

THE  
CONSTITUTION  
OF  
THE ASSOCIATION OF TAVIEFE CITIZENS  
OF  
NORTH AMERICA (TACONA)

## **PREAMBLE**

We, the members of the Association of Taviefe Citizens of North America, recognizing the need to unite and in the general spirit of being of help to one another and in support of development projects at Taviefe, do hereby form this non-profit, non-religious, and non-political Association, and put into effect this Constitution. Taviefe in this context refers to all the seven divisions namely, Avedome, Avenya, Aviefe, Deme, Dzafe, Dzefe, and Tsetse.

**Article I: Name of Association**

The name of our Association shall be Taviefe Citizens of North America including Canada (TACONA) herein referred to as the Association.

**Article II: Non-Profit Purposes**

This Association shall operate as a tax-exempt membership organization under Section 501 (a) of the Internal Revenue Code as described in Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) provisions of the United States of America.

**Article III: Mission and Purpose**

The objectives of TACONA shall include but not limited to:

- a. Promoting unity among members.
- b. Helping one another in times of death of an immediate family member.
- c. Promoting the interest of Taviefe citizens in North America.

**Article IV: Membership**

Section 1. Definition of Membership

Membership is open to anyone, from 18 years and above, whose parents hail from Taviefe. This means This means people whose paternal and maternal parents originate from Taviefe are qualified to be members. It is also open to people with various Taviefe affiliations including people who either lived or went to school at Taviefe.

Section 2. Classification of Membership

- a. Regular membership shall be open to all citizens of the seven divisions of Taviefe as defined in the Preamble.
- b. Membership shall also be open to friends of Taviefe.
- c. An active member shall be a regular member who is up-to-date with his/her financial obligations.
- d. A non-active member is a regular member who is delinquent in his/her financial obligations for six months or more.

Section 3. Membership Fees and Dues

- a. Membership dues shall be \$120 US (\$10 USD per month) per calendar year for regular members.
- b. If more than one family member resides in the same household, the dues shall be at the highest individual rate per family

- c. Members have the option to make a one-time payment or pay biannually, quarterly or monthly whichever works best for a member.
- d. The Association shall maintain a bank account at a financial institution in the United States of America.

#### Section 4. Membership Books and Records

The Association shall maintain a membership and mailing list service that shall comprise the electronic mail and regular mailing addresses and records of all members. Members are advised to notify the secretary as and when their contact details have changed.

#### Section 5. Non-liability of Members

No member of this Association shall be personally liable for the debts, liabilities, or obligations of the Association.

### **Article V: Meetings**

#### Section 1. Regular Meetings

Meetings shall be scheduled and held as determined necessary by the membership of the Association. The executive shall also hold such meetings in cyberspace when the need arises.

#### Section 2. Special/Emergency Meetings

The executive, upon consultation with members, shall call special meetings at a predetermined location or in cyberspace as and when the need arises.

#### Section 3. Notice of Meetings

Notice stating the place, day, and time of the meeting and the purpose or purposes of the meeting shall be delivered to members in advance by electronic or regular mail. Notice shall be given no less than 10 days and no more than 50 days by electronic information prior to meetings.

#### Section 4. Quorum for Meetings

A quorum of at least 50 percent of active members, at any scheduled meeting, shall be deemed constituted when the President or other executive members or any active member selected to act as Chairperson in the absence of these officers, calls the meeting to order.

#### Section 5. Majority Action as Membership Action

Every act or decision done or made by a majority of active members present in person, in cyberspace, or by proxy at a duly held meeting at which a quorum is present is the act of the members.

#### Section 6. Voting Rights

Each active member is entitled to one vote on each subject submitted to a vote by the active members. Voting at duly held meetings shall be by voice vote or written responses if held in cyberspace.

## **Article VI: Executive Officers**

### Section 1. Qualifications

1. Any active member of the Association may serve as an executive officer of the Association.
2. Executive officers of this Association shall be members in good standing. “Good standing” means that the officers are up to date in their financial obligations to the Association and should not be under any restrictions or suspensions placed on them by the general membership.

### Section 2: Designation of Officers

The officers of the Association shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary/Organizer, and Treasurer. There shall also be local representatives who will serve as liaison in all jurisdictions as determined by the Association.

### Section 3. Election and Terms of Office

Executive officers shall be elected by simple majority for a four-year renewable once mandate. Officers shall be elected through secret ballot or by voice vote if necessary, by active members of the Association. Active members may vote by proxy.

### Section 4: Functions of the President

The President shall:

- a. Serve as the head of the Executive Committee and the Association.
- b. Preside over executive and general meetings and summon emergency meetings in consultation with the other executive members.
- c. Serve as the liaison between the Association and other groups at home and in the Diaspora.

### Section 5: Functions of the Vice-President

The Vice-President shall:

- a. Act in the absence of the President as the head of the Executive Committee and Association
- b. Assume the functions of the Secretary/Organizer and the Treasurer in their absence.

### Section 6. Functions of the Secretary/Organizer

The Secretary/Organizer shall:

- a. In consultation with the President schedule meetings, keep complete membership and accurate record of all meetings of the Association.
- b. Serve notices of meetings, take minutes of meetings, be responsible for correspondences

of the Association and also see to the organization of meetings.

