

**CONSTITUTION OF THE  
BANKING, INSURANCE AND GENERAL WORKERS UNION**

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# **CONSTITUTION OF THE BANKING, INSURANCE AND GENERAL WORKERS UNION**

## **RULE 1: NAME AND REGISTERED OFFICE**

- (a) The name of the Union shall be the **Banking, Insurance and General Workers Union (BIGWU)**, hereinafter referred to as 'the Union'.
- (b) The registered office of the Union shall be **No. 85 Eighth Street, Barataria, Trinidad**, or other such place as the Central Executive may from time to time determine.
- (c) For the purpose of administrative convenience, the Union may also maintain branch offices at such places as determined by the Central Executive of the Union.

## **RULE 2: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The aims and objective of the Union shall be as follows:-

- (a) To organise banking, insurance and other workers who qualify for membership, whether professional, clerical or non-clerical, technical or commercial.
- (b) To promote and to protect the interests and welfare of its members, by representation for fair remuneration and other employment conditions, that would ensure an adequate standard of living befitting the dignity of the human person and commensurate with the levels of responsibility and all other conditions relevant to the progressive interests of workers in general and its members in particular.
- (c) To settle disputes between members.
- (d) To associate or affiliate with other Trade Unions and/or organisations, nationally and internationally in the incessant struggle of the working class and the masses generally against oppression, social and economic injustice towards a fair and just society.
- (e) To provide educational facilities and programmes/services for its members.
- (f) To provide benefits for its members, such as retirement benefits, death benefits, recreational facilities, co-operatives and other benefits and services as may be introduced from time to time.
- (g) To provide for the education of members in the principles, history, theory and practice of trade union development and working class struggles.

- (h) To hold, purchase, lease, mortgage, or otherwise deal with real personal property of any kind and to carry on or participate in any business or undertaking (commercial, industrial or otherwise) in the interest of or for the purpose of furthering the interests of the Union or of trade union development generally.
- (i) To invest the funds of the Union in such stocks, funds, shares, securities or other investments of whatsoever nature and wheresoever and whether involving liability or not and whether coming under the definition of investments for Trustees or not, as the Trustees of the Union, the Central Executive and General Council shall in their discretion think fit and may vary from time to time.
- (j) To render financial assistance to members when on strike provided the strike is called or sanctioned by the Union acting through the Central Executive.
- (k) To provide legal advice and/or legal assistance necessary and as determined by the Central Executive in connection with their employment.
- (l) To provide legal assistance, costs and indemnity to officers and representatives of the Union when acting in the name and on behalf of the Union.
- (m) To promote a cordial relationship between its members and any employer of its members and to settle disputes amicably wherever possible.
- (n) To improve and promote a high level of service of its members to the employer(s) generally.
- (o) To promote liaison or affiliation with other organisations (local, regional or international) having similar aims and objects.
- (p) To generally promote the interests of the country and in particular, the Trade Union Movement.
- (q) To do all other such lawful things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects or any of them.
- (r) Subject to the restrictions and to the conditions prescribed in relevant provisions of the Trade Unions Ordinance, the political objects set forth in Section 33 Sub-section 3 of the Ordinance shall also be objects of the Union.

### **RULE 3: MEMBERSHIP**

- (a) All workers of any financial or non financial institution as well as any other persons employed in any capacity whatsoever shall be eligible for full membership of the Union.

- (b) Application for membership shall be made on the prescribed form and an applicant shall be deemed to have become a member when the payment of the applicant's entrance fee and first weekly or monthly dues has been received.
- (c) Membership in the Union shall entitle members:-
  - (i) to representation in matters concerning their terms and conditions of employment;
  - (ii) to seek or to hold office in the Union, provided however that in the case of officers on the Central Executive no member shall be entitled to hold any such office before the expiration of two (2) years continuous membership and shall have served as a branch official or as a full time non-executive officer of the Union or as an executive member on the Women/Youth Committee for a period of two (2) years to the satisfaction of the Central Executive and General Council.
  - (iii) to enjoy any benefits that may be provided under and in accordance with these rules,
  - (iv) To obtain a copy of these rules upon payment of the appropriate charge, if any.
  - (v) An unemployed/retired worker who wishes to retain membership in the Union and so notifies the General Secretary in writing shall pay Union dues at the rate determined by the Central Executive.
  - (vi) The General Council shall be entitled to confer honorary membership upon any person, if in its opinion such a person so deserves.
- (d) Honorary members may be entitled to attend any meeting at any level of the Union upon written invitation. Such members shall pay no dues, shall not vote at any meeting nor hold any office in the Union.

