THE CONSTITUTION

OF THE

GUYANESE ASSOCIATION OF BARBADOS INCORPORATED

TITLE

The organization shall be known as the “Guyanese Association of Barbados Incorporated” hereafter within this Constitution referred to as the Association. In abbreviation it shall be referred to as GABI.

ARTICLE II – AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Association is a non-political, non-religious organization established with the following aims and objectives:-

(a) To promote the integration of Guyanese into the Barbadian Society.

(b) To endeavour to preserve and exhibit Guyanese culture in the Barbadian society.

(c) To provide resource information to recent Guyanese Immigrants and Guyanese Immigrants in need of assistance within the scope of the law and this Constitution.

(d) To organize celebrations around Guyanese national events.

(e) To be active as a group with an effective voice in the affairs of the community and to co-operate with other national groups, and especially with groups with whom we share similar ethnic and cultural traditions, in pursuing common aims and objectives.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

1. Membership Eligibility and Classification shall be as follows:-

(a) General

The general membership shall be open upon payment of the annual dues to:-

All Guyanese and their families;

Members of a family where one member is of Guyanese parentage;

Any person who has expressed interest in supporting the aims and objectives of and undertakes to fully participate in all activities of the Association;

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(b) Honorary

The Executive shall guard the election of honorary membership as exclusively a distinction for meritorious service to the Association. Honorary membership is the highest distinction that the Association may bestow and should be conferred only in exceptional cases.

The term of such membership will be determined by the Executive of the Association, and the Executive may also revoke an honorary membership at any time.

Honorary members are exempted from the payment of dues.

Honorary members shall not be eligible for election as a member of any Committee of the Association.

(c) Life

Any member of the Association over eighteen years of age shall be eligible for life membership upon payment of the required dues to the Association.

(d) Organisational

Any association with similar aims and objectives is eligible for membership upon payment of the annual dues.

(e) Student

Student membership shall apply to any member who attends full time at any university, college or educational institution upon payment of the annual dues.

2. Membership Rights and Obligations

(a) A general member in good standing shall be entitled to all the rights, obligations and privileges which membership in the Association confers and implies, including:

(i) Eligibility to seek any office in the Association provided the member has at least one year of membership, shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age, shall have no criminal record and not exhibited or participated in activities contrary to the aims and objectives of the Association.

(ii) The right to vote on all matters requiring a vote of the membership and, subject to the obligations including:
(iii) Regular attendance at meetings;
(iv) Prompt payment of dues;
(v) Participation in the activities of the Association, and
(vi) Conduct reflecting a favourable image of the Association.

3. Application for membership

The form and manner of the application for membership shall be as provided by and approved by the Executive.

4. Membership dues

Membership dues shall be subject to annual review by the Executive who shall recommend any proposed changes to the Annual General Meeting of the membership.

Annual membership dues become payable on or before the date of the Annual General Meeting and shall be paid in full by the first Saturday in December.

Any member who fails to pay membership dues as prescribed, ceases to be a member in good standing.

5. Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated upon:

(a) Notification by a member in writing of his or her resignation;

(b) A seventy five percent (75%) vote of the members of the Executive present at an Executive Meeting called for the purpose of considering a gross misconduct of a member whose actions are contrary to the aims and objectives of the Association.

6. Membership is not transferable to anyone.

**ARTICLE IV – Executive**

1. The following Office Bearers will manage the Association:

   • President
   • Two (2) Vice-Presidents
   • Treasurer
   • Secretary

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• Assistant Secretary/Treasurer

• Three (3) Committee Members

2. Elections of all Officers will be held biennially at the Annual General Meeting of the Association, from and by members of the Association.

3. All officers are eligible to serve for no more than two (2) consecutive terms.

4. The Immediate Past President shall be ex-officio on the Executive. In the event that the Past President is unavailable, one of the past Vice-Presidents, or in their non-availability, any other member of the past executive shall be nominated by the incoming Executive.

5. Vacancies

In the event vacancies shall be such a number as to reduce the number of the Executive to less than the number required for a quorum, the membership of the Association shall have power to fill such vacancies by an election held at any regular meeting of the Association upon fourteen (14) days prior notice, setting forth the purpose, time and place for such a meeting.

6. Remuneration

No officer or member of the Association shall be entitled to any remuneration.

ARTICLE V – DUTIES AND POWER OF THE EXECUTIVE

In addition to those duties and powers expressed and implied as set forth elsewhere in this Constitution, the Executive shall:

(a) Consider and formulate all matters of policy of the Association for presentation to, and approval by the general membership at a regular or special meeting.

