

CONVENTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION OF ADULTS

The States signatory to the present Convention,

Considering the need to provide for the protection in international situations of adults who, by reason of an impairment or insufficiency of their personal faculties, are not in a position to protect their interests,

Wishing to avoid conflicts between their legal systems in respect of jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition and enforcement of measures for the protection of adults,

Recalling the importance of international co-operation for the protection of adults,

Affirming that the interests of the adult and respect for his or her dignity and autonomy are to be primary considerations,

Have agreed on the following provisions –

CHAPTER I – SCOPE OF THE CONVENTION

Article 1

(1) This Convention applies to the protection in international situations of adults who, by reason of an impairment or insufficiency of their personal faculties, are not in a position to protect their interests.

(2) Its objects are –

a) to determine the State whose authorities have jurisdiction to take measures directed to the protection of the person or property of the adult;

b) to determine which law is to be applied by such authorities in exercising their jurisdiction;

c) to determine the law applicable to representation of the adult;

d) to provide for the recognition and enforcement of such measures of protection in all Contracting States;

e) to establish such co-operation between the authorities of the Contracting States as may be necessary in order to achieve the purposes of this Convention.

Article 2

(1) For the purposes of this Convention, an adult is a person who has reached the age of 18 years.

(2) The Convention applies also to measures in respect of an adult who had not reached the age of 18 years at the time the measures were taken.

Article 3

The measures referred to in Article 1 may deal in particular with –

a) the determination of incapacity and the institution of a protective regime;

- b) the placing of the adult under the protection of a judicial or administrative authority;
- c) guardianship, curatorship and analogous institutions;
- d) the designation and functions of any person or body having charge of the adult's person or property, representing or assisting the adult;
- e) the placement of the adult in an establishment or other place where protection can be provided;
- f) the administration, conservation or disposal of the adult's property;
- g) the authorisation of a specific intervention for the protection of the person or property of the adult.

Article 4

(1) The Convention does not apply to –

- a) maintenance obligations;
- b) the formation, annulment and dissolution of marriage or any similar relationship, as well as legal separation;
- c) property regimes in respect of marriage or any similar relationship;
- d) trusts or succession;
- e) social security;
- f) public measures of a general nature in matters of health;
- g) measures taken in respect of a person as a result of penal offences committed by that person;
- h) decisions on the right of asylum and on immigration;
- i) measures directed solely to public safety.

(2) Paragraph 1 does not affect, in respect of the matters referred to therein, the entitlement of a person to act as the representative of the adult.

CHAPTER II – JURISDICTION

Article 5

(1) The judicial or administrative authorities of the Contracting State of the habitual residence of the adult have jurisdiction to take measures directed to the protection of the adult's person or property.

(2) In case of a change of the adult's habitual residence to another Contracting State, the authorities of the State of the new habitual residence have jurisdiction.

Article 6

(1) For adults who are refugees and those who, due to disturbances occurring in their country, are internationally displaced, the authorities of the Contracting State on the territory of which these adults are present as a result of their displacement have the jurisdiction provided for in Article 5, paragraph 1.

(2) The provisions of the preceding paragraph also apply to adults whose habitual residence cannot be established.

Article 7

(1) Except for adults who are refugees or who, due to disturbances occurring in their State of nationality, are internationally displaced, the authorities of a Contracting State of which the adult is a national have jurisdiction to take measures for the protection of the person or property of the adult if they consider that they are in a better position to assess the interests of the adult, and after advising the authorities having jurisdiction under Article 5 or Article 6, paragraph 2.

(2) This jurisdiction shall not be exercised if the authorities having jurisdiction under Article 5, Article 6, paragraph 2, or Article 8 have informed the authorities of the State of which the adult is a national that they have taken the measures required by the situation or have decided that no measures should be taken or that proceedings are pending before them.

