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# ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

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**A French *Société Anonyme* (joint stock company)  
with a share capital of EUR 7,851,636,342.00**

**REGISTERED OFFICE**

**12, Place des Etats-Unis  
CS 70052 - 92547 Montrouge Cedex (France)  
registered under the SIREN N° 304 187 701  
at Nanterre's *Registre du Commerce***

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# ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

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## TITLE I

### CORPORATE FORM – REGISTERED NAME - CORPORATE PURPOSE - REGISTERED OFFICE – TERM

#### **ARTICLE 1 – Corporate form**

The Company is a joint stock company [French *Société Anonyme*] with a Board of Directors. It is governed by the laws and regulations that apply to credit institutions and to French *Sociétés Anonymes* and by the present Articles of Association.

#### **ARTICLE 2 - Registered name**

The name of the Company is: "Crédit Agricole Corporate and Investment Bank".

#### **ARTICLE 3 – Corporate purpose**

The purpose of the Company, in France and abroad, is:

- to enter into any banking transactions and any finance transactions, and more particularly:
  - to receive funds, grant loans, advances, credit, financing, guarantees, to undertake collection, payment, recoveries,
  - to provide advisory services in financial matters, and especially in matters of financing, indebtedness, subscription, issues, investment, acquisitions, transfers, mergers, restructurings,
  - to provide custodial, management, purchasing, sales, exchange, brokerage and arbitrage services with respect to all and any stocks, equity rights, financial products, derivatives, currencies, commodities, precious metals and in general all and any other securities of all kinds,
- to provide all and any investment services and related services as defined by the French Monetary and Financial Code and any subsequent legislation or regulation deriving therefrom,
- to establish and to participate in any ventures, associations, corporations, by way of subscription, purchase of shares or equity rights, merger or in any other way,

- to enter into transactions, either commercial or industrial, relating to securities or real estate, directly or indirectly related to any or all of the above purposes or to any similar or connected purposes,
- the foregoing, both on its own behalf and on behalf of third parties or as a partner and in any form whatsoever.

#### **ARTICLE 4 - Registered office**

The registered office is at 12, Place des Etats-Unis - CS 70052 - 92547 Montrouge Cedex (France)

#### **ARTICLE 5 – Term**

The Company's term of existence shall end on 25 November 2064, except in the event of early dissolution or extension of its life.

## **TITLE II**

### **REGISTERED CAPITAL - SHARES**

#### **ARTICLE 6 – Registered capital**

The registered share capital of the Company is set at EUR 7,851,636,342.00 (seven billion, eight hundred and fifty-one million, six hundred and thirty-six thousand, three hundred and forty-two euros). The capital is divided into 290,801,346 (two hundred and ninety million, eight hundred and one thousand, three hundred and forty-six) fully paid-up shares, each with a nominal value of EUR 27 (twenty-seven euros).

#### **ARTICLE 7 – Form of the shares – Assignment and transfer of shares**

##### **7a. Form of the shares**

The shares must be registered in a pure nominative account at the issuing company.

##### **7b. Assignment and transfer of shares**

- I. The assignment of shares for the benefit of spouses, ascendants and descendants is subject to no restriction.

The same shall apply to assignments for the benefit of Crédit Agricole S.A. and of any company placed under its control, under the terms of article L233-3 I & II of the French Commercial Code.

- II. Except for cases mentioned under (I.) above, no private individual or legal entity (hereinafter the "Assignee") may become a shareholder of the Company or the holder of a right stripped from any share or any right derived therefrom in any manner whatsoever (hereinafter the "Assignment") if that person or entity has not been previously approved by the Chairman of the Board of Directors under the conditions set forth hereinbelow:

1°. The application for approval of the assignee shall be notified to the Company by extrajudicial instrument or by registered mail, return receipt requested, indicating the last name, first names and address of the assignee, the number of shares of which the assignment is envisaged, the price offered and the terms of sale. Approval shall be constituted either by notification thereof, or by the absence of such notification within a period of three months as from the date of the application.

The decision to approve shall be taken by the Chairman. No reasons need be given for that decision and in the event of a rejection this shall under no circumstances be justification for any claim.

