

**CONSTITUTION OF OTU UMUNNA OF OTTAWA
PROPOSED AMENDMENT
CONSTITUTION OF IGBO ASSOCIATION IN OTTAWA**

This Constitution refers to the administrative and domestic affairs of Otu Umunna of Ottawa.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

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Be it enacted as a Constitution of Otu Umunna Association of Ottawa (hereinafter referred to as Otu Umunna) as follows;

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

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Definition: In this Constitution, amendment or addition to it, Otu Umunna hereafter passed, unless the context otherwise requires:

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Definition: In this Constitution, amendment or addition to it, Igbo Association in Ottawa hereafter passed, unless the context otherwise requires:

- (a) Article means number 1 and all other articles.
- {b) Member means any person who is admitted and registered in the association,
- (c) A member in good standing is any member who is not in arrears In respect of any amount payable by him/her.
- (d) A registered member is one who has paid the registration fee and whose name appears in the official register of the association.
- (e) Family membership Includes parents and children under 18 years of age.
- (f) Single membership includes an unmarried person, however, a married person can elect to register as a single member.
- (g) Organization includes the Executive Committee, of the association and the general membership.
- (h) Voting right means the privilege of voting on elections, motions and special resolutions of the Association.
- (i) Proxy means authority to vote on behalf of another.
- (j) Special resolution means a resolution passed by not less than 2/3 majority of members entitled to vote in a general meeting, where notice specifying the intention to propose a resolution has been duly given.
- (k) Culture means the development of Igbo literature, arts and entertainment within the Canadian political and socio-cultural system.
- (l) National Capital Region includes Ottawa-Carleton, Outaouais and surrounding Regions.

Article 1: NAME OF ASSOCIATION

The name of the Association shall be Otu Umunna of Ottawa. It shall be a non-profit, cultural organization and shall be based In the National Capital Region of Canada.

PROPOSED AMENEDMENT

Article 1:

The name of the Association shall be Igbo Association in Ottawa It shall be a non-profit, cultural organization and shall be based In the National Capital Region of Canada.

Article 2: GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The goal of this association is to preserve and to protect the Igbo culture within the Canadian multicultural mosaic.
- 2.2 The objectives of the association are as follows:
 - (a) To promote Igbo culture and traditional values.
 - (b) To foster the use of Igbo language among members and their families.
 - (c) To provide instructional facilities and instructors for the teaching of the Igbo language and traditional values.
 - (d) To provide a forum for the fostering of closer ties and understanding.
 - (e) To serve as a forum for discussing issues and problems pertaining to the Igbo community.

Article 3: MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1 Membership is open to any Igbo-speaking person resident in the Region.
- 3.2 Family membership status shall be accorded to a family upon registration If either the husband or the wife is duly registered. Children are included in the family membership as long as the children are under 18 years of age.
- 3.3 Single membership status is accorded to a single person with an Igbo background.
- 3.4 Subject to the approval of the Executive Council, honorary membership status may be extended to a non-Igbo speaking person who is genuinely interested in Igbo culture and who actively supports the ideals and programs of the association.

Article 4: MEMBERSHIP FEES

- 4.1 The registration fee for membership in the Association shall be \$10.00 for a family member and \$5.00 for a single member. These fees are subject to periodic review by the association.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

4.1 The registration fee for membership in the Association shall be \$20.00 for a family and \$10.00 for a single member. These fees are subject to periodic review by the association

- 4.2 An annual due of \$20.00 for a family member and \$10.00 for a single member is payable annually and this is also subject to periodic review.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

- 4.2 An annual due of \$50.00 for a family member and \$25.00 for a single member is payable annually and this is also subject to periodic review,**
- 4.3 Members shall be required to pay levies when necessary.
- 4.4 Dues, fees and levies are payable within a reasonable time as soon as they become due and payable.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

- 4.4 Annual dues, fees and levies are due and shall be payable for each year between June 1 or each year and December 31 of every year.**
- 4.5 Member at good standing for the purposes of benefit package shall be one who is not in arrears for more than \$100.00 or the equivalence of 2 years annual dues.**
- 4.6 There shall be reinstatement fees for those who allow their membership to expire and that fee shall be \$50.00**
- 4.7 For members who allow their membership to lapse shall on reinstatement be eligible to pay all outstanding arrear of dues, fees and other levies owed to the Association.**
- 4.8 Member who owe up to \$200.00 in arrears, shall be deemed to have allowed their membership to expire, therefore no longer eligible to attend or be invited to be invited to the Associations parties, the exception being attendance to picnics until their reinstatement fees are paid in full.**
- 4.9 Membership dues, fees and levies shall not be paid and shall not be accepted posthumously.**

Article 5: GENERAL MEETINGS

- 5.1 A general meeting shall be held once every 3 months. The venue of each meeting shall be decided by the Executive Council.
- 5.2 At least twelve members shall constitute a quorum for binding deliberations.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

- 5.2 At least 6-8 members shall constitute a quorum for binding deliberations.**
- 5.3 Either or both husband and wife in a family membership may attend general meetings. Where both persons attend, their votes shall count separately.
- 5.4 The language of business for all meetings shall be Igbo. If for some reason a member is not fluent in Igbo, such a person can use English.
- 5.5 Voting on any motion before the meeting shall be by show of hands or by secret ballot as determined by the President.
- 5.6 Each member present at the meeting is entitled to one vote.

