

**THE  
CONSTITUTION,  
GHANA  
ASSOCIATION OF  
FRENCH TEACHERS  
(GAFT)**

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE GHANA ASSOCIATION OF FRENCH  
TEACHERS(G.A.F.T)

PREAMBLE

We, teachers of French in Ghana;

-having acknowledged our professional duty to teach French as a foreign language and having recognized the importance of unity in the fulfilment of this duty,

-taking cognizance of the geographical position of our country Ghana, being surrounded by French speaking countries to the east, west and north,

-imbued with the responsibility to promote and propagate the French language through teaching and any activity with the intended purpose,

-having joined the following organisations : "Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Français (F.I.P.F), the Association des Professeurs de Français de l'Afrique et de l'Océan Indien(A.P.F.A.O.I), the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie(O.I.F) in 2006 with its attendant associate membership status and the Réseau des Centres de Français Langue Etrangère d'Afrique(R.E.C.F.L.E.A)

-being aware of the role our country Ghana plays in the promotion of democracy and good governance with the enormous responsibility to international duty,

-knowing the importance of French in the development and promotion of political and economic integration in the West African sub region and beyond,  
- knowing the place of French in the global village,

adopt the present articles herein:

**ARTICLE 1: CREATION, IDENTITY, SECRETARIAT AND DURATION:**

**1. CREATION-IDENTITY**

a. That there shall be an association of **teachers of French** known as the Ghana Association of French Teachers (G.A.F.T) hereinafter referred to as the "Association".

b. The Association shall be affiliated to "Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Français (F.I.P.F)" and the "Association des Professeurs de Français d'Afrique et de l'Océan Indien (A.P.F.A.O.I)", Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie(O.I.F) and the Réseau des Centres de Français Langue Etrangère d'Afrique(R.E.C.F.L.E.A).

**2. DURATION:**

a. The lifespan of the Association is unlimited.

### 3. SECRETARIAT

a. The Permanent Secretariat of GAFT is established in Accra, Ghana. Furthermore, for better decentralization and effective implementation of the association's aims and objectives, each region shall have a Regional Office as and when the Association can provide funding for the establishment of the said regional office.

### ARTICLE 2: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

#### 1. AIMS

- a. The Association shall be a non-profit-making body without any political, tribal or religious learning or affiliation.
- b. The Association shall seek to promote the welfare of its members by enhancing their professional development.
- c. The Association shall also seek to promote multilingualism and its attendant advantages.
- d. The Association shall seek to promote the teaching and learning of French.
- e. The Association shall seek to put to use common resources, professional experiences and research for mutual enrichment.

#### 2. OBJECTIVES

The Association shall have the following objectives:

1. To facilitate teaching programs and training of trainers and teachers
2. To promote exchange programs for teachers, researchers and students
3. To formulate policies for teaching, learning and research and lobby for government and international partners' support
4. To facilitate trans-border cooperation in teaching French as a foreign language
5. To promote exchange of information and research findings among members.

### ARTICLE 3: MEMBERSHIP

1. The Association is open to all French teachers, groups or associations resident in Ghana who use French as a tool, a medium of communication or have passion for the language.

The Association shall have the following membership:

- Founding members
- Active members
- Associate members
- Honorary members
- Friends of G.A.F.T

#### 2. Founding Members:

These are all those who by one way or the other see the necessity of establishing a national body under which all those who teach French as a subject can identify

## ARTICLE 4: PRINCIPAL OFFICERS

1. The National Executive Council shall be made up of the following officers:

1 PRESIDENT  
1 VICE PRESIDENT,  
1 GENERAL SECRETARY,  
1 ASSISTANT SECRETARY,  
1 FINANCIAL SECRETARY,  
1 NATIONAL ORGANISER,  
1 EDITOR

and three (3) Ex-officio members to be appointed by the National Executive Council based on certain professional or technical competence they may possess.

## ARTICLE 5: ELECTIONS

### 1. ELECTIONS

- a. For effective organisation and consultation, only the President, the General Secretary and the Financial Secretary shall be elected at Congress.
- b. The President shall appoint the Vice President, the Assistant Secretary, the National Organiser and the Editor.
- c. An elected officer shall serve for a term of two years and shall be eligible for re-election to that same office for another term only.
- d. The ex-officio members shall be appointed by the National Executive Council, subject to ratification by the Central Committee.
- e. Elections shall be conducted by an Electoral Commission constituted by the Central Committee present at Congress.
- f. The Electoral Commission shall be composed of the ten (10) Regional Coordinators chaired by one member of the Advisory Council.
- g. Such a Commission shall be answerable to Congress and its functions shall cease upon the successful conduct and declaration of elections .
- h. The Chairman of the said Electoral Commission shall declare the results.
- i. The Electoral Commission shall act on all petitions/grievances brought to it immediately.

