



The Constitution of the
IGBERE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, INC. (IDA)

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The Constitution of the

IGBERE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, INC. (IDA)

MOTTO: Honor, Unity & Progress.

THE PREAMBLE

We the people of Igbere extraction, having come together with oneness of purpose, aspiration and united front, in recognition of our indivisible heritage, love for our community and its welfare, and in recognition of the lack of certain basic needs, do hereby adopt to frequently review/audit our community's social profile and seek ways we can impact, promote, and develop social initiatives and programs for the development, growth, and welfare of our community; through justice, fairness, integrity, transparency, accountability, and rule of Law.

ARTICLE I

NAME, PURPOSE, AND PRINCIPLES

The Association shall be known and addressed as "IGBERE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, INC. (aka IDA)."

PURPOSE:

The purpose(s) for which the Association is formed are as follows:

- A. To promote charitable, educational and cultural, scientific activities, and to develop and operate community-based services for Igbere people and others, all for the purpose of enabling the people to enjoy other basic rights as all other citizens of the world.
- B. All members of the Association, in pursuit of the purpose stated in Article I-A, solemnly affirm and declare their adherence to the following principles:
 - 1) The equality of all members.
 - 2) The right of each member to lawfully express him/herself freely without fear of reprisal.
 - 3) Respect for the rule of law and for the universally accepted democratic principles in the discourse relating to the affairs of the Association.
 - 4) Peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiations, mediation and reconciliation.
 - 5) Respect for the decisions of the Association and of its properly constituted governing authority.
 - 6) Affirmation of basic objectivity in all deliberations of the Association.
 - 7) The Chapter organizations **if and/or** when formed will operate within the state laws in which they are incorporated and adopt their own constitution in accordance with their locality. However, the IDA national constitution is supreme and shall overrule local chapter constitution in case of conflict.
 - 8) At this point in time, all IDA activities and actions will be directed from the IDA Inc. legal entity using its Constitution as the guiding document.

- C. To search, develop, and maintain strong brotherly and sisterly relationships between; and with all Igbere indigenes, for the purpose of unity, brotherhood, and solidarity in pursuit of oneness among all Igbere people; development, and progress in our community- Igbere:
- 1) To promote unity and solidarity among all members of IDA based on our common heritage and love for the welfare of Igbere community;
 - 2) To seek ways to engender, encourage, develop, promote, and implement quality improvement actions that shall impact Igbere community and her peoples' quality of lives and socioeconomic wellbeing in positive ways. Such action may include, and not limited to the following social amenities or services: Healthcare, water systems, good-roads, electricity, quality-education/availability, etc.
 - 3) To engender and promote mutual cooperation among all members of IDA and other Igbere indigenes based on truth, integrity, transparency, accountability, and good-stewardship;
 - 4) To promote oneness and empathic action of love and support toward the welfare of each affected IDA member in time of need; when event(s) or conditions call for such action.
- D. In pursuance of the above declared purpose in Article I, each member of the IDA, solemnly declares and affirms his or her willingness to adhere to each of the article of the purpose of declaration:
- 1) The understanding that all members of the IDA, irrespective of age, education, gender, etc., are equal;
 - 2) The lawful freedom of each IDA member to express himself or herself freely within the boundaries of appropriateness/respect for the rule of law, and acceptable behavior(s) or manners, without fear of retribution or reprisal; 3) To respect each IDA constituted entity or governing body or the inherent authority therewith; 4) To follow diligent and due process in addressing each matter/issue/concern related to IDA.

ARTICLE II

MEMBERSHIP

- A. Membership shall be open to every Igbere person and who is at least 18 years old. (i). IDA shall have junior members (less than 18 years) without financial responsibilities. (ii): An IGBERE person is any person whose father, mother or fore-fathers hail from a distinct village in Igbere in line with the patrilineal custom of IGBERE people.
- B. **Active Membership:** A member who is duly registered by paying the one-time enrollment fee, current with their annual membership dues. To maintain a current status a member must not be more than 3-months behind on their dues if such member elects to pay their annual dues on monthly installments. Irrespective of the one-time enrollment fee to IDA, members may still be considered non-active if they fail to meet the requirements above.

- C. Honorary membership by a simple majority of votes of the general members may be conferred to a non-indigenous Igbere persons who have taken special interest in the affairs of the IDA.

