



African Association of Political Science

## The Constitution of the African Association of Political Science

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### Pre-amble

1. The African Association of Political Science (AAPS) hereafter referred to as AAPS was first established by the resolution of a conference held in Dar es Salaam in 1974. Following a period of lull in its activities between 2008 and 2017, AAPS was officially reborn in March 2021 during its Rethinking Africa Conference and General Meeting 2021 where a new constitution was proposed.
  2. The Constitution was approved and adopted by the General Meeting of the Association held online on 26 March 2021.
  3. The General Meeting has the right to decide the location of the legal address of the Association
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### Article One: Purpose

The African Association for Political Science is a non-profit association for scientific purposes. Its function is to represent political scientists focused on Africa based in Africa and elsewhere, regardless of their school of thought, scientific approaches or ideological opinion. Its goal is to promote political studies in and on Africa and the Diaspora.

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### Article Two: Objectives

1. To achieve these ends, the AAPS shall support activities to:
    - a. secure and develop institutional and personal contacts between political scientists and other social scientists in Africa and throughout the world;
    - b. encourage the international dissemination and exchange of information on developments in knowledge on political sciences;
    - c. facilitate and promote international research and training;
    - d. convene meetings and regularly scheduled conference and other colloquia;
    - e. promote publications that support its research and other activities.
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### Article Three: Membership

1. There shall be both collective and individual members of the Association, who may be either regular or affiliated.
2. Collective Members:

- a. Regular collective members shall be national and regional political science associations duly established for scientific purposes and open to all active political scientists. They shall be admitted to membership by a decision of the Executive Committee (EC).
    - b. Affiliated collective members shall be research institutions and universities or their departments, as well as other associations of political scientists active as scholars or practitioners in the field of political science. They shall be admitted by a decision of the EC.
  3. Individual Membership:
    - a. Regular individual membership is open to scholars or professionals active in political science teaching, in research and/or in practice. To become a member and to maintain membership individual members must join and maintain membership in both the AAPS and at least one of its Research Committees.
  4. All members shall respect the principles upon which the Association is founded, and contribute to its purposes.
  5. To remain members in good standing, all categories of members must have paid their membership dues for the current year.
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#### **Article Four: Research Committees**

Research Committees (RCs) exist to promote and enhance international cooperation and development in theoretical and empirical research in political science within the Association and outside it.

1. Each Research Committee has a particular branch of political science as its remit, which should be defined widely enough to cover a large area and range of approaches to the field. RCs are free to organise themselves, and to administer their own funds, to cooperate with academic and non-academic bodies, and to engage in any activities they may consider appropriate to their stated objectives, as long as they operate in a way consistent with these Statutes and the general principles and policy of the AAPS.
  2. The following Research Committees are recommended: Political Thought/Theory; Peace and Security; Political Economy; Africa's International Relations; Democracy and Governance.
  3. For other RCs to be founded, the procedure is as follows:
    - a. a proposal is made to the Executive Committee by any 10 regular individual AAPS members in good standing, and will be accepted by the RC Chair if it meets the conditions listed in clauses (b) - (d).
    - b. The members applying should be able to demonstrate that they have agreed a conceptual framework and work programme among themselves.
    - c. The remit of the proposed RC should not overlap significantly with the remit of any other already existing RC.
    - d. The members supporting the proposal should have sufficient national diversity and statutes should be proposed which are consistent with general AAPS principles and are approved by the EC.
  4. RCs may provide for sub-groups with autonomy sufficient to pursue their specialised research interests, if there are sufficient members in specialised subfields to justify this.
  5. RCs have an obligation to provide information on their membership and activities to the Secretariat when this is requested, and to encourage their members to join the AAPS if they are not already members. The AAPS may take the number of AAPS members in a RC into account in determining its rights and benefits.
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## **Article Five: National Associations/Societies**

