

BYLAWS FOR LECUDO-USA WASHINGTON DC BRANCH (LECUDO-WDC)

Preamble:

- GA
- Mindful of the 501c (3) status of LECUDO-USA to which LECUDO-Washington DC Metro Area Branch is an affiliated branch;
 - Mindful of the LECUDO- USA Constitution which LECUDO-WDC Metro Branch holds allegiance to;
 - Mindful of our collective will as Lebang people living in the Diaspora in Washington DC Metro Area to live in harmony, assist one another in times of hardship or joy with one another; in times of success and good tidings etc.
 - Mindful of our resolve to promote our culture and tradition then pass same to our posterity here in the Diaspora
 - Mindful of our resolve to initiate meaningful projects to help us develop/improve ourselves and support/carry out projects back home
 - Mindful of our resolve to assist in developmental projects in Lebang and enable our kith and kin back home develop and live better lives.

We voluntarily agree to adopt the following By-laws to be our guiding rules.

Article One: Aims

Section 1.1: Aims of LECUDO WASHINGTON DC METRO AREA BRANCH

- i. To bring all sons and daughters of Lebang and persons related to them by marriage and well-wishers under one viable organization, irrespective of sex, religion, title or belief
- ii. To stand by one another in times of hardship/trouble
- iii. To help resolve differences amongst members for the growth of our unity
- iv. To help our people living in the Diaspora, Lebang and our people in Cameroon in general.
- v. To educate members to be law abiding in their respective counties in the U.S.A as well as help in the development of this country by paying our taxes and doing all other things which will contribute to the security, economy and development of the U.S.A.

Article Two: Name and Motto

Section 1.1: This Branch shall be called "LECUDO-Washington DC Metro Area Branch"

Section 1.2: The Motto shall be Unity, Strength and Progress.

Article Three: Membership and Registration

Section 1.1: Membership into LECUDO-Washington DC Metro Area Branch shall be open to people aged at least 21 years who meet the following conditions:

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- i- Sons and Daughters of Lebang origin
- ii- Persons related to Sons and Daughters of Lebang by marriage
- CA iii- Persons who have been conferred traditional titles by his Majesty the Fon of Fontem and his Chiefs.
- iv- Resident members are defined as those who live within the States of Maryland, Virginia or the District of Columbia. All others are considered differently as detailed below.
- v- All those living out of the above States MUST pay a yearly \$350 fee plus all other dues paid by resident members to be accepted.
- vi- Parents/relatives must have lived in the USA for the previous 6 months prior to registering.
- vii- All those who have lived in MD, VA or DC and have moved out but are still willing to maintain their membership will be required to pay a yearly out of State fee of \$350 plus other dues paid by resident members.
- viii- Those who reside in Ohio and Massachusetts States and other States closer to the both States will not be accepted in LECUDO-WDC and are advised to register with Chapters in those States.
- ix- Members from the same State that number up to 15 within LECUDO-WDC coming from out of State will be asked to create a Chapter in that State and will thus not be accepted to reactivate or register with LECUDO-WDC.
- x- An active member is a member who is financially up to date (good standing) as of the time of any incident/event at hand.
- xi- A prior member of the organization who has been inactive for less than three (3) years will be readmitted if he/she pays all dues and sanctions that he/she owed during the last year that membership was activated plus a registration fee of \$10.
- xii: a - The re-admitted member shall have six (6) months of probation during which the member will not be entitled to any financial benefits offered by the organization, and shall have 50% of benefits outlined in these bylaws in the six (6) months after the probation period.
- xii: b - The readmitted member will have 100% of all benefits after twelve (12) months of active membership.
- xii - A prior member of the organization who has been inactive for more than three (3) years can gain readmission by paying the registration fee of \$10 if the member did not get any financial benefit from the organization during his/her prior membership period. If the individual seeking readmission had benefited financially from the organization while he/she was a member, he/she will pay all dues and sanctions to cover all the inactive years for membership to be reactivated with a registration fee of \$10.
- Xii: a - The re-admitted member shall have six (6) months of probation during which the member will not be entitled to any financial benefits offered by the organization, and shall have 50% of benefits outlined in these bylaws in the six (6) months after the probation period.
- Xii: b - The readmitted member will have 100% of all benefits after twelve (12) months of active membership.

