

The Constitution

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE
Cameroonian Cultural Association of Southern New Jersey, CCASNJ.

PREAMBLE

CONSIDERING:

The number of Cameroonian people in Southern New Jersey and the greater tri-state metropolitan area;

- Mindful of their rich and diverse culture and the desire to hand it down to posterity,
- Conscious of the need to support one another in their various endeavors,
- Conscious of the need to support Cameroon in her economic, and socio-cultural development,
- And realizing that Unity is Strength,

Declare that We the Cameroonian people of Southern New Jersey and the greater tri-state area have on this date, _____, formed the CAMEROONIAN CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY (CCASNJ)

PART ONE: GENERAL PROVISIONS

CHAPTER ONE: **NAME, MOTTO, HEADQUARTERS.**

ARTICLE 1

The association shall be known as the CAMEROONIAN CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY hereafter referred to as CCASNJ.

ARTICLE 2

- a) CCASNJ shall be governed by this constitution or its legally amended version and pledges to respect all the laws of the United States of America and the Republic of Cameroon.
- b) CCASNJ is a non-political and non-religious organization
- c) The duration of CCASNJ is in perpetuity
- d) The CCASNJ will be a cultural and charitable organization directing all its charitable endeavors toward helping its members within the United States and the Republic of Cameroon

ARTICLE 3

The motto of CCASNJ is: *In unison, no frontier is unreachable.*

ARTICLE 4

The headquarters of CCASNJ shall be in ---

CHAPTER TWO: OBJECTIVES AND MEMBERSHIP

ARTICLE 5

OBJECTIVES:

CCASNJ shall play the role of a unifying force and have as its objectives to:

- (i) Protect and promote the interests of its members.
- (ii) Encourage and develop in her membership a sense of oneness, mutual assistance and a spirit of selfless service to CCASNJ and the people of the United States and the Republic of Cameroon.
- (iii) Identify and contribute directly or indirectly to development projects that promote the United States and the Republic of Cameroon culturally, educationally, socially and economically.

ARTICLE 6

MEMBERSHIP

Membership to the CCASNJ shall be open to:-

- (i) All Cameroonian people resident in Southern New Jersey and the greater Philadelphia metropolitan tri-state area of the United States.
- (ii) Anyone who has been adopted by Cameroon parents.
- (iii) Anyone whose spouse (or former spouse) is (or was) a Cameroonian.
- (iiii) Friends and sympathizers of the Cameroonian people who have adopted the culture and life of the Cameroonian people.

and who has completely registered with and is in good standing the Organization.

ARTICLE 7

Complete Registration shall be defined as:-

- (i) A onetime nonrefundable Affiliation Fee of \$100.00, due by the end of the second meeting day, from the day the member commits to join the Organization, and
- (ii) An annual registration fee of \$25.00 due on the date the member commits to join the Organization and the first meeting day of the start of a new financial year of the Organization.

ARTICLE 8

A member shall cease to become a member any time his \$100.00 Affiliation fee is reduced/charged as a result of his/her nonpayment of any financial obligation. The member can only regain his/her membership rights after replenishing the charged amount to make up the \$100.00 Affiliation Fee.

ARTICLE 9

Obligations of Membership:-

The obligations of membership shall include:-

- (i) Meet their financial obligations to the Organization faithfully and promptly;
- (ii) Attend all meetings as required, to participate at those meetings in utmost good faith to achieve the goals and objectives of CCASNJ; and
- (iii) Pay \$50.00 to CCASNJ to support a member(s) whose relative who is not also a member of CCASNJ or expected to be a member of CCASNJ dies; limited to mother, father, husband, wife or kids.
- (iiii) Pay \$ 10.00 to CCASNJ to support a member(s) who has given birth to a new born baby.
- (v) Pay \$100.00 to CCASNJ to support a member's family, when that member dies.
- (vi) Pay \$1.00 for every lateness or \$10.00 for every absence from the meeting without reasonable cause.
 - (vii) The amounts in (iii), (iv) and (v) above would become due on the day the official notification is send out by the Secretary General, President or any other authorized executive. A member's \$100.00 Affiliation Fee would be charged for any of the amounts listed above after the end of the first meeting after that amounts becomes due.
 - (viii) Purchase a life insurance for him/herself and family through the CCASNJ group insurance (SAGI or any other insurance that the group shall enter into contract with) or sign a waiver form with CCASNJ that he/she will not be needing the said insurance; in which case he would be encouraged to have another life insurance.
 - (ix) Be an advocate for CCANJ and foster the goals and ideals of CCASNJ to the best of their knowledge and abilities;

ARTICLE 10

Rights of Membership:-

A member shall have the right to:

- (i) Attend all general meetings of CCASNJ;
- (ii) Express their opinion on any and all matters for discussion at the meeting;
- (iii) Vote and/or be voted into any CCASNJ leadership position;
- (iiii) Every member shall have one vote at general meetings; and

- (v) Their membership benefits.