### 2. ELIGIBILITY

- a. Members vying for or appointed to the following positions: President, Vice President, General Secretary and Financial Secretary must be Ghanaians and professional French teachers.

themselves as such.

### 3. Active Members:

- a- Shall be a French teacher
- b -Shall abide by the present articles
- c- Shall regularly pay their dues
- d- Shall be engaged effectively in the activities of the Association and in the promotion and defence of the interests of the Association.

### 4. Associate Members:

- a. Shall be an associate member any individual, group or association who does not fulfil conditions stated in **Article 3.3a** ( must be a French teacher) but may or may not fulfil any other clauses of the said article.
- b. Associate membership may also be conferred on those who use the French language as a means of communication or who, by their actions, are seen to be promoting the activities of the association.

### 5. Honorary Members:

Honorary membership may be conferred on persons or groups who, the association considers by their contributions, enhance its broad objectives

### 6. Friends of G.A.F.T

- a. The honorary title of "Friends of G.A.F.T" may be conferred on some of the staff of organizations that may help the Association in any year under review.

### 7. Admission

- a. Membership is subject to application and payment of the prescribed fees.
- b. The application shall be subject to regional recommendation and national approval.
- c. Where an application is turned down, valid reasons must be given for the rejection of the applicant's request.
- d. Members of the Association who are temporarily sojourning outside the country must discharge their financial obligations.
- e. All members of the Association in good standing at the time of promulgation of this constitution automatically remain members and need not re-apply for membership as stipulated in **Article 3.7a**(Membership is subject to application and payment of the prescribed fees).

b. All members of the Association who have fulfilled their financial obligations towards the Association and have been in the Association for not less than 3 years are eligible to contest for the said positions.

#### **ARTICLE 6: CENTRAL COMMITTEE, ADVISORY COUNCIL AND OTHER ORGANS**

1. There shall be a Central Committee comprising the National Executive Council, the Regional Coordinators, the Editor and the 3 Ex-officio members.
2. There shall be an Advisory Council of five (5) distinguished persons who have once been associated with the Association and who show interest in its welfare and shall include at least a Past President. Members of the Advisory Council shall be nominated by the National Executive Council and approved by the Central Committee. The members of the Advisory Council shall in turn elect one of them as their Chairman. A member of the Advisory Council shall serve a renewable term of four (4) years.
3. There shall be a Financial Committee of two (2) members appointed by the National Executive Council to assist the Financial Secretary to raise funds for the association.

#### **ARTICLE 7: AUTHORITY AND MANAGEMENT**

1. The President shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the association. He /she shall serve as the liaison officer between the Association and all its external partners. He/she may appoint another member to perform such duty on his/her behalf. He /she is the convener of all meetings, executive or general, over which he/she shall preside, and casts a deciding vote whenever there is a deadlock. He/she sees to the execution of all decisions of the Association and is ultimately answerable to Congress. When in doubt about an issue, he/she may consult the Advisory Council, the National Executive Council or Congress. He/she shall be a signatory to the Association's accounts and shall approve the day-to-day financial expenditure. He /she shall prepare an annual programme of activities in consultation with the National Executive Council. The President shall present an annual report and budget to Congress.
2. The Vice President shall be responsible for the coordination of all activities at the regional level. He/she shall also be in charge of membership cards. He /she shall discharge any other duties assigned by the President and take over the duties of the latter in his / her absence.
3. The General Secretary shall be the official mouthpiece of the Association. He/she shall play the role of a Public Relations Officer (P.R.O). He /She is also responsible for all official correspondence and the running of the Association's secretariat. He/she shall convene meetings at the instance of the President. In consultation with the convener, the General Secretary shall draw up an agenda which shall be circulated among members well ahead of the meeting. He/she is a signatory to the Association's accounts.
4. The Assistant Secretary shall work hand -in -hand with the General Secretary and act in the absence of the latter. He/she shall take minutes of all meetings of the Association and read same at subsequent meetings. He/she shall discharge other secretarial duties as may be assigned him or her by the General Secretary.
5. The Financial Secretary shall handle all financial issues of the Association and therefore shall

propose the annual budget and all other incidental financial expenditure to the National Executive Council. He/she shall explore avenues to generate funds for the Association. He/she shall be the head of the Financial Committee which will assist him/her in the discharge of his/her duties. He/she shall be a signatory to the Association's accounts.

6. The National Organiser shall propose and organize training programs with the approval of the National Executive Council. He /she shall mobilize members for the Association's programs and activities. He/she shall also assist the Vice President in the coordination of regional activities.

