

CAMEROONIAN ASSOCIATION OF RICHMOND-VIRGINIA



CONSTITUTION

SECTION I: GENERAL DISPOSITIONS

Article 1: Preamble

We, Cameroonians in the Richmond area founded an organization known as the “Cameroonian Association of Richmond -Virginia”, with the acronym “CAMASSOR”, with a 501(c)3 status.

Article 2: Motto

Unity - Fraternity - Prosperity

Article 3: Siege of CAMASSOR

The official siege of CAMASSOR is located in Richmond-Virginia. The mailing address shall be P.O. Box 70756 Richmond, VA 23255.

Article 4: Duration of CAMASSOR

CAMASSOR has an unlimited duration and can only be dissolved by the at least a quorum of the Assembly as defined in Article 1.1a of this document.

Article 5: Purpose and Objectives

The purpose and objectives of this association are:

- a. To bring members together with the aim of knowing themselves, socializing and cooperating in common matters affecting them
- b. To promote understanding and tolerance in our multi-ethnic societies

- c. To deliver and restore our cultural values and to educate our children high moral values by instilling law-abiding principles in our operations
- d. To share experiences in fundamental issues across our endeavors for success and prosperity
- e. To carry out or support developmental projects in our homeland (Cameroon) as well as support each other in USA

SECTION II: MEMBERSHIP

- a. Membership is open to all law-abiding Cameroonians and relatives/friends of Cameroonians, of good character and conduct, residing within the Richmond Area, and who can participate in its activities regularly
- b. Membership is on a per-annum basis and an individual becomes a registered member if they voluntarily pay a non-refundable annual registration fee of \$10
- c. All newly registered members must receive a receipt of payment and a copy of the constitution and bye laws plus the current list of members from the Financial Secretary and Secretary General or their designees respectively
- d. All registered members are compelled to pay non-refundable hosting fees and dues of \$5 and \$10 every month, respectively.
- e. Any returning member wishing to renew his/her membership shall be required to settle all previous year's financial obligations before being allowed to register for the new year. A returning member's past fees and dues may be waived only in attenuating circumstances deemed by at least a quorum of the assembly as defined in Article 1.1a of this document.

SECTION III: Organization and Structure of CAMASSOR

The association shall be made up of three independent organs namely: **Assembly, Executive and Committees**. These organs shall function in a democratic manner, adhering to the standard operating procedures in accordance with the stipulated bye-laws and regulations enshrined in this constitution

Article 1.0 Assembly

This is the legislative organ of the association and meets once a month at a specific location. The assembly can also meet spontaneously in emergency situations

Article 1.1 Composition and Function

- a. It is made up of all registered members of this union and forms a quorum with two thirds of its registered members
- b. A quorum of this organ is required to make decisions that are deviational to this document except in emergency situations such as death of a member, meeting timelines for association activities and others considered as such
- c. It is responsible to endorse bye-laws and regulations of the association by a simple majority after a democratic voting procedure
- d. It is empowered to vote members of the executive and nominate members of the committees

- e. Has the right to revoke membership of a registered member following recommendations from the advisory committee
- f. Has the prerogatives to impeach a member of the executive board, when a vote of “no confidence” is issued against this individual; following recommendations from the advisory committee
- g. Holds regular monthly meetings to discuss issues related to its function on the last Saturday of the month at the designated location
- h. Shall respond to recommendations of different committees as deemed appropriate
- i. Shall approve all expenses above \$1000

Article 2.0 Executive

This is the administrative organ of the association that is elected by the general assembly for a two-year term of office, re-electable for a second term. It will perform general duties of the association and coordinate all activities. It is constituted of seven offices

Article 2.1 Composition and Function

Article 2.1.1 President

- a. Shall be the head of the executive board and shall work collaboratively with members in the executive team
- b. Shall convene and preside monthly general assembly and executive meetings
- c. Shall represent the association in all spheres externally with authority from the general assembly but in emergency situations approval from the executive team is sufficient
- d. Shall be a signatory to the association’s bank account
- e. Shall keep the property and correspondences of the union in good standing
- f. Shall ensure the smooth running of socio-cultural activities of the union
- g. Shall intervene and initiate reconciliatory talks amongst disgruntled members and/or manage conflicts among members
- h. Shall oversee all financial transactions of the association
- i. Shall approve expenses below \$100 carried out by members of the executive board
- j. Shall present an annual budget to the assembly in relation to the projects and activities earmarked for that business year
- k. Shall ensure that the developmental projects of the association are carried out appropriately and timely

