



**TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
ASSOCIATION OF
VILLAGE/COMMUNITY
COUNCILS**

**CONSTITUTION
OF VILLAGE/COMMUNITY COUNCILS
(Revised 2003)**

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**TRINIDAD & TOBAGO ASSOCIATION
OF VILLAGE/COMMUNITY COUNCILS**

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP
IN A UNIT COUNCIL**

**Trinidad and Tobago Association
of
Community Councils**

I _____ hereby apply for membership in the _____ Unit
Council, and agree to abide by its Constitution and Rules.

Date of Birth _____ ID. # _____

Address _____

Occupation _____ Tel.# _____

I am a member of the following organization (s)

I remit my entrance fee of \$_____ and \$_____ in monthly
subscriptions.

My interests are _____

Date _____ Signature _____

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Nominated By _____ Seconded By _____

President _____ Secretary _____

Date Application Approved _____

CONSTITUTION

(Revised 2003)

*This Constitution Shall Not be reproduced (in any form) except
by Order of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of
Village/Community Councils*

1. **MISSION STATEMENT:**

The Mission of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils is to be the main instrument and networking agency for all community groups, in providing a greater sense of awareness and generally raising the standard of living of all the peoples of Trinidad and Tobago.

DEFINITION:

The Village/Community Council is a voluntary, non-political, non-governmental organization operating within a defined area. It is the co-ordinating agency for community improvement and its main function is to promote the interests and welfare of the community. Its members, both male and female, are drawn from every sector of the community regardless of colour, class, creed, religion, status or political affiliation.

2. **NAME**

The name of the unit council shall be preceded by that of the area served.

3. **REGISTRATION**

All Village/Community Councils must apply for registration to The Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils through their respective Branch Association. They shall also be registered with Community Development Division in their respective counties.

Where suspension is handed down, all property in the name of the said Branch or Unit Councils shall be vested in the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils until such time as the matter is resolved.

COMPANY'S REGULATION:

Authorization is given to all arms of the organisation regarding the formation of a Company(s).

Wherever a Company is formed an Audited Financial Report and a Progress Report **Must** be submitted on a quarterly basis and a yearly Comprehensive Audited Report at the Annual General Meeting.

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT:

The Constitution **Shall** be amended on recommendation by the National Council, which **Must** be ratified by the National Convention

- iv) Used the name and or seal of any Village./Community Council or any other Organ of the Association of Village/Community Council for their personal benefit. Shall be subject to Litigation.
- v) Brought their respective Village/Community Council or any other, Organ of the Association of Village/ Community Council into disrepute, by their utterances and or actions.
- vi) Used their position to usurp and undermine the authority of their respective Village/Community Council or any other Organ of the Village Council.
- vii) Failed to comply with a lawful order issued in writing, by the Executive of the respective Village/Community Council, or any other Organ of the Association of Village/Community Councils, in like manner.
- viii) Refused to carry-out an official directive issued verbally or in writing, by the Executive of the respective Village/ Community Council or any other Organ of the Association of Village/Community Councils, in like manner, by due process.

A copy of the charge(s) shall be forwarded to the person(s) charged for the alleged offence/s within seven (7) days of the charge(s) made.

Re-instatement of suspended membership shall be at the discretion of the Unit Council, Branch or National Executive as the case may be.

4. **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- a) To promote the interests and welfare of the community by:
 - i) Fostering cultural, recreational, educational, spiritual, social and economic activities.
 - ii) Mobilizing the co-operative efforts of all members of the community in the pursuit of self-help and other measures for total development.
- b) To co-operate with government and other agencies in the promotion of community development activities aimed at improving life in the community.
- c) To pool the resources of the community with those of other communities, through the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils towards national and regional achievement.
- d) To monitor and where appropriate undertake the provision of services including works for maintenance of the community's infrastructure and facilities.
- e) To foster the protection and enhancement of the environment by assisting in preserving the natural habitat of man, animals, plants and marine life without pollution.
- f) To establish and maintain a Youth Arm within the Unit Council, capable of meeting the aspirations of youths in the community.
- g) Membership in the Youth Arm shall be for youth between the ages of 15 and 25 years.

5. **BOUNDARIES**

- a) The area to be served by each Village/Community Council shall be defined by a plan of the area as approved by the Executive of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils.

Such areas shall not be subject to change except with the approval of the Executive of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils.

The National Executive may delegate this authority to the Branch Association

If the Village/Community Council ceases to function for a period of two years or more and is resuscitated, the Branch Association must review its original boundaries and make recommendation to the Executive of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils.

6. **OFFICE**

Each Village/Community Council and Youth Arm shall operate an office at the same venue.

