

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE IGBO ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA



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1 ARTICLE 1 NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION

This organization will be known and called “The Igbo Association of Victoria, Australia ” otherwise referred to below as the “Association”

2 ARTICLE 2 ORGANIZATIONS

The Association shall be an incorporated Association.

3 ARTICLE 3 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

3.1 OBJECTIVES

- 3.1.1 To have a strong association where every member is valued, respected and recognized by promoting and upholding equality and allowing all members to offer their suggestions and have their say by democratic process.
- 3.1.2 To promote and defend the rights and interests of all Igbos in Australia.
- 3.1.3 To promote and maintain our unique cultural heritage, values, traditions and legacy which will be handed down to our children and generations to come.
- 3.1.4 To foster love, friendship and unity amongst our members for the achievement of happiness, peace progress and a sense of pride in our heritage.
- 3.1.5 To provide the avenue for and encourage members to participate in economic, social and cultural activities including learning the Igbo language and to undertake projects and initiatives for the benefit of Igbos and other Nigerians.
- 3.1.6 To encourage and support members in times of adversity, including welcoming and providing guidance to new Igbos in Victoria.
- 3.1.7 To have a constitution that members will respect and abide by.
- 3.1.8 To create and foster a positive relationship between Igbos, other Nigerians and various Associations in Australia.
- 3.1.9 To create a harmonious integration between our cultural heritage in Nigeria and our new found culture

in Australia.

- 3.1.10 To positively promote the image of Nigeria in Australia through the Igbo Culture and participating in activities that will benefit the Australian Community.

3.2 LEGAL AUTHORITY

The Igbo *Association* is incorporated under *the Associations Incorporations Act 1981*. The Igbo *Association* is constituted under the articles set forth in this constitution.

4 ARTICLE 4 MEMBERSHIP

- a) Membership shall be open to all Igbo persons by birth, marriage, or adoption.
- b) Any non-Igbo person who marries an Igbo person may qualify for membership of the *Association*.
- c) Any child born of an Igbo person (s), who is adopted by a non -Igbo person(s), or who lives with a non-Igbo parent or guardian shall qualify for membership if the surrogate parent (s) of such child apply for membership on behalf of the child.
- d) One adult head of household in a family shall be registered and commit to full financial membership in good standing for the members of that family to qualify as members of the Igbo *Association* organization.

5. ARTICLE 5 ASSOCIATION GOVERNANCE

5.1 The Executive

- 5.1.1 The Igbo *Association* shall have one governing body namely the executive Council hereafter referred to as “the Executive” consisting of the elected officials, that is the President, Vice President, Secretary and Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Social Director, Provost and the Public Relation officer.
- 5.1.2 The Executive shall be the highest legislative and policy-making body of this *Association* except when the members of the Igbo *Association* are in congress. The Executive Council shall possess all legislative and policy-making authority of the *Association* except the power to amend the constitution and the power to act as the final authority on administrative appeals.
- 5.1.3 The Executive shall have the authority to make binding interpretations of this constitution and rulings and decision of the council shall remain in full force and effect unless revised at a plenary meeting by members of the *Association*.
- 5.1.4 The Executive shall uphold the ideals and constitution of the *Association* and run its affairs consistent with the aims and objectives of the *Association*.
- 5.1.5 The executive shall be accountable to the general membership, in plenary sessions.

5.2 Executive Council

- 5.2.1 The Executive shall consist of President and all elected officials, with the president chairing the executives. However, the *Association* has the right to add additional officers as needed.
- 5.2.2 A simple majority of the Executive Council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
- 5.2.3 The Executive shall establish an internal system for the bonding of members and shall have all powers necessary to carry out the purpose of this section.
- 5.2.4 Should a vacancy occur among the members of the Executive Council, the vacancy shall be filled for the remainder of the un-expired term of the office in the circumstances and in the manner provided in the Bylaws of this Constitution.

6 ARTICLE 6 AMENDMENTS

- 6.1 This Constitution may be amended by the proposals properly introduced at a general meeting and approved by a two-thirds vote of the eligible voters present at the time the vote is taken.
- 6.2 The Executive Council shall review and make a recommendation to the full body of the Igbo *Association* on any proposal to amend the Constitution.
- 6.3 Any amendment to this Constitution, unless otherwise provided in the amendment, shall become effective upon final adjournment of the general meeting at which the amendment is adopted.
- 6.4 The General secretary of the *Association* shall be responsible for printing and distributing copies of the Constitution as amended, shall have the authority, in connection with such printing, to renumber any article, section, subsection, or paragraph as may be necessary, and to correct any errors or references in other portions of the Constitution to such renumbered article, section, subsection, or paragraph.

