

ARTICLE I - GOALS

- a. Promote economic, academic and social empowerment among the Bakossi in the Diaspora and Cameroon.
- b. Promote a networking forum for BACDA-USA members.
- c. Encourage fraternity amongst the Bakossi through cultural and social interactions with other groups.
- d. Foster cultural integration in our host country, the USA, in strict compliance with its laws.
- e. Impart the spirit of self-pride within the Bakossi community in the USA.

ARTICLE II - NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (NEC)

- a. There shall be no more than two (2) NEC meetings a year.
- b. Subsequent meetings shall be conducted in NEC e-group or by teleconferencing if necessary.
- c. NEC members are encouraged to respond to proposals made on NEC e-group forum by members. Such postings and responses shall be courteous and respectful.
- d. The President of BACDA USA shall be a de facto member of ALL committees. He/She shall therefore not be a member of any committee. He can attend in a consultative manner and participate in the deliberations of any committee he /she so desires.
- e. In Convening NEC Meetings, the national President has the right to qualify attendees.

ARTICLE III - CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

- a. All chapter presidents are representatives of the national president
- b. Chapter presidents shall keep records of membership and meeting attendance.
- c. Shall provide the NEC with a list of up to date members a month before the convention.
- d. Ensure that National dues are collected in their chapter.
- e. They shall attend all NEC meetings.
- f. Shall form a crisis committee.

ARTICLE IV – PRIVILEGES

- a. The privilege to be featured in the BACDA USA national Magazine shall be determined as follows: The Communication Committee in conjunction with the national President and treasurer will ensure that any member nominated to be featured is current on national dues.
- b. The national President shall be entitled to a petty cash account of two thousand (\$2000.00) dollars per budgetary period.
- c. All other privileges shall be conferred as maybe determined on a case by case basis in general assembly through Executive or other member initiatives.

- d. Members have the right to vote at conventions in absentia provided Article VI (m) is observed.

ARTICLE V - GROSS MISCONDUCT/SANCTIONS

- a. BACDA members shall conduct themselves with the utmost respect during deliberations and in their relationship with each other.
- b. Disruption of deliberations by hawkish attitudes such as finger pointing, coarse or offensive language, use of expletives and swear words etc. shall be punishable by a fine not to exceed \$50.00.
- c. Any BACDA-USA member who shall commit battery or an assault on another member shall be suspended and/or expelled from the association.
- d. Any BACDA-USA member who shall be found guilty of making insulting remarks about a member on the e-group shall be unsubscribed.
- e. Complaints of gross misconduct shall be in writing, to the Legal Affairs Committee; which shall ascertain such misconduct after investigation. Such finding shall be presented to the president.
- f. The national president shall announce sanctions for such gross misconduct.
- g. A suspended and/or expelled member shall be reinstated after a written apology with a promise to refrain from such actions in the future.
- h. However, such apologies shall not be accepted for repeat misconduct.
- i. All allegations of financial misconduct or unresolved financial discrepancies should be referred to NEC or LAC. If a positive determination is made and grounds for continued interests are found, all avenues of restitution shall be sought, including legal remedies.

ARTICLE VI - ELECTIONS

- a. An Ad hoc Electoral Committee of five members shall be set up to conduct the elections.
- b. Such committee shall elect its chairperson, who shall remind all election participants about the electoral rules and process prior to the elections.
- c. The following positions shall be open for elections: president, vice-president, secretary-general, assistant secretary-general, financial secretary, and treasurer, organizing secretary and protocol officer.
- d. Election to all posts shall be conducted by secret ballot.
- e. Election to a position shall be determined on the basis of the majority of votes obtained.
- f. The electoral committee shall summarize and announce the election results immediately.
- g. The Legal Affairs Committee shall announce the commencement of the electoral canvassing not later than two months prior to the election date.
- h. The Legal Affaires Committee shall be responsible for preparing the ballot papers, boxes and other electoral paraphernalia.
- i. Candidates may present their candidature through BACDA e group or through any other means they deem effective.
- j. The rights of candidates to seek obtain and announce endorsements shall not be abridged at any time during the electoral process.

