

RULES OF ORDER OF THE MEETING OF THE CULTURAL COMMUNITIES NETWORK

1. Preamble

- 1.1. Recognising the diverse heritage and enduring identities of the cultural communities in Southern Africa;
- 1.2. Affirming the inherent dignity, equal worth, and unique contributions of all cultural communities;
- 1.3. Guided by the principles of mutual recognition, cultural respect, and peaceful coexistence and cooperation;
- 1.4. Committed to fostering open dialogue, deliberation, and collaborative decision-making on matters of common concern;
- 1.5. Acknowledging the value of diversity, and the importance of maintaining constructive and respectful engagement among cultural communities;
- 1.6. The recognised member institutions hereby establish these Rules of Order (“Rules”) as a framework for structured participation, shared understanding, and ongoing cooperation.

2. Purpose and Scope

- 2.1. These Rules serve to regulate the procedures and conduct of a meeting convened by and among recognised member institutions.
- 2.2. The purpose of the meeting is to deliberate on matters of mutual concern, and cooperation among the member institutions.
- 2.3. The meeting shall not constitute a juristic person and does not possess legal personality.
- 2.4. The meeting shall operate in a structured, formal, orderly, and inclusive manner to enable fair deliberation, respectful engagement, and equal participation of all member institutions.

3. Members of the Meeting

- 3.1. Member institutions may include any cultural organisations, community organisations, royal or traditional leadership structures, community representative organisations, and other recognised institutions representing cultural community interests.
- 3.2. Cultural institutions seeking to become member institutions may apply for recognition in writing, providing such information as may reasonably be required by the meeting.
- 3.3. The meeting may, upon due consideration of an application, admit an applicant as a member institution by a two-thirds majority vote of the recognised member institutions present.

- 3.4. The meeting may grant membership on either a full or conditional basis. Conditional membership may be granted subject to such reasonable conditions as the meeting may determine necessary to ensure the integrity, inclusivity, and orderly functioning of the meeting.
- 3.5. Each recognised member institution is entitled to appoint two delegates to participate in the meeting.
- 3.6. Delegates representing member institutions must present at each meeting written evidence of their proper appointment.
- 3.7. The meeting shall maintain a register of all recognised member institutions, indicating the date of their recognition, the status of their membership (whether current, full or conditional), and any conditions applicable to conditional members.

4. Constitution and Officers of the Meeting

- 4.1. Any member institution may initiate the convening of a meeting by issuing a written notice to all recognised member institutions.
- 4.2. The notice shall state the purpose, proposed date, and venue (physical or virtual) of the meeting.
- 4.3. The convening member must provide a proposed agenda at least 14 days prior to the meeting.
- 4.4. Any member institution may submit further matters for discussion for inclusion in the agenda, provided such submissions are made within a reasonable time before the meeting, or if accepted and received at the meeting by a majority of the meeting.
- 4.5. The convening member shall open the meeting and oversee its proper constitution.
- 4.6. A meeting shall be considered properly constituted and shall commence when all members present give mutual assent to:
 - 4.6.1. the recognition of the member institutions represented; and
 - 4.6.2. the appointment and authority of their respective delegates.
- 4.7. Any issues arising at the convening of the meeting, including matters of order or the credentials of a delegate, shall be resolved by an ordinary majority of the recognised member institutions present. However, where the issue pertains to the membership status or recognition of the member institution represented by the delegate in question, such matter shall be resolved by a two-thirds majority of the recognised member institutions present.
- 4.8. At the commencement of each meeting, the delegates shall appoint by majority vote a Chairperson to preside over that meeting.
- 4.9. The Chairperson shall be responsible for maintaining order, managing speaking turns, and facilitating deliberation and consensus in accordance with these Rules.
- 4.10. In respect of any matter relating to the order of the meeting or procedure not expressly provided for in these Rules, the Chairperson shall apply such common principles of

meeting procedure as may be generally accepted and appropriate in the circumstances, subject always to the will of the meeting.

- 4.11. The convening member shall appoint a Secretary to assist the Chairperson during the meeting. The Secretary shall be responsible for supporting procedural matters, recording the proceedings, and preparing the minutes of that meeting.
- 4.12. The minutes of the meeting shall be approved by an ordinary majority of the recognised member institutions that was present at the meeting.
- 4.13. The offices of Chairperson and Secretary cease upon the finalisation of the minutes of the meeting.

5. Calling of meetings

- 5.1. Before the conclusion of each meeting, the delegates shall appoint a convening member or convening committee responsible for issuing notice and convening the next meeting.
- 5.2. This does not preclude two or more recognised member institutions from jointly convening a meeting outside of the ordinary course, where circumstances reasonably warrant such a step and notice is duly given to all member institutions.

6. Quorum and Participation

- 6.1. A quorum shall consist of at least 50% of the recognised member institutions represented by at least one delegate each.
- 6.2. In the absence of a quorum, the meeting may be adjourned and reconvened with appropriate notice.