7 ARTICLE ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS

- 7.1 All elected officials of the Igbo *Association* shall be subjected to an oath of office by the Chairperson of the Electoral Committee in the next general meeting following the election of the said officials.
- 7.2 No elected officer of the *Association* shall assume the office for which **he/she is** elected before taking the oath of office as set forth in the bylaws of this Constitution.

8 ARTICLE 8: COMMITTEES

8.1 Standing Committee:

By default, the executive committee is the standing committee of the *Association*.

8.2 Ad-hoc Committees:

An ad-hoc committee shall be set up, whenever the need arises, for a specified purpose and given a time frame and specific terms of reference within which to discharge its assigned task.

8.3 Council of Elders:

8.3.1 A council of elders shall be set up to deal with conflict resolution and any other matters referred to it by the executive and or the membership.

8.3.2 Criteria

8.3.3 A member of the association is eligible to be nominated to the Council of Elders if they are of:

- (i) Good Standing
- (ii) Not less than 55 years of age

8.3.4 Term:

A person nominated to the Council of Elders shall be a member for life except in circumstances where they do not meet the criteria set out in subsection 8.3.2(i).

9 ARTICLE 9 FINANCE COMMITTEE

9.1 A Financial Committee shall include the President, the Financial Secretary and
The treasurer.

9.2 The financial committee is authorised to act as signatory on behalf of the Association.

9.3 For amounts exceeding \$1000.00 the signature of all members of the
financial committee is required.

9.4 For amounts of less than \$1000.00 the signature of the President and any
other member of the financial committee are required. In the absence of the
President the signature of any two members is required.

10 ARTICLE 10 THE EXECUTIVE

10.1 Term of office

10.1.1 The Executive term shall be two years. In the event of a resignation, such office shall be filled by election for the remainder of the term.

10.1.2 Out going member of Executive shall be eligible for re-election without limits as long as such officers remain effective and willing to serve and is of good standing.

10.2 Criteria

Individual members who are likely to be in the State of Victoria for the duration of the office term may seek to be elected to hold any such office. Such members shall also meet all the qualities listed in sub-section 11.3.1 in the bylaws.

10.3 Removal of an Officer

10.3.1 Upon determining that an executive officer **has acted contrary to the terms and conditions of his (or her) office** the executive committee shall pass a resolution reprimanding the officer in question, and this reprimand shall be conveyed to the officer in writing.

10.3.2 If an officer is reprimanded a second time, he or she shall be advised by the Executive Committee to resign from office. If he or she fails to do so, the executive committee shall submit to the *Association* a resolution for his or her removal from office.

10.3.3 The removal from office shall be by secret ballot at a general meeting for which the matter has been duly put on the agenda. The officer shall be removed from office if two-third (2/3) majority of the *Association's* members approve the resolution.

10.4 Other Executive Functions

10.4.1 Special assessment may be levied by order of the Executive Council when in its judgment such special assessments are necessary. Revenue derived from special assessments shall be expended only for the purposes for which such special assessments were levied, except that any excess shall revert to the general fund of the *Association*.

10.4.2 In any matter coming before the Executive Council for review or on appeal, the Executive may, by majority vote, authorize any person or persons of its own choosing to conduct, in the name of the Executive Council, an investigation or hearing on the matter and make a report of findings and recommendations to the Executive for decision by the Executive Council. Any decision made by the Executive Council under such procedure shall have binding effect on the *Association*.

10.4.3 The Executive Council shall have the authority to order the immediate suspension, pending full investigation, of officers or members of the *Association* who in its opinion are engaging in conduct

imminently dangerous to welfare of the Igbo *Association*.

10.4.4 The Executive Council shall annually present a written report to the *Association* concerning the preceding mid-year meetings of the *Association*. The Executive Council shall review and make recommendation to the *Association* of any proposal to amend the Constitution.

BYLAWS

11 ARTICLE 11 MEMBERSHIP DUES AND FEES

11.1 Membership

11.1.1 Membership is granted upon a one-time registration payment of one hundred (\$100) or its equivalent per person or per household. A household is defined as a husband and wife with children less than 18 years of age.