#### **RULE 4: ENTRANCE FEES AND DUES**

- (a) The rates of subscription payable by each member shall be as determined from time to time by a Conference of Delegates or Special Conference of Delegates.
- (b) Any member not in receipt of salary who has been granted leave by their employer under the terms of a recognised career break scheme shall in application to the General Secretary have their subscription suspended for the period of such leave.

(c)

- (i) Any member not in receipt of either salary or pension and suffering financial hardship may apply to the Central Executive for a suspension of subscription and the Central Executive at its sole discretion may suspend the members subscription for a period of time as it may think fit.
- (ii) During any such period the member shall be entitled to such benefits as may be determined by the Central Executive.
- (d) An entrance fee of **ten dollars (\$10.00)** shall be paid upon application by each prospective member, along with a monthly subscription of **thirty dollars (\$30.00)**, in the case of members where there is no certificate of recognition.
- (e) Where a collective agreement exists, members in the bargaining unit concerned shall each pay:
  - (i) A monthly subscription of up to 2% per cent of basic salary/wage to a maximum of **ninety dollars (\$90.00)** per month. This provision may be varied from time to time in such circumstances as determined by the General Council.
  - (ii) Benefits applicable to the above will be determined by the General Council.
  - (iii) Any member or former member, who has overpaid their dues either because of a change in their membership status or because of their resignation from the Union, may apply in writing, to the General Secretary for a refund. The General Secretary on verifying same will refund the overpaid dues.
  - (iv) A member whose dues are two months or more in arrears shall be deemed to be unfinancial. A member whose dues are six (6) months in arrears shall cease to be a member of the Union and his name shall be removed from the roll of members.
  - (v) A person who has ceased membership for whatever reason may be readmitted to membership only at the discretion of the Central Executive and only under terms and conditions as it may determine.
  - (vi) Members who resign voluntarily may be re-admitted to membership only at the discretion of the Central Executive, provided that a re-admission fee of \$300.00 dollars and all back dues are paid.
  - (vii) Payment as in (vi) above may be waived or decreased / increased in appropriate circumstances at the discretion of the Central Executive.

## **RULE 5:                    TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

Membership in the Union may be terminated through any of the following ways:

- (a) Written resignation to the General Secretary
- (b) Expulsion, or
- (c) Being in arrears of Union Dues for a period of six (6) months or more. However, subject to the discretion of the Central Executive, this shall not apply where such arrears on the part of the member is due to unpaid sick leave or victimisation for Trade Union activity. In both cases the period of exemption shall be determined by the Central Executive.

## **RULE 6:                    STRUCTURE OF THE UNION**

The structure of the Union shall be as follows:-

- (i) Biennial Conference of Delegates
- (ii) General Council
- (iii) Central Executive
- (iv) Presidency
- (v) Secretariat
- (vi) Education & Research Department
- (vii) Branches & Affiliates
- (viii) Committees
- (ix) Shop Stewards Council
- (x) General membership

*Other Departments as determined by the Central Executive*

## **RULE 7:                    BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF DELEGATES**

- (a) The Biennial Conference of Delegates shall be the supreme authority of the Union and it shall be convened by the General Council on a date within the period September to November in the particular calendar year, provided however that the General Council or failing the General Council, the Central Executive shall have the power by resolution to appoint a date outside such period, but within the calendar year.
- (b) The Biennial Conference shall be constituted of the General Council and delegates from each branch of the Union elected on the basis of one (1) delegate for every fifty (50) members or part thereof.
- (c) The quorum of the Biennial Conference shall be one third 1/3 of the total number of delegates and members of the General Council entitled to attend.

- (d) The functions of the Biennial Conference of Delegates shall be, among other things, to determine the policy or policies of the Union generally and in relation to any particular question or matter; to receive and consider reports on the activities and the audited accounts of the Union for the preceding years, to consider and direct the General Council to address the budget and activities of the Union for the ensuing year, to consider and determine such other matters as may be brought before it, including resolutions from the Branches, the Central Executive or the General Council, and if and when required, to amend the Rules of the Union.
- (e) It shall be the duty of the General Secretary to notify each branch of the date appointed for the Biennial Conference of Delegates at least six (6) weeks in advance and each Branch shall within twenty-one (21) days of the such notification submit to the General Secretary the names of the Branch delegates and such resolutions and other matters as the Branch may propose for inclusion on the agenda of the Biennial Conference.
- (f) It shall be the responsibility of the Central Executive to formulate the Agenda.
- (g) It shall be the responsibility of the Central Executive to direct and ensure that the General Secretary prepares for the Biennial Conference all relevant documents in such time as to allow for circulation thereof to the delegates at least five (5) days prior to the date of the Biennial Conference.
- (h) Decisions of the Biennial Conference shall be binding on all members of the Union.

