

THE CONSTITUTION
OF
IBOM PEOPLES CONGRESS (USA), INC.

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Preamble:

As a people of a common heritage and destiny, we have a moral obligation to contribute our fair share individually and collectively, to make a difference in the lives our people in Akwa Ibom State.

WE THE DAUGHTERS AND SONS OF AKWA IBOM STATE OF NIGERIA;

CONVINCED that it is the inalienable right of all people to control their own destiny;

CONVINCED of the fact that freedom, equality, justice and dignity are essential objectives for the achievements of the legitimate aspirations of the Akwa Ibom people

CONVINCED of our responsibility to harness the natural and human resources of our state for the advancement of our people in all spheres of human endeavor;

INSPIRED by a common determination to promote understanding and cooperation among our peoples (at home and abroad) in response to the aspirations of our peoples for brotherhood and solidarity, in a larger unity transcending ethnic and local government differences;

DETERMINED to safeguard and consolidate the hard-won Statehood within the Federation of Nigeria, and to resist marginalization or domination, in any form, by any constituent authority or ethnic group, in Nigeria;

DESIROUS of working as catalyst with other grassroots agents of change in the LAND OF PROMISE;

CONSCIOUS of the fact that Akwa Ibom State is a host to valuable natural resources, and also conscious of the inequitable distribution, by the Federal Government, of the proceeds of the natural resources, and in support of the State Government's effort to put an end to this economic injustice;

COMMITTED to the practice of tolerance and the desire to live together in peace with one another irrespective of the artificial clan boundaries;

DEDICATED to promoting social progress and better standards of life for the current and the generations yet unborn in Akwa Ibom State;

DEDICATED to providing unflinching and selfless support to the Akwa Ibom State government and the local governments, when they are working for the interest, welfare, and well-being of our people; and equally dedicated to opposing the government when we believe it is not working in the interest of the people of Akwa Ibom State.

COMMITTED to advocacy and non-partisanship, and resolved that our selflessness and unfettered determination can go a long way towards making us a giant 'Catalyst' for change: socially, economically, and politically for the common good and improved quality of life for all, for generations yet unborn in Akwa Ibom State and beyond:

Have agreed to establish Ibom Peoples Congress, herein after called IPC, to accomplish the aims stated above. Accordingly, we hereby declare our unconditional commitment and loyalty to the goals and objectives of the IPC Constitution as follows:

ARTICLE I: NAME

The Organization shall be known, called, and addressed as **Ibom Peoples Congress (IPC) USA, Inc.**

ARTICLE II: CONSTITUTION

The Constitution of IPC sets forth the Organization's fundamental laws. It is designed to serve the interest of the people of Akwa Ibom State.

This Constitution shall be binding on all members and constituent committees. The Guardian of the Constitution shall be the IPC Legal Counsel, to be nominated and confirmed by the IPC CWC.

ARTICLE III: OPERATING HEADQUARTERS OF IPC

1. The location and headquarters of the Organization shall be California in the United States of America, where it was founded and incorporated.

IPC Coordinators/Operating Chapters

2. To facilitate the work of IPC, the Executive may decide to appoint Coordinators where IPC is not in operation, chapters may be established in different parts of the world. The Coordinators and chapters are subordinate to, and shall not take any decision affecting the Organization without the approval of the Headquarters.
3. The Operating Chapters shall not develop its own Constitution. They may, subject to the approval of the CWC, develop Bylaws to facilitate the work of the Chapter if the socio-political situation warrants it.

ARTICLE IV: OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of the IPC is to seek economic justice, political justice and economic empowerment for the people of Akwa Ibom State. The Organization shall also promote democratic political process, good governance that guarantees freedom and human rights for all citizens, and equitable distribution of the proceeds of the natural resources of Akwa Ibom State among the citizens.

This Organization is organized and operated exclusively for public and charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3), Internal Revenue Code.

In fulfillment of its foregoing objectives, IPC shall generally take all necessary and appropriate action, and in particular shall:

1. Demand for a fair share of revenue derived from the exploitation of natural resources of Akwa Ibom State by the federal government of Nigeria and other private and multi-national corporations operating in the state.
2. Monitor and follow up with development activities in the state with a view to playing a meaningful role in the areas of social and economic development.
3. Demand the establishment of political system based on true democratic principles and good governance, where the rights and freedom of the citizens are guaranteed;
4. Serve as a mouth-piece for the masses on social, economic, and political issues, and also as advocate for truth and accountability in public service within and outside our state using the legal system if necessary.
5. Promote, encourage, and assist the State Government in the development, selection, adaptation, transfer and use of industrial technology, with due regard for the socio-economic conditions and the specific requirements of the industrial development of the State;
6. Organize and collaborate with different levels of educational institutions in the State in training of technical and other appropriate categories of personnel to meet the state and local government manpower needs;.
7. Advise the people and State government in the exploitation, conservation and transformation of the natural resources for the common good of the people of Akwa Ibom State;
8. Collaborate with the State Government and other entities in working to eradicate poverty, illiteracy, and diseases, through job creation activities, making schools

- affordable to everyone in the State, and the provision of medical facilities to those in need;.
9. Explore with other stakeholders in the State the possibility of establishing a State owned oil and mineral exploration company to produce and manage our own share of the natural resources; and
 10. Participate in environmental protection projects in order to protect our people against devastating effects of environmental degradation resulting from exploration, extraction and/or production of natural resources.

ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP

- A. Membership of the organization shall be open to all law abiding, peace and development loving citizens of Akwa Ibom State who accept the objectives and obligations contained in the Constitution and in the judgment of the Organization are able and willing to carry out these obligations. .
- B. There shall be membership registration fee of \$50.00 and annual dues of \$100.00. Non members may still participate in the organization without the right to vote on any issue.
- C. IPC reserves the right to refuse membership to persons established to be of questionable character or ill repute.

ARTICLE VI: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the following officers:

- (a) President
- (b) Vice-President
- (c) Secretary
- (d) Assistant Secretary
- (e) Director of Communication
- (f) Treasurer
- (g) Financial Secretary

A. PRESIDENT

Founder Position:

1. The founder of IPC shall remain the President of IPC for four years following the ratification of this Constitution. At the end of this term, he will join the Board of Trustees and shall serve as the Advisor Emeritus to both the President of IPC and the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.
2. Prospective candidates for the position of President shall submit their letter of intent to the General Assembly at least 30 days before election for a due process. The candidate that secures the highest number of votes shall assume the presidency of IPC for two year, and may be re-elected for another two year tenure, for a maximum of four years.

Qualifications for the President

1. Must be a citizen of Akwa Ibom State with record of advocacy and community development;
2. Exemplary communication skills.
3. Must be a person of integrity, transparency, adept in leadership skills, good character, responsible and focused
4. Foresighted in the dispensation of the duties of his office, knowing very well that the success or failure of the IPC organization rests on his leadership.
5. Shall be domiciled in the United States of America.

Responsibilities of the President

The President shall perform the following functions:

1. Appoint members of the Executive and some members of the CW Committee.
2. Create and implement short and long term action plans needed to achieve organizational objectives;
3. Work with the Executive and CWC to raise fund for the organization.
4. Actively participate in the development of annual budgets.
5. Manage the flow of communication within and outside the organization;
6. Provide guidance and direction to ensure the smooth running of the Organization's activities.
7. Be the chief Spokesperson for the organization.
8. Ensure efficient and effective management of organization's resources, including finances and human;
9. Chair or appoint a designee for all the Organization's meetings.
10. Convene emergency meetings of the Executive or general membership as the need arises.
11. Organize regional meeting within continental United States of America or elsewhere.
12. Exercise oversight role over all functions and activities of the Organization as stipulated by the constitution and the by-laws.

13. Organize and mobilize people for the work of the Organization in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.
14. Attend or send his designee to all meetings and conferences as allowed by the law and the constitution.
15. Provide leadership in all efforts toward writing of by-laws and Charters of the IPC; assist in protecting the Organization's image, and constantly research on means to achieve strategic goals and objectives of the Organization.
16. Make recommendations to the Executive on matters affecting finance, and strategies.
17. Educate supporters and non-supporters on issues and concerns that could possibly affect or impact progress of the Organization.
18. Be a member of all the Think Tank Committees.

B. VICE PRESIDENT

1. There shall be one Vice President that shall be appointed by the president.
2. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall perform the duties of the President with all powers, privileges and responsibilities attached to that office.
3. He shall help to define ways and means in which people could be mobilized for action for a just cause and shall develop tactics and strategies to achieve change(s) as desired by the Organization.
4. In the event of the resignation, dismissal or permanent incapacity of the President, he/she shall assume the office of the President until a new president is elected.

C. SECRETARY

The IPC Secretary shall be both a scrivener and a custodian of intellectual capital of the organization.

Duties of the Secretary

1. Serves as a focal point for communication with the Executive, CWC, the Think-Tank Committees, and other constituents of the organization;
2. Record the minutes of all meetings of the Executive and the general meetings.
3. Keep a careful and authentic record of proceedings of the organization.
4. Search the minutes for information that may be requested by officers or members.
5. Prepare a roll of members and call it when necessary.
6. Preserve all records, reports and documents of the organization except those specifically assigned to the custody of others.
7. Call the meeting to order in the absence of the presiding officers.

8. Provide the President at the beginning of each meeting with a detailed order of business, of committees that are to report, and of announcements.
9. Provide the Chairperson of each committee with all the papers and instructions required to perform their duties .
10. Read all papers that may be called for by the assembly
11. Bring to each meeting a copy of the constitution, by-laws, and standing rules of the organization, together with a list of the members of all committees.
12. Develop, update and maintain a yearly roster of members and professionals of Akwa Ibom State origin.
13. Carry on the official correspondence of the organization.
14. Provide the quarterly attendance of all the members to the general house.
15. Send information regarding every agenda of meeting in writing to reach the members not later than seven (7) days prior to the meeting date.
16. Perform other functions assigned by the President, the CWC or prescribed in this Constitution.
17. Be an Ex-Officio member of the Think Tank Committees.

D. ASSISTANT SECRETARY

In the absence of the Secretary, the Assistant Secretary shall perform the duties of the Secretary with all powers, privileges and responsibilities attached to that office.

E. DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATION

Director of Communication is the connecting thread between the IPC and the general public. Accordingly, he or she is expected to perform multi-task and multi-dimensional duties.

