

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE NSO' FAMILY UNION (NFU) EUROPE

Preamble

We, sons and daughters of Nso' Bui Division, in Europe, Desirous:

- To bind ourselves together and thereby to foster a spirit of oneness and of solidarity;
- To work relentlessly for our common interests by tackling our common problems together;
- To create fruitful, sustainable and harmonious relationships with other people living in Europe, irrespective of their country of origin, race, sex, political orientation, ideology or religion,

Resolve to form an apolitical and non-profit making organization, the Constitution of which shall be as follows.

CHAPTER I NAME, AIMS, LANGUAGES AND OBJECTIVES

Article 1 The name and languages

a) The Organization shall be known as NSO FAMILY UNION-EUROPE, abbreviated as NFU-Europe. The traditional name of NFU-Europe shall be "Nso'kuiyi" (translated as Nso' is growing which is more of a declaration) which symbolizes and promotes the traditions and ethnic origins of the peoples of NSO, Bui Division in the Northwest Region of Cameroon, West Africa. NFU-Europe is organized exclusively for charitable, socio-Cultural, educational and development purposes.

b) The official languages are Lamnso, English and French.

Article 2 Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of the Union shall be as follows:

- i) To bring together all Nso Associations (Local Chapters) in Europe under its Umbrella
- ii) Each European Country will register only one Nso Association (Local Chapter) into the NFU-Europe.
- iii) Due to the vast geographical nature of a given country, Nso sons and daughters can form regional groupings for the sake of convenience, but must come under one unified Local Chapter which will be a NFU-Europe registered member.
- iii) In European Countries where there are no established Nso Associations (Local Chapters), Nso Sons and Daughters in such countries will be encouraged to register with the nearest Nso Association (Local Chapter) to their country of residence.
- iv) In an event where there is no Nso Association (Local Chapter) nearby these Nso Sons or Daughters can register directly with the NFU Secretariat as NFU members.

2. To develop and build sustainable alliances with all the Nso organisations and people in Europe through conventions; thereby creating opportunities through educational and consultative approaches towards the success and growth of the Nso' people.

3. To create, develop and sustain an economic forum and databank through which ideas and talents would be mobilised and transformed into economic projects of our general concern, both in Europe and in Nso'.

4. To improve and promote the socio-cultural well-being of the Nso'

People in order for them to grow in awareness and love for their common roots.

Article 3 Legal personality

The Union shall, in pursuance of its aims and objectives, have capacity to seek legal advice, go to arbitration, initiate legal proceedings and defend legal actions brought against it as circumstances may require. No dispute between members of the Union on Union matters or between a member or members of Local Chapters shall be taken to arbitration, or to a court of law or to any other authority or institution without the National Executive having first had the opportunity of considering and resolving it.

Article 4 Moto

The motto of NFU-Europe shall be: *“Wir tom wir e wir tom wir”* translated as *“Let us support each other”*

CHAPTER II MEMBERSHIP

Article 5 Membership criteria

- ii) Membership into the NFU-Europe shall be reserved only to Nso Associations (Local Chapters) in all the European countries and otherwise as stated in Article 1 sub (iv)
- ii) A Nso Son or daughter from a European country with a Local Chapter cannot become an individual member of the NFU-Europe.

iii) NFU-Europe will encourage members to register with their local chapters except as otherwise provided.

iv) However, the provision in sub (iii) above can be reviewed by the Executive Committee in very critical circumstances strictly on a case by case basis.

2. Those that by domicile, consanguinity and/or have genuine concern for Nso' shall be considered possible members through honorary membership.

3. Such honorary membership can only be validated through the respective local chapters of NFU-Europe.

Article 6 Voluntary nature of membership

Membership in the organization is voluntary. All members including Executive Officers shall not be compensated for donations or service to the organization. When on official mission out of their station, their transport fares and Lodging may be reimbursed. The General Assembly will have to lay down the conditions for this to be applied.

Article 7 Membership categories

The categories of membership of the Union (through local chapters) shall be as follows: (Active and Honorary members).

a) Active members shall comprise all members who regularly take part in Union activities and whose financial obligations to the organisation are up to date as stated in Article IV sub iv below.

b) Honorary members (non- Nso members): membership shall be open exclusively upon invitation by an active member and seconded for consideration by the NFU-Europe Executive, to persons that supports the mission and objectives of NFU-Europe and patronizes the projects of the organization. Honorary members do not have voting rights.

