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CONSTITUTION

FOR

AFRICAN CENTRE IN TORONTO

REVISED: June 7, 2020



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BE IT ENACTED as the constitution of the Organization as follows.

0.0 INTRODUCTION

ACT unites members of diverse backgrounds and meets the needs of individuals at a time of bereavement while operating on mutual trust.

1.0 MEMBERSHIP

1.1 Aspiring members will pay a one-time non-refundable registration fee of \$100.00. Thereafter, registered members will pay \$50.00 annually to renew their membership. New members who join ACT will have to wait for 3 months to benefit from the Bereavement.

1.2 Bereavement that will require the ACT's action will include the death of a family member (a family being husband, wife, children, parents & birth siblings). Note that the siblings referred herein are those from the same mother.

1.3 Upon the death of a family member as per article 1.1 above, each member shall contribute amount \$50 to the ACT account and, the money will be presented to the bereaved member effective immediately using the available IBF upon clearance/verified officials that indeed the death occurred, and the member is eligible.

1.4 The ACT shall have an Immediate Bereavement Fund (IBF) where each member of the Bereavement shall contribute \$100 to be held in the Immediate Bereavement Fund Account to address immediate cases of Bereavement. If the said funds have been used, the member shall within thirty (30) days replenish his /her account. Any failure to do so will result in loss of membership in the Bereavement.

1.5 When a member's IBF is depleted and has not been replenished as stipulated in 1.3 above, the member will be moved to a list of INACTIVE members and inactive member will not be eligible to any member benefit. However, at the time the member brings his/her IBF up to date, his/her.

will be put back on the active list and must wait three (3) months to be eligible to any contributions from the group. In the event no payment or communication to the office 60 days after being inactive, the member will be deregistered.

1.6 Upon the death of a member of the Bereavement, each member will contribute \$100 towards the funeral expenses and \$50 towards the purchase of the coffin. This amount is payable within one week.

1.7 Authoritative proof of death and unquestionable documented evidence of relationship to the member must be provided by the bereaved member before the release of funds. In cases of fraud, errant members shall be legally liable to refund to the association all payouts made to the member and this clause shall be applied retroactively up to three years CUIAS Immigrant Services

1.8 Those members who are more than one from the same family will be treated as individual members and each will benefit from the membership contribution in the event of bereavement.

1.9 All members who had joined the Bereavement are automatic members unless they opt-out by sending a message to an email address provided by ACT.

(treasury@africancentretoronto.org) or (secretary@africancentretoronto.org) However, any member who opts out of the Bereavement and would want to join again, will be subjected to six *(6) *months waiting period to benefit from ACT.

1.10. If benefits are paid out, the bereaved must acknowledge in writing legally to maintain membership in good standing for at least two years and shall not resign or leave the organization for any reason (except at member's death).

2.0 MEETINGS

2.1 Meetings are VERY important and are to be attended when called.

2.2 Member general meetings will be held once a year in summer and optionally when a member is affected by bereavement OR on special request by one quarter of the registered members at the time (time of what? When is the meeting requested?).

2.3 A meeting notice along with the proposed agenda will be sent to members via their last known e-mail address at least one week before the meeting. Additional items after such notice shall be considered wherever possible, under AOB and must be received by the Secretariat at least twenty-four hours before the meeting.

2.4 Executive committee meeting notices will be sent to members via their last known e-mail address.

2.5 The quorum for the annual general meeting or any other special general meeting shall be 25 members. Approved by many members present.

3.0 WITHDRAWAL

3.1 A member is free to withdraw from the Association at any time. If the same member decides to re-register, then he/she will be considered as a new member having prior knowledge of the Association and will have to pay the registration fee plus any contributions made in previous events when the new member was not registered except where article 1.10 applies.

3.2 On withdrawal, the registration fee is non-refundable however only the IBF is refundable provided the member's account is up to date.

4.0 MEMBERS CONTACTS

4.1 Each member is obligated to give the secretary his/her contact information and to update it, as necessary.

4.2 In the event of a member being bereaved, the Secretary will send out an e-mail as soon as possible and if necessary, may inform members by phone. The Secretary may assign the task of contacting Members to another executive committee officials or any volunteer from the association (The secretary can assign his assistant for small tasks like these)

4.3 Personal contacts and information shall be kept only for the purpose of communicating with the members of the organization on matters related to the Association.

5.0 THE ORGANIZATION OFFICERS

5.1 The organization shall be governed by a committee which shall consist of:

- a) Chairperson,
- b) Vice-Chairperson,
- c) Secretary,
- d) Assistant Secretary,
- e) Treasurer,
- f) Assistant Treasurer and
- g) Board members.
- h) Executive (“The Executive”)

5.2 An Executive consists of Vision bearers who shall act as an oversight authority to the elected officials. To qualify to the executive, one must have exhibited absolute zeal to the group. Their

term will be unlimited term of service subject to their discretion. The Chairperson will present progress reports to the Executive for evaluation and recommendations of the organization.

5.3 The rest of the officials shall serve in office for one term whereby one term means two years, unless he/she:

- I. Decides to resign from the elective office or, from the Association
 - II. Leaves the country for good
 - III. Receives a no confidence vote from the membership.
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5.4 The Chairperson will head the officials and will be appointed by most of the members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Vice Chairperson will assist the Chairperson as may be needed.

5.5 The Secretary shall be voted in by most of the members. He/she will be obligated to take minutes during meetings and to communicate updates to the membership. The Assistant Secretary will assist the Secretary as and when needed.