11.1.2 This registration fee is due on the requested registration date.

11.2 Membership Dues

11.2.1 Each full single member shall be required to pay annual membership dues in the amount of one hundred and twenty dollars (\$100.00) being \$25 every quarter. Households shall pay \$180.00 being \$45.00 per quarter.

11.2.2 Dues are deemed delinquent after 3 consecutive failures to pay the above dues.

11.3 Membership Standing

11.3.1 A member in good standing is one who is of good character and up-to-date in the discharge of all financial obligations, and who participates actively in all meetings, *Association* activities and events.

11.4 Levies

11.4.1 The *Association* reserves the right to assess levies at anytime as needed.

11.5 Duties and Obligations of Members

All members of the *Association* are ambassadors of the *Association* and the Igbo Community. Hence, every member should portray a good image of the *Association* at all times. It is the duty of all members to:

- a) Promote the aims and objectives of the association and represent the interest of the *Association*.
- b) Pay in a timely manner, all dues and fees duly assessed.
- c) Attend the meetings as required.

- d) Participate to the fullest extent possible in all activities of the *Association*, particularly when assigned in a special capacity.
- e) Participate actively in the *Association's* committees when designated.
- f) Show respect for the principles of debate and discussion; that is, to take the floor when called upon to do so by the presiding officer.
- g) No member is authorized to solicit for funds or issue statements on behalf of the organization unless authorized by either the general assembly or the executive committee.

11.6 Members Benefits

- a) On the death of a member, the widow or widower gets a minimum sum of \$5000 to help cover expenses that would be incurred. It is incumbent on the executive to raise the above amount from the members of the association.
- b) A visitation of a member's relative in case of death will be performed (if required by the bereaved)
- c) Where there is a need to assist members in need the executive, in its discretion, will use its best endeavors to assist such members.

12 ARTICLE 12 ELECTIONS

- a) Notice of self nomination will be tendered in the June meeting preceding the election year, with the exception of the inaugural election.
- b) Nominations by other members would be conducted on the day of the election.
- c) With the exception of the first elections, elections shall be conducted in the October meeting of the election year.
- d) All elections shall be by simple secret ballot by members present at such election and by a simple majority.
- e) All members seeking elective office must be of good character and in good financial standing with the Association, and be a full member for at least six months with the exception of the inaugural election.

13 ARTICLE 13 OFFICIALS

13.1 President

The President shall:

- a) Have the power to convene and preside over all *Association* meetings and coordinate activities of the *Association*.

- b) Coordinate activities of the executives.
- c) With the secretary draw up agenda for each meeting.
- d) Act as chief executive of the *Association*.
- e) Have the power to delegate duties to any members.
- f) Strive to promote unity and cohesiveness among members and uphold the ideals and constitution of the *Association*.
- g) With the Director of Socials, actively promote cultural and traditional education for member families.
- h) In the absence of both financial secretary and treasurer, collect money from members and forward same to financial secretary within 7 days.
- i) Lead and serve as the spokesperson of the association.
- j) Vote only to break a tie at general meetings, except at elections.
- k) Have no power to remove an elected officer, but shall recommend the removal of an officer. The association must approve the removal of an elected officer by a two-thirds majority at a general meeting.
- l) Keep all confidential documents of the association except the financial records.
- m) Approve disbursements of funds based on approved activities of the association.
- n) Be a signatory to the cheques and withdrawals of funds.

13.2 Vice President

The Vice President Shall:

- 13.2.1 Work cooperatively with the president, assisting the president as assigned or delegated by the President.
- 13.2.2 Assume the duties of the President, in his or her absence, impeachment, removal, disqualification or resignation pending an election of which is to be held within 3 months. In the event that general elections are not due within 6 months.

13.3 Secretary

The Secretary shall:

- 13.3.1 Take notes of meetings and distribute or read minutes of all *Association* meetings to members;
- 13.3.2 Keep records of all *Association* meetings and correspondence.
- 13.3.3 In consultation with the president send out correspondence and notice of all meetings as may be required.
- 13.3.4 Collaborate with the President to draw up meeting agenda and send out notices of organization meetings.
- 13.3.5 Perform all other duties related to the office of the Secretary and such other duties that may be assigned by the President or the general body of the association.

