

THE  
**CONSTITUTION**  
and **BY-LAWS**

OF



**ASANTEMAN ASSOCIATION**  
**OF THE WASHINGTON METRO AREA**



*Approved*  
*February 22, 2014*

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## **PREAMBLE**

We, the sons and daughters of Asante descent and sympathizers resident in the Washington Metropolitan Area, being aware of our tradition, custom, cultural heritage, and our dedication to uniting Asantes, promoting interest in Asante culture, in pursuit of happiness, economic and social progress and peace with all mankind, commit ourselves to this Association and do hereby adopt, enact and give to ourselves this Constitution as the supreme governing law of the Association.

## **ARTICLE ONE**

### **NAME OF THE ASSOCIATION**

The name of the Association shall be Asanteman Association of Washington Metropolitan Area, Inc, hereinafter referred to as the "Association", and shall be incorporated in the State of Maryland.

## **ARTICLE TWO**

### **PURPOSES**

As a democratic, non-profit, non-political and non-religious organization, the purposes of the Association are to:

Section 2.1. Unite Asantes in the Washington Metropolitan Area.

Section 2.2. Promote the social, moral, educational and the general welfare of its members.

Section 2.3. Provide a source of cultural enrichment, and promote interest, inform and educate the general community about Asante culture.

Section 2.4. Instill and inculcate in the youth the love and pride of Asante cultural heritage.

Section 2.5. Provide social networking and support for the members.

Section 2.6. Organize periodic workshops to educate members on pertinent issues, such as Asante culture and traditions, legal, immigration, health, employment, insurance, and investments.

Section 2.7. Project good image of Asantes in the Washington metro area.

Section 2.8. Support Asanteman development efforts by motivating and educating members to financially support educational, health and other social programs in Asanteman.

Section 2.9. Develop linkages to and networking with other African ethnic groups and participating in inter-cultural exchange programs.

Section 2.10. Assist the needy financially and in kind.

Section 2.11. Contribute to the development of the Washington Metropolitan area community by performing voluntary services.

Section 2.12. Ensure that no substantial part of the activities of the Association shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. Further, the Association shall not participate in or intervene in (including publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of, or in position to, any candidate for public office.

## **ARTICLE THREE**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Section 3.1. Membership of the Association is open to all Asantes and others who subscribe to the aims and objectives of the Association.

Section 3.2. An active member of the Association shall be one whose membership application has been approved, who has paid his/her membership application fee, monthly dues, and other assessed financial obligations to the Association and actively participates in the affairs of the Association.

Section 3.3. A Life member (who is an inactive member of the Association) shall be one who had been an active member of the Association in good standing for at least 10 years and of at least 75 years old and whose membership application has been approved. All membership application fees, monthly dues, and other assessed financial obligations to the Association and active participation in the affairs of the Association are waived.

## **ARTICLE FOUR**

### **GOVERNING BODY**

Section 4.1. The supreme authority of the Association shall be vested in the General Assembly which shall meet at least once a month and from which power shall be entrusted in the Executive Council and the Council of Elders, and other organs of the Association.

Section 4.2. The general policy of the Association shall be determined by the Executive Council subject to the approval (by a simple majority) of the General Assembly.

Section 4.3. The Executive Council shall have the power to make rules to govern the Association subject to the provisions of this Constitution and shall report such rules to the General Assembly for approval. However, no rule, law or proposition passed by the Executive Council for the intent and purposes of altering, amending, repealing or abrogating any organ or fundamental law, rule or principle of the Association shall be enforceable until approved and ratified by two thirds majority of the general assembly.

Section 4.4. Any decision of the Executive Council may be rescinded by two-thirds majority vote of the General Assembly.

Section 4.5. Subject to the provision of Article Nine, the Executive Council shall have the power to appoint members to committees of the Association as needed.

Section 4.6. The Council of Elders shall form a caretaker Executive Council in case the Executive Council resigns en-bloc or is unable to perform its duties until such time that elections are held to elect a new Executive Council.

## ARTICLE FIVE

### **THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Section 5.0.1. The Executive Council shall be made up of a President, Vice President, General Secretary, Assistant General Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Social Activities Coordinator, Cultural Coordinator, Assistant Cultural Coordinator, Public Relations Officer, and Assistant Public Relations Officer.

Section 5.0.2. The term of office of the members of the executive council shall be two years. Members of the Executive Council shall be eligible for election to another position of office provided that no officer shall serve more than two consecutive terms in any one position.

Section 5.0.3. An executive member may resign from his/her position by a written letter to the General Secretary, or in the case of the General Secretary, by a letter to the Assistant General Secretary.

Section 5.0.4. All members of the Executive Council shall take the oath of allegiance as set forth in Article Thirteen of the Constitution upon assumption of office.

Section 5.0.5. Subject to the provisions of Article Eight, all vacancies on the Executive Council shall be filled by general elections within two months of such vacancy.

Section 5.0.6. Any member of the Executive Council shall be removed from office if he/she commits an impeachable offense as referred to in Article Eleven.

Section 5.1. **The President** shall:

Section 5.1.A. Be the spokesperson and Chief Executive Officer of the Association and shall be in charge of the day-to-day administration of the Association

Section 5.1.B. Preside over all functions of the Executive Council and of the General Assembly.

Section 5.1.C. Insure that the Association laws and regulations are obeyed.

Section 5.1.D. Submit an annual State of the Association (including the achievements and shortcomings) at the first general meeting in January.

Section 5.1.E. Present an annual budget to the Association by February of each year.

Section 5.1.F. Have a casting vote in case of a tie at all Executive Council and general meetings except for elections of officers of the Association.

Section 5.2. **The Vice President** shall:

Section 5.2.A. Act in the absence of the President.

Section 5.2.B. Succeed to the office of the Presidency for the unexpired term of the President in the event there is a vacancy or the President cannot perform the functions of that office.

Section 5.2.C. Perform such duties as may be assigned by the President or the Executive Council.

**Section 5.3. The General Secretary shall:**

**Section 5.3.A.** Have custody of and properly maintain all assets and documents of the Association except financial documents.

**Section 5.3.B.** Conduct all correspondence on behalf of the Association and pertaining to the office of General Secretary and shall be responsible for keeping Association correspondence.

**Section 5.3.C.** Record accurate minutes at all Executive Council and general meetings of the Association.

**Section 5.3.D.** Co-ordinate all the activities of the Executive Council and all other committees and serve as a liaison between the committees and the Executive Council.

