

**THE CONSTITUTION**  
**OF**  
**AKANU OHAFIA ASSOCIATION USA**

**July 2, 2022**

## PREAMBLE

We, the indigenes of Akanu Ohafia in Abia State of Nigeria, resident in the United States of America (USA), in order to foster unity, cooperation and social interaction amongst ourselves, do hereby unite to form this nonprofit organization, *Akanu Ohafia Association USA*; and do hereby affirm this Constitution to embody our collective will, and to guide our affairs as an Association, and our conduct, as members thereof.

## ARTICLE I NAME THE ASSOCIATION

Section 1: **Name.** The name of this organization shall be: AKANU OHAFIA ASSOCIATION USA (AOAU), hereinafter referred to as “The Association” or “AOAU”, as registered in the state of Texas. The Association shall serve as a National organization for all Akanu Ohafia indigenes resident in various Cities and States of the United States of America.

## ARTICLE II PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES AND STATUS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Section 1: **Purpose/Objectives.** Overall purpose of this Association is, primarily, to advance Akanu Ohafia cultural, overall charitable and vital information-sharing activities in the USA and in Akanu Ohafia, Abia State, Nigeria. More specifically, the objectives of the Association are:

- a) To provide a platform for interaction and fostering of unity, mutual respect, understanding and harmony among Akanu Ohafia indigenes resident in the USA.
- b) To promote and preserve Akanu Ohafia cultural heritage, acceptable by the Association.
- c) To foster the welfare of the Association’s members and their immediate family members. In this Constitution, immediate family members refer to husband, wife, children who are biological or legally-adopted, parents, and biological brothers and sisters. Children and brothers and sisters shall be under the age of 25 years and resident in the USA.
- d) To engage in community projects when feasible and as shall be agreed upon by the Association; i.e., projects that shall foster cultural and social wellbeing amongst members of the community in the USA and in Akanu Ohafia.
- e) For members to use their time, talent and resources to help the needy in the community here in the USA as well as in Akanu Ohafia—the needy as shall be defined on occurrence, and acceptable by majority of active members present and voting at a well-constituted general assembly.
- f) To encourage and promote the exchange of ideas and information in order to enhance understanding between the community and members of the Association.
- g) To help disseminate Akanu Ohafia cultural heritage, tradition and custom to other Associations with similar interests.

Section 2: **Status.** The Association shall remain a non-political, non-partisan, nonprofit and non-governmental organization. All revenues of the Association shall be devoted exclusively to the causes of the Association in the area of cultural, charitable, and information-sharing purposes set forth in this Constitution. No part of the net earnings of the Association shall be used to benefit, or be distributed to its members, officers or private persons, except that the

Association shall be authorized and empowered, by the General Assembly, to make such payments and distribution in furtherance of the Association's purposes as herein set forth.

**ARTICLE III**  
**MEMBERSHIP, ELIGIBILITY AND RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS**

Section 1: **Membership.** There shall be **two** types of membership; i.e.: (i) **Active Membership** and (ii) **Associate/Honorary Membership**.

- a) **Active Membership:** An active member is a person who is financially up-to-date in paying the Association's dues and mandatory levies, and attending meetings regularly and giving moral, financial and physical support to the smooth-running of the Association.
- b) **Associate/Honorary Membership:** An associate/honorary member shall include:
  - i High School students, of Akanu Ohafia descent, who shall have the right to participate in meetings and service in committees.
  - ii Any other person who is not an Akanu indigene, who shall identify with the interests and aspirations of the Association, and whose services to the Association and/or Akanu Ohafia at large, shall deserve commendation.

Section 2 **Eligibility.** Membership is voluntary and open to all male and female of Akanu Ohafia, by birth and by naturalization, and their spouses. Membership Eligibility requires that a member shall: (i) be resident in the United States of America; (ii) have attained the age of 25 years and older; (iii) subscribe to the goals and objectives of the Association; (iv) be current in payment of the Registration Fee and all mandatory levies; (v) maintain attendance and participation in the Association's meetings, programs and activities; and (vi) adhere to other eligibility criteria stipulated in relevant sections of this Constitution.