ARTICLE III

ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION OF MEMBERS

Section 1: Admission of new members

Membership shall be open to everyone who meets one of the following conditions below:

- a) **By birth:** At least one of the parents or grandparent shall be from Igbere.
- b) **By marriage:** You are married to someone from Igbere.

Section 2: Registration and Dues

There shall be an enrollment (registration) fee of **\$50.00 per individual** by all members of IDA, payable upon admission.

Other financial contributions for the maintenance of IDA shall come from the members in the form of annual dues of \$60 per individual. The \$60 dues shall be payable to IDA. The Executive Committee from time to time may recommend increase or decrease of members' annual dues and registration fees subject to approval by a simple majority of the general members.

The benefits due to a child or children of a divorced couple will be paid to the parent with the custody of the child or children.

ARTICLE IV

RIGHTS, DUTIES, AND DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

Section 1: Rights/Duties of members

- a) All active members of the Association shall enjoy equal rights and privileges.
- b) All active members of IDA shall have the privilege of making motions, voting, seeking or holding office under given conditions (See Election Article), serving on the committees and participating in the business activities of IDA.
- c) An honorary member is not eligible to vote, hold office or serve on committees. Honorary member shall not be required to pay membership fees. Voluntary money donation/contribution received from such a member shall not change the status of the honorary membership.

- d) All members shall pledge themselves to observe the principles outlined in **Article I**.

Section 2: Discipline of members

- 1) Any unruly behavior (fighting, disrespect of each other) by members may attract a fine of \$50.00.
- 2) Any members, who say, write, disseminate or cause to disseminate articles or words in order to defame, damage or falsely accuse another member, shall pay a fine of \$500.00. The affected member shall file a complaint against the offender before the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall take a swift action within 30 days to investigate and establish that the alleged offensive act (s) had occurred.
- 3) The complaint must be in writing addressed to the President, who shall set up a grievance committee to investigate the allegation. The Complaint about an elected officer should be addressed to the Chairman of Council members.
- 4) The offender must be given an opportunity to defend himself/herself. If the offender is found guilty, he/she shall pay the stipulated fine within 30 days with option of installment payments.
- 5) Failure to do so shall result in suspension of the offender from IDA for a period of six months and subsequently expelled if he/she has not paid the fine after the six-month suspension?
- 6) The Executive Committee review the complaint and make a recommendation which the Board should review and come to an agreement with the Executive. The recommendation should be brought to the floor for a vote and should carry by a simple majority.

ARTICLE V **DEATH OF A MEMBER**

In the event of death of an active member of the Association:

- a) The President shall notify all members.
- b) The Association shall be actively involved in helping family members and friends of the deceased to arrange for the burial overseas or transporting the remains of the deceased member to Igbere.
- c) If an active member dies, the organization shall donate \$3,000 to the bereaved family either by members' levy or organizational resources. The levy should be obtained by dividing \$3000 by the number of members.
- d) If an immediate family member (child, mother or father) of an active member dies, the organization shall donate \$500 to the bereaved family.
- e) The President shall also appoint a committee from the deceased member's Locality/ Local Chapter to visit with the family to express condolences on behalf of IDA. If there is no local Chapter, the function can be performed by IDA members living in the area of the deceased (Locality).
- f) In the event of death of an inactive member, the President shall appoint members or a committee (see b) to visit with the bereaved family, **NO ASSOCIATION FUNDS SHALL BE EXTENDED TO THE FAMILY OF NON-ACTIVE MEMBER.**

- g) IDA shall mandate the executive council to explore ways of securing a cultural life insurance for members and their children.

ARTICLE VI

STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1: Names of Standing Committees

The Association shall accomplish its purposes through the Executive Committee and the following Standing Committees:

- A. **Finance Committee,**
- B. **Project Committee,**
- C. **Membership Committee,**
- D. **Cultural and Social Committee,**
- E. **Constitution Review Committee.**

Section 2: Ad hoc Committee

In the event that the need arises, the President of the Association shall appoint active members of the Association to serve on ad hoc committees whose objective shall be to deal with issues that are not covered by the standing committees indicated in **Article VI, Section 1**. Any ad hoc committee shall function for a specified period after which it shall be dissolved.