Duties of the Director of Communication

Director of Communication shall act as a Public Relation Officer who shall serve as a focal point for the Organization. As the public voice of IPC, the Director of Communication shall:

1. Coordinate all public appearances and media contacts in consultation with the President or his designee.
2. At all times be available to answer questions regarding IPC and shall maintain above average knowledge of the Organization's activities.
3. Be responsible for those means of communication that permit messages or information about IPC to be made public; and shall oversee all aspects of publication, news articles and other materials going to media such as TV, Radio, magazines and newspapers.

4. Explore and research avenues which can provide important links connecting IPC ideologies to the people and shall help to shape attitude on many issues affecting the Organization.
5. Coordinate with other officers towards achieving IPC goals and objectives, and shall perform other duties as directed by the President or his designee.

Qualifications of Director of Communication

1. Have an amiable personality,
2. Good communication skills, both spoken and written;
3. Public exposure experience
4. Ability to work with people irrespective of gender, nationality, ethnic origin and race.

F. TREASURER

As the custodian of the Organization's money, the treasurer shall:

1. Receive all funds on behalf of the Organization and deposit in the bank within 48 hours of receipt.
2. Keep a complete and accurate record of receipts and disbursements of the funds.
3. Ensure that all payments are supported by vouchers.
4. Ensures that appropriate financial records are made available to the members when needed.
5. Be responsible for checking all bills and vouchers which are presented for payment and for issuing checks to cover them
6. Keep all financial records of the Organization including individual registration fees, monthly dues, levies, fines and voluntary donations.
7. Render quarterly financial reports to the CWC, General Assembly and Advisory Committee.
8. Present at the annual general meeting a detailed account of the financial position of the Organization.
9. In collaboration with the Financial Secretary, prepare and file the necessary financial statements and any applicable tax returns on behalf of the Organization in compliance with Internal Revenue Service requirements for non-profit organizations.

G. FINANCIAL SECRETARY

The Financial Secretary shall be responsible for all financial functions:

1. Serve as economic and financial adviser to IPC leadership.
2. Coordinate the funds mobilization projects and advice the organization on the modalities of fund raising.
3. Develop and maintain database of some potential donors and shall also establish active contacts with individuals and organizations.

ARTICLE VII: THE EXECUTIVE

The Executive shall perform the following functions:

1. Execute the policies and represent the views of the Organization.
2. Advocate on behalf the people.
3. Convene emergency, *ad hoc* and regular meetings, including elections and special meetings.
4. Coordinate the activities and review all projects initiated by the Think-Tank Committees
5. Compile names of all members eligible to vote before elections.
6. Develop strategic priorities for the organization in the areas of political involvement, meaningful empowerment, health, education, public safety, and industrial development of Akwa Ibom State
7. Monitor the performance of the different Committees of the organization.
8. Ensure that the constitution and policies of the Organization are adhered to at all times.
9. Recommend disciplinary action against any officer or member of the Organization for misconduct and, or negligence of duty.
10. Initiate programs and recommend same to the General Assembly for approval.

ARTICLE VIII: CENTRAL WORKING COMMITTEE (CWC)

Central Working Committee (CWC) shall be made of the Executive Committee, Heads of the Think-Tank Committees, Legal Counsel, and other distinguished Akwa Ibomites. The Central Working Committee shall meet on bi-monthly or quarterly basis to review the work of the Think-Tank Committees and offer advisory opinion on their performance. Chairs of the Committees may report any inconsistencies to the Executive or CWC at any time.

CWC shall perform the following functions:

1. Draw up policies and programs for the organization;

2. Approve President's appointment to the Executive Committee and CW Committee.
3. Advise the President on matters pertaining to the Organization.
4. Approve the appointment of the Legal Counsel
5. Discuss all issues pertaining to progress and development of Akwa Ibom;
6. Assist the Resource Development Committee in raising funds for the Organization;
7. Review and approve the operating budget.
8. Ensure that the constitution and policies of the Organization are adhered to at all times
9. Approve disciplinary action against any officer or member of the Organization for misconduct and, or negligence of duty.
10. Initiate programs in any area covered or not covered by the Committees.
11. Play active role in the management of the organization.
12. Recruit new members into the Committee and continually monitor committee's performance.
13. Approve all appointments to the Board of Trustee.

ARTICLE VIII(B): LEGAL COUNSEL

The Legal Counsel furnishes legal advice to the President and the Chairpersons of different Committees with respect to their responsibilities and operating functions of the organization.

Functions of the Legal Counsel

As the chief law officer of IPC, the Legal Counsel will perform the following duties:

1. Provide advice to the President and other officers of the Organizations on all legal matters and services performed within, or involving, the IPC;
2. Draft formal opinions on a variety of legal questions involving the operations of the IPC.
3. Render opinions to the President and to the Chairs of the various organizational units on questions of law arising in the administration of the programs and policies of IPC.
4. Provide advice on standards of conduct involving members of IPC and, as appropriate, in relation to non-IPC members;
5. Be responsible for preparing and filing the annual incorporation returns with the appropriate authorities in the United States;
6. Interpret the Constitution when the need arises or upon request.
7. Provide explanation, when necessary, on legal and political issues affecting the welfare of the Organization and its members at the general or annual meetings.