7. **MEMBERSHIP**

- a) Membership in the Village/ Community Council shall be open to:
 - i) All persons fifteen (15) years and over, living in the area served by the Village/Community Council. These persons shall be known as individual members.
 - ii) All organized groups in the community. These groups

- a) For disciplinary charges originating within a Unit Council the National Executive shall be the arbitrator. An appeal shall be made to the National Council.
- b) For charges originally dealt with at the level of the Branch, an appeal can be made to the National Executive, regarding the decision of the National Executive final appeal may be made to the Annual Convention, which decision shall be binding on all parties.
- c) For charges, which reside exclusively within the Trinidad and Tobago Association the final appeal shall be made to the Annual National Convention.

5. **SUSPENSION/EXPULSION/LITIGATION**

Disciplinary charge(s) leading to suspension, expulsion and or Litigation shall be laid in writing against any member or group of members, who it is believed:

- i) Transgressed the Constitution and or Regulations of The Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils.
- ii) Is convicted by the courts of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, on criminal charge(s).
- iii) Is guilty of theft or misappropriation of the funds of any Village /Community Council, or any other Organ of the Association of Village/Community Councils.

- b) If the reported transgression resides exclusively within the Trinidad and Tobago Association, the National Executive shall investigate the matter and its findings shall be reported in writing to the complainant and the National Council.
- II. Members charged shall be afforded the opportunity of meeting the charges brought against them.
- III. a) Either party shall have the right of appeal and shall in the first instance (if the case is within a Unit Council), appeal in writing to the appropriate Branch Association not later than twenty-one (21) days after being officially informed of the decision.
A copy of the appeal **must** be sent to the Secretary of the Unit Council involved.
- b) If the initial decision is made by the Branch the appeal shall be made to the National Executive which shall deal with the matter.
- c) If the initial decision is made by the National Executive the appeal shall be made to the National Council.
- IV Appeals having been dealt with as detailed above, all decisions shall be communicated in writing to both parties.
- V If either party is still not satisfied at this stage, the following procedure will apply:

- shall be known as affiliates and their representatives shall be known as Representative Members and shall not be less than fifteen (15) years of age.
- iii) The Village/Community Council shall have the power to accept persons under the age of fifteen (15) years, under such terms and conditions as the Council may decide. Such persons shall not be entitled to vote or hold office.
- iv) The Village/Community Council in its discretion may appoint Honorary Members for a period of three (3) years. Such members shall neither have a vote nor hold office, but shall be eligible for re-appointment. The total number of Honorary Members shall not exceed five (5).
- vi) The minimum number of individual members required to form a Village/Community Council shall be twenty - five (25).
- b) Applications for membership must be made on the prescribed forms (copy appended) and must be submitted to the Secretary of the relevant Village/ Community Council with the appropriate entrance fee, subject to approval by the unit council.
- c) New members will be furnished with a Membership Card and will be free to attend meetings of the Council. A copy of the Constitution shall be made available to all new members at the designated price.
- d) Organisations whose applications for affiliation have been accepted shall pay an affiliation fee and an annual subscription fee as stipulated in the regulations.

- e) i) An affiliated organisation shall be represented on the Council by two (2) of its members one of whom shall serve on the Executive. These two representatives shall have all the privileges of the individual members, save that they shall not be eligible to participate in the Annual General Meeting of the Council.
- ii) A member, who is (a) unfinancial, (b) struck off the membership role, (c) suspended/expelled from a Village/ Community Council shall not be accepted as a representative of an affiliated group on the Council.

8. **OFFICERS**

The officers of the Village/ Community Council shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, two (2) Trustees, Public Relation Officer, Education Training and Research Officer, Welfare Officer, Youth Officer.

- a) All these officers, together with five (5) ordinary members shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Council in each year. They shall hold office until the next Annual General Meeting, and shall be eligible for re-election. Only financial members shall take part in the election.
- b) There shall be two (2) Auditors, who shall be appointed externally.

ix. **Education, Training and Research Officer**

The Education Officer shall be responsible for Education, Training and Research.

x. **Youth Officer**

The Youth Officer shall be responsible for attracting young people to the Association to introduce a youth perspective to all the of the Association's activities. He/she shall articulate the views of youth and develop programmes to ensure youth participation at all levels.

4. **DISCIPLINE**

Bona fide members of the Association are privileged to (lay charge/charges) against any other member or group of members whom it is believed transgressed the Constitution and/or its regulations provided that the charge(s) is/are laid in writing.

