



**Declaration of the Unification of the
Regular Grand Lodge of Serbia A.F.&A.M.
United Grand Lodges of Serbia A.F.&A.M.
and
Grand National Lodge of Serbia A.F.&A.M.**

Into



United Regular Grand Lodges of Serbia A.F.&A.M.

Proposed text of the Declaration

Prepared by:

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BACKGROUND AND BASES FOR THE PROPOSAL OF THE DECLARATION OF UNIFICATION

I am writing this in regard to the situation of Freemasonry in Serbia. Past Grand Master of the United Grand Lodges of Serbia Vladimir S. Markovic and me have been discussing a complex situation of Masonry in Serbia for several years already and this Proposal of the Declaration of unification of All Serbian Freemasons into one federation of Grand Lodges in Serbia, based on the proven example of German Freemasonry over past seventy years, is a result and final product of our analyzes. Taking into account all different aspects and issues that Serbian Freemasons are facing today in their development, and for the benefit of their future growth, in my opinion this is the best solution in solving present situation in Serbian Freemasonry.

I need to mention here short history of my interest for the Freemasonry in Serbia. United Grand Lodges of Germany appointed in me in 2006, as a Special Envoy of The Senate of UGL of Germany to explore the state of the Masonic movement in Serbia. I visited Belgrade, Serbia on 12/ 14-15 /2006. My visit was in part motivated by the fact that UGLG re-consecrated Grand Lodge in Serbia in 1990 and my aim was to understand and eventually support in the process of the Masonic unification, to which it seems all Masons in Serbia were strongly striving for.

After I met with Grand Officers and Brothers of the UGLS and inspected their work, I was convinced in the regularity of their origin and their work and subsequently, after the visit, I made Report to the Senate of UGLG with affirmative recommendations concerning future regular Masonic activities in Serbia. In 2009, I visited UGLS again and was provided with the opportunity to get profound insight into their Masonic work, their Charity actions and their plans. In my report to the Senate of the UGLG I again expressed my utmost satisfaction and I recognized their regularity and excellent results.

It is my sincere opinion that we should all support and help Freemasons in Serbia to find a way of working together towards unification of all Serbian regular Freemasons into one Jurisdiction. This Proposal is mine and Brother Markovic's contribution to this process, and I warmly and fraternally present this document to Serbian Freemasons for consideration.

In.....
On

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MW Alfred F. Koska PGM
United Grand Lodges of Germany

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A. The Platform for the Unification

1. Parties:

- a) **Regular Grand Lodge of Serbia A. F.&A.M.** (referred to in this document as RGLS)
- b) **United Grand Lodges of Serbia A.F. &A.M.**(referred to in this document as UGLS)
- c) **Grand National Lodge of Serbia A.F. & A. M.** (referred in this document as GNLS)

By the signatures of their authorized Officers parties listed above agree to establish and, as sovereign and independent Grand Lodges, enter into membership of the federation of the Grand Lodges under the name:

United Regular Grand Lodges of Serbia A.F.&A.M. (referred to in this document as URGLS)

2. Bases and reasons for the unification

- a) The first regular, just and duly constituted Grand Lodge of Freemasons on the territory of Serbia was established in 1919 under the name Grand Lodge of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenians – Yugoslavia (from 1926 known as Grand Lodge of Yugoslavia). The Grand Lodge of Yugoslavia went dormant in 1940 due to the political situation in Europe at the time. During the rule of the communist regime (1944 – 1990) Freemasonry in former Yugoslavia was forbidden by law;
- b) 1990 The Grand Lodge of Yugoslavia was re-established and continued with its work. Its regularity of the origin, and the continuity of the existence was recognized by the Charter of the United Grand Lodge of Germany from June 23rd 1990;
- c) Due to the unfortunate circumstances caused by the personal conflicts between individual members as well as by the socio-political conditions of the country in transition from 1993 to 2006 there were several break ups and divisions within the Grand Lodge of Yugoslavia. These developments resulted in the formation of several Grand Lodges – each claiming exclusive regularity and sovereignty. As this situation brought nothing but damage to the society of Freemasons in Serbia, and having in mind the benefit and advancement of Freemasonry, the Parties which affixed their signatures on this document, have decided to overcome mutual disagreements and conflicts from the past, and to, in the name of fraternal love and unity, with the faith

in the Grand Architect of the Universe, join into federation of Grand Lodges under the name United Regular Grand Lodges of Serbia;