Article 2.1.2 Vice President

- a. Shall work in close collaboration with the president to ensure the duties are performed accordingly
- b. Shall take over all functions of the president in case of absence or incapacity until the assembly deems it necessary to conduct a presidential by-election
- c. Shall work with other members of the executive team to ensure the smooth running of the association

Article 2.1.3 Secretary

- a. Shall take minutes in all executive and general assembly meetings of the association
- b. Shall present detailed minutes of preceding meetings to the assembly and executive board
- c. Shall keep records of attendance for all executive and general assembly meetings of the association
- d. Shall communicate with the social secretary and send executive and general assembly meeting announcements one week and reminders two days via email and/or text prior to the meetings, respectively.
- e. Shall send out correspondences on behalf of the executive team and general assembly to members and other organizations/institutions on the official letterhead of the association
- f. Shall work with other members of the executive team to ensure the smooth running of the association
- g. Shall keep the original PDF. electronic copy of the constitution for future reference
- h. Shall bring a binder containing a hard copy of the constitution and bylaws to every executive and general assembly meeting.

Article 2.1.4 Vice Secretary

- a. Shall act on behalf of the Secretary in case of absence or incapacity until the assembly deems it necessary to conduct a secretarial by-election
- b. Shall work with other members of the executive team to ensure the smooth running of the association

Article 2.1.5 Financial Secretary

- a. Shall remind and collect all forms of financial obligations from members and other organizations and tender these funds to the treasurer for banking
- b. Shall keep a transparent record of the association's financial transactions
- c. Shall make sure all financial transactions of the union are executed to the profit of the association
- d. Shall deliver a clean balance sheet quarterly and at any meeting if the association deems it necessary
- e. Shall cooperate with the audit committee to establish a bi-annual financial audit report
- f. Shall work with other members of the executive team to ensure the smooth running of the association
- g. Shall assist the president to draw up the association's annual budget in relation to the projects and activities earmarked for that business year
- h. Shall send a report summarizing all financial activities following each general assembly meeting to the executive board no later than ten days after the meeting.
- i. Shall ensure CAMASSOR's taxes are filed (Form 990-N) by April 15th each year.

Article 2.1.6 Treasurer

- a. Shall receive and disburse funds of the association for specified functions
- b. Shall be the main depositor of cash into the association's bank account

- c. Shall maintain transparent financial records of debits and credits of cash into and out of the association's accounts
- d. Shall be a signatory to the association's bank accounts
- e. Shall cooperate with the audit committee to establish a bi-annual financial audit report
- f. Shall be compelled to present the bank savings or debit account records when demanded by the general assembly
- g. Shall work with other members of the executive team to ensure the smooth running of the association

Article 2.1.7 Social Secretary

- a. Shall organize and promote socio-cultural activities of the association
- b. Shall maintain contact with other Cameroonian cultural groups
- c. Shall work with other members of the executive team to ensure the smooth running of the association
- d. Shall designate protocol officers (for example: Chief Weep, Ushers) to perform specific functions at meetings and social events
- e. Shall reach out to general assembly meeting hosts and communicate with the Secretary
- f. Shall ensure that the children are safe and participate in refreshments at general assembly meetings
- g. Shall appoint a disciplinary master/mistress to maintain order and tranquility amongst the children as the meeting proceeds

Article 2.1.8 Vice Social Secretary

- a. Shall act on behalf of the Social Secretary in case of absence or incapacity until the assembly deems it necessary to conduct a social secretarial by-election
- b. Shall work with other members of the executive team to ensure the smooth running of the association

Article 3.0 Committees

These are the multi-functional permanent or temporary independent bodies of the association that are assigned specialized duties by the general assembly. There are two permanent committees and three temporary committees

Article 3.1 Composition and function

- a. Members of these committees will be nominated and confirmed by two members of the general assembly respectively
- b. The number of members in any committee shall be odd to avoid voting ties
- c. All members of each committee must exercise their voting right and a final consensus agreed upon democratically
- d. In case of a tie, the chairperson of that committee may have a second vote to break the tie
- e. All committees must tender a detailed and accurate report of their accomplishment to the general assembly for appraisal or approval where applicable

Article 3.2 Permanent Committees

Members of these committees shall be nominated and confirmed by the assembly. They will be installed into office by the President and will hold their positions until the assembly deems it necessary to suspend, dismiss or replace them.