13.4 Assistant Secretary

The Assistant Secretary shall:

- 13.4.1 Work cooperatively with the secretary, assisting the secretary as assigned or delegated by the secretary.
- 13.4.2 Assume the duties of the secretary in his or her absence, disqualification or resignation pending an election which is to be held in 3 months in the event that a general election is not due within 6 months.

13.5 Social Director

The Social Director Shall:

- 13.5.1 Arrange all social, cultural and educational functions in consultation with the Executive Committee and approval of the Members and Committee of elders
- 13.5.2 Solicit for member's assistance on particular projects.
- 13.5.3 With the President actively seek and promote cultural enrichment for the children of the members including but not limited to language lessons.
- 13.5.4 Take charge of the planning and execution of all or part of the Social activities of the *Association*.

13.6 Provost

The Provost Shall:

- 13.6.1 Act as the *Association's* town crier and help the president and the secretary to arrange meetings of members when needed or in emergency situations.
- 13.6.2 Maintain order at the *Association* meetings and gatherings.
- 13.6.3 Take and keep accurate attendance records and collect fines where applicable at Meetings.

13.7 Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary Shall

- 13.7.1 Keep up to date and accurate records of the *Association* finances including receipts, and payments to the Treasurer.
- 13.7.2 Keep up to date and accurate records of financial status of each member at all times.
- 13.7.3 Actively collect dues and levies from each member and issue receipts for all and any money collected.
- 13.7.4 Turn all monies collected over to the treasurer for deposit into the *Association's* bank account within 7 days.
- 13.7.5 Work with the treasurer to reconcile the *Association's* bank accounts and all other accounts relating to the *Association*
- 13.7.6 Issue financial status reports to the membership during regular meetings and present the end of year

financial reports to members.

13.8 Treasurer

The Treasurer shall:

- 13.8.1 Keep record of all funds received from the financial secretary and deposit same in the *Associations* bank account within 7 days.
- 13.8.2 In the absence of the financial secretary collect all funds and deposit same in the *Association* account within 7 days and give the financial secretary a detailed analysis of such monies collected.
- 13.8.3 Pay authorized expenses of the *Association* and present receipts, invoices or cancelled cheques.
- 13.8.4 Receive the *Association's* bank statement and send a copy to the financial secretary and reconcile all accounts within 7 days with the help of the financial secretary as needed.

14 ARTICLE 14 DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

All disciplinary action shall be handled by the membership. The membership shall have the discretion to refer matters to the executive or the council of elders.

- 14.1 There shall be a standing disciplinary committee appointed by the executive committee and ratified by the general assembly.
- 14.2 Any member appointed to the disciplinary committee must be of good standing
- 14.3 The tenure of the disciplinary committee shall be the same at the executive committee.
- 14.4 A member of the disciplinary committee may be removed by a simple majority vote of members present at the meeting if found wanting.
- 14.5 Any member of the disciplinary committee whose conduct is found wanting or who has a conflict of interest may excuse him or herself or be removed
- 14.6 The disciplinary committee may consult the committee of elders if and when the need arises.
- 14.7 Members of the Association may refer disciplinary matters to the committee of elders if so desired.

15 ARTICLE 15 CODE OF CONDUCT

- 15.1 Members shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the ideals and aspirations of the *Association*.
- 15.2 All members shall strive to attend all meetings; failure to attend any scheduled meeting shall carry a fine of \$10 except where such absence has been communicated to the President, secretary, Provost or

the host of the meeting.

- 15.3 a) All members shall be punctual to all meetings. Any person that comes after the scheduled meeting time or when quorum is formed shall be fined \$5 unless excused by the president or provost.
- b) If a quorum is not formed within 1 hour of scheduled time the meeting shall be cancelled.
- 15.4 Rowdy meetings shall not be allowed. In order for a member to speak in a meeting, that member must be recognized by the provost to speak and the member shall be given full audience and attention by members.

15.5 Fines:

- a) Unexcused absence----\$10:00.
- b) Unexcused lateness----\$5:00.
- c) Disruptive attitude after first warning -----\$5:00.
- d) Fighting-----Suspension for 6 months. Letter of apology and payment of \$500 fine for readmission failing which will lead to expulsion.

16 ARTICLE 16 NOTICE OF MEETINGS

- 16.1 Meetings shall be held bi-monthly unless otherwise scheduled by the *Association*.
- 16.2 Notice when necessary shall be by phone, email or in writing as needed.

