



The Constitution of the African Association for Rhetoric (AAR)

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Preamble

The African Association for Rhetoric is a body of scholars, rhetors, and researchers who interrogate the deployment of rhetoric and speech communication in political, social, cultural, judicial, and deliberative contexts. The fundamental goal of the Association is to encourage rhetors and researchers in public speaking from across Africa and around the world to participate in rhetorical debates on democratic governance and other pertinent topics of interest to them. The Association also seeks to promote scholarship in African Rhetoric. The Association's activities include biennial conferences, occasional seminars, and symposia. The Association's main publications are *The African Journal of Rhetoric* and an online supplementary Journal, entitled *Balagha: African Rhetoric Quarterly*. The Association also seeks to award members, fellowships, and honorary fellowships to deserving orators and rhetorical practitioners who have responsibly deployed rhetoric in the public domain.

1. Establishment

- 1.1. There is hereby established an African Association for Rhetoric ('the Association') under the terms and conditions stated below.
- 1.2. The Association's shortened name shall be AAR, hereinafter referred to as the Association.

2. Body Corporate

- 2.1. The operating jurisdiction of the African shall be the continent of Africa and beyond, as the Congress deems fit.
- 2.2. The Association shall exist in its own right, separately from its members.
- 2.3. The Association shall be able to acquire and own control of its own property and assets and other possessions.
- 2.4. The Association shall be able to sue and be sued in its own name.
- 2.5. The Association shall continue to exist even when its membership changes and there are different office bearers

3. Core Purpose

As is main purpose, the Association shall:

- 3.1. Organise conferences and publish books and journals in rhetoric.
- 3.2. Seek to promote rhetorical and cultural and dialogue within and among political and governance institutions in Africa and beyond,
- 3.3. Support and initiate research in rhetoric and Public Communication
- 3.4. Honour individuals who have distinguished themselves in rhetorical activities.

4. Objectives

As its main objectives, the Association shall:

- 4.1. Identify various forms and domains of African Rhetoric in relation to indigenous knowledge systems, inter alia, and document them for posterity
- 4.2. Conduct research primarily into rhetoric and democratic governance, and other areas that concern the political, social, cultural and religious life of a nation
- 4.3. The Association will also seek to establish a forum for scholars from different parts of the world to dialogue and debate relevant issues. Such for a will include, conferences, seminars, rallies, roundtables and colloquia
- 4.4. Contribute the development of a new culture of democratic governance through research into the area of political culture of contexts where the Association's services are needed or falls within the Association's area of interest

5. Income and Property

- 5.1. The Association shall keep a record of all its belongings and reserves all rights of its property
- 5.2. The Association may remunerate members for work done at reasonable rates. The Association is under no obligation to give its property or money to its members.
- 5.3. The Association shall refund only monies spent on its behalf to its members by the persons concerned
- 5.4. Members or office bearers have no rights in the property or other Assets of the organisation solely by virtue of their being members or office bearers

6. Composition and the Powers of the Association

- 6.1. The Executive Committee shall assume power and authority that it deems fit for it to achieve the Association's set objectives
- 6.2. The Executive Committee has the power to make necessary arrangements for fundraising in the most discreet manner
- 6.3. The Executive Committee has the power to make by-laws for the proper management of the Association
- 6.4. Nomination and Elections shall hold during the business meeting at the biennial congress. Following are procedures guiding Executive committee meetings.
 - 6.4.1. The Management Committee shall hold at least two meetings each year.
 - 6.4.2. The Chairperson or two members of the Committee members must know the date of the proposed meeting not less than 21 days before it is due to take place. The agenda must be circulated within the aforementioned period of time. If matters relating to the appointment of a new member, notice of not less than 30 days must be issued to other members of the committee. If the Chairperson does not attend a meeting, then other members of the committee who are present shall choose

which one of them will chair that meeting. This must be done before the meeting starts.

- 6.4.3. There shall be a quorum whenever Executive Committee meeting is being held. The quorum shall be the presence of 3 voting committee members.
- 6.4.4. The Management Committee shall establish sub-committees as it deems fit, in case of a quick project or an enquiry. At least three people shall constitute this sub-committee. The sub-committee shall periodically and/or terminally report back to the Executive Committee on its activities.
- 6.4.5. Minutes of the meetings shall be kept with the General Secretary of the Association which will be made available for every member of the Association for consultation.
- 6.5. No members or office bearer shall be held personally liable for the loss suffered by any person as a result of an act of omission which occurs in good faith while the office-bearer is performing functions for or on behalf of the Association
- 6.6. The Executive Committee shall comprise of
 - 6.6.1. Patron(s)
 - 6.6.2. The President
 - 6.6.3. Vice President
 - 6.6.4. Treasurer
 - 6.6.5. General Secretary
 - 6.6.6. Financial Secretary

7. The Patron(s)

The Patron shall:

- 7.1. Be responsible members of society who have distinguished themselves in their calling but have significantly deployed rhetoric for the benefit of humanity, or have been involved in rhetoric related research and publishing
- 7.2. Support the activities of the Association through his/her presence, funding support and fundraising
- 7.3. The patron shall be a non-voting member of the Executive committee, but shall function in an advisory capacity

8. The President

The President shall:

- 8.1. Ensure the smooth running of the Association
- 8.2. Oversee the planning and organisation of conferences and other Association's activities
- 8.3. Be responsible for linkages and networking with similar organisations
- 8.4. Lead the rest of the Executive and the membership as a team
- 8.5. Represent AAR in other Associations' conferences

- 8.6. Spend at most two terms in office. The second term shall be subjected to election as normal at the congress
- 8.7. Be responsible for fundraising in collaboration with other members of the Executive
- 8.8. Be signatory to Association's Account. In case other signatories' locations create logistical problems, the executive shall sit and decide on the best way possible.

