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The Constitution of The Zimbabwean Society At Stellenbosch University



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Preamble

Whereas we as the Zimbabweans at Stellenbosch University find it necessary and desirable to nurture, articulate and foster growth and development by looking after the aspirations of the Zimbabweans (Undergraduate, Postgraduate students, Post-Doctoral Associate and Staff of Stellenbosch University) buoyed by progressive and democratic mindedness. In a united manner, we therefore commit ourselves to a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic Society free of exploitation and not unresponsive to plight of members. We aim to have a representative body for Zimbabwean students' rights and interests at Stellenbosch University. We will follow the rule and regulations of Stellenbosch University and the Student Constitution as revised in 2011.



Definitions:

Annual General Meeting (AGM): a meeting that is held annually to elect the Executive committee and inform the members of the Society of previous and future activities.

By-election: an election conducted to fill the vacancy left in any post of leadership.

Executive Committee (EC): a board of members that runs the Society and which has specific and defined roles.

General Meeting: the meeting that includes all members of the Zimbabwean Society at Stellenbosch University.

Member: any person who is a member of the Society in any of the categories established by virtue of this constitution.

Paid up: an amount sounding in money paid for the membership fee by cash or put on members student account.

Quorum: the minimum number of members of an assembly or society that must be present at any of its meetings to make the proceedings of that meeting valid.

The Society: Zimbabwean Society at Stellenbosch University.
Zimbabwean students: students who are citizens of Zimbabwe or whose country of origin is Zimbabwe.

Motion of no confidence: A statement or vote about whether a person is fit to hold that position, perhaps because they are inadequate in some respect, are failing to carry out obligations, or are making decisions that others feel are detrimental, or in violation of the law. As a society motion, it demonstrates to the chairperson that the society no longer has confidence in the appointed EC.



Section One

1.0 Name

1.1 The Name of the organization shall be the Zimbabwean Society at Stellenbosch University.

1.2 The official abbreviation for the Zimbabwean Society at Stellenbosch University shall be ZimSoc.

1.3 The name of the Society shall only be changed at the Annual General Meeting (Hereinafter AGM) and shall require a two thirds majority of votes of the paid-up members present at such meeting.

Section Two

2.0 Colors and Symbols

2.1 The colors of the Society shall be green, yellow, and red, black and white. The colors are derived from the Zimbabwean flag. 2.2 The official logo/symbol of ZimSoc will be as seen below.



Section Three

3.0 Legal Personality

3.1 The Zimbabwean Society at Stellenbosch University shall be a legal person with continuous succession and power, apart from its individual members, to require, hold and alienate property, enter into agreements,



and do all things necessary to carry out its aims and objectives and defend its members, its property and reputation.

3.2 The organizational control and programmes of the Society shall rest in the Society's membership and structures in accordance with its Constitution.

3.3 The Society shall operate at the Stellenbosch Campus of Stellenbosch University with special attention being paid to establishing branches at the University's other campuses such as Tygerberg and Bellville.

3.4 The Society shall also endeavour to develop and nurture ties with such Societies as may be present at other Universities in the Western Cape and beyond.

3.5 Liability of the members of the Society shall be limited to the outstanding annual fees and the members shall have no interest in the movable and immovable property of the Society, or any profits accrued thereto.

3.6 The Society shall not be held liable for any loss suffered by any person as a result of any act performed or committed in good faith by the member, performing their function for or on behalf of the Society, neither shall the assets of the Society be seized in respect of the obligations of its members.

Section Four

4.0 Principles

4.1 The following shall be the principles of the Society and shall always guide its deliberations including its policies, campaigns and operations and processes.

- i. Democracy
- ii. Non-Racialism
- iii. Non-Sexism
- iv. Member Driven
- v. Inclusiveness

Section Five

5.0 Aims and Objectives

5.1 The main aims and objectives of the Society are to:



- i. Strive to peacefully rally Zimbabweans on our campus to support and unite behind ZimSoc and actively participate in the activities and programmes to create an enabling environment for the Zimbabweans to prosper.
 - ii. Promote solidarity, corporation and the spirit of togetherness amongst Zimbabweans.
 - iii. Champion the General interests and rights of Zimbabweans in the socio-economic and academic life at Stellenbosch University.
 - iv. Develop and maintain a database of Zimbabweans on our campus.
 - v. Establish and maintain a Resource Centre to provide for counselling, advising and the assisting Zimbabweans, particularly new students.
 - vi. To initiate programmes and projects of job creation for its members in conjunction with any interested parties.
 - vii. To represent the needs of members on matters that pertain to their lives on campus, taking care not to be aligned to any political party in Zimbabwe or South Africa.
 - viii. To strive for a democratic and progressive ZimSoc that will
 - ix. prepare all members to partake to the fullest in the building of a strong Zimbabwean Community.
- (ix) Planning and hosting regular information sessions for the purposes of creating a platform for discourse on matters of interest to Zimbabweans on our campus.