17 ARTICLE 17 QUORUM

- a) 33% or 1/3rd of the registered members shall constitute a quorum.
- b) All decisions reached by members where such a quorum was formed shall be binding on the *Association*.

17.1 Time limit for meetings:

- a) Starts at 3pm and ends at 6pm, or as otherwise stated, in the agenda.
- b) To vote: (i) commencement time
(ii) Period of grace from commencement time
(iii) quorum

18 ARTICLE 18 CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- 18.01 Where there is a conflict involving members that is not of a criminal nature the affected member may bring it to the attention of the Council of Elders and or Adhoc Committee. This might include a resolution by council of elders and or an adhoc committee delegated to deal with the issue. Every effort will be made to contain and resolve issues without use of judicial system where appropriate
- 18.02 Members of such council / delegate shall be barred from discussing the content of such conflicts outside the council or delegation including their wives and or other family members.
- 18.03 Nothing in this section shall be construed as denial of each member's rights to seek redress in any established court of law in Australia or Nigeria.

18.1 COMPLAINTS AGAINST MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

- 18.1.1 Complaints against an individual in such an individual's capacity as a member of the Igbo *Association* shall be filed with the executive and heard by the council of elders or adhoc committee. Except to stand as a witness for himself or herself, individuals shall be excluded in participating in deciding the outcome of the complaint.
- 18.1.2 A complaint filed against any elected officer or member shall be filed with the executive and heard by the council of elders or adhoc committee.
- 18.1.3 Where a complaint is filed against any elected official of the association and the council of elders or adhoc committee has found the elected official the recommended their removal it will be necessary to have the vote of more than 50% of members present to effect the removal of a sitting official.

18.2 PROCEDURE FOR FILING COMPLAINTS

- (a) All complaints shall be in writing and shall be signed by the member or members bringing the complaints. The complaints shall be specific, citing in detail the nature, the date, and the circumstances of the alleged offense and, where a violation of a Constitutional provision is alleged, the specific section shall be cited with the specific act or failure to act, which constitutes the alleged violation. The complaints shall be delivered to the Secretary of the *Association* who shall then record the receipt of the complaints in a log, and the nature of the complaints, and shall then file it with the appropriate hearing body.
- (b) If the secretary is a directly interested party and depending upon the nature of the complaints, it shall be filed with the Chairperson of the Executive Council. Notwithstanding the hearing body where the complaints were filed, a record of the filing shall be entered in the designated *Association* Log by a non-interested party.

18.3 RIGHTS OF THE RESPONDENT

18.3.1 The respondent person shall be guaranteed the following rights:

- a) The right to be served a full copy of the complaints within fifteen days after they are filed and at least thirty days before the hearing.

- b) The right to have at least fifteen days advance notice of the date, time, and place of the hearing
- c) The right to cross-examine the complainant and any witnesses.
- d) The right to present witnesses on the respondent person's behalf.
- e) The right to compel the production of *Association* records pertinent to the case.
- f) The right to choose a person to act as the respondent person's counsel in the case. It does not matter whether such a representative is a member of the association.
- g) The right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty.
- h) The right to refuse to testify or answer questions, provided, however, that this right shall not include the right to refuse to produce at the hearing any documents or property of the Igbo *Association* and which are pertinent to the case.
- i) The right to appeal, in the manner hereafter provided.

18.4 RIGHTS OF THE COMPLAINANT

18.4.1 The complainant shall be granted the following rights:

- a) The right to have the initial hearing body convened no later than the following general meeting after the complaint (s) have been filed.
- b) The right to have at least fifteen days advance notice of the date, time, and place of the hearing.
- c) The right to give personal testimony.
- d) The right to present the testimony of others and to cross-examine witnesses presented by the respondent.
- e) The right to compel the production of *Association* records pertinent to the case
- f) The right to choose a person to act as the complaining party's representative counsel in the case
- g) The right to appeal, in the manner hereafter provided.

18.5 OBLIGATIONS OF THE COMPLAINANT

18.5.1 The person or party bringing the complaint shall be under the following obligations:

- a) To file the original complaint in sufficient detail as to afford the respondent person full opportunity to prepare a response
- b) To appear in person at the hearing
- c) To assume the burden of proof.