7. Meeting Procedure

- 7.1. The Chairperson shall ensure the orderly conduct of the meeting, protect the right to speak, and maintain procedural fairness.
- 7.2. Only duly appointed delegates of member institutions may speak and participate in deliberations at the meeting.
- 7.3. Observers may be permitted to attend upon invitation or approval by the meeting but may not participate in deliberations unless permitted by the Chairperson and on such conditions as determined by the meeting.
- 7.4. The meeting shall proceed according to an agenda adopted by the delegates at the beginning of the session.
- 7.5. The Chairperson shall call each item in order and invite delegates to speak in turns.
- 7.6. Delegates must address the Chairperson when speaking and avoid interruptions or personal attacks.
- 7.7. A delegate may raise a point of order, which must be immediately addressed by the Chairperson.
- 7.8. Matters not on the agenda may be raised with the consent of the meeting.

7.9. The Chairperson may, at any time, in the interest of resolving issues or promoting the seeking of consensus on matters of common concern, recommend the use of alternative procedures or forums, including structured dialogue, mediation, or facilitated discussion. Any such departure from standard procedure shall be subject to approval by a majority vote of the delegates present.

8. Standard of decision-making

8.1. The meeting shall strive to reach decisions through open deliberation, mutual understanding, and consensus among the recognised member institutions.

8.2. Except for procedural matters and decisions relating to the conduct and order of the meeting itself, no member institution shall be bound by a decision to which it has not agreed.

8.3. Where consensus cannot be reached, the matter may be:

- 8.3.1. deferred for further consideration or bilateral engagement; or
- 8.3.2. referred to an alternative process as agreed by the meeting in terms of these Rules.

8.4. The Secretary shall ensure that any unresolved matters are accurately recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

9. Serious disputes

9.1. In the event of a serious dispute or disagreement that materially affects the ability of the meeting to proceed or impacts relations between communities or member institutions, the Chairperson or the meeting may direct the parties to seek resolution through private engagement.

9.2. The parties may, by mutual agreement, appoint a mediator or facilitator to assist in resolving the dispute, on such terms and conditions as they deem appropriate.

9.3. The meeting shall not impose a resolution on any party to the dispute but may support and encourage dialogue, conciliation, and other peaceful means of resolution in the interest of preserving mutual respect and continued cooperation.

9.4. Any party engaged in such a dispute shall be entitled to make representations to the meeting, should the dispute materially affect the broader functioning or integrity of the meeting.

10. Committees and Mandated Functions

10.1. The meeting may from time to time appoint special committees to carry out specific mandates arising from decisions of the meeting.

10.2. Such committees may be tasked to:

- 10.2.1. Give effect to any agreed decisions or declarations;
- 10.2.2. Correspond or liaise on behalf of the meeting members with external stakeholders, institutions, or authorities ;

- 10.2.3. Conduct studies, investigations, or preparatory work in support of the meeting's aims;
- 10.2.4. Report back to the meeting on progress, outcomes, recommendations or findings.
- 10.3. Committees shall operate within the terms of reference and scope agreed upon at the time of their appointment.

11. Conduct and Decorum

- 11.1. Delegates shall treat one another with dignity and respect at all times.
- 11.2. No delegate shall interrupt another while speaking, except on a point of order.
- 11.3. Disorderly conduct may be addressed by the Chairperson, including a warning or a request to withdraw from the session.
- 11.4. The meeting shall aim to uphold a respectful and inclusive atmosphere in line with the dignity of all cultures represented.

12. Records and Continuity

- 12.1. The Secretary shall prepare a record of decisions mutually agreed upon and circulate the minutes to all delegates within 14 days.
- 12.2. The meeting may, from time to time, appoint a Member or Committee for Correspondence and Record, who shall be responsible for the ongoing custody and organisation of all minutes, correspondence, declarations, reports, and statements agreed upon by the meeting.
- 12.3. The Member for Correspondence and Record shall maintain all formal documentation arising from meetings, including minutes, declarations, reports, and agreed correspondence.
- 12.4. Agreed decisions shall be regarded as maintaining ongoing effect unless altered by mutual agreement or for material and justifiable reasons.
- 12.5. Each meeting shall conclude with a summary of decisions, noting any deferred matters for future engagement.

13. Termination of Membership

- 13.1. Any recognised member institution may, at any time, voluntarily terminate its membership by giving written notice to the Member for Correspondence and Record.
- 13.2. Such termination shall take effect upon receipt of the notice, unless a later effective date is specified therein.
- 13.3. The meeting may, by a two-thirds majority of recognised member institutions present, resolve to terminate the membership of any member institution.
- 13.4. Before any such resolution is adopted, the affected member institution shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity to make written or oral representations as to why its membership should not be terminated.

- 13.5. The reasons for termination must relate to conduct or circumstances that materially undermine the integrity, purpose, or effective functioning of the meeting.

14. Costs and Expenditure

- 14.1. The meeting shall not incur or authorise any costs, obligations, or financial expenditure on behalf of any member institution unless expressly agreed to in writing by the affected member(s).

15. Amendments to these Rules

- 15.1. These Rules may be amended by a two-thirds majority of all recognised member institutions represented at a duly convened meeting.
- 15.2. Any proposal to amend the Rules must be circulated to all member institutions at least 14 days prior to the meeting.

16. Common commitment

- 16.1. These Rules reflect the shared commitment of the member institutions to peaceful coexistence, cooperation, mutual recognition and respect, and peaceful deliberation. All who participate in the meeting undertake to uphold these principles in good faith.