**Section 5.3.E.** Perform such other duties that may be assigned by the President and the Executive Council.

**Section 5.3.F.** Make available for inspection by the Association or by any member, upon request, all or part of the assets and documents of the Association in his/her possession.

**Section 5.4. The Assistant General Secretary shall:**

**Section 5.4.A.** Assist the General Secretary in the performance of his duties and act as the General Secretary in the absence of the General Secretary.

**Section 5.4.B.** Perform such duties as may be assigned by the President or the General Secretary.

**Section 5.4.C.** Succeed to the office of General Secretary for the unexpired term of the General Secretary in the event there is a vacancy or the General Secretary cannot perform the functions of that office.

**Section 5.5. The Treasurer shall:**

**Section 5.5.A.** Maintain custody and safety of all the funds of the Association

**Section 5.5.B.** Be responsible for the disbursement of all funds as approved by the President and the Executive Council.

**Section 5.5.C.** Be the association's collection agent, collecting dues, donations, levies, gifts, contributions and all other monies and must issue receipts for all monies paid to him or her on behalf of the association and shall promptly deposit all such monies into the Association's bank account.

**Section 5.5.D.** Ensure that all monies collected on behalf of the association are deposited in a specific financial institution approved by the President and Executive Council within two (2) working days after receipt of such funds.

**Section 5.5.E.** Forward records of all cash collected, deposited and disbursed to the Financial Secretary including deposit slips, copies of all receipts, sources of all receipts, check stubs, cancelled checks, bank statements and paid invoices and bills by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month.

**Section 5.5.F.** Be a signatory to all financial disbursements made by the association. Work with the Financial Secretary and other officers to ensure the submission of all financial statements to appropriate entities (e.g., governmental agencies) as required by law.

Section 5.5.G. Working with the Financial Secretary and other officers, submit all financial records within thirty (30) days after the expiration of term of elected officers for audit review.

Section 5.5.H. Be a signatory to the bank accounts as one of three (3) authorized signatures.

Section 5.5.I. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Executive Council and the President.

Section 5.5.J. Serve in Standing and/or Ad Hoc Committees at the request of the President and Executive Council.

Section 5.6. The Assistant Treasurer shall:

Section 5.6.A. Assist the Treasurer in the performance of that office and act as Treasurer in the absence of the Treasurer.

Section 5.6.B. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the President or the Treasurer.

Section 5.6.C. Succeed to the office of the Treasurer for the unexpired term of the Treasurer in the event there is a vacancy or the Treasurer cannot perform the functions of that office.

Section 5.7. The Financial Secretary shall:

Section 5.7.A. Be the custodian of all financial records of the association and shall be party to all financial transactions

Section 5.7.B. Be responsible for keeping records of all monies collected and expenditures made, and make such records available for audit.

Section 5.7.C. Working with the Treasurer and other officers, submit monthly, quarterly and annual financial reports on the state of association financial position to the Executive Council and the President and read the respective reports at general meetings.

Section 5.7.D. Prepare, in consultation with the President, Chair to the Council of Elders and Chairpersons of Standing Committees, an annual operating budget for the association.

Section 5.7.F. Keep an updated roll of members' dues paid, updated roll of members with outstanding financial obligations and submit monthly list of outstanding members financial obligations to the Treasurer who will pursue collection.

Section 5.7.G. Perform other related duties that may be assigned by the President in line with the goals of the Association.

Section 5.7.H. Serve in Standing and/or Ad Hoc Committees at the request of the President and the Executive Council.

Section 5.7.I. Preferably, be an accounting professional or have an accounting background.

Section 5.8. The Social Activities Coordinator shall:

Section 5.8.A. Liasie between the Social Activities Committee and the Executive Council.

Section 5.8.B. Shall organize and coordinate Association's social and entertainment activities.

Section 5.8.C. Perform such duties as may be assigned by the President or the Executive Council.



Section 5.8.D. Shall ensure that all members are encouraged and given the opportunity to learn and/or participate in social activities.

Section 5.8.E. Be the Chairperson of the Social Activities Committee.

Section 5.9. **The Cultural Coordinator** shall:

Section 5.9.A. Liaise between the Cultural Committee and the Executive Council.

Section 5.9.B. Organize and coordinate Association's cultural activities.

Section 5.9.C. Coordinate all activities of the cultural troupe, promote common forum for the exchange of ideas, education and the presentation of the Asante culture to individuals, groups, organizations and others interested in the Asante culture.

Section 5.9.D. Keep custody and accurate records of all cultural paraphernalia of the Association.

Section 5.9.E. Perform such duties as may be assigned by the President or the Executive Council.

Section 5.9.F. Ensure that all members are encouraged and given the opportunity to learn and/or participate in cultural activities.

Section 5.9.G. Be the Chairperson of the Cultural Committee.

Section 5.10. **The Assistant Cultural Coordinator** shall

Section 5.10.A. Assist the Cultural Coordinator in the performance of the duties of that office and act in the absence of the Cultural Coordinator.

Section 5.10.B. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the President or the Cultural Coordinator.

Section 5.10.C. Succeed to the office of Cultural Coordinator for the unexpired term of the Cultural Coordinator in the event there is a vacancy or the Cultural Coordinator cannot perform the functions of that office.

Section 5.11. **The Public Relations Officer** shall:

Section 5.11.A. Be the Public Relations Officer and in charge of all protocol of the Association and chairperson of the Public Relations Committee.

Section 5.11.B. Promote the aims and image of the Association, and publicize issues and activities of the Association, issue advertisements, write press releases and answer inquiries about the activities of the Association.

Section 5.11.C. Arrange meeting place and contact members of any emergency within the Association.

Section 5.11.D. Perform such duties as may be assigned by the President and the Executive Council.

Section 5.11.E. Be the Chairperson of the Public Relations committee.

Section 5.12. The **Assistant Public Relations Officer** shall:

Section 5.12.A. Assist the Public Relations Officer in the performance of the duties of that office and act in the absence of the Public Relations Officer.

Section 5.12.B. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the President or the Public Relations Officer.

Section 5.12.C. Succeed to the office of Public Relations Officer for the unexpired term of the Public Relations Officer in the event there is a vacancy or the Public Relations Officer cannot perform the functions of that office.

## **ARTICLE SIX**

### **THE COUNCIL OF ELDERS**

The Council of Elders shall be organized in line with Asante traditions and custom. Its members must be of good standing, be well versed in the Asante culture and traditions, and have good understanding of the Constitution.