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Section 1.2: All of the above willing to become member shall pay a \$10 registration fee and annual dues of \$84 plus their residency corresponding fee. The registration fee is a onetime payment unless reapplying after non-active membership, dismissal or resignation. The \$84 dues and residency fee must be completed by September 30th of each of year. The lack of progressive membership will result in non-active status.

Section 1.3(a): The organization runs from January 1st to December 31st each year. From January each year there shall be a \$1 reactivation fee for old members to maintain membership. Reactivation can only be in person except when a permanent resident member is bed ridden within the United States. In such a case reactivation by delegation will be valid only if the designee of the old member who is bed ridden obtains the approval of the general assembly. Permanent resident here means someone who lives and files taxes in the USA.

Section 1.3 (b): However, there shall be a grace period that extends until the meeting of February to all those who were up to date as of December 31st of the previous year. All other members to benefit same must have completed all outstanding dues at January meeting and reactivated their membership.

Section 1.4: All new members will announce their intent to become members of the organization during the General Assembly. Registration shall be recorded to clearly indicate names; date of registration and amount paid and MUST be made in person and be presented to the General Assembly.

- a) The new member shall have three (3) months of probation during which the member will not be entitled to any financial benefits offered by the organization, and shall have 50% of benefits outlined in these bylaws in the six (6) months after the probation period.
- b) The new member will have 100% of all benefits after nine (9) months of active membership.

Section 1.5: Any member that departs the US in the middle of the year keeps his/her membership so long as dues are being paid and will benefit as well until the January meeting of the following year which is reactivation time.

Section 1.6: Registration shall be accepted from people of age 21 and above. Members who have children of 21 should encourage them to become members.

Section 1.7: If any member who has been dismissed from the organization for disciplinary, sanction(s) or any other reasons wishes to be readmitted s/he will have to register as a fresh applicant and serve a 90 (ninety) days probationary period after which if his/her conduct is deemed acceptable, then will he/she be admitted as a member.

Section: 1.8: The branch shall keep an attendance record at all meetings.

Article Four: Rights and Duties of Members

Section 1.1:

- To freely attend and take part in deliberation of the branch

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- To contest for any office within the branch
- To rally support of the branch for any post s/he intends to contest for in LECUDO-USA
- To host the meeting in accordance with the hosting calendar
- To respect others and be respected reciprocally
- To respect traditional rulers and other title holders in our midst
- To respect the branch Executive and follow meeting procedures in attendance.
- To freely vote on issues debated on upon at branch meeting
- To freely resign from the organization.
- To abide by the Bylaws
- To enjoy all active membership support as stipulated in this Bylaws.
- *All benefits shall depend on a 75% financial obligation paid as of the time of occurrence of the incident starting from February and ends by September 30th. There after 100% shall be expected at the time of occurrence of the incident with the exception of fines like: late coming, hosting, quarterly attendance and other fines which shall be calculated and deducted by the executive upon occurrence as stated in Article 5:2:11 below*
- Every member must attend at least one meeting per quarter, failure to do so; a fine of \$25 per quarter will be levied to that member. This applies only to resident members.
- Payment will be accepted only during a meeting session.

Article Five: Assistance and Support to Member

Section 1: Birth

Section 1:1: Birth shall be defined as the coming into this World of a new born into a family in which one or both parents are members in good standing of the organization.

Section 1:2: Each child born into the home of a member(s) in good standing at the time of birth shall be given a \$100 check within 90(ninety) days of the member or designee announcing to the General Assembly.

Section 2: Death

Section 2.1(a): In case of the death of a brother or sister of the same womb, biological father or mother of a member(s), each member in good standing shall be given a condolence package of \$1500.00.

Section 2.1(b): Each beneficiary shall be given a condolence package of \$1500.00

Section 2.2 (a): In case of the death of a spouse of a member, the other spouse or family shall be given a condolence package of \$3,000.

Section 2.2 (b): In case of the death of a biological child with both parents as members, a condolence package of \$2,000 shall be given to each parent and in case of a single parent, a condolence package of \$2,000 shall be given to that parent. Still birth does not qualify in this circumstance.