The procedure for dealing with the charge/s shall be as follows:

- I. a) The Executive in the case of a Unit Council and Branch Executive in the case of a Branch shall investigate the charge(s) and report its findings in writing to the general meeting of the Unit or Branch Council as the case may be. After consideration the decision of the meeting shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.

made. He/she shall keep proper accounts of monies received and issue receipts for monies in his/her hands belonging to the council, until such time as he/she shall have lodged them with the Bankers in the name of the Council. Such a period shall not exceed forty eight (48) hours. He/she shall submit for audit, books, vouchers etc. and the accounts of the Council when required.

vi. **The Trustee**

The Trustees shall be responsible for the property (inclusive of community centres) vested in the Organization. The Trustees shall be responsible for the care, upkeep and maintenance of such property and giving an assessment of their condition as at the end of the financial year.

vii **Public Relations Officer**

The Public Relations Officer shall be responsible for publicizing the activities of the movement and maintaining a good public image at all times specifically, he/she shall maintain good relations with the media and ensure proper coverage of major activities staged by the Movement.

viii. **Welfare Officer**

The Welfare Officer shall be responsible for identifying cases in which persons may be socially dispossessed and spearhead relief activities for the well being of the entire membership/communities.

c) ***Conduct of Elections:***

The responsibility for conducting **all** elections of the Executive Body of the Village /Community Council rests **only** with the Branch Executive.

Save and except in circumstances where the Branch is un-represented. The National Executive is empowered to conduct the exercise.

The Community Development Division may act as partners in the exercise in collaboration with the Branch Association.

No member who is a candidate for office shall serve as Returning Officer.

9. **MANAGEMENT**

a) **The Village/Community Council shall be managed by an Executive Body consisting of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, two (2) Trustees, Public Relation Officer, Youth Officer, Welfare Officer, Education Officer, five (5) ordinary members and one (1) representative from each affiliated organisation.**

b) **The Executive Body shall appoint sub-committees as may be deemed necessary.**

c) **The Executive under the direction of the Council shall carry out the day to day affair of the Council, provided that a general meeting shall ratify all matters of policy.**

- e) No member of the Executive shall be paid for executing his or her functions, as a member of this body.
- f) The Council shall by at least a two-thirds majority of financial members at a special meeting called for the purpose on adoption of a vote of no-confidence; remove any officer(s) from office.
- g) Each Village/Community Council shall submit a monthly written report on its activities, during the prescribed period to the relevant Branch Association.
- h) The Village/ Community Council shall be responsible for the appointment of Wardens. This shall be made annually at the Annual General Meeting of the respective Village/ Community Councils.

10. **FINANCE**

- a) The Village / Community Council shall bank all monies collected in its name. The Treasurer shall be authorized by the Executive to keep a specified sum in hand as stated in the regulations.
- b) Withdrawals shall be made on the signatures of one of the Trustees and the Treasurer. The President shall replace the Treasurer as a signatory for withdrawals when the Treasurer is unavoidably unavailable. Monies in the possession of the Trustee or Secretary shall be handed over to the Treasurer to be deposited in the approved bank within forty-eight (48) hours of receiving same.

shall perform all the duties of the President. He/she shall exercise all powers of and be subject to the same limitation imposed on the President. He shall perform such other duties as may be assigned to him. In the absence of the President and Vice President/s members present shall elect by majority vote a chairman to take the chair.

iii. **The Secretary**

The Secretary shall carry out the directives of the Executive. He/she shall maintain a roll of the membership of the organization and such other books that the committee may direct. He/she shall attend all meetings, take Minutes of the proceedings, notify all members of their acceptance and generally conduct the correspondence of the Council/Association. He/she shall keep an inventory of all property belonging to the Council/Association which inventory shall be updated periodically by the Trustees.

iv. **The Assistant Secretary**

The Assistant Secretary shall assist the Secretary in all his/her duties.

v. **The Treasurer**

The Secretary shall receive all monies of the Council, which shall be noted and handed over to the Treasurer, who shall issue orders for payment which must be countersigned by the President before payment is

iv) **Finance**

These committees shall each comprise one (1) member from each Branch Association (exclusive of the Chairman) serving on the National Council, the Chairman of any one of the committees is authorized to co-opt the services of persons to assist him/her in the efforts to achieve the desired goals.

The Trinidad and Tobago Association may appoint a Patron, such appointment shall be made at the Annual Convention.

These Regulations may be amended at a properly constituted National Council Meeting and ratified by the National Convention.

3. **DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

i. **The President**

The President shall preside at all meetings and shall be responsible for the proper conduct of business at these meetings. He shall have a deliberative and casting vote. He shall sign the minutes of each meeting at the time they were approved. He must approve all vouchers before payments are made by the Treasurer. He shall superintend the general administration of the organisation and secure the observance of and adhere to the approved rules and regulations.

ii. **The Vice President**

In the absence of the President, the Vice-President

- c) The funds of the Village/ Community Council shall be used solely for the purpose of carrying out the aims and objectives of the Council. No portion thereof shall be paid or transferred to individuals or any member of the Council.
- d) The Trustees shall appear as defendants or complainants should there be legal matters affecting Unit Councils, and the Council shall pay all expenses incurred thereto.
- e) It shall be the duty of the Auditors to submit a correct statement of their findings when called upon to audit the books of the Village/Community Council.
- f) The Treasurer’s books shall be subject to inspection at any time by the Branch Executive.
- g) The financial year of the Village/Community Council shall be from February 1st to January 31st
- h) The Treasurer shall report in writing at each monthly meeting of the Village/Community Council on all Financial transactions of the Council during the previous month.
- i) The Treasurer shall submit all relevant documents to The Auditors for audit not later than the end of February of each year.
- j) The Council is empowered by a decision taken at a General Meeting to institute legal proceedings against any member or group of members who it believes is guilty of theft or misappropriation of the Village/Community Council funds.