- d) All Parties which affixed their signatures on this document – RGLS, UGLS, and GNLS base their origin, regularity of their work, and the legality of their existence on the Charter of the United Grand Lodges of Germany from June 23rd 1990;
- e) All Parties which affixed their signatures on this document – RGLS, UGLS, and GNLS – mutually recognize to each other’s the origin, regularity of work, and the legality of existence as based on the Charter of the United Grand Lodges of Germany from June 23rd 1990;
- f) All Parties which affixed their signatures on this document – RGLS, UGLS, and GNLS mutually recognize to each other’s that they are sovereign and independent Grand Lodges with the exclusive authority to practice Freemasonry on the territory of the Republic of Serbia;
- g) All Parties which affixed their signatures on this document – RGLS, UGLS, and GNLS agree that no other Grand Lodge, except the Grand Lodges members of the URGLS, is accepted as regular on the territory of the Republic of Serbia;
- h) All Parties which affixed their signatures on this document – RGLS, UGLS, and GNLS state as their reasons behind the establishment of the URGLS and entering into the membership of the URGLS following:
 - The general consolidation and advancement of the Freemasonry in Serbia as well as the strengthening of the chain of fraternal union of all Freemasons on the territory of Serbia,
 - Final solution of the question of legality and regularity of all Parties which affixed their signatures on this document – RGLS, UGLS, and GNLS.
 - Joined representation and cooperation with the foreign Masonic Jurisdictions, as well as with international and concordant Masonic bodies.

3. Principle and tenets

(Here are all of the general Masonic principles and tenets as written in the GL Constitution)

4. The place of the unification

The place of the unification and the headquarters of the URGLS is in the Or. of Belgrade. The Office of the Grand Master is located in the Or.of Belgrade as well.

B. The Structure, Organization, Rights, and Responsibilities of the United Regular Grand Lodges of Serbia

1. Bodies of the United Regular Grand Lodges of Serbia

Bodies of the URGLS are: General Assembly of the URGLS, Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, The Office of the Grand Master, Senate of the URGLS and the URGLS Court of Honor.

2. General Assembly of the URGLS

The General Assembly is the highest Legislative and supervisory authoritative Body of the URGLS. All decisions of the General Assembly are final and binding for all Grand Lodges that are members of the URGLS.

The General Assembly of the URGLS consists of the voting delegates and delegates without the right to vote. Voting delegates are Masters of the Lodges and Lodge delegates. Each Lodge has one delegate in the General Assembly for each 20 Lodge members.

Non-voting delegates are Grand Lodge Officers of all Grand Lodges, members of the Office of the Grand Master, members of the Senate, Grand Master, and Deputy Grand Master.

The Grand Master of the URGLS is presiding over the General assembly of the URGLS and in his absence, Deputy Grand Master presides over the General Assembly.

All decisions of the General Assembly are passed by two third majority.

Regular General Assembly is convened in June of each year.

Regular General Assembly is convened by the order of the Senate of the URGLS.

The General assembly:

- Decides about The Constitution of the URGLS, - amendments and changes;
- Elects the Grand Master of the URGLS;
- Elects Deputy Grand Master of the URGLS;
- Elects members of the Court of Honor on the proposal by the Grand Master of the URGLS;
- Decides about strategic questions of the mutual interest for all obediences;
- Approves Treaties of Amities between URGLS and foreign Masonic Jurisdictions;
- Approves Treaties of Concordance with other Masonic Bodies;
- Approves Treaties with other international Masonic organizations;
- Recall and dismisses Grand Officers of the URGLS on the proposal by the Court of Honor of the URGLS at the regular or special General assembly.

3. Grand Master

- Grand Master is considered the highest Masonic authority on the territory of Serbia;
- Grand Master is elected for the term of two years by the General Assembly of the URGLS with the possibility to be re-elected for the second term;
- To be elected for the Grand Master of the URGLS the candidate must have been Past Grand Master of one of the Grand Lodges of the URGLS;
- Candidates for the Grand Master of the URGLS are proposed by the General Assembly's of the Grand Lodge member on the principle of rotation when in each next term a candidate from other Grand Lodge member of the URGLS is proposed starting with the Grand Lodge with biggest number of members.