9. The Vice President

The Vice President shall:

- 9.1. Deputise for the President in the event that he is indisposed or unavailable
- 9.2. Perform duties as delegated by President
- 9.3. Ensure that the Association's publications are timeously published by supporting various editorial committees which may be constituted.

10. Treasurer

The treasurer shall

- 10.1. Keep the Association's money
- 10.2. Disburse money for Association's needs
- 10.3. Alert the executive when the purse is almost depleted
- 10.4. Advise on fundraising
- 10.5. Be signatory to the Account

11. General Secretary

The General Secretary shall

- 11.1. Serve as the Head of Secretariat
- 11.2. Coordinate Meetings
- 11.3. Ensure the smooth organising of conferences
- 11.4. Keep custody of all minutes of meetings which would be made available to members for consultation
- 11.5. Ensure all publications are ready for conferences
- 11.6. Monitor Association's website
- 11.7. Be responsible for all publications and press releases during office

12. Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary shall:

- 12.1. Be a signatory to the Account
- 12.2. Keep records of Accounts and Association's spending
- 12.3. Give accounts of expenses at congresses

- 12.4. Shall ensure the preparation of financial records and forward to the Director of Non-Profit Organisations within six months after the financial year, which is 30 September of every year.
- 12.5. Should any investment opportunity be identified, the financial secretary shall advise the Association, and such investments can only be made through registered investment institutions listed in Section 1 of the Financial Institutions (Investment of Funds) Act 1984. The organisation can approach the banks for advice and obtain securities listed on a licensed Stock Exchange, as provided for in the Stock Exchange Control Act.

13. Congress

- 13.1. The Congress shall consist of the Association's members who all have equal voting rights.
- 13.2. Quorum shall be 2/3 of the registered members of those present at the biennial conference. At least 15 members shall be present.
- 13.3. Officers shall be elected at the congress
- 13.4. Location of next conference shall be decided at the congress meetings

14. Secretariat

- 14.1. The Rhetoric centre (Now: **The Martinsons Institute**) shall serve as the secretariat for the Association until such time as the Association is strong enough to have its own secretariat
- 14.2. The Association raises funds for its activities through its secretariat
- 14.3. Office Bearers shall work closely with the secretariat
- 14.4. The Executive Committee shall hold its meeting prior to the congress at the biennial conferences and make important decisions for the Association.
- 14.5. The organisation's financial transactions shall be conducted by means of a banking account.

15. Membership

The Association shall have the following membership categories:

- 15.1. Student (graduate Students at higher institutions)
- 15.2. Professional Members (Fellows)
 - 15.2.1. A member shall be considered for Fellowship if the person has attended three consecutive conferences of the African Association for Rhetoric and has published at least twice in the African Journal of Rhetoric.
- 15.3. Honorary Members (See Section 16 below)
- 15.4. Corporate Organisations, NGOs and other credible organisations
 - 15.4.1. Any person who has been a member for year shall be eligible for election into office

- 15.4.2. Membership fees will be fixed by the congress. No member is liable for any of the Association's obligations and liabilities by virtue of his/her status as members of office bearers of the Association.
- 15.4.3. No member is entitled to claim the asset of the Association should the Association fold up. Such Asset shall be transferred to the Rhetoric Centre first of all, or any other rhetoric organisation.
- 15.4.4. Because of the specialist nature of this Association, membership is only open to persons who are interested in rhetoric, either as an academic specialty or vocational practice, e. g. professional speakers, lawyers, political leaders and leaders of thought.
- 15.4.5. A member of the Association is expected to attend the Biennial conference and pay membership fees as at when due to be eligible for the Association's newsletter and a copy of the *Journal: African Journal of Rhetoric*.
- 15.4.6. Membership is purely on voluntary basis and any person may cease to be a member of the Association any time s/he deems fit.
- 15.4.7. The Association reserves rights to membership.

16. Honorary Membership and Awards and Prizes

- 16.1. Prospective Honorary Fellows shall be nominated for award by registered members of the Association
- 16.2. Names of Honorary Fellows shall be announced at the biennial conference dinner where plaques and certificate shall be presented.
- 16.3. The Selection committee shall be constituted at the biennial congress and they shall receive nominations and decide those who would be honoured as fellows.
- 16.4. The selection Committee shall consist of 5 members
- 16.5. The period of screening and nomination shall be a year into the conference
- 16.6. The following are the categories of Awards:
 - 16.6.1. Distinguished civil/human rights activist.
 - 16.6.2. Distinguished Journalist/writer
 - 16.6.3. Distinguished President's / Diplomat's Award
 - 16.6.4. Distinguished Scholar's Award

17. Amendments to the Constitution

- 17.1. Amendments to the constitution of the Association may only be recommended to the constitution at a special meeting of the Congress at the biennial conference
- 17.2. For such a special meeting, the notice period shall be six months; all relevant information must be made available to the secretariat 3 months before the meeting, a quorum shall be 2/3 of members, and the recommendation shall be based on a 2/3 majority vote of attending members.
- 17.3. No amendment shall be made which negates the existence of the Association.

18. Dissolution and Winding Up

- 18.1. The Association shall close down if the 2/3 of its membership present a motion for such a motion and vote in its favour. Should the Association fold up, Item 15.1.7 shall apply in respect of its property.
- 18.2. When the organisation closes down, it has to pay off all its debts. After all debts have been paid, if there is property or money left over, such monies shall not be paid or given to members of the organisation. The organisation's general meeting shall decide which non-profit organisation with similar objectives shall receive such monies and property.

19. The constitution was adopted at a meeting held on:

_____ in _____

Chairman

Secretary