#### Section 7. Duties of the Treasurer

The Treasurer shall:

- a. Be in charge of and responsible for all funds of the Association, and deposit all such funds in the name of the Association in such banks, trust companies or depositories approved by the Association.
- b. Receive and give receipt for, monies due and payable to the Association from any source whatsoever.
- c. Disburse or cause to be disbursed the funds of the Association as may be directed by the Executives, and take proper vouchers for such disbursements.
- d. Keep and maintain adequate and correct accounts of the Association's business transactions including accounts of its assets, liabilities, receipts, disbursements, gains and losses.
- e. Exhibit at all reasonable times the books of account and financial records to any active member or the Executives, upon request.
- f. Render to the Association, whenever requested, an account of any or all his or her transactions as Treasurer and of the financial condition of the Association.
- g. Be allowed to keep a cash imprest of \$400 if the need arises.

#### Section 8. Process of Resignation of Executive Members

- a. Any Executive member who intends to resign shall notify the Executive Committee in writing at least six (6) weeks in advance. Advance notice prior to resignation will not only allow for an appropriate replacement but also ensure a smooth transition.
- b. Members are not required to go through this process since they are either active or inactive in terms of their monthly dues and attendance at meetings.

### **Article VII: Finances**

Finances of the Association shall be raised from monthly dues, levies, and other fundraising activities as decided by members. The Association may also invest its resources with the intention to make good returns.

### **Article VIII: Execution of Deposits and Funds**

#### Section 1: Checks and Notes

All checks, drafts, promissory notes, orders for payment of money, and other evidence of indebtedness of the Association shall be signed by the Treasurer and countersigned by the President or the Secretary.

## Section 2: Deposits

All funds of the Association shall be deposited in a United States bank from time to time to the credit of the Association in such banks or trust companies or other depositories as approved by the Association.

### **Article IX: Beneficiaries/Benefits**

- a. Members and their immediate (nucleus) family members are the beneficiaries.
- b. Benefits shall cover assistance in times of loss of an immediate family member (husband, wife, or child).
- c. The benefit package shall be \$300 USD for an active member who loses a dependent or beneficiary.
- d. TACONA shall give a \$1000 USD to a member's family when he or she passes away.
- e. In order to enjoy full benefits of the Association, members must honor all financial obligations, for example pay their dues/levies up-to-date as decided by the Association.
- f. Members who are delinquent in paying their dues for six consecutive months will not qualify to receive benefits in times of loss unless otherwise stated in section g to accommodate unforeseen circumstances. The member would be required to first settle his/her debts with the treasurer and remain in good financial standing prior to receiving benefits.
- g. Furthermore, a delinquent member between the 6th and 8th months, under unforeseen circumstances may reactivate his/her membership. After the 8th month he/she would be considered completely inactive and would be required to pay all arrears prior to receiving benefits.
- h. When a delinquent member in the 8th month passes away, the arrears would be deducted (from the \$1000 USD benefit amount) and the remainder of the money given to his/her family.
- i. When a living delinquent member in the 8th month loses a nucleus family member, he/she would be required to pay the arrears up to the 8th month prior to receiving benefits.
- j. New members shall qualify for benefits three months after joining the Association if they remain active and in good standing. Alternatively, their benefits can be effective immediately upon joining if they decide to pay for the last three months prior to becoming members.
- k. Any active TACONA member (5yrs and more) who has decided to move/relocate from North America would be given a send-off package of \$300.00 from the Association.
- l. A member who receives the send-off package may retain his/her full membership and pay full monthly dues if he/she decides to do so after leaving North America.

- m. TACONA shall give a one-time \$300 USD donation (with a get-well card) to a member in good standing who has become sick and incapacitated or unable to perform activities of daily living.
- n. TACONA shall give a one-time \$150 USD donation (with a get-well card) to a member in good standing who undergoes a major surgery or has been hospitalized for any serious illness for 3 days or more.
- o. TACONA shall give a one-time \$100 USD donation (with a congratulatory card) to a member, in good standing, who welcomes his/her first child (adopted or biological) since joining the Association.
- p. TACONA shall give a one-time \$100 USD donation (with a congratulatory card) to a member in good standing, who has completed his/her Associate or Bachelors degree since joining the Association.

### **Article X: Amendments**

These by-laws may be amended, added to, or repealed, as and when deemed fit. Provisions in this Constitution shall be subject to amendment by 75 percent of the active TACONA membership present at any meeting. Suggestions or recommendations for modifications may be made in writing to the President at any time up to three months in advance of any business meeting of the Association.

### **Article XI: Dissolution**

In the event of any merger, consolidation, or dissolution of the Association, all of the remaining assets of the Association shall, after necessary expenses thereof, be distributed to such organization or organizations as shall qualify under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended (or the corresponding provision of any subsequent law), subject to an order of a Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of Maryland or such other approval as may then be required by applicable law.

This Constitution comes into effect this day, January Twenty, in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand and Nine (01/20/09)

Adopted on April 26, 2009 during the Association's Teleconference call.

1. Amended on October 28, 2012 during the Association's Teleconference call.
2. Amended on December 17, 2017 during the Association's Teleconference call.
3. Amended on February 24, 2019 during the Association's Teleconference Call.
4. Amended on May 30, 2021 during the Association's Teleconference Call.