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PREAMBLE

We, the citizens of Liberia residing in Manhattan, do hereby associate ourselves into an organization under the name of the Liberian Community Association of New York: officially abbreviated as LICANY of the purpose of unity and understanding the problems and responsibilities with which we are faced; in order to promote the welfare of Liberians at home and abroad; to develop and nurture a keener relationship of togetherness and communication; and a sense of political, social and economic consciousness among ourselves.

We have realized the need to maintain and sustain within our ranks, the bonds of dedication and patriotism to our native land; therefore, we do ordain and establish this Constitution and these by-laws as the legal documents for the governance of the same, which shall hereinafter be referred to as “THE LIBERIAN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK (LICANY).”

ARTICLE 1
MEMBERSHIP

Section 1.

Membership in the Association shall be opened to all Liberians residing in Manhattan and any other borough or municipality where Liberians, are unorganized.

Section 2.

To become a member any desirous person must submit a written application to the Membership Board to be appointed by the President.

Section 3.

Affiliate members shall apply to any and all Liberians throughout the United States who prefer affiliation with this organization.

Section 4.

Associate member shall apply to any and all persons who directly or indirectly manifest interest in the Association; such interest shall not be construed to mean, refer or apply to the perpetration and/or promotion of activities that subdue dedication and patriotism to the Republic of Liberia and a legally constituted government thereof.

Section 5.

Active member shall refer and apply to any member of this Association who attends meetings regularly without a lapse of six consecutive months and who is not delinquent for four consecutive months in payment of monthly dues.

Section 6.

The non-Liberian spouses of those eligible for membership shall be recognized as full members provided a written declaration of intent is filed according to Section 2 of this Article.

Section 7.

Honorary membership shall be bestowed on those individuals, whose distinguished support and services warrant recognition. Such recognition shall be given by the President in consultation with the Council. Honorary membership however, remains purely a ceremonial stature: privileges accompanying the grant of this title shall not include the right to vote or hold any office.

ARTICLE II
OFFICERS

Section 1.

The elected officers of the Liberian Association of New York shall be: President and Vice president; Treasurer and Auditor-General may also be elected. Other officers shall include Social Secretary, General Secretary, Chaplain, members of the Council and members of the Board of Directors (BOD).

- a) The President shall be the executive officer of the Association. He/she shall preside over any, all and every meeting, and shall have the power to appoint, by the with the advice and approval of the Council, all, every, and as many officers as he/she may consider necessary for the smooth, effective and efficient operation of his/her administration.
- b) The President shall be elected by a simple majority of all member voting secret ballots in a General Election held on the second Sunday in August every election year.

- c) The President, his/her cabinet and other appointed officers shall hold office for two years, beginning on the day of his installation or inauguration which shall be two months after his/her election.
- d) The President shall approve all vouchers for funds and countersign all checks drawn on the treasury accounts of the Association in result of appropriations made by any office or committee of the Association.
- e) The President shall have the power to conduct the external relations of the Organization with other institutions including, but not limited to, the governments of States and their agencies, international bodies, business enterprises and other voluntary associations. Where such transactions connected with the external interests and internal programs require, the President shall negotiate and, with the advice and consent of the Council, conclude all formal agreement, contract, and other understandings to which the Organization shall be a party.
- f) The President shall be the chief spokesman on all matters involving the interests, policies, and activities of LICANY He/she shall be member ex-officio of the committees.

Section 2.

- a) The Vice President shall be the principal deputy of the President in matters of overall leadership.
- b) He/shall in the case of inability, impeachment, and removal or death of the President, immediately succeed to the Presidency pending appropriate action in accordance with the constitution.

Section 3.

- a) The General Secretary shall be the chief recording office of the Association. He/she shall be the custodian of all records except the bank (pass) books. Some of his/her books of records shall be made public to any member upon request through the office of the President, for security reasons.
- b) The General Secretary shall read minutes of the previous meeting at the start of the current meeting, for corrections and acceptance and acceptance so as to form part of the archives of the Association.
- c) In consultation with the President, the General Secretary shall send out notices and memos in regard to meeting and other events of the Organization.
- d) In the case of inability, impeachment, and removal or death of the Vice President, the General Secretary shall immediately succeed to the Vice Presidency pending appropriate action in accordance with the constitution.

Section 4.