Article 6: ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURES

- 6.1 The affairs of the association shall be directed by an Executive Council.
- 6.2 The Executive Council shall present to the general meeting a plan of activities and a budget estimate at the beginning of each year.
- 6.3 Following the approval of the plan of activities, the Executive Council may then set up special committees to implement the plan.
- 6.4 Funds needed to execute any approved projects shall be secured by the Executive Council in a manner acceptable to the general membership. Where a long term loan is required the approval of the general membership shall be required.
- 6.5 All monies belonging to the association shall be deposited promptly by the Treasurer in an account, which shall be held in a designated bank chosen by general membership.
- 6.6 The President and the Treasurer shall be joint signatories for the purpose of withdrawing money from the Association's account. The Financial Secretary shall prepare a voucher authorizing any withdrawal of funds from the association's bank account.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

- 6.6 The President, Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall be joint signatories for the purposes of running of the Associations account as required by the bank to withdraw or deposit money or sign into GIC investment.**
- 6.7 Executive officers and other members authorized to carry out any tasks on behalf of the Association shall be reimbursed for all personal expenses incurred by them upon the presentation of appropriate receipts.
- 6.8 The Executive Council may expend a maximum of \$200.00 in operating expenses without prior authorization by the general membership. However, the Executive Council shall notify the general membership of the expense as soon as possible.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

- 6.8 The Executive Council may expend a maximum of \$500.00 in operating expenses without prior authorization by the general membership. However, the Executive Council shall notify the general membership of the expense as soon as possible.**
- 6.9 The Executive shall be authorized to cash the Association's GIC to a maximum of one thousand dollars where the need arises, but shall in addition each be required to work to raise a minimum of \$2000.00 per year on behalf of the Association. With the amendment, the previous 6.9 changes to 6.10, etc.**

- 6.9 The Executive Council shall render a full financial statement and a detailed report of the Association's activities at the end of each year.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

- 6.10 General Election shall be held in March leading to the end of term, however hand over to a new Executive shall be in June to enable the-out going Executive plan and**

arrange for that year's Easter party and picnic be implemented by new executive. With this addition, the original section 6.10 changes to 6.11 etc.

- 6.10 All executive positions are to be filled by election to be held at a general meeting of the Association.
- 6.11 To contest for any executive post a member shall be in good standing and the nomination of the member shall be endorsed by at least two other members in good standing.

PROPOSED AMENEDMENT

6.11 To contest for any executive post) a member shall be in good standing and the nomination of the member shall be endorsed by at least one other member in good standing.

- 6.12 Voting at elections shall be by secret ballot.
- 6.13 Each executive post is for a two year term.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

6.13 Each executive post is for a three-year term.

- 6.14 No officer shall hold office for more than two consecutive terms. However, after two years might have elapsed, such a member can contest once more for any executive post.

PROPOSED AMENEDMENT

6.14 In the event that there is a finding and consensus that members are unwilling to run for elective office, consideration shall be given to setting aside the provisions as stated in (6.14)

- 6.15 A vacancy arising in the Executive Council shall be filled by nomination or appointment pending an election.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

6.16 Non- financial members cannot seek office or serve in an executive position.

Article 7: DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

- 7.1 The Executive Council shall comprise a President, a Vice- President, a Secretary, a Financial Secretary, a Treasurer and a Social Secretary,

Duties of President:

- (a) The President is the Chief Executive Officer of the Association.
- (b) President shall preside over all meetings.
- (c) President shall summon all general and emergency meetings.

Duties of Vice-President:

- (a) To act in the absence of President.
- (b) To carry out any other duties assigned by the President.

Duties of the Secretary:

- (a) The Secretary is the custodian of all administrative records and documents (including the register of members but excluding financial records).
- (b) Secretary takes minutes at all meetings and disseminates the same to members.
- (c) Secretary sends out notices for meetings to the general membership.

Duties of Treasurer:

- (a) Keeps the bank books, cheque booklets and other financial Instruments belonging to the Association.
- (b) Maintains a petty cash account In an amount not exceeding \$50.00.
- (c) In conjunction with the Financial Secretary, renders an account of association's finances to general membership at least once a year.
- (d) Deposits all monies belonging to the Association promptly in the association's bank account

Duties of Social Secretary:

- (a) To organize all social and cultural activities.
- (b) To chair all meetings of the Social Committee which shall be appointed by the President and approved by the general membership.
- (c) To act as the liaison with other organizations in social matters.