**RULE 8: SPECIAL CONFERENCE OF DELEGATES**

- (a) A Special Conference of Delegates may be held on any matter or question on which a decision is urgently required that cannot be left to the next forthcoming Biennial Conference, and shall be convened in accordance with the following:-
  - (i) On the request by resolution of a majority of the Branches of the Union communicated to the General Secretary stating the matter or question to be submitted for decision at a Special Conference.
  - (ii) On the recommendation of the General Council.
- (b) A Special Conference shall be constituted on the same basis as the Biennial Conference and shall be convened by the General Secretary in the same manner and shall follow the same procedure, except that the only business that may be entertained shall be what was submitted in accordance with Section 1 of this rule; and any decision arrived at by majority vote shall be final and binding on members of the Union.

## **RULE 9: THE GENERAL COUNCIL**

- (a) The General Council shall be the governing authority of the Union between one Biennial Conference and the next. It shall be subject to the authority of the Biennial Conference and any special conference which may be convened.
- (b) The General Council shall be comprised of
  - (i) The Central Executive;
  - (ii) The President, Secretary and one other elected officer of each branch;
  - (iii) The President and Secretary of the Women's Committee;
  - (iv) The President and Secretary of the Youth Committee;
  - (v) The Secretary of the Shop Stewards Council
- (c) The General Council shall meet at least once every three (3) months.
- (d) The General Council shall have the authority to fine, suspend, dismiss or expel a member.
- (e) The decisions of the General Council shall be binding on all members of the Union.
- (f) An emergency meeting of the General Council may be called by anyone of the following:-
  - (i) The Central Executive
  - (ii) One third (1/3) the total number of branches by resolutions to the General Secretary
  - (iii) The President of the Union
  - (iv) In the case of (ii) and (iii) above, the request for such a meeting shall be in writing to the General Secretary and shall state the issue or issues for which the meeting is to be convened.
- (g) The quorum for meetings of the General Council shall be one third (1/3) of the members thereof.



- (h) Any member of the General Council who absents his/herself from three consecutive meetings without written excuse acceptable to the General Council shall have automatically forfeited his/her seat thereon, and also his/her office as a Branch Official and shall be deemed to have resigned.
- (i) The agenda for meetings of the General Council shall be settled by the Central Executive; except that in the case of an emergency meeting called by the President it shall be determined by him; excepting also, that in the case of an emergency meeting requested by one third (1/3) of the total number of branches, the agenda shall be formulated by the General Secretary on the basis only of the specific issue or issues contained in the written request, as outlined in Section 6(b) of this Rule.
- (j) The General Council shall have power between Biennial Conference of Delegates to determine all matters on which these rules or any other rules made hereunder are silent and any ambiguity arising in the interpretation of the said rules, and its decision on any such matter shall be final.
- (k) The General Council shall have power generally to take all such steps and to do all such things as it shall deem necessary and proper for furthering and/or carrying into effect the objects and purposes of the Union including power to control and/or appropriate and/or expend the funds of the Union and to make and issue Standing Orders relating to, or for the purpose of regulating any matter, exercise or operation not provided for in these rules.

**RULE 10: THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE**

- (a) The Central Executive shall be responsible for direction and supervision of all aspects of the Union's activities; its day to day conduct, including the management of the business of the Union; and, its general administrative functions.
- (b) The Central Executive shall be responsible to the General Council and all Conferences of Delegates.
- (c) The Central Executive shall meet at least once per month on a scheduled date and time, or as otherwise determined by the Central Executive.
- (d) The Central Executive shall be comprised of the National Officers who shall be:-

<b>President</b>	<b>General Secretary</b>
<b>Deputy President</b>	<b>Deputy General Secretary</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Vice President</b>	<b>Assistant General Secretary</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President</b>	

- (e)
  - (i) The National Officers of the Union shall each be elected by a secret ballot vote by the members of the Union in accordance with (Elections Rules made by the General Council) and shall serve for a period of four (4) years and shall be eligible for re-election.
  - (ii) In the event of a vacancy occurring on the Central Executive within the four (4) year period, the General Council shall decide whether or not it shall be filled by a bye-election. In the event that the decision is in the affirmative, then the vacancy shall be filled by a bye-election in the same manner as in e (i) of this rule, but the incumbent shall hold office for the remainder only of the term of the former incumbent.
- (f) The quorum for meetings of the Central Executive shall be one-half (1/2) of its membership.
- (g) The agenda for meetings for the Central Executive shall be as follows:-