Section 2.3: An annual condolence contribution of \$121.00 shall be paid by each member to cover the above mentioned condolences packages and it is only when this fund is used up that more contribution

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can be requested from members. This contribution is expected from January to September on an equal monthly payment of \$13.50

Section 2.4: Every member shall pay \$195.00 per year to cover the cost of “Atonga” in case of the death of a Member. In case where there is a balance at the end of year, the general assembly shall decide what old members shall pay while new members shall be expected to pay \$195.00.

Section 2.5: Each member shall contribute \$21.67 per month for Nine (9) months (January to September) in case they choose a month to month payment. Those who join in the middle will be expected to match their payment based on the month they joined provided they pay all by September.

Section 2.6: In case of members who register after September, a complete payment of \$195.00 will be expected from them immediately.

Section 2.7: “Atonga” package of \$15,000 shall be given to the bereaved family. Unless the member had specified to the meeting (Executive) whom the Atonga should be given, the following priority will be observed in the presence of other family members: The surviving spouse in the United States; Oldest biological child who is an active member of LECUDO-WDC; Oldest biological child in the U.S.; and the relative with whom the member lived with last.

Section 2.8: Each parent, spouse, brother, sister or child shall be given the corresponding assistance above if they are a qualified meeting members.

Section 2.9: Any member, who uses a fake relationship to obtain financial assistance, shall be required to refund such financial assistance plus a fine equal to the amount of the assistance falsely obtained if in due course of time the relationship is proven beyond all reasonable doubts that it was false.

Section 2.10: All members have to physically attend condolence visit within 72 hours of the announcement except out of state members who in return will not benefit any such visit out of state but will be obliged to attend a wake keeping for a member’s death in the WDC Metro Area.

Section 2.11: In case where a beneficiary still owes fines or other financial obligations even though in good standing, s/he will not receive his/her condolence package until such dues are completely paid. The organization will deduct the balance of the current year’s dues and any other financial obligations and fines, then make the check to the member. No such deduction shall be made on baby gifts and if the member dies.

Section 2.12: In the event of a member’s death in the United States, LECUDO –WDC shall perform the Nkang dance during the wake keeping based on the family wishes. This shall be scaled based on the venue.

Section 2.13 (a): In case an up to date member wishes to organize a wake keeping, s/he will have to work out a convenient date with the President.

(b): During such wake keeping, the bereaved family shall provide a distinct sitting table with a minimum of 3 chairs for the Executive.

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(c): The bereaved family shall make provision on the program for a word from the President.

Article Six: Discipline

Section 1: The general assembly shall nominate a disciplinary committee of 3 or 5 to determine the class of offence(s) committed by members.

Section 1.1: Class 'A' offences shall be punishable with fines and/or reprimand. They include:

- i- Repeatedly disorderly talking during meeting sessions
- ii- Quarreling and use of abusive language and gossiping
- iii- Continuous refusal to participate in meeting session hosting

Section 1.2: Class 'B' offences shall be punished with a fine and suspension. They include:

- i- Fighting
- ii- Inciting people to disrupt the organization by creating camps
- iii- Failure to pay fines
- iv- Gross disrespect to the executive, chiefs, or other constituted authorities
- v- Failure to physically attend occasions such as condolence visit within 72 hours of the announcement and wake keeping of a member.

Section 1.3: LECUDO-WDC member will not schedule any occasion or event on LECUDO -WDC's meeting day which is always the 3rd Saturday of every month from 8pm to 10pm. The fine will be \$500 for any member who violates this law.

Section 1.4: LECUDO-WDC WhatsApp group will be exclusively used by members who will post matters concerning the meeting and meeting members. Defaulters shall be sanctioned either by warning, suspension or complete loss of privilege in the forum if it becomes recurrent.

Section 1.5: The longest time of suspension shall be 90 (ninety) days and after serving the suspension such person will be required to serve a 90 (ninety) days probationary period after paying all outstanding dues and fine(s) time period during which his/her conduct will be evaluated.

Section 1.6: During the suspension and probationary period, there shall be no benefit for such a person.