Duties of the Financial Secretary:

- (a) Collects all dues and levies, as approved, and issues the necessary receipts.
- (b) Maintains proper records of the finances of the association.
- (c) Hand over all monies, collected on behalf of the association, to the Treasurer for custody.
- (d) In conjunction with the Treasurer, reports to the membership, on the status of the Association's finances at least once a year.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

The Association shall nominate and appoint an Advisory Committee as well a Council of Elders whose numbers shall be determined by the General Assembly

Article 8: AMENDMENT TO CONS1TUTION

- 8.1 By a special resolution approved by at least 25% of registered members, with at least 3 weeks notice of the proposed changes to all members.

IGBO ASSOCIATION IN OTTAWA

A COMPREHENSIVE BENEFITS PACKAGE FOR MEMBERS

1. General Principles

- In keeping with the declared aims and objectives of this Association, bona fide members should expect to receive a package of benefits.
- In developing this benefits package, consideration has been given to both current and longer term interests

OBSOLETE CLAUSES [TO BE REVIEWED/AMENDED]

- **It is anticipated that the longer term benefits will be introduced within a preset time table (say two to five years from now) depending on the availability of adequate resources**
- **In order for the Association to be able to implement most of the proposed benefits both short term and longer term elements, funds will have to be set aside each year starting from this year. In addition, a yearly upward review of annual dues and levies payable per member will come into effect next year. It is proposed that annual dues payable for next year will be \$25.00 per family member and \$15.00 for a single member. In the following year (1996) the dues payable will be \$35.00 for a family member and \$25.00 for a single member.**
- It is envisaged that most aspects of the proposed benefits package will be reviewed each year, in order to match projected expenses with available resources, and to allocate otherwise uncommitted funds appropriately.

2. Eligibility Criteria

- Only members in good standing are eligible for the full slate of benefits. This requires that the said member is not in arrears of any dues or levies, and he/she regularly participates in activities organized by the Association, including meetings and committee assignments. For purposes of clarity, members in good standing would have paid the registration fee immediately upon joining, and will be required to pay annual dues latest by June 1 each year. A member in good standing is required to attend a minimum of 2 general meetings and to participate in at least 2 social functions each year. The member will in addition serve dutifully in any committee to which he or she may be assigned. The Executive Council may make exceptions on the issue of participation in organized activities if the member can justify in writing that his or her prolonged absence from such activities arises from circumstances beyond his or her control.
- Members who are not in good standing will only qualify for Class 1 benefit to the extent to be determined by the Executive Council on a case by case basis ;

- The full slate of benefits will also be extended to honorary members, who are in good standing.

OBSOLATE CLAUSE [TO BE REVIEWED/AMENDED]

- **It is proposed to create a new category of membership for college students who no longer qualify for family membership. This will accommodate kids in colleges as well as first level (undergraduate) university students.** If a child enters college before age 18, that child will have to register as a student member. The registration fee for this class is the same as for single members, but the annual dues will remain at \$10.00 for as long as the child is in school. Student members will be entitled to the full slate of benefits if they are in good standing as defined above. However, both parents and children from a family unit cannot apply for the same benefit separately.

3. **Categories of Benefits**

The following broad categories of benefits are being proposed:

- Class 1 Force Majeure - deaths and chronic disabilities involving members or their children.

OBSOLATE CLAUSE [TO BE REVIEWED/AMENDED]

- Longer Term-Benefits, **which will be phased in over say two to five years;** will include such elements as a college scholarships and investment opportunities to which the Association and other interested parties may be involved in for the purpose of profit.
- Current - includes births, marriages, activities sponsored by other sister Associations, and deaths in the extended family system (includes family members resident In Nigeria).

4. **Proposal Highlights**

OBSOLATE CLAUSE [TO BE REVIEWED/AMENDED]

Since the Association can only extend these benefits to its members within the limits of its resources within approved yearly budgets, the best that anyone can do is to establish a mechanism for allocating funds to each of these categories of benefits. For a start, the allocations will be made in the most reasonable manner, but over time it will be possible to make better predictions and consequently better allocations of resources to achieve the desired objectives.

It is hereby proposed to set aside 70% of the net yearly revenue (gross less operating expenses) to meet the Force Majeure and Longer Term benefits. This then leaves us with 30% to take care of current benefits.