#### **Central Executive – Agenda**

- (1)** Chairman's Opening Remarks
  - (2)** Confirmation/Adoption of Minutes
  - (3)** Matters Arising from Minutes
  - (4)** Correspondence
  - (5)** New Members – Confirmation
  - (6)** Consideration of other reports including that from Trustees
    - (a) Industrial Relations
    - (b) Organisational
    - (c) Financial
  - (7)** Any other Business
- (h) Emergency Meetings of the Central Executive shall be convened in the following manner:-
  - (i) By the President who shall formulate the Agenda in consultation with the General Secretary.
  - (ii) By the General Secretary upon written requests of one-third (1/3) of the Central Executive. In this event the General Secretary shall settle the agenda in consultation with the President but shall include the matters raised in the aforementioned written request.

## **RULE 11: DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS OF NATIONAL OFFICERS**

### **THE PRESIDENCY**

#### **PRESIDENT**

- (a) The President shall be Chief Executive Officer of the Union and head of the Presidency. He/She shall be responsible to the General Council for supervision of all officers of the Union.
- (b) The President shall preside at the Biennial Conference of Delegates, at Special Conferences and at meetings of the General Council and the Central Executive and shall have an original and casting vote. The President or any other presiding member shall sign the minutes of each meeting at the time they are approved. Any presiding officer in the absence of the President shall have an original and a casting vote.
- (c) He/She shall be a full time officer of the Union and shall receive such wages and benefits and enjoy such facilities as may from time to time be decided by the General Council.

#### **DEPUTY PRESIDENT**

- (a) The Deputy President shall assist the President in the supervision of the officers and other officials as well as all aspects of the Union's portfolio, and in particular those of Collective Bargaining and Labour Relations generally. He/she shall act as President in the absence of the incumbent.
- (b) He/She shall be a full time officer of the Union and shall receive such wages and benefits and enjoy such facilities as may from time to time be decided by the General Council.

#### **VICE PRESIDENTS**

- (a) There shall be two (2) Vice Presidents in order of precedent. The Vice Presidents shall be charged with the responsibility of all Collective Bargaining and Labour Relations matters and/or other duties as may be assigned to them by the Central Executive.
- (b) In the absence of the President or the Deputy President, they shall in order of precedence exercise all the powers and discharge all the duties of the President and in particular the duty of presiding at the Biennial Conference of Delegates. The two (2) Vice Presidents may be full time officers of the Union and shall receive such remuneration and benefits and enjoy such facilities as may from time to time be decided by the General Council.

## **THE SECRETARIAT**

### **GENERAL SECRETARY**

- (a) The General Secretary shall be the head of the Secretariat and shall have the responsibility for the accounts of the Union, all correspondence and the general office. The General Secretary shall conduct the business of the Union in accordance with the rules and shall carry out the directives of the Biennial Conference of Delegates, Special Conference of Delegates, Central Executive and the General Council and shall submit to members of the General Council a written report on the activities of the Union as directed by the Central Executive.
- (b) He/She shall submit to Branch Secretaries statements concerning the membership of their branches and all correspondence relevant for the proper and informed activities of their branches.
- (c) He/She shall keep or cause to be kept registers in which shall be recorded the names of members who attended Biennial Conference, General Council and Central Executive Meetings.
- (d) He/she shall prepare for the Biennial Conference of Delegates a written report on all aspect of the Union's work for which he/she is responsible.
- (e) He/She shall be a full time officer of the Union and shall receive such wages and benefits and enjoy such facilities as may from time to time be decided by the General Council on the recommendation of the Central Executive.

### **DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY**

- (a) The Deputy General Secretary shall be a full time officer of the Union and shall receive such remuneration and benefits and enjoy such facilities as may from time to time be decided by the General Council.
- (b) The Deputy General Secretary shall act in close liaison with the General Secretary to effect the responsibilities attendant to the secretariat, including finance and administration.

### **ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY**

- (a) The Assistant General Secretary shall work in close liaison with the General Secretary and carry out such duties as may be assigned.
- (b) On the recommendation of the Central Executive, the General Council shall be empowered to assign the Assistant General Secretary as a full-time officer of the Union and accordingly he/she shall receive such wages and benefits and enjoy such facilities as may from time to time be decided by the General Council.

