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AZAPO

Azanian Peoples Organization

Constitution and Policy

One People One Azania

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Azania People's Organization

**Constitution
and Policy**

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PREAMBLE

Whereas we, the Black People of Azania, conscious of the philosophy of Black Consciousness as a living force amongst the majority of our people, and recognising that Black workers particularly are responsible for creating the wealth of our country.

And whereas workers are subjected to the most inhuman and ruthless laws;

And further realising that the oppressive system in its effort to render the worker powerless and perpetually subservient, creates and utilises tactics of divide and rule that gave birth to factionalism and tribalism;

And whereas the worker is more determined to see freedom and justice, and desirous of occupying his rightful place in the land of his birth.

And also that it is an inalienable right of any community to organise itself into a political movement to express and manifest its aspirations, ideals and goals;

And further believing that Black Consciousness be developed and maintained as a true philosophy for workers.

THEREFORE RESOLVE

1. To found a political movement which will express and manifest the aspirations of the Black people in Azania.
2. To found a movement that will unite all and liberate all from the exploitative and oppressive shackles.

SECTION 1

Name

The name of the organisation shall be the AZANIAN PEOPLE'S ORGANISATION, hereinafter referred to as AZAPO.

SECTION 2

Aims and Objectives

1. To conscientise, politicise and mobilise Black workers through the philosophy of Black Consciousness in order to strive for their legitimate rights.
2. To work towards the establishment of an educational system that will respond creatively towards the needs of Azanians.
3. To promote an interpretation of religion as a liberatory philosophy relevant to our struggle.
4. To promote and encourage research into various problems affecting our people.
5. To expose the oppressive and exploitative system in which our people are denied basic human rights.
6. To work towards the unity of the oppressed, for the just distribution of wealth and power to all people of Azania.

SECTION 3

Membership

1. Membership shall be open to Blacks only.
2. Every member shall subscribe to the principles, aims, policy, goals and philosophy of the organisation.
3. No membership shall be given to persons or organisations whose interests are in conflict with those of AZAPO.
4. Membership shall be:
 - a. by individual application
 - b. by group affiliation.
5. Every member of the organisation shall pay membership fee which shall be determined from time to time and a monthly subscription fee. Membership shall be renewable annually.
6. Any member or organisation whose interests have subsequently been proven to be in conflict with those of AZAPO shall be expelled forthwith.

SECTION 4

Composition of the National Council

1. The National Council shall comprise of:
 - i) Chairman
 - ii) President
 - iii) Vice-President
 - iv) General Secretary
 - v) Public Secretary
 - vi) National Organiser
 - vii) All the Secretariates
 - viii) Regional Organisers
 - ix) Branch Chairmen and an additional branch delegates.
2. a. No member of the National Executive Committee shall be eligible to serve as Chairman of the National Council. However the President shall chair the first Council after Congress.
b. The Chairman of the Council shall be elected from amongst the branch Chairmen and Regional organisers on a rotating basis.
c. At the end of each session Council shall elect a Chairman for its next sitting.

SECTION 5

Duties of the National Council

1. To receive and consider reports of the National Executive Committee.
2. To evaluate progress of the organisation.
3. i) To regularly scrutinise the financial situation of the organisation.
ii) To review the financial records of the General Secretary.
4. To convene the National Congress.
5. The Council shall be empowered to appoint a Secretariate to deal with various aspects affecting Black People.
6. The Council shall be empowered to take any disciplinary action against any member who is guilty of misconduct.
7. The Council shall appoint an acting Chairman in an event where the current Chairman is unable to execute his duties.

Meeting of the National Council

1. The current Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Council.
2. The Council shall meet at least once in three months at a venue determined by the current Chairman of the Council.

3. The current Chairman of the Council shall immediately inform the General Secretary who will then notify all the other members of the Council of such venue and date of meeting.
4. Failure by a member of the Council to attend two (2) consecutive meetings without adequate reason shall lead to the automatic suspension from the Council.

