

THE CONSTITUTION

(BY-LAWS)

(CODIFIED)

OF

AGUATA-ORUMBA ASSOCIATION OF
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

A CALIFORNIA NONPROFIT
CORPORATION
(Adopted: September 15th, 2012)

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BY-LAWS

PREAMBLE

This non-profit organization was formed as a result of the need to create a body of brotherhood among the citizens of Aguata-Orumba Local Governments in Anambra State of Nigeria and to know and Associate closer with one another. The Association became a body as a result of October 13, 1991 meeting. **However, the Association has elected Dec. 31st as the end of its calendar year.**

ARTICLE I NAME

The name of the Association shall be known as AGUATA-ORUMBA ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA (AGORA Assoc. of So. Cal.).

ARTICLE II PURPOSE

The purpose of the Association is:

- 1) To promote the social, cultural and economic welfare of its members and the public
- 2) To create a forum where individual members would be encouraged to express their ideas
- 3) To promote our cultural heritage in Southern California
- 4) To provide social and economic benefits to the members in accordance with the by-laws of the Association.
- 5) To promote educational, health, and welfare services to third world countries

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

SECTION I

Membership to the Association is open to:

- 1) All citizens of Aguata-Orumba, 18 years of age and over
- 2) All women married to Aguata-Orumba citizens
- 3) All interested members of the public whose character has been attested to by at least three) active members of the organization.
- 4) A dismissed member can apply for re-admission under conditions set forth in ARTICLE X No. 6

SECTION II

Any person 18 years and above, as in Section I of this article after May 10, 1992 is eligible to join the Association by paying membership dues.

SECTION III

All registered members are considered active by:

- 1) Full payment of annual dues and contributions by the due date, June 30 of each year
- 2) Attendance of at least 50% of the meetings held within the Association's calendar year or from the date the member joined the Association.

SECTION IV

- 1) Active membership terminates when an individual ceases to comply with SECTION III and/or
- 2) Other matters that the Association deems appropriate

ARTICLE IV **BENEFITS**

All Association benefits are due to active new members after one (1) year probationary period from the time of joining. Any active member owing the organization shall pay all outstanding debts to the association before receiving benefit due to the member. Such debt(s) cannot be deducted from benefits.

SECTION I – Marriage (One time benefit)

A gift of a framed certificate and cash or money order totaling one hundred dollars **(\$100.00)** payable in U.S. currency shall be made to a member who gets married upon official notification.

SECTION II – Birth

Gifts for new-born babies shall be fifty **(\$50.00)** per life birth.

SECTION III – Hospitalization for 72 hours or more

Gift(s) shall not exceed fifty **(\$50.00)** dollars with a visit by an official representative. Gift is limited to a total of one (1) in any 12 month period.

SECTION IV – Death

Members: A cash gift of two thousand dollars **(\$2,000.00)** and a traditional cultural gift of cloth (igha Akwa) not exceeding sixty dollars **(\$60.0)** shall be given to the family of a bereaved member. A levy of one hundred dollars **(\$100.00)** for member's death shall be assessed on each member to cover the above cash gift of **\$2,000.00** and any necessary assistance to be given to the family.

In addition, the association will spearhead and collaborate with the family of the bereaved and a \$300.00 will be given to the bereaved family toward wake keeping expenses

Spouse: A cash gift of one thousand dollars **(\$1000.00)** and a traditional cultural gift of cloth (igha Akwa) not exceeding sixty dollars **(\$60.0)** shall be given

to any member who loses a spouse. In addition, a levy of fifty dollars (\$50.00) shall be assessed each member to cover the above cash gift.

Children: A child of a member can only be a rider on the parent up to the age of 25th birthday. Upon the death of a child of an active member, a cash gift of (\$300.00) three hundred dollars will be given to the member

Primary Parents: Primary Parent is defined as follows: (a) biological parent (b) parent that legally adopted the member. A cash gift of three hundred (\$300.00) dollars shall be given to any member who loses any of the primary parents.

Wake Keeping: On the day of a wake keeping for a deceased member, each member must be on AGORA uniform. There shall be a twenty five dollars (\$25.00) fine for not wearing the uniform and fifty dollars (\$50.00) for not attending the wake except a member is known to be outside Southern California, out of the country, or health problem known to the organization.

Relocation: A gift of a plaque not more than fifty dollars (\$50.00) will be presented to an active member on relocation pursuant to Article III Section III Subsection 2.

ARTICLE V REGISTRATION AND DONATION

SECTION I A one-time admission fee of fifty dollars (\$50.00) per person is required for membership registration.

SECTION II Every member shall be required to pay an annual donation of one hundred dollars (\$100.00).

SECTION III **Emergency Donations**
In an emergency situation, every member shall be required to donate whatever is determined by the executive.