Section Six

6.0 Membership

6.1 Membership shall be open to all Zimbabwean Students, Postdoctoral Fellows and Staff. Those who will be admitted to membership will include:

- i. Undergraduate students
- ii. Postgraduate students
- iii. Post-Doctoral Fellows
- iv. Alumni

As decided by the AGM, regardless of, race, sex, creed on condition that they adhere to the principles, discipline and mode of operation of the Society.

6.2 Membership shall be confirmed annually, through the payment of the annual membership fees. Members will be notified in writing (electronically or otherwise) if they have paid cash, that their



membership has been approved. In addition, the membership fee may also be deducted from the individual interested in joining the Society's student account and this will be conveyed upon signing up for the Society.

- 6.3** Membership fees are to be determined by the EC.
- 6.4** Application for membership shall be made in writing (completion of the ZimSoc Membership Application Form) and shall be accompanied by any such fees as the AGM may determine. Members can also join using the online platform which would automatically deduct the membership fee from their student account.
- 6.5** Any other type of membership other than normal membership, shall be determined by the General Meeting of the Society.
- 6.6** Members of the Society may belong to or be a member of any like organization, with similar aims and objectives in protecting the interests of Zimbabweans, provided that the policies and programmes of any such organization are not apparently hostile to the aims and objectives of the ZimSoc.
- 6.7** No person shall occupy any executive position or represent the Society on any structure unless she/he is a registered and paid-up member of the Society.

Section Seven

7.0 Rights and Obligations

- 7.1** Every member of the Society shall have the right to:
 - i. Take part in the discussion and formulation of the Society's policy.
 - ii. Be elected to any committee, commission or delegation of the Society.
 - iii. Submit proposals or statements to the Society on any matter that affects the Society's members.
 - iv. Protection by the Society against any harassment, victimization, and or discrimination based on race ethnicity, regionalism, sex or creed that may exist or arise on Campus, within the mandate and abilities of the Society.
 - v. Active participation in the activities of the Society.
- 7.2** All members shall be obliged to:
 - i. Carry out decisions, duties and directives from the AGM with diligence.
 - ii. Organize, participate and contribute positively to all the Society's activities and/or programmes and to contribute to the strengthening of its organizational unity.



- iii. Combat all forms of tribalism, regionalism and nepotism and any other forms of discrimination based on sex and race and as well as combating factionalism and malicious gossip within the ranks of the Society.

Section Eight

8.0 Responsibilities of the Society

8.1 The Society shall have all the powers to perform all such acts that are expedient or necessary to achieve the objectives as set out above, including but not limited to:

- i. To claim, collect and receive any fees or dues from members.
- ii. To receive any donations or bequests, accruals or benefits from any person or body.
- iii. Enter into agreements on behalf of the Society and its members with other Organizations.
- iv. Issue notices of meetings or any other meeting for transactions of business, Societies or other partners.
- v. To do such other lawful actions not in conflict with this Constitution and in the interest of the Society and its vi. members.
- vii. Appoint an Executive Committee comprising of a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary General, Treasurer and any other office or post that the General Meeting feels necessary for the Society to operate effectively and fulfil its objectives.
- viii. Receive and consider reports of the Executive Committee, deliberate on the policies and programmes of the organization.
- ix. Recognize Zimbabwean National Holidays.
- x. To provide a society for Zimbabweans at Stellenbosch University, representing and bringing together diverse individuals. As well as promoting unity and integration across different races, tribes and cultures thus creating a unique Zimbabwean identity.
- xi. To accede the decisions from the society members to allot a day for the discussion of a motion of no confidence tabbed by the society, which would have the effect of testing the confidence of the EC.
- xii. Submit an agenda for the term.



Section Nine

9.0 Annual General Meeting

9.1 The Annual General Meeting will be the highest decision-making body of the ZimSoc.

9.2 The Annual General Meeting of the Society shall take place once a year during the 3rd term of the Academic year of Stellenbosch University.

9.3 Notice of the Annual General Meeting is to be sent out at least 14 days before the date of the meeting and is to be accompanied by an Agenda of the issues that are to be dealt with in the meeting.