8. Be the legal adviser to the Organization on applicable local, county, state, and federal Laws to ensure compliance with these laws.
9. Be the official representative of the Organization in all legal matters of interest to the Organization.
10. Monitor and ensure implementation of all decisions taken by the General Assembly and other established Committees of the organization
11. Upon termination, hand over all Organization properties within thirty (30) days to the Secretary and or his/her successor.
12. Respond to all inquiries and perform other duties as may be required by the Organization from time to time.
13. Be an Ex-Officio member of the Board of Trustees.

Qualifications of the Legal Counsel

1. He or she must have a law degree (JD or LLB) from a recognized university;
2. Licensed to practice law in one of the States of the United States of America

ARTICLE IX: GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly is the Organization's supreme body. It is its plenary deliberative organ;

The General Assembly shall meet in ordinary session at least once a year in August. The site of the annual Akwa Ibom State National Convention is the preferred venue for the yearly General Assembly. The Assembly may also meet via teleconferencing in lieu of the National Convention site.

The Assembly will be comprised of members of the Executive, CWC, Think-Tank Committees, BOT and other duly registered members.

The functions of the Assembly are as follows:

1. Determine principles and lay down the general measures suitable for attaining the objectives of the Organization;
2. Examine and approve the general program of activities prepared by Executive for the coming year;
3. Approve amendments to the Constitution;
4. Determine any other regulations deemed necessary;

5. Elect the President of the Organization;
6. Adopt resolutions and make recommendations to the Executive on matters with which the Organization is competent to deal;
7. Determine the financial policy of the Organization.

ARTICLE X: THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- A. The Board of Trustees (BOT) shall consist of, at least, seven (7) members, who are appointed by the CWC, for a period of two (2) years; reappointment is possible.
- B. Members shall be selected among qualified individuals who are resident in Nigeria or in the Diaspora. Those selected must have contributed to their community development or the development of the state. Board of Trustees (BOT) shall reflect senatorial districts the state.
- C. Any member of the Board of Trustees is entitled to resign from his/her position anytime. The Board of Trustees can only be dissolved by the CWC.
- D. The Organization may remove members of the Board of Trustees from office prematurely with good reason, such as non participation. If a member of the Board of Trustees resigns prematurely, the Organization would appoint a successor for the remaining term of office.
- E. The role of the Board of Trustee shall be that of advisory. The Chairman of the Board shall not be the President of IPC, and shall be elected by the Board members.

Duties of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees shall perform the following function:

1. Ensure that the constitution and policies of the association are adhered to at all times.
2. May advise on the creation of committees when necessary to execute the affairs of the association.
3. Raise funds.
4. Recommend disciplinary action against any officer or member of the association for misconduct and, or negligence of duty.
5. Initiate programs and recommend same to the CWC for approval and implementation.
6. Mediate in a time of crisis.
7. Review all projects initiated by the Committees and make recommendations to the House.

8. The Board of Trustees shall meet at least once a year.

ARTICLE XI: THINK-TANK COMMITTEES

A. The following principal organs of IPC are hereby established by this Constitution:

1. Political Action Committee (PAC)
2. Health Care Committee
3. Economic Committee
4. Education Committee
5. Environmental Committee
6. Resource Development Committee

B. ROLES OF THE THINK-TANK COMMITTEES

1. A Committee Chairperson shall be elected by members of the Committee bi-annually. The same Chairperson can be re-elected, but not more than four years in office.
2. Other Think-Tank Committees, as may be found necessary, may be established in accordance with this Constitution.
3. Each Think-Tank Committee shall develop its own agenda, objectives and operational plans in line with the objectives of the IPC. The operational work plans must be approved by the CWC before implementation.
4. Each prospective Think-Tank Committee member shall be approved by the respective Committee and confirmed by the Executive or Central Working Committee.
5. Each Think-Tank Committee shall appoint the officers of the Committee including Deputy Chairperson, and the Secretary to implement the policies and programs of IPC and the Think-Tank Committee.
6. The Chairperson of the Think-Tank Committee shall not take any decision likely to commit IPC to any form of financial obligations without prior authorization by the Executive.
7. A committee shall not embark on a project or a program that is not within the confine of such Committee without prior authorization by the Executive Committee.

8. Unless waved by the Executive or Central Working Committee, a member may not belong to more than one Think Tank Committee at the same time.
9. When engaging in grant writings, the Think-Tank committee shall work in collaboration with the Resource Development Committee for the purpose of obtaining such grants as allowed under IRS section 501(c)(3).
10. Written communication to any government, its agencies, outside individuals or organization shall be done with the knowledge of the Executive Committee.
11. Think-Tank Committees are required to work in collaboration with each other where necessary, and with particular reference to formal funding applications, to provide information on funding sources and contact to information to the Resource Development Committee for implementation.

C. DUTIES OF THINK-TANK COMMITTEES

1. Political Action Committee (PAC)

Political Action Committee shall:

1. Liaise with the schools and other social institutions to intensify political socialization and education of Akwa Ibomites, especially the youths – particularly sharpening political consciousness, political mobilization and political tactics.
2. Function as Political Action Group, influencing the decision-making process of all institutions that may likely affect the citizens of Akwa Ibom State.
3. May work with the Executive in areas of advocacy; in organizing political workshops and training, seeking redress in appropriate quarters against any government, agency or individuals whose activities are deemed inimical to the peoples' interests, etc.