(3) The measures taken under paragraph 1 shall lapse as soon as the authorities having jurisdiction under Article 5, Article 6, paragraph 2, or Article 8 have taken measures required by the situation or have decided that no measures are to be taken. These authorities shall inform accordingly the authorities which have taken measures in accordance with paragraph 1.

Article 8

(1) The authorities of a Contracting State having jurisdiction under Article 5 or Article 6, if they consider that such is in the interests of the adult, may, on their own motion or on an application by the authority of another Contracting State, request the authorities of one of the States mentioned in paragraph 2 to take measures for the protection of the person or property of the adult. The request may relate to all or some aspects of such protection.

(2) The Contracting States whose authorities may be addressed as provided in the preceding paragraph are –

- a) a State of which the adult is a national;
- b) the State of the preceding habitual residence of the adult;
- c) a State in which property of the adult is located;
- d) the State whose authorities have been chosen in writing by the adult to take measures directed to his or her protection;
- e) the State of the habitual residence of a person close to the adult prepared to undertake his or her protection;

f) the State in whose territory the adult is present, with regard to the protection of the person of the adult.

(3) In case the authority designated pursuant to the preceding paragraphs does not accept its jurisdiction, the authorities of the Contracting State having jurisdiction under Article 5 or Article 6 retain jurisdiction.

Article 9

The authorities of a Contracting State where property of the adult is situated have jurisdiction to take measures of protection concerning that property, to the extent that such measures are compatible with those taken by the authorities having jurisdiction under Articles 5 to 8.

Article 10

(1) In all cases of urgency, the authorities of any Contracting State in whose territory the adult or property belonging to the adult is present have jurisdiction to take any necessary measures of protection.

(2) The measures taken under the preceding paragraph with regard to an adult habitually resident in a Contracting State shall lapse as soon as the authorities which have jurisdiction under Articles 5 to 9 have taken the measures required by the situation.

(3) The measures taken under paragraph 1 with regard to an adult who is habitually resident in a non-Contracting State shall lapse in each Contracting State as soon as measures required by the situation and taken by the authorities of another State are recognised in the Contracting State in question.

(4) The authorities which have taken measures under paragraph 1 shall, if possible, inform the authorities of the Contracting State of the habitual residence of the adult of the measures taken.

Article 11

(1) By way of exception, the authorities of a Contracting State in whose territory the adult is present have jurisdiction to take measures of a temporary character for the protection of the person of the adult which have a territorial effect limited to the State in question, in so far as such measures are compatible with those already taken by the authorities which have jurisdiction under Articles 5 to 8, and after advising the authorities having jurisdiction under Article 5.

(2) The measures taken under the preceding paragraph with regard to an adult habitually resident in a Contracting State shall lapse as soon as the authorities which have jurisdiction under Articles 5 to 8 have taken a decision in respect of the measures of protection which may be required by the situation.

Article 12

Subject to Article 7, paragraph 3, the measures taken in application of Articles 5 to 9 remain in force according to their terms, even if a change of circumstances has eliminated the basis upon which jurisdiction was founded, so long as the authorities which have jurisdiction under the Convention have not modified, replaced or terminated such measures.

CHAPTER III – APPLICABLE LAW

Article 13

(1) In exercising their jurisdiction under the provisions of Chapter II, the authorities of the Contracting States shall apply their own law.

(2) However, in so far as the protection of the person or the property of the adult requires, they may exceptionally apply or take into consideration the law of another State with which the situation has a substantial connection.

Article 14

Where a measure taken in one Contracting State is implemented in another Contracting State, the conditions of its implementation are governed by the law of that other State.

Article 15

(1) The existence, extent, modification and extinction of powers of representation granted by an adult, either under an agreement or by a unilateral act, to be exercised when such adult is not in a position to protect his or her interests, are governed by the law of the State of the adult's habitual residence at the time of the agreement or act, unless one of the laws mentioned in paragraph 2 has been designated expressly in writing.

(2) The States whose laws may be designated are –

- a) a State of which the adult is a national;
- b) the State of a former habitual residence of the adult;
- c) a State in which property of the adult is located, with respect to that property.