Article 8 Dues

- i) NFU-Europe participation fee shall be levied to all Nso sons and daughters from every local chapter attending a convention.
- ii) This participation fee is modifiable depending on the inflation level at anytime.
- iii) The NFU-Europe participation fee is 50€ (Fifty Euros)
- iv) The NFU-Europe participation fee will include a member's NFU annual registration fee, annual dues and convention all-in dues.
- v) This fee shall be collected by every NFU-Europe local chapter prior to a convention and must be handed to the NFU-Europe Treasurer or Financial secretary on or before the 30th of June of each year. If a member does not cancel his or her participation before the 15th of July; then there will be no refund. Local chapters shall determine when to send funds to NFU-Europe.
- vi) However those who fall within article II sub section 1 paragraph (iv) can pay their participation fee directly to the NFU-Europe Treasury or on arrival in the convention venue.
- vii) NFU-Europe Friends or Local chapter Friends attending the convention shall pay an amount to be determined by the organising committee of each convention.
- viii) Participation fee for teenagers will henceforth be levied following an agreed age breakdown.

ix) Kids from 15 years and above will pay 50% of convention fee.

CHAPTER III ORGANS OF THE UNION

Article 9 Organs

The following shall be the organs of the Union

- A. General Assembly (GA) – composed of all local chapters with the registered members of NFU – Europe:
- B. Advisory Council – composed of leaders of various NFU- Europe registered local chapters
- C. Executive – composed of the President, Vice president, Secretary and vice Secretary General, Financial and vice Financial Secretaries, Treasurer, Public Relations Officer and other Executive members deemed necessary by the GA
- D. Local Chapters
- E. Traditional Title Holders (Lavntir)

Article 10 Composition of the General Assembly

The General Assembly shall comprise of all members of the Union. Subject to the provisions of the constitution, it shall be the supreme authority in all matters concerning the Union. It shall meet in one or other of the following session: Extra-Ordinary General meeting, or Annual Convention.

i) The General Assembly (GA) shall be strictly composed of all NSO Associations (Local Chapters) formally registered with NFU and all individual NFU-Europe members as stated in Article 1 sub (iv) above.

ii) The Advisory Council shall be composed of Leaders of all NSO Associations (Local Chapters) in Europe. An individual from a country without a local Chapter can be co-opted to the ADCOM if need be.

iii) The Local Chapter is the main base of the NFU-Europe structure in the system of administration and must be protected by the NFU-Europe executive committee and GA.

Article 11 Role of the General Assembly

The General Assembly shall hold a Convention annually in accordance with the following procedure:

- a. The annual Convention shall take place, preferably the Second weekend of August of each year.
- b. It shall elect the Executive Board of the Union and consider annual reports from out-going Officers of the Union as stipulated in the Constitution.
- c. Under the Chairmanship of the NFU-Europe President, the NFU-Europe Convention Committee shall be responsible for planning and running of the convention.
- d. Each chapter shall host the Convention. The order of hosting as chosen by the General Assembly meeting is as follows:
Belgium 2011, Germany-(Stuttgart) 2012, The UK 2013, Germany (Frankfurt) 2014, Switzerland (Zurich) 2015, and tentatively Scandinavia 2016, Holland 2017, and Italy 2018
- e. The General Assembly may decide to attribute the hosting of the convention to an alternate location should there be a finding that a selected host country local chapter or association is unable or unwilling to organize attributed convention slots
- f. The Executive in collaboration with the Convention Committee and the Host Chapter shall be responsible for the Convention.

NFU-Europe shall fund the Convention.