(b) Authorize all expenditures of the Association for purposes consistent with the aims and objectives of the Association, but shall not create any indebtedness in excess of the income of the Association;

(c) Have the books and accounts of the Association audited annually, or in its discretion more frequently as the case may be;

(d) Transfer all the assets of the Association to the incoming Executive within thirty (30) days of the election.
ARTICLE VI– ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

The Officers of the Executive, with the exception of the Immediate Past President shall be elected in the following manner:-

(a) The Secretary shall submit in writing, the names of the candidates nominated for the various offices, to the membership at least fourteen (14) days prior to the date of the Annual General Meeting.

(b) A valid nomination shall be in writing and accompanied by two (2) seconders from two (2) members who are qualified to vote at the elections other than the nominating member.

(c) The Executive shall appoint a Returning Officer for the purpose of the election.

(d) If only one nomination is made for each office, the election shall be made at the Annual General Meeting. If additional nominations are made for each office, election will be by secret ballot at the Annual General Meeting.

(e) A simple majority is required for each candidate to win.

(f) The Returning Officer shall, as soon as may be reasonably practical after the elections, announce the results to the general membership and submit a report that shall be filed with the minutes of the Annual General Meeting.

ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS

1. General Meetings

There shall be two General Meetings annually and the Annual General Meeting to be held on the first Saturday in December.

Decisions made at a general meeting shall be by a simple majority of votes from those members attending the meeting.

2. Special General Meetings

Special General Meetings may be convened by the Executive Committee or on receipt by the Secretary of a request in writing from not less that twenty five (25) financial members of the Association. All members in good standing shall be notified by the Secretary in writing at least fourteen (14) days before any special meeting is held, of the date, time, place and purpose of such special meeting.

Only such business shall be transacted at the special meeting as is called for in the notice.

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3. **Annual General Meeting**

This will be held annually, with due notification to all financial members of the date, time and place at least fourteen (14) days before the date of the actual meeting.

(a) The business of the Annual General Meeting shall be to:

1. Confirm the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting and any General Meetings held since the last Annual General Meeting.
2. Receive the audited accounts for the period from the Treasurer.
3. Receive the President's Report.
4. Elect an Auditor.
5. Transact such other business received in writing by the Secretary seven (7) days prior to the meeting and included on the agenda.
6. Review membership fees and agree them for the forthcoming year.
7. Any Other Business.

(b) The election of Office Bearers of the Association will be held biennially at the Annual General Meeting.

4. **Motions**

Except as otherwise specified herein, motions and actions proposed shall become effective upon majority vote of the members then voting in person.

5. **Quorum**

(a) Six (6) members of the Executive shall constitute a quorum for the Executive meeting.

(b) Twenty five (25) members shall constitute a quorum for an Annual, General and Special Meetings.

(c) In the event that there is not a quorum, the meeting shall be postponed by seven (7) days, or whatever period is convenient) at which postponed meeting, business will be transacted whether or not a quorum exists.
6. Notification of meetings

The Secretary shall notify members of meetings by email. In the event that a member does not have access to email, the Secretary shall send notifications by post.

ARTICLE VIII – FINANCE

1. Bank Account

The Association shall maintain a bank account and there shall be four designated signing officers of the Association: the President or one of the Vice Presidents together with the Treasurer or Secretary.

2. Financial Year

The financial year of the Association shall be 1st October to 30th September of the following year.

3. Auditor

At the Annual General Meeting an Auditor shall be elected who shall audit the books and records of finances of the Association as well as verify the Treasurer’s Report to the Annual General Meeting and report to the members.

ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

1. Any proposed amendments to the Constitution must be proposed by a financial member and seconded by another financial member.

2. The Executive shall thereafter call a meeting to consider the proposal within six (6) weeks of the date of the proposal. Copies of the proposal shall be sent to each member at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

3. Such amendments shall be passed if supported by not less than two thirds of those financial members present at an Annual General Meeting of Special Meeting called for the purpose, assuming that a quorum has been achieved.

ARTICLE X – DISSOLUTION

1. The Association may be dissolved with the will of the membership or due to lack of interest therein.

2. On dissolution, the Association’s property and assets after liquidation of all its liabilities shall be transferred to another organisation with similar

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purposes and which has rules prohibiting the distribution of its assets and income to its members.

ARTICLE VI – RULES OF PROCEDURE AT MEETINGS

All questions or Order of Procedure with respect to any meeting or action of this Association, the Executive or any Committee except as otherwise specifically provided for in this Constitution shall be in accordance with ROBERT’S RULES OF ORDER (Revised).