(3) The manner of exercise of such powers of representation is governed by the law of the State in which they are exercised.

Article 16

Where powers of representation referred to in Article 15 are not exercised in a manner sufficient to guarantee the protection of the person or property of the adult, they may be withdrawn or modified by measures taken by an authority having jurisdiction under the Convention. Where such powers of representation are withdrawn or modified, the law referred to in Article 15 should be taken into consideration to the extent possible.

Article 17

(1) The validity of a transaction entered into between a third party and another person who would be entitled to act as the adult's representative under the law of the State where the transaction was concluded cannot be contested, and the third party cannot be held liable, on the sole ground that the other person was not entitled to act as the adult's representative under the law designated by the provisions of this Chapter, unless the third party knew or should have known that such capacity was governed by the latter law.

(2) The preceding paragraph applies only if the transaction was entered into between persons present on the territory of the same State.

Article 18

The provisions of this Chapter apply even if the law designated by them is the law of a non-Contracting State.

Article 19

In this Chapter the term 'law' means the law in force in a State other than its choice of law rules.

Article 20

This Chapter does not prevent the application of those provisions of the law of the State in which the adult is to be protected where the application of such provisions is mandatory whatever law would otherwise be applicable.

Article 21

The application of the law designated by the provisions of this Chapter can be refused only if this application would be manifestly contrary to public policy.

CHAPTER IV – RECOGNITION AND ENFORCEMENT

Article 22

(1) The measures taken by the authorities of a Contracting State shall be recognised by operation of law in all other Contracting States.

(2) Recognition may however be refused –

a) if the measure was taken by an authority whose jurisdiction was not based on, or was not in accordance with, one of the grounds provided for by the provisions of Chapter II;

b) if the measure was taken, except in a case of urgency, in the context of a judicial or administrative proceeding, without the adult having been provided the opportunity to be heard, in violation of fundamental principles of procedure of the requested State;

c) if such recognition is manifestly contrary to public policy of the requested State, or conflicts with a provision of the law of that State which is mandatory whatever law would otherwise be applicable;

d) if the measure is incompatible with a later measure taken in a non-Contracting State which would have had jurisdiction under Articles 5 to 9, where this later measure fulfils the requirements for recognition in the requested State;

e) if the procedure provided in Article 33 has not been complied with.

Article 23

Without prejudice to Article 22, paragraph 1, any interested person may request from the competent authorities of a Contracting State that they decide on the recognition or non-recognition of a measure taken in another Contracting State. The procedure is governed by the law of the requested State.

Article 24

The authority of the requested State is bound by the findings of fact on which the authority of the State where the measure was taken based its jurisdiction.

Article 25

(1) If measures taken in one Contracting State and enforceable there require enforcement in another Contracting State, they shall, upon request by an interested party, be declared enforceable or registered for the purpose of enforcement in that other State according to the procedure provided in the law of the latter State.

(2) Each Contracting State shall apply to the declaration of enforceability or registration a simple and rapid procedure.

(3) The declaration of enforceability or registration may be refused only for one of the reasons set out in Article 22, paragraph 2.

Article 26

Without prejudice to such review as is necessary in the application of the preceding Articles, there shall be no review of the merits of the measure taken.

Article 27

Measures taken in one Contracting State and declared enforceable, or registered for the purpose of enforcement, in another Contracting State shall be enforced in the latter State as if they had been taken by the authorities of that State. Enforcement takes place in accordance with the law of the requested State to the extent provided by such law.

CHAPTER V – CO-OPERATION

Article 28

(1) A Contracting State shall designate a Central Authority to discharge the duties which are imposed by the Convention on such authorities.

(2) Federal States, States with more than one system of law or States having autonomous territorial units shall be free to appoint more than one Central Authority and to specify the territorial or personal extent of their functions. Where a State has appointed more than one Central Authority, it shall designate the Central Authority to which any communication may be addressed for transmission to the appropriate Central Authority within that State.