CHAPTER THREE: **SPECIAL PROVISIONS: MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS**

ARTICLE 11

Meeting

- (i) Beginning January of every year, CCASNJ shall hold its meetings on a monthly basis and on the last Saturday of the month, with a minimum of twelve (12) meetings every year.
- (ii) Whenever circumstances do not permit the executive shall agree to reschedule the meeting to another favorable date, not to coincide with an already scheduled meeting day.
- (iii) Meeting start time shall be 7:00pm on the meeting day. Any member arriving at the meeting after 7:30pm will be considered late for that meeting and fined and specified in article 9(iv)
- (iii) A quorum for every meeting shall consist of two third of current fully Affiliated members. Decisions arrived at; by such a quorum shall be binding in all circumstances.

ARTICLE 12

Meeting hosting

- (i) At the last meeting of the year, the executive shall identify a list of potential members for the next meeting year.
- (ii) In collaboration with all the members, apportion the members into groups, proportionate to the number of meetings (12) to be held during the next year.
- (iii) Each group of members would be assigned a meeting day on which they would be expected to host and take care of food and drinks during the assigned meeting. They would independently decide on where and how they intend to host the meeting.
- (iii) The minimum requirement for hosting would be just enough food and drinks for all the members and a space where the meeting can take place.
- (v) Members who do not comply with article 12(iv) during their meeting month, shall be fined by an amount agreed upon by the general assembly. The fine shall be such that it includes, the members reasonable portion of expenses for the meeting hosting plus sanctions for not hosting the meeting.

ARTICLE 13

Conventions

CCASNJ shall as it deems necessary, organize conventions, conferences, and other special events, as one of its means of meeting with its objectives as stipulated in article 5 above.

PART TWO: ADMINISTRATION AND FUNCTIONS

ARTICLE 14

The CCASNJ shall be comprised of:

- a) The Board of directors.
- b) The Executive Officers.
- a) [The General Assembly.](#)

ARTICLE 15

- a) [The Board of directors;](#)
 - i. [The Board of Directors shall be nominated and elected by the General Assembly. Every board member shall be elected as board member only.](#)
 - ii. [The GA shall nominate members based on their experience and fields of specialty; ensuring that potential board members have some professional background that can help push the organization ahead in achieving its objectives.](#)
 - iii. [The President and immediate past President shall be automatic members of the Board for their first terms, provided that all re-elections shall treat all candidates equally.](#)
 - iiii. [The term of office of the Board shall be three years, and each member shall be eligible for re-election indefinitely, except that a chairman cannot hold that position for more than nine consecutive years or three terms of office.](#)
 - v. [The Board of Directors shall have a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, VP of Finance, VP of Business Management, VP of membership Services, VP of Strategy and Planning, and any other Positions that might be deem necessary for the smooth functioning of the organization.](#)
 - vi. [Aside from the Board Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary, the other positions can be occupied by more than one board member, depending on the necessity and unanimous decision of all the board members.](#)
 - vii. [The main purpose of the Board shall be to advise the Executive in all areas of CCASNJ's not-for-profit status: taxation, regulatory requirements, fundraising, and keeping up with any updates with non- profit laws.](#)
 - viii. [The BOD shall have a minimum of five members and a maximum of ten members.](#)
 - ix. [The Board shall have the responsible electing its chairperson, \(who shall not be the current President\) and the rest of the other positions.](#)

- x. The Board shall meet at the invitation of the Chairman or on the suggestion of three Board members, but at least three times a year (every four months).

b) The Executive Officers.