11. **SUBSCRIPTION/DUES**

Individual members and affiliates shall pay monthly dues and annual subscription fees as specified in the regulations.

12. **ARREARS**

An individual member whose subscription is three (3) months or more in arrears shall be deemed to be unfinancial and such a member shall cease to enjoy the rights and privileges of the Village/Community Council.

On payment of the arrears, such a member shall be re-instated save that he/she shall not be eligible for office unless the arrears is paid up at least one month prior to the date of the Annual General Meeting.

A member who is unfinancial for eight (8) months or more shall be taken off the membership roll.

13. **ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS**

- a) Any officer or member of the Executive, who is unable to attend a regular general, executive or special meeting shall send a reasonable written or oral excuse.
- b) The seat of a member of the Executive shall be declared vacant if he/she fails to attend three (3) consecutive, Executive Committee or General Meetings without a written or oral excuse and the Council shall take steps to fill the vacancy.
- c) A bye-election shall be held within twenty- one (21) days of the position/office being declared vacant.

- ❖ Vice Presidents (3) [one of which **must** be from the Tobago Branch].
(a. Administration, b. Operations, c. Tobago Affairs)
- ❖ Secretary
- ❖ Assistant Secretaries (2)
- ❖ Treasurer
- ❖ Public Relation Officer
- ❖ Trustees (3)
- ❖ Youth Officer
- ❖ Welfare Officer
- ❖ Education, Training and Research Officer
- ❖ Chairmen of the four (4) Standing

vi) To appoint two Auditors.

The Executive shall appoint a Returning Officer as the need arises, to conduct all Elections of the organisation.

No member who is a candidate for office shall serve as Returning Officer.

2. **STANDING COMMITTEE**

The Standing Committees of the Association shall be:

- i) Membership and General Purposes
- ii) Community Centre Management and Improvement
- iii) Education, Training and Research

- f) Fifty (50) members shall form the quorum for the Annual Convention.

**TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO ASSOCIATION OF
COMMUNITY COUNCILS
REGULATION**

The National Council shall be the main instrument of policy for the efficient operation of the organisation and for the good governance of all affairs of the Association subject to the dictates of the Constitution and in keeping with instructions from time to time, by the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils.

1. **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Annual General Meeting shall be held in the month of September for the following purposes:

- i) To confirm the Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting.
- ii) To receive and adopt the Report of the National Executive for the period under review.
- iii) To consider and adopt the Financial Statement of the Association duly audited.
- iv) To receive and adopt the Report of the Trustees.
- v) To elect the National Executive Committee which shall comprise:
 - ❖ President

14. **MEETINGS**

a) ***Regular Meetings:***

A regular general meeting shall be held at least once per month on a specified day at a specified time and place. Ten (10) financial members shall form a quorum. In the event of there being no quorum after sixty (60) minutes, the meeting shall be held one (1) week after the date at the same time and place and in the event of there being less than a quorum at this meeting, those present will proceed to deal with the agenda.

b) ***Annual General Meeting:***

The Annual General Meeting shall be held no later than the end of March each year. Sixteen (16) financial members shall form a quorum. In the event of there being no quorum at the expiration of sixty (60) minutes, an interim committee must be elected to administer the affairs of the community council for a period not exceeding three (3) months, when the AGM will be called.

Each individual member of the Council shall be notified in writing of the date, time and place of the Annual General Meeting at least seven (7) days before the date of meeting. A notice shall be posted in some conspicuous place in the community, giving date, time and place of the Annual General Meeting.

The Annual General Meeting shall as far as possible be held in some public place e.g. community centre, school, Society Hall, Church Hall, etc.

All officers shall be elected by secret ballot.

c) ***Special Meetings:***

Special Meetings of the Village/Community Council may be called at the discretion of the President, or in his/her absence by the Vice President or on the written request of the ten (10) financial members of the Council of which two (2) shall be Executive Officers.

d) ***Executive Meetings:***

The Executive shall meet at least once per month. One third of its membership which must include at least two (2) officers shall form a quorum.

In the event of there being no quorum, the meeting shall be held one (1) week after the date, at the same place and time and in the event of there being less than a quorum at this meeting, those present will proceed with the agenda.

15. **REGISTRATION/AFFILIATION**

The Village/Community Council shall be registered with the Branch Association operating in its area, and shall be represented on this Association by three of its members. It shall pay the appropriate registration fee and other dues and report to the Branch Association on a monthly basis on its activities.