SECTION 6

Composition of the National Executive Committee

1. President
2. Vice-President
3. General Secretary
4. Publicity Secretary
5. National Organiser.

Duties of the President

1. The President shall be chief executive officer of the organisation.
2. He shall represent the organisation nationally and internationally.
3. He shall be responsible for the guidance and application of the principles, policies and goals of the organisation.
4. He shall preside at all meetings of the National Executive Committee.
5. He shall report and be responsible to the National Council.

Duties of the Vice-President

1. He shall perform the duties and functions which are otherwise performed by the President, if the President is unable to do so.
2. He shall assist the President in the execution of his duties, functions and responsibilities.

Appointment of Acting/or Vice President

In the event of both the President and Vice President being unable either temporarily or permanently to perform their duties the Executive Committee shall appoint a member of the National Council to act as President and/or Vice-President who shall hold office until the President or Vice-President is able to assume his duties or until a new President or Vice-President has been elected.

Duties of the General Secretary

1. The General Secretary shall act as the chief administrative officer of the organisation.
2. He shall be the custodian and see to the safe keeping of all the properties of the organisation unless the executive decides otherwise.
3. He shall be in charge of the secretarial work of the organisation.
4. He shall be responsible for the keeping of records of the organisation.
5. He shall be responsible for keeping the books of accounts, income and expenditure of the organisation.
6. He shall cause a balance sheet to be prepared and certified by auditors, annually.
7. He shall present an audited financial report to the National Congress.
8. He shall prepare and submit on a quarterly basis, financial report to the National Council.

Duties of the Publicity Secretary

1. He shall be responsible for projecting the image of the organisation.
2. He shall be responsible for issuing press statements on behalf of the organisation.
3. He shall be responsible for all the organisation publications and other material pertaining to his office.

NATIONAL ORGANISER

1. Shall be the co-ordinator of the Regional Organisers.
2. Shall be responsible in conjunction with Regional Organisers for the establishment of the branches.
3. Shall be the co-ordinating officer of the branches in all regions.
4. Shall be responsible for the formulation of various methods of approaching the community.
5. Shall visit the branches in all regions together with the responsible Regional Organiser.
6. a) Shall at least once every two months hold a meeting with Regional Organisers to inquire into the progress of the organisation.
b) Shall record these proceedings and report to the National Executive Committee.

SECTION 7

Election of National Executive Committee

1. Congress shall elect the National Executive Committee annually whilst the Executive Committee will meet at least once in every two months.
2. The term of the office by fulltime staff shall be extended for two years. Each year congress shall ratify the position.
3. The National Executive shall be empowered to appoint the secretariats in the different fields.
4. All Regional Organisers, elected to other position of the National Executive, shall ipso facto cease to represent their regions. The affected region shall thereafter elect a new Regional Organiser whose election shall be ratified by the National Executive Committee acting on mandate of the congress.

Election of Regional Organiser

1. A month after the sitting of congress, the region shall assemble to elect among themselves their Regional Organiser.
2. The Regional Organiser shall be recommended annually by the regions and the names submitted to the national congress ie. each shall elect its organiser and their names shall be introduced and/or read to the national congress for their ratification.

SECTION 8

Powers and Duties of Regional Organisers

1. Shall be responsible for organising the people in his region.
2. Shall liaise between the National Organiser and his region.
3. Shall be responsible for visiting all branches in his region and be available for assistance and advise.
4. Shall be responsible for the cultural orientation and conscientisation of the black community in his region.
5. Shall be responsible for convening and presiding over regional activities.
6. Shall be responsible for submitting progress reports of the branches to the National Organiser.

SECTION 9

Branches

1. The National Organiser shall, subject to the approval of the National Executive Committee, establish branches in consultation with the Regional Organisers.
2. A branch shall consist of at least 20 members or any such number that the National Executive Committee may decide upon.
3. Delimitation of branches shall be determined by the National Organiser in consultation with the Regional Organiser.
4. Election of the Branch Executive Committee shall be held annually.
5. Each branch shall supervise all aspects and activities of the organisation within the area of its jurisdiction.
6. Each branch may submit to the National Executive Committee or National congress for consideration, recommendations concerning the principles, aims, objectives and goals of the organisation.
7. Each branch shall elect delegates to the National congress.
8. Each branch shall have an Executive Committee comprising of:
 - a) Chairman
 - b) Vice-Chairman
 - c) Secretary
 - d) Treasurer
 - e) Two (2) additional members.