18.6 PENALTIES AGAINST GUILTY PARTY

18.6.1 A hearing body may, if it finds the respondent person guilty, assess any one or more of the following penalties:

- a) A formal reprimand, accompanied by a formal warning against any repetition of the act or acts of which the respondent is found guilty.

- b) A fine in an amount not to exceed \$100.00 to be paid to the *Association*.
- c) Full or partial indemnity, where the consequences of the offence can be measured in material terms.
- d) Removal from office in the *Association* and/or suspension from the right to hold any elected position for a period not exceeding four years.
- e) Suspension from membership for a specified period not exceeding two years.
- f) Expulsion from the association.
- g) Any combination of the above penalties as may be determined by the hearing body.

18.7 PENALTIES AGAINST THE COMPLAINANT IF COMPLAINTS NOT SUSTAINED

If the complaints are not sustained, and the hearing body or the appellate body is convinced that the complaints were not brought in good faith or were actuated by malice, the hearing body or the appellate body may impose such penalty on the complainant party as in its judgment is deemed proper under the circumstances.

- 18.7.1 In any case, the party against whom the penalty is imposed shall have the right to appeal the imposition of the penalty in the manner provided for other appeals, beginning at the level immediately above the hearing or appellate level at which the penalty was imposed, and no such penalty shall take effect while an appeal of such penalty is pending.

18.8 APPEAL FROM DECISIONS

- 18.8.1 The decision of the adhoc hearing body appointed by the Executive may be appealed by either party to the Executive council. The Decision of an adhoc hearing body, whether sitting as an original hearing body or as an appellate trial body, may be appealed to the Executive Council. Whatever the Executive Council or their delegates decide is final.
- 18.8.2 All decisions shall be rendered by the hearing body within ten days following completion of the hearing. Such decision shall be in writing and shall be transmitted in a sealed envelope, mailed or hand delivered, to the person bringing the complaint and the respondent at the same time as soon as is practical
- 18.8.3 Either party may, within thirty days following receipt of the decision, file an appeal to the Executive Council in the same manner as is provided for the filing of original complaints with such a hearing body. The appeal shall be in writing, and shall be accompanied by a copy of the original complaint and of the decision, which is being appealed. The appeal shall set forth in substance the appellant's reasons for believing the hearing body was in error and the nature of the error.
- 18.8.4 The Executive council or their delegates shall proceed, in the manner described for the hearing of original complaints, to hear such appeal; provided, however, that the Executive council or their delegates may, in their discretion, hear the appeal on the record established at the initial hearing as a new case.
- 18.8.5 Decisions of the hearing bodies at the Executive level shall be in full force and effect from the date of the decision.

19 ARTICLE 19 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

19.1 Decision of the Executive Council or their delegates shall be in writing, and shall include at least the following separate items:

- a). A statement of complaints
- b). A summary of the evidence in support of the complaints.
- c). A summary of the Evidence in refutation of the complaints.
- d). A finding of facts.
- e). A conclusion of law (The Igbo Constitution).

20 ARTICLE 20 DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION

- a) In the event that the *Igbo Association* shall be dissolved all assets shall be liquidated and proceeds distributed among members equitably.

21 ARTICLE 21 MEMBERS AT LARGE

- a) Any member who has paid a registration fee but moves out of the area will have the status of member at large with the option to renew membership at a later date by paying the annual dues from the year the member rejoins the *Association*.

22 ARTICLE 22 BANKING

- 22.1.1 The *Association* shall maintain a bank account and the *Association* shall have the right to choose its own bank.
- 22.1.2 Cheques for all authorized expenditure must be signed by any 2 of the following: the President, Treasurer or financial secretary.

23 ARTICLE 23 BILL OF RIGHTS FOR IGBO ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

- 23.1.1 No person of Igbo descent or otherwise as specified in the articles of membership otherwise eligible for membership in this *Association* shall be denied membership, on the basis of unqualified equality, because of race, creed, color, ancestral heritage, economic status, disability or political belief.