Section 1.7: A fine must be paid within 90 days from the day it was sanctioned, after which such fine becomes a debt and thus could cause loss of benefits until paid in full.

Section 1.8: In case of embezzlement, the matter will be closely studied and legal action may be recommended based on the 501c (3) status of the organization.

Article Seven: Termination of Membership

Section 1: Termination of membership could either be voluntary or as a sanction.

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Section 1.1: Voluntary termination occurs when a member resigns or does not reactivate at the beginning of a new year.

Section 1.2: Termination as a sanction occurs when a member on suspension or fined fails to show up after the 90 (ninety) days suspension period and/or fails to pay the fine within 90 (ninety) days of the fined date.

Section 1.3: Membership is terminated when a member dies.

Article Eight: Assistance to other Organizations, Villages and Personalities.

Section 1.1: Assistance shall be given to other organizations/Associations during their fundraising activities. The sum of \$100.00 shall be issued to such organization once a year provided they are in good cooperation with LECUDO-WDC

Section 1.2: Assistance to personalities shall mean a gift worth not more than \$100.00 during the celebration of an ordination, send off or any other event worthy of appreciation. The general assembly shall determine the qualification but in case of urgency, the Executive could decide by at least 2/3 majority.

CA Section 1.3: The above mentioned assistance shall only be valid upon receipt of a request/invitation from such organization, village or personality. In some special cases, the Executive may determine without an invitation.

Section 1.4: Members of LECUDO-WDC who become members of a group that breakaway from LECUDO-WDC or works against LECUDO-WDC will automatically lose their membership in LECUDO-WDC. LECUDO-WDC does not accept concurrent membership with any group that is a breakaway group from LECUDO-WDC or works against LECUDO-WDC. It remains the right of members to choice where to belong but can't belong to both.

Section 1.5: In case a member belongs to a group that breakaway from LECUDO-WDC or works against LECUDO-WDC and it is discovered when he or she has a condolence/benefit, that member will lose that benefit and will not receive any LECUDO-WDC officially sanctioned condolence visit or wake keeping attendance.

Article Nine: Meetings and Committees

Section 1: Meetings

Section 1.1: The LECUDO Washington DC Metro Area Branch, shall hold its monthly meetings on the Third Saturday of every month starting at 8 pm and ending at 10 pm.

Section 1.2: A late coming fee of \$1 will be charged on anyone that comes in after 8.15pm.

Section 1.3: The Executive will determine the venue of the meeting and the hosting group and will make public during the previous meeting session or at least a week before the meeting holds.

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Section 1.4: The group of members hosting shall provide food, water and assorted drinks and ensure that they rearrange and clean the hall in which the meeting holds at the close of the meeting. Names of those who fail to participate in the hosting shall be recorded and punishment shall be a fine of \$100 and they will be reassigned to host within the same year.

Section 1.5: The Executive shall have the power to determine the quantity and quality of food and drinks to be brought to the meeting as part of hosting based on the population.

Section 1.6: Any decision in the meeting shall be by vote of a simple majority of those present.

Section 2: Committees

Section 2.1: The general assembly shall create an Ad hoc committee to study any matter requiring an in-depth study referred by the Executive.

Section 2.2: This Ad hoc committee shall be made up of seven (7) members including one or two members of the Executive.

Section 2.3: The Ad hoc committee shall elect its chairman and secretary. It shall dissolve after rendering the report of its task to the general assembly in writing.

Section 2.4: The general assembly may adopt its report in whole or modify certain part(s) before adoption by a simple majority of those present.

Article Ten: Elections

Section 1: The Executive branch shall hold office for two years and at the end of two years, elections shall be held on the Third Saturday of November of the Second Year to elect a new executive.

Section 1.1: Voters shall be active members as per article 3 Section (1.1) (x). A list of all qualified members shall be presented by the Financial Secretary prior to the election.

Section 1.2: The general assembly shall elect an Election Officer and a Secretary to conduct elections. The outgoing Executive will then step aside for elections to be conducted. The new executive will take office during the January meeting.

Section 1.3: The Election Officer shall only vote if there is a tie. The Election Officer and Secretary will record the names of all candidates to any position. Candidates could be nominated or self-nomination for election.