Article 29

(1) Central Authorities shall co-operate with each other and promote co-operation amongst the competent authorities in their States to achieve the purposes of the Convention.

(2) They shall, in connection with the application of the Convention, take appropriate steps to provide information as to the laws of, and services available in, their States relating to the protection of adults.

Article 30

The Central Authority of a Contracting State, either directly or through public authorities or other bodies, shall take all appropriate steps to –

a) facilitate communications, by every means, between the competent authorities in situations to which the Convention applies;

b) provide, on the request of a competent authority of another Contracting State, assistance in discovering the whereabouts of an adult where it appears that the adult may be present and in need of protection within the territory of the requested State.

Article 31

The competent authorities of a Contracting State may encourage, either directly or through other bodies, the use of mediation, conciliation or similar means to achieve agreed solutions for the protection of the person or property of the adult in situations to which the Convention applies.

Article 32

(1) Where a measure of protection is contemplated, the competent authorities under the Convention, if the situation of the adult so requires, may request any authority of another Contracting State which has information relevant to the protection of the adult to communicate such information.

(2) A Contracting State may declare that requests under paragraph 1 shall be communicated to its authorities only through its Central Authority.

(3) The competent authorities of a Contracting State may request the authorities of another Contracting State to assist in the implementation of measures of protection taken under this Convention.

Article 33

(1) If an authority having jurisdiction under Articles 5 to 8 contemplates the placement of the adult in an establishment or other place where protection can be provided, and if such placement is to take place in another Contracting State, it shall first consult with the Central Authority or other competent authority of the latter State. To that effect it shall transmit a report on the adult together with the reasons for the proposed placement.

(2) The decision on the placement may not be made in the requesting State if the Central Authority or other competent authority of the requested State indicates its opposition within a reasonable time.

Article 34

In any case where the adult is exposed to a serious danger, the competent authorities of the Contracting State where measures for the protection of the adult have been taken or are under consideration, if they are informed that the adult's residence has changed to, or that the adult is present in, another State, shall inform the authorities of that other State about the danger involved and the measures taken or under consideration.

Article 35

An authority shall not request or transmit any information under this Chapter if to do so would, in its opinion, be likely to place the adult's person or property in danger, or constitute a serious threat to the liberty or life of a member of the adult's family.

Article 36

(1) Without prejudice to the possibility of imposing reasonable charges for the provision of services, Central Authorities and other public authorities of Contracting States shall bear their own costs in applying the provisions of this Chapter.

(2) Any Contracting State may enter into agreements with one or more other Contracting States concerning the allocation of charges.

Article 37

Any Contracting State may enter into agreements with one or more other Contracting States with a view to improving the application of this Chapter in their mutual relations. The States which have concluded such an agreement shall transmit a copy to the depositary of the Convention.

CHAPTER VI – GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 38

(1) The authorities of the Contracting State where a measure of protection has been taken or a power of representation confirmed may deliver to the person entrusted with protection of the adult's person or property, on request, a certificate indicating the capacity in which that person is entitled to act and the powers conferred.

(2) The capacity and powers indicated in the certificate are presumed to be vested in that person as of the date of the certificate, in the absence of proof to the contrary.

(3) Each Contracting State shall designate the authorities competent to draw up the certificate.

Article 39

Personal data gathered or transmitted under the Convention shall be used only for the purposes for which they were gathered or transmitted.

Article 40

The authorities to whom information is transmitted shall ensure its confidentiality, in accordance with the law of their State.

Article 41

All documents forwarded or delivered under this Convention shall be exempt from legalisation or any analogous formality.

Article 42

Each Contracting State may designate the authorities to which requests under Article 8 and Article 33 are to be addressed.

Article 43

(1) The designations referred to in Article 28 and Article 42 shall be communicated to the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law not later than the date of the deposit of the instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval of the Convention or of accession thereto. Any modifications thereof shall also be communicated to the Permanent Bureau.