The assignor shall be informed of the decision within fifteen days of receipt of the notification by registered mail, return receipt requested.

In the event of a rejection, the assignor shall have ten days from the date of receipt and in accordance with same procedure as above, to make it known whether or not he wishes to abandon the proposed

assignment.

2°. If the assignor does not abandon the proposed assignment, the Chairman shall be bound, within a maximum period of three months from the date of notification of the rejection, to arrange for the acquisition of the shares either by existing shareholders or by third parties, or, with the consent of the assignor, by the Company with a view to reducing its share capital.

To that end, the Chairman shall inform the shareholders of the proposed assignment by registered mail, return receipt requested, inviting each to indicate the number of shares he wishes to acquire.

Offers to purchase shares shall be sent by shareholders to the Chairman by registered mail, return receipt requested, within ten days of the date of receipt of the notification. The allocation of the shares proposed for sale between the shareholders wishing to purchase them shall be determined by the Chairman in proportion to their respective holdings in the total share capital and up to the limit of their applications.

3°. If no application to purchase shares is sent to the Chairman within the above time limit or if the requests do not cover the total number of the shares, the Chairman may arrange for the available shares to be purchased by third parties.

4°. With the agreement of the assignor, the shares may also be purchased by the Company. The Chairman shall seek such agreement by registered mail, return receipt requested, to which the assignor must respond within ten days of receipt.

If this agreement is given, the Board of Directors shall, upon proposal by the Chairman, call an Extraordinary General Meeting of shareholders for the purpose of deciding upon the redemption of the shares by the Company and the corresponding reduction in share capital. The Notice of Meeting must be sent out sufficiently early to ensure that the three-month time limit is observed as stipulated below.

In all the cases of purchase or redemption described above, the price for the shares shall be set as indicated at point (6) below.

5°. If all the shares have not been purchased or redeemed within a period of three months from the date of the notification of rejection, the assignor may complete the sale to the initial assignee for the totality of the shares to be assigned, notwithstanding the offers of partial purchase that may have been made.

The three months period may be extended by a court injunction issued in summary proceedings by the President of the Commercial Court, and not subject to appeal, at the behest of the Company, with the assigning shareholder and the assignee being duly called to attend the hearing.

6°. In the event that the shares on offer are acquired by shareholders or third parties, the Chairman shall notify to the assignor the last name, first names and address of the purchaser(s).

Failing an agreement between the parties, the price for the shares shall be determined under the conditions set forth in Article 1843-4 of the French Code of Civil Law.

The cost of the expert valuation shall be borne equally by vendor and purchaser.

7°. Within eight days of the date of determination of the price, notification shall be sent to the assignor by registered mail, return receipt requested, indicating that he must, within fifteen days of the receipt of that notification, make it known whether he wishes to abandon the proposed assignment or, if not, attend the registered office to receive payment of the price, which shall not bear interest, and to sign the share transfer form. Failing attendance by the assignor within the above-mentioned time limit of fifteen days, or failing notification to the Company within that time limit of his intention to abandon the assignment, the assignment to the purchaser or purchasers shall be formalised on the instructions of the Chairman of the Board of Directors or a specifically authorised person, with effect from the date of the formalisation of said assignment.

8°. The provisions of the present article shall apply generally to all and any manner of transfer of ownership, whether free of charge or not, by private deed or in any other manner, even where the assignment is effected by public auction under a court order or following a private decision, and whether such assignment is voluntary or enforced. They shall apply in particular to contributions to corporate capital, partial contributions of assets, mergers, spin-offs (scissions) and general transfers of property.

9°. The approval provisions contained in the present Article shall also apply to the assignment of rights of allocation of shares in the event of an increase in share capital by means of an incorporation of reserve funds, profits or issue premiums. They shall further apply in the event of the assignment of share subscription rights associated with an increase in capital in cash or individual relinquishment of subscription rights in favour of designated beneficiaries.

In either of these cases, the approval and the conditions governing the redemption of shares stipulated in the present article shall apply to all shares subscribed, and the time allowed to the Chairman for the notification to third party subscribers of their acceptance or rejection as shareholders shall be three months as from the date of final completion of the increase in share capital.

