

The Constitution of United Nations Association of South Africa (UNASA) (Stellenbosch Chapter)



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Chapter 1

1. Preamble

1.1. The name of the Association shall be the “United Nations Association of South Africa (Stellenbosch Chapter)”, hereafter referred to as “UNASA (SC)” or simply “Association”.

1.2. The Association shall be closely affiliated to, and work under the auspices of, the United Nations Association of South Africa (UNA-SA), and through it, the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA).

1.3. The Association is a voluntary, non-profit, non-governmental organization established in accordance with the Non-Profit Organizations Act of 1997.

1.4. The Association shall exist, separately from its members and continue to exist even when its membership changes and there are different office-bearers.

1.5. The Association may not give any of its money or property to its members or office-bearers, other than to reimburse persons for expenses incurred on behalf of the Association or to pay persons for the work that was done for the Association.

1.6. Members or office-bearers of the Association do not have rights over belongings of the Association.

2. Mission Statement

The aim of the Association is to be a student's movement for the realisation of the purposes of the United Nations.

The objectives are to generate awareness and support for the aims, achievements and activities of the United Nations and its agencies; promote studies, research and activities relating to the United Nations system; promote international understanding and peaceful co-operation among students; and to strive, along with other organizations, to promote harmony as well as economic, social and cultural progress in South Africa.

The Association believes that it should play a dynamic role in the changing and developing times at the University of Stellenbosch through the promotion of lively debate and critical thinking amongst Association members and students alike; commits itself to justifiable and transparent conduct towards any individual or group of individuals; recognizes the right to freedom of speech, association, assembly or protest of all the members of the University, as long as the rights of others are not affected; and rejects any arbitrary discrimination against any member of the university society.

3. Relations with UNA-SA (SC)

The Association shall strive to achieve its aims through membership of UNA-SA(SC) and of the WFUNA. It shall co-operate with other United Nations Associations and UNA-SA Chapters in pursuing the objectives of UNA-SA (SC), and endeavour to participate in activities conducted under UNA-SA auspices.

4. Definition

In this Constitution, unless the context otherwise indicates:

4.1. "Active member" means any ordinary member that has attended at least three official UNA-SA (SC) functions throughout the year;

4.2. "Majority" should be understood as 50 percent plus one of the members present who are voting;

4.3. "Member" means an ordinary member of the Association who is not in arrears with the payment of the membership fee, and who has not been excluded or suspended from the Association or from the University;

4.4. "Portfolio" means a membership position on the Executive Committee of the Society, as outlined in section 15;

4.5. "Quorum" for any meeting, except where exception is provided for, shall be one-quarter of the total number of members in the society;

4.6. "SRC" means the Students' Representative Council recognised by the Council as the body representing the students of the University;

4.7. "Staff member" means a person employed by the University on a full-time basis, or temporarily; and

4.8. Words in the singular number include the plural, and words in the plural number include the singular.

Chapter 2

5. Membership

5.1. Registered students and staff members of the University of Stellenbosch may become members of the Association upon payment of membership fees as prescribed by the Executive Committee;

5.2. Registered students of Stellenbosch University must make up 85% of all the members of the Association;

5.3. Membership lasts as from the first day of the academic year. Should a person join during the year, membership fees will be paid in full regardless of the terms already expired;

5.4. The Executive Committee retains the right to suspend the membership of any member of the Association for a certain period should such a person be found guilty by the Executive Committee of any serious misconduct towards the Association or its good name;

5.5. The Executive Committee may further approve applications for membership to the Association from members of the general public provided such membership would promote and further the Association and its stated goals;

5.6. The Executive Committee reserves the right to bestow honorary membership on past members and members of the general public for exceptional service to the Association;

5.7. The Executive Committee shall determine the annual membership fee;

5.8. All members shall be entitled to take part in the activities of the Association. They shall have the right to participate, directly or indirectly, in the activities of the Association. These rights include:

- a. The right to vote in the election of the Executive Committee;
- b. The right to be elected as an Executive Committee member of the Association; and
- c. The right to make proposals and/or suggestions regarding the Association's policies and programmes;

5.9. Membership can be terminated
by:

- a. A letter of resignation addressed to the Chairperson;
- b. A decision of the Executive Committee taken with a two thirds majority;
or
- c. Non-payment of the annual subscription;

5.10. All membership fees paid prior to termination of membership shall be forfeited.

Chapter 3

6. Annual General Meeting

6.1. At the end of their term of service (as determined by the regulations of the SRC), the Executive Committee will host an Annual General Meeting in any format that might suit it. At the meeting, the Chairperson is to submit an annual report and the Finance manager a preliminary, or final, financial report. The Chairperson is to make recommendations in the annual report, which can serve as a guideline for the new Executive Committee;

6.2. Members choose a new Executive Committee at the Annual General Meeting according to the procedure set out in section 11;

6.3. 10% of the registered members must be present at the Annual General Meeting;

6.4. Should 10% of the registered members not be present, a new date for the Annual General Meeting must be scheduled;

6.5. Members are to be notified in writing of a pending Annual General Meeting and to be made available the agenda at least fourteen (14) days in advance.

