



IN REASON WE TRUST

**HUMANIST ASSOCIATION OF GHANA (HAG)**  
CONSTITUTION

FIRST RATIFIED: 2015

FIRST AMENDED: 2018

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# Humanist Association of Ghana (HAG)

## PART 1 – MEMORANDUM OF THE ASSOCIATION

### 1. Name

The name of the Association is- “**Humanist Association of Ghana (HAG)**”

### 2. Objectives

- i. To organize into an association and promote coordination amongst all persons, institutions, organizations, and others engaged in or interested in or connected with or working for promoting human rights and critical thinking in Ghana and globally.
- ii. To organize conferences, seminars, workshops, meetings, and forums for the discussion of matters bordering on human rights, humanism and the promotion of critical thinking in Ghana.
- iii. To coordinate with other professional agencies, associations and organizations so as to share experiences, information, publications and resources towards promoting human rights and critical thinking in Ghana and globally.
- iv. To create spaces where humanist ideas or non-belief can be expressed freely.

### 3. Address of the Association

The following are the official contact details of the association for the time:

E-mail: [ghanahumanists@gmail.com](mailto:ghanahumanists@gmail.com) or [hello@ghanahumanists.org](mailto:hello@ghanahumanists.org)

Web site: [www.ghanahumanists.org](http://www.ghanahumanists.org)

Facebook: Humanist Association of Ghana

Twitter: @HumanistsGH

### 4. Jurisdiction

The association shall have the Republic of Ghana as its jurisdiction for all legal purposes.

## **5. Authorization**

The President of the Association is authorized to correspond with the Registrar General, in connection with the Registration of the Association and any corrections to be affected in the Memorandum of the Association and the Rules and Regulations therein.

## **6. Income**

The Association shall be a voluntary, non-profit body. The income of the association by whatever means it might derive shall be utilized for the purpose of objects of the association.

## **PART 2 - RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

### **8. Interpretation**

In these rules and regulations unless there may be anything in the subject or context inconsistent therewith -

- I. The Association means “Humanist Association of Ghana - HAG”.
- II. The members means the members of the association for the time being.
- III. The “President” and the “Executives” means those respective elected office bearers of the Association for the time being.
- IV. The “Conference” and “Special HAG Meetings” as are convened and held only under rules of the association in force.
- V. The “Freethought Meetings” means all public and general meetings of the Association organized through the Freethought Ghana Group.
- VI. The “HAG Meetings” means all meetings organized by the Association for its members and any other individuals, institutions or organizations invited by the executive committee
- VII. A “resolution” means the resolution of the association duly passed and adopted.
- VIII. The “Amsterdam Declaration” “ is a statement of the fundamental principles of modern Humanism passed unanimously by the General Assembly of the International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU) at the 50th anniversary World Humanist Congress in 2002”. It is reprinted in full in Appendix A.
- IX. The “Logo” means the symbol of the Association.
- X. The “Year” means the official year of the association from 1st April of the particular year to the 31st March of the next year.
- XI. The “Members” means all categories of members of the association duly admitted who have satisfied all prerequisites for membership and duly admitted.

## 9. Membership

### 9.1 Eligibility

Membership of the Association is open to:-

- I. Any person living in Ghana at or above the age of 16, who subscribes to the objectives of the Association, is confirmed so after approval by the Executive Committee and on their payment of the prescribed fees.
- II. Any atheist (one who rejects the belief in gods, deities and the supernatural) or agnostic (one who does not claim to have any evidence of the existence or non-existence of a god, deity or supernatural force).
- III. Any person who has attended at least 3 Freethought Ghana meetings in a year.
- IV. Any person who subscribes to and follows the Amsterdam Declaration\* .
- V. Any person who agrees to be a contributing member of the Association financially and/or socially.

### 9.2 Classes of membership

- I. **Life Member:** Any person living in Ghana at the time of registration, who claims to have no evidence of the existence or non-existence of a god, deity, or supernatural force, who attends at least three (3) Freethought meetings in a year and subscribes to the Amsterdam Declaration. The person shall pay the annual fee agreed by the association annually. All life members shall conduct themselves in accordance with the Amsterdam Declaration or by a Code of Conduct defined by the Association. The person shall enjoy the privilege of voting and the right to contest for election.
- II. **Donor Member:** Any individual, organization, or institution established lawfully may be admitted after the vetting and approval of the executive committee, and upon making a financial contribution to the Association above the threshold agreed annually by the executive committee. The privileges include invitations to conferences and functions of the association and updates (e.g. newsletters, annual reports) on the work of the association. However, there shall not be any voting or contesting privileges to the member.
- II. **Associate Member:** Any individual, organization, or institution who offers any services to the organization or collaborates with the Association towards the achievement of the objectives of the Association may be admitted after approval of the Executive Committee. However, there shall not be any voting or contesting privileges to the member.
- III. **Honorary Fellows/Members:** Any individual who has made a significant contribution towards the achievement of the objects may be admitted on the recommendations of the Executive committee and the approval of the membership body. The person shall enjoy all the privileges of a member except for voting and the right to contest for election. They shall not be required to pay any fees.