5.6 The Treasurer shall be voted in by most of the members. He/she will manage the finances of the Association and provide quarterly financial statements to the members. The Assistant treasurer will assist the treasurer as and when needed via individual email accounts.

5.7 Office bearers will serve on a voluntary basis and no monetary compensation will be given.

5.8 Should a vacancy occur within the officials Committee; such vacancy shall be filled by appointment by most of the officials' members.

5.9 After the two-term election, if the composition of the elected officials committee has no member from the out-going committee, then the in-coming committee will co-opt one member from the out-going committee. The term of the co-opted member will be the same as the in-coming committee.

5.10 The Executive Committee/officials can spend up to a maximum of \$ 1000 per year from the members' contributions account for the use of running the office. All the expenses incurred shall be accounted for during the Annual General Meeting (AGM.)

6.0 ELECTIONS

6.1 Any member of the ACT shall have the right to stand for any of the elective positions. All outgoing committee members are eligible for reelection if, served diligently.

6.2 The Association shall elect in a General Election the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and three committee members as outlined in

6.1. The outgoing chair will automatically become one of the three committee members if proven to have served per article 6.1 above; consequently, only two committee members will be elected.

If there is no outgoing chair, three committee members will be elected.

6.3 Elections will be held once every two years with the Election Day being the same day as the Annual General Meeting in July.

6.4 The election procedure and proceedings will be handled by an Election Committee comprised of three members elected by the general members during the Annual General Meeting of a non-election year. The three members shall elect their chair and no member of the Election Committee shall run as a candidate.

6.5 Nominations will be open for all the positions in 6.2 above.

6.6 The nomination period shall be one 14 days prior to and including the Election Day. All nominations shall be forwarded to the election committee.

6.7 Voting, in sequence of positions in 6.2 above, shall be done by secret ballot.

6.8 Counting of ballots will be done by the election committee on the day of elections and those elected by simple majority, shall be announced immediately.

6.9 In case of a tie, the elections shall be repeated for the position the candidates are in a tie. In case of another tie, then the tie breaker shall be by a casting vote by the outgoing Chairman.

6.10 Any position where a person runs uncontested the position shall be filled by that individual.

6.11 Any position left vacant after the general election may be filled by the in-coming Committee.

6.12 Any position vacated by the elected officer after the general election may be filled by the incoming committee.

6.13 The elected committee shall take over from the out-going committee on the first Day of August.

7.0 BANKING AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

7.1 The Association will open and operate a bank account with three signatories: Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary. Two signatures will suffice for withdrawals.

7.2 The account shall be opened within two weeks after the meeting and when the Executive committee members have been appointed (Account holders).

7.3 The bank statements shall be published regularly for members to view. (Quarterly)

7.4 The members shall be notified regularly, at least once a year of the name of the Bank mentioned in 7.1 together with account number(s) for easy remittances.

7.5 Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 6.4, management policy of financial matters of the Association shall be vested on the Executive Committee under the overall direction of the members of the Association.

7.6 Any monies spent on other activities except bereavement of members, Annual General Meeting, and office expenses, must be agreed upon by most of members in a General meeting and/or by appropriate electronic means.

7.7 In addition to 7.3, the treasury shall produce statements of accounts of the Association every three months (quarterly) and send it to all members. Each member is entitled to verify what he/she has contributed and regularly know how the money has been used.

8.0 VOTE OF THANKS/AMENDMENTS

8.1 After every meeting the Chairperson shall inform the members of the Association's performance.

8.2 Once a member comes returns to Canada or after the funeral has taken place, he/she should notify the secretary or any member of the executive who in turn will update the members of the Association.

8.3 Amendments to this constitution shall be made at a general meeting by at least two thirds of the members' present provided there is still a quorum.

9.0 DISSOLUTION

9.1 In the event that the Association is dissolved, all the Association 's assets, after payment of its liabilities, shall be distributed equally among the registered members on the date the Association is dissolved.

9.2 The Association shall only be dissolved provided at least two thirds of all registered members shall agree in an Annual General Meeting, or Special General Meeting, specifically called for that purpose with at least one month's advance notice to all members for dissolution. (Replace word association with ACT)

10.0 ATTACHMENT: CODE OF CONDUCT

Every member of ACT shall:

1. Abide by the provisions of this constitution.
2. Actively participate in the activities of ACT
3. Promote the unity and understanding among the members
4. Refrain from and report any vicious activities and destructive criticism, which may foster disunity
5. Refrain from using obscene or vulgar language during any proceedings of ACT
6. Be free from the influence of intoxicants while conducting the affairs of ACT
7. Speak in non-provocative manner towards other members of ACT
8. Address the Chair during proceedings at all times
9. Any breach of the above provisions may result in one of the following disciplinary measure:
 - a) Rebuke by the Chair and denial from participation in proceedings for the rest of the meeting/ discussion any group official platform such as email or WhatsApp groups.
 - b) Removal from meeting room/any platform forum
 - c) Suspension of membership in the Organization while other articles of this constitution remains in force.
 - d) Removal or ban from holding office of the organization. Imposition of a punitive fine subject to decisions made by officials in consultation with members.

THE OATH OF OFFICE

I -----, do solemnly swear that I shall sincerely serve AFRICAN CENTRE IN TORONTO Incorporated, and I promise to do my best to

defend this constitution and by-laws and any amendment thereof and shall carry out my responsibilities faithfully, diligently and in accordance with its provisions and aspirations of the constitution; so, help me God. (In case of the affirmation please omit "So help me God")

Signed by the member and sealed with the seal of AFRICAN CENTRE IN TORONTO,

on this ----- day of -----, 20--

Signature of Member