ARTICLE VI OFFICERS, DUTIES, RIGHTS, ELECTIONS AND DURATION OF OFFICE

SECTION I – Officers

The officers of this Association shall be known as the executive consisting of:

President

Vice President

Secretary

Assistant Secretary

Financial Secretary
Treasurer
Provost
Publicity Secretary

Some of these offices may be merged and more may be created if the need arises.

SECTION II – Duties of the Officers

PRESIDENT

The President shall;

- 1) Be the chief executive and the spokesperson for the Association
- 2) Preside over all meetings
- 3) Convene all emergency meetings and activities
- 4) **In an emergency situation the President in conjunction with either the Financial Secretary or the Treasurer shall approve expenditure not exceeding two hundred (\$200.00) dollars.**
- 5) The President shall be one of the signatories for all withdrawals in excess of hundred (\$100.00) dollars
- 6) The President shall be responsible for the general administration and welfare of the Association
- 7) The President shall at the end of each calendar year present an annual report to the general meeting of the Association.
- 8) Be responsible to assure a proper handover of all association records and assets to a new administration.

VICE-PRESIDENT

In case of physical absence of the President, the Vice President shall assume all the powers and the duties of the President

SECRETARY

The Secretary shall;

- 1) Record and present the minutes of all the general and executive meetings
- 2) Handle all the correspondences
- 3) Be responsible for the safe keeping of all the Association records
- 4) Keep an up-to-date record of the members of the Association (addresses, emails, & phone numbers)
- 5) Maintain a permanent attendance register.

PUBLICITY SECRETARY

Publicity Secretary shall;

- 1) Send the circulars for the meeting and notices as the matter arises for the Association
- 2) Take care of the publicity needs of the Association as directed by the President

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Assistant Secretary shall;

In the absence of the Secretary assumes all the duties of the Secretary of the Association

FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Financial Secretary shall;

- 1) Keep accurate record of all the financial statements of the Association
- 2) Collects all donations as stipulated in the constitution and hands them over to the Treasurer within two (2) days of the collections
- 3) Collects and keeps the accurate records of all the Association's financial transactions
- 4) May be one of the signatories to any withdrawals in excess of one hundred (\$100.00) dollars
- 5) Reconcile the financial records with that of the treasurer and the bank
- 6) Present a bi-monthly update of the financial status of the Association or whenever called upon to do so.

TREASURER

Treasurer shall;

- 1) Be in charge of the Association funds
- 2) Deposit in the association's bank account(s) all funds within seventy two (72) hours of collection
- 3) Withdraw funds from the Association's bank account under the co-signatory of the President and/or the financial secretary.

PROVOST

Provost shall;

- (1) Be responsible for enforcing all procedural rules during the meeting of the Association as directed by the President
- (2) Collect all late fees or any financial fee imposed on the floor
- (3) Be responsible to any vote count as needed or directed by the president

SECTION III – Rights

Every active member of the organization has:

- (1) The right to vote
- (2) The right to hold office
- (3) The right to free expression in accordance with the organization rules
- (4) The right to request and host organization's general meetings

SECTION IV – Election of Officers

- (1) Officers of the Association shall be elected by secret ballot / show of hands
- (2) Any nomination shall be seconded by another active member
- (3) Each office shall be nominated and voted for separately
- (4) There shall be a maximum of three (3) nominees for each office
- (5) A simple majority carries the vote in all cases
- (6) Any nominee shall have the right to decline a nomination

- (7) Where there is a tie of votes, the president shall direct a run-off election.
- (8) To vote or to be voted for, a member must be active.
- (9) Notice of a general election shall be publicized in writing to members within a minimum of thirty (30) days to the next meeting.

SECTION V – Duration of Office

- (1) Officers shall be elected for a term of two years (24-month period) which begins in January
- (2) New officers shall assume office in **January** after general election in the last meeting of the year.
- (3) Term for each office is limited to two (2) consecutive terms of two years a term
- (4) The returning officer, appointed by the President, shall conduct the elections. In a situation where election was not completed, it remains the responsibility of the returning officer to conduct the rest of the election during the next general meeting.

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Association shall have committees. There shall be

- a) **Standing Committee: This is defined as one that has extended duty of 12 months or more as for example Scholarship and Social and Welfare Committees.**
- b) **Ad-hoc committees: This is created to serve for a specific project and it is dissolved upon completion of the project.**

SECTION I – Creation

- (1) Committees shall be created as needed
- (2) Committees shall be appointed by the president.
- (3) No committee term shall exceed the term of the president that appointed it except Scholarship, Social and Welfare committees

SECTION II – Purposes

- (1) Members of each committee shall be responsible for the obligations entrusted on them by the association
- (2) A committee shall be dissolved after the completion of its assignment

SECTION III – Executive Committee

- (1) The officers of the Association shall make up the members of the Executive Committee
- (2) The Executive Committee shall be holding periodic meetings to see that the organization's objectives are implemented **and report to the general body.**

