TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS .................................................................................................................. 2
PREAMBLE ........................................................................................................................................... 3
ARTICLES OF THE CONSTITUTION ...................................................................................................... 4
ARTICLE I: NAME .................................................................................................................................. 4
ARTICLE II: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES ................................................................................................. 4
ARTICLE III: GOVERNING BODY ......................................................................................................... 4
ARTICLE IV: EXECUTIVE BOARD .......................................................................................................... 5
ARTICLE V: OFFICERS .......................................................................................................................... 5
ARTICLE VI: MEMBERS ........................................................................................................................ 5
ARTICLE VII: VOTING RIGHTS AND ELECTIONS .............................................................................. 6
VOTING .................................................................................................................................................. 6
ARTICLE VIII: BIENNIAL CONGRESS AND MEETINGS ..................................................................... 8
ARTICLE IX: DUES AND FINANCES .................................................................................................... 9
ARTICLE X: COMMITTEES ................................................................................................................... 9
ARTICLE XI: COUNTRY CHAPTERS AND BRANCHES ..................................................................... 9
ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION ..................................................................... 10
ARTICLE XIII: GENERAL PROVISION ............................................................................................... 10
ARTICLE XV: BY-LAWS ....................................................................................................................... 12
BY-LAWS ARTICLE 1. THE EXECUTIVE BOARD ............................................................................. 12
BY-LAWS ARTICLE 2. DUTIES OF OFFICERS .................................................................................. 12
BY-LAWS ARTICLE 4: DUES ................................................................................................................ 14
BY-LAWS ARTICLE 5. COUNTRY CHAPTERS AND BRANCHES ...................................................... 14
BY-LAWS: ARTICLE 6. COMMITTEES ............................................................................................... 15
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AHILA</td>
<td>Association for Health Information and Libraries in Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIM</td>
<td>Africa Index Medicus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>General Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PREAMBLE

This revised Constitution presented to the 2019 AHILA General Assembly, replaces the previous Constitution of 2014 and the amended version of 2016.

The decision to amend the AHILA constitution was agreed in 2012 during the General Assembly (GA) in Cape Verde. However, nothing happened since then. The same decision was upheld in 2014 during the AHILA conference in Tanzania. Consequently, the then President, Dr Rehema Chande Malya constituted a three persons committee (Maria Musoke, Nancy Kamau and Shane Godbolt) to revise the Constitution and present the amendments to the GA at the 2016 AHILA Congress in Kampala.

After discussion, the 2016 General Assembly requested the committee to make further amendments and present the revised Constitution to the next General Assembly.
ARTICLES OF THE CONSTITUTION

I. NAME
II. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES
III. GOVERNING BODY
IV. EXECUTIVE BOARD
V. OFFICERS
VI. MEMBERS
VII. VOTING RIGHTS and ELECTIONS
VIII. BIENNIAL CONGRESS AND MEETINGS
IX. DUES & FINANCES
X. COMMITTEES
XI. COUNTRY CHAPTERS AND BRANCHES
XII. AMENDMENTS
XIII. GENERAL PROVISION
XIV. BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I: NAME

The organization shall be called "The Association for Health Information and Libraries in Africa."

ARTICLE II: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Association for Health Information and Libraries in Africa (AHILA) is a non-profit organization that aims to:

1) promote closer association among health information professionals in Africa;
2) promote a high standard of library practice for health information services, education and research in Africa;
3) work in close collaboration with the World Health Organization Regional Office for Africa and cooperate with national and international health organizations and Learned Societies and Associations in full mutual respect of each other's aims and objectives, and through Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) where applicable;
4) participate in international activities in the field of health information;
5) carry out other activities which the General Assembly approves.

