial and national laws.
- To create and administer an annual budget, and provide annual financial reports to all Russian temples.
- To connect ISKCON centres in Russia with available support in relation to conduct of leaders.
- To ensure that the necessary offices are reviewed and, if approved, are reaffirmed along with their directors annually.
- To support efforts and structures to enhance the effectiveness of Temple Presidents, Zonal Supervisors, Regional Secretaries, Russian Ministers, Russian Offices, and Duty Officers, per the policies established by the global GBC Body.
- To work toward developing regional offices and representatives for Ministries as deemed necessary by the RGB.
- To organize at least one annual meeting of all Russian RGB members, Regional Secretaries, and other Russian leaders in good standing to discuss and coordinate strategic plans and other issues

of importance for ISKCON Russia.
- To report annually to the global GBC Body.
- To serve on committees that may be established from time to time by the RGB.
- To promote support of and cooperation with the RGB within their area of responsibility.
- To keep confidentiality on topics so deemed.
- To attend a minimum number or percentage of meetings as specified by current policy.

RGB Chair

The RGB will have a Chair.

Rules for Election of Chair

The RGB Chair shall be elected each year, and shall be confirmed annually by majority vote of the Regular Voting members of the RGB.

Duties of RGB Chair

The RGB Chair shall:

- at a minimum, call for monthly online RGB meetings;
- call for a BGM and preside over the voting and appointments of new RGB members;
- liaise with the GBC EC for all necessary purposes;
- call for meeting agenda items from all RGB members;
- prepare and distribute agendas for meetings;
- chair the meetings.

How RGB Meetings are Convened and Conducted

Meetings may be held in person, or via an online platform such as Zoom.

Biannual General Meetings shall be held in person, with mandatory attendance of all members, unless exempted by the Chair.

Frequency

Meetings shall be held monthly. The Chair may call for additional meetings at its discretion.

Quorum

The presence of 2/3 of the Regular Voting Members of the RGB constitutes a **quorum** at any RGB meeting.

If for any reason, a quorum is not present for two consecutive meetings, or in an emergency or time-sensitive situation, any four GBC members will constitute a quorum for any and all business that needs to be conducted.

Agenda Items

Proposed agenda items for regular monthly meetings shall be sent in beforehand and compiled by the Chair after seeking input from all RGB members.

Discussion of Items

The Chair invites all members to participate in discussions.

Voting

Voting shall be done on the basis of one person, one vote.

Administrative staff are not members of the RGB and thus do not vote in Regular Voting or Special Voting.

The RGB recognizes that the GBC Body may also from time to time promulgate additional standards for what is to be included in the Rules and Regulations, and these additional standards would take effect without requiring a vote of the RGB, provided they conform with the laws of Russian Federation.

Voting may take place with electronic support such as Telegram polls or other method at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

Proposed resolutions are to be presented with sufficient Whereas clauses so that the context and rationale are clear.

Straw Voting

Straw Voting takes place at meetings to get a sense of the RGB's current opinion on a specific proposal or topic of discussion. Abstentions for lack of preparedness to vote are discouraged. Abstentions are allowed only with a rationale.

Regular voting

Regular proposals are decided by simple majority.

Special voting

Any proposals related to changing any aspect of these Rules and Regulations must be decided by a 3/4 majority.

A 3/4 majority of Regular Voting Members are required to increase the number of Regular Voting Members of any category.

A 3/4 majority of Regular Voting Members are required to appointed.

Veto

GBC members of the RGB can veto a decision of the RGB by their unanimous vote, in which case the RGB decision becomes null and void and is returned to the RGB for further discussion. The GBC members shall prepare their alternative solution with justification.

If, after a second round of discussion, a 3/5 majority of GBC members does not support a proposal that has the approval of a 3/4 majority of the RGB, it may be referred to GBC EC and the entire GBC Body for their ultimate decision.

Each member may also temporarily veto decisions within his immediate area of responsibility (for example, if the decision relates to a specific area under a GBC Zonal Secretary or a professional area of

responsibility under the relevant ministry) if the member feels that the decision may be detrimental to ISKCON or its members. Within the period specified by the resolution, the member must present an alternative solution with justification.

Finance

The RGB is authorized to develop an annual budget and assign annual contributions for temples and projects to support the shared efforts of ISKCON in Russia.

The RGB is authorized to accept gifts of funds from sources other than the annual contributions from temples.

Annual accounts of revenue and expenses shall be made available to the GBC EC, the RGB members and the Russian Ministry representatives.

Relationship with Temple Presidents and other leaders in ISKCON

The GBC Zonal Secretaries, Zonal Supervisors and Ministers serving on the RGB shall themselves formally pledge to uphold the decisions agreed upon by the RGB in their own areas, and work with all the ISKCON leaders in their zones to implement these decisions.

As the RGB is a deputed body of the GBC, it is the duty of ISKCON organizations in Russia and their leaders to comply with RGB decisions. Failure to do so may be subject to ISKCON disciplinary actions as per ISKCON Law. Any appeal will be as provided for within ISKCON Law.

Understanding the need for strategic planning and support on a national level, the RGB will organize or assist in organizing the following meetings:

1. RGB BGM
2. Local leaders' Annual conference
3. ISKCON Leadership Sanga meeting
4. Regular regional/divisional/area council meetings

Procedures for Reporting to the GBC Body on RGB Membership and Proceedings

Resolutions passed by the RGB by request of GBC secretariat can be translated into English and sent to the Corresponding Secretary of the GBC Body no later than one month after being requested (this is in accordance with the GBC Resolution passed in 2010: Update on 3.4.1.5.1 Reporting Duties).

A biannual report, including all resolutions and decisions adopted in the previous half a year, shall be sent to the GBC Body along with the names of current members and the minutes of the RGB AGM.

The annual report will also be distributed to all RGB members, all Russian Regional secretaries, and all

Leadership Sanga members.

Procedures for Maintaining a Record of the Official Proceedings of the RGB

Minutes of each meeting shall be recorded by an administrative staff member or by a member designated by the Chair. The minutes shall include the:

- date
- members present and absent and their regrets
- agenda items
- conclusions and/or resolutions made
- results of votes
- action items
- person(s) responsible for the action items' completion

The minutes shall make up the official records of the RGB and shall be kept in both, hard copy and electronic copy, by the appointed person above. Electronic copies shall be available to any RGB member and Temple President upon request.

All decisions of the RGB will be sent to the Regional Secretaries, the Leadership Sanga members, the Russian Ministry representatives, the Russian Temple Presidents, and the GBC Zonal Supervisors within 14 days of their passage.

Procedures for Changing these Rules and Regulations

See the paragraph on Special Voting in the section on Voting, which states:

"The RGB recognizes that the GBC Body may also from time to time promulgate additional standards for what is to be included in the Rules and Regulations, and these additional standards would take effect without requiring a vote of the RGB, provided they conform with the laws of Russian Federation.

[…]

Special voting

Any proposals related to changing any aspect of these Rules and Regulations must be decided by a 3/4 majority."