Section 1.4: Elections shall be conducted on a post by post basis. Candidates to the post of President shall be given three (3) minutes each to outline their policies and philosophy.

Section 1.5: The Executive positions to run for include: President, Vice President, Secretary, Vice Secretary, Treasurer, Two (2) Protocol Officers, Two Organizing Secretaries, and Two (2) Financial Secretaries (male and female).

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Section 1.5: The newly elected Executive members will be installed during the December general meeting following their election in November, and they will start running the organization as from January 1st after their installation.

Article Eleven: Finances

Section 1.1: Sources of Revenue

The LECUDO Washington Metro Area branch shall derive its finances from the following sources:

- i- Approved payment of the Sinking Fund, Condolence, and Projects Levies
- ii- Registration and reactivation fees
- iii- Fines
- iv- Generous donations
- v- Funding for projects from philanthropic organization, agencies, companies and personalities
- vi- Fund raising activities organized by the organization.

CA **Section 1.2:** The Treasurer and the Financial Secretary shall be responsible for keeping of the organization's finances in properly kept records. Attributes of officers will be elaborated under Article 12 below.

Section 1.3: Members may contribute individual funds to provide *Lefoah* to members.

Section 1.4: The Financial Secretary shall openly read to the assembly a summary of income and expenditure during each meeting. The Treasurer shall ensure that he/she shows the president and the financial secretary, receipts of money given him/her for banking.

Section 1.5: The executive shall make a quarterly financial statement of the organization in April, July, October and the end of year report presented in February.

Section 1.6: The bank accounts of the organization shall have two signatories-(President and Treasurer), only the President and Treasurer can withdraw from the accounts, the financial secretary shall prepare all checks for signature by president and Treasurer.

Section 1.7: The general assembly shall appoint three persons to audit the books of the organization *in* January and present an audit report during the February meeting.

Section 1.8: The executive shall not use **ATM** cards to run the accounts of the organization. There shall be proof of all checks drawn on the accounts of the organization.

Section 1.9: All checks issued by LECUDO Washington Metro Area branch must be signed by the President and the Treasurer for any payment to be made by the bank.

Section 1.10: The Executive shall not at any time negotiate with any individuals or financial institutions for any funds or credit without the approval of the general assembly.

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Article Twelve: Officers and their Functions:

Section 1.1: President: The President shall serve as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of LECUDO-WDC Area branch.

S/he shall preside at all monthly meetings, executive meetings and at other occasions where the branch is organizing or/and participating in.

S/he shall enforce the By-laws and resolutions adopted by the General Assembly.

S/he shall oversee all the activities of all his executive

S/he shall guarantee transparent accountability of all branch revenue

S/he shall represent or delegate representation where the branch is invited

CA S/he shall perform all other duties customary to the office of president but submitting himself and his executive to the control of the decision of the General Assembly.

S/he shall be number one signatory to the branch accounts and shall authorize expenditure in conformity with the By-laws.

Section 1.2: Vice President:

The V.P shall perform the functions of the President in any of the following situations: absence, inability, refusal to act, resignation of the President or when the President is sanctioned or removed by a vote of no confidence of the General Assembly.

The V.P shall conduct attendances during all meetings including executive meetings.

The V.P shall perform such other duties as the President may delegate or the General Assembly may authorize.

Section 1.3: The Secretary General:

The Secretary General shall keep accurate records of all proceedings of monthly and executive meetings.

S/he shall give notice of meeting dates and venues through all possible means of communication.

S/he shall create a file within the organization's computer to save all written records.

S/he shall do all other duties as delegated by the President or the executive.

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Section 1.4: The Vice Secretary General:

The Vice Secretary shall act in the absence of the Secretary and do all other duties that may be assigned to him/her by the President.

S/he shall take down resolutions taken by the General Assembly which then become part of the by-laws of the organization making sure that the date, time and venue of the resolution (s) are well stated.

Section 1.5: The Treasurer:

The treasurer shall do the following:

Bank all branch revenue, issue receipts for all money received. Any other person who collects in his/her name shall do same.