ARTICLE III: GOVERNING BODY

1. The Governing body of the Association shall be the General Assembly.
2. The General Assembly (GA) shall:
   2.1 be formed by two representatives from each paid up institutional member plus all other paid up individual members;
   2.2 review the progress of the Association since the past two years;
   2.3 elect the Executive Board and other officers;
   2.4 meet at least once in two years;
   2.5 discuss the reports of the President, Secretary General and Treasurer presented to the General Assembly meeting;
   2.6 receive and discuss Country progress reports as presented by Country Chapters to the Secretary General prior to the Biennial Congress;
2.7 deal with any other matter relevant to the Association and may delegate authority to the Executive Board.

ARTICLE IV: EXECUTIVE BOARD

1) The Executive Board shall be formed by the officers (as specified in article V) and four ordinary members all elected by the General Assembly;
2) The Executive Board shall represent French-speaking, English-speaking and Portuguese-speaking countries for as long as paid up members from such countries are present at the General Assembly and have attended at least two past Biennial Congresses;
3) The four ordinary members shall retire after two terms of office;
4) The Executive Board shall be responsible to the General Assembly for carrying out its decisions;
5) The Executive Board shall be responsible for sending copies of the General Assembly report to each member one month after each Biennial General Assembly to facilitate work plans for County chapters, among other things;
6) The current Executive Board shall present a budget estimate for AHILA activities and a report to the General Assembly with its recommendations;
7) The Executive Board shall meet wherever possible between meetings of the General Assembly if a quorum (30%) of Council members is present;
8) The Executive Board may co-opt members as deemed necessary;
9) The Executive Board shall have the right to appoint standing and/or ad-hoc committees whenever necessary;
10) At the approval of the General Assembly, the Executive Board may hire staff to carry out the programs of the Association whenever necessary.

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS

The Officers of the Association shall be the President, two Vice-Presidents, the Secretary General, the Assistant Secretary General and the Treasurer;

1) The term of the officers shall be from the end of one General Assembly to the next;
2) The Officers may be re-elected individually for a second and last term;
3) Any vacancy occurring among the Offices of the Executive Board shall be filled, at the recommendation of the President or the Vice-President, by an existing member of the Executive Board;
4) Duties and responsibilities of each Officer shall be tabulated within the By-laws.

ARTICLE VI: MEMBERS

The membership of the Association shall consist of Individual, Institutional, Affiliate members, Honorary and Student.

A. Individual Member: An individual member shall be any person who is engaged in health and/or medical sciences library and information work or retired or formerly engaged in health and medical sciences library and information and who shall pay the prescribed individual subscription fee;
B. Institutional Member: An Institutional member shall be any institution or library or resource center that is active in health and/or medical sciences library and information work and who shall pay the prescribed institutional subscription fee;

C. Affiliate Member: An Affiliate member shall be any person or institution that is active in health and/or medical sciences library and information work and may not be covered in A or B above and who shall pay the prescribed subscription affiliate fee. An Affiliate member shall have all the benefits of membership except the right to vote and to hold office;

D. Honorary Member: An Honorary member shall be an individual nominated by the Executive Council for an outstanding contribution to the field of health and/or medical sciences library and information work. An Honorary member shall be exempt from payment of subscription dues, but shall have all the benefits of membership except the right to vote and to hold office. An Honorary member may make financial and other material contributions to the Association;

E. Student Member: A student member shall be any person registered in a recognized School of Library and Information Science and related fields who is interested in the activities of the Association and who shall pay the prescribed student subscription fee. A student member shall have all the benefits of membership except the right to vote and to hold office.

ARTICLE VII: VOTING RIGHTS AND ELECTIONS

VOTING

1) Paid up members of the Association shall have the right to vote as follows:
   a. Institutional members shall have two votes each;
   b. Individual members shall have one vote each;
   c. Affiliate, Honorary and Student members shall have no voting rights.

2) Voting shall be by secret ballot of the members present during the General Assembly.

3) In case of a tie after counting votes, there shall be a second voting with emphasis put on the manifesto of the candidates and/or the contribution made to AHILA. If the candidates tie the second time, then the most senior past President of AHILA or one of the founder members of AHILA or the longest serving AHILA member shall cast the determining vote. If the three of them are present at the GA, they will decide among themselves who shall cast the vote.