Where the shares are redeemed, the price shall be equal to the value of the new shares as determined under the conditions set forth in Article 1843-4 of the Code of Civil Law.

10°. In the event of allocation of shares following the distribution of the assets of a company holding those shares, allocations to persons who are not already shareholders of the Company shall be subject to the approval procedure described herein.

Consequently, any proposal to allocate shares to persons other than existing shareholders shall give rise to an application for approval by the liquidator of the company under the provisions of paragraph (1) hereinabove.

Failing notification to the liquidator of the Chairman's decision within three months of the date of the application for approval, such application shall be deemed approved.

In the event of a refusal to approve certain proposed recipients of allocations, the liquidator may, within thirty days of the notification of such refusal, amend the allocations in order to submit only those recipients who are approved.

If all the proposed recipients are rejected, or if the liquidator has not amended his proposed distribution within the above-mentioned time limit, the shares allocated to the non-approved shareholders must be purchased or redeemed from the company in liquidation under the conditions set forth in paragraphs 2 to 4 above. Failing such purchase or redemption of the totality of the shares covered by the rejection, within the time limit stipulated at point (5) above, the distribution may be completed in accordance with the proposal submitted.

- III. Transfer of ownership of shares through inheritance or related to the liquidation of a common property between spouses is subject to no restriction.

## **ARTICLE 8 - Rights and obligations attached to shares**

Each share confers, in the ownership of the Company's assets, the distribution of profits and the liquidation bonus, a right proportional to the number of existing shares, taking into account, where applicable, redeemed and non-redeemed, fully paid-up and partly paid-up capital, the nominal amount of the shares and the rights of other classes of shares.

All present and future shares in the capital shall invariably be treated equally with regard to tax liability. Consequently, all duties and taxes which, for whatever reason, may become payable solely in respect of certain shares further to their redemption, whether during the life of the Company or upon its liquidation, shall be spread over all the shares making up the capital at the time of such redemption, in a manner such that all the present or future shares shall confer upon their owners, taking account where applicable of their nominal and non-redeemed amount and of the rights of shares of other classes, the same actual advantages and right to receive the same net amount.

On each occasion that it may be necessary to hold more than one share in order to exercise any right, the

ownership of a single share or of shares in a number less than that required shall confer no right with respect to the Company, it being the responsibility of the shareholders to arrange personally for the grouping and, where applicable, for the purchase or sale of the necessary number of shares.

## TITLE III

### MANAGEMENT OF THE COMPANY

#### **ARTICLE 9 – Membership of the Board of Directors**

The Company shall be managed by a Board of Directors with between six and twenty members. At least six Directors shall be appointed by General Meetings of shareholders in accordance with the provisions of Article L. 225-18 of the French Commercial Code or any subsequent provision deriving therefrom, and two shall be elected by the salaried employees in accordance with the provisions of Articles L. 225-27 to L. 225-34 of the French Commercial Code or any subsequent provisions deriving therefrom.

The following persons may also attend Board meetings in an advisory capacity:

- if applicable, one or more *censeurs* (non-voting members of the Board) appointed in accordance with Article 17 below,
- one member of the Economic and Social Committee, appointed by said Committee.

#### 1. Directors appointed by General Meetings of shareholders

These Directors shall be appointed, renewed or removed in accordance with the legal and regulatory provisions in force.

Their term of office shall be three years. However :

- by way of exception, the General Meeting may, for the establishment or maintenance of a staggering, appoint one or several directors for a different term not exceeding three years, in order to allow a staggered renewal of the directors' mandates,
- any Director appointed to replace another whose term of office has not expired shall hold office only for the remainder of his predecessor's term.

In the event of a vacancy or vacancies subsequent to death or resignation, or in other cases listed by law, such vacancies may be filled provisionally by co-optation under the conditions laid down by law and regulations in force.

#### 2. Directors elected by employees

Two members shall be elected by the employees: one shall be elected by executive level staff (*cadres*), the other by the other categories of staff.

In any event, the number of members elected in this way may not exceed one-third of the members appointed by the General Meeting.

They shall be elected under the terms and in accordance with legal and regulatory provisions in force or, failing this, as determined by the Chief Executive Officer after consultation with the trade unions represented in the Company.