7. The Editor shall be responsible for the Association's publications such as newsletters, magazines and newspapers. He/she shall collect and collate articles and write-ups that promote the Association's image as well as the teaching and learning of French in the Ghana. He/she shall be assisted by an Editorial Board duly appointed by the National Executive Council. He/she shall have no voting rights at the National Executive Council and Central Committee meetings.

8. The Ex-officio members shall facilitate the conduct of the Association's business and general organisation by bringing into play their particular expertise and contacts. They shall have no voting rights at National Executive Council and Central Committee meetings.

9. For effective organisation, there shall be district/sub-metro and regional (executive) groupings of the Association.

10. At the regional level, there shall be a Coordinator, a Secretary, a Financial Secretary, an Organiser and an Assistant Organiser. The Coordinator, the Secretary, the Financial Secretary and the Organiser, shall constitute the Regional Executive Committee.

11. At the regional level, only the Coordinator and the Financial Secretary shall be elected under Article 5.2 ( must be Ghanaians and professional French teacher).

12. Only the Regional Coordinator will be a member of the Central Committee.

13. Organisation at the district/sub-metro level will be left to the discretion of the Regional Executive Committee, that shall take due cognisance of their peculiar situation.

14. At the district/sub-metro level, there shall be a district/sub-metro Coordinator, a Secretary and an Organiser that shall be elected. He /She shall be answerable to the Regional Coordinator and ultimately to the Regional Executive Council.

15. Only the district/sub-metro Coordinator shall be elected as stipulated under Article 5.2a (...must be a Ghanaian and professional French teacher).

16. These sub-groupings may enact bye-laws to guide their peculiar situations but these bye-laws shall not deviate in letter and spirit from the national Constitution.

## **ARTICLE 8: PARTNERS**

### **1. STATUTORY PARTNERS**

The following shall be the statutory partners of the Association:

- Government of Ghana
- Governments of France, Canada, Belgium and francophone countries in Africa.
- F.I.P.F
- A.P.F.A.O.I
- O.I.F
- A.U.F
- R.E.C.F.L.E.A

## 2. OTHER PARTNERS

Any other institution that shares the aims and objectives of the Association and wishes to support the association financially or materially shall be considered as such.

## ARTICLE 9: CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

1. The medium of communication at all meetings shall be French and English. Members of the Association should ensure the use of decent language at all meetings (debates, exchanges and communications). General meeting standing orders and procedure should be strictly adhered to.
2. Congress, made up of members of the Association in good standing, shall be the highest decision making body. Congressional meetings shall be held annually.
3. National Executive meetings shall be held quarterly (once every three (3) months). Such meetings shall be used to formulate policies that will promote the attainment of the Association's objectives, to plan future programs and evaluate past activities. The Central Committee shall meet, at least, once a year. All other organs shall meet once a term and report of their activities and the minutes sent through the Regional Coordinator to the National President.
4. The National Executive Council shall encourage and support the regional bureau to organise activities aimed at promoting the teaching and learning of French and enhancing members' professional development.
5. The activities of the Association shall be the following:
  - annual national congress
  - workshops, seminars and in-service training for teachers
  - forums
  - colloquia
  - symposia

## ARTICLE 10: QUORUM

A third of paid-up members present at a general meeting shall validate the commencement of business. A simple majority shall validate any decision except in the case of amendments and impeachment.

National Executive Council meetings shall be held in the presence of the President or the Vice President as well as four (4) other executive members.

Central Committee meetings shall be held in the presence of the National Executive Council and representatives of the six (6) regions.



## **ARTICLE 11: FEES/DUES**

1. All members of the Association shall fulfil their financial obligations to the Association. Fees and any other special levies to be paid will be proposed by the Financial Committee and decided upon either at a Central Committee meeting or National Executive Council meeting depending on the urgency of the situation. No member in arrears shall be in good standing with the Association. Any member in such situation risks the loss of privileges.
2. All Regional Branches shall, after collection of dues from members, send one third (1/3) of the said amount collected to the National Secretariat.
3. Any Regional GAFT branch who fails to mobilize, collect and send its part to the National Secretariat shall be called before the Financial Committee for explanation.
4. Contributions of one third (1/3) to the National Secretariat from the regions shall be obligatory and any regional branch of the said Association who fails to honour its part shall face disciplinary sanctions unless stated otherwise.