OBSOLATE CLAUSES-4.1 & 4.2 [TO BE REVIEWED/AMENDED]

4.1 1994 Allocations

It is anticipated that for 1994, we will have a net revenue of \$1000.00. The allocation of this money to the various benefits is as follows:

- (i) For Force Majeure incidents 40% which amounts to \$400.00;**
- (ii) For Longer Term benefits 30% which amounts to \$300.00;**
- (iii) Per current benefits 30% which amounts to \$300.00.**

4.2 Force Majeure Specifics

This package will apply in the event of the death of a member or of a member's child as detailed below. It will also be applicable if a member suffers a chronic debilitating injury or illness, of a degree that prevents the person from fending for himself or herself. In the event of death or chronic injury affecting a member or a member's child, the following benefits will be extended:

- The Association will pay a condolence visit to the family Involved and it will present the**
- family with one case of beer (24 bottles) and two cases of soft drinks (24 cans per case).**
- The Association will assist in the planning of funerals or extended hospital stay.**
- The Association will maintain a constant liaison with the family for as long as the family**
- retains its membership, assisting the family as far as it is possible.**
- A cash donation will be made to the family in the amount of \$50.00 for incidents involving a member and \$20.00 for cases affecting a member's child.**
- In addition to all of the above, in the event of the death of a member, an ad hoc meeting will be held at which levies will be collected. All monies collected will be used to assist the bereaved family.**

It is proposed to transfer all unused funds from funds raised each year into a short term investment account.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Sec.4.2 FORCE MAJEURE SPECIFICS: Death of a member requires the association to provide one case of beer (24 bottles) and 2 cases of soft drink of 24 cans each plus a cash donation of \$500.00 and \$100.00 cash donation for a member's child under 18 years and over 18, \$200applies.

In the event that a member in good standing loses a brother or sister, the Association will send a delegation, with a 24 bottle case of beer and condolence card.

4.3 Longer Term Benefits Specifics

This package of benefits will be funded largely from funds raised through investments. A special investment committee will be set up to determine areas of investment and the modality for such investment. The committee will present its proposals to the general membership who will then decide the manner of this investment.

OBSOLETE CLAUSE [TO BE REVIEWED/AMENDED]

A scholarship fund is also envisaged as part of this benefit package. Student members of the Association admitted to colleges or universities are eligible. It is proposed to commence this scheme in 1996 with 2 scholarships each worth \$150.00. By the year 2000, it is anticipated that as many as 6 children will benefit each year from this scheme. Until this scheme starts, it is proposed to invest all the money allocated to this head as specified earlier.

Only duly registered and active student members of the Association will qualify for this scholarship fund. Where more applicants are received than are anticipated for a given year, a ballot will be used to select the winners. The winners in any given year are automatically ineligible to apply for the next year, but may apply after two years.

OBSOLETE CLAUSES [TO BE REVIEWED/AMENDED]

4.4 Current Benefits

The only aspect of the current benefits package that requires qualification is the issue of deaths in the extended family system. Due to limited resources, it will be necessary to limit these benefits to deaths of parents of both adults in the family membership category. As the resources available to the Association improve, this definition may be expanded. The allocation of the budget of \$300.00 for this year is as follows:

- **Births estimated at about 2 this year, \$25.00 to be given to the family;**
- **Marriages (only if a formal invitation is given to the Association) - a gift worth \$25.00;**
- **Activities sponsored by other organizations including other Otu Umunna Associations – will depend on the nature, \$50.00 has been proposed to be set aside for this year.**

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Activities sponsored by other organizations including other Igbo Association in Ottawa – will depend on the nature, \$50.00 has been proposed to be set aside for this year.

- Deaths in the extended family system, drinks and cash not exceeding \$25.00. The family will be given the choice of all cash or all drinks. Amount set aside for this year is \$100.00.

CLAUSE TO BE REVIEWED

- **There is a feeling within the Executive Council** that the birth and marriage benefits be extended only if the Association is officially notified of the event, or if the Association is formally invited by the family concerned. An adequate notification will be a letter or a fax sent to the Secretary or the President.
- If a member in good standing decides to relocate somewhere else, the following benefits are proposed (Note: This benefit item has no budgetary allocation in the current year; expenses for this sub head will be charged to yearly operating expenses).
 - (I) If a person has been a member since the inception of the Association or for a period of five years. (whichever is the shorter), and has not received any benefit whatsoever, such person will be entitled to a cash handout or a gift in the amount of 30% of the sum of dues and donations the person has paid over the period; over the period;
 - (ii) If membership is for a period less than the period stated in (i) above, the entitlement will be reduced to 15%;
 - (iii) If a member has served the Association in an Executive position or as a chairperson of a key committee for at least two-year term, and that member has discharged his or her or her duties creditably, the Association will give the individual cash or gifts totaling 50% of the sum of dues, levies and donations paid over the period of continued membership in the Association.
 - (iv) If the member has received any of the benefits outlined above, the value of that benefit will be deducted from. the amounts quoted In (i) to (iii) above. The balance, if any will then be given to the person

(Revised October 2007).