2. Health Care Committee

The Health Care Committee shall:

1. Actively work for the improvements of health care in AKS, specifically in the areas of prevention, education, diagnoses and treatment of the medically disadvantaged population.
2. Collaborate and work with all stakeholders in Nigeria to improve the health of the poor and needy, especially in AKS.
3. Develop health care policies, position papers and may make recommendations to appropriate health care authorities in Nigeria.

4. Work in collaboration with appropriate committee to solicit funds/donations from all parties allowable under IRS section 501(c)(3) code for health care improvements in Nigeria and AKS in particular.
5. May provide support to institutions related to health care in Nigeria including training/research centers, health care clinics, hospitals, pharmaceutical companies, laboratories and so forth.

3. Economic Committee

The Economic Committee shall be responsible for IPC activities pertaining to economic development in Akwa Ibom State, including, but not limited to the following:

1. Identify the development needs of Akwa Ibom State, and available resources within the state, with a view to exposing to potential foreign investors.
2. Work with different economic groups and chambers of commerce to organize trade missions to Akwa Ibom State
3. Matching Akwa Ibom businesses with potential foreign investors.
4. Organizing training programs for Akwa Ibom entrepreneurs on best business practices.
5. Liaise with the Education Committee to promote job training programs.
6. Serve as information clearinghouse for Akwa Ibom businesses and potential foreign investors.
7. Provide any additional services that could foster economic growth of Akwa Ibom State.

4. Education Committee

Conscious of the fact that the youth of Akwa Ibom State are the future leaders of our society, and if they are to be effective and productive citizens, the education system must be tailored to produce the quality citizens and leaders needed for the smooth operation of the affairs of the state. Education, if properly planned and delivered, is a common framework that binds members of the society and directs them toward common societal goals. Without this binding element, human society would either exist in disarray or would not exist at all. To ensure that no Akwa Ibom child is left behind, the Education Committee of IPC shall:

1. Work closely with respective institutions and stakeholders to improve the standard of education in Akwa Ibom State.
2. Collect and/or purchase books, academic journals, computers and other equipments from donor organizations and individuals and distribute them to schools and libraries in the state.
3. Create and manage “education bank” for the storage of books and educational equipment and supplies in strategic locations in the United States and elsewhere.

4. Institute fund mobilization campaign aimed at raising funds for the purchase and shipments of books and other educational materials
5. Liaise with government and other local NGOs in Akwa Ibom State to determine the needs of each school and for equitable distribution of books and supplies to the schools in need.
6. Suggest standards for selecting and purchasing equipment, designing facilities, and interconnecting statewide education delivery systems.
7. Collaborate with the State Education Board to develop criteria for general education courses and streamline the purposes and intended learning outcomes for general education.
8. Provide input into the formulation of education policies in Akwa Ibom and participate in the evaluation of the general education program's effectiveness against the State's educational goals for the citizens.
9. Engage in continuous education campaign to ensure the implementation of education for all (EFA) program.
10. Assist the school authorities to develop corporate business plan to help them mobilize resources and manage available resources to achieve maximum efficiency and effectiveness at the lowest cost to taxpayers.

6. Environmental Committee

The Environmental Committee shall:

1. As a primary function, offer suggestions on how to protect our environment: land, water, and air from pollution.
2. Advise the government on how to reduce water borne diseases by mitigating groundwater contamination, etc.
3. Educate the citizenry on the importance of environmental preservation, and the adverse effects of environmental degradation.

6. Resource Development Committee

The Resource Development Committee shall:

1. Be responsible for sourcing the necessary funding for the implementation of IPC programs.
2. Raising funds from individuals, foundations, and other organizations in the United States, Nigeria and elsewhere.

3. Work with individual Think tank committees to coordinate funding requests and applications directed at external funding contacts outside of the Committee.

ARTICLE XII: INTERNAL AUDITORS

There shall be one Auditor elected by the General Assembly.

A. Functions of the Auditors

1. Ascertain whether the assets of the organization are recorded properly...
2. Audit all accounts of the Organization and submit final audit reports to the General Assembly at the annual meeting.
3. Request all financial records and information from any entity connected with the finances of the Organization to help them execute their constitutional responsibilities to the Organization
4. Examine financial and accounting records, other documents, and tangible items such as office equipment and supplies.
5. Monitor certain administrative processes or procedures to ensure it conforms to good business practices;
6. Ask a range of questions - from formal written questions to informal oral questions – to clarify issues or obtain information;
7. Test some of the organization's internal controls procedures.
8. Make judgments on significant estimates or assumptions that the different Leadership branches of IPC may make in the course of preparing the financial report.
9. Assist the External Auditors by providing all necessary financial records to help them execute their responsibilities to the Organization

B. Qualifications of Auditors

1. A degree in Accounting from a recognized university, or has a relevant financial experience.
2. Have a working knowledge of the financial operating functions and organizational structure, policies and procedures of the Organization

C. Terms of Office of Auditors

1. The term of office for the Auditors shall be two (2) years each and may be re elected to another term upon satisfactory performance of duties.

