

Nigeria Inter-Religious Council



CONSTITUTION

OF THE

NIGERIA INTER-RELIGIOUS COUNCIL

(NIREC)

2020

“Government” means the Three Arms of Government, the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary as well as the State and Local Governments.

“State” includes the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja.

“Council” means Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC)

“Member” means a member of the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC)

“Chapter” means a State or Local Government branch of the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC)

“Group” means members collectively, either of the Islamic Faith or Christianity in the Council.

“Fiscal Year” means a period of twelve (12) months starting from first (1st) day of January and ending of the thirty first (31st) day of December each year.

“The General Meeting of the Council” means a full meeting of the Council in Plenary Session.

ARTICLE 21: COMMENCEMENT

This amended Constitution having been approved and enacted by the Council comes into effect on the twelfth (12th) day of the month of March in the year 2020.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Preamble	3
Article 1 Name	3
Article 2 Membership.....	4
Article 3 Objectives and Functions of the Council.....	4
Article 4 General Meeting.....	5
Article 5 Executive Committee	5
Article 6 The Secretariat – National, State and Local	6
Article 7 Standing Committees and Functions	7
(1) (a) Education Committee	7
(b) Public Issues Committee	7
(c) Research and Planning Committee.....	7
(d) Finance Committee	8
(e) Dialogue and Peace Building Committee	8
(f) International Relations Committee	8
(2) Chairmen of Committees	8
(3) Membership of Committees	8
(4) Powers of Committees	8
Article 8 Additional Committees	9
Article 9 Principal Officers	9
Article 10 Responsibilities and Functions of Principal Officers.....	9

(1)	Co-Chairmen.....	9
(2)	Executive Secretary.....	9
(3)	National Treasurer	10
(4)	National Legal Adviser	10
(5)	National Publicity Secretary	10
Article 11	Meetings	11
(1)	Council	11
(2)	Executive Committee.....	11
(3)	Standing Committee	11
(4)	Ad-Hoc Committees	11
Article 12	Proceedings of the Council and Chapters	11
(2)	Quorum.....	12
Article 13	Withdrawal of Membership.....	12
Article 14	Financial Provision and Audit.....	12
Article 15	Board of Trustees.....	13
(1)	Composition.....	13
(2)	Tenure.....	13
Article 16	Special Clause.....	14
Article 17	Bye Laws.....	15
Article 18	Supremacy of the Constitution.....	15
Article 19	Amendment.....	15
Article 20	Interpretations.....	16
Article 21	Commencement.....	16

similar to the objectives and functions of the Council as stated in Article 3 of this Constitution and such institution or institutions, body or bodies are prohibited from distributing its or their income and property amongst its or other members to an extent at least as great as if imposed on the Council under or by virtue of this Special Clause; such institution or institutions, body or bodies to be determined by the members of the council at or before the time of dissolution and if in so far as effect cannot be given to the aforesaid provision, then to some charitable object.

ARTICLE 17: BYE LAWS:

Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the State and Local Government Chapters shall have power to make Bye Laws which provisions must not be contrary to the provisions of this Constitution and the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

ARTICLE 18: SUPREMACY OF THE CONSTITUTION

This Constitution is binding on the Council, its members, organs, agencies, committees and Chapters.

ARTICLE 19: AMENDMENT

The Council at a general meeting on a substantive motion approved by Eighty per centum (80%) of its membership may amend this Constitution provided that the proposed amendment shall be circulated to all members at least three (3) months before the date of the Council meeting at which the proposed amendment would be tabled.

ARTICLE 20: INTERPRETATIONS

In this Constitution unless the context otherwise requires:-

that he may be so removed, on account of infirmity of mind, body or insanity or on account of misconduct, bankruptcy or conviction on a criminal offence involving dishonesty by a Court of competent jurisdiction or if such member resigns his appointment.