Both these Directors are elected for a term of office ending the same day:

- either at the close of the Annual Shareholders meeting held in the third calendar year following their election,
- or upon completion of the elections organized during this third calendar year when these take place after the annual shareholders meeting.

Where a seat falls vacant due to the death, resignation, removal or termination of the employment contract of a Director elected by employees, the vacancy shall be filled in accordance with the legal and regulatory provisions in force and the new Director shall take office immediately. If replacement proves impossible, elections for such member shall take place within three months.

In any event, the term for which a Director elected by employees may hold office shall be limited to the period remaining to run until the date on which his contract of employment ends.

#### **ARTICLE 10 – Other provisions relative to the Directors**

Any Director turning sixty five is automatically deemed to be resigning at the close of the annual General meeting of shareholders immediately following his/her sixty fifth birthday.

The term of office of a Director appointed by the shareholders in General meeting can however be renewed from year to year up to a maximum five times, being specified that at no time can the number of directors aged over sixty five exceed one third of the total number of Directors. Should the total number of Directors not be precisely divisible by three, that third part will be rounded upward.

#### **ARTICLE 11 - Proceedings of the Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors shall meet as often as is dictated by the Company's interest, and when called by its Chairman or at least one third of its members.

If applicable, the Chief Executive Officer may request the Chairman to call a meeting of the Board on a specific agenda. Any such request is binding upon the Chairman.

Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held either at the registered office or at any other place indicated in the Notice of Meeting.

Notice of Meeting may be given by any means, even orally.

In order for decisions at such meetings to be valid, at least half of the Board's sitting members must be present.

Any member of the Board of Directors may grant a proxy to another member to represent him at a meeting of the Board. Each member may hold no more than one proxy at any given meeting.

The Board of Directors' internal rules may stipulate that for calculation of the quorum and majority, Directors who take part in a Board meeting using a remote telecommunications means such as video-conferencing, the type and conditions of use of such means being determined by reference to the regulations in force, shall be deemed to be present.

Decisions shall require a majority vote of those Directors present in person and by proxy. When voting ends in a tie, the Chairman shall cast the deciding vote.

The Directors, as well as any other person called to attend the meetings of the Board of Directors, shall be subject to an obligation of discretion in respect of the proceedings of the Board as well as in respect of information of a confidential nature or described as confidential by the Chairman of the Board.

The chairman or at least one-third of the Directors may consult the Board of Directors in writing under the quorum and majority rules, on the following decisions :

- Replacement of a Director by co-optation mentioned in 9.1 of the articles of association
- Necessary amendment of the articles of association to comply them with the law
- Convening of General Meeting
- Transfer of the head office to the same French department

In case of written consultation, each Director, each Censor and the representative of the Economic and Social Committee receive by any means which enables to produce evidence of sending, a form including the draft of the proposed decisions, with necessary documents to vote, and the response time from the date of sending.

During the response time, each Director can ask any explanation or additional information as it may consider pertinent to him, related to the consultation subject.



The vote of each Director is cast on the written consultation form including the draft of the proposed decisions.

In case of failure to reply within the time limit, the Director is considered as absent for the calculation of quorum. If a Director, within the time limit, does not express in a clear and unequivocal manner his vote on one or more of the proposed decisions, it will be considered as an abstention.

Board decisions are considered to have been made after the deadline response.

#### **ARTICLE 12 - Attendance register and minutes of meetings of the Board of Directors**

A register of attendance shall be kept at the registered office and this shall be signed by the Directors attending each Board meeting.

The proceedings of the Board shall be recorded in minutes drawn up in accordance with the legal and regulatory provisions in force.

Such minutes shall be signed by the Chairman of the meeting and by at least one other Director. In the event that the Chairman of the meeting is unable to sign the minutes, they shall be signed by at least two Directors.

In case of written consultation of the Board of Directors, the consultation method, the proposed decisions, the written consultation results, and the list of the sent documents, are recorded in the minutes signed by the Chairman or by at least two Directors.

Production of a copy of, or an extract from the minutes of the meeting shall suffice as proof of the number of Directors in office and their presence or representation by proxy.