Organisations accepted as affiliates to the Village/Community Council shall pay an affiliation fee and an annual Subscription fee as stipulated in the regulations. Unit Councils and affiliated groups shall be certified by the Trinidad and Tobago Association and the Branch respectively.

minimum of sixteen (16) persons representing at least four (4) Branches. Four (4) of which **must** be Executive Officers.

13. **ANNUAL CONVENTION**

The Annual Convention of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils shall be held in the month of October, at a venue to be decided on by the the National Executive Committee. At each Convention, the business to be transacted shall be.

- a) Report on the proceedings of the last Annual Convention.
- b) Consideration and Adoption of the Report.
 - i) National Council Report
 - ii) Report of Standing Committees and Youth Council
 - iii) Treasurer's Report duly audited.
 - iv) Annual Executive Report of Branch Associations.
- c) Amendment of the Constitution governing the administration of the Village/Community Council.
- d) Consideration of motion from Branch Associations, the National Executive and the National Council
- e) Any other matter that is properly before the Convention.

committee. All monies and properties of the Association shall be vested in three (3) Trustees of the Association.

- b) To prepare an annual budget, subject to the normal provisions of the law.
- c) All Branch Associations are authorized to raise funds by public subscription, donation or function to carry on their work under clause 4 (b) and shall pay at least one tenth of the profits made, to the Secretary of the National Council. The remainder shall be retained by the Branch for the purpose of meeting any expenses in connection with works under clause 4 (b). The same shall apply to unit councils.
- d) The Treasurer of the National Council and of each Branch shall be required to keep proper books of accounts, which shall be subject to inspection and audit by the Auditors appointed or elected by the National Council.
- e) The financial year shall commence from August 1st to 31st July of the following year.
- f) The Treasurer shall report quarterly on the finances of the Association.

12. QUORUM

- a) For meetings of the National Executive Committee six (6) members shall form a quorum.

For meetings of the National Council, the quorum shall be

16. DISSOLUTION

- a) The Village/Community Council shall not be dissolved except with the consent of not less than five-sixth of the financial members present and by voting by secret ballot at a Special Meeting called for the purpose.
- b) Notwithstanding the above, a Village/Community Council that has **not** held its Annual General Meeting for three (3) consecutive years shall be deemed to be dissolved.
- c) If upon dissolution of the Council, there remains after satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatever, the same shall be vested in the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils until a new Council is formed.

17. GENERAL

- a) Each member of the Village/Community Council shall be Given an opportunity to procure a copy of the Constitution.
- b) The Village / Community Council shall make such rules, as it deems necessary for the good governance of the Council, these rules must be approved by the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village /Community Councils and shall not be repugnant to this Constitution and/or its associated regulations.
- c) All officers who have been replaced are required to hand over to the new incumbent all information, documents etc, including property pertaining and/or belonging to the Council within twenty-one (21) days, failing which disciplinary or legal action will be taken against such person

COMMUNITY COUNCILS REGULATIONS

1. **REGISTRATION**

All applications to the Community Development Division for Registration **must** have the approval from the appropriate Branch Association, or would not be recognized as a member of the Association.

2. **QUALIFICATION FOR OFFICE**

No member of a Village / Community Council shall be elected to the Executive unless he or she has been a member of that Council for at least three (3) months.

Save that of a new or resuscitated Council.

3. **AUDITORS**

The appointment of the Auditors of the Village/Community Councils shall be executed at an Annual General Meeting of the Councils. They shall not be a member of the Council.

4. **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

i) The Annual General Meeting shall be held not later than the last day of March in each year, for the following purposes.

The Branch Executive may grant an extension to this deadline.

II. **Community Centre Management and Improvement Committee:**

- a) To encourage the building and equipping of Community Centres.
- b) To supervise the management and use Community centres.
- d) To co-ordinate and monitor the function of Wardens and Caretakers.
- e) To perform all other duties as directed by the National Executive.

III. **Education, Training and Research Committee:**

- a) To organize and mount an Annual Leadership Training Course.
- b) To organize and mount other training programmes on topics of national importance.
- c) To assist Branches in the organization of training courses.
- d) To produce the Association's periodical.
- e) To perform all other duties as assigned by the National Executive.

IV. **Finance Committee:**

- a) Fundraising shall be an integral function of the

any Branch not represented on the Executive.

- b) The National Executive Committee shall be responsible to the National Council.
It shall be charged with the responsibility of running the day to day affairs of the Association and shall be empowered to take such decision as are necessary for the good governance of the Association. These decisions **must** not be repugnant to this Constitution and/or its Regulations.
- c) The National Executive Committee shall meet at least once per month.
- d) If a member of this committee absents him/herself from three (3) consecutive meetings without a reasonable excuse stated in writing to the Secretary his/her seat shall automatically become vacant and the National Council shall take steps to fill the vacancy.

11. **THE POWER AND DUTIES OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

I. Membership and General Purposes Committee:

- a) To stimulate interest, promote membership and supervise the functioning of Branches.
- b) To organize and promote Village/Community Council Week, festivals and other Special Events.
- c) To perform all other duties as directed by the National Executive.