SECTION 10

Powers and Duties of the Branch Executives

The Chairman shall:

1. Be the head of the Branch.
2. Be the chief executive member to whom the executive members shall be responsible.
3. Whenever possible and necessary represent the branch.
4. Carry out the aims and objectives of the organisation.
5. Preside at all the meetings of the branch.
6. He shall, within the policy of the organisation, in consultation with the Publicity Secretary and at least one member of his executive, issue press statement pertaining to his branch only.

The Vice-President shall:

1. Assist the Branch Chairman in the execution of his duties and deputise for him should he for some reason be unable to carry out his duties.
2. Be responsible together with other members for the maintenance of the branch.

The Secretary shall:

1. Be responsible for the safe keeping of the books and records of the branch.
2. Be responsible for the secretarial work of the branch.

The Treasurer shall:

1. Be responsible for the funds of the branch and shall keep a register of all the capital assets of the branch.
2. Deposit funds of the branch in a bank to be decided by the branch executive.

SECTION 11

Quorum

1. National Council: A third of branch chairmen will form a quorum.
2. National Executive Committee: A simple majority present will form a quorum.
3. National Congress: A third of the members of the congress will form a quorum.
4. Branch Executive Committee: A simple majority will form a quorum.

SECTION 12

Special Meetings

The Chairman of the national congress at the relevant time shall instruct the General Secretary to convene special meeting in respect of all urgent matters pertaining to the organisation and shall appoint the date, time, venue and agenda.

SECTION 13

Voting

1. Voting at National Congress shall be constituted as follows:
 - a) For the first hundred or part thereof each branch shall have three votes.

- b) For each additional three hundred or part thereof up to one thousand there shall be one additional vote.
- c) For each additional five hundred or part thereof up to two thousand there shall be two additional votes.
- d) No branch shall have more than ten (10) votes.
- e) Each member of the executive shall be entitled to one vote, providing that the Presiding Officer is entitled to a casting vote.
- f) Voting by proxy shall not be allowed.

SECTION 14

National Congress

1. The supreme and highest governing and policy making body of the organisation shall be the National Congress and it shall meet once a year, at a place and time determined by the National Council providing that:
 - a) The National Council may convene a special session of the National Congress wherever the Council sees it necessary and desirable to do so.
 - b) The National Congress shall comprise delegates from branches and the National Executive Committee.
 - c) The National Congress shall have the power and authority to take decisions by a majority vote of those present and voting in all aspects of the policy, principles, organisation's finance and discipline of the organisation, and all such decision shall be binding on the organisation and all its formation providing that the National Congress shall have the power and authority to abrogate, amend, rescind and/or alter its own resolutions and/or decision on constitution a policy, principle, aims, objectives and goals unless agreed to by not less than a two thirds majority of members attending the session.

SECTION 15

Notification of Meetings

Members of the National Council and National Congress should be notified of meetings not less than twenty one (21) days before such meetings take place.

SECTION 16

Finances

1. Funds shall be deposited with a bank to be determined by the National Executive Committee.

2. The National Executive Committee shall frame and prescribe regulations and procedures to be adopted and followed by any or all formations of the organisation with regard to finances.
3. The General Secretary shall be in charge of finances.
4. All financial transactions carried out in the name of the organisation shall bear the signature of the Secretary General and of either the President or Vice-President.
5. The organisation shall appoint a recognised firm of auditors who shall be allowed to inspect the financial records.
6. Books and/or records of the organisation shall be audited annually before the National Congress.
7. The financial year of the organisation ends in November.
8. All payments shall be made by cheque, except in the case of petty cash.
9. The organisation shall be a body co-operate, capable of managing its own assets and liabilities.