Article 3.2.1 Advisory Committee

- a. Shall be composed of 3 distinguished members with high moral rectitude and integrity
- a. Shall supersede the executive board in emergency situations described as “social crisis” in our bye laws
- b. Shall summon an emergency general assembly meeting presided by the chairperson to nominate an acting president in case the offices of the President and Vice President are vacant
- c. Shall respond to issues emanating from social misconduct of members of the assembly
- d. Shall intervene in issues regarding the impeachment of an executive member who
 - I. is defiant of our constitution
 - II. abuses their office
 - III. neglects their duties
- e. Shall call the house to order when chaos in its modus operandi ensues
- f. Shall submit a report to the assembly after any of its interventions: this report shall be subject to re-consideration by the general assembly and if approved, shall become a final resolution of the assembly
- g. Shall oversee and intervene in financial issues of the association when need arises

Article 3.2.2 Audit Committee

- a. Shall be made up of 3 members designated by the general assembly
- b. Shall be responsible to audit the receipts and records of the financial secretary and the treasurer
- c. Shall cooperate with the financial secretary and treasurer to establish a bi-annual audit report that must be presented to the general assembly in June and January meetings
- d. Shall monitor the financial transactions of the union with the aim of identifying corruption and mismanagement practices

Article 3.3.0 Temporary Committees

Members of these committees shall be nominated and confirmed by the assembly and will hold their positions until completion of their momentarily assigned duties.

Article 3.3.1 Constitution review committee

- a. Shall comprise of 3 members well versed with the constitution and the rule of law
- b. Shall review the constitution annually to identify loopholes and incompatibilities that may be subject to amendments

- c. Shall suggest amendment recommendations to the general assembly for approval
- d. Shall document the approved amendments as an addendum in section VI
- e. These amendments shall be cited and printed on a separate sheet continually
- f. The addendum shall be updated progressively, signed and dated by chairperson of this committee and counter-signed by the President
- g. Shall be consulted for clarification in case of misinterpretation of this dossier

Article 3.3.2 Socio-cultural committees

- a. Shall comprise of members nominated and confirmed by the assembly
- b. Shall collaborate with the Social Secretary to execute assigned duties before and after an event
- c. Shall be very instrumental in the organization of parties, socio-cultural activities and sports events

Article 3.3.3 Electoral committee

- a. Shall be made up of 3 members that may not apply for any vacancy on the executive board
- b. Shall be formed at the September meeting in an election year
- c. Shall supersede the incumbent executive board on the election day
- d. Shall be dissolved at the end of a successful election on the last Saturday of November in an election year
- e. Shall determine and use rules and regulations of the electoral code to conduct a free and fair election
- f. Shall announce results of the election and swear in the new executive board on the inaugural ceremony at the January meeting following elections

Article 3.3.3.1 Electoral Code

- a. It shall serve as a guideline or regulation for the electoral procedure
- b. Candidates aspiring for positions in the executive team must tender a written or verbal statement of interest to the electoral committee in October meeting in an election year
- c. Only registered members above 18 years who are up-to-date with their financial obligations will be eligible to file in their candidacy
- d. The electoral committee shall scrutinize all candidates for various positions and proclaim the two viable contestants for each vacancy
- e. Only registered members above 18 years shall be eligible to vote
- f. Voting shall be carried out in a secret ballot, then counted by two members of the electoral committee
- g. A simple majority shall determine the winner of each position
- h. If there is a tie, then a second round of voting shall be conducted
- i. If there is a second tie, then the chairperson of the electoral committee will cast the decisive vote to break the tie
- j. There shall be no vote or nominations in absence of the candidate; they must be physically present at the elections

- k. However, if there are tangible reasons for absence, the candidate would be considered if they submitted their statement of interest to the electoral committee prior to elections
- l. Tangible reasons for absenteeism will include but not limited to hospitalization, ill health, accessibility hurdles, etc