### 9.3 *Registration of Members*

The association shall maintain at its registered office, a register of its members and shall enter therein within 15 days after the admission of a member or the cessation of the membership, as the case may be, the following particulars.

- I. Name and Address of the member (including phone, fax, and Email wherever available).
- II. The date on which the member was admitted.
- III. The date on which the member ceased to be such member.

### 9.4 *Rights of Members*

- I. Each member (individual) shall have one vote at every meeting. Voting by proxy is strictly not allowed.
- II. All members of the association shall be entitled to participate in the meetings, functions, and gatherings of the association.
- III. All members of the association shall have the right to inspect the books of the accounts, books containing the minutes of proceedings of HAG Meetings, and the register of the members of the association on any working day during business hours by giving reasonable advance notice.
- IV. The rules and regulations and/or bylaws shall bind all members of the association, from time to time.
- V. The services of the Association and its resultant benefits shall be opened to all its members.

### 9.5 *Responsibilities of Members*

All members are to conduct themselves with the values of respect and equality and to abide by the HAG Membership Rules of Conduct (See Appendix B).

## **10. Association Year**

The year of the Association including all its branches for financial and functioning purposes shall be from 1st April of that year to 31st March of the next year.

## 11. Executive Committee

### 11.1 Constitution of the executive committee and term limits

The general control, management and direction of the policy and affairs of the association shall be vested in a body styled as “Executive Committee” at the Headquarters level.

This shall consist of the following 6 members who shall be elected from among the life members (only).

President	-	1(One)
Organizing Secretary	-	1(One)
Treasurer	-	1(One)
Council Members	-	2(Two)
Communications Officer	-	1(One)

They shall hold the offices for a term of two year maximum and after the expiry of which the Executive Committee shall be freshly constituted from among members only. However, existing executive committee members shall be eligible for re-election for only five consecutive terms maximum for any of the offices.

All the persons shall hold the office purely on an honorary basis and without any remuneration except for travel allowance incidentals as admissible as per prevailing Government of Ghana norms for meetings subject to availability of funds and prior approval by the Executive Committee.

### 11.2 Proceedings of the Executive Committee

- I. The executive committee shall meet at least quarterly. Other meetings may be held either upon the advice of the President or the request of at least three members of the executive committee.
- II. The quorum of the meeting of the Executive committee shall be four members present.
- III. If within half-an-hour of the time appointed for a meeting a quorum is not constituted, the meeting shall stand adjourned for half-an-hour at the same time and place, and if at the meeting a quorum is still not constituted the meeting shall be canceled.
- IV. The absence, without explanation of any members of the Executive committee for 2 (Two) consecutive quarterly executive meetings and/or for a continuous period of 6 months whichever is more, shall entitle the Executive Committee to remove such member from the executive committee.



- V. A resolution shall be passed by a two-thirds majority vote of members after circulation to all members.
- VI. Decisions taken by the Executive Committee shall not be actionable until communicated with a deadline to all members. The deadline shall be determined by the urgency of the matter to be decided or the timeframe available for an effective action to be taken.
- VII. Objections raised by members to executive committee decisions shall be discussed and may be resolved in the following manner:
  - a. A re-evaluation of the decision by the executive committee and provision of alternatives that consider the concerns raised.
  - b. An explanation of and acceptance thereof of that explanation by the executive committee to the member raising the objection.
  - c. A vote by a two-thirds majority of members who voted on the decision.