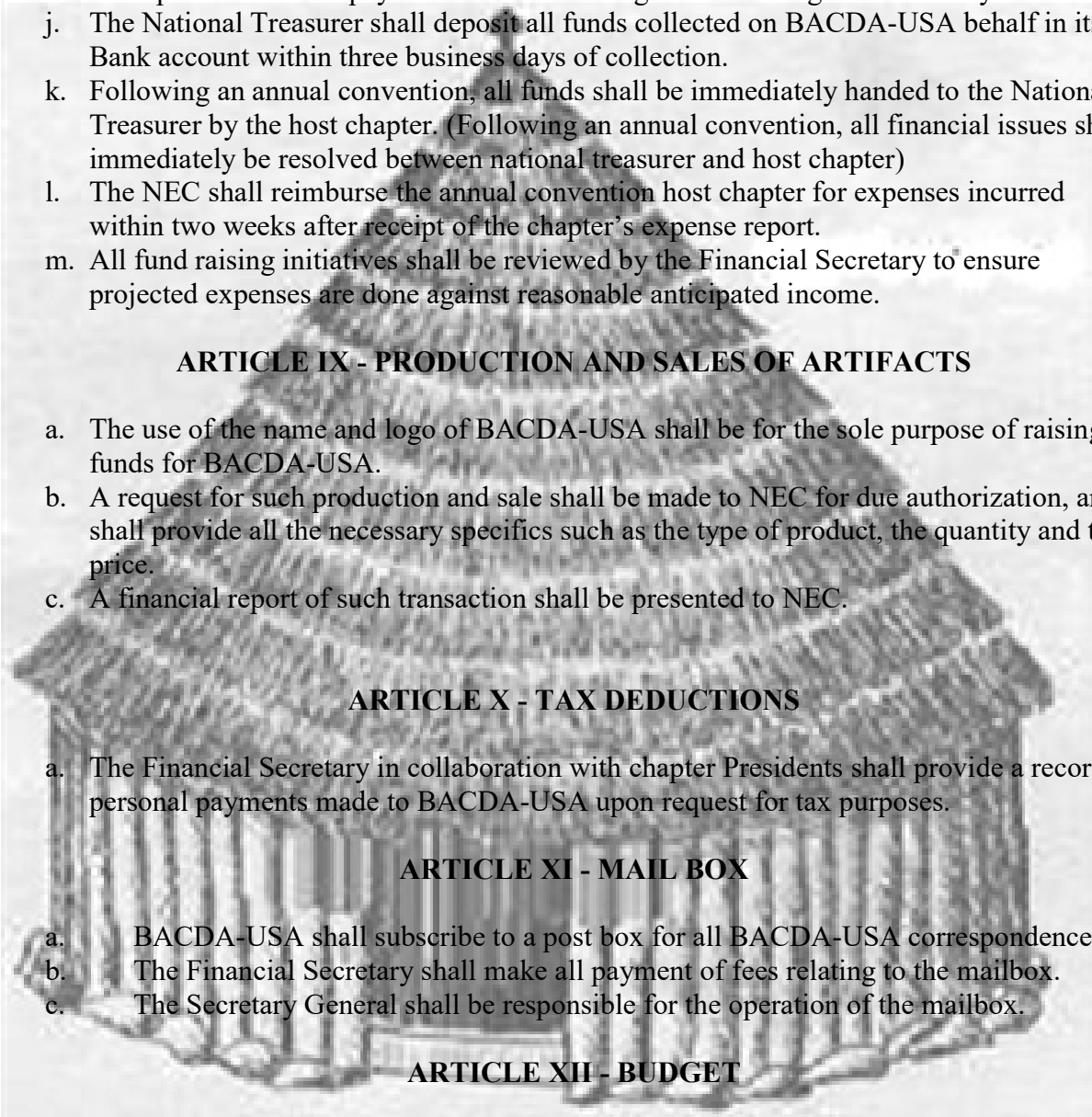
- k. Presidential candidates may make a list of members of their cabinets, provided that such list or members shall not be made public prior to Election Day and such members are nominated from the floor.
- l. Only candidates who are financially up-to-date both local and nationally shall be eligible to vote and be voted.
- m. The Chairman of the Legal Affairs Committee, in collaboration with chapter presidents and the national financial secretary shall ascertain eligibility.
- n. No candidate may nominate or be nominated in absentia.
- o. Candidates for the post of BACDA-USA President and their running mates shall each be given twenty (20) minutes to present their platform. They shall answer not less than two questions asked by the Electoral Committee. Such questions shall be amongst those submitted to the Electoral Committee by the General Assembly.
- p. The new BACDA-USA national executive committee shall be presented to members by the out-going national president.