The treasurer shall be the chief financial officer of the association. He/she shall collect or direct the collection and receive other monies connected with the Association's activities for prompt deposit into the official bank accounts of the Association. He/she shall prepare and maintain an up-to-date record of the various sources of the monies received in the Treasury. The treasurer shall submit a quarterly report to the President.

Section 5.

- a) The Auditor-General shall be the chief accountant of the Association.

- b) The Auditor-General shall submit a semi-annual report to the Association.
- c) In the case where discrepancies or fraud is suspected the Council shall request the auditor to audit the records of subjects involved; and upon completion of such audit, the auditor shall make a detailed report to the council in the given period of time for appropriate action.
- d) The Auditor-General shall also perform additional duties that shall arise and be assigned to him/her by the president.

Section 6.

The Social Secretary shall be the chairman of the social committee and shall be the master of ceremony (MC) at any social event. The social committee shall propose and implement all social programs approved by 2/3 majority of general meeting.

Section 7.

The Chaplain shall head the Emergency Committee; he/she shall conduct devotions and benedictions at all general and called meetings. He/she shall have sufficient religious knowledge and the ability to interpret the Bible.

Section 8.

The Council shall have the power to conduct special inquires, investigations and impeachment proceedings, and its approval shall be necessary for the withdrawal of funds from the treasury, for projects that are not part of an approved program and/or budget, and it shall have full, complete and exclusive jurisdiction in all matters pertaining and relating to questions arising from conflict of law, the interpretation of the constitution and By-Laws.

Section 9.

The Council shall consist of five (5) elected representatives whose tenure shall be two years. The council shall choose from among its members a chairman and a chairman pro-tempore. The Council shall be elected at the second General Meeting of the new-administration.

Section 10.

In case of a vacancy on the Council because of reason including but not limited to death, resignation, removal from office, or inability to discharge the powers, duties and high responsibilities of the member of that body, the chairman or chairman pro-tempore, shall notify the President who shall schedule a meeting to fill said position.

ARTICLE III
OATH OF OFFICE

Section 1.

Every appointed and elected officer including the President shall commence the execution of the duties of his/her office, by taking the following oath or affirmation, administered by any member of the council, or any one the President-elect may choose, by and with the advice and consent of the Council: *I, ... do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of ... of the Liberian Community Association of New York, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the Liberian Community Association of New York both in deed and Principal, so help me God.*

ARTICLE IV
STANDING COMMITTEE

Section 1.

The Standing Committee of the Organization shall be as follows: The Executive Committee, Emergency Committee, Social Committee, Membership Committee and Election committee.

- a) The Executive Committee shall consist of the President and all cabinet members. The same shall advise the President on internal and external management and other important matters of the Association. It shall formulate of consider general policy proposals for implementation. It shall promote relations with other organization.
- b) The Emergency Committee shall be headed by the Chaplain or any member designated by the President. The committee shall have the power, up Presidential directives, to handle all emergencies or eventualities that shall arise within the community. This committee shall recommend aid to distressed members; and shall make comprehensive report to the President and the General Body at a general or called meeting.
- c) The Social Committee shall function according to **Article II Section 6** of the constitution.
- d) The Membership Committee shall be headed by a chairman. The committee shall be charged with the responsibilities to determine eligibility of an applicant. The committee shall consider **Article 1, Section 2** as a criterion of acceptance of new members.
- e) The Election Committee shall comprise 2/3 majority of five members appointed by the President on the second Sunday in February each election year. The committee shall regulate all general elections, orderly and efficiently. The committee shall elect, among its members, a chairman who shall be the spokesperson. It shall brief the President and the Council, from time to time, on problems about elections. With the advice and

consent of the President and the Council, the committee shall have the power to settle elections disputes.

- f) In the instance where the President is seeking re-election the election committee shall confer with the council on all matters.
- g) No member of this committee shall help to organize or support a Presidential campaign. In the instance where a member directly or indirectly helps, supports or organizes a Presidential campaign, he shall immediately be replaced at a general or special meeting by a 2/3 majority of members present.

ARTICLES V **DISTRICTS**

Section 1.

The Organization shall be divided into as many geographical districts as are necessary for a smooth and effective operation of the Association.

Section 2.

Each district shall be represented by their elected councilman, who is a member of the Legislative and Judicial Council.

ARTICLE VI **IMPEACHMENT**

Section 1.