Section 3: Appointment of Members of the Ad hoc Committees

It shall be the responsibility of the President of the Association to solicit for volunteers to serve on the ad hoc committees after giving due consideration to the expressed preference of active members to serve on the committee of their choice. However, the President shall appoint all or the rest of the committee members when the number of volunteers is not enough to constitute the committee.

ARTICLE VII
FUNCTIONS AND POWERS OF COMMITTEES

All standing committees shall function for a maximum of consecutive two terms of two years each.

Section 1: Executive Committee

- A. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, the Publicity Secretary, the Financial Secretary, the Treasurer, the Provost, and the Local Chapter Chairpersons.
- A. The Executive Committee shall be the principal administrative organ of the Association.
- B. It shall be the chief legislative and policy-making branch in concert with the general house of the Association.
- D. The President or members of the Executive Committee, however, shall pass no laws or by-laws governing the IDA unless such laws, by-laws or rules are approved by a simple majority of the chapter organizations or by at least a simple majority of members at the general meeting or convention.
- E. The Executive Committee shall be subject to the provisions of this charter, discuss matters of common interest to the IDA with a view of harmonizing the general policy of the Association. It may, in addition, review the structure, functions and acts of all the committees.
- F. The Executive Committee shall approve the annual budget submitted by the Finance Committee' by at least a simple majority vote of its members.
- G. The Executive Committee shall administer the Association's budget and appropriate its funds.

Section 2: Finance Committee

- A. The Finance Committee shall act as the principal budgeting organ of the Association and Fund raising.
- B. It shall investigate and prepare the budget for the next fiscal year.
- C. It shall identify ways and means of raising and spending funds by the Association.
- C. The Financial Secretary and the Treasurer shall be ex-officio members of this committee.
- D. The Finance Committee shall have not more than five members.

Section 3: Project Committee

- A. The Project Committee shall have the responsibility of developing plans for the projects of the Association.
- B. It shall assess, evaluate and prioritize IDA projects.

- C. In cooperation with Finance Committee, it shall develop strategies for implementing the projects.
- D. The Project Committee shall have not more than seven members.

Section 4: Membership Committee

- A. The Membership Committee shall have the responsibility for outreach and recruitment of new members including compiling a directory of all Igbere people in diaspora.
- B. It shall have additional responsibility of encouraging participation of members in all affairs of the Association.
- C. The Membership Committee shall have a maximum of five members.

Section 5: Cultural and Social Committee

- A. The Cultural and Social Committee shall promote Igbere culture.
- B. The Cultural and Social Committee shall be actively involved in organizing IDA Conventions, end of year parties and general meetings.
- C. The Cultural and Social Committee shall have a maximum of five members.

ARTICLE VIII **OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

(Note: The pronoun “He” used in this document is inclusive and gender neutral)

- (A). The officers of the IDA Association shall consist of democratically elected executive officers, referred as - **The IDA Executive [aka Councilmen** (*the suffix, men, in this document is gender neutral*)]. The IDA councilmen are the official governing body of the association. This body shall comprise of the PRESIDENT (aka SPEAKER), the Vice President (aka Assistant SPEAKER, the Secretary, the Publicity Secretary, the Financial Secretary, the Treasurer, the Parliamentarian (Provost), and any or other necessary adjunct community leader(s).
- (B). The candidates for the Executive body of the IDA – The Executive (Councilmen), namely: the President, The Vice President, Secretary, Financial Secretary, Publicity Secretary, Treasurer, and the Provost shall be elected on the general floor of the IDA Convention by simple majority votes of the all eligible convention delegates.
- (C). Each aspiring candidate for any position in the community council-ship shall be of good moral character, in good financial standing and must be a member of the IDA from the inception of the association or must have attended two consecutive IDA conventions in addition to having maintained active membership for at least one calendar year.

(D). The IDA Executive body is responsible for development of IDA annual Community budget, which shall be submitted to the IDA Board of Directors (aka Council of the Elders) for review, discussion, and adoption or referred back to the Executive for redress.

(E). The Executive shall analyze, plan, and strategically implement IDA convention adopted objectives and goals for the progress and welfare of the IDA and or our Igbere Community.