Copies of, or extracts from minutes of meetings shall be validly certified by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board, the Chief Executive Officer, or an authorised signatory duly empowered therefor.

During liquidation, such copies or extracts shall be certified by a single liquidator.

#### **ARTICLE 13 - Powers of the Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors shall determine the Company's business policies and ensure that they are duly implemented. Subject to the powers expressly allocated to General Meetings of shareholders and within the limits set by the corporate purpose, it shall consider any matter relating to the proper operation of the Company and shall take its decisions on any relevant issues during the course of its meetings.

The Board of Directors may carry out all checks and verifications it considers appropriate. The Chairman or the Chief Executive Officer of the Company shall be bound to provide each Director with all the information required in order to carry out his assigned tasks.

The Board may decide to set up committees to examine issues that the Board itself or its Chairman may submit to them. The Board shall determine the members and powers of such committees, and they shall act under the Board's responsibility.

Unless expressly assigned by law, the Board may grant those of its powers it chooses to any persons or committees it deems appropriate, by means of a special authorisation and for one or more specific purposes, with or without the possibility of sub-delegation.

The Board of Directors shall decide whether the general management of the Company shall be placed in the hands of the Chairman of the Board or the Chief Executive Officer.

In general terms, the Board of Directors is vested with all the powers granted to it under the laws in force.

#### **ARTICLE 14 - Remuneration of Directors**

Directors may receive, in remuneration of their activity, by way of Directors' fees, a fixed annual sum, the amount of which shall be determined by an Ordinary General Meeting and shall remain applicable until otherwise decided.

The Board of Directors shall distribute the total amount of directors' fees between its members as it sees fit.

It may also itself allocate exceptional remuneration in respect of assignments or mandates entrusted to Directors. This remuneration shall be subject to the legal provisions that govern related party transactions.

In addition, the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman or Vice-Chairmen may receive remuneration in an amount to be determined by the Board of Directors.

#### **ARTICLE 15 - Chairman of the Board**

The Board of Directors shall elect the Chairman of the Board from amongst its members. The Board shall determine the length of his term of office, which may not exceed his term as a Director.

The Board of Directors may elect a Vice-Chairman or several Vice-Chairmen. It shall also determine the length of his/their term(s) of office, which may not exceed the length of his/their term(s) as Director(s).

The Chairman shall organise and coordinate the work of the Board and report on such activities to the General Meeting. He shall ensure that the Company's bodies operate satisfactorily and ensure, in particular, that the Directors are in a position to carry out their assignments.

In general terms, the Chairman shall be vested with all powers granted to him by the legislation in force.

As an exception to the provisions of Article 10 paragraph 1 of the present Articles of Association, the age limit for the performance of the duties of Chairman of the Board of Directors is set at 67, except where the Chairman also acts as Chief Executive Officer of the Company.

He shall benefit from the provisions of Article 10, paragraph 2.

#### **ARTICLE 16 - General Management**

The Chairman of the Board of Directors, or another individual appointed by the Board of Directors and having the title of Chief Executive Officer, shall be responsible for the general management of the Company.

Upon proposals by the Chief Executive Officer, the Board of Directors may appoint one or more individuals to assist the Chief Executive Officer, having the title of Deputy Chief Executive Officers.

##### **1. Chief Executive Officer**

Within the limits set by the corporate purpose and subject to those powers expressly allocated by law to General Meetings and to the Board of Directors, the Chief Executive Officer shall be vested with the widest possible powers to act in the Company's name in all circumstances.

He shall represent the Company in its relations with third parties, especially with regard to legal proceedings.

Taking into account the corporate purpose, and in accordance with the law, sureties, endorsements and other guarantees in favour of third parties shall be granted by the Chief Executive Officer.

The Chief Executive Officer may decide to set up committees to examine issues that he shall submit to them for their opinion. He shall determine the members and powers of such committees.

The Chief Executive Officer may entrust those of his powers he chooses to any persons or committees he deems appropriate, by means of a special authorisation and for one or more specific purposes, with or without the possibility of sub-delegation of those same powers.

Where the Chief Executive Officer is a member of the Board of Directors, his term of office may not exceed his term of office as Director.