2. No Auditor shall serve more than two (2) terms of office.
3. Auditors will not be allowed to serve in other Committees of the Organization.
4. The Auditors shall maintain independence from the President and other senior officers of the Organization so that tests and judgments are made objectively.
5. The Auditors would be required to discuss the scope of the audit plans with the organization's leadership. The President and other Committee Chairpersons may request that additional procedures be performed.

ARTICLE XIII: ELECTION AND TERMS OF OFFICE OF ALL ELECTED OFFICIALS OF IPC

1. Following the expiration of the founding president's tenure, subsequent presidents of IPC shall be elected for tenure of two years by the General Assembly.
2. The same president can be re-elected, but not more than four years in office.
3. Candidates for the office of the President shall be nominated by two members of two different Committees and voted into office by the General Assembly.
4. Candidates for other elected offices shall be nominated by at least a member of any Committee.
5. In a physical meeting, election shall be by secret ballot and the candidate who receives the highest number of votes cast shall be declared elected. In case of a tie, there shall be a run-off election.
6. When election is conducted via a teleconference, a voice vote shall be used in lieu of balloting. Runoff election shall be conducted in event of any tie.
7. No officer, irrespective of rank, shall serve for more than two consecutive terms.
8. In case of *emergency* and for the interest of the Organization, the incumbent's term of office may be extended provisionally until his or her successor shall have been duly elected

ARTICLE XIV: REMOVAL OF THE OFFICERS OF THE ORGANIZATION

- A. The General Assembly shall relieve a President, Legal Counsel, or Auditor(s) of his position after due process.

- B. The president can relieve any member of the Executive Committee of his/her position in consultation with the CWC.
- C. President can call for the removal of a committee Chairman or dissolution of a Committee for not keeping with IPC guidelines, not obeying the Constitution, or for non-performance if only after proper consultation with, and approval of the CWC.
- D. Any committee member or officer of IPC can call for the removal of any elected/appointed officer of the organization.
- E. An officer of the IPC shall be removed from office by a vote of simple majority of total number of members in the appropriate committees, or the general assembly, as the case may be, if after proper hearing, he/she is found to:
 - 1. Be guilty of misconduct, such as subversive and treacherous activities;
 - 2. Be administratively inept;
 - 3. Behave in manners which are generally detrimental to the goals, principles and growth of IPC Organization.
 - 4. Be non-performing, or fail to participate in three consecutive monthly teleconferences or two consecutive bi-monthly or quarterly teleconferences without contacting the leadership.
- F. Voting to remove an officer shall be conducted via teleconference by voice vote or by secret ballot under the voting rights and procedures established by this Constitution.
- G. A member shall be dismissed by its Committee if found to have engaged in anti-IPC activities.

Nothing contained in this Constitution shall authorize IPC or any member of the IPC to act in a manner prejudicial to the privacy rights and integrity of the person removed.

ARTICLE XV: CHAPTERS

Any new chapter of IPC shall be approved by the CWC, and the constitution of IPC shall be binding on every chapter.

ARTICLE XVI: FINANCES

A. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Organization shall be on a calendar basis, from January 1 to December 31 of the same year.

B. SOURCES OF FUNDING

The finances of the Organization shall be drawn from dues, levies, donations, bequeaths, solicitations, grants and other legal sources.

No individual or groups of individuals should violate the Federal or State laws of the United States in the process of raising funds for the Organization.

Friends of Akwa Ibom wishing to support IPC financially may donate money to the Organization. Such donation should be paid directly to the organization's bank account or by check made payable to IPC.

C. EXPENDITURES

No expenditure shall be incurred on behalf of the Organization prior to a written approval by the President and communicated to the Treasurer.

Either the Treasurer or the Secretary, or in the absence of these two officers any other member of the Executive designated by the President, may keep the sum of one hundred dollars (\$100) or any other sum not to exceed two hundred dollars (\$200) as authorized by a written resolution of the Executive upon recommendation of the President, as petty cash balance for the purpose of running the day to day business of the Organization.

All payments must be made with check of the bank account of the Organization by the designated signatories and must be supported by vouchers and/or receipts. Designated signatories shall include the President and the Treasurer for the general accounts, and in the absence of the respective Treasurer; the Financial Secretary can sign with the President. Reimbursable expenses can only be made on receipts or invoices and petty cash payments may be made in cash and evidenced by receipts.

Any expense more than five hundred dollars (\$500) shall be recommended for approval by the EXECUTIVE for payment.

D. COMPLIANCE WITH THE LAWS OF THE UNITED STATES

Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a charitable organization exempt from Federal income tax under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law or (b) by a charitable organization contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law.)

ARTICLE XVII: OPERATIONAL BY-LAWS

A. INTENT TO RUN FOR AN OFFICE

1. A candidate for any office, must be a member in good standing who has satisfied the entire Constitutional requirements for membership of IPC, and shall submit a memorandum of intent to the Executive, through the Secretary, immediately such position is declared vacant or at least one month before election.
2. The memorandum of intent must be endorsed by at least two (2) members of two different Committees in good standing.
3. Should the qualification of the candidate for position be questioned, the burden is on the candidate to make good his or her candidacy.

