

ZAMBIA NATIONAL COUNCIL
FOR THE CATHOLIC LAITY

CONSTITUTION

Zambia National Council for the Catholic Laity
Laity Centre,
Plot No. 4645 Tito Rd, Rhodes Park
LUSAKA

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ADOPTED BY ZNCCL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

4TH JULY 1999

**WHOSE ARTICLE 8.0 CLAUSE 8.1 AND ARTICLE 9.0 CLAUSE 9.4 WERE
AMENDED BY ZNCCL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF AUGUST 2014
FROM TWO to THREE YEARS TERM OF OFFICE.**

PREAMBLE

The Catholic Church was founded to bring the Kingdom of Christ over all the earth for the glory of God the Father, to give all men and women a share in salvation and thus bring everything together in Christ. Every Christian is called to play a part in this mission.

Because of our common dignity derived from Baptism, we Lay Christians share responsibility for the Church's mission; to be a Christian also means to be an apostle (Laity n.2). As far as the laity is concerned, the place where God calls us to work is in the world around us, in our ordinary life situations and our relationships. Full of the Spirit, we bear witness to the Gospel and help all people to journey towards salvation.

The Gospel images of 'salt', 'light' and 'leaven' have special relevance for the lay faithful; these are images of deep involvement and full participation in the life of the world and the human community (C.L.n.15). As lay people we ought to take on ourselves as our distinctive task the renewal of the temporal order.

The African Synod of 1994 has highlighted that we are the Family of God. The Church-as Family is oriented towards the building of society, and the Synod insists that "task of the laity through Baptism and Confirmation is to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world especially in those places where only a lay person is able to render the Church present" (Message African Synod 57)

An effective proclamation of the Gospel can be fully carried out through the enlightened contribution of all believers. In his message to the Church in Africa the Holy Father asks that "the laity be trained so that they can fully exercise their role of inspiring the temporal order – political, cultural, economic and social – with Christian principles, which is the specific task of the laity's vocation in the world" (EA 75)

Article 1.0 NAME:

The organisation shall be called the Zambia National Council for the Catholic Laity, referred to hereafter as the ZNCCL.

Article 2.0 PURPOSE:

The role and purpose of the ZNCCL is to promote the effective participation of the laity in the life and mission of the Catholic Church in Zambia.

Article 3.0 OBJECTIVES:

- (i) To facilitate the development of a mature laity by offering training for our mission in the Church and in society,
- (ii) To facilitate the laity to understand and fulfil the evangelization mission that is ours by virtue of our baptism,
- (iii) To promote unity and dialogue among the laity and with other members of God's family in order to build up the Church as a family,
- (iv) To encourage the creation and growth of structures through which lay people can effectively participate in the life and mission of the Church,
- (v) To co –ordinate all apostolic lay movements and associations approved by ZCCB and affiliated to ZNCCL,
- (vi) To act as spokesperson for the laity,
- (vii) To be a forum for the exchange of information on matters affecting the laity at national, regional and international levels,

Article 4.0 MEMBERSHIP:

4.1 Dioceses: through Dioceses Laity Structures,

4.2 Apostolic Movements and Associations approved by the Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops,

4.3 Ex-officio members: the Episcopal Director of the Laity

The National Pastoral Co-ordinator

The National Organising Secretary

Honorary members as conferred by the Council

Article 5.0 APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP:

5.1 The applicants shall submit to the Executive their Constitution, the application form and admission fees. The Executive will inform the Annual General Meeting.

5.2 Membership Fees: All member bodies shall pay admission fee and annual subscription fee as determined by the Executive and ratified by the General Meeting.

Article 6.0 BRANCHES:

The ZNCCL may have as its branches the National Council of Catholic Women, the National Council of Catholic Men, the National Council of Catholic Youth to respond to their respective constituents. These Councils shall have their own Constitutions and shall be accountable to the Zambia National Council for the Catholic Laity.

Article 7.0 THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:

7.1 The General Meeting of the ZNCCL shall be held once a year

7.2 The General Meeting shall be attended by:

- (i) Four representatives from each Diocese including the Diocesan Pastoral Coordinator,
- (ii) Two representatives from each member Movement/Association including the appointed National Chaplain if there is one,
- (iii) Two representatives from each branch one of which is the serving member on the Executive Committee,
- (iv) The elected and co opted members of the Executive Committee,
- (v) The ex-officio members.

7.3 Any Catholic who has served the Laity well may be nominated by the Executive Committee for life honorary membership. The nomination shall be ratified by the Annual General Meeting.

7.4 Voting: all those entitled to be present at the Annual General Meeting according to Article 7.2 shall have the right to vote. Non-payment of annual subscription fees suspends the defaulting party from the right to vote.

7.5 Every member except ex-officio and honorary members shall have one vote. Voting shall be by secret ballot.

7.6 Every matter put to vote shall be decided by a simple majority except in case of Articles 8.3 and 16 of this Constitution. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson shall have a casting vote.

7.7 The Episcopal Director and the National Pastoral Co-ordinator shall advise the Annual General Meeting concerning resolutions and decisions in matters relating to doctrine or policies of national importance.

7.8 The quorum for a General Meeting shall be 50% of its member bodies including at least (5) Dioceses.

7.9 The Agenda of the Annual General Meeting shall be prepared and sent to all the participants at least three (3) months before the Annual General Meeting.

Article 8.0 ELECTIONS:

8.1 *Elections shall be held every three years.*

All members, except ex-officio and honorary, have the right to vote and to be voted for, on condition that their respective movements or associations have paid their yearly subscription fees.