- a) To confirm the Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting;
- b) To receive and adopt the Secretary's Report for the year under review;
- c) To consider and adopt the Financial Statement duly audited;
- d) To receive the report of the Trustees and Committees of the Village/Community Councils;
- e) To elect the officers and other members of the the Executive;
- f) To elect three (3) representatives to serve on the Branch Association, and to elect three (3) alternates;
- g) Except in the case of a new or resuscitated Councils. No member shall be elected to represent the Council on the Branch Association unless he/she has been a member of that Council for at least twelve (12) months;
- h) To elect two (2) delegates to attend the Annual Convention of the Branch;
- i) To appoint Honorary Members;
- j) To appoint Auditors;
- k) To appoint Honorary Wardens;

- i) To transact any other business of which due notice has been given.
- ii) Un-financial members shall not participate in the Annual General Meeting and shall not be eligible for election to Office.
- iii) No monies shall be collected at the Annual General Meeting.

5. **FINANCE**

Treasurer shall be authorized to keep in hand a sum of money not exceeding one hundred (\$100.00) dollars to cater for the day to day expenses.

6. **SUBSCRIPTION/DUES**

- a) An individual member of the Village / Community Council shall pay an entrance fee of three dollars (\$3.00) and a monthly subscription of one dollar (\$1.00).
- b) A Unit Council shall pay to the respective Branch Association a Registration Fee of fifty dollars (\$50.00) and an Annual Subscription of thirty dollars (\$30.00).
- c) Affiliated Groups shall pay to Unit Councils a Registration Fee of fifty dollars (\$50.00) and an Annual Subscription of thirty dollars (\$30.00).

challenged at the Annual Convention next following.

- d) The National Council shall meet once per quarter. However if deemed necessary a special session of the National Council shall be convened.

9. **THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Annual General Meeting shall be held in the month of September of each year for the following purposes:

- a) To confirm the Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting.
- b) To receive the Annual Executive Report.
- c) To consider for adoption the Audited Financial Statement of the Association.
- d) To elect the Executive for the ensuing term.
- e) To elect the Chairmen of the Standing Committees.
- f) To appoint two (2) Auditors.
- g) To receive reports of Standing Committees.

10. **NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- a) The National Executive Committee shall comprise the officers of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils, the Chairmen of the four (4) Standing Committees and one (1) representative each from

The National Council shall, after consultation with the Branches concerned, have the power to alter these areas.

Responsibilities of Branches

- a) The Branch shall be responsible for conducting its own affairs within its particular area, subject to the general principles and regulations laid down by the National Council.
- b) All Branch elections shall be held not later than the end of May each year, the National Council may grant an extension to this deadline.
- c) The Branch Association and the Branch Executive shall each meet at least once per month.
- d) A Convention, open to every individual Village/Community Council of each Branch shall be held once per year, during the month of July.

7. **THE NATIONAL COUNCIL**

- a) The National Council shall be the Governing Body of the Association between Conventions. It may delegate this responsibility to the National Executive.
- b) It shall comprise six (6) representatives from each Branch Association.
- c) Decisions of the National Council on the interpretation of these rules and any other matters shall be final unless

7. **SUSPENSION/EXPULSION**

Disciplinary action leading to suspension, or expulsion shall be laid in writing within seven (7) days of the alleged offence.

All officers who have been replaced, suspended or expelled are required to hand over (within seven (7) days) to the new incumbent all information, documents etc. including property pertaining and/or belonging to the Unit Council to the Branch Association. Failing which disciplinary or legal action will be taken against such person(s).

Re-instatement of a member shall be at the discretion of the Unit Council, Branch or National Executive..

8. **AMENDMENT**

These regulations may be amended at a properly constituted meeting of the National Council, ratification of which must be given by the Annual Convention.

CONSTITUTION OF THE BRANCH ASSOCIATION OF THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE/COMMUNITY COUNCILS

1. **NAME**

The name of the Organization shall be the
..... Branch of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils hereinafter referred to as the Branch Association.

2. **AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

The aims and objectives of the
..... Branch Association of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils shall be:

- a) To assist in the organization and administration of Village/Community Councils and their affiliates.
- b) To foster cultural, recreational, educational, social, economic, spiritual and allied activities.
- c) To co-operate with government and other Agencies engaged in activities aimed at improving conditions in the community over which the Branch operates.
- d) To promote the interest and welfare of the people of

in its area. Such application must be accompanied by membership fee.

Fifty percent (50%) of the membership fee and/or annual subscription together with the duplicate of the enrollment form, **must** be forwarded to the Secretary of the National Executive Committee and the original form, together with fifty percent (50%) of the membership fee and/or annual subscription retained by the Branch.