Keep records of different headings of revenue in his/her custody

Be a signatory to the bank accounts

CA Prepare the balance sheet of the branch revenue (together with the financial secretary) to be tabled at the end of every meeting.

Section 1.6: The Financial Secretary:

S/he shall record and collect all revenues of the branch during monthly meetings, condolence fund, fund raising activities etc.

S/he shall make a summary of all income and expenditure of the branch revenue during monthly meetings and at different occasions wherein money will be paid.

S/he shall keep transparent recordings of all revenue, item by item and corresponding to members' names.

S/he shall pay back individual savings and interests.

S/he shall co-opt the treasurer when preparing the quarterly and the end of year's financial accounts.

S/he shall do all other duties customary to this office.

Section 1.7: Organizing Secretaries:

They shall be two in number.

They shall be in charge of organizing communication and publicity within the organization.

They shall organize and promote all socio-cultural manifestations like dance parties, receptions, meetings etc.

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Section 1.8: Protocol Officers:

They will be two in number

They shall ensure respect of sitting order in accordance with traditional requirements.

They shall make sure seats are well arranged in any occasion involving the organization.

They shall serve as traditional protocol officer for traditional leaders during any public event.

They shall do any other job as assigned by the President.

Article Thirteen: Advisers

The Executive shall appoint advisers when need be

They shall give advice on controversial issues.

CA They shall advise the executive and the General Assembly.

They shall perform any other duties as requested by the executive or the General Assembly.

Article Fourteen: Resignation of an Executive Member:

Any executive member who intends to resign, **must** give a one-month notice during a monthly meeting session, during this period s/he will be expected to be preparing all organization's documents and other belongings to hand over and as well as an audit be conducted if need be during the handing over meeting day.

Failure to hand over the organization's documents and/or belonging in his/her keeping may lead to disciplinary sanctions which may not exclude any legal action(s).

Article Fifteen: Project/Fundraising

Section:1.1 LECUDO-WDC shall work along with LECUDO-USA to define, select and execute projects based on the 501(c) 3 of the organization.

Section 1.2 LECUDO-WDC shall collect an annual development due from all members for LECUDO-USA at least One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) per member. Members shall have the entire year to pay without affecting their standing as to benefits but failure to pay will be considered a debt and will be required as any other debt before reactivation the following year.

Section: 1.3 Record of the money collected will be kept with LECUDO-WDC and LECUDO-USA but money will be sent into LECUDO-USA bank account annually.

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Section: 1:4 A member may feel free to make installment payments up to June of each year and to give more to have their name publish by LECUDO-USA on list of members who have paid prior to the convention.

Section: 1:5 LECUDO-WDC will not be accountable to any money paid directly to LECUDO-USA by any WDC member.

Section 2:1 Fundraising activities may include a gala night, games and cookouts, BBQ etc.

Section 2:2 Starting from January 2020, a onetime Hall Levey of Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) will be paid by each member. This money will not count towards the standing of the member during their first year but will become a debt the following year and thus required to be paid before reactivation.

Article Sixteen: Running Cost of the Meeting:

Section 1.1: An annual running cost of \$1000 shall be provided to the executive to carry on official duties smoothly including executive meetings.

Section 1:2: An annual stipend to be given to the executive as an appreciation for their duties shall be determined and given by the General Assembly each year.

Section 1:3: There will be an annual Family Day on the 3rd Saturday of August each year. The executive shall table a budget during the June meeting session for discussion, debate and adoption by the General Assembly. This budget will have to reflect the previous year's while taking into consideration the increase or decrease in membership.

Final Article: Amendment

These bylaws shall be amended if deemed necessary, in the presence of at least 50 registered members in attendance at the time of the vote during the December meeting on the point(s) which had been debated prior to the session. The amendment will take effect from January the following year.

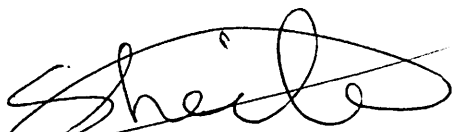
Goes into effect this 21st day of January, 2023

Sign:



President: Chrisantus Asong

Sign:



Vice President/Secretary General: By order: Sheila Atemnkeng