### *11.3 Duties of the Executive Committee*

- I. To ensure and promote the aims and objectives of the association.
- II. To ensure that all money transactions are to be held through a recognized established financial institution or medium.
- III. To ensure utilization of income towards promoting the objectives of the association.
- IV. To decide on the expulsion of a member in case he/she is convicted of any criminal offense based on the decision contravening the rules and regulations of the association.
- V. To raise funds by donation, grant or gift etc. to fulfill the objectives of the Association.
- VI. To appoint a sub-committee/expert group etc., with such powers as deemed fit and said committee may co-opt from among the members of the association.
- VII. To invite/co-opt specialists/experts in the area of humanism who may be non-members of the association whose counsel is considered useful to the association.
- VIII. Shall arrange for the publication of handouts, brochures, journals, documents etc.as may be considered fit in furtherance of its objects.
- IX. To appoint the personnel of the association, determine their remuneration, salaries and other service conditions and also to terminate their services, dismissal or otherwise and take disciplinary actions as necessary.
- X. Open and operate bank accounts, deposit, withdraw or invest funds, issue, accept, sign, endorse and deliver cheques, drafts, letters of credit, and in general any other negotiable instruments. Such banking account (s) as and when opened shall be

operated by the President or Organizing Secretary and (after a note approved by the President) and Financial Secretary being common.

- XI. Decide on the establishment of branch offices of the association.
- XII. Decide on any, every and all matters pertaining to or in connection with the administration of the association and the successful pursuance of aims and objectives.
- XIII. In the event of any office bearer laying down office for whatever reasons, the executive committee can co-opt any member considered suitable for the office to act in that capacity until the next elections are held for the replacement of such position within four weeks.
- XIV. In all matters to be decided by a simple majority in Executive Committee/HAG meetings, casting vote of the Executive Committee shall prevail in case of an equality of votes.

#### *11.4 Duties of the President*

- I. The President shall be in overall charge of the association and preside over Executive Committee meetings.
- II. The President in case of emergency may exercise all the powers and perform all the functions required to be exercised and performed under the rules and regulations by the executive committee provided that all the actions taken by the President shall be placed before the next Executive Committee/HAG Meeting for approval.
- III. The President shall preside over every meeting of the Executive Committee (or shall delegate to a member of the Executive Member) to regulate the proceedings of the meetings, interpret rules and decide doubtful points or shall delegate to a member of the Executive Committee to do so.

#### *11.5 Duties of the Organizing Secretary*

- I. The person shall be in charge of all administrative executive work of the association. He/she shall act under the guidance, supervision and advice from the Executive Committee.
- II. Shall be responsible for the office of the Association with all its records papers and files.
- III. Shall be responsible for calling for all meetings of the Executive Committee/HAG/Freethought Meetings as per rules and regulations with the approval of the Executive Committee and maintain the minutes, book and record of all the proceedings of the meetings.
- IV. To look after and conduct all correspondence relating to the association including issuance of notices for Executive Committee and all members.

- V. To oversee and sign all vouchers/bills of expenses of association before payment by the treasurer.
- VI. Shall act as Chair in place of the President where and if the President was unavailable to act in that capacity.

*11.6 Duties of the Treasurer / Financial Secretary*

- I. Treasurer shall keep all accounts and ledgers of the association.
- II. The person shall operate the bank account(s) with the President or Organizing Secretary as decided by the Executive Committee.
- III. The person shall receive all subscriptions, donations, grants etc., in cheques/drafts/cash (preferably to avoid cash transactions as far as possible) and record the receipts in the book/ledger maintained for the purpose.
- IV. The person shall arrange for the investment of surplus assets/income as decided and approved by the Executive Committee in conjunction with the Organizing Secretary.
- V. To submit all records and papers relating to receipts and expenditures etc., to the President once in a month or even earlier for review and approval.
- VI. To prepare yearly accounts of receipts and expenditures and have the same audited by an auditor approved by the Executive Committee and place it before Executive committee and HAG Meeting for ratification.
- VII. Shall act as Chair in the absence of both the President and the Organizing Secretary.
- VIII. To maintain a contingency cash fund of a maximum amount as may be decided by the Executive Committee/President and Organizing Secretary.

*11.7 Duties of the Council Members*

The two Council Members shall:-

- I. Take up any role or function which the Executive shall decide is needed for the execution of tasks. Such roles may change depending on the project the Association has at hand.
- II. Provide a check and balance within the Executive Committee - (this is on the presumption that an Executive Committee of four persons is more susceptible to groupthink than six).

*11.8 Duties of the Communications Officer*

- I. Develop and implement a communication strategy to reach different audiences with the aim of helping achieve the organization's objectives.

- II. Shall be responsible for managing the social media accounts of the organization and for keeping subscribers informed of HAG activities.
- III. Shall be responsible for publication and distribution of the journal, Newsletter and other publications of the association.
- IV. Shall select the members of the Media (Social/Traditional) Committee who are ordinarily members of the association along with the executive committee who shall be ex-officio members of the Journal Committee.

## **12. Regional Representatives**

Ghana is divided into sixteen (16) regions. From each region, there shall be representatives who shall coordinate with the Executive Committee for all activities of the association in their region.