## **ARTICLE 12: SOURCES OF FUNDINGS**

1. Resources of the Association shall come from the following partners and any other sources:
  - Contributions from members
  - income from organized activities
  - donations/legacy
  - grants from states/ governments/financial partners/philanthropic organizations

## **ARTICLE 13: FINANCE**

1. The Financial Secretary shall keep the accounts of the Association's financial transactions and shall within three (3) days, deposit all monies in the appropriate accounts with the banks decided upon by the Association. He /she shall, however, keep an accountable imprest not exceeding two hundred Ghana cedis (GH¢200.00) (to be revised to reflect current financial trends). He /she shall present the Association's book for any audit checks after reminder.
2. The Regional Financial Secretary shall keep an imprest not exceeding one hundred Ghana cedis (GH¢100.00)
3. The President, General Secretary and Financial Secretary shall be signatories to the Association's accounts with two (2) signatories validating a cheque.
4. The Financial Secretary shall keep up-to-date records of gifts, grants and any other monies the Association donates or receives.
5. The Association's accounts shall be subject to annual internal audits and an external audit after the President's end of term in office.

## **ARTICLE 14: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Members shall benefit from pedagogical assistance as may be provided by the Association or its allies as per **Article 2.1**: clauses b, c, d and e as follows respectively:

- b. The Association shall seek to promote the welfare of its members by enhancing their professional development.
- c. It shall also seek to promote multilingualism and its attendant advantages.
- d. The Association shall seek to promote the teaching and learning of French.
- e. The Association shall seek to put to use common resources, professional experiences and research for a mutual enrichment.

To this end, the Association shall encourage its members to participate in activities organised at regional and district/sub-metro levels by institutions committed to improving the teaching and learning of French.

2. As far as possible, members shall enjoy any fringe benefits that shall be due them as a result of their membership. The National Executive Council shall work closely with partners to secure scholarships and awards to members. The National Executive Council shall ensure an equitable distribution of these scholarships and awards.
3. The Association shall intervene on behalf of members whenever there is an impasse due to misunderstandings with officers of allied organisations or due to problems relating to the implementation of official directives.
4. Whenever there is an internal conflict/dispute and where regional and national executive councils have failed to settle the case; the Advisory Council shall be the final arbiter.
5. Members shall be eligible for nomination as delegates to and/or officers of affiliated bodies as stated in **Article 1.1b** (Is affiliated to the "Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Français (F.I.P.F)" and the "Association des Professeurs de Français d'Afrique et de l'Océan Indien (A.P.F.A.O.I)

#### **ARTICLE 15: LOSS OF MEMBERSHIP**

1. Any member of the Association in arrears of dues more than two (2) years shall be deemed to have relinquished their membership with all privileges thereto attached.
2. Any member, who takes legal action against the Association without first exhausting available internal channels or redress, shall upon the resolution of the suit, lose their membership.
3. Any member who, by his/her conduct, is seen to be consistently causing the Association unnecessary embarrassment and who persists, in spite of caution, may be expelled by a two-thirds (2/3) majority at Congress.
4. Any member in good standing may, if they so wish, withdraw their membership but shall forfeit any financial benefits from the Association.
5. Any person who loses membership can re-apply for reinstatement if they can show a sincere change of attitude. Such reinstatement shall be subject to a six (6) month probation during which time the member shall be under observation.

## ARTICLE 16: SANCTIONS

1. Any member, who commits a misdemeanour not meriting outright expulsion, may be sanctioned in a less severe form by the National Executive Council, acting on the advice of the Advisory council. All such sanctions applied shall be reported to the Central Committee and Congress.

2. Any officer who uses his/her position to exploit the Association or acts in a manner that is detrimental to the Association or a section of the membership, shall lose his/her position and shall be barred from holding any office for a period of time to be determined by Congress. Such an impeachment must be approached by two-thirds (2/3) of members present at Congress and voting. This is without prejudice to any legal action that may be necessary to reclaim any Association's property that may be in his/her possession.

3. The following shall be the sanctions:

- Call to order
- Warning
- Sanction
- Expulsion

The standing orders will indicate the nature of the offence/misconduct that attracts the said sanctions.

## ARTICLE 17: INTERPRETATION

Whenever there are any doubts as to the import of any section of this Constitution, the Advisory Council shall be the final arbiter.

## ARTICLE 18: AUTHORITY AND AMENDMENT OF THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION

1. This document is binding on all members of the Association. Any regional or district/sub-metro or other sub-groupings bye-laws are subject to the national Constitution.

2. Any amendments or insertions can be made as and when deemed necessary by member(s) of the Association after due notice to the membership through the National Executive Council. Such amendments shall be carried by two-thirds (2/3) of members present and voting at Congress.

## ARTICLE 19: AMENDMENTS

1. Any proposed amendment to this Constitution shall be submitted in writing to the President.
2. Any proposed amendment shall be debated and voted on at a meeting of the Committee.
3. The Constitution shall be duly amended upon two thirds majority of votes of members present at a meeting of the Committee.

## ARTICLE 20: COMMENCEMENT

This constitution shall come into force on the ...*2nd*... day of *September* 2011