Section 1: **THE PRESIDENT:**

- a) The President shall be the Chief Executive of the Association and an ex-officio member of all committees.
- b) Shall be regarded as the leader of and the spokesperson for the Association.
- c) Shall have the authority to summon and preside over all general, special, or emergency meetings of the association. The President shall also be the Chairperson of the Executive Committee/body.
- d) In consultation with members of the executive council body, the President shall constitute and commission an Ad Hoc Committee(s) as deemed necessary to execute non-legislative matters.
- e) The President shall not be a member of **the Board of Directors** and shall not be responsible or influence the selection of all or any member of The Council of Elders or its Chairperson. He shall recommend the award of honorary membership to the Board of Directors.

Section 2: **The Vice President (aka Assistant Speaker):**

- a) The Assistant Speaker shall be the chief assistant of **The President**; and is next in the line of succession and authority to the President.
- b) In the absence of **The President**, the Vice President shall assume the role and power of **The President**.

Section 3: **SECRETARY**

- a) The Secretary shall be the recording officer of the Association and the custodian of its records and property, except those specifically assigned to others, such as the Treasurer's book.
- b) Specific duties of the Secretary include taking minutes of all meetings of the Executive body/committee(s), as well as all minutes of the general meetings of IDA.
- c) The Secretary shall prepare/handle all correspondences as directed by the President, the Board of Directors or the general assembly.

Section 4: **PUBLICITY SECRETARY**

- a) The Publicity Secretary shall be responsible for disseminating information about the Association and shall be the publisher and editor of the newsletter.

- b) He shall have the responsibility of informing members of any scheduled meetings.
- c) He shall be involved actively in organizing the Association's convention and general meetings.
- d) In the absence of the Secretary, he shall assume the role of the Secretary.

Section 5: **FINANCIAL SECRETARY**

- a) The Financial Secretary shall be the finance and fiscal officer of the Association and ex-officio member of the Finance and Fundraising Committee.
- b) In these capacities, he shall be responsible for budget planning and shall have a good working knowledge of book keeping and financial reporting.
- c) He shall be required to prepare and publish regularly the financial statement of the Association's newsletter.
- d) He shall be responsible for receiving funds on behalf of the IDA. To this extent, he shall be responsible for the Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable and shall transfer all funds to the Treasurer for deposit within 48 hours of collecting such funds.
- e) In the absence of the Secretary and Publicity Secretary, he shall take minutes of meetings.

Section 6: **TREASURER**

- a) The Treasurer shall have charge and custody of, and be responsible for all funds of IDA and deposit all such funds in the name of IDA in such banks or depositories as shall be selected by IDA.
- b) He shall receive and provide receipts for monies due and payable to IDA from the Financial Secretary; disburse or cause to be disbursed the fund of IDA as approved by the Executive Committee and directed by the President.
- c) He shall keep and maintain adequate records of accounts and business transactions, including IDA assets, liabilities, receipts, and disbursements. In conjunction with the President and the Financial Secretary, the Treasurer shall be a signatory to all IDA financial instruments including checks, and shall be an ex-officio member of the Finance and Fundraising Committee.

Section 7: **PARLIAMENTARIAN or PROVOST**

Shall maintain proper decorum and ensure applications of the rule of order adopted by the organization during all meetings.

Section 8: **LOCAL CHAPTER CHAIRPERSONS**

- a) Local Chapter Chairperson shall act as liaison officers between the Executive Committee and the general local chapter membership.
- b) They shall maintain contact with members in their chapters ensuring that they are current with the deliberations and activities of the Executive Committee.

Women Leader: The women leader will work in conjunction with the first lady to develop programs that involve our women.

ARTICLE IX **REMOVAL OF OFFICERS**

- a) An Officer may be removed from office (for cause) by the affirmative vote of a simple majority of the members in good financial standing.
- b) Initiative for such removal may be either by a Motion of the Board of Directors or a Petition signed by at least one third (1/3) of members in good standing. The petition shall be submitted to the Board of Directors. A motion of the Petition formally presented at one general meeting is necessary for the purpose of debating, arguing, and voting on such Petition.

ARTICLE X **BOARD OF DIRECTORS (aka Council of Elders)**

Section 1:

- a) **THE IDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS** shall consist of seven (7) IDA members.
- b) All 7 Elders shall be elected by a simple majority of members of IDA by a secret ballot.