The Council shall examine, investigate and inquire into every petition signed by at least ten (10) active members alleging a

serious offence committed by the President, elected or any appointed officer of the Association.

Section 2.

The trial procedure shall include the right of the accused to answer all charges against him, to confront his accuser and cross-examine witnesses against him, to produce witnesses in his defense and to defend himself either in person or by writing.

Section 3.

In the instance that the council shall find the President or any officer guilty of a serious offense, and if LICANY shall consider his removal from office, a special meeting shall be convened for the purpose of holding a general referendum comprising of active member only, which shall determine his/her continued stay or removal. (As used in above sections, his and subsequent paragraphs, what shall be tantamount as a "Serious Offence" shall be determined by the Council).

ARTICLE VII
FINANCES

Section 1.

The Organization shall establish and maintain bank accounts at an organized and recognized banking institution in the City of New York, for safe custody of its funds and other financial assets and liabilities.

Section 2.

No monies shall be drawn from the Treasury of the Association, but in consequence of appropriations, made by any office or committee, approved by the President, and the Council. Statements of accounts of the receipts and expenditures shall be

periodically made available by the treasurer and he/she shall also observe **Article II, Section 4** of the constitution.

Section 3.

No member or officer shall keep any funds belonging to the Association for more than 10 days. All funds received on behalf of the Organization must be turned over to the Treasurer to be deposited in the Association's bank account within 10 days.

Section 4.

Any member or officer who shall receive funds or make disbursements on behalf of the Organization shall issue official receipts in duplicate; the original being sent to the payee and the duplicate being kept by the Treasurer.

ARTICLE VIII
TENURE OF OFFICE

Section 1.

The President and all elected and appointed officers of the Association shall serve a term of two consecutive years. If reelected, they shall serve an additional term of two years. Elected officers shall not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.

ARTICLE IX
INSTALLATION

Section 1.

For the purpose of raising funds for the Association, the incumbent shall work with the Transition Team of the new administration to plan the installation program. The LICANY

shall sponsor such programs and all proceeds therefrom shall be deposited in the Treasure-of the Organization.

Section 2.

The President-elect, his/her cabinet and other appointees shall officially resume management of the Organization immediately after comply with **Article III, Section 1** of this constitution.

Section 3.

All installations of new or incoming administrations shall take place in October of each elections year, according to **Article II, Section 1 (c)** of the Constitution.

ARTICLE X
LICANY PROPERTIES

Section 1.

All assets, liabilities, including but not limited to all documents compiled by the Association during any administrative year shall be considered properties of the Association.

Section 2.

List of all items turned over to the new administration shall be signed for by the President-elect in the presence of the Election Committee and the Council after installation.

Section 3.

LICANY shall take appropriate action against anyone who shall refuse to release all of the Association's documents or prosperities to the new administration.

ARTICLE XI

ELIGIBILITY

Section 1.

General qualifications for Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates shall include attainment of age twenty-one or above; a resident of the State and City of New York of rat least on calendar years; an active member; non-delinquent in payment of monthly or meeting dues.

ARTICLE XII ELECTIONS

Section 1.

The elections of the executive officers of LICANY shall be conducted by the Election Committee according to **Article IV, Section 1 (e)** of the Constitution. All general elections shall be held during the second Sunday in August every election year.

Section 2.

Any member eligible for, and desirous of, the Presidency of LICANY shall communicate his intentions in writing to the Election Committee on the before March of the election year.

Section 3.

After the Committee receives a declaration of candidacy for the office of President, it shall conduct a thorough, detailed and complete investigation, with or without the assistance of the candidate, and shall submit a written brief report to the Organization, such day as shall be set for that purpose.

Section 4.

In the instance that the committee shall receive more than two declarations of candidacy for the office of President, the Election

Committee shall schedule a primary election to determine two, and only two candidates for consideration on the general election day.

Section 5.

In the instance that a candidate determined by a primary election shall, at least two weeks before general election day, become unavailable either because of death, disability, voluntary withdrawal of candidacy, or for whatever other reason the Election committee shall consider sufficient to imply unavailability, the committee shall include the name of the candidate with the third highest vote, as determined by the primary election.

Section 6.

If a primary election has not ensured for want of more than two candidates and a candidate shall become unavailable, in keeping with **Section V of this Article**, the committee shall submit the name of the second candidate to a general referendum.

Section 7.