SECTION 17

Property

The organisation shall be empowered and entitled to sell, purchase, hire, lease, mortgage, pledge and in any way alienate or deal with both movable and immovable property acquired by any of its formation.

The properties of the organisation shall be registered in its own name or in the name of the Trustees appointed for the purpose by the Executive in the event of any law requiring this, on behalf of the organisation.

SECTION 18

Legal Procedures

The organisation may sue or be sued in its name, and shall appoint its own legal advisers. The President or Vice-President in the event of the President not being available for any reason whatever shall be authorised by National Executive at its special meeting to institute and defend all legal proceedings.

SECTION 19

Discipline

1. A member may be suspended or expelled for misconduct by the National Council or any Branch Executive Committee.
2. The Branch Executive Committee shall after the suspension of a member immediately inform the National Executive Committee or National Council whichever will meet first.

3. The National Executive Committee or National Council shall ratify or dismiss such suspension or expulsion.
4. Upon expulsion of a member all monies due to the organisation by such members shall become payable. If payment thereof is not made within 28 days the National Council may take such steps as it deems necessary to secure such a settlement.
5. Such a member shall cease to be entitled to any of the benefits of membership including the right to vote and shall be deemed to be out of good standing.
6. The National Council may suspend any office bearer from office on the recommendation and request of the National Executive until a decision is taken by the Congress which decision shall be taken by vote.

Resignation

A member may resign by giving one month's notice in writing to the Branch Executive Committee provided that no resignation shall take effect until monies due to the organisation by the member concerned have been paid.

SECTION 20

Dissolution

1. The National Council shall, should the need arise, convene an emergency National Congress which shall vote on the matter.
2. In the event of any assets left after the dissolution the National Executive Committee shall be empowered to distribute such assets to any Black organisation it deems fit.
3. Three months notice should be given to all Branches before such a meeting can take place.

SECTION 21

Amendments

All the provisions of this constitution may be repealed amended or added to any manner by the two thirds of the majority of the delegates present and voting.

SECTION 22

Interpretation of Text

1. Unless inconsistent with the context BLACK shall be interpreted as those who may by law or tradition are economically, socially and politically discriminated against as a group in the Azanian society, and identify themselves as a unit in the struggle towards the realization of their aspiration.

2. Unless inconsistent with the context, words purporting masculine gender shall also denote feminine gender.
3. Unless inconsistent with the context ORGANISATION shall mean the Azanian People's Organisation.
4. Unless inconsistent with the context EXECUTIVE shall mean the National Executive Committee of the organisation.
5. Unless inconsistent with the context COUNCIL shall mean the National Council of AZAPO.
6. Unless inconsistent with the context MOVEMENT shall mean AZAPO.
7. Unless inconsistent with the context PRESIDENT shall be the National President of AZAPO.
8. Unless inconsistent with the context REGION shall mean at least four branches in the same geographic contiguity.
9. Unless inconsistent with the context WORKER is a Black Labourer who even though he/she forms the backbone of the country's economy is forced under degrading conditions to sell his/her labour without sharing in the wealth he produces.
10. In the event of any dispute or disagreement from the meaning or interpretation of any section, sub-clause, word or words of this constitution, the final arbitrator shall be the Congress.

ON POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

The philosophy and policies of the Organisation will be on the broad provisions of the philosophy of Black Consciousness. We shall adapt ideas and experiences of humanity to our unique circumstances on the acceptance in this part of Africa. In our self-acceptance and our self-affirmation we shall take into account our historical and national peculiarities and disseminate ideas which will liberate people from bondage and give them rightful liberty and freedom.

2. Black Consciousness

We recognise philosophy of Black Consciousness as a living reality amongst the majority of the Black people of Azania. We acknowledge the philosophy of Black Consciousness as the fruition (culmination) of the liberatory efforts on the part of difference Black organisation throughout the history of resistance against white domination.