7. Extraordinary Meetings

7.1. An Extraordinary Meeting will take place at the request of the Chairperson or the Executive Committee, or if at least twenty (20) members request such a meeting from the Executive Committee in writing;

7.2. Rules, regulations and powers during an Extraordinary Meeting are as for the Annual General Meeting

Chapter 4

8. Voting Procedure

8.1. Each individual member shall have one vote;

8.2. Voting shall be by show of hands, or, if the meeting so decides, by open or secret ballot;

8.3. Voting may also be done electronically;

8.4. No voting may be affected by proxy;

8.5. When a vote is required, the decisions of the Executive Committee shall be taken by simple majority (50% +1), with the following exceptions, which shall require a two-third majority of those present and voting:

a. Amendments to the Constitution;

b. The waiving of the secrecy of the vote; and

c. The liquidation of the Association; 8.6. In the case of a tie, the presiding officer shall be granted the right to a deciding vote.

Chapter 5

9. Powers of the Executive Committee

9.1. The Executive Committee shall work on the basis of consensus. In cases where this proves impossible, decisions shall be taken by a simple majority of members present;

9.2. The minutes of each meeting will be given to members at least three days before the next meeting. The minutes of the previous meeting shall be confirmed as a true record of the proceedings at the following meeting and shall be signed by the chairperson;

9.3. The Executive Committee has the right to establish procedures for proper management, including procedure for application, approval and termination of membership;

9.4. In the event that a member of the Executive Committee is unable to continue to serve until the end of his/her term, the Executive Committee may co-opt a person to serve until a Special Meeting is convened, where the vacancy needs to be filled through an election;

9.5. The Executive Committee shall:

- a. Endeavor to implement the policies adopted by the UNA-SA (SC);
- b. Assist in fund-raising activities; and
- c. Perform any other functions as specified in this Constitution;

9.6.A member ceases to be part of the Executive Committee when such a person:

- a. Submits a written resignation to the President;
- b. Membership is terminated as indicated in section 5(9);
or
- c. The Executive Committee takes disciplinary action against such member of the Executive Committee who neglects to carry out any duty assigned to him/her in terms of his/her portfolio by means of expulsion from the Executive Committee, with said member still retaining membership to the Association.

10. Duties of the Executive Committee

10.1. This section applies to all Executive Committee members;

10.2. Each and every member of the Executive Committee is directly responsible towards the Chairperson and the Association members for maintaining and enforcing the constitution as approved by the Student Court;

10.3. Each member of the Executive Committee is directly responsible and liable towards the Chairperson and the Association members for performing the duties required by the portfolio assigned to him/her;

10.4. All members of the Executive Committee are expected to actively assist, in any manner possible, any other members of the Executive Committee;

10.5. Each member of the Executive Committee is expected to:

- a. Attend all functions and events organized by the Association unless unable to do so owing to prior commitments. In which case, 24-hour notice is to be given to the Chairperson and the Secretary;

b. Act in a manner doing the Association credit at all times;
and

c. Perform his/her duties to the best of his/her
ability;

10.6. General Executive Committee members must each organise three events throughout their Executive Committee term, one per term starting in the calendar year. A failure to do so will result in an internal disciplinary hearing with regards to a neglect of duties.

11. Election of the Executive Committee

11.1. Executive Committee application requirements:

a. A 1 paragraph motivation letter;

11.2. Every registered member of the Association is a registered voter in the election of a new Executive Committee member;

11.3. The registered voters elect a new Executive Committee for the Executive Committee portfolios set out in section 15.1;

11.4. The Executive Committee will be elected on a portfolio basis;

11.5. The candidate with the most votes for a portfolio will receive the corresponding position on the Executive Committee;

11.6. In the event of a tie for a portfolio position, the Executive Committee will cast the tie-breaking vote;

11.7. Only active members of at least one year of membership of the Association are eligible for nomination;

11.8. The election of the Executive Committee will take place by means of a secret ballot vote;

11.9. The Executive Committee shall appoint a ballot-box convener at the beginning of the meeting. The ballot-box convener must manage the election as prescribed by the Executive Committee;