ARTICLE VII - COMMITTEE CHAIRS

- a. Committee chairs may be nominated and selected on the basis of expertise and
- b. Experience in a particular area.
- c. Committee members may be selected by the chairperson or by self-appointment.
- d. Committee chairs may resign from their post by notifying BACDA-USA national president in writing to this end. The president shall inform NEC of such resignation.
- e. Committee chairs shall attend all NEC meetings.
- f. The national president shall inform BACDA-USA members of a committee vacancy and shall request members to express their intention to fill it.
- g. Present a budget during the first NEC meeting.
- h. Present written reports, a consensus of members of committee, during NEC
- i. Meetings and conventions; such report shall include a statement of income/expenditures supported by receipts as appropriate.
- j. The national president may request NEC to replace an ineffective committee chair, which may confirm such replacement on the basis of a majority vote.

ARTICLE VIII - FINANCES

- a. An ad hoc audit committee shall be formed yearly by the general assembly for the purpose of auditing BACDA-USA financial transactions.
- b. All BACDA-USA officials involved in financial transactions shall be audited, particularly the Financial Secretary, the Treasurer and the President.
- c. In order to effectively carry out its responsibilities, the audit committee shall request all the documents it deems necessary from the officials concerned. Such documents must be made available not later than one month from the effect of the date of such request.
- d. In the event of non-respect of this time frame, the audit committee shall duly inform the NEC for appropriate action.
- e. The audit committee shall present its report to the general assembly after notifying NEC and the officials audited of its findings.

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- f. The president of the host chapter of a convention shall submit a financial report to the national financial secretary not later than one month after the convention.
 - g. The national financial secretary shall submit the convention report to the NEC via the e-group not later one week of receipt of the report from the host chapter president.
 - h. All bank statements shall be chronologically documented and filed.
 - i. The Financial Secretary shall follow up with members who present dishonored checks, so these persons could repay the amount including all bank charges withheld by the bank.
 - j. The National Treasurer shall deposit all funds collected on BACDA-USA behalf in its Bank account within three business days of collection.
 - k. Following an annual convention, all funds shall be immediately handed to the National Treasurer by the host chapter. (Following an annual convention, all financial issues shall immediately be resolved between national treasurer and host chapter)
 - l. The NEC shall reimburse the annual convention host chapter for expenses incurred within two weeks after receipt of the chapter's expense report.
 - m. All fund raising initiatives shall be reviewed by the Financial Secretary to ensure projected expenses are done against reasonable anticipated income.

ARTICLE IX - PRODUCTION AND SALES OF ARTIFACTS

- a. The use of the name and logo of BACDA-USA shall be for the sole purpose of raising funds for BACDA-USA.
- b. A request for such production and sale shall be made to NEC for due authorization, and shall provide all the necessary specifics such as the type of product, the quantity and the price.
- c. A financial report of such transaction shall be presented to NEC.

ARTICLE X - TAX DEDUCTIONS

- a. The Financial Secretary in collaboration with chapter Presidents shall provide a record of personal payments made to BACDA-USA upon request for tax purposes.

ARTICLE XI - MAIL BOX

- a. BACDA-USA shall subscribe to a post box for all BACDA-USA correspondence.
- b. The Financial Secretary shall make all payment of fees relating to the mailbox.
- c. The Secretary General shall be responsible for the operation of the mailbox.