Section 2:

- a) The IDA Board of Directors (Council of Elders) shall elect its own Chairperson and Secretary.
- b) Members of the IDA Executive Committee shall not be involved in choosing and electing The Chairman or the Secretary of The Council of Elders.
- c) Consistent with the IDA's by-laws, rules, and procedures, The Board of Directors shall establish all necessary rules and procedures of how to conduct its business.

- d) The IDA Board of Directors shall serve to check against and oversee the Executive Council body of the IDA; monitor and review the performance(s) of the Executive Committee in relationship to adopted community set objectives and goals; review and approve annual community budget; and work in concert and in consultation with Executive Councilmen, and possible adjunct community leaders to analyze, address, and remedy emergent community related matters/issue(s); and shall make appropriation(s) as needed to meet an ensuing community need(s).

Section 3:

QUALIFICATION OF A MEMBER OF THE IDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

- a) Each aspiring candidate to the membership of IDA Board of Directors shall be in good moral and financial standing; and must be a member of the IDA from the inception of the association or must have attended two consecutive IDA conventions; whichever of these two clauses is a basic prerequisite into IDA Board of Directors' candidacy;
- b) Shall be a man or a woman of impeachable moral character, with demonstrated interest and love for the community of Igbere and her people, welfare, and progress;
- c) Shall be a man or a woman of high moral integrity with unquestionable value for truth, equity, justice, fairness, transparency, accountability, and rule of law.

Section 4:

- a) Board members shall serve for a three-year term.
- b) Their term shall begin at the close of the annual general meeting at which they were elected.
- c) They may run again after two years of the end of tenure.

Section 5:

- a) The President of IDA is answerable to the Board of Directors.
- b) The Board shall initiate the removal or temporary suspension of the President from office for cause pending affirmative vote by at least two-third majority of members in good standing at the general meeting or convention?

Section 6:

- i. The President of IDA is answerable to the Board of Directors.
- ii. The Board shall initiate the removal or temporary suspension of the President from office for cause pending affirmative vote by at least two-third majority of members in good standing at the general meeting or convention.
- iii. The Board shall mediate between local chapter members and their elected officials.
- iv. The Board's interpretation of any disputed section of the IDA constitution shall be approved by two-third majority of the general house (members in good financial standing).

- v. The Board shall uphold or decline the IDA President's request for suspension or removal of any member of the Executive Committee, pending affirmative vote of the general members for the action at the general meeting.

ARTICLE XI **GOVERNMENT**

An Executive Committee whose membership composition shall be as set forth in **Article VII** shall govern the Association.

ARTICLE XII **CONVENTIONS**

- A. Convention of all the members of the Association shall be held 2 years beginning 2018 and then 2020, and at a place to be determined by the Executive Committee.
- B. Such National Convention shall be financially sponsored by IDA and not by the Local Chapters.
- C. All proceeds from such convention, including donations shall belong to IDA less 20 percent to be given to the Local Chapter for hosting the convention.
- D. No local chapter of IDA shall hold meeting, party, convention or any other type of event and/or activity at the same period that the IDA is holding its convention. Any local chapter that violates this rule shall pay a fine of \$5,000 to IDA. All the officers of the offending local chapter shall pay fines of \$500 each. Should the local chapter or its officers fail to pay the said fine within 30 days, the local chapter and/or officers shall be suspended from IDA until such a time as they pay the fine.

ARTICLE XIII **ELECTIONS**

- A. The election of the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, the Publicity Secretary, the Financial Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Parliamentarian (Provost) shall be held every three years at the convention of the general members.
- B. Voting shall be by secret ballot, and simple majority of the votes shall be necessary for the election of all officers.
- A. All elected officers shall serve a three year term.
- B. No elected officer shall serve in the same office for more than two consecutive terms.

- C. To be eligible for election and to hold office, a member must be in good standing with respect to membership dues, must be of good moral character, and a law abiding citizen.
- D. In case of a tie, another election shall be held between the tied candidates immediately after the first election until a winner emerges.
- E. The term of office of newly elected officers shall commence immediately upon election and shall terminate after two years of service in the office.
- F. An election ad-hoc committee shall be appointed at the national convention hall by the general house. Members eligible to vote may volunteer to serve in the election ad-hoc committee, but must be approved by simple majority of members.
- G. Any contest resulting from the election shall be referred to the Board of Directors for resolution. The Board's decision shall be presented to the general house for approval and adoption.