- Grand Master is presiding Officer of the General Assembly of the URGLS without the right to vote;
- Grand Master is presiding Officer of the Senate of the URGLS with the right to vote;
- Grand Master has a right to summon a special Grand Assembly sessions;
- Grand Master appoints Grand Secretary of the URGLS, assistant Grand Secretary of the URGLS, and Grand Treasurer of the URGLS;
- Grand Master represents URGLS and all Grand Lodges members of the URGLS in the international relations and in the relations with the concordat bodies;
- Grand Master is proposing candidates for the URGLS Court of Honor on recommendations from the member Grand Lodges.

4. The Office of the Grand Master

The Office of the Grand Master is an administrative body of the URGLS and is consisting of:

- Grand Secretary (paid position)
- Assistant Grand Secretary (paid position)
- Grand Treasurer

These Officers are appointed by the Grand Master.

Officers of the Office of Grand Master are administrative members of the URGLS working under the Grand Master and they are non-voting members of the Grand Assembly.

5. Senate of the URGLS

- The Senate of the URGLS is executive body of the URGLS;

- The Senate of the URGLS is composed of Grand Master of the URGLS and Grand Masters and Deputy Grand Masters of the Grand Lodges that are members of the URGLS;
- The Grand Master summons and is presiding Officer of the Senate;
- All decisions of the Senate are passed by the majority vote;
- Senate summons the regular sessions of the General Assembly;
- Senate makes all of the decisions in regard to the foreign affairs of the URGLS and proposes them to the URGLS Grand Assembly for ratification;
- Senate makes all of the decisions in regard to URGLS relations with the Masonic concordant Bodies and proposes them to the URGLS Grand Assembly for ratification;
- Senate makes all of the decisions in regard to the strategic questions of mutual interest for all member Grand Lodges.

6. Deputy Grand Masters

- Deputy Grand Master is elected by the General Assembly of the URGLS on the proposal by the General Assembly of the Grand Lodge of which he is a member;
- Deputy Grand Master is always elected from the other Grand Lodge member of the URGLS than the Grand Master of the URGLS, starting with the second largest Grand Lodge (number of members)
- Deputy Grand Master is automatically elected to the position of the Grand Master after the term of the Grand Master has expired;
- Deputy Grand Master presides over the URGLS in a case that Grand Master is absent or unable to perform his duties;
- Deputy Grand Master assists Grand Master in various duties at the pleasure of Grand Master.

7. Court of Honor of the URGLS

- The Court of Honor of the URGLS consists of three members, and three deputy members on the base of one member and one deputy member from each member Grand Lodge of the URGLS.
- Candidates for the members of the Court of Honor, as well as deputy members are proposed by the Grand Master of the URGLS;
- Members of the Court of Honor are elected by the Grand Assembly for the term of two years;
- Member of the Court of Honor could be recalled or dismissed only by the General Assembly on the proposal by the Grand Master of the URGLS;
- The qualifications for the members of the URGLS Court of Honor are as follows:
 - a) That they are Past Master of the Lodges in one of the member Grand Lodges,
 - b) That do not hold any other Office in their Grand Lodge,
 - c) That they are proved to be in their private, professional and Masonic lives honorable and independent individual of strong personal integrity,
 - d) That they are in one of the legal professions,
 - e) That they are not members of any political party.
- The Court of Honor starts their proceedings by the order of the Grand Master of the URGLS (except in the case of proceedings against Grand Master of the URGLS);
- The Court of Honor accepts complains and starts proceedings on complains from the members of all member Grand Lodges if the complaint is against the member of the one of other member Grand Lodges or if the complaint is in regard to the violation of this Declaration or of the Constitution of the URGLS;
- Individual members of the Lodges under the protection of any of the URGLS member Grand Lodges may submit complaint to the Court of honor only through the Grand secretary's Office of their Grand Lodge;

- Court of Honor considers only complains in regard to the violations of the Constitution of the URGLS, complains against Officers of the URGLS, including Grand Master of the URGLS, and individual complains regarding Brothers from the other member Jurisdiction than of the party complaining;
- The decisions of the Court of Honor do not have punitive character. If there is a punitive measure to be considered, the case is send to the Grand Lodge whose member committed violation for the further proceedings on the matter;
- Court of Honor has right to, upon filled complaint against any of the Officers of the URGLS, including Grand Master of the URGLS, start proceedings for the dismissal of the said Grand officer, if it comes out that his acts represent a violation of the Principles and tenets of Freemasonry or of the Constitution of the URGLS;
- The proceedings against Grand Master could be carried only by the unanimous approval of the Senate of the URGLS, excluding Grand Master of the URGLS;
- The proceedings against any other of the Officers of the URGLS may be carried only with the approval of the Grand Master of the URGLS;
- All decisions of the Court of Honor must be carried unanimously by consensus.