8.2 All elections of office bearers shall be by secret vote.

8.3 The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall be elected by a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority, all other office bearers by a simple majority.

8.4 If in the first vote nobody received the required majority, second vote will be cast between the two candidates with the greatest number of votes.

8.5 An electoral commission will be set up comprising ex-officio and or other non eligible members other than those who have defaulted to introduce and conduct the elections in an atmosphere of prayer.

Article 9.0 THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

9.1 The Executive Committee shall be elected by the General Meeting of the ZNCCL, shall be composed of the following:

Chairperson

Vice Chairperson

Secretary

Vice Secretary

Treasurer

Vice Treasurer

Two elected members

9.2 The Executive Committee may co opt not more than two members to complement the elected Executive.

9.3 Each branch shall elect one representative to the Executive Committee who shall report regularly on the activities of the branch.

9.4 *The term of office of the Executive is three (3) years eligible for re-election but not more than twice in succession.*

9.5 Extended Executive meetings shall consist of the Executive Committee together with one representative of all the member bodies.

9.6 Sub Committees: The ZNCCL Executive shall constitute them as and when necessary. They are accountable to the Executive Committee; their mandate shall terminate with the term of office of the National Executive which appointed them. Each sub-committee shall have a member of the Executive Committee as an ex-officio member.

9.7 Termination of Service:

Any office bearer can be relieved of his/her duties by the Executive Committee subject to ratification by the Annual General Meeting in case of:

- (a) Ill health and incapacity,
- (b) Resignation,
- (c) Failure to attend three consecutive meetings without valid reasons,
- (d) Gross misconduct,
- (e) For serious reasons, submitted in writing, a vote of no confidence towards the Executive Committee can be passed by the Annual General Meeting by a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority.

9.8 Casual vacancies shall be filled by the Executive Committee subject to ratification by the Annual General Meeting.

Article 10.0 FUNCTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

- (i) To implement decisions taken by the ZNCCL General Meetings and to pursue the objectives of the Council between General meetings,
- (ii) To assist and mediate between the different member bodies,
- (iii) To prepare and attend Executive meetings once a quarter
- (iv) To call for Extended Executive meetings once a year or as need arises,
- (v) To call emergency meetings of the entire National Council when deemed necessary or on request of more than five member bodies.

Article 11.0 THE NATIONAL PASTORAL CO ORDINATOR:

The National Pastoral Co-ordinator shall;

- (i) Provide spiritual leadership to the Laity and foster their involvement in the life and mission of the Church.
- (ii) Advise the ZNCCL and the Episcopal Conference so that the lay activities are in accordance with the mind of the Church,

- (iii) Assist the ZNCCL implement decisions of the Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Article 12.0 THE NATIONAL ORGANISING SECRETARY:

There shall be a National Organising Secretary to the Council appointed by the Executive with the approval of the Episcopal Director.

12.1 The functions of National Organising Secretary shall be:

- (i) To ensure that decisions made by the Executive Committee relating to the effective organisation and formation of the laity in Zambia are implemented,
- (ii) To ensure that the recommendations of the Zambia National Council for the Catholic Laity are disseminated to relevant organisations and movements for the purpose of monitoring/follow up,
- (iii) To be the link between the ZNCCL Executive Committee and the member bodies, encouraging unity and co ordination through regular contacts,
- (iv) To ensure proper management and custody of all assets of the Zambia National Council for the Catholic Laity and its branches.

Article 13.0 FINANCES:

- (i) All funds of the ZNCCL shall be lodged on one or more banks in accounts entitled “The Zambia National Council for the Catholic Laity”.
- (ii) All cheques and withdrawal forms shall be signed by the Treasurer or Vice-Treasurer on Panel A and one of the following: the Chairperson, National Organising Secretary, or National Pastoral Coordinator on Panel B.
- (iii) The funds of the Council shall only be used to promote the objectives and policies of the ZNCCL.
- (iv) The Financial Year end shall be ~~30 June~~31 March
- (v) Audited accounts shall be made available and presented to the Annual General Meeting at the time of elections.
- (vi) The Zambia National Council for the Catholic Laity acting through the Executive Committee (the Trustees) may borrow and give security for such money as they may decide to be necessary for its purpose.
- (vii) No funds shall be solicited from funding agencies without the recommendation from the Executive Committee, and the approval of the Bishop Director.
- (viii) Any local fundraising done in the name of the ZNCCL must be approved by the Executive Committee.
- (ix) ZNCCL has the right to raise funds and receive donations.

Article 14.0 **BOARD OF TRUSTEES:**

The Executive Committee shall act as a Board of Trustees for the Laity. It shall be entitled to purchase, to acquire and dispose of assets and liabilities as deemed necessary.

Article 15.0 **OFFICIAL LANGUAGE:**

All constitutional matters shall be translated officially in the English language.

Article 16.0 **INTERPRETATION OF THE CONSTITUTION:**

In case need arises to interpret some parts of the constitution, this shall be done collectively by the Chairperson, the National Organising Secretary and the National Pastoral Coordinator, subject to approval of the Annual General Meeting

Article 17.0 **AMENDMENTS:**

This constitution may be amended by a two thirds majority of the voting members of the Council provided that one month's notice in writing of the proposed amendment is given to all members.

A majority of $\frac{2}{3}$ of those present at the meeting shall be required to pass such amendments, as well as the subsequent approval by the Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops (ZCCB).

Signed by:

CHAIPERSON

SECRETARY

NATIONAL PASTORAL COORDINATOR

~~1st. Revision~~ Revised: 2015

~~2nd. Revision~~ Updated: ——— 2018