All the representatives shall hold their office for a maximum of one year (one-term) period. However, they are eligible for contesting again by election.

## **13. Biennial Conference**

- I. There shall be a Conference of the Association every other year ordinarily or as the majority of Members may decide, under the auspices of the association. The branches or members of the association shall have the privilege of inviting and organizing the conference. The place, date, duration, time and chairman (and if deemed necessary standby Chairman or otherwise) of the conference shall be decided by the Executive Committee as suitable and acceptable.
- II. The President, Organizing Secretary and Financial Secretary shall provide all possible assistance to the chairman of the conference.
- III. The Chairman of the conference will determine who constitutes the organizing committee from the life members of the association.
- IV. The Chairman of the organizing committee shall submit to the Organizing Secretary of the association a report/statement of accounts of the conference within three months of the conference.

## **14. Elections**

- I. The elections to office bearers of the Executive Committee shall ordinarily be held every two years. Only members who are eligible to contest may file their nominations duly proposed and seconded by two members of the association.

- II. The Organizing Secretary shall ordinarily be the returning officer of the elections unless the person is contesting the elections, then the President may appoint a non-contesting consenting member as Returning Officer. The returning officer shall invite nominations from members for the various offices for at least one month before the elections and notify all members. The returning officer shall make all arrangements for voting and following counting of votes and declare the results within twenty four hours after the voting closes, under the approval of the President, Organizing Secretary and the Returning Officer.
- III. Voting by proxy will not be allowed.
- IV. A member may nominate themselves.
- V. A member may be nominated for more than one office.
- VI. A member cannot nominate more than one person for an office
- VII. A member may decline the nomination during the nominating process. Where a member is nominated for more than ONE office, the nominee shall have the right to decide which ONE office they wish to be elected to.
- VIII. After the nominations, the returning office will provide a list of all nominees for the various offices for final confirmation
- IX. The final list of nominees will be confirmed at least 48 hours after the list has been provided

## **15. Recall of Elected Representatives**

An elected representative may be removed from office for cause by a recall election which may be initiated through a petition signed by ten(10)percent of the membership. A general membership meeting will be scheduled prior to the recall election within thirty (30) days after receipt of the recall petition. Following the general membership meeting, the recall election shall be by secret ballot of the membership. The Executive Board shall notify in writing any officer who has been recommended for recall. The recall shall be effected by a simple majority.

## **16. Annual HAG Meeting**

- I. The Association shall hold at least one HAG Meeting annually at which the report of the management of the Association for the year together with an audit copy of the accounts shall be presented by the Organizing Secretary and Financial Secretary respectively for approval.
- II. The Annual HAG Meeting shall be held no later than the 31st of March of our calendar year.

- III. A Special HAG Meeting may be convened at any time on the request of the Executive Committee or on the request of at least one-tenth of the total life members, who shall state in writing the business for which they wish the meeting to be convened and the general body shall within ten (10) days from the date of request proceed duly to call a meeting on a day not later than twenty (20) days from the date of receipt of the request.
- IV. If a member has not supplied to the Association any email address for giving notice to him/her, a notice advertised on the Facebook Group Page shall be deemed sufficient notice. Necessary notice shall be issued 20 days in advance by Organizing Secretary. The notice shall be in English, mentioning the date, time and place and the agenda of the meeting.
- V. Quorum - one-fifth (1/5) of total life members of the Association present (whichever is less) in any Annual HAG Meeting shall form the quorum.
- VI. The Annual HAG Meeting shall be presided by the President and in his/her absence the members present shall elect from amongst themselves a Moderator for the meeting. The decision of meeting shall be recorded and maintained by the Organizing Secretary and approved by the Moderator of the meeting.
- VII. All life members of the Association can attend and take part in the deliberations and voting rights shall be restricted to life members only.
- VIII. Business at the meeting shall ordinarily be transacted in the following order:
  - a) Reading of notice of the meeting
  - b) Adoption of the Organizing Secretary report for the year.
  - c) Adoption of the accounts report for the year by the Financial Secretary.
  - d) Consideration of the budget for the ensuing year.
  - e) Resolutions.
  - f) Any other business with the permission of the President.

## **16. Validity of Proceedings**

The proceedings of the HAG Meeting, Executive committee or any committee acting under the rules and regulations of the Association shall not be invalidated by any accidental omission to give any notice hereby required or by any vacancy among its members or by any defect in the election or qualification of any members.

## **17. Regular HAG Meetings**

- I. Aside the Annual HAG Meeting, HAG Meetings shall be called by any member and seconded by ten other members. Such a call shall be sent through the Organising Secretary who shall be compelled to call the meeting.