(2) The declaration referred to in Article 32, paragraph 2, shall be made to the depositary of the Convention.

Article 44

A Contracting State in which different systems of law or sets of rules of law apply to the protection of the person or property of the adult shall not be bound to apply the rules of the Convention to conflicts solely between such different systems or sets of rules of law.

Article 45

In relation to a State in which two or more systems of law or sets of rules of law with regard to any matter dealt with in this Convention apply in different territorial units –

a) any reference to habitual residence in that State shall be construed as referring to habitual residence in a territorial unit;

b) any reference to the presence of the adult in that State shall be construed as referring to presence in a territorial unit;

c) any reference to the location of property of the adult in that State shall be construed as referring to location of property of the adult in a territorial unit;

d) any reference to the State of which the adult is a national shall be construed as referring to the territorial unit designated by the law of that State or, in the absence of relevant rules, to the territorial unit with which the adult has the closest connection;

e) any reference to the State whose authorities have been chosen by the adult shall be construed

– as referring to the territorial unit if the adult has chosen the authorities of this territorial unit;

– as referring to the territorial unit with which the adult has the closest connection if the adult has chosen the authorities of the State without specifying a particular territorial unit within the State;

f) any reference to the law of a State with which the situation has a substantial connection shall be construed as referring to the law of a territorial unit with which the situation has a substantial connection;

g) any reference to the law or procedure or authority of the State in which a measure has been taken shall be construed as referring to the law or procedure in force in such territorial unit or authority of the territorial unit in which such measure was taken;

h) any reference to the law or procedure or authority of the requested State shall be construed as referring to the law or procedure in force in such territorial unit or authority of the territorial unit in which recognition or enforcement is sought;

i) any reference to the State where a measure of protection is to be implemented shall be construed as referring to the territorial unit where the measure is to be implemented;

j) any reference to bodies or authorities of that State, other than Central Authorities, shall be construed as referring to those authorised to act in the relevant territorial unit.

Article 46

For the purpose of identifying the applicable law under Chapter III, in relation to a State which comprises two or more territorial units each of which has its own system of law or set of rules of law in respect of matters covered by this Convention, the following rules apply –

a) if there are rules in force in such a State identifying which territorial unit's law is applicable, the law of that unit applies;

b) in the absence of such rules, the law of the relevant territorial unit as defined in Article 45 applies.

Article 47

For the purpose of identifying the applicable law under Chapter III, in relation to a State which has two or more systems of law or sets of rules of law applicable to different categories of persons in respect of matters covered by this Convention, the following rules apply –

a) if there are rules in force in such a State identifying which among such laws applies, that law applies;

b) in the absence of such rules, the law of the system or the set of rules of law with which the adult has the closest connection applies.

Article 48

In relations between the Contracting States this Convention replaces the Convention concernant l'interdiction et les mesures de protection analogues, signed at The Hague 17 July 1905.

Article 49

(1) The Convention does not affect any other international instrument to which Contracting States are Parties and which contains provisions on matters governed by this Convention, unless a contrary declaration is made by the States Parties to such instrument.

(2) This Convention does not affect the possibility for one or more Contracting States to conclude agreements which contain, in respect of adults habitually resident in any of the States Parties to such agreements, provisions on matters governed by this Convention.

(3) Agreements to be concluded by one or more Contracting States on matters within the scope of this Convention do not affect, in the relationship of such States with other Contracting States, the application of the provisions of this Convention.

(4) The preceding paragraphs also apply to uniform laws based on special ties of a regional or other nature between the States concerned.

Article 50

(1) The Convention shall apply to measures only if they are taken in a State after the Convention has entered into force for that State.

(2) The Convention shall apply to the recognition and enforcement of measures taken after its entry into force as between the State where the measures have been taken and the requested State.

(3) The Convention shall apply from the time of its entry into force in a Contracting State to powers of representation previously granted under conditions corresponding to those set out in Article 15.