Section 6.1.A. All past Presidents, Asantefuoahenfo and Asantefuoahemaa of the Association and predecessor Associations; and the current Asantefuohene, Asantefuohemaa, Kontihene, Abusuapanin and Obaapanin shall be members. The President and the Executive Council, in consultation with the Council of Elders may appoint additional members to the Council of Elders and whose term shall not exceed the term of office of the President. The maximum membership of the Council of Elders may be defined in the by-laws.

Section 6.1.B. The Council of Elders shall be chaired by the current Asantefuohene. The Kontihene shall serve as an Acting Chairperson of the Council of Elders in the absence of the Asantefuohene.

Section 6.1.C. The Council of Elders shall advise the President and the Executive Council on all matters relating to the progress of the Association.

Section 6.1.D. The Council of Elders shall form a caretaker government should the Executive Council resign en bloc, subject to Section 8.1.

Section 6.1.E. The Council of Elders shall mediate in a timely manner any dispute arising or occurring between members of the Executive Council.

Section 6.1.F. The Council of Elders shall meet, at least, once every three months.

### **DUTIES OF ASANTEFUOHENE**

Section 6.2.A. The Asantefuohene shall be the ceremonial head of the association and shall serve as a source of inspiration to members.

Section 6.2.B. The Asantefuohene shall serve as the Chairman of the Council of Elders.

Section 6.2.C. The Asantefuohene shall strive to portray Asante custom and culture, and in consultation with the Executive and Council of Elders, he may represent the Association at events where the emphasis is to showcase Asante culture.

Section 6.2.D. In consultation with the Council of Elders, the Asantefuohene shall advise the President and the Executive Council on all matters affecting the progress and smooth running of the Association.

Section 6.2.E. The Asantefuohene may be invited to attend Executive Council and other committee meetings as an observer/advisor.

Section 6.2.F. In consultation with the Council of Elders, the Asantefuohene shall recommend to the General Assembly to appoint a committee to investigate and report for proper action to be taken if he has enough evidence or reasons to suspect that the President has violated his/her oath of office.

Section 6.2.G. In consultation with the Council of Elders, the Asantefuohene shall have power to dissolve the Executive Council if they refuse to hold elections as specified in the Constitution, or seek approval from the general assembly for the extension of their term of office.

Section 6.2.H. The President and the Executive Council shall swear-in their oath of office before the Asantefuohene and the Council of Elders.

Section 6.2.I. The Asantefuohene shall act as the President if both the President and the Vice President resign or they cannot perform the functions of their office until the election of a new President and Vice President, subject to Section 5.0.5.

Section 6.2.J. The Asantefuohene, in consultation with Asantefuohemaa shall appoint the following sub-chiefs and traditional elders subject to the approval of the Council of Elders: Kontihene, Abusuapanin, Akyeamehene, and Manwerehene and two other sub-chiefs as the Asantefuohene may deem fit and necessary.

### **ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE OF THE ASANTEFUOHENE**

Section 6.3.A. Any male member of the Association who is in good standing and well versed in the Asante culture and traditions, and have good understanding of the Constitution shall be eligible to be elected as the Asantefuohene of Washington Metropolitan Area.

Section 6.3.B. The election of the Asantefuohene shall follow the following process:

- i) At a scheduled general meeting, the General Assembly shall nominate qualified candidates.
- ii) Within thirty days from the nomination of the candidates, the Assembly shall elect, by secret ballot, the Asantefuohene from the pool of candidates nominated by the General Assembly.

Section 6.3.C. The term of office of the Asantefuohene shall be three years.

Section 6.3.D. The Asantefuohene shall be eligible for re-election for additional term(s) of office.

### **DUTIES OF ASANTEFUOHEMAA**

Section 6.4.A. The Asantefuohemaa shall strive to portray Asante custom and culture, and she, along with the Asantefuohene, and in consultation with the Council of Elders and the Executive, may represent the Association at events where the emphasis is to showcase Asante culture.

Section 6.4.B. The Asantefuohemaa shall be a member of the Council of Elders.

Section 6.4.C. The Asantefuohemaa shall lead and represent the women on all matters affecting Asante women's tradition, customs and culture.

Section 6.4.D. The Asantefuohemaa shall advise and guide the President on all matters affecting women and the entire Association's progress.

Section 6.4.E. The Asantefuohemaa, in consultation with Asantefuohene shall appoint Obaapanin and two other sub-queen mothers subject to the approval of the Council of Elders as the Asantefuohemaa may deem fit and necessary.

## **ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE OF THE OHEMAAH**

Section 6.5.A. Any female member of the Association who is in good standing and well versed in the Asante culture and traditions, and have good understanding of the Constitution shall be eligible to be elected as Asantefuohemaa of Washington Metropolitan Area.

Section 6.5.B. The election of the Asantefuohemaa shall follow the following process:

- i) At a scheduled general meeting, the General Assembly shall nominate qualified candidates.
- ii) Within thirty days from the nomination of the candidates, the General Assembly shall elect, by secret ballot, the Ohemaa from the pool of candidates nominated by the General Assembly.

Section 6.5.C. The term of office of the Asantefuohemaa shall be three years.

Section 6.5.D. The Asantefuohemaa shall be eligible for re-election for additional term(s) of office.

## **DUTIES OF SUB CHIEFS, QUEENMOTHERS AND TRADITIONAL ELDERS**

Section 6.6.A. The term of office of the sub-chiefs, sub-queen mothers, Abusuapanin and Obaapanin shall not exceed the term of office of the incumbent Asantefuohene and Asantefuohemaa.

Section 6.6.B. The Kontihene shall act as Asantefuohene in the absence of the incumbent Asantefuohene and shall perform all such duties as may be needed to be performed by the Asantefuohene including acting as chair to the Council of Elders. He shall accompany the Asantefuohene to represent the Association at all events where the emphasis is to show case Asante culture. He shall be part of the team of Elders who advises Asantefuohene on cultural and traditional matters.

Section 6.6.C. The Abusuapanin shall be the Principal Traditional Elder and Head of Asantefuohene Advisory Team. He shall accompany Asantefuohene and other Chieftaincy entourage to all events and functions where Asante culture will be showcased. The Abusuapanin shall be the spokesperson for the Association on all traditional and cultural matters. He will work to ensure that the Chieftaincy Institution is dignified at all times and that the Asantefuohene, Asantefuohemaa and all other sub chiefs and sub queen mothers are performing their roles appropriately.