9.4 The AGM shall have the power to elect or appoint any commission or committee and assign specific tasks and duties to such commission, committee or individual(s) as the case may be.

Section Ten

10.0 Executive Committee (EC)

10.1 The Executive Committee shall consist of the following positions, which are to be filled by the AGM through electoral processes, requiring a two-thirds majority vote:

- i. Chairperson
- ii. Vice Chairperson
- iii. Secretary General and Communications Officer
- iv. Treasurer
- v. Project Coordinator
- vi. Secretary of Publicity and International Affairs
- vii. Executive Members

10.2 Voting Procedure:

- i. The members elected to serve on the EC shall be elected by the members attending the AGM and approved by the EC, by way of nominations being made from the floor at the AGM and voted on. Nominated persons are subject to accepting or declining their nomination by another member without need to give a reason for their decision. Self-nominations will be permitted.
- ii. All members of the Society are equally eligible for nomination for any of the positions on the EC.



- iii. Only registered members are eligible to partake in the voting procedure, self-nominations by submission of applications via email to the secretary general, including all the necessary details and the executive committee may decide to use an online voting system.
- iv. There must be at least 7 nominations brought forward, 1 per each position of the EC, before a vote can be taken.
- v. If less than the required number of people is nominated, a byelection to nominate more people will be held later as decided by the members present at the AGM.

10.3 Members elected to serve on the EC of the Society shall serve for a period of one year, which shall be known as one term, where after the position becomes vacant and shall be refilled by the AGM.

10.4 No member may serve on the EC, in whatsoever capacity, for more than 2 consecutive terms unless if there are no nominations or applications submitted for an EC position.

10.5 A member elected to serve on the EC, who has been absent for three consecutive EC meetings without leave or apology, shall vacate his/her position.

10.6 The vacant position on the EC referred to in clause 10.5 shall be temporarily filled by a person elected by the EC, who shall serve until the date of the next AGM, where the AGM shall elect a person to fill the vacant position for the remainder of the term of the EC.

If, however the Chairperson resigns, the Vice-Chairperson is to assume the office of the Chairperson and the EC shall decide whether appoint a new Vice-Chairperson or not and the Secretary General to be next in line after the Vice-Chairperson. If all three are to resign, then the executive member will become the acting chairperson and would be required to hold a general election within a week to fill the vacant positions.

10.7 The EC members may, in consultation with the AGM establish working groups or committees to assist them with their tasks.

Section Eleven

1. Duties of the Executive Committee

All members of the EC shall perform any legal society duties assigned to them by the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

2. The Chairperson shall:

- i. Preside over all meetings of the Society and of its Executive Committee.



- ii. Delegate tasks and coordinate the work of the members of the Society and committees that may be formed.
- iii. Represent the Society to the University and beyond.
- iv. Be a signatory, together with the Secretary General, to the Society's Cost Point.
- v. Direct the Secretary General to hold elections on the date decided by the EC via a written letter seven days prior. And hold a meeting to verify the results of the elections with the EC and approve the elected EC.
- vi. Create such committees as may be necessary to carry out the Societies' programme and, with the guidance of the Executive Committee, detail the responsibilities of each committee.
 - a. Committees created by the Chairperson, unless otherwise specified, shall be bodies that gather information and make recommendations pertaining to specific projects and/or Goals.
 - b) Such recommendations shall be presented in written form to the entire Society at regular meetings.
- vii.

3. The Vice-Chairperson shall:

- i. Assist the Chairperson as requested in fulfilling the Chairperson's duties.
- ii. Assume the Chairperson's role when he/she is absent.
- iii. Oversee all the activities and events hosted by the society.
- iv. Oversee the various committees established by the Chairperson.

4. The Secretary General and Communications Officer shall:

- i. Take the minutes of each meeting, distribute the minutes to members, and maintain the record of the minutes.
- ii. Conduct correspondence for the Society at the direction of the Chairperson.
- iii. Take attendance at each meeting and maintain a list of active members to be made available at each meeting.
- iv. Be a signatory, together with the Chairperson to the Society's Cost Point.
- v. Issue media statements on behalf of the Society in consultation with the Chairperson.
- vi. Be responsible for the external and internal dissemination of information on the Society through various media forms as may be required.
- vii. Preside over elections of the EC and present the voting results to the incumbent EC for approval within 24 hours, before the results are announced.