ARTICLE 16: SPECIAL CLAUSE

- 1) The Income and Property of the Council howsoever derived shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the aims and objectives of the Council as set forth in this Constitution; and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise however by way of profit, to the members of the Council. PROVIDED that nothing herein shall prevent the payment in good faith, of reasonable and proper return for any services actually rendered to the Council and no remuneration or other benefit in money or money's worth shall be given by the Council to any member of such Council except repayment of out of pocket expenses or reasonable and proper rent for premises demised or let to the Council provided that the provision last aforesaid shall not apply to any payment made to Company, firm or other body in which a member of the Council maybe a member and such member of the Council shall not be bound to account for any share of profits which he may receive in respect of any such payment.
- 2) In the event of winding up or dissolution of the Council, after satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever outstanding shall not be paid to or distributed amongst the members of the Council but shall be given or transferred to some other institutions or institutions, body or bodies having objects and functions

CONSTITUTION OF THE NIGERIA INTER-RELIGIOUS COUNCIL (NIREC)

PREAMBLE

We, the representatives of the two Principal Religions, in Nigeria -Islam and Christianity, voluntarily decided by ourselves to come together to form an Association on the 11th day of September, 1999, and the association having been inaugurated on the 29th day of September, 1999.

Guided by our divine regulations and the dictates of our CREATOR, determined, within the context of our religions, to forge inter-religious harmony and concord.

Having firmly and solemnly resolved, within the confines of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, to live in unity, harmony and peace for the welfare, security and prosperity of our people and our Nation under God.

Do hereby make, enact and give to ourselves this Constitution to guide and direct our collective endeavours: -

ARTICLE 1: NAME

- (1) The name of the Association or organization is **NIGERIA INTER-RELIGIOUS COUNCIL (NIREC)** (hereinafter referred to as “**THE COUNCIL**”).
- (2) The Council shall in consultation with the States, promote and encourage the establishment of the State and Local Government Chapters which shall perform such functions as are specified in Article 3 of this Constitution.
- (3) Subject to the provisions of the Constitution, the Council shall operate as a Non-Government and Autonomous body.

ARTICLE 2: MEMBERSHIP

- (1) The Council shall consist of 60 members. 30 members to represent the Christians and 30 members to represent the Muslims. They are to be appointed by the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) respectively.
- (2) State and Local Government chapters shall consist of equal number of members to represent the two faith communities to be appointed by the State and Local Government branches of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) respectively.

Provided that where applicable members of the Council from a State shall be ex-officio members of the State Chapters.

- (3) State and Local Government chapters shall appoint from their members two members - one member from each group to be Co-Chairman of the State and Local Government chapters and another member in each case to be the Secretary on rotational basis for a period of three years.

ARTICLE 3: OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL

The objectives and functions of the council shall be:-

- (1) To honestly and sincerely endeavour by themselves and through them, their followership, to understand the true teachings of the two religions - Christianity and Islam - including their peculiarities and personal mannerisms through dialogues, discussions, workshops, seminars, conference, pamphlets etc.

- b) All other monies accruing to the Council and Chapters from other sources.
- 3) The Executive Secretary and The Secretaries to the Chapters shall prepare not later than July 31st of each year a statement of the income and expenditure of the Council and the Chapters for the succeeding year and when so prepared, the estimates shall be submitted for approval to the Council and Chapters as the case may be.
- 4) The Executive Secretary and The Secretaries to the Chapters shall be the Accounting Officers for the purpose of controlling and disbursing amounts from the funds established by this Article.
- 5) The accounts of the Council and Chapters shall be audited by Auditors appointed by the Council and Chapters respectively.

ARTICLE 15: BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- (1) **Composition & Powers:** There shall be a Board of Trustees consisting of six (6) members of proven integrity and unimpeachable character from each of the two groups, viz - the Muslim and the Christian. The Trustees shall be the sole custodians of the immovable landed property and title deeds of the Council. They may, on behalf of the Council, acquire the property by purchase, donations or application to government etc. The Trustees shall have a Seal which shall be in the custody of the Executive Secretary who shall serve as their Secretary.
- (2) **Tenure:** A member of the Board of Trustees may hold office for life but shall cease to hold office on a resolution passed by sixty percent (60%) of the membership of the Council

their individual membership and a minimum of 30% of each group.

- b) Where Standing Orders made under Sub-Article (1) of this Article provide for the Council and Chapters to co-opt persons, such persons may attend the meetings and advise on any matter referred to them but shall not count towards a quorum and shall not be entitled to vote at any of such meetings.