B. VOTING

1. Only members in good standing shall be allowed to vote any election.
2. Voting shall be by secret ballot or by voice in case of teleconference election.
3. Each candidate shall be allowed a nomination speech of not more than three (3) minutes followed by questions and answers, before the voting.
4. The Election Officer shall determine the number of questions and the order of questioning, in his/her sole discretion in so far as all candidates shall have equality in the duration of speech and number of questions. The Election Officer may overrule any embarrassing or vexatious questions, in his/her sole discretion and such questions shall not count towards the question tally for such candidate. Election officer shall be appointed by the CWC.
5. A candidate receiving simple majority of the votes cast shall be declared elected. In case of a tie, there shall be a run-off for the leading candidates.

C. OATH OF OFFICE

The President-elect shall first take an oath of office before assuming the duties of President. He/she shall swear-in, or cause to be sworn-in, the Vice-President and other Chairpersons of the different working Committees, Internal Auditors and the Legal Counsel before assuming duties of their respective offices.

The swearing in of all elected officers must take place immediately after the election, but not beyond the next deliberative meeting of the organization.

D. RESIGNATION AND VACANCIES

1. Any officer of the Organization may resign by submitting a letter of resignation to the Secretary of the Committee prior to leaving office. Acceptance of the resignation shall not be required to make the resignation effective.
2. To ensure continuity of the work of the Organization, a qualified member of the organization may be nominated, *pro tempore*, to carry out the functions of the position pending the completion of the process of election.
3. In lieu of special elections, the President, in consultation with the Executive may appoint officers to fill vacancies on a temporary basis. Such a decision must be communicated to all members of IPC within seven (7) days of the decision.

ARTICLE XVIII: CONDUCT OF THE MEETINGS OF THE ORGANIZATION

A. CONDUCT OF THE GENERAL MEETING:

1. There shall be a general meeting of all registered members held at least once a year, preferably at the site of Akwa Ibom State National Convention or by teleconferencing in event of emergency.
2. The meetings of the Committees shall be called under the instructions of, and presided over by the President or Chair as described in this Constitution.
3. All meetings shall be conducted in an orderly manner and according to standard parliamentary procedures. The President shall use his/her discretion to limit the time for each discussion.
4. Only members of the Organization in good standing shall vote in the general meetings.
5. Each speaker must be recognized by the President or the Presiding Officer before he/ she can speak.
6. A member shall speak without recognition only if he or she is doing so on “**point of order**,” “**point of information**,” or “**point of objection**”. All points of order,

information, or objection, shall be addressed to the President or Presiding Officer who shall either sustain or overrule the same.

7. Every speech shall be addressed to the President or the Presiding Officer.
8. Any member found insulting another member or members, using foul language or causing disturbances of any kind in the Organization's meetings or activities may be liable for a fine of up to \$100.00. Any member so fined shall forfeit all his or her privileges in the Organization until the fine is paid in full.

B. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

1. The Executive Committee meetings shall be called under the instructions of, and presided over by, the President as described in this Constitution.
2. Executive meeting shall be held mostly by way of telephone conferencing, at the date and time approved by the President.
3. Four (4) members shall form a quorum for Executive Committee meetings.
4. Motion shall be carried by a simple majority of members present and actually voting.
5. The President reserves the right to exercise veto on issues he believes is of utmost importance to the organization.
6. The Executive reserves the right to invite any non-committee member(s) to join its meetings.

C. CENTRAL WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

1. Central Working Committee meetings/teleconference shall be held every two or three months or as determined by the members, and shall be presided over by the Chair(s) as described in this Constitution.
2. Meetings shall be held mostly by way of telephone conferencing, at the date and time approved by the President or the Chair(s).
3. Half of the total number of members shall form a quorum for CWC meetings.
4. Motion shall be carried by a simple majority of members present and actually voting.
5. The CWC reserves the right to invite any non-IPC member(s) to join its meetings.

D. STANDING AND AD-HOC COMMITTEES

The Organization and Committees may create standing and/or ad-hoc committees to deal with matters and issues as the Committee may see fit.

E. HANDING OVER TO NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS

1. Handing over of Organization documents and properties shall be done in an orderly manner and as required by the Constitution. Under no circumstances shall the outgoing officers retain documents and properties of the Organization longer than two months into the new administrative year.
2. From the conclusion of elections, any property or document of the Organization in the custody of the outgoing officers or any other person shall be handed over to the incoming President or his/her designee within thirty (30) days.
3. All accounts belonging to the Organization maintained by an outgoing officers shall be transferred to the new officers and the ending balance reported openly to the first General Assembly meeting called by the new administration.
4. To facilitate the work of the incoming officers, a letter must be sent to the bank holding the organizational money, informing the bank of the change of leadership with specimen signatures of the new officers.

F. NON-COMPLIANCE

1. Non-compliance with any of the Section 1 clauses above shall be a violation of this Constitution. Violation thereof shall result in the suspension of members of the prior officers from the Organization. The officers suspended shall remain so suspended until they have remedied the deficiency, either by handing over the requested property or document, or by closing the account and accounting for all the funds deposited into the account.