ARTICLE VIII VACANY AND RESIGNATION

- (1) Any officer may resign his/her post in writing to the general assembly through the President or the secretary
- (2) Any vacancy created by resignation, removal or death shall be filled during a general meeting provided that the circular calling for such election stipulates that such a vacancy shall be filled, and there is at least thirty (30) days notice of meeting

ARTICLE IX MEETING AND QUOROM

SECTION I – Meetings

- (1) The association meet shall be bi-monthly, on the third (3rd) Saturday of the month. Meeting starts at 5:00pm and ends at 8:00pm.
- (2) **The place of the next meeting shall be determined according to the order of the meeting scheduled hosting list or by any other method agreed to by the floor**
- (3) The president shall have the responsibility to recognize speakers during meetings, with the help of the provost when needed
- (4) All decisions of the Association, except the emergency decision shall be made on the floor. The decisions at any meeting shall be made by the majority votes of the members in attendance
- (5) The decision made at any other meetings including emergency and executive meetings shall be ratified by the general meeting. Note: Any situation that demands immediate attention and cannot wait until next general meeting is an emergency
- (6) Any suggestion to be voted on by the house shall be introduced as a motion and shall be seconded
- (7) Voting shall be recognized by show of hands counted by the Provost except in the election of officers.

SECTION II – Quorum

- (1) The number of members required to form a quorum for any official gathering of the Association (Meetings) **is seven (7) members.**
- (2) In the event that quorum is not formed for **one hour (at 6:00pm)** the meeting shall stand cancelled.
- (3) In addition, the designated host of a meeting shall be given a token of **(\$50.00)** fifty dollars if a meeting is cancelled due to lack of quorum.
- (4) On emergency meetings, five **(5)** members shall form the quorum.
- (5) In the case of executive meeting, their majority forms the quorum.

ARTICLE X DISCIPLINE AND PENATLY

Every member of the Association is subject to the Association's disciplines.

- (1) **The minimum attendance requirement will count toward any member who misses the general meeting.**
- (2) If a member comes to the meeting after the minutes of the last meeting is read and adopted, such a member is late with a fine of **one dollar (\$1.00), and two dollars (\$2.00) after 7:00pm.**
- (3) Any member who exhibits disorderly conduct as fighting or disrupting the meeting and found guilty after a hearing in a general meeting by 2/3rd of the people present, shall be fined **fifty dollars (\$50.00)**
- (4) Any such member will be dismissed after **three (3)** such reprimands within two years from the date of first offense
- (5) Any member, who fails to appear before the meeting or fails to answer questions to charges of disorderly conduct without official excuse, shall be considered guilty of as charged.
- (6) Any dismissed member can apply for re-admission in writing.
 - a) Tender apology to the general assembly
 - b) The application shall be approved by 2/3rd majority vote conducted by secret ballot and
 - c) A payment of double membership fee of **one hundred dollars(\$100.00)**
- (7) **There shall be a fine of (\$300:00) three hundred dollars to any member who fails to host an Association meeting as scheduled except in a situation where such a member provides a pre-arranged substitute.**

ARTICLE XI ASSOCIATION STATUS

- (1) The Association may be incorporated in the State of California as AGUATA-ORUMBA ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA (AGORA).
- (2) The Association shall engage only in the activities authorized by the Article of Incorporation and this bylaws
- (3) Any action not authorized by the bylaws of the Association may be ratified by the two-third (2/3rd) majority of the general meetings pursuant to ARTICLE X

ARTICLE XII BYLAW AMENDMENTS

- (1) This by-laws shall be amended by a two-third vote of members present in a general meeting
- (2) All by-laws amendments shall be subject to:
 - a) the procedures of ARTICLE X
 - b) such motion for an amendment shall be publicized through the circular for its voting in the next meeting
- (3) Any amendment so ratified shall immediately become an integral part of the by-law

ARTICLE XIII
CONSTITUTIONAL AMEMDMENTS

- 1) The Constitution of the Association can only be amended once every two years if necessary
- 2) The Amendment of the Constitution can be amended either by:
 - a) A proposal from the executive body, or
 - b) By a proposal from an active member of the association with signatures of ten active members
- 3) The proposed amendment shall be submitted to the president of the association no later than sixty (60) days of the proposed meeting at which the proposed amendment shall be discussed.
- 4) The president shall direct the secretary to give notice to all active members of the proposed meeting in which the proposed amendment of the Constitution shall be discussed no later than thirty (30) days prior to the date of the meeting. Said notice shall be by email and/or United States Mail.
- 5) The amendment of the Constitution shall be by at least two-third (2/3) majority of the members present at the meeting.

**THIS CONSTITUTION IS HEREBY APPROVED THIS DAY,
SEPTEMBER 15, 2012.**

Signed



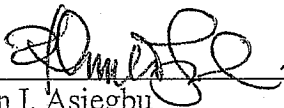
Martin O. Okpala
President

Signed



Anthony Ikebudu
Chairman, Constitution Codification Committee

Signed



John I. Asiegbu
General Secretary