ARTICLE 13: WITHDRAWAL OF MEMBERSHIP

The withdrawal of a person's membership and his replacement shall be the prerogative of the group to which the member belongs. By a resolution passed by two-thirds majority of its membership, the Council may recommend the withdrawal of a person's membership on account of infirmity of mind or body or for misconduct injurious to inter-Council harmony or capable of lowering the image of the Council in the estimation of the generality of the Nigerian citizenry.

ARTICLE 14: FINANCIAL PROVISIONS AND AUDIT

- 1) The Council and Chapters shall establish and maintain funds from which shall be defrayed all expenditure incurred by the Council and the Chapters.
- 2) There shall be paid or credited to the funds established in pursuance of this Article.
 - a) Such monies as may be appropriated or granted in each year to the Council and Chapters by the Federal, State and Local Government as the case may be.

- (2) To create a permanent and sustainable channel of communication and interaction thereby promote dialogue between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria so that the members of both faiths may have mutual understanding of each other's religious position, and generally promote harmony, inculcate co-existence among all the people of Nigeria irrespective of their religious or ethnic affiliations.
- (3) To promote and inculcate moral, ethical, social and cultural values of the two faiths for the rebirth and rebuilding of a better society.
- (4) To provide a forum for mutual co-operation and promotion of the welfare of all citizens in the nation.

ORGANS AND FUNCTIONS

ARTICLE 4: GENERAL MEETING

- (1) The Council in a General Meeting shall be the highest policy making body of the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) and its objectives and functions are as specified under Article 3 herein.

ARTICLE 5: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- (1) There shall be an Executive Committee of the Council consisting of the following Principal Officers: -
 - a. Co-Chairmen
 - b. Executive Secretary
 - c. National Treasurer
 - d. National Legal Adviser
 - e. National Publicity Secretary
 - f. Chairmen of Standing Committees
- (2) It is responsible for the implementation of the decisions of

the Council and the effective implementation thereof on sustainable day-to-day basis. It also ensures co-ordination and harmonious co-operation of the various units, arms and agencies of Council's standing and ad-hoc Committees.

- (3) The Co-Chairmen shall preside over all the meetings of the Executive Committee.
- (4) The Members of the EXCO shall be appointed by the General Council within the Council in fair representation of the two groups to serve for a tenure of 3 years in the first instant and another final term of 3 years if reappointed.

ARTICLE 6: THE SECRETARIAT - NATIONAL, STATE AND LOCAL

- (i) There shall be a National Secretariat to be situated in the Federal Capital Territory Abuja.
- (ii) The State and the Local Government Secretariats at the level of State and Local Government Chapters shall be situated in their respective capitals.
- (iii) The State and Local Government Chapters of the Council shall appoint such fit and proper persons, on such terms and conditions, and assign to such persons such functions as they respectively deem fit in line with the structure of the National body.
- (iv) The Secretariat shall be headed by the Executive Secretary to be appointed by the Council, while the State and Local Government Chapters shall appoint Secretaries as the case may be.

cases of emergencies.

- 2) **Executive Committee:** shall meet every two months to appraise and evaluate progress of activities and assignments and give direction and impetus for results.
- 3) **Standing Committee:** shall meet as often as the exigencies of their assignments demand and to keep the Executive Committee informed of their progress.
- 4) **Ad-hoc Committees:** shall meet at such times and at such places and as often as the circumstances, nature and urgency of their assignments dictate.

ARTICLE 12: PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL AND CHAPTERS

- 1) Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the Council and the Chapters shall have power to regulate their proceedings and may make Standing Orders for that purpose as will ensure speedy and effective achievement of their functions provided that the Council and the Chapters shall function notwithstanding: -
 - a) any vacancy in their membership;
 - b) any defect in the appointment of a member; or
 - c) that a person not entitled to do so took part in their proceedings.
- 2) **QUORUM**
 - a) For meetings of the Council, its organs, Committees Standing and Ad-hoc the quorum shall be 50 per centum of

- iii. Shall be responsible for the day to day running of the Council and Preside over the meetings of the staff of the Council's Secretariat.
- iv. Shall serve for a tenure of 3 years renewable once.
- v. The office of the Executive Secretary shall be rotated between Christians and Muslims.