We understand the philosophy of Black Consciousness as:

- a) A framework whose internal dynamics give form to the entire nature of Black aspirations.
- b) An irreversible process of self-understanding and self-assertiveness of the Black people of Azania in the face of oppressive socio-political structures imposed by the white government.
- c) A firm expression of the will of Black people to participate fully in the power structure of the democratic government.
- d) A philosophy that relatively translates itself into an active opposition to government policies bent on entraining the Black people from themselves: an active resistance to every form of injustice meted out to the Black people.
- e) A philosophy that gives direction to the Black people in an attempt to re-orientate their entire value system.
- f) A philosophy that grasps Black solidarity as an imperative element that militates against any form of sectionalism and ensures a united effort towards changing the status quo.
- g) A philosophy that understands the position of the Black people who are de facto a race of workers therefore an inevitable agent of change within the present political system.
- h) A philosophy that seeks to create a just society where the value of persons shall be held supreme.

3. Bantustans

We recognise the fact that the entire country of Azania belongs to the Black people, hence our vehement rejection of the bantustan policy. The policy of bantustans has arisen by the myth that the Black people consist of separate nations. This is an imposition of the white government aimed at:

- a) Depriving the Black people of their inalienable right of citizenship in the country.
- b) Destroying the unity and solidarity of the Black People.
- c) Fostering the apartheid policy of divide and rule.
- d) Facilitating a continued economic exploitation of the Black people and perpetuating white domination.

4. Class and Race

We recognise the fact that in our country race is a class determinant. Thus the concentration of economic and political power in the hands of white race enables it to promote a rigid class structure. The Black people on the other hand constitute a people racially discriminated against and economically exploited. This gives rise to the ever increasing conflict between the white and the black races. The white race accumulates capital by exploiting the Black labour and by virtue of their possession of political power, they maintain themselves in a position of privilege.

5. Trade Unions

Realising the imbalance of power between the owners of capital and Black workers, we acknowledge Trade Unions as an instrument that can bring about the re-distribution of power. In the unique situation that is South Africa Trade Unions should go beyond the problems of management and labour. We envisage a persistently militant system of Trade Unions which will challenge the discriminatory labour laws of the white minority government and thereby bring about change.

AZAPO POLICY ON LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

PREAMBLE

The Azanian People's Organisation, a black national political organisation working to bring about complete and democratic political, economic and social change in the whole of Azania notes that the Black people who are the workers and the majority are an oppressed and exploited people whose oppression and exploitation is perpetrated mainly at the following levels:

- a) The white minority government with its covert and overt institution,
- b) The National and multinational capital with its imperialistic inclinations

- c) The collaboration of the superpowers and their beneficiaries who give moral and material support to the racist minority government of South Africa

The AZAPO therefore adopts the following as its policy on local, national and international relations:

1. The AZAPO acknowledges the existence of the historical political organisations.
2. The rules and regulations governing the Organisation's recognition of other organisations as well as the Organisation's relationship with other organisations will be governed and guided primarily by the AZAPO policy.
3. The Organisation will forge working relations with religious, educational, sporting, cultural, trade, journalist unions, students and workers organisations which embrace the broad philosophy of Black Consciousness as defined by the AZAPO.
4. The Organisation in all its relationship with other bodies and/or powers shall retain and maintain its independence and direction in terms of policies, principles, programmes and ideology.
5. The AZAPO shall reserve the right of mandating and/or appointing a member(s) to be a spokesman(men) of the Organisation to the international community.
6. The AZAPO shall not implement programmes of other organisations which have similar aims and objectives at the expense of the programmes of the Organisation.
7. Further, the AZAPO shall have the right to confirm and/or repudiate whatever standpoints made by such spokesmen.
8. The AZAPO maintains that the struggle of the oppressed and exploited people of the world has local, national and international dimensions.
9. The AZAPO shall continually keep abreast of historical and recent developments and trends in local, national and international arenas.
10. The Organisation shall also continually guard against reactionary and counter-productive trends in its ranks as well as in the broad oppressive and exploitative machinery.
11. This policy is geared to reflect the Organisation's thrust to build a broad and extensive base essential for the realization of the objectives and aims of the Organisation.



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