- a) In addition to meeting the obligations stipulated in ARTICLE III, Section 1(a) herein, **Active members** shall:
  - i have a cumulative of 75 percent (75%) of attendance in the Association's activities and meetings; and
  - ii make 100 percent (100%) payments on Registration Fee and all mandatory levies, except those with less than three-month delinquent on their levy.
- b) In addition to the category of membership stipulated in ARTICLE III, Section 1 (b) (ii) herein, **Associate/Honorary membership** shall be conferred to such a person (non Akanu Ohafia indigene), upon the approval, by majority votes of Active members present and voting at a duly constituted General Assembly.

Section 3: **Rights and Obligations.** Active members shall have the following rights and obligations:

- a) **Right** to vote and to run for an office subject to the eligibility requirements of the office for which they shall run;
- b) **Right** to receive all benefits that shall be available to members.
- c) **Obligation** to: (i) participate in all programs and activities of the Association; (ii) pay appropriate levies and other contributions; (iii) participate in the election process; (iv) support the programs and activities of the Association to ensure their success and continuity; and (v) attend the Association's duly scheduled meetings and activities.

**ARTICLE IV**  
**REGISTRATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1: **Registration.** The registration for full active membership shall be by a one-time non-refundable donation to the Association of \$50 (fifty US dollars).

Section 2: **Associate/honorary members** are not bound by the provisions of ARTICLE IV, Section 1 herein. However, any donations by the Associate/honorary member made to the Association to support and/or further its purpose shall be accepted and appreciated.

**ARTICLE V**  
**PRINCIPAL ORGANS AND COMMITTEES OF THE ASSOCIATION**

Section 1: There shall be two main organs of the Association: (i) General Body/Assembly; and (ii) Executive Body.

- a) **General Body/Assembly.** The **General Body/Assembly**, consisting of all members of the Association, shall constitute the major organ of the Association.
- b) **Executive Body.** There shall be an **Executive Body (EXCO)** made up of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Financial Secretary, Assistant Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Publicity Secretary/Provost. The Executive Body shall be responsible for the Association's administration, strategic planning for donations, fund raising and annual activities, conferences, seminars and fairs, general networking, etc. It shall also coordinate and oversee the Association's policy decisions.

Section 2: There shall be **Standing** and/or **Ad Hoc Committees** as and when necessary.

- a) The **Executive Body** shall nominate an **Ad hoc** and/or a **Standing Committee** for ratification by Active Members of the Association present and voting at the duly constituted General Assembly.
- b) Each **Ad hoc** or **Standing Committee**, consisting of not less than three persons and headed by a member of the Executive Body, shall be created to address specific issues and/or implement an identified project.
- c) An **Ad hoc Committee** (e.g., Electoral/Returning Officers, Constitution Review, Settlement of Disputes, etc.) shall be dissolved once its final report is submitted and/or project is completed.
- d) A **Standing Committee** (e.g., Welfare, Fundraising, Advisory, etc.) shall remain undissolved unless otherwise determined by Active Members of the Association at a duly constituted General Assembly.
- e) Each Ad hoc and/or Standing Committee shall have the right to develop rules (approved by the Executive Body) that shall be consistent with its assignment, and shall not contradict the Constitution of Akanu Ohafia Association USA.

**ARTICLE VI**  
**ELECTION ELIGIBILITY AND QUALIFICATION**

**Section 1:** **Election Eligibility.** Active members who meet the requirements stipulated in ARTICLE III, Section 1(a) and Section 2(a) i. & ii., herein, shall be eligible to vote and run for any office, subject to the eligibility requirement of the particular office that they shall run for.

**Section 2:** **Qualification:** To qualify for a position in the Association's Executive office, the candidate shall:

- a) have been an Active member in good standing (financially up-to-date) for a minimum of one year, committed to the Association, and must have met the requirements set forth in ARTICLE III, Section 1(a) and Section 2(a) i. & ii., herein; and
- b) have **NOT** been convicted in any criminal case by a competent court.