Article 12 Proportion for distributing Convention proceeds

Distribution of proceeds from Annual Fund raising/Convention activities

- a. NFU-Europe shall be entitled to **70%** and the hosting chapter of the Convention shall be entitled to 30% of the profit of the Convention after all expenses have been deducted.
 - i) Profits includes Gala gate takings
 - ii) Profit from sale of drinks (including hot drinks)
- b. Donations raised during fund raising activities at the Convention for projects shall not be included in the calculations of profit from the Convention.
- c. The Convention Committee shall convene on the morning of the Sunday of the Convention to go over cost analysis.
- d. NFU-Europe shall publish an interim financial report **not later than 30 days** after each convention. A complete financial report shall be done 60 days after.

Article 13 Advisory Council

Advisory Council - composed of heads (leaders) of various committees shall be nominated by the General Assembly at the Convention. Each Chapter shall propose a member to the General Assembly for nomination to the Council. The Council will then elect their chairperson and secretary.

a) Council Role: The *Advisory Council* shall be responsible for the overall policy and direction of the Union, and shall delegate

responsibilities of day-to-day operations to the *Executive*.

b) Vacancies: If the office of any Adviser becomes vacant by reason of death, resignation, disqualification, removal or other cause, a majority of the Advisers remaining in office, shall select a successor for the unexpired term or until the next annual meeting. At the next annual meeting, a formal nomination to fill the vacancy shall take place. The same holds for the executive.

c) Participation in Meetings by Telephone Conference: Members of the Council, executive, or of any committee thereof, may participate in a meeting of such council, executive or committee by means of conference telephone or similar communications equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other, and such participation shall constitute presence in person at such a meeting.

d) Powers: The Advisory Council may, except as otherwise required by law, exercise all such powers and do all such acts and things as may be exercised or done by the Union, including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the unqualified power to adopt from time to time regulations consistent with this constitution, for the management of the Union's affairs and to further the purposes of the Union as set forth in its Certificate of Incorporation.

e) Compensation of Advisors: Advisors shall not receive any compensation for their services as Advisors, including, without limitation, their services as members of committees. Advisors may, however, be reimbursed by the Union for their reasonable expenses

incurred in the performance of their duties as such Advisors.

f) Guidelines: The Advisory Council in collaboration with the Executive may draft guidelines to govern the day to day functions of the Union.

Article 14

Executive Committee

The Executive will represent the Union and run the day to day functions of the Union. Executive shall submit its plan of action and budget to the Advisory Council for approval.

a. Composition: The Executive of the Union shall consist of the following officers:

- A President
- A Vice-President
- A Secretary General
- A vice Secretary General
- A Treasurer
- A Financial Secretary
- An Organizing/Public Relation Officer,

b. President

- The President shall be the executive head of the Union and shall be responsible to the Union for the due and proper execution of its business and coordination of its activities.
- The President shall preside at all meetings of the Union, unless otherwise provided under this Constitution, and shall sign all the minutes thereof after normal adoption.
- He/she shall sign all important resolutions, declarations and statements made by the Union at its General or Executive meeting, (other than correspondence and dispatches in the normal course of business) which

represent the Union's opinion or policy on any major issue affecting the interest of the Union, or of Nso' or the Union's relations with any other Union, association or similar bodies, before such documents are issued out of the Secretariat.

- He/she shall have a casting vote at all meetings of the Union at which he presides. He/she shall deliver at the Annual Convention or Extraordinary General meeting an Annual Presidential address.

The president shall be a signatory to the NFU-Europe account.

c. Vice President

- The Vice President shall, in the absence of the President, execute all duties and assume all responsibilities falling within the purview of the President's authority.
- He/she shall perform all such functions as the President may from time to time delegate to him/her.
- The Executive Vice President shall be a signatory to the Europe-NFU account.

d. Secretary General

- The Secretary General shall be responsible for the management and running of the Union's Secretariat.
- He/she shall, in consultation with the President, arrange, convene and see to the proper running of all meetings of the Executive and the General Assembly.
- He/she shall take and keep minutes of all meetings which he/she convenes.
- The Secretary General shall sign all correspondences, papers and documents emanating from the

Secretariat and shall with the President, sign such papers, documents, and statements as are referred.