Section 6.6.D. The Akyeamehene shall be the principal mouthpiece of Asantefuohene and will be the Chief Linguist. He will pour libations at all ceremonies where the ritual will be performed. The Akyeamehene shall be fluent in Twi language and be very knowledgeable in Asante customs and traditions.

Section 6.6.E. The Manwerehene shall be the head of Asantefuohene' s security detail and will accompany Asantefuohene to attend all cultural events and functions where the Manwerehene will ensure the security and safety of Asantefuohene including the safeguarding of all the cultural and traditional paraphernalia accompanying the chieftaincy entourage.

Section 6.6.F. The Obaapanin shall be the traditional mother to Asantefuohemaa and shall perform motherly duties to ensure the welfare and wellbeing of the Asantefuohemaa. She shall be the principal advisor to Asantefuohemaa and will accompany the Asantefuohemaa to all events and functions where Asante culture will be showcased.

Section 6.6.G. Other sub-chiefs and sub-queen mothers when appointed will be assigned duties and functions as the Asantefuohene and Asantefuohemaa deem fit and necessary. They will be part of the Chieftaincy entourage at all cultural events.

## **ARTICLE SEVEN**

### **HEADQUARTERS**

The headquarters of the Association shall be the residence of the President.

The Association shall maintain a mailing address at a local post office and all correspondence of the Association shall be directed through this mailing address.

The General Secretary shall maintain custody of the key to the mailbox.

## **ARTICLE EIGHT**

### **ELECTIONS**

Section 8.1. The Association shall hold biennial elections at the November general meeting and not more than one month later in case of cancellation of such a meeting. If the Executive Council resigns en-bloc, elections shall be held no later than three months after such resignation.

Section 8.2. Voting shall be by secret balloting based on the principle of one-person-one-vote.

Section 8.3. Candidates for election shall be nominated and seconded by a member and the nomination confirmed by the Electoral Committee at a general meeting of the Association.

Section 8.4. Candidates for elected offices shall be members of the Association for at least one year.

Section 8.5. Winners of elections of the Association shall be determined by a simple majority of members present and voting at all elections and confirmed by the Electoral Committee.

Section 8.6. All elected officials shall take the oath and assume the functions of their offices at the first meeting in January following their elections.

## **ARTICLE NINE**

### **COMMITTEES AND FUNCTIONS**

Section 9.1. There shall be eight standing committees of the Association. However, the Executive Council may appoint an ad-hoc committee in case of need for a period not to exceed the term of office of the Executive Council. The eight standing committees are:

- a. Finance Committee
- b. Judicial Committee
- c. Cultural Committee
- d. Educational Committee
- e. Social Activities Committee
- f. Public Relations Committee
- g. Visitation Committee
- h. Audit Committee

Section 9.2. The President, in consultation with the Executive Council, shall appoint members to the committees of the Association and shall appoint the chairpersons of these committees.

Section 9.3. The President and the Executive Council shall determine terms of office of members of each committee members. However, the President shall not appoint committee members to terms to exceed his/her own term.

Section 9.4. Committees shall meet when necessary, but at least once every six months and shall present timely written reports and/or recommendations of such meetings to the Executive Council which shall deliberate on such reports and present them to the General Assembly for discussions.

Section 9.5. The Finance Committee shall:

Section 9.5.A. Oversee and review all the financial transactions of the Association including the review and approval of the Association's annual budgets and the fund raising activities of the Social Activities committee.

Section 9.5.B. Approve all expenditures over two hundred dollars (\$200) and shall determine what constitutes a major expenditure requiring approval of the general assembly.

Section 9.5.C. Review fiscal policies of the Association and in consultation with the Audit Committee and make recommendations to improve the financial status of the Association.

Section 9.5.D. Advise the Association on matters relating to income and expenditures necessary to achieve the Association's objectives.

Section 9.5.E. Include the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary as Ex-Officio members.

Section 9.6. The Judicial Committee:

The President and the Executive Council, in consultation with the Council of Elders, shall refer member complaints, disputes, major conflicts, and allegations of commission of an offense described in Section 11 of this Constitution by a member, to the Judicial Committee. Any aggrieved member may submit a written request to the President for a judicial inquiry.

Any member, seeking a Constitutional interpretation, shall table a motion at a General Meeting and if seconded and when a simple majority of members present and voting supports the motion, the request for Constitutional interpretation shall be referred to the Judicial Committee by the President.

Section 9.6.A. The Judicial Committee shall:

Section 9.6.B. Have full and complete powers, right and authority to hear, investigate and determine all controversies and disputes among members and between any applicant and any member, and any decisions or rulings given by the committee shall be enforceable within the Association.

Section 9.6.C. Have the power to recommend disciplinary actions to the Executive Council, which shall deliberate on such recommendations and shall accept or modify such disciplinary actions and make same known to the General Assembly.

Section 9.6.D. Have the power to interpret the Constitution and their interpretation shall be final and binding on all members.

Section 9.6.E. Have seven members; four members shall be nominated by the President in consultation with the Executive Council and three members shall be nominated by the Asantefuohene in consultation with the Council of Elders.

**Section 9.7. Cultural Committee shall:**

Section 9.7.A. Be chaired by the Cultural Coordinator and be responsible for and in concert with other committees of the Association, promote historical education and cultural enrichment programs for the members of the Association and their dependents.

Section 9.7.B. Educate members and their dependents the traditions, customs, and protocol, of the Asante culture.

Section 9.7.C. Promote the cultural and educational aspirations of members and their dependents through the formation of cultural troupe.

Section 9.7.D. Promote Asante culture through music, dance repertoires, story telling and teach all aspects of the Asante culture to members and non-members of the Association.

**Section 9.8. Educational Committee shall:**

Section 9.8.A. Be responsible for and in concert with other committees of the Association, promote historical education and cultural enrichment programs for members of the Association and their dependents.

Section 9.8.B. Educate members and their dependents the traditions, customs, and protocol, of the Asante culture.

Section 9.8.C. Invite members and non-members with expert knowledge in subject areas of importance to majority of the members of the Association to speak at general meetings of the Association.

**Section 9.9. Social Activities Committee shall:**

Section 9.9.A. Be chaired by the Social Activities Coordinator and be responsible for the social needs of the members of the Association.

Section 9.9.B. Organize educational and social tours for members of the Association.

Section 9.9.C. Organize social events as a means of raising funds for the Association. However, the Social Activities Committee shall not commit the Association with any financial obligations associated to organizing social events without approval of the Executive Council, the Finance Committee and/or the Association.

Section 9.9.D. Be responsible for planning and organizing fund raising and voluntary activities of the Association.