ELECTIONS

4) The AHILA Executive Board shall put in place an electoral committee by the end of the second day of the Biennial Congress and announce the members of the committee to the participants of the Congress. This shall enable the committee to start preparing for the elections in good time;

5) The Electoral committee shall comprise of three eminent people as follows:
   a) One of the past AHILA Presidents who shall not be contesting for any of the posts in that year’s elections;
   b) One of the founder members of AHILA or the longest serving AHILA member;
   c) One of the international (from outside the AHILA region) members of AHILA. International members present at the Congress shall appoint a representative among themselves;
B. Institutional Member: An Institutional member shall be any institution or library or resource center that is active in health and/or medical sciences library and information work and who shall pay the prescribed institutional subscription fee;

C. Affiliate Member: An Affiliate member shall be any person or institution that is active in health and/or medical sciences library and information work and may not be covered in A or B above and who shall pay the prescribed subscription affiliate fee. An Affiliate member shall have all the benefits of membership except the right to vote and to hold office;

D. Honorary Member: An Honorary member shall be an individual nominated by the Executive Council for an outstanding contribution to the field of health and/or medical sciences library and information work. An Honorary member shall be exempt from payment of subscription dues, but shall have all the benefits of membership except the right to vote and to hold office. An Honorary member may make financial and other material contributions to the Association;

E. Student Member: A student member shall be any person registered in a recognized School of Library and Information Science and related fields who is interested in the activities of the Association and who shall pay the prescribed student subscription fee. A student member shall have all the benefits of membership except the right to vote and to hold office.

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5) The Electoral committee shall comprise of three eminent people as follows:
   a) One of the past AHILA Presidents who shall not be contesting for any of the posts in that year’s elections;
   b) One of the founder members of AHILA or the longest serving AHILA member;
   c) One of the international (from outside the AHILA region) members of AHILA. International members present at the Congress shall appoint a representative among themselves;
6) The Electoral committee shall call for nominations of all Executive Board positions starting on the third day of the Congress and closing the nominations by the end of the fourth day of the Congress;

7) The electoral committee shall provide information on those eligible for nominations as contained in the Constitution;

8) The electoral committee shall provide a nomination form with a candidate’s name, position she/he is standing for, proposer and seconder, all shall be paid up and eligible members to participate in elections. The proposed candidate shall sign to consent the nomination;

9) The electoral committee shall carefully examine the nomination forms and only those who qualify shall be passed to participate in the election;

10) The Electoral committee shall determine and announce before the nominations start, who among the past AHILA Presidents or one of the founder members of AHILA or the longest serving AHILA member shall cast the determining vote in case of a tie;

ELIGIBILITY

11) Only paid up AHILA members shall be eligible to participate in the elections, that is, to stand, nominate and vote;

12) A list of eligible members shall be displayed on the third day, before the start of the election process;

13) The President and other members of the Executive Board shall NOT be eligible for re-election for more than two successive terms;

14) Depending on the official language of the President, the first Vice-President and the second Vice-President shall be from a different official language if there are eligible paid up members from those countries at the General Assembly;

15) The President, Secretary General and Treasurer shall come from different countries. This shall give an opportunity to various countries to participate in AHILA leadership;

16) To be eligible for standing as one of the officers, a prospective candidate shall have been an active paid up member of AHILA and shall have attended the Biennial Congress at least two times;

17) Candidates standing for the post of AHILA President shall present a manifesto spelling out what they practically plan to do for AHILA.

ELECTORAL PROCESS

18) The Electoral Committee shall call out names of all paid up members who are eligible to vote;

19) Members eligible to vote shall be given voting cards/papers for each position;

20) For every position, a candidate with majority votes shall be declared the winner. Similarly, for the four committee members, the candidates with majority votes shall be declared the winner;

21) In the event of a tie, the Electoral Committee shall request the person nominated in no.10 above to cast the determining vote.