**ARTICLE VII**  
**OFFICES/OFFICERS AND DUTIES**

**Section 1:** **Offices/Officers.** The following offices and Officers shall be established to form the Executive Body of the Association:

- a) President
- b) Vice President
- c) Secretary
- d) Assistant Secretary
- e) Financial Secretary
- f) Assistant Financial Secretary
- g) Treasurer
- h) Publicity Secretary/Provost

**Section 2:** **Duties.** Duties of the Executive Officers are stated as follows:

- a) **PRESIDENT**
  - i) The President shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Association, and shall coordinate all the activities of the Association and have the powers to call for emergency meetings, Akanu USA meetings and Executive meetings.
  - ii) The President is empowered to initiate actions and carry out decisions of the house necessary for the proper functioning of the Association.
  - iii) The President shall appoint members to act for any elected official who shall be absent for whatever reason, such appointments shall terminate at the expiration of the assigned duty.
  - iv) The President shall be the custodian of all matters of accountability in the affairs of the Association. Once a year, he should report directly or make in writing to the members on the state of the Association at the convention or through the group's WhatsApppage.
  - v) The President shall be a signatory to the Association's Bank Account.
  - vi) The president shall present a proposed budget to the House for approval at the first

meeting of each year.

- vii The president and all officers shall maintain confidentiality of members personal affairs and information unless prior permission is given by members to release such information.

b) **VICE PRESIDENT**

- i The Vice President shall deputize for the President and shall assume all his/her functions in his absence.
- ii The Vice President shall oversee all the committees (Standing and/or Ad hoc) and their respective activities and ensure their reporting back to the General Assembly.
- iii The Vice President shall perform other duties as may be desired by the General Assembly.

c) **SECRETARY**

- i The Secretary shall be responsible for the full and complete records-keeping and recording of the proceedings of all the Association's meetings.
- ii The Secretary shall read the minutes of the last meeting and makes changes/corrections as directed by the general assembly.
- iii The Secretary shall be the sole custodian of the minutes of all meetings.
- iv The Secretary shall handle all correspondences of the association as directed by the president
- v The Secretary shall send out the minutes of the previous meeting via WhatsApp at least one week prior to the next general meeting

d) **ASSISTANT SECRETARY**

- i The Assistant Secretary shall deputize for the Secretary and shall assume all his/her functions in his/her absence.
- ii The Assistant Secretary shall perform all other related duties as may be directed by the General Assembly

e) **FINANCIAL SECRETARY**

- i The Financial Secretary shall record and keep accurate books of the Association's financial affairs, including all revenues and expenditures.
- ii Twice in a year, the Financial Secretary shall, in collaboration with the Treasurer, provide the General Assembly with an up-to-date financial report, covering all collections/receivables (dues, levies, fines, etc.), donations, pledges and other revenues and expenses.
- iii The Financial Secretary shall account for, and record all monies (expenses and accounts receivables) at the end of every meeting, and promptly forward such figures/records to the Treasurer.
- iv The Financial Secretary shall be responsible for all the Association's tax issues and shall submit them promptly to the General Assembly for approval.
- v It shall be the responsibility of the Financial Secretary to announce and present to the General Assembly, all new members who have registered, paid up their registration and annual dues and levies.