1. National associations/societies shall be duly represented within the AAPS by the National Associations Liaison Committee (NALC) to discuss and recommend to the Executive on matters of the general policy and governance of the AAPS.
2. The chairperson and deputy chairperson of the Committee shall be elected during the AGM of AAPS and the president shall become a member of the extended Executive Committee
3. The Committee is designed to provide space for associations/societies to advise the Executive especially on matters of governance of relations between AAPS and national associations as anchors of the AAPS.
4. The Committee plays a role in facilitating the establishment or reestablishment of national associations in countries where they do not exist.
5. The Committee shall prepare its own statutes governing the Committee operations.
6. The Committee shall normally meet at every AAPS Conference, and at least once between every two Conferences, if possible. It shall have a calendar of meetings agreed in advance. To convene its meetings, a formal communication shall be sent to all the members eligible to appoint delegates. Due notice shall be given of meetings.
7. Electronic meetings and seminars among associations may also be held, on the initiative of the chairperson.
8. A quorum of at least one half of the members is necessary for the Committee to reach decisions. Decisions shall be taken by a majority vote of those present and voting, or voting in a postal ballot. The vote at a meeting shall be taken by show of hands or by roll call, except for elections and other decisions concerning identified persons, in which case it shall be taken by secret ballot. In case of a tie, the chairperson shall have the deciding vote when the ballot is not secret; when it is secret, a second vote will be taken.

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## **Article Six: The Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee (EC) shall consist of not less than five, nor more than fifteen members, including additional members elected (or co-opted by the EC) to ensure. The Executive Committee of five shall be elected at each regular general meeting, but additional members may be elected or co-opted by direction of the EC in terms of Article 6 (2).

The EC applies the policies of the AAPS and it proposes the membership to the AGM.

1. The Executive Committee (EC) shall consist of five executives: the President, two Vice-Presidents, Secretary, and Treasurer.
2. A maximum of ten additional members of the extended EC shall be elected by general members or co-opted by the EC for purposes of representativity.
3. The Editor-in-Chief shall attend the Extended Executive Committee meeting as an additional member included in the 10.
4. The EC shall consider, where means allow, identifying and appointing a Programme Officer to manage the day to day operations of the Association. The Programme Officer shall provide logistical support to the EC.
5. The EC shall be duly elected at the general meeting of AAPS during its Conference, and shall hold office until replaced at the next ordinary General Meeting.

6. In case of vacancy among those Executive Committee members who are not President, their place shall be taken by the candidates ranking highest in number of votes among those not elected and still available.
7. The vacancy of the President shall be filled by one of the deputy president voted in by the EC until an ordinary or extra-ordinary general meeting is held.
8. The EC shall have the overall responsibility for the functioning of the AAPS including its prudent financial management, a publications programme, membership drive, partnerships, AAPS membership of extra-continental bodies, and staffing.
9. It shall thus be considered the highest decision-making body between general meetings.
10. The EC can form ad-hoc sub-committees from among its members to make recommendations on particular matters.
11. The EC shall meet during the AAPS Conference, and at least six times between every two Conferences. Its meetings shall be chaired by the President or, in his/her absence, by the Vice-President nominated by the President.
12. The EC shall take its decisions by consensus or by a majority vote of those present and voting, the chairperson having the casting vote in case of a tie.
13. The quorum for a duly convened meeting shall be 50% + 1 of the full executive.
14. Any member of the EC who does not carry out the basic functions of membership, or offer appropriate reasons for a temporary inability to do so, shall after a period of 6 months' notice (given by the Executive Secretary after consultation with the President - or, in the case of the President's inactivity, with the Vice-Presidents) be deemed to have resigned unless circumstances make this inappropriate. If such a case arises, the Executive Secretary shall notify the EC and the EC shall decide how to deal with it.
15. The Executive Committee shall hold its first meeting immediately following the close of the General Meeting at which the committee was elected to begin its work and set out its programme of action. The Executive Committee shall regularly meet twice a year.
16. If an elected member fails to attend more than two regular meeting of the Executive Committee during the two-year term of office, irrespective of the reasons for not attending, his/her committee membership ends.
17. The Executive Committee may establish its own rules and regulations and may delegate authority to act on its behalf to the President or the member acting for him or her, or to sub-committees of its members.
18. The duties of the EC are:
  - a. execute the decisions of the General Assembly;
  - b. exercise general control over the administration of the Association;
  - c. be responsible for the development of the programme and activities of the Association between sessions of the Council;
  - d. appoint the Programme Officer upon a nomination submitted through the President to the Executive Committee. Programme officer is normally expected to serve for two years, and subject to satisfactory performance and need this appointment may be extended by a further two years.
  - e. appoint the Editor-in-Chief and other Editors of the AAPS Journal; the *African Journal of Political Science* (AJPS). It shall also approve the Editorial Board of AJPS recommended by the Editor-in-Chief.
  - f. establish such standing or temporary committees of the Association as may seem desirable;
  - g. accept and expend moneys on behalf of the Association;
  - h. submit reports as necessary to members and invite and consider their comments thereon;
  - i. establish, subject to general directives adopted by the General Meeting, the annual budget of the Association; and