If a candidate submitted to a General Referendum shall decline or be rejected, the Committee shall entertain candidates anew and shall set date and time for Special Election

Section 8.

In the instance where the ballots cast resulted in an equal distribution of votes, the Committee shall immediately schedule a new election. If, however, a tie-vote persists twice, the Committee shall obtain from the floor one nomination for addition to the list of the existing candidates for further balloting until the tie is broken.

Section 9.

Observership on the committee shall be accorded to one accredited representative of each of the presidential candidates, alliance of candidates, so as to ensure security and protection of all parties interest. The committee shall issue guidelines and regulations during elections.

Section 10.

The President is required by law to brief the President-election issues of the community from day to day until the official transition shall take place.

ARTICLE XIII
ANNUAL REPORT

Section 1.

The President shall submit semi-annual reports to the Organization during his/her two-year term. His/her first semi-annual report shall be made on the first Sunday in February, six months after his/her election. The final report shall be made on the last Sunday in 30 days or so before the President-elect is installed.

Section 2.

The semi-annual reports shall include but not be limited to, financial disclosures of the Association, the disclosure of the organization's assets and liabilities, donations and/or contribution to other organizations, governments and individuals. The report shall also include unfinished projects, contracts and recommendations.

ARTICLE XIV
MEETING

Section 1.

The General Meeting of the Association shall be held once a month, occurring on the first Sunday of the current month, at a place and time to be announced according to **Article II, Section 3 (c)** of this Constitution.

Section 2.

Meeting dues shall be five dollars per month, or sixty dollars a year. Taxations other than the monthly meeting dues, shall be levied on the membership only upon approval of the Body as expressed at a meeting.

Section 3.

At a General Meeting, 2/3 of the active membership shall constitute a quorum. However, if less than 2/3 are present, those present may determine, subject to a veto from the President, whether they constitute a quorum. At a Special Meeting, the President shall decide whether a quorum exists.

Section 4.

The President shall convene an Emergency Meeting in case of death or any other eventuality to determine and deliver the kind of aid and advise the victim or his/her family shall need.

Section 5.

At a meeting, the President, shall appoint, or designate a member to maintain order. He/she may impose fines of not more than \$2.00 payable on demand, on any member of such acts as he/she shall consider disorderly.

Section 6.

It shall be the responsibility of the President to ensure that the organization shall maintain, at all times, an up-to-date and current record of the meeting dues paid by each and every member; the date on which such payments were made; the

meeting attended by each member, and recording of special services rendered, if any.

Section 7.

No President shall have secret meeting with any government, organization or their agents without the consent and advice of the Council. In the instance where meeting is held, the President has committed a serious offence warranting impeachment proceedings.

ARTICLE XV
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1.

The Chapter shall be officially represented at the Union of Liberian Association in the Americas (ULAA) Board of Directors meetings by three (3) individuals including the President. This board, hereinafter, shall be referred to as “Directors” or BOD.

Section 2.

The election of the Directors shall take place during the first general meeting of the new administration.

Section 3.

The directors shall meet quarterly with other chapters Board at a place and time decided by the leadership of the BOD itself. The directors shall report to the chapter on any meeting they shall attend under the auspices of ULAA in the interest of the chapter. The President shall be the spokesperson of the Board.

Section 4.

Any director who shall miss two consecutive sessions of the BOD meetings shall be impeached for inability and lack of interest.

Section 5.

This Board shall be the official lobbyist of the Chapter. No member of this Board shall be entitled to special privileges from the Chapter.

Section 6.

For the purpose of good record keeping the President shall designate any member of the Board to perform secretarial duties during Board meetings and conferences.

ARTICLE XVI
THE UNION (ULAA)

Section 1.

The Union of Liberian Associations in the Americas, Inc. (ULAA) shall be recognized by the Chapter, as the overall organization for the Liberians in the North and South Americas.

Section 2.

The Union shall not dictate representation of the Chapter to the Union Board of Directors meeting and other conferences. Both organizations shall work together for the common good of the Liberian people at home and abroad.

Section 3.

The Chapter shall secede from the Union only if such secession shall not threaten normal operatives and interests of the Union.

ARTICLE XVII
AMEMDMENTS

Section 1.

Amendments to this Constitution shall require 2/3 approval by all members of the Council and simple majority of all members present at a general meeting of the Liberian Community Association of New York.