- vi The Financial Secretary, in collaboration with the Treasurer, shall follow up with members on donations and levies.
  - vii The Financial Secretary shall be the sole custodian of the Association's Check Books; and shall be responsible for the disbursement of all checks, but shall not pay out any money without the authorized signature of the Association's President, and attested to, by the signature of the Treasurer.
- f) **ASSISTANT FINANCIAL SECRETARY**
- i If the Financial Secretary is unable or incapacitated to carry out the duties of the office of the Financial Secretary, the Assistant Financial Secretary shall assume and carry out the duties of the office of the Financial Secretary.
  - ii The Assistant Financial Secretary shall assist the Financial Secretary in all financial functions.
  - iii The Assistant Financial Secretary shall perform all other related duties as may be directed by the General Assembly.
- g) **TREASURER**
- i The Treasurer shall be the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the Association.
  - ii The Treasurer shall be responsible to collect all monies and deposit all funds to the Association's bank account, no later than one week after every meeting or receipt of such funds.
  - iii The Treasurer shall be a signatory to the Association's bank account(s).
  - iv The Treasurer shall cooperate with the auditors appointed by the Executive
- h) **PUBLICITY/SOCIAL SECRETARY**
- i The Publicity Secretary/Provost shall promote a positive image of the Association externally as well as champion membership drives for the Association.
  - ii Shall be responsible for the development, promotion, coordination and implementation of all cultural and social activities of the Association.
  - iii Shall be responsible for publicizing all activities of the Association and for updating the Association's data base and sending out congratulatory messages for birthdays and anniversaries.
  - iv Shall maintain peace and order during the proceedings of all regularly scheduled meetings.
  - v Shall enforce the Constitution of the Association regarding orderly conduct at meetings, lateness and unexcused absenteeism on the part of members of the Association.
  - vi Shall not engage in any open confrontation or verbal exchange(s) with members at any meeting but shall observe and record the violations of the Constitution during any meeting and politely request that order be maintained in situations where there is excessive uproar during the meeting and in case of nuisance, disorderliness and/or defiance to the constituted authority, he/she shall report promptly to the President for an appropriate disciplinary action.
  - vii In the absence of the Publicity Secretary/Provost, the Assistant Secretary shall deputize for this office.



i) **PROVOST**

- a) Shall maintain peace and order during the proceedings of all regularly scheduled meetings.
- b) Shall take attendance at all meetings or other events as agreed by the general assembly.
- c) Shall enforce the byelaws of the association regarding orderly conduct at meetings, lateness and unexcused absenteeism on the part of the members.
- d) Shall not engage in any open confrontation or verbal exchange(s) with members at any meeting but shall observe and record the violations of the constitution during any meeting and politely request that order be maintained in situations where there is excessive uproar during the meeting; and in case of nuisance, disorderliness and/or defiance to the constituted authority, he/she shall report promptly to the President for an appropriate disciplinary action.

**ARTICLE VIII****ELECTION PROCESS AND SWEARING-IN OF ELECTED OFFICIALS**

Section 1: **Election Process.** Election of officers of the Association shall be in line with the following process:

- a) The Executive Body, with the ratification of the General Assembly, shall appoint three members of the Association to be the Electoral Committee/Returning Officers, one month prior to the date of election.
- b) Within two weeks before the election, the Electoral Committee/Returning Officers shall publish the guidelines for the election and circulate same on the Association's WhatsApp Forum and/or individual members' email or by any other mode of communication that shall be agreed by the General Assembly.
- c) The Electoral Committee/Returning Officers shall conduct the election in accordance with the provisions of the current Constitution of the Association.
- d) The election shall be conducted at a duly constituted General Assembly (meeting).
- e) Only Active and financially up-to-date members, as defined in ARTICLE III Section 1(a) and Section 2(a) i & ii, shall vote and be voted for.
- f) The Financial Secretary, in collaboration with the Treasurer, shall publish the names of eligible members in the Association WhatsApp Forum and/or individual emails, or any mode of communication that shall be agreed by the General Assembly.
- g) Candidates for election shall be nominated by an Active/Financially up-to-date member, and the nomination shall be supported by an Active/Financially up-to-date member. Any nomination with no support shall be deemed void.
- h) Voting shall be by Secret Ballot or as may be decided by the General Assembly.
- i) Election shall be by a simple majority of the votes cast by Active members present and voting.
- j) There shall be **no** voting by proxy or by absenteeism.
- k) Prior to voting, each nominated candidate for the office of the President shall be given a maximum of five minutes to make a speech on his vision for the Association.



**Section 2: Swearing-in of Elected Officers.** Swearing-in of the elected officers shall take place, not more than one month, following the elections:

- a) Elected Officers shall be sworn in by Members of the Electoral Committee/Returning Officers at a duly constituted General Assembly.
- b) All out-going officers shall prepare their handover note and inventory of the Association's properties in their possession and/or custody, with a clearly written handover note which shall include observations and recommendations.