- He/she shall keep a proper and up-to-date Register of members of the Union and shall submit to the Annual General Meeting or Convention an Annual report on activities of the Union.

e. Treasurer

- The Treasurer shall have custody of the funds of the Union and those of the Union's Financial Institutions.
- He/she shall maintain the financial transaction records of the Union.
- He/she shall receive and disburse the Union's funds subject to due authorization by the President, the Financial Secretary or whoever may be authorised to do so by the GA.
- He/she shall observe all financial rules, regulations, and/or policies as shall be directed and/or stipulated by the committee and/ or the President, consistent with the provisions of this Constitution.
- The Treasurer shall be a signatory to the NFU account.

f. Financial Secretary

- The Financial Secretary shall enforce the financial policies, rules and regulations, as shall from time to time be adopted by the National Executive. He/she shall enforce and implement audit recommendations.
- He/she shall publish the annual financial Report of the Union at the Convention.
- He/she shall comply with European/State laws and regulations.

- The Financial Secretary shall be a signatory to the NFU-Europe account.

g. Organizing Secretary/Public Relations

- The Organizing Secretary shall be the official link between the Union and the outside world.
- He/she shall prepare materials of the Union’s events, ceremonies, etc.
- He/she shall facilitate social exchanges, contacts, and interactions within the Union membership as well as with outside persons or Unions.
- He/she shall be responsible for information, publication and publicity for the Union.
- He/she shall chair the Convention Committee and shall, in collaboration with the President and the host chapter, be responsible for the planning and execution of the annual Convention.

k. Removal

Any Executive of the Union may be removed at any time, with or without cause, by a majority vote of the General Assembly.

**Article 15
Standing committees**

There shall be five Standing Committees as follows:

- Culture
- Education
- Health
- National Convention Committee
- Technology Committee

(a) Culture Committee

- The Culture Committee shall be chaired by the Coordinator for Culture and shall ensure that membership is comprised of volunteers as well as representatives from each local chapter.
- It shall be the duty of this committee to plan and organize cultural exhibitions that are educational and that promote the Union’s values at home and abroad.
- The plan of action shall be made available to the membership, Executive and the public.
- It shall include an itemized budget subject to the approval of the Executive. This committee shall also be responsible for the execution of the approved projects or initiatives.

Tasks of the coordinator of the Culture committee:

- The Coordinator for Culture shall be responsible for formulating, presenting and executing all approved culture-related projects and activities.
- He/she shall report directly to the President and, in consultation with the President, ensure that NFU-Europe meets its objectives toward fulfilling its socio-cultural mission through various culture-related programs and activities of the Union.
- He/she shall chair the Culture Committee.
- He/she shall submit, at a minimum, an annual budget and two status reports within a NFU-Europe calendar year to the Executive and the Annual General Meeting or Convention.

(b) Education Committee

- The Education Committee shall be chaired by the Coordinator for Education and shall ensure that members comprise of volunteers as well as representatives from each local chapter.
- This committee shall be responsible for assessing and prioritizing the educational needs of children in Nso' and in Europe as well as developing a plan of action that addresses those in need.
- The plan of action shall be made available to the membership, Executive and the public.
- It shall include an itemized budget subject to the approval of the Executive. This committee shall also be responsible for the execution of the approved projects or initiatives.

Tasks of the coordinator of the education committee:

- The Coordinator for Education shall be responsible for formulating, presenting and executing all approved education-related projects and activities.
- He/she shall report directly to the President and, in consultation with the President, ensure that NFU-Europe meets its objectives toward fulfilling its education mission through various education-related programs and activities of the Union.
- He/she shall chair the Education Committee.
- He/she shall submit, at a minimum, an annual budget and two status reports within a NFU-Europe calendar year to the Executive and the Annual

General Meeting or Convention.

(c) Health Committee

- The Health Committee shall be chaired by the Coordinator for health and shall ensure that members comprise of volunteers as well as representatives from each local chapter.
- This committee shall be responsible for assessing, and prioritizing health projects and initiatives that address the health needs of the population in Nso' and Europe.
- The committee shall develop a plan of action, which shall be made available to the membership, Executive and the public.
- It shall include an itemized budget subject to the approval of the Executive. This committee shall also be responsible for the execution of the approved projects or initiatives.