11.10. In the event of more than two (2) candidates being nominated for the position of Chairperson, an election must be held in order to reduce the number of candidates to two (2) before voting for the Chairperson or the Executive Committee can begin;

11.11. Members of the Executive Committee are elected by a common majority of votes;

11.12. A member who cannot be present during the election may stand as a candidate in proxy.

12. Resignation of an Executive member

12.1. Should a member of the Executive Committee wish to resign from their position

in the middle of the term, they must serve a notice of three weeks to the Chairperson,

Vice-Chairperson and the Secretary;

12.2. This notice must take form of a formal written notice;

12.3. During the notice period of three weeks the outgoing Executive Committee member must to the best of their abilities continue to fulfil their role on the Executive Committee i.e. continue with the projects in which they were engaged;

12.4. Furthermore, they must compile a report which will be handed in to the newly appointed member of the Executive Committee, outlining which projects were in motion at the time of their resignation as well as any other information the newly appointed member to carry out the rest of the term successfully.

13. Appointment of new executive member upon resignation

13.1. Within 24 hours of receiving a notice of resignation from a member of the Executive Committee, the Secretary must create a Google Form for prospective applicants to fill out;

13.2. The Chairperson must inform the head of Media and Marketing to advertise the vacancy on the Executive Committee;

13.3. If it is the head of Media and Marketing that serves a notice of resignation, they themselves, must advertise the vacancy on the Executive Committee;

13.4. Applications must be opened for two weeks;

13.5. At the end of these two weeks the Executive Committee will have one weekend (the nearest coming weekend) to critically analyse all applications;

13.6. A meeting will be held on the nearest coming Wednesday where the applications will be cut down to a top 5;

13.7. The Chairperson and the Vice-chairperson must schedule interviews from the period within Tuesday and Friday;

- 13.8. At an interview there must be a panel of 3 members of the Executive Committee one of which must be the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson or the Secretary;
- 13.9. No member of the Executive Committee may interview someone they know nor someone they encouraged to apply;
- 13.10. All interviewees are to be asked the same set of questions;
- 13.11. All interviews must be capped at 15 minutes;
- 13.12. Interview candidates must be made aware of this cap;
- 13.13. If the interview process cannot take place (due to the unavailability of either the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson or the Secretary at every interview) then the individual who received the most votes in the above preliminary stage will be appointed to the portfolio, with the rest of the 4 other candidates offered positions on the sub- committee of that portfolio;
- 13.14. Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson and the Secretary may only cite unavailability under strenuous academic pressure and demands, including but not limited to instances such as upcoming exams, test week, major assignments etc.
- 13.15. The Executive Committee must be made aware of this alternative process at the meeting where a top 5 will be voted for;
- 13.16. The Chairperson and The Vice Chairperson will then sit down at some stage in the nearest coming weekend make a selection of who is to be appointed into the position based on the interviews;
- 13.17. The newly appointed member will be made aware of their appointment by 20h00 on the Sunday of that very weekend;
- 13.18. They will serve in their post effective the nearest coming Monday.

14. Executive Committee Meetings

14.1. Executive Committee meetings take place on a weekly basis. It is up to the discretion of the Executive Committee to choose which day and time suits the academic timetable of all members;

14.2. All Executive Committee members must attend 75% of all Executive Committee Meetings during their term, failure to do so will result in disciplinary action;

14.3. Formal meeting procedures are applicable at all times unless determined otherwise by either the Executive Committee or the Chairperson;

14.4. The agenda of the Executive Committee meeting shall be made available to the Executive Committee 24 hours before the meeting;

14.5. The quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of two thirds of its members. The Executive Committee shall meet on a weekly basis during the academic year;

14.6. Members of the Executive Committee are only allowed to excuse themselves from a meeting with the prior consent of the Chairperson, Vice-chairperson or Secretary;

14.7. The Executive Committee takes decisions by means of a majority of votes of members.

15. Members of the Executive Committee

15.1. The Executive Committee shall consist of at least the following members:

- a. Chairperson;
- b. Vice-Chairperson;
- c. Secretary-General;

- d. Treasurer;
- e. Media and Marketing;
- f. MUN Coordinator;

- g. Sustainable Development Goal (SGD) Coordinator;
- h. Human Rights Coordinator;
- i. Pieter Langeveldt Project Coordinator;
- j. Reading Project Coordinator;
- k. Additional member(s);