### ARTICLE IX

#### **TENURE/TERM OF OFFICE AND ELECTION PERIOD**

**Section 1: Tenure of Office.** The term of office shall be for two years, starting from the date the officer shall be sworn in. No elected officer of the Association shall be elected to the same office for more than two consecutive years, except after a period of six years.

**Section 2: Election Period.** Election shall be held at the Akanu Ohafia USA Convention.

### ARTICLE X

#### **BENEFITS AND ELIGIBILITY PERIOD**

**Section 1: Benefits.** **Active members** as defined in Article 3, Section 1(a), shall be entitled to the Association's benefits as follows:

- a) **Death of an Active Member:** At the death of an Active Member, the President shall summon an emergency meeting. There shall be a mandatory contribution of a minimum of \$100 (one hundred US dollars) per member. There shall be a total donation of \$5,000 (Five thousand US dollars) to the specified next of kin. In the case that contributions from the membership shall fall short of \$5,000, the Association shall donate, from its account, the balance thereof. Where more than \$5,000 shall be realized, the surplus shall be retained by the Association. Members shall take active role in the planning of the wake and the burial, in collaboration with the family. Members who reside within the same area as the deceased member, shall pay a condolence visit on behalf of the Association.
- b) **Death of member's child:** At the death of an Active Member's child, who shall be under 25 years of age and resident in the United States of America, there shall be a voluntary contribution (*Ipa efere*); and \$2,500 (Two thousand five hundred US dollars) shall be donated to the bereaved member. Where more than \$2,500 shall be realized, the surplus shall be retained by the Association. In the case that contributions from the membership shall fall short of \$2,500, the Association shall donate, from its account, the balance thereof. Members who reside within the same area as the deceased member's child, shall pay a condolence visit to the family on behalf of the Association.
- c) **Death of a member's spouse (spouse who is not a member of the Association):** At the death of an Active Member's spouse, there shall be a voluntary contribution (*Ipa Efere*); and \$1,000 (One thousand US dollars) shall be donated to the bereaved member. Where more than \$1,000 shall be realized, the surplus shall be retained by the Association. In the case that contributions from the membership shall fall short of \$1,000, the Association shall donate, from its account, the balance thereof. Members who reside within the same area as the deceased member's spouse, shall pay a condolence visit to the family on behalf of the Association.

- d) **Death of a primary or biological parent:** At the death of a primary parent (Mother or Father) of an Active Member, there shall be a voluntary contribution (*Ipa Efere*); and \$2,500 (Two thousand five hundred US dollars) shall be donated to the bereaved member. Where more than \$2,500 shall be realized, the surplus shall be retained by the Association. In the case that contributions from the membership shall fall short of \$2,500, the Association shall donate, from its account, the balance thereof. Members who reside within the same area as the deceased member's spouse, shall pay a condolence visit to the family on behalf of the Association.
- e) **Death of a sibling:** At the death of a sibling of an Active Member, there shall be a voluntary contribution (*Ipa Efere*); and \$1,000 (One thousand US dollars) shall be donated to the bereaved member, provided the deceased member's sibling died in the United States of America, and shall be less than 25 years of age. Where more than \$1,000 shall be realized from the donation, the surplus shall be retained by the Association. In the case that contributions from the membership shall fall short of \$1,000, the Association shall donate, from its account, the balance thereof.
- f) **Child Birth:** At the birth of an Active Member's biological child, in the United States of America, there shall be a voluntary contribution (*Ipa efere*); and \$500 (five hundred US dollars) shall be donated to the member. Where more than \$500 shall be realized from the donation, the surplus shall be retained by the Association. In the case that contributions from the membership shall fall short of \$500, the Association shall donate, from its account, the balance thereof.
- g) **Natural Disaster:** At the occurrence of any natural disaster that shall displace an Active Member to some extent, there shall be a voluntary contribution (*Ipa efere*); and \$500 (five hundred US dollars) shall be donated to the affected member. Where more than \$500 shall be realized from the donation, the surplus shall be retained by the Association. In case that contributions from the membership shall fall short of \$500, the Association shall donate, from its account, the balance thereof.
- h) **Court Action:** In the event of any dispute arising between the Association and a member, neither the Association nor the member(s) shall resort to court proceedings without first exhausting the grievance avenues within the Association. Any member resorting to any court action, without first exhausting all avenues for redress, such as arbitration and or mediation within the Association, shall be expelled from the Association.
- i) **Any member** who shall have received any financial benefit from the Association, shall pay back the benefits to the Association, if he/she leaves the Association within one year of receipt of such benefit.