Article 51

(1) Any communication sent to the Central Authority or to another authority of a Contracting State shall be in the original language, and shall be accompanied by a translation into the official language or one of the official languages of the other State or, where that is not feasible, a translation into French or English.

(2) However, a Contracting State may, by making a reservation in accordance with Article 56, object to the use of either French or English, but not both.

Article 52

The Secretary General of the Hague Conference on Private International Law shall at regular intervals convoke a Special Commission in order to review the practical operation of the Convention.

CHAPTER VII – FINAL CLAUSES

Article 53

(1) The Convention shall be open for signature by the States which were Members of the Hague Conference on Private International Law on 2 October 1999.

(2) It shall be ratified, accepted or approved and the instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval shall be deposited with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, depositary of the Convention.

Article 54

(1) Any other State may accede to the Convention after it has entered into force in accordance with Article 57, paragraph 1.

(2) The instrument of accession shall be deposited with the depositary.

(3) Such accession shall have effect only as regards the relations between the acceding State and those Contracting States which have not raised an objection to its accession in the six months after the receipt of the notification referred to in subparagraph b) of Article 59. Such an objection may also be raised by States at the time when they ratify, accept or approve the Convention after an accession. Any such objection shall be notified to the depositary.

Article 55

(1) If a State has two or more territorial units in which different systems of law are applicable in relation to matters dealt with in this Convention, it may at the time of signature, ratification, acceptance, approval or accession declare that the Convention shall extend to all its territorial units or only to one or more of them and may modify this declaration by submitting another declaration at any time.

(2) Any such declaration shall be notified to the depositary and shall state expressly the territorial units to which the Convention applies.

(3) If a State makes no declaration under this Article, the Convention is to extend to all territorial units of that State.

Article 56

(1) Any State may, not later than the time of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, or at the time of making a declaration in terms of Article 55, make the reservation provided for in Article 51, paragraph 2. No other reservation shall be permitted.

(2) Any State may at any time withdraw the reservation it has made. The withdrawal shall be notified to the depositary.

(3) The reservation shall cease to have effect on the first day of the third calendar month after the notification referred to in the preceding paragraph.

Article 57

(1) The Convention shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiration of three months after the deposit of the third instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval referred to in Article 53.

(2) Thereafter the Convention shall enter into force –

a) for each State ratifying, accepting or approving it subsequently, on the first day of the month following the expiration of three months after the deposit of its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession;

b) for each State acceding, on the first day of the month following the expiration of three months after the expiration of the period of six months provided in Article 54, paragraph 3;

c) for a territorial unit to which the Convention has been extended in conformity with Article 55, on the first day of the month following the expiration of three months after the notification referred to in that Article.

Article 58

(1) A State Party to the Convention may denounce it by a notification in writing addressed to the depositary. The denunciation may be limited to certain territorial units to which the Convention applies.

(2) The denunciation takes effect on the first day of the month following the expiration of twelve months after the notification is received by the depositary. Where a longer period for the denunciation to take effect is specified in the notification, the denunciation takes effect upon the expiration of such longer period.

Article 59

The depositary shall notify the States Members of the Hague Conference on Private International Law and the States which have acceded in accordance with Article 54 of the following –

- a) the signatures, ratifications, acceptances and approvals referred to in Article 53;
- b) the accessions and objections raised to accessions referred to in Article 54;
- c) the date on which the Convention enters into force in accordance with Article 57;
- d) the declarations referred to in Article 32, paragraph 2, and Article 55;
- e) the agreements referred to in Article 37;
- f) the reservation referred to in Article 51, paragraph 2, and the withdrawal referred to in Article 56, paragraph 2;
- g) the denunciations referred to in Article 58.

In witness whereof the undersigned, being duly authorised thereto, have signed this Convention.

Done at The Hague, on the 13th day of January, 2000, in the English and French languages, both texts being equally authentic, in a single copy which shall be deposited in the archives of the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and of which a certified copy shall be sent, through diplomatic channels, to each of the States Members of the Hague Conference on Private International Law.