Tasks of Health committee coordinator:

- The Coordinator for Health shall be responsible for formulating, presenting and executing all approved health-related projects and activities.
- He/she shall report directly to the President and, in consultation with the President, ensure that NFU Europe meets its objectives toward fulfilling its health mission through various health-related programs and activities of the Union.
- He/she shall chair the Health Committee.
- He/she shall submit, at a minimum, an annual budget and two status reports within a NFU-Europe calendar year to the Executive and the Annual

General Meeting or Convention.

(d) National Convention Committee (CC)

- The Convention Committee shall be chaired by the Organizing Secretary and shall ensure that members comprise of volunteers as well as representatives from each local chapter.
- This committee shall be responsible for the planning and execution of the annual Convention.
- It shall present an itemized budget subject to the approval of the Executive. The Convention committee should present their program for approval by NFU Exco.

(e) The Technology Committee

- The Technology Committee shall be chaired by the webmaster of the NFU-Europe website and shall ensure that information about the organization is published promptly on its site.
- This committee will be responsible for maintaining, improving and updating the organization's website and its technology needs.

**Article 16
Ad hoc committees**

AD HOC Committees may be formed by the President or Advisory Council as needed to fulfil the mission of the organization. The Executive may create other committees from time to time as deemed necessary to carry on the work of the Association. Some of the ad hoc committees that could be created are:

a. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee shall be composed of the Treasurer, the Financial Secretary and four members appointed by the Executive after each annual convention. The committee shall elect a Chairperson. It shall be the duty of this committee to prepare a budget for the fiscal year beginning the first day of September and submit it to the Executive.

The Finance Committee shall be responsible for developing and reviewing fiscal procedures and fundraising plans. The Executive must approve the budget and all expenditures must be within the budget. The financial records of the Union are public information and shall be made available to the membership, and the public. The finance committee may from time to time submit supplements to the budget for the current fiscal year.

b. Auditing Committee

The Auditing Committee shall comprise of three members promptly appointed by the Executive after each annual convention. The committee shall elect a Chairperson. The audit committee shall audit the Financial Secretary's accounts at the middle and close of the fiscal year and make the report available to the Executive, membership and the public.

c. Finance and Fundraising Committee

This committee shall be composed of four members promptly appointed by the Executive after the annual convention. The committee shall elect a Chairperson. It shall be the duty of this committee to develop modalities for raising funds for the Union. This committee shall work

with the Executive to ensure that fund raising activities are carried out.

d. Constitution Committee

This committee shall be composed of five members appointed by the Advisory Council to receive, study, and report to the General Assembly with suitable recommendations or complaints regarding the -laws and all matters within the union.

e. Elections Committee

This committee shall be composed of five members and shall be appointed by the Advisory Council in an election year to conduct the elections of the officers of the Union as provided under these laws. The committee shall ensure the smooth transfer of authority and Union property from outgoing executive members to succeeding executive members.

The Elections Committee shall issue one authenticated direct secret ballot paper per voter, per office during the elections.

Article 17 Local Chapters

Local Chapters shall be the basic organizational unit of the Union at the local level.

a. Local Chapters shall be made up of branches in the various countries or Regions of Europe.

b. A local chapter need not have distinct Constitutions or By-laws. It must abide by the constitution of NFU-Europe. However, if it is to have separate and distinct laws, its provisions must be compatible with those of the NFU - Europe laws with its aims and objectives consistent with that of the Union.

c. A group of Nso' elements residing in a country or region, (where a

recognised Nso' group does not exist) and wishes to become an affiliate of the Union, shall indicate such intentions in writing to the Executive Board.

d. The Executive Board shall upon receipt of such intent, inform the said group of the fact of its registration as NFU local Chapter, according to the provisions of the laws.

Article 18 Title holders (Lavntir)

The Traditional Title Holders (Lavntir) shall be made up of all those who hold traditional titles in Nso' Bui Division. The role of the Traditional Title Holders (Lavntir) shall be a consultative body for the Union. The Advisory Council and Executive may call on them for advice on matters relating to culture and tradition.