ARTICLE XII - BUDGET

- a. The president shall present a budget at the beginning of the fiscal year or the start of the term or not later than 60 days into the term.
- b. That budget may be submitted to the NEC via the net.
- c. It shall include expected/project travel expenses, committee expenses, convention expenses, (to include artifacts, T-shirts, etc).

- d. The president shall say how much he has at his disposal at the time. If he has or envisages a deficit, how he proposes to deal with it? What revenues is he expecting? The budget shall not include any money earmarked in a lock box for development in Ekorseh.

ARTICLE XIII - CONVENTIONS

- a. Chapter presidents shall call the roll of members attending.
- b. Chapters shall wear their local uniform during the general assembly.
- c. Host chapter members and national financial secretary and/or treasurer shall be responsible for convention gala gate proceeds.
- d. Convention spending should be submitted along with the initial budget. (All planned convention spending shall be submitted and agreed to by the NEC and hosting chapter)
- e. A loss or gain from the convention gala shall be shared between the local chapter and national. (All funds raised during a convention except for annual dues, lock box finances, special projects and or specifically designated donations chosen by specific donors shall be tallied as "gross income" for that convention. All authorized or pre-approved convention expenditure shall be tallied as that convention's total expenditure. The difference between the two shall be calculated and shared as directed by the constitution.)
- f. Vendors at conventions shall get prior authorization from the NEC and where necessary, they shall sign an agreement.
- g. Performance of any activity unrelated to the goals of BACDA during conventions shall receive prior approval of the NEC.

ARTICLE XIV - FINANCIAL RECORDS

- a. Any and all monies spent on behalf of BACDA should be accounted for with receipts, clear tabulation or other written record.
- b. Registered members of BACDA USA should not be denied unfettered access to our financial records.
- c. At all scheduled NEC meetings, the Fin. SEC/Treasurer or whoever receives monthly or quarterly bank records should present the records during such meetings.
- d. Chapter presidents should get copies of our latest convention financial record within a maximum 60 days after the national convention.
- e. The financial secretary must submit a detailed financial record at the end of his term in office/during handing over ceremony.
- f. Outgoing NEC president should present a check off list of any and all BACDA properties and records in his/her possession.
- g. The outgoing president should hold a formal handing over ceremony, which shall be granted space in convention programming, however little. A record shall be kept of the check off list that is signed by the outgoing and incoming President.
- h. Official copies of all BACDA USA records, newsletters, snail mail, financial records, etc, whether in e-file or hard copy shall be carefully archived, given announced official chain of custody and preserved. Those asking questions, research, and investigations or

audits shall be made aware of how to access these records as may be authorized by the NEC.

ARTICLE XV - SPECIAL PROJECTS

- a. All monies paid to Committees for special projects in Cameroon should be supported by transfer slips and other relevant documentation showing transfer and receipt of funds.
- b. BACDA should approach lenders, other financial institutions, donors and foundations etc to solicit funds for projects.
- c. Levied funds for special projects shall be collected at the chapter level.
- d. Written reports of special projects shall be presented at NEC meetings, e-group and conventions.

ARTICLE XVI - INTERPRETATION

- a. "He" shall mean him or her.
- b. Association" means Bakossi Cultural and Development Association, BACDA-USA.
- c. Matters relating to the he day to day interpretation of the bylaws and constitution
- d. Shall be referred to the LAC for resolution

ARTICLE XVII: AUTHENICATION AND AMMENDMENTS

The above text having been adopted upon due deliberation and endorsement of at least two-thirds (2/3) majority of recognized General Assembly members in fulfillment of provisions of the previous Constitution of BACDA USA allowing for Constitutional changes as verified by the National Executive Committee this _____ day of _____, Two thousand and _____;

We the undersigned, having been duly delegated by the provisions of the previous BACDA USA Constitution, do hereby solemnly append our signatures, as a mark of testimony to the said act and of authenticity of the present document which replaces the previous Constitution done on the

_____ in _____. From this day henceforth, all shall honor this document as the Constitution of the BACDA-USA

National President

Legal Affair Chair