- j. ratify the appointment of the Conference Programme Chair upon nomination by the President.

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## **Article Nine: The President and the Vice-Presidents**

1. The AAPS President shall legally represent the Association both internally and externally, and shall have general responsibility for the implementation of the Association's policy and for supervision of the activity of the Secretariat. S/he shall chair the meetings of the EC; in his/her absence, the meeting will be chaired by a Vice-President nominated by the President. The President is also responsible for overseeing the development of the programme for the next Conference, in collaboration with the Programme Committee and in liaison with the Local Organising Committee.
2. The first Vice-President shall be responsible for Research, Ethics, and Publications:
  - a. Research - to oversee and coordinate the activities of RCs, and other research initiatives, to propose policies in the area of research, and to encourage comparative and cross-national research.
  - b. Publications - to oversee the Association's publications programme, and to propose policies in the area of publications.
  - c. Ethics – responsible for the Association’s policies and guidelines regarding ethics generally including research ethics.
3. The second Vice-President shall be responsible for National Associations and Membership.
  - a. National Associations - to maintain liaison with regular collective members, and to propose policies and activities to respond to their needs.
  - b. Membership – work in liaison with Executive Secretary to oversee the Association's membership regulations and processes
4. The AAPS President and Vice-Presidents shall hold office for a two-year term between consecutive AAPS Conferences. They shall be eligible for re-election to the same office once.
5. In case of a vacancy in the office of the President and/or any Vice-President, the Executive Committee shall elect an Interim President or Vice-President until the end of the uncompleted term, should it consider it necessary to fill the office.

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## **Article Ten: Nominations and Elections**

1. At least six months before each Conference, the Executive Committee shall elect a Nominating Committee (NC) with five members. All of these members must be regular individual members in good standing. Each NC shall select from among its membership a chairperson who will be responsible for organising its work, in cooperation with the Secretariat.
2. The NC have the task of drawing up slates of nominations for election to the Executive Committee (EC). Members of the NCs are ineligible as candidates for any of these positions. The slates shall comprise at least two candidates for each position. The Nominating Committee (NC) shall seek nominations, with appropriate motivation, supported by two members in good standing and including evidence of the candidate’s consent. The NCs may also actively solicit further candidacies and collectively make their own nominations. The Nominating Committees should, separately and jointly as specified, draw up slates selected, at their discretion, from the nominations made and send them (for the EC) to the members of the Association, not later than six weeks prior to the Conference. If the nominations received by this

time are insufficient or do not adequately meet the criteria stated, the deadline may, in consultation with the President, be extended to allow the search for nominations to continue.