CHAPTER IV MEETINGS, STANDING ORDERS AND QUORUMS

Article 19 Meetings

a. Unless otherwise provided for under the NFU-laws, or where particular circumstances demand, meetings of the General Assembly and of the Executive Board shall be convened by the Secretary-General in consultation with the President, and shall be presided over by the President.

b. Their respective Secretaries in consultation with their respective Chairpersons shall convene Meetings of Standing or Ad hoc committees, and their respective Chairpersons shall preside. The *Ad Hoc* or Standing committees shall establish their own Standing orders and rules as to quorum, subject to amendment or

nullification by the General Assembly.

c. A quorum at a General Assembly meeting shall consist of representatives from 75% of the registered chapters in the Union.

CHAPTER V FINANCE

Article 20 Finances

The Union may derive its income from any of the following sources:

- a. Membership Registration and Dues payable annually; provided that the amount may be revised from time to time by the General Assembly, as it considers fit.
- b. Proceeds from fund raising events.
- c. Donations and gifts to the Union.
- d. Proceeds from the sale of memorabilia/ publications
- e. Levies, when necessary

CHAPTER VI ELECTIONS AND BY-ELECTIONS

Article 21 Term of office

Members who are elected Officers of the Union shall hold office for two years. This can be Renewable once.

- a. A general election of Officers of the Union shall take place at the Convention unless otherwise specified.
- b. A special election to fill a vacancy caused by resignation or otherwise shall take place by Presidential appointment. A vacancy caused by resignation or otherwise may be

filled by presidential appointment whilst awaiting proper election.

c. All voting at elections shall be by direct secret ballot and by simple majority; renewable just once.

d. Presidential candidates' intentions shall be tendered in writing 30 days before the Convention to the Chapter president, Electoral committee and the chairperson of the Advisory Council.

e. The list of candidates will then be forwarded by the chairperson of the Advisory council to the General Secretary who shall present them at the Convention. If nobody tenders in his/her candidacy, then an independent member, who is registered at the local association, can pose his/her candidacy for election.

f. The Presidential candidate shall tender a list of his/her cabinet at the beginning of the convention.

Candidates on the list must be in attendance at that convention for the list to be considered admissible.

The candidate shall be in good standing at their local chapter.

In the absence of any candidates running for the presidency as stated in (d) above, the floor will be open to drafting candidates that are registered at the local association, for President at the General Assembly.

g. The Electoral Committee shall publish the names of candidates not later than 20 days prior to the National Convention in NFU -Europe (electronic) Forum and on the website.

Article 22 Eligibility for office

The following shall NOT be eligible either as candidates for an office in the Union, or as proposers or seconders of candidates, or as voters.

- a. Honorary members of the Union.
- b. Members whose dues/fees have not been paid up prior to the

election at the local level and at NFU-Europe.

CHAPTER VII DISSOLUTION

Article 23 Dissolution

The following procedure shall be adopted with regard to dissolution:

- a. The method for convening the meeting for dissolution shall be as provided, as in the case for convening an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting.
- b. If at least 75% of registered members vote in favour of dissolution, then the Union shall be deemed dissolved.
- c. On dissolution all property and funds of the Union shall, be subject to the payment of all liabilities due at the date of dissolution, or shall be distributed to a charitable organization as the General Assembly may by simple majority decide. The funds can also be distributed to local associations.

CHAPTER VIII AMENDMENTS OF THE CONSTITUTION

Article 24 Amendments

The Constitution shall be given a test of time for minimum 2 years before any amendments.

These laws may be amended at an Annual General Assembly Meeting of the Union, provided always:

- a. The Secretary General receives written notice of the proposed amendment at least 90 days before the General Assembly Meeting;

- b. That all members are duly informed of the proposed amendment within a reasonable length of time before the Annual General Assembly Meeting holds;
- c. That all members are notified by electronic mail, teleconference call, postal mail, chapter communications or by any other means of communication.
- d. That the amendment is carried, during the Annual General Assembly Meeting, by a simple majority of those present at the meeting with a capacity to vote.
- e. Amendments that are voted down in a General Assembly Meeting may be re-proposed in the next General Assembly meeting.
- f. There is a review of this constitution after every two years.

CHAPTER IX INTERPRETATION

Article 25 Principle of interpretation

The following words or terms shall be interpreted to mean, in the context of these laws, as hereunder specified:

*“Wir tom wir e wir tom wir”
translated as “Let us support each other”*