## **TRUSTEES**

- (a) There shall be three (3) Trustees appointed to the Central Executive by the General Council and who shall have ex-officio status. They shall have vested in them all the real and personal property whatsoever belonging to the Union and they shall deal with it in such manner as the General Council or the Central Executive may direct.
- (b) The Trustees shall be responsible for all property, real estate, and investments of the Union. They shall see that no one abuses such property or estate and shall deliver to the General Secretary within three (3) days all properties, monies, cheques, documents or other securities of the Union when requested by the General Council or Central Executive to do so.
- (c) The Trustees may each be given an honorarium in a sum to be determined by the General Council.

*(The Trustees may attend meetings of the Central Executive but will not have the right to vote).*

## **RULE 12: EDUCATION AND RESEARCH OFFICER**

- (a) The office of Education and Research Officer will be one of appointment by the Central Executive. Any person/s so appointed shall receive such wages and other benefits as may from time to time be decided by the Central Executive and ratified by the General Council.
- (b) The Education and Research Officer/s shall be subordinate to the President or such other officer/official as may be assigned by the President or Central Executive and shall work in close collaboration with all the other departments of the Union and render such assistance as may be required.
- (c) The Education and Research Officer/s shall conduct educational projects for the benefit of the members and shall provide information relevant to the requirements and operation of the Union, including political, economic and social data.
- (d) There shall be an Education Committee headed by the Education and Research Officer and comprising the branch Education Secretaries.
- (e) The Education and Research Officer/s shall prepare reports as requested by the Central Executive or General Council.
- (f) The office of Education and Research Officer shall be responsible for the editing and publication of the Union's news journal.

**RULE 13: ORGANISERS & LABOUR RELATIONS OFFICERS**

- (a) The Central Executive may appoint Organisers as the need arises. They shall work under the direction of and be subordinate to the President or such other Officer/official as may be assigned by the President or Central Executive. They shall be primarily responsible for the recruitment of workers into the Union and shall perform such other organizing and labour relations duties to which they may be assigned. Any one or more of them may be full time and shall receive such wages and benefits as may be decided by the Central Executive.
- (b) The Central Executive may appoint Labour Relations Officers as the need arises. They shall work under the direction of and be sub-ordinate to the Deputy President or such Vice President as may determined and shall be primarily responsible for collective bargaining labour relations matters and such other trade union duties to which they may be assigned from time to time. Any one or more of them may be full time and shall receive such wages and benefits as may be decided by the Central Executive.

**RULE 14: THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

There shall be established a committee to be known as the Communications Committee which shall be comprised of four (4) members of the General Council, including the Editor. This committee may meet as often as is considered necessary. Its chairperson shall be named by the General Council who shall be empowered to convene such meetings. This committee shall be responsible, for the formulation of policy and other guidelines designed to assist the Editor in the presentation of the Union's Journal / website / and other communications media.

**RULE 15: BRANCHES**

- (a) The membership of the Union shall be organised into branches.
- (b) Branches of the Union shall be established on the basis of membership in the Union obtaining in a given place of employment.
- (c)
  - (i) Each branch of the Union shall be governed by a Branch Committee comprising the following Branch Officers: Branch President; Branch Vice President; Branch Secretary; Branch Education Secretary; one (1) Shop Steward and one (1) Committee Member.
  - (ii) In the event of a branch having more than one Shop Steward it shall be decided amongst them which of their number shall be the member on the Branch Committee, and such decision shall be communicated to the General Secretary. Members of the Branch Committee and other Shop Stewards shall be enacted to hold office for two years. They shall generally assist in the recruitment of new workers into the Union.

- (d) Branch Officers shall be elected by the members of the Branch provided however that in default of such election the incumbent officers shall continue to hold office. In the event of a vacancy on a Branch Committee, a bye-election shall be held.
- (e)
- (i) A Branch of the Union shall meet at least once in every six (6) months on a date appointed by the Branch Committee. The quorum for meetings of a Branch shall be 1/5 of its number. In Branches with membership of 500 or more the quorum for meetings shall be a minimum of 50.
- (ii) A Branch Committee shall meet at least once monthly on the summons of the Branch Secretary at the direction of the Branch President. The quorum for Branch Committee meetings shall be three (3) members. The agenda for meetings of a Branch shall be determined by the Branch Committee, but must include:
- (1) President's Opening Remarks
  - (2) Report on the last General Council Meeting
  - (3) Correspondence
  - (4) Shop Stewards Report: questions and debate
  - (5) General Business
- The Agenda for meetings of a Branch Committee shall be settled by the Branch Secretary in consultation with the Branch President or vice versa.
- (f) The Branch President shall be the Head of the Branch and shall have general supplemental responsibility for the conduct of the Union in so far as it concerns the Branch and for defending and promoting the particular interests of Branch members. He/ She shall preside at meetings of the Branch and shall be responsible for the orderly conduct of such meetings and must ensure that the agenda is strictly followed. It shall be the duty of the Branch Vice President to assist the Branch President generally and, in particular, to preside at meetings of the Branch committee or the Branch in the absence of the Branch President.
- (g) The Branch Secretary shall be responsible for recording the minutes of the Branch Committee and the Branch and to ensure that the records of the Branch are up to date and kept in proper condition. He/She shall establish direct communication with the General Secretary to ensure prompt receipt of correspondence and other documents relevant for the effective performance of his/her duties. He/She shall ensure membership status is advanced and maintained.