3) National Treasurer

- i. Shall be the custodian of Council's Funds.
- ii. Shall keep proper book of accounts and maintain records of the revenue and expenditure of the Council.
- iii. Shall prepare the annual budget of the Council after consultation with other Principal Officers and present same before Council before the beginning of each fiscal year for approval.
- iv. Shall prepare statements of account at such times and in such manner as Council deems fit to direct.
- v. Shall cause the accounts of Council to be audited at the end of each fiscal year by a competent Professional Auditor who shall be appointed by the Council.

4) National Legal Adviser

Shall advise the Council, its organs and agencies on all legal matters.

5) National Publicity Secretary

Shall publicize the activities of the Council after due consultation with the Co-Chairmen and the Executive Secretary.

ARTICLE 11: MEETINGS

- 1) **Council:** For consistency shall meet quarterly except in

ARTICLE 7: STANDING COMMITTEES AND FUNCTIONS

There shall be standing committees to take charge of various aspects of the work of the Council including issues of concern in particular to the Christians, the Muslims and the Nation generally. The following Standing Committees shall be established and responsible to the Council: -

(a.) Education Committee: It shall be responsible for: -

- i. ensuring that Religious Education is rehabilitated and given a pride of place in the Nation's educational system.
- ii. promoting and coordinating the proper role of religious organisation in education in general and their contributions to government effort.
- iii. monitoring the National educational curriculum and syllabus on routine basis with a view to inculcating sound moral and spiritual values in the youths.
- iv. recommending to the Council where necessary the best approach to improving religions education in the nation.

(b.) Public Issues Committee:

It shall have the responsibility of identifying National Public issues on which both religions have common concern and recommend same to Council with a view to Council taking appropriate action including advising the Government.

(c.) Research and Planning Committee

It shall be responsible for identification of, research in, evaluation of and communication to Council of potential causes of conflict. The Committee shall also be responsible for monitoring and evaluating Council's policies programmes and activities with a view to achieving

effective planning for the future.

- (d.) **Finance Committee:** It shall be responsible for sourcing and prudent management of funds of the Council.
- (e) **Dialogue and Peace Building Committee:** It shall be responsible for initiating moves to nip in the bud any anticipated conflicts. It shall liaise with the Research and Planning Committee with a view to making effective and optimum use of the Committee's findings for peace building and conflict resolution. The Committee shall also be responsible for networking with other national organizations with similar objectives.
- (f) **International Relations Committee:**
It shall be responsible for linking and networking with relevant international organizations with a view to fostering international understanding and harmony.
- (2) **Chairmen of Committees:**
Every Committee set up under this Article shall be presided over by a Chairman who shall be a member of the Council or Chapter as the case may be, and shall ensure the achievement of the objectives for which the committee is constituted.
- (3) **Membership of Committees:**
Every Committee shall be made up of such members and/or persons as the Council or Chapter may determine.
- (4) **Powers of Committees:**
Committees appointed under this Article shall consider and report on any matter with which the Council and Chapters

are concerned.

ARTICLE 8: ADDITIONAL COMMITTEES

The Council, its Chapters and agencies shall have the power to constitute additional Standing Committees or establish Ad-hoc Committees from time to time to address issues or matters as the need arises.

ARTICLE 9: PRINCIPAL OFFICERS

The Principal Officers are:

- 1) The two Co-chairmen who are heads of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) respectively.
- 2) The Executive Secretary
- 3) Chairmen of Standing Committees
- 4) National Treasurer
- 5) National Legal Adviser
- 6) National Publicity Secretary

ARTICLE 10: RESPONSIBILITIES AND FUNCTIONS OF PRINCIPAL OFFICERS:

- 1) **Co-Chairmen**
The Co-Chairmen preside over all meetings of the Council. The Co-Chairmen shall ensure the faithful implementation of Council's decisions.
- 2) **Executive Secretary**
 - i. Shall be the Head of the National Secretariat and the Chief Executive of the Council. He shall be responsible for the disbursement of funds of the Council.
 - ii. Shall be on full-time.