Section 2: **Eligibility Period.** There shall be a six (6) month waiting period, from the date of the member's registration, to qualify for the stipulated benefits in Article X, Section 1 (a) through (g) herein.

**ARTICLE XI**  
**RESIGNATION, RELIEF OF OFFICE AND VACANCY**

- Section 1: **Resignation**. Any officer may resign his position in writing addressed to the General Assembly through the President. Resignation shall not relieve any officer of any accountability and/or liability to an act of misconduct committed while in office.
- Section 2: **Relief of Office**. Any Officer may be relieved of his/her duty by the General Assembly for reasons of non-performance, abuse of office and for the following reasons:
- (a) Refusal to carry out the official duties of his/her office without any just cause.
  - (b) Refusal to comply with legitimate Association's orders and/or relevant provisions of the Constitution.
  - (c) Delinquent on levies for more than six months.
  - (d) Fighting and breach of peace during meetings and at social functions.
  - (e) Consistent absences from scheduled meetings/functions without prior permission for a period of six months.
  - (f) Confidentiality, trust, courtesy and honesty are always required of all members of the Executive, and removal of an officer shall be supported by a simple majority vote of the General Assembly.
- Section 2: **Vacancy**. Shall any office become vacant by resignation, incapacitation, removal or death, the General Assembly shall elect a new member for that post at a duly constituted general meeting or at the Akanu Ohafia Convention.

**ARTICLE XII**  
**BANKING AND AUDITING**

- Section 1: **Banking**.
- a) The Executive Body shall recommend to the General Assembly the financial institution to serve as the Association's bank. A simple majority of vote, at a duly constituted General Assembly, shall be required to approve the recommended banking institution.
  - b) All fund receipts including donations, levies, fines dues shall be deposited into the Association's account within three (3) days of receipt of such funds.
  - c) The Association's account shall, in no case be commingled with any other funds.
  - d) All checks in favor of the Association shall be made payable to Akanu Ohafia Association USA.
  - e) All checks drawn on the Association shall be signed by the treasurer and/or Financial Secretary and approved by the President.
- Section 2: **Auditing**.
- a) An audit of all financial records, including bank statements, shall be performed every year, and the result and findings of the audit published on the association's WhatsApp Forum or any other official communication platform.
  - b) The General Assembly shall elect a three-member audit committee with no executive member in the committee.
  - c) All funds found to be lost, misappropriated or embezzled shall be refunded to the

Association's account, in full within six (6) months, by whosoever that shall be indicted, together with penalty that the general membership might impose on the culprit or responsible party.

**ARTICLE XIII**  
**GENERAL MEETINGS AND CONVENTION**

Section 1: **General Meetings**. The Association shall conduct general meetings at a date and time stated in this Article XIII, Section 1 herein.

- a) General meetings shall hold every other month, on the third Sunday of the month.
- b) General meetings shall commence by 5 pm PST, 7pm CST or 8pm EST.
- c) The mode of the meeting shall be in person and or via zoom or any other video conference brand, as agreed by the General Assembly.
- d) A quorum shall be formed when Ten members and two executive officers are in attendance.
- e) Members must conduct themselves in a civilized manner by showing respect to other members. Use of offensive language, abusive or action disruptive to the meeting shall not be tolerated.
- f) Any misconduct by a member shall be addressed by the General Assembly and in case of breach of peace or disruption of the meeting, a reasonable sanction/fine shall be applied.
- g) All fines, fees, levies and/or donations paid to the Association shall be non-refundable.
- h) Any unexcused absences shall attract a fine of \$10.00 (Ten dollars) while lateness shall attract \$5.00 (Five Dollars) A member is said to be late to a meeting after the opening prayer is said.
- i) Excused absence is limited to ill-health of a member, family members, a travel out of the United States of America, bereavement, and/or any other as may be excused by the General Assembly.