4. **ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION**

- i) The appropriate annual subscription fee **must** be paid by the unit council to the Secretary of the Branch not later than March 31st in each year. Fifty per cent (50%) of this subscription **must** be forwarded to the Secretary of the National Executive Committee.
- ii) Any Branch Association whose subscription is in arrears of three (3) months or more, shall not be entitled to a voice in the management of the Association nor receive any of its benefits.

5. **BRANCHES**

The Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils shall have Branches comprised of members within the following areas:

- | | | |
|---------------|-------------|-----------------|
| St. Andrews | Caroni | St. George East |
| St. David | St. Patrick | St. George West |
| Nariva/Mayaro | Victoria | Tobago |

- viii) To promote the interest and welfare of Trinidad and Tobago.
- ix) To initiate movements designed to stimulate the building and equipping of Community Centres.
- x) To establish a Community Foundation Fund.
- xi) To work towards the formation of a Caribbean Association of Village/ Community Councils.

3. **MEMBERSHIP**

Eligibility

- i) Any Village/ Community Council is eligible for membership in the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/ Community Councils provided it is a member of a Branch Association.
- ii) There shall be an additional category of membership called Associate Membership which shall be opened to individuals who are qualified in the field of Community Development, either academically or through practical association and experience.

Procedure

To become a member of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils. Each Village/Community Council must apply on the prescribed form in duplicate to the Secretary of the Branch Association operating

- e) To establish and maintain a headquarters office in
- f) To co-ordinate the activities/programmes etc. between the Local Government Body and the Village/Community Councils.

3. **MEMBERSHIP**

Eligibility

Any Village/Community Council operating in shall be eligible for membership in the Branch Association.

Procedure

- i) Any Village/ Community Council applying for membership must submit the prescribed form (in duplicate), duly filled out, to the Secretary of the Branch Association accompanied by the appropriate annual subscription and registration fees.
- ii) Village/ Community Councils or Youth Arm shall be admitted to membership only at a Regular Executive Meeting of the Branch Association.

Honorary Members shall be appointed at the Annual Convention of the Branch from recommendations made by the Branch Executive.

4. **ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION**

- i) The Annual Subscription Fee **must** be paid by the Unit Council to the Secretary of the Branch Association, not later than the last day of March of each year.
- ii) Any Village / Community Council whose subscription is in arrears for more than three (3) months shall not be entitled to a voice in the Branch Association or any of its benefits.
- iii) Fifty percent (50%) of the Registration Fees and/or Annual Subscriptions paid by Units shall be paid to the Secretary of the National Executive by the respective Branch Association.

5. **THE BRANCH ASSOCIATION**

- a) The Branch Association shall be responsible for the efficient operation of all Village/Community Councils and for conducting all affairs of the Association within its particular area subject to the dictates of the Constitution and in keeping with instructions from time to time, by the Trinidad and Tobago Association.
- b) The Branch Association shall be comprised of three (3) accredited representatives of each member Council; and shall be eligible for re-election to serve for a period of one (1) year.

**CONSTITUTION OF THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE/COMMUNITY COUNCILS**

1. **NAME**

The name of the organization shall be the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/ Community Councils.

2. **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The aims and objectives of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/ Community Councils shall be:

- i) To co-ordinate the efforts of all national community based organisations towards national, regional and international improvements and developments.
- ii) To empower members of the community to be better able to promote their own interests and development.
- iii) To co-ordinate and supervise the activities and programmes of the Branch Associations.
- iv) To strengthen the organization of Village/Community Councils.
- v) To assist Branch Associations, all unit councils and their affiliates, in organisation and management.
- vi) To foster cultural, recreational, educational, spiritual, social, economic and allied activities.
- vii) To co-operate with other agencies engaged in community development.

10. **AMENDMENT**

These regulations may be amended at a properly constituted meeting of the National Council, ratification of Amendments must be given by the Annual Convention.

c) Decisions of the Branch Association on interpretation of this Constitution shall be binding unless rescinded by the National Council of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils.

d) The Branch shall elect annually an Executive which shall comprise the following members;

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| President | Vice President |
| Secretary | Asst. Secretary (2) |
| Treasurer | Trustees (2) |
| Public Relations Officer | Youth Officer |
| Educ., Training & Research | Welfare Officer |
| Ordinary Members (6) | |

In addition, it shall elect an Education Training and Research Committee, a Sports Committee, a Cultural Committee and such other committees as are considered necessary to manage the affairs of the Branch.

Two (2) Auditors shall be appointed. They shall not be a member of the Association.

e) The Branch Association shall also elect annually six (6) representatives to the National Council, and also six (6) alternates.

f) Election of Officers of the Branch Association shall be held not later than the end of May in each year. All offices held are eligible for re-election. The responsibility for conducting the election of the Branch Executive rests with the National Executive.

g) No member who is a candidate for office shall serve as Returning Officer.