C. Foreign Relations

Relations between Grand Lodges that are members of the URGLS and the foreign Masonic Jurisdictions are carried only through the URGLS.

According to this:

- URGLS exchanges Treaties of Amity with foreign Masonic Jurisdictions as URGLS and in the name of all its member Grand Lodges;
- Grand Master of the URGLS represents URGLS and all member Grand Lodges in all international affairs and in the visits to the foreign Jurisdictions;
- URGLS exchange Treaties of Amities and mutual recognition only with foreign Jurisdictions that were recognized as regular by one of the following bodies:

- a) United Grand Lodge of England,
 - b) One or more Grand Lodges members of the Conference of Grand Masters of North America,
 - c) One or more Grand Lodges members of the World Conference of Grand Lodges,
 - d) One or more Grand Lodges members of the Conference of Grand Masters of the Prince Hall Affiliation.
- Treaty of Amity with foreign Jurisdictions considered regular, that were signed by the Grand Lodges members of the URGLS previous to their joining of the URGLS will be, with the approval of foreign Jurisdictions, transferred as the Treaty of Amity between given foreign Jurisdiction and the URGLS;
 - Treaty of Amity with foreign Jurisdictions considered irregular, that were signed by the Grand Lodges members of the URGLS previous to their joining of the URGLS will be considered by the URGLS cancelled and the Grand Lodges members of the URGLS which signed such a Treaty will have to solve the issues of such treaties in accordance with this Declaration;
 - On the proposal of the Senate and upon ratification by the General Assembly eventually Treaty of Amity could be exchanged by the foreign Jurisdictions that doesn't qualify by any of the conditions given above, but is still considered regular, and if such Treaty would benefit future advancement of the URGLS;
 - URGLS will design and release "Masonic Passport" of the URGLS that will be together with the Grand Lodge ID be an official Masonic document upon visiting foreign Jurisdictions;
 - Members of the URGLS can visit Lodges in the foreign Jurisdictions only with the previous knowledge and approval of the Grand Secretary of the URGLS.

D. Mutual relations between Grand Lodges members of the URGLS

- Grand Lodges that are united into federation of Grand Lodges under the name United Regular Grand Lodges of Serbia A.F.&A.M. are in its internal work and organization completely independent and sovereign Jurisdictions with the right to charter Lodges and conduct Masonic work on the whole territory of the Republic

of Serbia, in accordance with their Constitutions and in agreement with this Declaration and the Constitution of the URGLS;

- Grand Lodges that are united into federation of Grand Lodges under the name United Regular Grand Lodges of Serbia A.F.&A.M. respect and mutually recognize their mutual independence, sovereignty, and integrity, and under no circumstances will do anything that would be considered violation of any of the attributes of any other Grand Lodge member of the URGLS;
- Individual members of the Lodges under protection of any Grand Lodge united into federation of Grand Lodges under the name United Regular Grand Lodges of Serbia A.F.&A.M. have right of visitation to the Lodges from other Grand Lodge member of the URGLS with knowledge and approval by the Grand Secretary of the visiting Grand Lodge;
- Same rule applies to the group visits, joined ritual work etc.;
- Individual members of the Lodges under protection of any Grand Lodge united into federation of Grand Lodges under the name United Regular Grand Lodges of Serbia A.F.&A.M. that are, for any reason, expelled from the Grand Lodge, have no right to apply for membership into another Grand Lodge member of the URGLS;
- Taking into account that in the previous years a certain number of Brothers expelled from one of the Grand Lodge member of the URGLS, were accepted into membership into another Grand Lodge, now member of the URGLS, where they are still active members – by this Declaration it is proposed following: That in the name of fraternal love and unity, such Brothers be let know that they may not be received in a visit to the Grand Lodge from which they were expelled and that their participation in any joint body of the URGLS may be subject to a special approval by the Senate of the URGLS;
- Individual members of the Lodges under protection of any Grand Lodge united into federation of Grand Lodges under the name United Regular Grand Lodges of Serbia A.F.&A.M. who demitted from the Grand Lodge cannot apply for the membership into any other Grand Lodge member of the URGLS without written consent by the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge from which they demitted;
- Lodges under the protection of any Grand Lodge united into federation of Grand Lodges under the name United Regular Grand Lodges of Serbia A.F.&A.M. cannot, under no circumstances surrender their Charter and apply for the new Charter

with another Grand Lodge member of the URGLS. This would be considered flagrant violation of this Declaration and such Lodge would be subject to the expulsion from the URGLS;