The age limit for Chief Executive Officers is set at sixty-five (65).

Where the Chairman of the Board of Directors is responsible for the general management of the Company, the provisions of this article shall apply to him.

##### **2. Deputy Chief Executive Officers**

The number of Deputy Chief Executive Officers is limited to a maximum of five.

The age limit for Deputy Chief Executive Officer is set at sixty-five (65).

When they are appointed, the scope and term of the powers of each Deputy Chief Executive Officer shall be set by the Board of Directors, in agreement with the Chief Executive Officer.

With regard to third parties, Deputy Chief Executive Officers shall benefit from the same powers as the Chief Executive Officer.

#### **ARTICLE 17 - *Censeurs* (non-voting advisory members of the Board)**

Upon proposal by the Chairman, the Board of Directors may appoint one or more legal entities or individuals as *censeurs* (non-voting advisory members of the Board).

*Censeurs* shall be appointed for a term of office that shall expire at the close of the first Board Meeting held after the Annual General Meeting called during the third calendar year following the year in which they were appointed as such. Any *Censeur* reaching the age of seventy two is deemed to resign automatically at the close of the Board meeting immediately following his/her seventy second birthday.

Each *Censeur* may be removed from office at any time by the Board of Directors upon proposal by the Chairman.

Depending on the agenda, *Censeurs* are called to attend meetings of the Board of Directors and General Meetings of the shareholders, and may, if invited to do so by the Chairman, take part in the proceedings in an advisory capacity.

*Censeurs* may receive fees in an amount decided by the Board.

### **TITLE IV**

#### **COMPANY AUDITS**

#### **ARTICLE 18 – Statutory Auditors**

An Ordinary General Meeting of shareholders shall appoint Statutory Auditors to carry out assigned tasks as specified in law, at the times and under the conditions provided by the legislation in force.

Statutory Auditors shall be eligible for reappointment.

They shall receive remuneration in an amount determined in accordance with the terms and conditions laid down in the laws and regulations in force.

### **TITLE V**

#### **GENERAL MEETINGS**

#### **ARTICLE 19 – Composition - Nature of Meetings**

General Meetings shall be composed of all shareholders, regardless of the number of shares they may own.

Duly constituted General Meetings shall represent all shareholders. Resolutions passed in General Meetings in accordance with the laws and regulations in force shall be binding on all shareholders.

General Meetings shall be designated as Extraordinary General Meetings where their resolutions relate to an amendment of the Articles of Association; they shall be designated as Ordinary General Meetings in all other cases.

Special Meetings of shareholders may take place involving the owners of a specific class of shares, if any, to decide upon changes to the rights attached to the shares of such class.

Such Special Meetings of shareholders shall be called and proceed in the same manner as Extraordinary General Meetings.

## **ARTICLE 20 - Meetings**

General Meetings shall be called in accordance with the provisions of the laws and regulations in force.

Meetings shall be held either at the Company's registered office or at any other place designated in the Notice of Meeting.

General Meetings shall be chaired by the Chairman of the Board of Directors or, in his absence, by a Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors or by a Director appointed by the Chairman of the Board of Directors for that purpose. Failing this, the General Meeting may itself elect the chair of the meeting.

The agenda shall be determined by the author of the Notice of Meeting. Only proposals from the author of the Notice of Meeting or from the shareholders shall be included in the agenda.

Each shareholder in the Ordinary or Extraordinary General Meeting shall have a number of votes proportional to the fraction of the Company's capital corresponding to the shares he owns or represents, provided however that such shares are not deprived of the right to vote.

The Board of Directors may decide that shareholders taking part in the meeting via videoconferencing facilities or by some other means of remote telecommunications enabling them to be satisfactorily identified shall be deemed to be personally present at the meeting for the purposes of calculation of the quorum and the majority, provided however that the type and conditions of use of such means shall comply with the laws and regulations in force.

## **ARTICLE 21 - Ordinary General Meetings**

Ordinary General Meetings shall proceed in accordance with the quorum and majority rules as provided by the laws and regulations in force.

Shareholders shall be called each year to attend an Ordinary General Meeting.