Section 2: **Convention**. There shall be a bi-annual Akanu Ohafia Association USA as stipulated hereunder:

- a) A convention/home coming/reunion, every two years, for the purposes of fundraising, get-together and election, shall be organized. Proceeds from the fundraising activity shall be used to finance any project in our community here in the USA and/or in Nigeria as shall be deemed fit by the General Assembly.
- b) All arrangements and logistics of the Convention shall be the responsibility of an ad-hoc committee that shall be appointed by the Executive Body and ratified by the General Assembly, and the Committee shall work in collaboration with the Publicity/Social Secretary to realize the project.

**ARTICLE XIV**  
**PHILOSOPHY, DISCIPLINE AND CENSORSHIP**

**Section 1: Philosophy.**

- a) Every active member of the Association is subject to disciplinary action and censorship initiated by any other active member(s).
- b) Every member of the Executive Committee shall serve as an "ombudsman" of the Association.
- c) As an "ombudsman", each complaint or concern received by the Executive Body shall be dealt with diligently, courteously and expeditiously.

**Section 2: Discipline.**

- a) As may be applicable, every member shall abide by the provisions of this Constitution. No one is above the law. Failure to do so, the General Body/Assembly or its representative(s), with a majority vote of members present and voting at the general meeting, shall appropriately reprimand and/or expel the offender(s)/violate(s).
- b) Any allegation for disciplinary action, against an active member for inappropriate behavior outside the meeting forum, shall be submitted to General Body through the President in writing.
- c) The Secretary shall present the written allegation to the General Body.
- d) The General Body shall determine (based on the nature of the allegation) whether or not an Ad Hoc Investigation Committee should be set up.
- e) Investigation Committee shall report to the General Body of its finding with recommendations in the very next scheduled general meeting.
- f) All members shall conduct themselves reasonably and in civil manner during meetings. Any disorderly conduct or use of offensive or abusive language shall result in the following fines:
  - i A fine of \$100 (one hundred US dollars) shall be levied against the member(s) who shall be in violation of provisions of Article XIV herein.
  - ii Such fines shall be paid in full at the next general meeting, and shall not go beyond two general meetings thereof. If not redeemed as stipulated, it shall cost the member(s) an additional \$20.00 for every month thereafter.
  - iii The third time the same member(s) shall repeat the same violation, he/she/they shall be suspended for three (3) months. After the three-month suspension, he or she or they shall pay all outstanding dues and fines accrued during this period in order to return as an active member(s) of the Association.
  - iv It shall be the responsibility of the President, in collaboration with the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary, to ascertain the redemption of these fines at the stipulated dates.
- g) Disciplinary actions other than those stipulated in this Constitution, shall be determined by the General Body through a vote of simple majority of active members present and voting.

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**Section 3: Censorship.**

- a) Conditions for censorship of any active member shall arise when any of the following charges is alleged:
  - (i) corruption
  - (ii) embezzlement
  - (iii) inefficiency
  - (iv) ineptitude
  - (v) misuse of power
  - (vi) laxity on duty
  - (vii) violation of the Constitution
- b) Every allegation stated above shall be made in writing and submitted to the President (and in the case of the President the written allegation shall be submitted to the Vice President) through the Secretary.
- c) All allegations shall be presented to the General Body by the President or, if applicable, by the Vice President, or the Secretary to determine their validity.
- d) (Every valid allegation shall be fully and expeditiously investigated by an Ad Hoc Investigation Committee.
- e) Investigation Committee shall report their findings and recommendations within a time frame specified by the General Body.
- f) The verdict of guilty or innocent shall be determined by a majority vote of active members present and voting.
- g) Any member of the Executive Body that is alleged to have committed any of the charges listed in ARTICLE XI, Section 3 (a) shall:
  - (i) step aside for the duration of the investigation
  - (ii) resign immediately if found guilty, or
  - (iii) resume her duties if found innocent
- h) If found guilty of embezzlement, the individual shall pay back the money or material embezzled either willingly or through legal action.
- i) Any member found guilty of embezzlement shall automatically lose all rights, privileges and future affiliations with the Association.
- j) Any member suspended from the Association for any of the allegations stipulated in ARTICLE XIV, Section 3(a) shall, in order to be reconsidered, submit a written application for re-admission to the Association. If reconsidered, such member shall not hold any office in the Association until after four (4) years following the re-admission.
- k) The General Body reserves the right to determine any further befitting action against or for the offender/violator.