- Lodges under the protection of any Grand Lodge united into federation of Grand Lodges under the name United Regular Grand Lodges of Serbia A.F.&A.M. can do their work in the Temples of another Grand Lodge member of the URGLS, subject to the approval by the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge that owns the Temple;
- Potential conflicts between two Grand Lodges members of the URGLS are subject of consideration by the Grand Master of the URGLS who arbitrates. If the problem is not solved, the issue is brought in front of the special session of the General assembly;
- Grand Lodges which consist the federation of Grand Lodges under the name United Regular Grand Lodges of Serbia are voluntary members of the URGLS and may, at any time, cancel their membership if they so desire, and in accordance with their rules, regulations, and Constitution;
- In the case that any of the Grand Lodges members of the URGLS, leave the URGLS that Grand Lodge will not be any more considered regular by other Grand Lodges members of the URGLS, and would lose all rights and privileges given to them by this Declaration or the Constitution of the URGLS;
- By entering into federation under the name United Regular Grand Lodges of Serbia, Grand Lodges members accept certain financial obligations towards URGLS;
- Failure to meet their financial obligation by the Grand Lodge member of the URGLS, may be considered as violation of this Declaration and of the Constitution.

E. Relations with Concordant Masonic Bodies

Relations with Concordant Masonic Bodies Grand Lodges members of the URGLS exercise solely and exclusively through the URGLS. In accordance with this:

- a) URGLS signs Concordats with all Masonic Concordant Organizations and Bodies in the name of all Grand Lodges members of the URGLS;

- b) Grand Master of the URGLS must be elected for a member of the Grand Council or any other executive body of the Concordant Body that URGLS enter into relationship;
- c) Grand Master of the URGLS represents URGLS with all Concordant Bodies in Serbia and abroad;
- d) The signers of this Declaration propose that the General Assembly of the URGLS gives necessary time for the unification of two existing Supreme Councils AASR of Serbia in order to be recognized by the URGLS.
- e) The signers of this Declaration propose that the General Assembly of the URGLS accepts existing Concordat between United Grand Lodges of Serbia and York Rite Bodies as the Concordat of the URGLS and York Rite Bodies.

F. Legal basis for the foundation of the URGLS

In order to establish the federation of Grand Lodges under the name United Regular Grand Lodges of Serbia and in order to sign this Declaration, it is proposed:

- That Grand Masters and Past Grand Masters of the participating Grand Lodges form a Committee that will work on the final form of this Declaration, as well as on the time and date of its execution;
- That this Declaration serves as temporary constitution of the URGLS until the Constitution is written and voted upon;
- That the Grand Master Elect and the Deputy Grand Master Elect of the URGLS form a Committee of four members, two from each Grand Lodge member, for the purpose of writing the Constitution of the URGLS to be accepted at the following General Assembly;
- The Constitution of the URGLS must reflect the articles and tenets of this signed Declaration;
- That all participating Grand Lodges upon entering into federation of the URGLS, adjust their Grand Lodge Constitution to reflect the articles agreed upon in this Declaration and the articles of the Constitution of the URGLS by the next General assembly of the URGLS.

G. The Financial Structure of the UGLS

- All participating Grand Lodges are responsible for the financial expenses of the URGLS;
- For that purpose the participating Grand Lodges will agree on the amount of dues that will be taken from the regular member's dues for the expenses of the URGLS. Dues will be paid according to the number of Lodges and number of members of each participating Grand Lodge. These numbers will be base for the establishing the number of delegates from each Lodge at the General Assembly.

For Regular Grand Lodge of Serbia

For United Grand Lodges of Serbia

For Grand National Lodge of Serbia

In _____

On _____ Day _____ Month _____ Year