The Executive Officers shall be composed of:

- (i) The President.
- (ii) The Vice-President.
- (iii) The General Secretary
- (iiii) The Assistant General Secretary.
- (v) The Treasurer.
- (vi) The Financial Secretary.
- (vii) The Organizing and Publicity Secretary.
- (viii) One Legal Adviser.

c) Executive officers shall be nominated and elected by the general assembly.

d) The term of office of the executive officers shall be two years.

e) The Aside from the president who shall not be eligible for re-election after the end of his/her second term of office, all other positions shall be eligible for reelection indefinitely.

POWERS AND DUTIES

1) THE President

- a) Shall be the executive head of the Association and shall be responsible to the Association for the due and proper execution of its business and coordination of its activities.
- b) Shall preside at all meetings of the Association, unless otherwise provided under this Constitution, and shall sign all the minutes thereof after normal adoption.
- c) Shall sign all important resolutions, declarations and statements made by the Association at its General or Executive meeting, (other than correspondence and dispatches in the normal course of business) which represent the Association's opinion or policy on any major issue affecting the interest of the Association, with any other Union, association or similar bodies, before such documents are issued out of the Secretariat.
- d) Shall have a casting vote at all meetings of the Association at which he presides.
- e) Shall deliver an annual report which shall take the form of a Presidential

address at the meeting closing the fiscal year's activities

- f) Shall ensure that bylaws are created to handle Administrative changes that govern the operations of CCASNJ.
- g) The president's term of office is two years and renewable only once.

II) THE VICE PRESIDENT

- a) Shall assist the President in his/her duties
- b) Shall assume the duties of the President in case of temporal or permanent incapacitation, pending new election for the office of the President.

III) THE GENERAL SECRETARY

- a) Shall be responsible for the management and running of the Association's Secretariat.
- b) Shall, in consultation with the President, arrange, convene and see to the proper organization of all meetings of the Executive Committee and the General Assembly.
- c) Shall take and keep minutes of all meetings which he/she convenes.
- d) Shall sign all correspondence, papers and documents emanating from the Secretariat and shall, with the President, sign such papers, documents, and statements as are referred.
- e) Shall keep a proper and up to date Register of members of the Association.

IV) THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

- a) Shall assist the National General Secretary in carrying out his/her duties.
- b) Shall deputize in the absence of the General Secretary.
- c) Shall assume the functions of the General Secretary in case of temporal or permanent incapacitation of the National General Secretary.

V) THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

- a) Shall be the custodian of all Financial records.
- b) Shall present to the Executive Committee and the General Assembly an account of all finances.
- c) Shall impose and collect all special fines and late fees approved by the National Executive Committee.

VI) THE TREASURER

- a) Shall be the custodian of all records of income and expenditure of the Association.
- b) Shall immediately deposit all Association money in the Association bank account.

VII) THE NATIONAL ORGANIZING AND SOCIAL SECRETARY

- a) Shall work in close collaboration with the President and General Secretary.
- b) Shall ensure all activities are given the widest publicity possible.
- c) Is the coordinator of all social activities of CCASNJ.

ARTICLE 16

- a) Every registered member has a right to vote and hold office in the CCASNJ.
- b) Voting will be by secret ballot or by show of hand.
- c) All decisions except constitutional amendments and by-laws will be arrived at by simple majority.
- d) All decisions arrived will be binding to all members.
- e) The President will cast a deciding vote in case of a tie.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINANCES

ARTICLE 17

Accounting Records

CCASNJ shall maintain the following accounting records:

- (i) Cash Book: to be used to record income from all sources and for all purposes. The Cash Book shall be organized so that it records income for any one purpose received and accounted for separately.

- (ii) Receipt Book:
 - a) A multiple-numbered receipt booklet with duplicates shall be maintained for all cash receipts.
 - b) Cash receipts shall be used and issued for all monies received, and clearly stating the date and purpose of the payment.
 - c) One cash receipt may be issued for monies paid by the same person on the same day for more than one purpose, so long as there is space to clearly explain each purpose.
 - d) Cash receipts shall be issued in serial order as printed, and each receipt shall be dated to show when the funds were received.
 - e) Each receipt shall be signed and issued by the Financial Secretary.
 - f) In the absence of the Financial Secretary, the Treasurer shall collect funds and issue cash receipts.
 - g) The Financial Secretary shall maintain a file for all cash receipt duplicates filed by serial number.

- (iii) Payment Voucher
 - a) A multiple-numbered payment voucher booklet with duplicates shall be maintained for all cash payments.
 - b) Payment Vouchers shall be issued for all cash disbursements, and clearly stating the date and purpose of the payment.