15.2. 'Additional Members' positions may be added or removed by the Executive Committee as it deems fit, aligning with the requirements of that Executive Committee's term;

15.3. Any vacancy on the Executive Committee may be filled at a meeting of the Association or by co-option.

16. Chairperson

16.1. The Chairperson of the Association shall preside at all meetings of the Executive Committee and of the Association;

16.2. In the absence of the Chairperson, all his/her powers and duties shall devolve on the Vice-Chairperson, and if he/she too is absent, upon the Secretary or such a person as appointed by the Chairperson in the previous Executive Committee meeting;

16.3. The Chairperson shall submit a report on the Association's activities over the past year to the Annual General Meeting;

16.4. The Chairperson may convene a meeting of the Executive Committee or the Association whenever he/she deems it necessary.

17. Vice-chairperson

17.1. The Vice-chairperson shall preside over the internal disciplinary committee meetings;

17.2. The Vice-chairperson shall oversee discourses and other diplomacy activities of the Association;

17.3. The Vice-Chairperson shall take charge of organising corporate sponsorships, public relations, head office relations and communication, discipline and inter-chapter Relations.

18. Secretary

18.1. The Secretary of the Association shall have charge of the Association's records and Minute Book;

18.2. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all meetings of the Association and the Executive Committee;

18.3. The Secretary shall keep a copy of the Association's Constitution, as amended from time to time, in the Minute book.

19. Treasurer

19.1. The Treasurer of the Association shall be responsible to the Executive Committee for all the income and expenditure of the Association during his/her term;

19.2. The Treasurer shall be entitled to draw upon accounts of the Association;

19.3. The Treasurer will prepare the financial report of the Association's activities during his/her term to present it at the Annual General Meeting;

19.4. The Treasurer shall organise fundraising.

Chapter 6

20. Discipline

21.1. Members of the Association may have their membership suspended if the internal disciplinary hearing committee finds the person(s) guilty of serious misconduct towards the Association or its good name;

21.2. Members of the Executive Committee may be expelled from the Executive Committee if it is found by the internal disciplinary hearing that such Executive Committee member(s) has neglected his/her duty in terms of their portfolio or in terms of section 10.5;

21.3. The internal disciplinary hearing committee shall be presided over by the Vice-chairperson;

21.4. The Vice-chairperson shall be assisted by three other Executive Committee members and four Association members on the internal disciplinary hearing committee;

21.5. Decision of the internal disciplinary hearing committee are to be decided by majority;

21.6. The internal disciplinary hearing committee must uphold justice and fairness, by listening to both sides of the case;

21.7. A minimum of two warnings must be given to trigger an internal disciplinary hearing;

21.8. After two warnings, a week's notice must be given to the parties of the up and coming internal disciplinary hearing;

21.9. The parties must be made known of their rights in the matter, including their right to appeal to the Student Court within 30 days of the internal disciplinary hearing committee's decision to dismiss;

21.10. The parties in the internal disciplinary hearing also have the right to bypass the internal disciplinary hearing and apply to the Central Disciplinary Committee of the University of Stellenbosch for fairness and justice.

21. Amendments

22.1. This Constitution can only be amended or altered by a two-thirds majority of the Executive Committee;

22.2. The amendment must also be approved by a two-thirds majority of all voting members present at an Annual General Meeting or Special Meeting;

22.3. A minimum of 20% of the members must be present for the Annual General Meeting or Special Meeting in order for an amendment to be approved;

22.4. In order for a Constitutional Amendment to be valid it is necessary that either a physical meeting or an electronic voting must be held;

22.5. In the case of a physical special meeting, the following conditions must be met to be valid:

a. minimum of 2 weeks' notice be given;

b. This notice must indicate the proposed amendment and the reasons for it; and lastly

- c. A meeting with regard to a constitutional amendment must take place at a reasonable time and place;
- 22.6. In the case of an electronic vote, the following conditions must be met to be valid:
- a. Electronic voting must be open for 2 weeks minimum;
 - b. Notice must be given at least one day prior to the opening of voting which gives the exact language that appears in the amendment to be read by members;
 - c. Members must be able to provide publicly visible comment on the amendment on the UNA-SA (SC) website, or on the online forum in which the electronic voting takes place.

22. Dissolution

- 23.1. The Association may be dissolved if at least two thirds of the members present and voting at an Annual General Meeting agree;
- 23.2. If there are assets left over after all the debtors have been paid it shall be donated to another non-profit organization that has similar aims to the UNA-SA (SC) or to a charitable organization, as per the decision of the members at the General Meeting.