- (h) The Branch Education Secretary shall establish direct communication with the Education and Research Officer and attend meetings of the Education Committee, shall be responsible for carrying out the work of that Committee among members of the Branch including the dissemination of educational material; and for the preparation and distribution of bulletins and pamphlets relating to the interest of Branch members.
- (i) The appropriate Shop Steward shall be responsible for initiating and/or making and/or pursuing representations at or up to the appropriate state relating to grievances of members of the Branch. At least once every four (4) months, he/She shall submit in writing to the Chief Grievance Officer a report of his / her activities.
- (j) Shop Stewards at their various places of employment shall also be charged with the responsibility for recruiting workers into the Union and in particular new workers.
- (k) Branches of the Union shall not merge or affiliate or sponsor or participate or use the name of the Union in any fundraising function or other functions unless they obtain the prior and specific approval of the Central Executive.

**RULE 16:                   WOMEN'S COMMITTEE**

- (a) There shall be established a Women's Committee whose objects shall be the furtherance of the Union objectives. It shall organise Units and Committees, and elect its own officers and shall also carry out such functions as approved by the Central Executive, General Council, Biennial Conference and/or Special Conference.
- (b) It shall engage in advocacy for equal rights for and on behalf of female members and other women and shall also be empowered to make representation on behalf of its members.
- (c) There shall be no fee to join the Women's Committee but the Committee is free to engage in fund raising exercises approved by the Central Executive.
- (d) The officers of the Women's Committee shall be elected by ballot on a biennial basis and shall be as follows:-

<b>President</b>	<b>Vice President</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Assistant Secretary</b>
<b>Three (3) Committee Members</b>	

- (e) The Women's Committee shall meet at least once in every quarter or as often as necessary.



- (f) It shall also engage in any other affairs which can further improve the welfare and interest of its members and the Union.
- (g) There shall be a conference of the Women's Committee once each year as maybe decided by the Committee.

**RULE 17:            YOUTH COMMITTEE**

- (a) There shall be established a Youth Committee whose objects shall be the furtherance of the Union objectives. The Committee shall organise units and sub groups, and elect its own officers and shall also carry out such functions as approved by the Central Executive, General Council, Biennial Conference and/or Special Conference.
- (b) It shall pursue activities aligned with the interest of young members in the Union between the ages of 18 to 35 years commensurate with international standards.
- (c) There shall be no fee to join the Youth Committee but the Committee is free to engage in fund raising exercises approved by the Central Executive.
- (d) The officers of the Youth Committee shall be elected by ballot on a biennial basis and shall be as follows:-

**Youth President**

**Youth Vice President**

**Youth Secretary**

**Four (4) Youth Committee Members**

- (e) The Youth Committee shall meet at least once in every quarter or as often as necessary.
- (f) There shall be a conference of the Youth Committee once every two years on a date proposed by the Committee and approved by the Central Executive.

**RULE 18: NATIONAL SHOP STEWARD COUNCIL**

- (a) In each branch a Council of Shop Stewards shall be formed comprising Shop Stewards from each department or section.
- (b) A Shop Steward Branch Council shall meet at least once a quarter or as determined by the Branch Council and shall discuss the affairs of the Branch in respect of grievances and other conditions of work.
- (c) A National Shop Stewards Council meeting shall take place once each year where members of each Council shall meet and discuss such matters as may be determined.
- (d) The Shop Stewards Council shall elect at the national level a Secretary and an Assistant Secretary.
- (e) The General Secretary shall be responsible for the co-ordination and organisation of all Shop Stewards Councils.

**RULE 19: LIMITATIONS OF INCUMBENCY**

No member shall be entitled to hold more than one (1) office, at the same time, at the national level.