**Section 9.10. Public Relations Committee shall:**

Section 9.10.A. Be chaired by the Public Relations Officer and shall function as a liaison between the Association and the public.

Section 9.10.B. Solicit for new members, sell the Association to the general public and engage in such public relations activities that will enhance the good name and reputation of the Association.

Section 9.10.C. Coordinate the publicity of all fund raising activities with the Social Activities and Finance committees of the Association.

Section 9.10.E. Monitor public responses and criticism to the activities and the direction of the Association.

**Section 9.11. Visitation Committee shall:**

Section 9.11.A. Promote fellowship among members of the Association.

Section 9.11.B. Visit the sick and notify members of the Association of the sickness, death or other misfortunes that may befall other members of the Association.

Section 9.11.C. Upon request, assist members of the Association or request the Executive Council to appoint a committee to assist with the execution of their social activities including outdoorings and funeral celebration.

**Section 9.12. The Audit Committee shall:**

Section 9.12.A. Audit or appoint a member outside of the Executive Council to perform annual audits of the Association's financial statements and supporting records and shall review the results of the audits before presentation to the Executive Council and to the Association.

Section 9.12.B. Review fiscal policies of the Association and in consultations with the Finance Committee, make recommendations to improve the financial status of the Association.

Section 9.12.C. Make recommendations on internal financial controls to the Executive Council.

**AD-HOC COMMITTEES**

**Section 9.13. Electoral Committee:**

Section 9.13.A. No later than two months before the general elections, the Executive Council in consultation with the Council of Elders shall appoint an Electoral Committee of not more than five (5) members to supervise and conduct the general elections of the Association.

Section 9.13.B. The Electoral Committee shall set rules governing all elections but shall not pass laws or regulations contrary to the provisions of this Constitution or the By-laws of the Association.

Section 9.13.C. The Electoral Committee shall present a written report on annual general elections to the Executive Council and present such report orally to the Association at the first general meeting following the elections.

**Section 9.14. Constitutional Review Committee:**

Section 9.14.A. Upon the determination by the President and the Executive Council in consultation with the Council of Elders that there is the need for a Constitutional review, the President shall appoint a Constitutional Review Committee of not more than five (5) members to conduct hearings, receive members recommendations, deliberate on the areas for constitutional amendments and prepare a draft of recommended proposed Constitutional Amendments. The Committees mandate shall include a time frame within which the Committee shall present its report to the President and the Executive Council.

Section 9.13.B. The Committee shall set rules governing the manner of the Committee's operations and processes.

Section 9.13.C. The Committee shall present a written report, signed by all members of the Committee to the Executive Council. The report shall include summaries of the Committee's work and the amended Articles or Clauses being recommended by majority of the Committee's members. The comprehensive report shall also include a separate report of any minority member or members' recommendations that were not accepted by the Committee.

**MEMBERSHIP WITH AND AFFILIATION TO OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

Section 9.14. The Association shall be a member of the Council of Ghanaian Associations (COGA) and the Asanteman Council of North America (ACONA) provided such continuing membership promotes the aims and objectives of the Association.

Section 9.15 The Association shall strive to seek affiliation with all Asante "Township" associations in the Washington Metropolitan Area so long as such affiliation promotes the aims and objectives of the Association.

**Section 9.16. Council of Ghanaian Associations (COGA):**

Section 9.16.A. The President and the General Secretary shall represent the Association at COGA level.

**Section 9.17. Asanteman Council of North America (ACONA):**

Section 9.17.A. The Asantefuohene, the Asantefuohemaa and two other representatives appointed by the President and the Executive Council in consultation with the Council of Elders shall represent the Association at ACONA level.

Section 9.18. The Association's representatives shall not commit the Association to any financial obligation exceeding two hundred dollars (\$200.00) without the prior expressed approval of the General Assembly.

**ARTICLE TEN**

**CORPORATE SEAL**

Section 10.1. The corporate seal of the Association shall be of the following form and design:



Section 10.2. The corporate seal shall be used only in connection with the transaction of business of the Association and shall be in the custody of the General Secretary.

## ARTICLE ELEVEN

### IMPEACHABLE OFFENSES AND TRIALS

Section 11.1. The following shall constitute impeachable offenses for the removal of officers of the Association from office:

- a. abuse of power
- b. embezzlement of Association's funds
- c. flagrant disregard of the constitution
- d. divulging confidential information of the Association to non-Executive Council members
- e. acts or behavior that shall disrupt the smooth running of the Association
- f. other acts that the Executive Council shall deem to bring the Association into disrepute.

Section 11.2. Procedure for impeachment shall be:

- a. the Executive Council shall request the Judicial committee to examine charges brought against any officer and to make recommendations to the Council and the General Assembly
- b. the General Assembly shall deliberate on the recommendations of the Judicial committee and a two thirds (2/3) majority vote of members present and voting shall either suspend or remove an officer so charged from office.
- c. the suspension or removal of an officer shall operate only to the office and for the position and for the period for which the officer was elected; all other membership rights of such an officer shall not be affected
- d. all parties to the motion to suspend or remove an officer shall be given full opportunity to present relevant evidence and exhibits which they deem necessary to the proper presentation of their case and shall be entitled to be cross examined at the Judicial Committee level.
- e. The Judicial committee shall take a verbatim transcript of all impeachment proceedings. In the event verbatim transcript is not made, the committee shall summarize the minutes of the trial in writing and furnish such minutes plus copies of all exhibits submitted at the trial to each party of the motion to remove or suspend an officer not more than seven (7) days after the committee meeting, and each party shall within ten (10) days after receipt of such minutes submit in writing any inaccuracies or objections to the secretary of the committee
- f. when an officer is suspended or removed from office and subsequently exonerated of all offenses, such officer shall immediately revert to the position held prior to such suspension or removal
- g. at a meeting of the General Assembly to suspend or remove an officer, the officer concerned shall be required to leave the room and members of the Executive Council will not be eligible to vote.

### Section 11.3. OFFENSES

1. Any member who by printing, writing or sign, or by word of mouth willfully and maliciously defames, slanders or impeaches the honesty, integrity, character or reputation of another member.
2. Any member who embezzles or fraudulently converts to his own use any money, funds, books, papers, documents, or other property belonging to the Association.
3. Any member whose action, or conceals any information and/or condones any act or information that could bring the Association's name into disrepute.