TERM OF OFFICERS

22) The Executive Board term shall be from the end of one General Assembly to the next;

23) The Officers may be re-elected individually and on merit for a second and last term.
ARTICLE VIII: BIENNIAL CONGRESS AND MEETINGS

I. BIENNIAL CONGRESS

1) The Association shall hold a five-day Congress after every two years;
2) The Congress shall be hosted in a country whose membership to AHILA has been active in attending the Congress for at least two times;
3) The venue of the Congress shall rotate in different member countries and languages (English, French and Portuguese speaking countries) as much as possible;
4) The Electoral committee shall call for offers to host the next Biennial Congress from eligible member countries. The call shall open on the third day of the Congress and close on the fourth day. The results shall be presented to the General Assembly by the Electoral committee;
5) The venue of the Congress shall be presented to and approved by the General Assembly. Two countries shall be announced, the first and the runner-up, in case the first country is not able to host the Congress;
6) The Congress shall be organized by the selected host country, which shall, in consultation with the Executive Board, formulate the Congress theme and prepare the Congress logistics;
7) The host country shall confirm, in writing, to the Executive Board, within three months after the Biennial Congress, that it will host the congress. Failure to do so, the opportunity to host the Congress shall be given to the second country, which shall also be required to confirm in three months;
8) The host country shall form a Local Organising Committee to plan for the successful hosting of the conference on behalf of the Association and it shall, therefore, be accountable to the Association and the GA;
9) The Congress organisers shall prepare and publish the Congress proceedings for only the presented papers within three months after the Congress;
10) The Congress organisers shall ensure that simultaneous translations are available in all sessions;
11) The funds raised for hosting the Congress belong to the Association. Consequently, an audited financial report shall be prepared and submitted to the Executive Board within a period not exceeding three months after the Congress. The AHILA treasurer shall table the financial report at the next AHILA General Assembly. The surplus funds shall be declared and retained to be used to enable members of the Local Organising Committee to attend the next congress.

II. MEETINGS

1) The Association shall hold a General Assembly meeting after every two years, during the Biennial Congress;
2) The meetings shall be presided over by the President or the First Vice-President in the absence of the President;
3) To transact business at the General Assembly meeting, thirty (30) percent of the members eligible to vote shall constitute a quorum.
ARTICLE IX: DUES AND FINANCES

1) The finances of the Association shall be derived from subscription as well as donations and grants including funds generated from hosting of the Biennial Congress;
2) There shall be two modes of Subscription: Institutional subscription and Individual subscription;
3) Honorary members are NOT liable to pay any subscriptions to the Association, but they can make donations to the Association;
4) Subscriptions are due and payable on admission to Association membership and thereafter yearly, or updated for the intervening years at the General Assembly;
5) Subscriptions paid during the General Assembly run from the last day of the Biennial Congress to the first day of the next Biennial Congress;
6) One ceases to be an Association member if s/he fails to pay or renew subscription fees;
7) The funds of the Association shall be deposited to the Association account and in the name of the Association;
8) The Treasurer is the principal signatory, and shall sign with either the President or the Secretary General, except as otherwise determined by the General Assembly;
9) The accounts of the Association shall be subjected to an annual audit. The auditor shall be agreed upon by the Executive Board;
10) The subscription fees paid by members during the Biennial Congress shall be collected by the treasurer and immediately banked on the Association account. In case the treasurer does not attend the Congress, then the AHILA President shall delegate one of the Executive Board members the responsibility of collecting the Association dues and the funds accounted for and banked on the AHILA account before leaving the Congress host country. The treasurer shall be immediately informed of the amount deposited by sending a copy of the bank slip electronically, and the original copy by post;
11) The funds of the Association shall be used for promoting the activities of the Association as approved by the General Assembly.