**RULE 20: DISCIPLINE**

**GENERAL MEMBERSHIP**

- (a) Any member shall have the right to complain in writing to the Central Executive through the General Secretary about the behaviour or utterances of another member as being detrimental to the interest of the Union and its members.
- (b) Upon receipt of any such complaint, the Central Executive shall appoint a Committee from among its members to investigate the matter. The result of the investigation shall be submitted in writing to the Central Executive which will make a decision after due consideration.
- (c) Where the Central Executive refers a charge against a member, it shall do so in writing under the hand of the General Secretary who shall also refer such charge to the General Council for its determination.
- (d) Where a member is charged by the Central Executive, the charge shall form an item on the agenda for the next meeting of the General Council. Alternatively, the Central Executive may call a special meeting of the General Council to consider and determine the charge.

- (e) Any member charged by the Central Executive shall be summoned to appear before the meeting of the General Council dealing with the charges. Such member shall be entitled to be heard in his/her own defence and, if He/She so desires, to be represented by a member of his/her choice.
- (f) The General Council may determine the matter in the absence of the member charged if it is satisfied that He/She was duly notified of the charge and of such meeting and, in its opinion, no proper written reason has been given by him/her for his/her absence.
- (g) A member who may have been suspended or expelled shall be entitled to appeal to the Biennial Conference. Such appeal shall be forwarded in writing to the Central Executive through the General Secretary at least twenty-eight (28) days before the date of the Biennial Conference. Such an appeal shall form an item on the Agenda for the Biennial Conference.

### **NATIONAL OFFICERS**

- (h) The President, Deputy President, or General Secretary shall be empowered to take disciplinary action in the form of a warning against any National / Elected officer under their supervision or may initiate a suspension with full pay pending investigation into any allegation of a job related offence.
- (i) In the event of a suspension pending investigation into such an Officer's conduct, the following procedure shall be engaged:-
  - (i) An emergency meeting of the Central Executive shall be summoned within five (5) *working* days of the suspension for the purpose of stating the reason/s to the Central Executive for the suspension. This meeting shall be fact finding.
  - (ii) The suspended Officer shall be summoned to the meeting and be allowed to speak in his/her own defence but not allowed to vote.
  - (iii) After the granting of two (2) adjournments on the basis of the unavailability of the suspended Officer for whatever reason/s, the Central Executive may proceed to take a decision on whether disciplinary charges will or will not be laid against the Officer.
  - (iv) In the event that disciplinary charges are laid against the Officer, he/she will be provided with full particulars relevant to the charges made and have the opportunity to state his/her case, ask questions, present evidence, and call witnesses in pursuit of defending himself/herself against the charges made at a Central Executive meeting/s summoned for that purpose.
  - (v) The Central Executive shall proceed thereafter to take a decision in the matter, including exoneration of the Officer, issuance of a warning letter, a disciplinary suspension or recommendation to the General Council for dismissal of the Officer.

- (vi) Where the recommendation is to dismiss, an emergency meeting of the General Council shall be convened to consider and determine the matter. The determination may be made in the absence of the Officer charged if the *General Council* is satisfied that he/she was duly notified of the charge and of such meeting and, in its opinion, no proper written reason has been given by him/her for his/her absence.
- (vii) An Officer who is subjected to any form of disciplinary action under this provision shall have the right of appeal to the General Council in the event of a warning or suspension by the Central Executive, or the Biennial Conference of the Union in the event of disciplinary action determined by the General Council.
- (viii) The tenets of natural justice shall be adhered to in the pursuit of (a) to (g) above. All matters shall be expeditiously addressed.
- (ix) In the event of any complaint being brought against the President, Deputy President or General Secretary by any Officer under their supervision, such complaint will be drawn to the incumbent/s attention by the Officer/s leveling same and communicated to the Central Executive through the office of the General Secretary. In the case of the General Secretary, any complaint *is* to be drawn to his/her attention and copied to all Officers.
- (x) The provisions of Rule 20 shall be observed in any proceedings against the incumbents as referred to above.

**RULE 21:                    ALTERATION OF RULES**

The Biennial or Special Conference of Delegates shall have the power to amend or alter these Rules on the basis of a resolution / motion from the Central Executive, the General Council or any branch of the Union on the basis of majority vote.

**RULE 22:                    DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS**

- (a) Any one Trustee and any one of the President, Deputy President, General Secretary or Deputy General Secretary shall sign all cheques.
- (b) Any one Trustee and any one of the President, Deputy President, General Secretary or Deputy General Secretary shall sign all vouchers and documents dealing with a financial transaction.