Section 11.4. Any conduct detrimental or inimical to the best interest of the Association shall be deemed offenses against the Association including:

- a. violation of any provision of this Constitution
- b. advocating, encouraging or attempting to bring about secession from the Association of any member or group of members
- c. publishing or sending letters, circulars, flyers, printed materials or oral statements which misrepresent the policies of the Association or defame, libel or criticize the honesty or character of an officer or a committee member of the Association relative to the performance of the members duties and functions of the Association and found to be untrue
- d. committing any act of fraud, embezzlement, mismanagement, or appropriating to anyone's own use of any money, property or thing of value of the Association
- e. committing any physical assault upon any officer or member of the Association in the performance of his/her duties.

Section 11.5. Any member who is alleged to have contravened any of the provisions above shall be referred to the Judicial Committee by the Executive Council and, if found guilty, the Committee shall recommend suspension or dismissal from the Association to General Assembly.

Section 11.6. The General Assembly shall deliberate on the recommendations of the Judicial committee and a two thirds (2/3) majority vote of members present and voting shall either suspend or dismiss the member. The General Assembly shall have the power to impose a lesser sentence in lieu of suspension or dismissal. The decision of the General Assembly shall be final.

Section 11.7. An expelled member shall not be entitled to any refunds of dues and other monies paid or benefits for any past contributions and services to the Association.

Section 11.8. A suspended member who is subsequently reinstated shall be entitled to all privileges, rights and benefits after all obligations to the Association have been met.

## ARTICLE TWELVE

### INDEMNIFICATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Section 12.1. Any member of the Executive Council, officer or employee of the Association may be indemnified by the Association against all expenses and liabilities, including counsel fees reasonably incurred or imposed upon such members of the Executive Council, officer, or employee in connection with any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding to which he/she may become involved by reason of his/her being or having been a member of the Executive Council, officer or employee of the Association or any settlement thereof, unless adjudged therein to be liable for negligence or misconduct in the performance of his/her duties. Provided, however, that in the event of a settlement, the indemnification herein shall apply only when the Executive Council approves such settlement and reimbursement as being in the best interest of the Association. The foregoing right of indemnification shall be in addition and not exclusive of all other rights to which such an individual is entitled.

Section 12.2. All members of the Executive Council, officers or employees of the Association shall not engage in activities that may result or appear to cause a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest may exist when the direct or indirect personal financial interest of any member of the Executive Council, officer or employee of the Association or a member of his/her family competes with or benefits from the financial interest of the Association. If such conflict of interest arises, such a member should bring it to the attention of the Executive Council and shall, if a member of the Executive Council, not participate in the final deliberations, decisions or vote on matters relating to the such interest until such a time that the conflict of interest is resolved by a vote of the Executive Council or by the General Assembly. All meetings relating to conflict of interest issues shall be properly documented by the Secretary or his/her assistant.

The activities that may result or appear to cause a conflict of interest shall be defined in the Association's By-Laws.

## **ARTICLE THIRTEEN**

### **OATH OF ALLEGIANCE**

Section 13.1. Individuals on becoming members of the Association shall take the following oath of allegiance:

I \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby (swear in the name of God) (solemnly affirm) that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the Asanteman Association as by the Constitution established and that I will preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the Asanteman Association (so help me God).

Section 13.2. Members on assumption of office to the Executive Council, shall take the following oath of allegiance:

I \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby (swear in the name of God) (solemnly affirm) that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the Asanteman Association and faithfully execute the functions of the office of \_\_\_\_\_ as by the Constitution established and to which I was elected and that I will preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the Asanteman Association (so help me God).

Section 13.3. The Asanfuohene and Ohemaa on assumption of office shall swear the oath of allegiance as defined in Asante custom and traditions in the presence of a representative of the Asantehene.

## **ARTICLE FOURTEEN**

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

This Constitution and any subsequent amendment thereto shall become effective immediately upon adoption unless otherwise provided.

## **ARTICLE FIFTEEN**

### **AMENDMENTS**

Section 15.1. This Constitution shall be amended only by two thirds (2/3) majority vote of members present and voting at a properly constituted General Assembly

Section 15.2. Proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the General Secretary who shall make copies of such proposal and distribute to all members not less than one month before a meeting of the General Assembly is scheduled to discuss the proposal.

# BY-LAWS



## **BY-LAWS**

### **I. MEMBERSHIP**

- A. Membership of the Association is open to all Asantes and others who subscribe to the aims and objectives of the Association.
- B. An active member of the Association shall be one who has paid his/her membership registration fee, monthly dues, and other assessed financial obligations to the Association and actively participates in the affairs of the Association.
- C. A Life member (who is an inactive member of the Association) shall be one who had been an active member of the Association in good standing for at least 10 years and shall be at least of 75 years of age and whose membership application has been approved. All membership application fees, monthly dues, and other assessed financial obligations to the Association and active participation in the affairs of the Association are waived.
- D. Every prospective member of the Association shall complete an application form furnished by the Association. Membership shall become effective after the approval of the application form by the Association or thirty (30) days after the submission of the application form if such application is not acted upon.
- E. A member who contravenes any provisions of this Constitution shall be suspended or dismissed from the Association.

### **II. ADMISSION POLICY**

- A. Prospective applicants shall request an application form from the general secretary and upon completion, shall furnish with it two passport size photographs and a non-refundable fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25) if seeking to be an active member.
- B. The Council of Elders shall review the completed membership application form and make recommendation to the President for approval/disapproval. During the review process, a member of the Council of Elders shall explain to the applicant the following:
  - Aims and objectives of the Association;
  - Rights and obligations (especially financial) of each member;
  - The benefits program;
  - Probationary period for receiving benefits from the Association;
  - Fund raising activities;
  - Eligibility to hold office in the Association;
  - Attendance policy; and
  - Other informational needs.
- C. Upon the recommendation of the Chairman of the Council of Elders, the President shall approve or disapprove the prospective member's application. The prospective member shall be informed orally or in writing of the action taken on his/her application.
- D. The whole review and approval process shall not exceed one month from the submission date of the application.

- E. Upon approval, a prospective member shall take an oath of allegiance administered by the Chairman or a member of the Council of Elders at a scheduled general meeting of the Association.
- F. The General Secretary shall provide to a new member of the Association:
  - The Constitution and By-laws of the Association; and
  - Membership directory.
- G. The effective date of membership of a new member shall be the date of approval (1.C above) of his/her membership application or by default, thirty days upon submission of his/her application if no action was taken on the application.