3. All candidates must have been individual members in good standing of the AAPS since the previous Conference and must still be so at the time when the NCs finalise their list. After two consecutive terms on the Executive Committee no member is eligible for a further consecutive term.
  4. In drawing up their slates the Nominating Committees shall consult their constituencies, and give due consideration to the diversity of fields within Political Science, to geographical representation and to gender as well as to candidates' experience in organising international activities, liaising with each other to promote these ends. There must be a gender balance within the trio of the Presidency; President and two Vice Presidents.
  5. Sitting presidents and vice presidents of national associations are exempt from being elected into the EC while they are still in office unless they resign such national offices beforehand.
  6. Nominations may also be made from the floor at all elections, if supported by five members at the general meeting and made with the consent of the candidate.
  7. The NC shall act as an electoral monitoring body during general meetings with the powers to certify the elections as free and fair.
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### **Article Eleven: Biennial Conferences**

1. The AAPS shall convene an international conference once every two years, always ahead of the World Congress of the International Political Science Association (IPSA).
  2. The location of each Conference shall be chosen at least 14 months before it is due to be held, in the light of proposals received. Proposals shall be invited from all national association members at least 18 months before the conference. The choice shall give due attention to the need for diversity of locations over time, as well as to local organisational resources and physical capacity; unlimited admission to the country for all participants, regardless of nationality, is essential.
  3. The organisation of the Conference shall be the joint responsibility of a Programme Committee established by the Executive Committee and a Local Organizing Committee established by the local organizers, as set out in the By-Laws.
  4. The Conference programme shall make room for the holding a general meeting of the Association.
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### **Article Twelve: Financial Responsibilities**

1. The Treasurer and the Executive Committee (EC) shall ensure that the agreed annual budgets may not be exceeded without following the appropriate procedure.
2. Any proposals for expenditure additional to those covered by agreed budgets must be formally approved by the EC through a procedure specified for that category of expenditure.
3. The Executive Committee shall consider and approve all financial policies and procedures including the setting up of bank accounts and other financial instruments.
4. It shall also approve the budget of the Association.
5. The Treasurer shall report to the EC on revenue, expenditure, fundraising, financial controls with a view to ensure prudent financial management.
6. The Treasurer, President and another member of the EC shall be signatories of the AAPS bank account.
7. No AAPS resources may be used for personal business or in pursuit of private interests, or any other matter not duly approved by the EC

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## **Article Thirteen: Secretariat and Headquarters**

1. The Programme Officer of the AAPS shall normally be appointed for a two-year term; the term is renewable without limit. S/he shall be in charge of the administrative affairs of the Association, and shall be accountable for them to the EC, to which s/he shall make quarterly reports on organisation, membership, finances, programmes, activities and accomplishments. S/he shall be in charge of the organisation of the Secretariat's office, and shall act as its staff director.
2. The Secretariat shall, in consultation with the Treasurer, draw up a budget each calendar year for approval by the Executive Committee, and shall provide for the Executive Committee an annual financial report duly verified by an auditor.
3. The stipends of the Program Officer Secretary and of other members of the staff of the Secretariat shall be determined by the President, in consultation with the Treasurer, in the light of relevant Executive Committee policy.
4. The location of the Secretariat's office shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

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## **Article Fourteen: Amendments to the Statutes**

1. Proposals for amendments to the Statutes may be made by the Executive Committee, or by any National Association at least six months before a Conference/General Meeting of AAPS.
2. The Programme Officer shall inform the Executive Committee of the proposals received, and shall subsequently circulate them by appropriate means among all the members including collective members and National Associations and the Research Council, together with a brief explanation of their rationale, at least three months before the next Conference. The Executive Committee will be entitled to propose amendments to the amendments, by a deadline such that they may be circulated at least 2 months before the Conference.
3. General meeting:
  - a. Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the General Meeting or, if the EC so decides, shall be immediately circulated by post for a postal ballot. A quorum of one half of the voting members plus one is needed for the Assembly to reach a decision. If more than one amendment is proposed, the amendments shall be voted on separately except where they are interdependent; the entire amended text will then be voted on. The amendments shall be adopted if approved by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.
  - b. Should the General Meeting fail to reach a quorum, the amendments shall be submitted to a postal/electronic ballot and shall be adopted if approved by a two-thirds majority of those voting, provided that at least one half of the members entitled to vote have voted.