**RULE 23: INSPECTION OF BOOKS**

- (a) Any member shall have the right to inspect at the Union's Headquarters upon reasonable notice and during working hours the entry on the Register of Members (as required under Section 4(1) of the Trade Union Act 1950) relating to that member and to obtain a copy of that entry upon payment of a fee as determined by the Central Executive.
- (b) Members shall have the right to inspect at the Union's Headquarters upon notice of not less than seven (7) days and during working hours the accounting records of the Union for any period after 2 years during which that person was a member of the Union.
- (c) The books pertaining to the Union as a whole shall be kept at the Registered Office. There shall also be kept at that Office a register of the names and addresses of all members of the Union.
- (d) The books of the Branches shall be kept at the respective Branch Offices or at such other place as the General Council or Central Executive may from time to time determine.
- (e) Any member desiring to inspect the books and accounts at the Registered Office shall give notice in writing to the General Secretary forty-eight (48) hours in advance. And it shall be the duty of the General Secretary to make available to the member such books and accounts.

**RULE 24: AUDIT**

- (a) Any Auditor appointed by the Registrar of Trade Unions shall audit the Accounts of the Union as soon as possible after the close of the financial year. He/She examine all books and accounts of the Union and shall certify as to their correctness or otherwise.
- (b) The financial year of the Union shall close on the 31<sup>st</sup> day of December each year.
- (c) A copy of the Auditor's Report shall be conspicuously placed at the Registered Office of the Union.

**RULE 25: DEFENCE AND DISTRESS FUND**

- (a) The Union may maintain a Defence and Distress Fund whereby members may be obligated to contribute such sums towards the Funds as may from time to time be determined by the Biennial Conference of Delegates or the General Council or Central Executive.

- (b) The amount collected and accumulated in the Fund shall be used towards the defence of rights of Union members in their occupation or employment, to assist members in distress and for such other purpose as may be determined by the Central Executive or General Council.

**RULE 26: SPECIAL FUND**

- (a) The Union may create a Special Fund for cultural, social, political and educational activities and so long as the decision remains in force the Union shall be at liberty subject to restrictions hereunder specified to apply monies out of this Fund in furthering the objects in this Rule.
- (b) The Union shall be at liberty to perform all or any of the acts and things hereunder specified, provided that the General Council shall have first specifically approved them.
- (c) The Union may organise and hold public meetings and distribute political and other literature and documents to advance its interest.
- (d) The Special Fund shall be created by the contributions of members of the Union and by donations and grants from interested organisations or persons. The funds shall be kept entirely apart from the other funds of the Union and separate accounts shall be kept in respect of this Fund. The Union may not borrow from other funds for the purpose of the Special Fund.
- (e) No member of the Union shall be required to make any contribution to the Special Fund unless the Union shall have first received from him notice in writing of his willingness to contribute to that fund and he has not revoked the notice. Such notice shall be in the following form:-

<b>SPECIAL FUND OF</b>	
<b>BANKING INSURANCE AND GENERAL WORKERS UNION</b>	
<b>Name</b>	_____
<b>Branch</b>	_____
<b>I hereby give notice that I am willing to contribute to the Special Fund of the Union and I understand that I shall in consequence be liable unless I deliver at the Head Office or some Branch Office of the Union a written notice of revocation.</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Signature:</b> _____

- (f) All contributions to this Fund made by members liable to contribute shall be levied and made separately from any contributions to the other funds of the Union.
- (g) A member who is exempted from the obligation to contribute to this Fund of the Union shall not by reason of his being so exempted be excluded from any benefits of the Union or shall any discrimination be in any way practised upon such a member on that account. No condition shall be imposed upon any person seeking admission to the Union that He/She contribute to this fund.
- (h) Every contributor to this Fund shall pay an annual sum for its maintenance as may from time to time be determined.
- (i) The control and management of this Fund shall be vested in the General Council.

**RULE 27:                   AFFILIATION OR AMALGAMATION**

The Union by decision of the Biennial Conference of Delegates, Special Conference of Delegates or the General Council may affiliate or have affiliated to it any genuine Trade Union or organisation at national regional or international level or amalgamate with any genuine trade union or organisation having objects wholly or in part similar to those of the Union to better extend its influence and scope of operation.

**RULE 28:                   DISSOLUTION**

- (a) The Union shall not be dissolved except with consent of three-quarters (3/4) of its total financial membership obtained through the means of a Secret Ballot.
  - (b) In the event of the Union being dissolved, all debts and liabilities legally incurred shall be borne out of the funds of the Union and the remaining funds shall be divided among the financial members in equal proportion.
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