- 23.1.2 Members shall suffer no impairment of freedom of speech concerning the operation of this *Association*. Active discussion of *Association* affairs shall be encouraged and protected within this *Association*.
- 23.1.3 Members shall have the right to conduct the internal affairs of the *Association* free from intimidation by peers, groups or entities.
- 23.1.4 Members shall have the right to fair and democratic elections. This includes but not limited to proper election procedures, which shall be constitutionally specified.
- 23.1.5 Members shall have an equal right to be nominated, elect, or be elected to hold office, subject only to constitutionally specified qualifications, uniformly applied.
- 23.1.6 Members shall have the right to full and clear accounting of all *Association* funds at all levels. Such accounting shall include, but not be limited to periodic reports to the membership by the appropriate fiscal officers, and periodic audits by officers elected for that purpose.
- 23.1.7 Members shall have the right to full participation, through discussion and vote, in the decision making process of the *Association*, and to pertinent information needed for the exercise of this right.
- 23.1.8 Complaints against members or officer (s) shall be specific and shall be only on grounds provided in this constitution. A respondent member, officer, or officers shall have the right to fair hearing with strict adherence to preceding set out within. The respondent shall be considered innocent until proven guilty.

24.0 ARTICLE 24: INVESTMENTS, ACQUISITIONS, AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

24.0 (a) The Association will become involved in Investments, acquisitions, and asset management when the Association deems fit. Further a committee shall be appointed to review Articles 24.1 to 24.8

24.1 Definition of Terms:

- (a) Investment: Investment refers to the identification of appropriate beneficial opportunity and the careful diligent deployment of available money or other asset in the hope of maximizing the identified opportunity to make more money or generate more asset than was deployed as initial investment.
- (b) Acquisition: Acquisition refers to the friendly or hostile negotiation and payment of a specified amount in cash and/or stock purchase to a third party or third parties for the purpose of taking over control of an asset or a corporate entity.
- (c) Asset Management: This involves the planning, coordination and management of money, human resources, investments, and acquisitions for the purpose of conserving their present market values and of creating greater future returns and benefits from all the assets under management.

24.2 Igbo Association of Victoria's Vision for Investments, Acquisitions, and Asset Management.

24.2.1 It is the vision of Igbo Association of Victoria (IAV) to lay adequate foundation necessary to facilitate the systematic research, identification and embrace of appropriate beneficial opportunities that would warrant beneficial investments, acquisitions and management of assets for the purpose of creating better economic, social, educational and cultural benefits for members, both in the short term and for the long term.

24.2.2 The vision of the IAV will be implemented by incorporating a separate entity to manage the business affairs of the association.

24.3 Goals and Objectives of the Investments, Acquisitions, and Asset Management.

(a) **Goals: Igbo Association goals on this matter include:**

- (i) The identification of beneficial appropriate investment and acquisition opportunities,
- (ii) The careful sourcing and the diligent deployment of the resources, and
- (iii) The efficient management of the assets for the benefit of members and other third parties.

(b) **Objectives:** The objectives that would be implemented in order to attain the above goals

Include but are not limited to the following:

- (i) Development of appropriate active rather than passive investments, acquisitions and assets management policy and implementation strategy.
- (ii) Election of resourceful and entrepreneurial members to serve in an "Investments, Acquisitions, and Assets Management Committee" (IAAMC).
- (iii) Provision of active support and necessary resources to enable the IAAMC achieve critical asset development and management goals.
- (iv) Giving approval for IAAMC to take over the administration and Management of the Association's business arm, and to provide quarterly report on The performance of the Association's business arm.
- (iv) Encouragement of the IAAMC to explore opportunities both in the Non-profit and in the for-profit worlds, including the establishment of the appropriate business entities that may be deemed necessary to facilitate beneficial business engagements.
- (v) Supporting all fundraising and financing activities that may be critical to driving investments and assets acquisition, including investments in real estate, stocks, bonds and other such high growth business Ventures.
- (vi) Volunteering time and efforts in helping IAAMC attain Igbo Association Investment and asset development and management goals.
- (vii) Igbo Association members must avoid any behaviours or activities that may tarnish or frustrate the critical efforts of members of this Committee.

24.4 Appointment of members to the Investments, Acquisitions, and Assets Management Committee (IAAMC)

The following conditions shall apply in relation to the appointment of or election of members to the IAAMC:

- a) Only highly motivated and inspired leaders shall be nominated to this highly business-orientated and results-driven committee.
- b) Only financial members in good standing shall serve in this committee.
- c) A member must have been one year or more in the *Association* to understand most
- d) of the factors underlying the organization's investment and asset development philosophy, and therefore to qualify to serve in this high profile business committee.
- e) The IAAMC shall consist of five members who have practical business, finance, and/or management experience.
- f) Members shall serve for three years with provision of one chance for re-election. After second term, a retiring member must wait for four years before running for another election.
- g) Members must attend all meetings held at least bi-monthly.
- h) Members of the IAAMC shall not use their position to seek personal favour nor the gratification of a third party. This in no way prohibits creative collaborative efforts that could create leveraged and multiple advantages for the *Association*.
- i) An inefficient, uncooperative or fraudulent member shall be replaced by a two-third majority vote. Such member shall be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the *Igbo Association*, including the possibility of civil prosecution if necessary to recover assets of the organization or obtain reasonable restitution.