The annual Ordinary General Meeting shall consider the report of the Board of Directors and the reports of the Statutory Auditors.

It shall discuss, approve or adjust the annual financial statements and the consolidated financial statements, if any, and shall determine the manner in which the net earnings for the financial year shall be allocated.

It shall appoint the auditors.

It shall consider any other proposals on the agenda which do not fall within the remit of Extraordinary General Meetings.

In addition to this Annual General Meeting, Ordinary General Meetings may be called in exceptional circumstances.

#### **ARTICLE 22 - Extraordinary General Meetings**

Extraordinary General Meetings shall proceed in accordance with the quorum and majority rules as provided by laws and regulations in force.

Extraordinary General Meetings may make all and any amendments to the Articles of Association.

#### **ARTICLE 23 - Minutes**

The proceedings of General Meetings of shareholders shall be recorded in minutes drawn up on a special register or on numbered loose-leaf pages. Such minutes shall be signed by the shareholders who have been appointed as officers of the meeting.

Evidence to third parties of the proceedings of any General Meeting may be properly provided by copies or extracts duly certified as a true record by the Chairman of the Board of Directors, a Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors, the Secretary of the Meeting, or a company officer duly empowered therefor by any one of the above-mentioned persons.

## **TITLE VI**

### **COMPANY ACCOUNTS**

#### **ARTICLE 24 – Financial year**

The financial year shall begin on 1 January and end on 31 December.

#### **ARTICLE 25 - Accounting documents**

At the close of each financial year, the Board of Directors shall draw up a detailed statement of assets and liabilities and the annual financial statements and, in addition, shall prepare a report on the management of the Company in compliance with applicable legal and regulatory provisions.

#### **ARTICLE 26 - Allocation and distribution of profit**

##### **I - Net earnings in the financial year - Statutory reserve – Distributable profit**

Those amounts laid down by the legislation in force shall be set aside from the net earnings for the financial year, from which shall be deducted any losses carried forward from previous years when applicable.

The balance, plus any profit carried forward from previous years, shall form the distributable profit.

## II - Allocation of distributable profit - Distribution of reserves

### 1. Retained earnings and creation of reserves

An Ordinary General Meeting may set aside from the distributable profit any amounts to be carried forward or to be allocated to one or more reserve funds. Such reserve fund or funds shall be available for allocation to any purpose determined by a General Meeting of shareholders as proposed by the Board of Directors and in particular for the redemption or reduction of the capital by way of reimbursement or redemption of shares.

### 2. Dividends

The balance of the distributable profit shall be distributed between the shareholders in proportion to their shares in the capital of the Company.

### 3. Distribution of Reserves

The General Meeting may resolve to distribute sums taken from reserve funds of which it may freely dispose. In such event, the corresponding resolution shall expressly designate the reserve funds from which the payments are to be made.

### 4. Limitations on distribution

With the exception of the case of a reduction in share capital, no distribution shall be made to the shareholders if the shareholders' equity is, or would subsequently thereto become, lower than the amount of share capital plus those reserves that, under the laws and regulations in force, may not be distributed.

### 5. Distribution of portfolio securities

An Ordinary General Meeting may, as proposed by the Board of Directors, decide to allocate, for the purpose of all and any distributions of profits or reserves, negotiable securities held in portfolio by the Company, subject to an obligation for the shareholders to effect groupings as may be necessary to obtain the desired number of securities thus allocated.

## III – Payment of dividends

The manner in which dividends decided by the General Meeting are to be paid out shall be specified by the General Meeting or, failing this, by the Board of Directors, but payment within the period set by the laws and regulations in force shall be mandatory.

The General Meeting called in order to approve the financial statements for the financial year may grant each shareholder, for all or part of any distributed final or interim dividend, an option for the payment of that final or interim dividend in cash or in shares.

## **TITLE VII**

### **DISSOLUTION – LIQUIDATION**

#### **ARTICLE 27**

Unless otherwise provided by the laws and regulations in force, at the end of the Company's term of existence or in the event of its earlier dissolution, a General Meeting of shareholders shall determine the method of liquidation and appoint one or more liquidators whose powers the Meeting shall determine.