### **III. MEMBERSHIP RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS**

- A. An active member is in good standing if he/she has fully met all his/her financial obligations to and participates in the affairs of the Association. Financial obligations include but not limited to payment of membership fee, monthly dues, funeral obligations and pledges, and all monies due from fund raising activities.
- B. Each active member shall pay monthly dues of ten dollars (\$10). Monthly dues are payable to the treasurer on the first day of each month. Advance payment of dues shall be accepted. Dues are delinquent if they are three months past due.
- C. In addition to those guaranteed by the constitution, active members in good standing shall also enjoy the following rights:
  - Right to vote after probationary period.
  - Right to nominate and be nominated for office after the probationary period.
  - Right to discontinue membership in the Association at any time without the benefit of refund of all dues and contributions paid, and without compensation for services performed for the Association before withdrawal, except where the Association had agreed to pay for such services before the said withdrawal.
  - Children of members who are eighteen years or younger shall have membership rights and privileges of the Association.
- D. Probationary period to receive benefits from the Association (except for the death of the active member or an active member's listed relative), shall be six months from the effective date the beneficiary became a member of the Association as stated in section II.G above.
- E. Members delinquent in their financial obligations to the Association shall have their names announced at each general meeting. Any member who is delinquent for three months in financial obligations will receive a reminder letter from the Executive Council. If there is no response by the 4<sup>th</sup> month meeting, the member shall be considered as not being in good standing and will be contacted by the Executive Council. If there is still no response by the 5<sup>th</sup> month meeting, the member shall be considered to have withdrawn from the Association. The member will receive an official letter from the Executive Council.
- F. Members shall attend at least one meeting within every three month period. A member who accumulates three consecutive absences without shall receive a reminder letter from the Executive Council. If a member misses four consecutive meetings, the member will be considered not to be in good standing.
- G. For excuse to be acceptable, a member shall call any Executive member before the meeting stating why the member cannot attend the meeting.

## **IV. BENEFITS**

### **A. FUNERALS**

#### **1. FUNERAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

##### **i) DEATH OF AN ACTIVE MEMBER**

When an active member in good standing dies, each Association member shall make cash contribution of at least fifty dollars (\$50) towards the funeral expenses of the deceased member.

##### **ii) DEATH OF AN ACTIVE MEMBER'S MINOR CHILD**

When an active member loses his/her minor child (under eighteen years old), each member shall make a minimum donation of twenty-five dollars (\$25).

##### **iii) DEATH OF AN ACTIVE MEMBER'S SPOUSE**

When an active member loses his/her spouse there is no financial obligation on each member but members are encouraged to attend.

##### **iv) DEATH OF A LISTED RELATIVE**

When an active member loses a listed relative (defined below), each active member shall make a minimum donation of twenty-five dollars (\$25).

A listed relative is a person who a member of the Association has listed on his/her membership application form as a person close to him/her i.e.; father, mother, uncle, non member spouse, aunt, brother, sister, etc. For the purposes of receiving the listed relative benefit, not more than two people shall qualify as listed relatives of each member.

v) All funeral contributions shall be given to the Assistant Financial Secretary who shall then present the collected amount to the bereaved member or in the case of the death of the active member, to listed next of kin, to defray the cost of the funeral.

vi) An active member who fails to meet his/her funeral obligations shall not be in good standing with the Association.

#### **2. FUNERAL ATTENDANCE**

All members are obliged to attend the funeral of an active member, minor child or a listed relative.

#### **3. FUNERAL ASSISTANCE**

The Association shall, if requested, appoint a committee to assist the bereaved family with the funeral arrangements without financial obligation to the Association upon the death of an active member.

#### **4. LIFE MEMBERSHIP (INACTIVE MEMBERSHIP) RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS**

The Association does not ascribe any rights and obligations to Life Members except that a Life Member's next of kin shall be entitled to receive funeral contribution, upon the death of the Life Member, of at least \$25 to be paid by each active member. The Association shall encourage active members to support functions organized by Life Members and vice versa.

## B. CHILD NAMING/OUTDOORING

There shall be no financial obligation to active members of the Association towards a member's child naming or outdoor ceremony. Members' presence at such functions is encouraged. The Association shall make a donation of \$200 to the active member for the child naming or outdoor ceremony. The Association shall be given at least two months notice for the impending event. Members are encouraged not to organize such activities to coincide with a scheduled general meeting, functions of the Association, and/or other members' activities. Members present at all child naming or outdoor ceremony may voluntarily contribute money for collective presentation at these ceremonies.

## C. WEDDING OR TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE CEREMONY

There shall be no financial obligation to active members of the Association towards a member's wedding or traditional marriage ceremony. Members are encouraged to attend.

## D. DEPARTING MEMBER

The Association shall organize a send off reception at a scheduled general meeting in honor of a member in good standing who is leaving the United States for good. The Association shall present such a member with a gift or souvenir. The departing member shall notify the general secretary at least two (2) months before his/her departure.

## E. HOSPITALIZATION OF AN ACTIVE MEMBER

If an active member in good standing is hospitalized, the Association shall send a delegation to visit the sick member and present a bouquet of flowers and a cash donation of \$200 to the active member. The amount spent on the bouquet of flowers shall not exceed seventy-five dollars (\$75). Further, all members are encouraged to visit the sick member. To qualify for this benefit, the member shall be at the hospital for three (3) days.

## **V. VISITATION COMMITTEE POLICY**

The executive council shall appoint a visitation committee to serve a two-year term.

The President and the Executive Council shall appoint the Chairman of the committee and six additional members (two from each jurisdiction of the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia).

By the recommendation of the Chairman, a committee member may be replaced by the Executive Council for failure to fulfill his/her duties.

### A. DUTIES OF THE VISITATION COMMITTEE

1. After notification of a member's hospitalization, the committee shall contact the sick member by telephone or in person within twenty-four (24) hours of the notification.
2. The committee shall notify the Publicity Secretary or any Executive Council member within twenty-four (24) hours of contact with the sick member. The Publicity Secretary or his assistant shall notify members of the Association and urge them to visit the sick member.
3. The committee shall send a delegation to visit the sick member and present a bouquet of flowers and get-well card on behalf of the Association.

## **VI. ELECTION REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES**

1. General elections to elect Executive Council members shall be held every two years, at the general meeting in November (in case of emergency, at the general meeting in December).

