

UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION – SOUTH AFRICA (UNA-SA)

CONSTITUTION

I. DESIGNATION

The name of the Association shall be the "United Nations Association-South Africa" hereafter referred to as UNA-SA or "the Association".

The Association is a voluntary, non-profit, non-governmental organisation established in accordance with the Non-profit Organisations Act of 1997.

The association shall:

- Exist in its own right, separately from its members.
- Continue to exist even when its membership changes and there are different office bearers.
- Be able to own property and other possessions.
- Be able to sue and be sued in its own name.

The association shall keep a record of everything it owns.

The Association may not give any of its money or property to its members or office bearers, other than to reimburse persons for expenses incurred on behalf of Association or to pay persons for work that was done for Association.

Members or office bearers of the Association do not have rights over things that belong to the Association.

The activities of the association shall cover the entire territory of the Republic of South Africa.

The Headquarters of the association will be based in a city determined by the Executive Committee. In the interim the headquarters shall be at: C/o CACE, University of the Western Cape, P Bag X17. Bellville 7535, South Africa. The contact person shall be Ms Nomvuyo Dayile, the Convener of the Steering Committee.

II. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the UNA-SA is to be a people's movement for the realisation of the purposes of the United Nations. The Objectives are to:

- Generate support for the aims, achievements and activities of the United Nations and its agencies;
- Promote studies, research and activities relating to the United Nations system;
- Promote international understanding and peaceful co-operation among peoples; and to
- Strive, along with other organisations, to promote harmony as well as economic, social and cultural progress in South Africa.

III. RELATIONS WITH WFUNA

The Association shall:

- Strive to achieve its aims through membership of the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA);
- Co-operate with other United Nations Associations (UNA's) in pursuing the objectives of WFUNA; and
- Endeavour to participate in activities conducted under WFUNA auspices.

IV. MEMBERSHIP

A. Affiliation and Membership

The Association has the following categories of membership:

- Individual membership;
- Affiliate membership, and
- Honorary life membership (bestowed on individuals by the General Assembly).

All persons of 16 years of age or older who accept the objectives of the Association, who are willing to devote themselves to its aims and purposes and who undertake to pay the assessed annual subscription are eligible to be members of the Association. Members under 18 years may not enter into contracts on behalf of the Association. The General Assembly shall determine the annual membership fee. Membership shall be valid for 12 months from the month they are paid and need to be renewed in the 13th month.

All persons wishing to join the Association shall submit a membership application form to the Secretary-General of the UNA or to the Chairperson of the Chapter through whom they are applying.

Any corporate body or non-profit organisation that accepts the objectives of the Association can apply for affiliation. The Secretary-General shall present applications for affiliation by other bodies to the Executive Committee for approval. Affiliated organisations shall be represented through individual memberships taken out by the organisation on behalf of its representatives. Each affiliate organisation will have a number of votes equal to the number of paid-up individual memberships taken out by the affiliate on behalf of its representatives. There shall be no limit to the number of memberships an affiliate can take out as long as there is an individual member linked to each membership.

The United Nations Student and Youth Association (UNSYA) will be affiliated to the UNA-SA.

B. Rights and obligations inherent to membership

All members shall be entitled to take part in the activities of the Association. They shall have the right to participate, directly or indirectly, in the decision-making process of the Association. These rights include:

- The right to vote in the election of Officers;
- The right to be elected as an Officer of the Association; and
- The right to make proposals and/or suggestions regarding the Association's policies and programmes.

C. Termination of membership

Membership can be terminated by:

- (i) A letter of resignation addressed to the Secretary-General;
- (ii) A decision of the Executive Committee taken with a two thirds majority; or
- (iii) Non-payment of the annual subscription for 2 years.

V. OFFICERS

- The Officers of the Association shall consist of the following members of the Executive Committee:
 - the President;
 - two Vice Presidents (the Incoming and Outgoing President);
 - the Secretary-General;
 - the Treasurer;
 - Two additional members; and
 - The Chairperson of each chapter.

The President, Treasurer and Secretary-General shall be entitled to take decisions on urgent matters but shall report as soon as possible to the Executive Committee.

The Officers shall be annually elected by the General Assembly, due attention being paid to the geographical and organisational character of the membership as well as gender and race. The Presidential troika will ensure that a President serves an effective 3 year term of office, first as Incoming Vice-President, then as President and then as Outgoing Vice-President. The General Assembly will annually elect the Incoming Vice-President and confirm the President. The Secretary-General and Treasurer can be re-elected for a second (or more) term(s). The vote shall be taken by secret ballot.

The President, the Vice-Presidents and the Treasurer can resign by submitting a letter of resignation to the Secretary-General. The Secretary-general can resign by submitting a letter of resignation to the President.

The President, the Vice-Presidents, the Secretary-General and the Treasurer may be suspended from office by the Executive Committee. Such action shall require a vote of two thirds of the members of the Executive Committee present.

The President is responsible for chairing the Executive Committee, General Assembly and other official meetings of the Association. The President is responsible for ensuring that the Association is managed according to this Constitution and the wishes of the members as expressed in the decisions taken at the General Assembly.

The Secretary-General is responsible for the executive management of the Association, according to the guidance provided by the Executive Committee. The Secretary-General may be a full-time salaried position.

The Treasurer is responsible for overseeing the sound financial management of the Association, and for reporting on the same to the Executive Committee and the General Assembly. The Secretary-General and his/her staff will ensure that the Treasurer has access to all financial records and management systems.

VI. ORGANS

A. General Assembly

The General Assembly shall meet in ordinary session at least once a year.