Section IV: Finances of CAMASSOR

- a. The finances of the association shall be accounted for by the President, Financial Secretary and Treasurer
- b. Records must be chronologically and accurately documented to facilitate audits
- c. Records must be audited bi-annually or at any time deemed necessary by the assembly

Article 1.0 Revenues of CAMASSOR

Funds of the association can be received in cash, check, money order and electronic transfer into the association's bank account

Article 1.1 Registration and dues

- a. A potential member pays \$10 annually to become a registered member.
- b. Thereafter they become compelled to pay monthly hosting fees of \$5 and dues of \$10 from the next month

Article 1.2 Fundraising events

- a. The association shall organize at least one fundraising party per annum to generate funds for its activities and projects

Article 1.3 Benevolent personalities and organizations

- a. The association reserves the right to receive funds from benevolent personalities and organizations without investigating their sources
- b. The association can also receive material or products from benevolent personalities and organization in place of cash
- c. It shall issue receipts to the donors for purpose of tax deductibles with the IRS

Article 1.4 Penalties or fines

Fines as a result of lateness, unexcused absences, disturbances during meetings and misconduct against a fellow member or assembly shall be paid to the financial secretary accordingly

Article 2.0 Expenditures of CAMASSOR

- a. The association shall spend its funds in a responsible manner. All records must be kept by the financial secretary

- b. Expenses below \$ 20 could be carried out by any member of the executive team without approval from the President
- c. Expenses below \$ 100 could be carried out by any member of the executive team with approval from the President
- d. Expenses below \$ 1000 could be carried out by the executive bureau with consensus from the majority
- e. Expenses above \$ 1000 could be carried out by the executive bureau ONLY with authorization from the assembly
- f. All authorizations must be documented and made available for audit purposes

Article 2.1 Secretariat

- a. This includes secretarial and documentation expenses

Article 2.2 Organizational

- a. This includes official travel expenses by executives, representatives/members when necessary
- b. It also includes expenses for parties and other social or recreational activities

SECTION V Socio-Cultural Activities

The association shall organize socio-cultural activities to publicly portray its beautiful culture and sustain this culture through the younger generations

Article 1.0 Meetings

- a. The association shall hold monthly meetings on the last Saturday of the month
- b. The monthly meeting host(s) shall coordinate and provide food and drinks. The host(s) of the general assembly meeting shall perceive a token to help defray some of the costs associated with hosting.
- c. Meetings shall alternate location as per the annual calendar drawn by the Social Secretary
- d. In case of irregularity on the hosting schedule, a member can opt to host the meeting on behalf of the other who by circumstance is not able to do so. It shall be the responsibility of a scheduled host to find his/her replacement(s) whenever necessary.
- e. In case there is no member willing to host, the President shall be compelled to host the meeting.
- f. Meetings shall begin at 7.00 pm but deliberation shall start at 8.00 pm prompt
- g. Decisions taken at meetings would follow democratic principles

Section VI Amendment

- a. This constitution is subject to annual review by the constitution review committee
- b. The committee shall gather suggestions to amendments and present to the assembly for adoption
- b. The amendments enacted will be signed by the chairperson of the constitution review committee and countersigned by the president

- c. All amendments shall be progressively attached as an addendum to the constitution proper to preserve its originality

Section VII Salvage Clause

- a. This clause empowers the assembly to deviate or violate the stipulated bye-laws, rules and regulations of this association at any time in any defined circumstance
- b. A simple majority of the quorum of the assembly must approve this deviation or violation for it to become effective
- c. However, in emergency situations, a simple majority of the assembly can approve a deviation or violation of any section/article of this constitution
- d. Emergency situations could be as a result of death, meeting timelines for union’s activities and others deemed as such by the assembly

SECTION VIII Certification and Authentication

We, the undersigned, members of this association do hereby solemnly acknowledge that we have adopted this dossier and would abide by it for our operation. We further certify that this document is authentic and shall be a reference guide to the pursuit of our core objectives in a peaceful and fair manner.

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Constitution Review Committee

Becky Kamguia

Geraldine Okon

Benji Djeukeng

Marco Dajeu

President of CAMASSOR

Dr. Mike Kometa