- II. Regular HAG meeting will be presided by any elected member/moderator by members present. The decisions of the meeting shall be recorded and maintained by the Organizing Secretary duly approved by the Moderator of the meeting.
- III. All members of the Association can attend and take part in the deliberations or any other member invited by the Executive Committee. But the voting rights shall be restricted to members present in the meeting.
- IV. All members present at the HAG Meetings shall conduct themselves in accordance with the Amsterdam Declaration or by a Code of Conduct defined by the Association.

## **18. Amendment to Memorandum, Rules and Regulations**

- I. Proposal for change in the memorandum, rules and regulations of the Association as and when necessary shall ordinarily be considered at the Annual HAG Meeting of the Association. The proposed alteration must reach the President, at least two months before the date of the meeting and shall be circulated to all the members/branches for opinion at least one month before the date of the meeting. The notice of the proposed change must be given in the agenda of the meeting. No such proposal shall be carried into effect unless it is agreed to by three-fourths of the life members present at the Annual HAG Meeting. (The notice shall mean that the actual wording for the proposed alteration shall be included in the agenda of the meeting).
- II. Wherever rules and regulations of the association do not exist or are conflicting, the Association shall be guided by the decisions of the executive committee meeting convened for the purpose.

## **19. Logo Meaning**

The Happy Humans (an icon that has been adopted as an international symbol of secular humanism) in the colors of the Ghana Flag, red, gold, green in the center of the Black star represent all humanists living in Ghana and the Black Star represents the Ghanaian symbol as in the Ghana National Flag.

## **20. Breach**

Any breach of this constitution will be treated as a potential disciplinary issue and dealt with accordingly as per the Executive Committee's decision. The HAG Constitution is effective as of the date of membership registration.

HAG reserves the right to continue, extend, revise or revoke this policy at its discretion.

This Constitution is to be reviewed annually by HAG.

**21. Declaration**

This constitution was first ratified on the 24th of March, 2016. The current (first) amendment is ratified this day, the 29th of July, 2018.

Signed:

**MICHAEL OSEI ASSIBEY**

\_\_\_\_\_

HAG President

HAG President's Signature

**AGOMO ATAMBIRE**

\_\_\_\_\_

Organizing Secretary

Member Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Witness (Member Name)

Member Signature

Date:



## APPENDIX

### A. Amsterdam Declaration

As part of the international humanist movement, we support the official defining statement of World Humanism passed unanimously by the General Assembly of the International Humanist and Ethical Union at the 50th anniversary World Humanist Congress in 2002.

- I. Humanism is ethical. It affirms the worth, dignity and autonomy of the individual and the right of every human being to the greatest possible freedom compatible with the rights of others. Humanists have a duty of care to all humanity including future generations. Humanists believe that morality is an intrinsic part of human nature based on understanding and a concern for others, needing no external sanction.
- II. Humanism is rational. It seeks to use science creatively, not destructively. Humanists believe that the solutions to the world's problems lie in human thought and action rather than divine intervention. Humanism advocates the application of the methods of science and free inquiry to the problems of human welfare. But Humanists also believe that the application of science and technology must be tempered by human values. Science gives us the means but human values must propose the ends.
- III. Humanism supports democracy and human rights. Humanism aims at the fullest possible development of every human being. It holds that democracy and human development are matters of right. The principles of democracy and human rights can be applied to many human relationships and are not restricted to methods of government.
- IV. Humanism insists that personal liberty must be combined with social responsibility. Humanism ventures to build a world on the idea of the free person responsible to society, and recognizes our dependence and responsibility for the natural world. Humanism is undogmatic, imposing no creed upon its adherents. It is thus committed to education free from indoctrination.

- V. Humanism is a response to the widespread demand for an alternative to dogmatic religion. The world's major religions claim to be based on revelations fixed for all time, and many seek to impose their worldview on all of humanity. Humanism recognizes that reliable knowledge of the world and ourselves arises through a continuing process of observation, evaluation and revision.
- VI. Humanism values artistic creativity and imagination and recognizes the transforming power of art. Humanism affirms the importance of literature, music, and the visual and performing arts for personal development and fulfilment.
- VII. Humanism is a life stance aiming at the maximum possible fulfilment through the cultivation of ethical and creative living and offers an ethical and rational means of addressing the challenges of our time. Humanism can be a way of life for everyone everywhere.

The Amsterdam Declaration explicitly states that Humanism rejects dogma, and imposes no creed upon its adherents.

## B. HAG Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures

Please refer to the Code of Conduct document.