2. Notwithstanding the above, suspension of any member for violation of any section or clause contained herein shall only be approved by the General Assembly at its meeting.
3. A suspended member or executive shall be re-admitted upon the payment of a fine as shall be determined by the General Assembly. The General Assembly may, at its sole discretion, increase the fine, if the reason for suspension is financial.
4. The fine set out above may be waived or reduced by the General Assembly for any affected member or officer upon request by the affected officer or member for good cause shown. The fine for a member or officer shall be waived if upon signed declaration, the GA determines at its discretion that the member was not at fault and did all within its powers to resolve the matter leading to the suspension. At least three members of the House and the affected member must sign the declaration on behalf of the member. The declaration on behalf of the officer must be signed by at least three members of the current Leadership and the affected officer.
5. Under no circumstance shall the fine be waived for a suspended officer if the reason for the suspension concerns not handing over financial papers, closing accounts or accounting for monies in his/her custody or accounts controlled by him/her.
6. An officer shall be suspended, after determination by the GA, and remain so suspended if the Auditor's report discloses a deficiency, and the officer does not make up the deficiency within the time set by the general meeting. Upon suspension of any President under this section the timelines required under this section in other sub sections shall become applicable.
7. Any ex-President or affected officer who remains suspended for a period to be determined by the GA under this section shall lose his/her privileges.
8. The Advisory Committee at its meeting following the GA's declaration in shall decide by a resolution carried by majority vote to refer the matter to the Legal Adviser with a financial note to take the matter to court for accounting or to recover the Organization's money or property. The Advisory Committee must satisfy itself by a cost-benefit analysis that legal action is in the best interest of the Organization and justify that action to the GA.

ARTICLE XIX: CONFLICT OF LAW

In the event of conflict between the United States of America (USA) and the IPC Constitutions, the USA Constitution shall prevail and override the IPC Constitution.

A. CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

1. IPC deserves the right to take any action against any member, where the involvement of that member with another organization presents a conflict of interest with, or hampers the work or the running of IPC.
2. Where such conflicts manifest, such member shall be suspended or be asked to resign.

B. RESOLUTION OF CONFLICTS

1. No member(s) or groups of members shall sue the Organization or any of its officers for any act done in the course of official duty or activity without first bringing the complaint, in writing, to the Executive or its designated conflict resolution body.
2. Where the act occurs during a general meeting, the matter shall be first referred to the President, if there is no designated conflict resolution body (CRB) for deliberation and decision.
3. It is the duty of the Executive to resolve any kind of problem among members and to prevent lawsuit, unless where it is unavoidable.
4. Where such cannot be resolved by the Executive, such matter shall be referred to the CWC or the BOT if the CWC cannot resolve the issue.
5. In case of lawsuit, the IPC could be a witness for any of the members or testify to the authenticity of the issue before the court.

ARTICLE XX: AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

- A. Amendment of the Constitution or its by-laws may be initiated by any member in good standing. Membership in good standing shall mean a registered member who has paid his/her dues up to date.
- B. Amendments may be proposed by any committee member. Such amendments will require support of two-thirds of the committee members before it is forwarded to the Executive where it would have to be approved by two thirds majority and ratified by a simple majority of the general assembly. The constitution could also be amended by the entire members of IPC in a referendum called by the Executive.
- C. All Constitution changes adopted shall become an addendum to the Constitution with immediate effect.

D. SUSPENSION OF CONSTITUTION

The provisions of this Constitution cannot be suspended.

ARTICLE XXI: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

In all procedural matters not covered by this Constitution, the Organization shall be guided by the current Robert's Rule of Parliamentary Procedure.

ARTICLE XXII: ACCOUNTS

- A:**
1. There shall be one central bank account maintained by the Executive for all the Committees.
 2. Money raised by or for various committees, shall be designated as such and credited to those committees for the purpose of their projects.
 3. Checks shall only be issued after authorization by the Committee and such shall be reflected in the Minutes.

B: Signatories

Every check shall be signed by the president and co-signed by the Treasurer or Financial Secretary. Checks in excess of \$500 must be approved by the Executive in case of the general IPC fund.

ARTICLE XXIII: OATH OF OFFICE

Following the election, the legal Counsel shall swear-in the new officers of the Organization. The oath of office shall be cited as follows:

"I _____ (Name of officer), DO HEREBY SOLEMNLY SWEAR, THAT I WILL PROTECT AND UPHOLD THE CONSTITUTION OF THE IPC, AND SHALL TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY, EXECUTE THOSE RESPONSIBILITIES ENTRUSTED ONTO ME BY IT, SO HELP ME GOD."

ARTICLE XXIV: SEVERABILITY AND SCOPE

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of this Constitution is for any reason found to be invalid or unconstitutional by a decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of the Constitution.

This Constitution, having been revised and ratified by the General Assembly on April 20, 2008 is hereby attested to by the undersigned on behalf of IPC members. In witness whereof we subscribe our names, as members of the Constitution Amendment Committee.

**Tom Mbeke-Ekanem, DPA
Founder/President IPC**

**Mr. Hope Umana, Esq. Member
Executive Committee**

**Mr. Uduak Udo, Member
Executive Committee**

**Dr. Augustine Ekwere, Chair
Education Committee**

**Mr. ndugu Imeh Inyang
Education Committee**

**Mr. Effiong Akpan
Education Committee**

Dated: April 20, 2008