24.5 Roles and Responsibilities of IAAMC Members

The following are the suggested roles and responsibilities of initial members of the IAAMC. These roles and responsibilities will change over time and as the IAAMC explore new grounds and undertake new projects:

- a) Each member of the IAAMC must make personal commitment to advance the investment, acquisition and asset management goals of the *Association*.
- b) Each member must attend all scheduled meetings and carry out all assigned duties.
- c) Members shall be appointed to specific areas or projects to which they are competent in and could provide leadership and accountability to the IAAMC and to the *Association*.

- d) Where necessary the IAAMC shall engage the services of professionals to provide advice or services in relation to the day to day running of the business.
- e) The IAAMC shall furnish the Igbo *Association* with half-yearly reports on its accomplishments and constraints, and seek input from Igbo *Association*.
- f) The IAAMC end-of-year performance, and plan for the next-year shall be reviewed annually by Igbo *Association* in the first meeting of the year. Appropriate feedback shall be provided to enable the IAAMC strengthen weak areas as well as build on its strengths.

24.6 Process for Identification and Selection of Investment and Asset for Acquisition.

While not pre-empting all circumstances that may warrant specific lines of action or decision, the following shall serve as a general guide for the identification and selection of investments and assets for acquisition.

- a) The IAAMC shall review all available investment/acquisition capital generated to date by Igbo *Association*.
- b) The IAAMC shall provide to Igbo *Association* members with details of capital available and invite suggestions of best investment/acquisition options in which the members would like to see their money invested.
- c) IAAMC will review all the options and present a short-list of three best investment/acquisition options to be provided to the *Association* for their final recommendation.
- d) Following an approval from the *Association*, the IAAMC will proceed with implementation of the selected investment/acquisition option, and continue to provide half yearly reports to the *Association* on performance, progress, constraints and areas for which help is needed.

24.7 Process for Management and Disposal or Sale of Asset

The following procedures shall guide the management and disposal or sale of Igbo *Association* assets that are under the management of IAAMC:

- (a) Once an investment or asset has been acquired, the IAAMC shall select among its members, an individual most capable of managing the asset. If IAAMC is unable to find a willing member with the requisite training and experience to manage the asset or investment, a slate of three third party professional individuals or firms will be presented to the *Association* for deliberation and selection. However, despite the appointment or election of an individual member or third party the IAAMC will be accountable collectively for the management of the asset.
- (b) The asset managing IAAMC member or the asset management third party will provide a half-yearly report to the IAAMC on the asset performance, and the IAAMC will report same to the *Association* in the latter's bi-monthly meeting.
- (c) An existing asset can be sold when it has come to the end of its useful life. On the other hand, an asset can be sold to raise funds for further investment or sold for purposes of raising funds to solve some financial problem. In both cases, and following authorization by *Association*, an expert in the valuation

of such asset shall be contracted to provide the assessment on the present market value of such asset. Members of the *Association* shall have the “Right-of-First Place” to the sale before other third parties can be considered for the purchase of the asset.

24.8 Process for the Disbursement of the Proceeds from Disposal or Sale of an Asset.

There must exist, a justifiable reason for the sale of any asset. Any funds realized from the sale of any asset, shall be committed to the very purpose for which the sale was made. Under no condition shall such a fund be diverted to another use. On the other hand, for any asset sold because it has reached its end of useful life, funds realized from such sale shall be ploughed back into new or existing investments or acquisitions, or may revert into the *Associations* general fund.

25 ARTICLE 25 ADMINISTRATION OF OATH

I, _____, promise and pledge that I will perform faithfully and with honour the duties of the office which I now assume in the *Igbo Association of Victoria (IAV)*, and I will deliver to my successor in office all books, papers and other property of this *Association* which are in my possession at the close of my official term. SO HELP ME GOD.