ARTICLE XIV **BANK ACCOUNT**

- A. IDA shall establish a Bank Account in a reputable financial institution with wider national footprint.
- B. Whenever a new Treasurer is elected and in the event that such new Treasurer resides in a different locality from his/her predecessor, the Association's bank account should remain with the same reputable financial institution due to its wider national footprint.

ARTICLE XV **SIGNATORIES TO BANK ACCOUNT**

- A. The President, the Financial Secretary, and the Treasurer shall be signatories to the bank account(s) of the Association.
- B. However, for the purpose of withdrawal of funds from the Association's bank account(s) for the Association's use or business, the President and any one other officer of the three signatories shall be required.
- C. The Treasurer shall be the custodian of the bank checkbook and bank cards (credit/debit card).
- D. The President and his/her cabinet are authorized to spend up to \$2,000.00 a year as an operating expenditure. Anything beyond the above amount will require the authorization of the Board of Directors and a detailed explanation of the proposed expenditure to the members of IDA.
- E. Receipts are required for all expenditures.

F. The Board of Directors shall approve all travels and expenses to be made by the President.

ARTICLE XVI

RETIREMENT FROM THE IGBERE AGE-GRADE SYSTEM

Any IDA member retiring from the Igbere Age-Grade System (Uke), in the Igbere Welfare Union's (IWU) traditional retirement ceremony "Igbotonma", shall be honored by IDA with a gift of \$300 or its naira equivalent provided that:

- a) Such member notifies the Secretary of IDA no earlier than six months and no later than three months to the "Igbotonma" in the particular year of retirement.
- b) The IDA Secretary shall confirm to the IDA Executive Committee that the retiring member is in good standing, including having met all financial obligations.

ARTICLE XVII

NEWSLETTER

- 1) IDA shall use Newsletters to keep all IDA members and all possible Igbere persons updated on the socioeconomic, educational and informational need(s) of our community;
- 2) To make our members and broader community of the society aware of our community ongoing social, economic, educational, and environmental need(s); and convey effectively what is (are) being done to meet our community need(s);
- 3) Shall use this medium to demonstrate IDA determination and willingness to be **transparent** and **accountable** to all IDA's stakeholders and sponsors;
- 4) Establish and maintain an ongoing connections and communications with active IDA participants, members, and with all possible; and prospective members and program(s) sponsors.

ARTICLE XVIII

SIGNATURE AND RATIFICATION

This charter (CONSTITUTION) shall take effect immediately upon ratification and adoption by at least two-third of the general members present.

ARTICLE XIX
INTERPRETATION

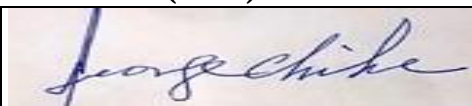
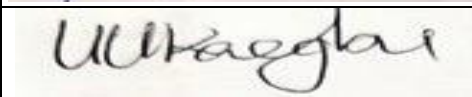
Any question, which may arise concerning the interpretation of this charter, shall be decided by a vote of the two-third majority of the members in good standing.

The Board's interpretation of the constitution is valid until it is reversed by 2/3 majority of members in good standing.

ARTICLE XX
AMENDMENT

This Constitution may be amended or revised if any member makes a written request to the President/Board of Directors to that effect, provided that the proposed amendment shall not be effective unless approved by at least a **2/3 majority** of members present at the general meeting or convention.

The written request to amend the constitution to the president/board of directors and when the proposal shall be brought to the floor not later than **60 days** from the date the president/board received the written request.

Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC)	
Engr. George Chike - (Chairman),	
Mr. Ukaegbu Ukaegbu – (Secretary of CDC),	
Arc. Fidelis Onwubueke, - (Member)	<i>Fidelis Onwubueke</i>
Chief Lekwa O. Lekwa, - (Member)	<i>Lekwa O Lekwa</i>
Dr. Anyaogu Elekwachi, - (Member)	<i>Anyaogu Elekwachi</i>
Chief Esse N. Esse, - (Member)	<i>EsseN Esse</i>