The General Assembly shall be convened by the Secretary-General. S/He shall give notice of such a session and communicate its agenda at least 6 weeks in advance.

An extraordinary session of the General Assembly may be convened by the Secretary-General:

- (i) At the request of 2/3 of the members of the Executive Committee; or
- (ii) At the written request of 1/3 of the members.

Notice of an extraordinary session shall be given at least 4 weeks in advance and shall state the purpose for which the session is convened. The General Assembly shall consist of all members present. The quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the members of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly shall:

- Be responsible for the promotion of the aims of the Association;
- Discuss matters included on its agenda by the Executive Committee;
- Consider the report of activities submitted by the Secretary-General;
- Adopt the policy and programme of activities of the Association;
- Elect the Officers of the Association and appoint an auditor;
- Determine the amount of annual subscriptions;
- Adopt the budget;
- Approve the report of the Treasurer and the audited accounts;
- Receive appeals against a decision of the Executive Committee; and
- Perform any other functions as set forth by this Constitution.

B. Voting

If a vote is required, the decisions of the General Assembly shall be taken by simple majority, with the following exceptions, which shall require a 2/3 majority of those present and voting:

- Amendments to the Constitution;
- The waiving of the secrecy of the vote; and
- The liquidation of the Association.

Each individual member shall have one vote. Each Chapter shall have a number of votes equivalent to the number of its paid-up members. Each Affiliate member shall have a number of votes determined in consultation with the Executive Committee at the time of its admission as a member.

C. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of 8 individuals, the President, Incoming Vice-President, Out-going Vice-President, Secretary-General, Treasurer, two additional members and the President of the UNSYA. In the event that a member of the Executive Committee is unable to continue to serve until the end of his/her term, the Executive Committee may co-opt a person to serve until the next General Assembly meeting, where the vacancy need to be filled through an election. The quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of 5 of its members. The

Executive Committee shall meet every month, with a minimum of four meetings per annum using the possibilities of modern technology where appropriate. The President of the Association, or in her/his absence a Vice-President, shall chair the meetings of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall:

- Endeavour to implement the policies adopted by the General Assembly;
- Decide on the admission of affiliate members and, in consultation with them, assess their subscriptions and the number of their delegates as well as the number of their votes at the General Assembly;
- Fix the date and prepare the agenda of the General Assembly;
- Be informed by the Secretary-General of her/his communications with the Secretary-General of WFUNA, WFUNA offices and other UNA's;
- Decide on the appointment of the Association's delegates to WFUNA meetings, including to whom any travel and/or assistance from WFUNA should be given;
- Assist in fund raising activities; and
- Perform any other functions as specified in this Constitution.

D. Powers of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall work on the basis of consensus. In cases where this proves impossible, decisions shall be taken by a simple majority of members present.

Minutes will be taken at every meeting to record decisions. The minutes of each meeting will be given to members at least two weeks before the next meeting. The minute shall be confirmed as a true record of the proceedings at the following meeting and shall be signed by the chairperson.

The Executive Committee has the right to form sub-committees. The decisions that the sub-committees take must be endorsed by the Executive Committee. All members of the organisation have to abide by the decisions that are taken by the Executive Committee and that are in accordance with the aims and objectives of the Constitution and within the mandate given by the General Assembly. The Executive Committee has the power and authority to raise funds or to invite and receive contributions. The Executive Committee has the power to buy, hire or exchange property and to enter into contracts with other bodies on behalf of the Association.

The Executive Committee has the right to establish procedures for proper management, including procedure for application, approval and termination of membership.

VII. FINANCES

The Associations shall derive its funds from the dues of its individual and affiliate members, donations, grants and fund raising activities. The subscriptions of individual and affiliate members shall be paid directly to the Association and collected directly or through chapters.

The financial year of the Association shall begin on 1 March and expire on 28 February.

The budget prepared by the Treasurer shall be submitted to the General Assembly for adoption. The Treasurer shall prepare a yearly statement of accounts which, after having been checked by the auditor appointed by the General Assembly, shall be submitted to the General Assembly.

The treasurer is responsible for the finances of the organisation. The Treasurer shall arrange for funds to be put into the bank account in the name of the organisation. The Treasurer must oversee the proper recordkeeping of all the finances of the Association. Whenever funds are to be taken out of the bank account, two signatories designated by the Executive Committee must sign the withdrawal or cheque.

The Association's accounting records and reports must be submitted to the Director of Nonprofits Organisations within six months after the financial year end.

If the Association has funds that can be invested, the funds may only be invested with registered financial institutions. These institutions are listed in Section 1 of the Financial Institutions (Investment of Funds) Act 1984. Alternatively, the Association can get securities that are listed on a licensed stock exchange as set out in the Stock Exchange Control Act 1985.

VIII. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed in writing by an individual member, by an affiliate member or by a Chapter. They should reach the Secretary-General at least 7 weeks before session of the General Assembly, at which time they will be considered.

Amendments to this Constitution can be made by the General Assembly only by a vote of two-thirds of those present and voting.

IX. DISSOLUTION

The Association may be dissolved if at least two thirds of the members present and voting at a General Assembly meeting are in agreement.

If there are assets left over after all debtors have been paid it should be donated to another non-profit organisation that has similar aims or to a charitable organisation, as per the decision of the General Assembly.

X. ADOPTION

This constitution was adopted at the inaugural meeting establishing the UN Association of South Africa on 26 November 2003 at the University of the Western Cape.

President

Nomvuyo Skota-Dayile

Secretary-General

Cedric de Coning