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## **Article Fifteen: Dissolution**

1. The dissolution of the Association shall be decided by the General Meeting by its usual procedures, except for the provisions of clause 14.2.

2. If practical, the proposal for dissolution shall be submitted to a meeting of the General Assembly. If the President does not judge a meeting practical, the proposal shall be put to a vote and votes given in writing without a meeting. Any such proposal must be circulated at least 6 months before the date of the meeting or postal /electronic vote. The dissolution shall be declared provided that a quorum of at least two thirds of the members in good standing have participated in the meeting or postal vote, and that at least two-thirds of those participating have approved it.
  3. In the event of dissolution, the net assets of the Association shall be transferred to an international organisation or institution whose objectives are similar to those of the Association, or shall be assigned to other uses considered consistent with the AAP's aims and objectives.
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## **APPENDICES**

### **By-laws of the AAPS**

#### **1. Working Languages**

The Association recognises various languages used in political science in Africa including Arabic, English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Swahili. The administrative language of the Association shall be English.

#### **2. Duties of Committee Chairs**

1. The chair shall open and close each session of the AAPS committees. S/he shall direct the discussions, ensure observance of the by-laws, and accord or withdraw the right to speak. S/he shall rule on points of order and, subject to the present by-laws, shall control proceedings and maintain order. S/he may ascertain the sense of the meeting and shall, if necessary, put questions to the vote.
2. If the chair is absent (or unable to attend), s/he shall be replaced by another member who, acting in this capacity, shall have the same power and duties as the chair. The acting chair will be appointed by the chair or, in the absence of such an appointment, by the meeting.
3. For any meeting of an AAPS committee non-members may be invited to attend, and to speak though not to vote, if the chairperson judges that they can make a special contribution to the business under consideration. Co-option - the expansion of the committee through the inclusion of additional members - is not permitted.
4. The chair will call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their wish to speak. For the convenience of the discussions, the chair may limit the time allowed to each speaker. Non-members may speak only with the consent of the chair.

#### **3. Procedures of General Meetings**

1. Notice of the meeting, together with its proposed agenda and working papers, shall be sent to the Council members at least two months before a meeting.
2. At the end of the discussion, and before a question is put to the vote, the chair shall read, or cause to be read, the text of the motion or resolution.
3. The chair shall announce the result of all votes.
4. The proposer of a motion shall have the right to speak first in the discussion. S/he may withdraw the motion with the consent of the members.
5. Motions whose effect is retroactive shall not be considered.
6. The Secretariat may at any time make to the meeting either oral or written statements concerning any question under consideration by it.
7. The provisional agenda shall include:

- a. the report of the Program Officer in collaboration with the Secretary General on the work of the Association since the last General Meeting;
- b. the accounts of the Association for the preceding two years and a statement of the financial prospects of the Association for the succeeding two years;
- c. items proposed by the Executive Committee;
- d. items proposed by any collective member;
- e. election of the President;
- f. election of the Executive Committee

#### **4. Voting**

1. In the Constitution the expression "votes cast" shall mean all votes, whether affirmative, negative, or abstaining ballots.
2. Voting in general meetings on issues shall be by show of hands, except when at least two delegates request a secret ballot; voting for elections shall always be by secret ballot.
3. A roll-call is obligatory when requested by at least five delegates or decided by the chair.
4. The chairperson has an ordinary vote unless otherwise specified in the Constitution and, in case of a tie, shall also have a casting vote.
5. When an amendment to a proposal is moved, the amendment shall be voted on first. When several amendments to a proposal are moved, the meeting shall first vote on the amendment deemed by the chair to be the furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest removed and so on, until all the amendments have been put to the vote.
6. A motion is considered an amendment to a proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from, or revises part of that proposal.
7. Votes in elections shall be counted by two members of the Secretariat, assisted by one or two other persons not eligible for election. After counting, the ballots shall be preserved by the Executive Secretary for at least one year, in a sealed envelope signed by two ballot counters.