## **ARTICLE XV**

### **ASSETS**

Section 1: **Assets**

- a) The Association's funds shall be generated through one time registration, fundraising activities, special levies, donations, grants, and other programs by its members.
- b) All levies, mandatory or voluntary, shall become due and payable on the published date of the levy campaign.
- c) All levies shall be voted on and approved at a duly constituted General Assembly by a simple majority of members present at the meeting
- d) A voluntary donation of any amount to the Association shall be acceptable with thanks.
- e) All payments made to the Association shall be appropriately recorded by the Financial Secretary and duly disposed of by the Treasurer.
- f) An elected official is prohibited from signing the Association's check in his or her name.
- g) All checks to be drawn from the Association's account shall be approved by the Executive Body and ratified by the General Assembly.
- h) All properties, real or chattel, shall be taken, held, sold, transferred or conveyed in the name of the Association.

## **ARTICLE XVI**

### **DISSOLUTION**

Section 1: **Dissolutions**. In the event of dissolution of the Association, the Executive Body (EXEC) of the Association shall, after making payments of all liabilities, dispose of the Association in such manner to an organization(s) that shall qualify as a charitable organization under section 501(c) and (3) of the Internal Revenue code, or corresponding section of any future Federal tax code as the EXEC shall determine and recommend to the General Assembly. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the court of common pleas of a county in which the principal office of the Association is then located.

## **ARTICLE XVII**

### **AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

- Section 1: This Constitution shall be amended by the General Assembly and at a duly constituted General Assembly/Meeting, by a minimum vote of two-thirds of active members present and voting at the meeting.
- Section 2: A two-third vote of active members present and voting at a General Meeting shall be required for the ratification of any amendment.
- Section 3: The voting shall be conducted by a secret ballot and the counts shall be recorded in the minutes of that General Meeting.
- Section 4: Any amendment so ratified shall immediately become an integral part of the Constitution.
- Section 5: A complete Review of the Constitution shall be done only when an amendment cannot resolve any outstanding issues, and if necessary, shall be conducted no more than once in four years



**ARTICLE XVIII**  
**DISSEMINATION OF THE CONSTITUTION**

- Section 1: Each registered member of Akanu Ohafia Association USA shall be entitled to a copy of this Constitution. The original copy of the Constitution shall be under the custody of the Secretary of Association.
- Section 2: This Constitution shall not be made available to any non-member of Akanu Ohafia Association USA; violator(s) shall face disciplinary actions in accordance with the provisions of the appropriate ARTICLE(S) of this Constitution.
- Section 3: A member of Akanu Ohafia Association USA who shall lose his/her copy of the Constitution shall pay the sum of Twenty US Dollars (\$20) to the Association, for a replacement.
- Section 4: Every member of Akanu Ohafia Association USA shall be subject to the rules and regulations set forth in this Constitution; violators shall face disciplinary actions set forth in the appropriate ARTICLES of the Constitution.

**ARTICLE XIX**  
**ENDORSEMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION:**

This Constitution has been reviewed and ratified by the General Body of Akanu Ohafia Association USA; and are hereunder endorsed by the following Executive members of the Akanu Ohafia Association USA, on this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of July 2022:

1. Chief Samuel Maduka Ijere, Interim President \_\_\_\_\_
2. Prof. Uduma Osonwa, Interim Secretary \_\_\_\_\_
3. Full Name and Signature \_\_\_\_\_
4. Full Name and Signature \_\_\_\_\_
5. Full Name and Signature \_\_\_\_\_
6. Full Name and Signature \_\_\_\_\_
7. Full Name and Signature \_\_\_\_\_
8. Full Name and Signature \_\_\_\_\_
9. Etc, etc.