- c) One Payment Voucher may be issued for payments made for different purposes, so long as there is space to clearly explain each purpose.
- d) Payment Vouchers shall be issued in serial order as printed, and each voucher shall be dated to show when the funds were paid.
- e) Each voucher must be signed by the payee and/or must have a receipt attached behind to justify the use of the funds.
- f) All disbursements must be approved by the president.
- g) The financial Secretary shall maintain a file for all payment vouchers according to date and serial numbers.

(iii) Financial Report.

The financial secretary shall present a financial report at every meeting of CCASNJ or make the report available to the meeting when he/she cannot attend.

(v) Bank Account:

- a) The Treasurer shall place all CCASNJ's funds in a bank account located in the USA. He must also keep a file of all back statements that is available to the General assembly during each meeting.
- b) Private funds shall not be deposited into the CCASNJ's bank account;
- c) All banking transactions shall be cosigned by the Treasurer, the President, and the General Secretary.

ARTICLE 18

SOURCES OF FUNDS

CCASNJ shall have the following sources of funds:

- (i) Membership Registration;
- (ii) Membership levies;
- (iii) Fines.
- (iii) Donations
- (v) Special Purpose Funds

ARTICLE 19

Uses of Funds

CCASNJ shall use its funds accordingly;

a) Bereavement by a member.

- (i) CCASNJ shall pay out \$1,500.00 to member(s) whose father, mother, husband, wife or child (who is not also a member or is not expected to be a member of CCASNJ) shall die, at a time when that member is currently in good standing with the Organization and has fully met up with the registration requirement.
- (ii) In the situation where more than one member is involved for the same event, the \$1,500.00 shall be divided to the members in their proportion to their number in the group if they cannot decide which single one of them can collect the money.

b) New Birth by Member or Member's spouse in the USA.

CCASNJ shall pay out \$300.00 to member(s) for a new born baby born in USA. The member or couple shall be encouraged to organize an event during which that money would be handed.

c) Dead of a member

CCASNJ shall collect \$100.00 from every member and pay out \$2,500.00 to the family of a member who dies while still an active member of CCASNJ. The balance of the money would be use by CCASNJ during funeral events of the member; any further balance after the funeral would again be paid to the family of the deceased member.

d) Others/Projects

CCASNJ shall spend money as agreed during a General Assembly on projects of the Organization.

e) Restrictions to the use of CCASNJ funds

CCASNJ shall in no circumstance be loaned out or use for the benefit of any individual, regardless of status unless it is in line with the objectives of the Organization and agreed upon in a General Assembly of CCASNJ.

ARTICLE 20

All CCASNJ monies must be handed over to the Treasurer for immediate deposit in CCASNJ's bank account within five business days.

ARTICLE 21

The General Assembly shall, as it deems necessary, appoint two non-executive committee members to audit the books of the CCASNJ, the result of which will be presented to the General Assembly at the third meeting following initiation of the audit.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

AMENDMENTS

ARTICLE 22

The constitution shall be amended on:

- a) The recommendation of the National Executive at a National Convention.
- b) A proposal by a quarter of registered members, through a petition drive, submitted to the General Assembly.

ARTICLE 23

A motion for amendment shall be effective if it is carried by a two-thirds majority of all members voting at the General Assembly.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

DISSOLUTION

ARTICLE 24

If it becomes imperative that the CCASNJ is dissolved, either voluntarily or by an order of the Government, the dissolution shall be effective as follows:

- a) Voluntary dissolution shall be effective after a motion tabled at a duly convened Extra-Ordinary General Assembly, carried by two-thirds of registered and fully paid-up members, either in person or by proxy.
- b) In the case of a voluntary dissolution, the Extra-Ordinary General Assembly shall appoint a Trustee Administrative Committee (TAC) empowered to liquidate the CCASNJ.
- c) Dissolution by Government order shall be effective after such a Government order has been issued.
- d) In case of dissolution by Government order, a body, whose members shall be constituted in the manner as those of the Board of Directors shall meet to appoint a TAC.
- e) The TAC shall report back to the General Assembly as defined in d) of article 24, as soon as it has finished its work, and all proceeds/assets of CCASNJ will be liquidated in the interest of its members after all debts. are paid.

Adopted in ---, USA on ---.

General assembly Chair:

General assembly Secretary: _____

Constitution Committee Members: _____