- h) The Branch Association shall hold a regular meeting at least once per month.
- i) The Branch Association Convention shall be held in the month of July each year.
- j) The Branch Association shall report quarterly on its activities to the National Executive in the manner as prescribed.

6. **BRANCH ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE**

- a) The Branch Executive shall comprise the officers and six (6) other members.
- b) The Branch Executive shall meet at least once per month. Six (6) members shall form a quorum. Two of which shall be Officers.
- c) The Branch Executive shall be charged with the responsibility of running the day to day affairs of the Branch Association and shall be accountable to the respective Branch Association.
- d) If any officer absents himself/herself from three (3) or more consecutive Regular Branch Association or three (3) or more consecutive Regular Executive Meetings without a reasonable excuse stated in writing to the Secretary, his/her office shall automatically become vacant

A bye-election shall be held within twenty-one (21) days of the office becoming vacant.

3. **AUDITORS**

The appointment of the Auditors of the Branch Association shall be executed at an Annual General Meeting of Branch. They shall not be a serving member of the Association.

8. **SUSPENSION/EXPULSION/REPLACEMENT**

All officers who have been replaced, suspended or expelled are required to hand over (within seven (7) days) to the new incumbent all information, documents etc. including property pertaining and/or belonging to the the Branch Association. Failing which disciplinary or legal action will be taken against such person(s).

In the case of the suspension of the Executive of a Branch Association, all information, documents etc .including property pertaining and/or belonging to the Branch Association must be handed over to the Executive of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils, within a period of seven (7) days..

9. **DUES**

A Unit Council shall pay to the respective Branch Association a Registration Fee of fifty dollars (\$50.00) and an Annual Subscription of thirty dollars (\$30.00).

These dues shall be reviewed time to time by the National Council.

- 3. Two (2) delegates from each Unit Council.
- 4. Such observers and special guests as the Branch Association Executive may determine.

11. **HONORARY MEMBERS**

The Branch may appoint such persons as it thinks fit to become Honorary Members, but such members shall have no vote and shall not hold office.

The total number of Honorary Members shall not exceed five (5) and shall be appointed for a period of one (1) year and are eligible for reappointment annually at the Convention of the Branch.

BRANCH ASSOCIATION REGULATIONS

1. **REGISTRATION**

All applications from Unit Councils to the Community Development Division for Registration **must** have the approval of the appropriate Branch Association, or would not be recognized as a member of the Association.

2. **QUALIFICATION FOR OFFICE**

All accredited representatives from a Unit Council are eligible for office at the Branch Association, provided that he/she has been a financial member in his/her Unit Council for at least one (1) year.

7. **FINANCE**

- a) All monies and properties of the Branch Association shall be vested in two (2) Trustees, elected annually by the Branch Association.
- b) The Treasurer of the Branch Association shall be required to keep proper books of accounts which would be subject to inspection and audit by the Auditors of the Branch Association.
- c) A bank account shall be opened in the name of the Branch Association and the passbook and statement where applicable shall be available at meetings for inspection, upon request.
- d) The Treasurer shall report in writing on the state of the finances at the Branch Association meetings in the months of July, October and end of January.
- e) The Treasurer shall submit all relevant documents to the Auditors for audit no later than the end of March of each year.
- f) The financial year of the Branch Association shall commence on 1st April and close on the 31st March of each Year.
- g) The Branch Association shall determine the amounts of money to be kept in hand by the Treasurer.

8. **QUORUM**

- a) Ten Unit Councils shall form a quorum at Regular General or Special Meetings of the Branch Association.
- b) One-third of the membership of any committee shall form a quorum.
- c) In the event of failure in getting a quorum at any meeting of the Branch Association or any Committee such a meeting shall be cancelled after the expiration of one (1) hour and another meeting shall be convened within fourteen (14) days. At such a meeting the members present shall constitute a quorum.

9. **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Annual General Meeting of the Branch Association shall be held not later than the end of May each year for the following purpose.

- ▶ The Confirmation of the Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting.
- ▶ The Presentation and Adoptions of Reports.
- ▶ The Election of Officers.
- ▶ Appointment of Auditors

Persons qualified to participate in the election shall be:

- i) Accredited representative or their alternates elected by their Village/Community Councils to serve on the

Branch Association for the new term.

- ii) Only accredited representatives to the Branch Association is eligible for election to office.

10. **ANNUAL CONVENTION**

The Branch Association Annual Convention shall be held in the month of July in each year for the following purposes:

- ▶ To deal with any matter placed before it by the Annual General Meeting.
- ▶ To consider motions submitted by Unit Councils, the Branch Executives and the Branch Association.
- ▶ To deal with matters that affect the efficiency and future of the Branch Association and the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Village/Community Councils.
- ▶ To deal with matters that affect the interest and welfare of the various communities within the Branch Association.

Persons who qualify to attend the Convention shall be:

1. Entire membership of the Branch Association.
2. The three accredited representatives from the Village/Community Councils elected to serve for the new term.