2. The Electoral Committee shall set up rules and regulations to be obeyed by all contestants and voters. All elections of the Association shall be conducted and supervised by the Electoral Committee. The decisions of the Electoral Committee shall be final.
3. The Electoral Committee shall present a verbal result of all elections immediately after the election and present a written report for the Association's records no later than two (2) months after the election. Candidates have three weeks to challenge the initial verbal results of any election after which the results may be affirmed.
4. Each candidate must be nominated and seconded by members in good standing before one could become official contesting candidate for any position.
5. The democratic principle of one-person-one-vote shall be strictly adhered to and enforced at all elections.
6. Voting in-absentia shall be allowed. Absentia voting shall be in writing and shall be presented in a sealed envelope to the Electoral Committee prior to the elections.
7. Procedures for by-elections to fill any vacant position shall be the same as stated above.
8. The Electoral Committee shall have power to disqualify a candidate if one is proved to be not in good standing, or he/she violates electoral rules and regulations. Any one so disqualified may appeal to the judiciary committee for review and determination of his/her case.
9. To be eligible to vote, an individual must have maintained six (6) months continuous membership in the Association by the date of the elections.
10. A candidate must be a member of the Association for at least one-year before he/she is eligible to be elected to any position on the Executive Council, as Asantefuohene or as Ohemaa.
11. A candidate eligible to be elected to the Executive Council can be nominated for more than one position but the candidate must choose only one of those positions for which he/she wants to contest before the close of the general meeting at which nominations are being made.
12. A member can nominate him/herself for any contested position. However, the nomination must be seconded by another member of the Association before it is placed on the ballot.
13. Any candidate nominated for a position can withdraw his/her candidacy for that position to which he/she was nominated by notifying the electoral commission before the elections. If one candidate remains for that position after the withdrawal of others, and after nominations are closed, the remaining one candidate shall be declared the winner unless the Electoral Commissioner decides to accept new nominations.
14. The winner of a contested position shall be by a simple majority vote of the members present and voting at the time of the election.

## **VII. FISCAL POLICY**

1. The fiscal year of the Association shall be the calendar year.
2. No part of the earnings of the Association shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributed to its members, trustees, donors, officers, or other private person except that the Association shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and make payments and distribution in furtherance of aims set forth in this constitution.

3. The Executive Council can incur expenditures of up to two hundred dollars (\$200) without the approval of the finance committee or the General Assembly. All expenditures over two hundred dollars (\$200) shall be approved by the finance committee.
4. The General Secretary shall be given an imprest account of up to two hundred dollars (\$200) for administrative expenses and shall be replenished upon presentation of proper receipts.
5. The Treasurer shall be given a petty cash of two hundred dollars (\$200) for administrative expenses of his/her office and administrative expenses of the standing committees of the Association. This amount shall be replenished upon submission of proper receipts.
6. All disbursements of the Association shall be paid by check, which shall be signed by either the President or the Vice President and the Treasurer. Both the President and the Vice President shall not sign a check together.
7. All monies collected on behalf of the Association shall be deposited promptly at a proper depository institution in the name of the Association.
8. The Executive Council shall prepare financial statements and make such statements available for audit not more than three (3) months after the end of the calendar year.
9. At the end of the financial year, the President shall present the Association's annual budget to the general assembly for approval and adoption.
10. Official receipts must be obtained for all expenditures.
11. Accurate accounts must be kept for all incomes and expenditures.

## **VII. ASSOCIATION MEETINGS**

- (a) General meetings of the Association shall be held on the last Saturday of every month.
- (b) Special meetings shall be called by the President in emergencies, and in that case the General Secretary and the Public Relations Committee shall inform members.
- (c) An active member is required to attend at least one meeting in every three months to maintain a good standing status. An active member may be excused from general meeting(s), and in that case a proper reason must be given to the General Secretary prior to the meeting day. An excuse may be granted for death in the family, overseas travel, serious sickness, hospitalization and any other reason that may be determined by the Executive Council as excusable. An excused absence will not be counted against the member in the determination of good standing status as regards meeting attendance.
- (d) A quorum shall be formed by the attendance of a simple majority of the members of the Association at any properly announced meeting. Additionally, a simple majority of the members of the Executive Council must be present.

The Association meetings shall be conducted as follows:

- a. Prayers
  - b. Roll Call
  - c. Minutes of Previous meetings
  - d. President's report or address
  - e. Treasurer's report
  - f. Unfinished business - Matters arising from minutes
  - g. New business
  - h. Other matters
  - i. Announcements
  - j. Adjournment
  - k. Benediction
- 1) A member shall be recognized by the speaker before addressing the floor and shall announce his/her name when recognized to address the meeting.
  - 2) If a member while speaking is called to order, at the request of the chair, he/she shall take seat until the question of order is resolved.
  - 3) No member shall interrupt another save only to call a point of order.
  - 4) Speeches from the floor shall be limited to three minutes.
  - 5) No member shall speak more than once on a question until others have had the opportunity.
  - 6) A motion shall be open for discussion only after it has been seconded.
  - 7) The President shall appoint a chaplain to open/close meetings with prayers.

#### **VIII. DUTIES OF THE SPEAKER**

1. There shall be a Speaker and Deputy Speaker at all general meetings appointed by the President who shall serve at the pleasure of the President.
2. The Speaker shall call the meeting to order when there is a quorum for the general meeting.
3. The Speaker shall count all votes at meetings of the Association except for votes at general elections conducted by the Electoral Committee.
4. The Speaker shall recognize members to speak at all meetings of the Association and shall have the power to discipline, including the dismissal of members from meetings at which such members' misbehavior occurs.
5. The Speaker shall see to it that members obtain the floor properly before they speak and obey the rules of debate.
6. The Deputy Speaker shall assist and act in the absence of the Speaker.

**IX. GOVERNANCE**

1. The President, in consultation with the Asantefuohene, shall convene a joint meeting of the Executive Council and the Council of Elders to deliberate on matters that are of supreme interest of the Association. Any rules or procedures for the effective and smooth running of the Association that are agreed to at such meetings shall have the same effect as rules or policies made by the Executive Council.
2. The General Secretary shall keep record of all proceedings of such meetings and the minutes shall form part of the Association's corporate records.
3. The maximum membership of the Council of Elders shall not exceed Nineteen (19) members.

**X. AMENDMENTS**

1. These Bye-laws shall be amended by a simple majority vote of members present and voting at a properly constituted General Assembly
2. Proposed amendments shall be tabled as a motion by a member at a properly constituted General Assembly and when seconded may be discussed and voted on at that meeting or be scheduled to be discussed and voted on at later General Meeting day at the discretion of the President.
3. The General Secretary shall present the formal wording of the approved amendments, duly endorsed by the President and the General Secretary, for distribution to members at subsequent General Meeting.



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