5. The Treasurer shall:

- i. Be responsible for managing all Society financial matters.
- ii. Maintain and keep current all Society financial records.
- iii. Report at each meeting on Society financial business and the status of the Society account.
- iv. Deposit all funds in a registered financial services provider

6. Secretary for Publicity and International Affairs

- i. Be responsible for the external and internal publicity of the work of the Society.
- ii. Coordinate the international work of the Society.
- iii. Liaise and maintain contact with the International Musicians Society, All Africa Students Union, Southern African Students Union and international organizations to which the Society is affiliated.
- iv. Represent and maintain a proper image of the Society internationally.
- v. Perform any other duty assigned to him/her by the EC or AGM through the Chairperson.

7. Project Co-coordinator shall:

- i. Oversee activities together with the vice chairperson
- ii. Perform any duties assigned to him or her by the EC or AGM through the chairperson (to be included under all posts)
- iii. Identify requirements and expectations of each event and liaise with stakeholders/the society during event planning process to make sure everything is in order.
- iv. Manage all event setup, tear down and follow up process.
- v. Maintain event budgets.
- vi. Book venues, entertainers, photographers and schedule speakers.
- vii. Conduct final inspections on the day of the event to ensure everything adheres to the society's standards
- viii. Assess an event's overall success and submit findings.
- ix. Create a project management calendar for fulfilling each goal and objective.
- x. Develop project strategies and ensuring that project deadlines are met.
- xi. Documenting and following up on important actions and decisions from meetings.

11.7 Executive member shall:

- i. Perform any duties assigned to him/her by the EC or AGM through the Chairperson



- ii. Serve as a point of contact for any formal grievances submitted to the EC
- iii. Help the Project and events coordinator and the Vice Chairperson with event managing.
- iv. Preside over motion of no confidence procedures.

Section Twelve

12.0 Discipline

12.1 Discipline and conduct of all members of the Society shall be regulated and governed herein by the Code of Conduct as adopted by the Annual General Meeting.

12.2 If any member of the Society is unhappy or unsatisfied with any decision taken by the Society, such a person may approach the Student Court of Stellenbosch University as an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Forum to resolve such a dispute.

Section Thirteen

13.0 Quorum

13.1 The quorum of the AGM shall be a simple majority comprising of 50% plus 1 of the number of paid up members.

13.2 The quorum of the EC shall be a simple majority comprising of 50% plus 1 of the full complement of members of the EC.

13.3 Each member attending the meeting shall have one vote per item on the Agenda that needs to be voted on.

13.4 Voting shall be decided by a show of hands except where otherwise decided and determined by the Chairperson.

13.5 Should a quorum not be present 30 minutes after the start of the meeting, the business of the meeting shall stand down for 30 more minutes, and if a quorum is still not present the meeting shall be adjourned? The members present at the meeting shall only have the power to decide on the date of the next meeting.

13.6 If at the next meeting, a quorum is not present, the members attending the meeting may take a vote, to be decided by a simple majority of members present at such meeting, and the business of the meeting shall then continue. All decisions taken at such meeting shall be considered to be of full and effect, as if decided by a full quorum.

13.7 Where amendments need to be affected to the Constitution of the Society, a two-thirds majority of members shall be required.



Section Fourteen

14.0 Amendment to the Constitution

14.1 All proposed amendments to the Constitution shall be submitted to the Secretary General in writing at least 30 days before the date of the next General Meeting.

14.2 Proposed amendments are to be listed in the Agenda that is to be sent out with the notice of the General Meeting at least 14 days before the date on which the meeting is to be held.

14.3 All proposed amendments shall be submitted to the plenary of the General Meeting for discussion and will require a two-thirds majority of votes in order to be adopted into the Constitution.

Section Fifteen

15.0 Dissolution

15.1 The AGM of the Society shall be entitled to decide on the dissolution of the Society. Such a decision shall be subjected to adoption or rejection at the AGM by a two-thirds vote.

15.2 Upon dissolution or winding up, the assets of the Society, remaining after satisfaction of all its liabilities shall be entrusted in the hands of any person as decided by AGM for disposal.

Section Sixteen

16.0 Motion of no confidence

16.1 Motions of no confidence are to be submitted to the Executive member, who will submit it to the EC and preside over the process in line with the constitution.

16.2 The society will have a discussion to assess all the motions and grievances submitted and the discussion will test the confidence of the EC.

16.3 The registered members are given sole power to adjudicate all impeachments, and a conviction is returned by a two-thirds vote. The consequence of a conviction is removal from office.

16.4 Inability to perform duties efficiently due to ill health or incapacity should be excluded.