#### **5. Conference Programme Committee and Local Organizing Committee**

1. For each Conference, a Programme Committee shall be set up as soon as possible after the election of the new Executive Committee, which must approve the proposals for its membership made by the new AAPS President. The Program Committee is co-chaired by the President and the Program Chair selected on the basis of relevant expertise.
2. In addition the Executive Committee can invite up to two AAPS members from outside the EC of high professional reputation to join the Program Committee. Its composition shall give due regard to diversity of national/regional representation, of gender, and of fields within political science. It shall have a maximum of 8 members in total.
3. For each Conference, there shall also be a Local Organising Committee (LOC). Its composition shall be determined by the local organisers, who will select a chair with lead responsibility for liaison with the AAPS Executive Committee, Programme Committee and the Secretariat.
4. A formal written agreement between the LOC and the AAPS will be drawn up specifying the detailed responsibilities of each party, and the agreed financial arrangements. When approved by the EC, it will be signed by the President and the appropriate officer of the LOC. Any changes to this contract will require the approval of the EC. The LOC will be responsible, within a general policy framework approved by the Executive Committee, for planning all local practical arrangements, raising funds locally, and organising appropriate scientific activities on matters of local interest.

#### **6. Mail or Electronic 'Meetings'**

Where this is not elsewhere specified, the chair of any committee or subcommittee may initiate mail and/or electronic discussion of matters which arise between regular meetings and may, if s/he deems

the issue an appropriate one, hold a postal and/or electronic vote which leads to a decision subject to the provisions about numbers participating and majorities made for regular meetings.

## **7. Publications**

The Association shall have a publication programme mainly from its biennial conferences, research committee meetings, seminars, and projects. The appropriate Vice President of the Association is responsible for overseeing on behalf of the EC the publication programme including the journal and other official publications.

- The African Journal of Political Science is the flagship publication of the Association governed by an International Advisory Board chaired by the Vice President of the Association, including members of the Executive Committee and other members of the association in Africa and abroad. This is a policy advisory board that meets once a year.
- The editorial oversight shall however rest with the Editorial Board made of members appointed among credible scholars committed to work for the journal with the approval of the EC. The Editorial Board shall reflect a gender balance always.
- In the event of resignation or termination of the Editor-in-Chief, the power to appoint an interim Editor-in-Chief until the next General Meeting shall rest with the Executive Committee.
- The Editor-in-Chief shall recommend with a strong motivation to the executive committee names for appointment into the editorial team including up to 3 editors and a book review editor all serving between General Meetings too, or such as the editorial policy approved by the EC provides.
- The Editor-in-Chief shall recommend to the EC an editorial policy to guide the publication of the journal, ensuring that it maintains the highest editorial and quality standards.
- The Editor-in-Chief shall periodically report to the EC about the state of the journal and plans to improve its performance.
- The positions of advisory and editorial board as well as in the editorial team including the Editor-in-Chief are voluntary until the General Meeting on the recommendation of the EC decides otherwise.

## **8. Revision of By-Laws**

Proposed amendments to these By Laws mailed to the Secretariat 75 days before a meeting of the General Meeting may be accepted by simple majority; amendments presented later require a two-thirds majority of votes cast for acceptance.

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## **Criteria for interpreting the statutes concerning individual membership**

1. Individual members of AAPS acquire the rights of voting, petitioning, motioning, and holding office by joining one of its Research Committees and paying dues set by both.
2. Such dues must be paid to the AAPS Secretariat whereupon the individual is registered as a regular member in good standing.

3. Individuals who are not regular members of the AAPS may participate in the activities of the Research Committees, Working Groups and Thematic Groups as affiliate members or as special participants.
4. Any monies collected by the Research Committees but not paid to the AAPS Secretariat in the name of individuals, are not recognized as dues by the AAPS.
5. Members ceasing to belong to the Association shall have no claim upon its assets.

It is clarified that:

1. All scholars who regularly participate in AAPS activities should be AAPS members;
2. EC members are to be regular not affiliated individual AAPS members.

## **9. Signature**

Hereby signed at \_\_\_\_\_ on this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2021

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

President of the Association of African Political Science