ARTICLE X. — COMMITTEES

1) The Executive Board shall appoint standing and ad hoc committees to assist in the performance of its duties;
2) The Executive Board under the guidance of the President shall appoint the Chair and provide the terms of reference to the committees;
3) Committee chairs shall prepare and send to the President annual reports three months before the Congress;
4) The President shall send these reports to all paid up members electronically at least two weeks before the Congress.

ARTICLE XI: COUNTRY CHAPTERS AND BRANCHES

A. COUNTRY CHAPTERS

1) Each member country shall be required to form a Country Chapter;
2) Each Country Chapter shall be required to implement the resolutions of the General Assembly as communicated by the Secretary General one month after the Biennial Congress;
3) Each Country chapter shall operate under the provisions of the Association Constitution;
4) Each Country Chapter shall strive to meet the objectives of the Association at the local level;
5) Each Country Chapter shall prepare and provide a written report to the Secretary General two months before the Biennial Congress for tabling at the General Assembly.

B. BRANCHES

1) Each Country Chapter may form branches in any geographical location where this is applicable and requested by members stationed in those locations;
2) Branches shall be established and operated with the guidance of the Executive Board of the Country Chapters;
3) Branches shall strive to meet the objectives of the Country Chapters at the local level.

ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

1) The Constitution shall be amended at the recommendation of the General Assembly;
2) The Executive Board shall appoint an ad hoc committee of respectable AHILA members to propose amendments to the Constitution;
3) Proposed changes to the Constitution shall be communicated to Executive Board by the Ad hoc committee prior to the Biennial General Assembly;
4) The Constitution shall be emended by the Biennial General Assembly meeting;
5) A fifty percent (50%) of eligible voters (paid up individual and institutional members) shall be required in order to pass an amendment of the Constitution.

ARTICLE XIII: GENERAL PROVISION

1) An Executive Board member who fails to fulfill her/his duties and/or obligations as spelt out in this Constitution shall not be eligible for re-election;
2) A member country that fails to fulfill the obligations of this Constitution shall be reprimanded by the General Assembly;
3) Members who fail to pay subscription dues for more than two years shall cease to be members and shall be removed from the membership list.

ARTICLE XIV- ARBITRATION

1) All parties shall endeavor to address any disputes amicably but in the event that one of the parties is dissatisfied, an arbitration process shall take place;
2) A three-A three-persons arbitration committee comprising of neutral members shall arbitrate any dispute raised by either paid up members of AHILA or members of the executive;
3) The following members shall form the Arbitration committee: an AHILA past president, a founder member of AHILA and the longest serving AHILA member. The AHILA past President, as a member of the committee, can change every four year
(after two General Assemblies) to give the other Past Presidents a chance to serve. There should be continuity in the Arbitration committee.

4) The arbitration committee shall deliver their verdict to the complainants within a period of three months;

5) All deliberations of the arbitration committee shall be confidential.

*END of the Constitution; By-laws follow*:
ARTICLE XV: BY-LAWS

The By-laws shall provide guidelines on the operations of the Association.

BY-LAWS ARTICLE 1. THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board shall transact the business for the Association for a duration of two years.

BY-LAWS ARTICLE 2. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

In addition to the duties and responsibilities already spelled out in the previous articles of this Constitution, the following Board members shall undertake the duties outlined below.

PRESIDENT

The duties of the President shall be as follows:

1) To act as the Chief Executive Officer and spokesperson of the Association;
2) To initiate policies and activities and present them to the Executive Board for approval and ratification by the General Assembly;
3) To raise funds for the Association in liaison with the Treasurer;
4) To act as the Association contact person for the African Index Medicus (AIM) and give periodic reports to members and the General Assembly.
5) To direct the affairs of the Association in consultation with the Executive Board;
6) To develop a strategic operational plan for the Association for the period in office;
7) To liaise with AHILA Regional and International partners for mutual benefits including signing MOUs where applicable;
8) To preside at all meetings of the Association and of the Executive Board;
9) To guide the Executive Board in the appointment of Chairpersons for the Standing and ad hoc committees and the provision of terms of reference for these Committees;
10) To be one of the three signatories to the Association's bank account;
11) To serve as an ex-officio member of all committees.

FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT/PRESIDENT

The duties of the First Vice-President shall be as follows:

1) To perform the duties of the President in his/her absence and in the event of any incapacitation or resignation from office;
2) To coordinate all country chapters and ensure the implementation of AHILA GA resolutions, and report to the GA;
3) To do any other duties assigned by the President or General Assembly.

SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT

The duties of the Second Vice-President shall be as follows:

1) To act for the First Vice-President when the incumbent is absent from office;
2) To act for the President in the absence of the First Vice-President;
3) To initiate activities to support the Continuing Professional Development committee of the Association, serve as the chair of that committee and submit periodic reports to members and the General Assembly;
SECRETARY GENERAL

The duties of the Secretary General shall be as follows:
1) To prepare a report of the immediate past Biennial Congress and meeting for presentation to the next General Assembly;
2) To distribute copies of the report of the Biennial Congress and meeting to all the members within one month after the Biennial Congress;
3) In consultation with the President, to call for all Executive Board meetings and to circulate the meeting agenda in advance;
4) To take minutes of the Executive Board meetings;
5) To keep all the official records of the Association;
6) To serve as the chair of Publication and Publicity Standing Committee;
7) To be one of the three signatories to the Association bank account;
8) To collect written reports from each Country Chapter two months before the Biennial Congress for compilation and tabling to the General Assembly;
9) To communicate the Biennial Congress resolutions one month after the Congress.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL

The duties of the Secretary shall be as follows:
1) To deputise for the Secretary General in his/her absence;
2) To carry any other duty as assigned by the President or the Secretary General;
3) To be a member of the African Index Medicus Standing Committee;
4) To serve as Vice-chair of the Publications and Publicity Committee;
5) To serve as the Association web master and maintain the website in consultation with the Executive Board and Country chapter Executive Board;

TREASURER

The duties of the Treasurer shall be as follows:
1) To collect all membership dues and all other monies and to deposit the same on the Association’s account as directed by this Constitution;
2) To maintain proper books of accounts of all payments and money received including all financial transactions from the Association account and Biennial Congress funds;
3) To ensure that AHILA funds are used appropriately and for the purposes which the Executive Board and GA has approved;
4) To present an audited financial report and accounts to the General Assembly since the last Congress;
5) To be a principal signatory to the Association’s account;
6) To be the Chair of the Finance and Fund-raising Standing Committee;
7) To be a member of the Membership Committee and to maintain a Membership Register.

BY-LAWS ARTICLE 3. BOARD MEMBERS

The duties of the four (4) Board Members shall be as follows:
1) To serve as members of the Executive Board and to participate in all Board meeting deliberations;
2) To serve as members of the Executive Board Standing committees;
3) To assist the officers of the Association in any activity that is delegated to them by the President;
4) Each of the four members to be member of the standing Committees of Finance and fundraising, African Index Medicus, Membership and Continuing Professional Development, Publications and publicity (including website).

BY-LAWS ARTICLE 4: DUES
1) Dues are payable annually or bi-annually;
2) Dues must be paid before the biennial congress or within the first two days of the Congress;
3) The membership committee shall set up the dues for each member category of Individual, Institutional, Affiliate and Student and recommend to the Executive Board for any changes in the amount and mode of payment of dues;
4) The Executive Board shall recommend to the General Assembly the amount of the dues for each member category and the mode of payment of dues;
5) Honorary members shall not pay any dues;
6) Members whose dues are unpaid shall not be entitled to vote or stand for any post;
7) Members who fail to pay up for more than two years shall be removed from the membership register.

BY-LAWS ARTICLE 5. COUNTRY CHAPTERS AND BRANCHES

A: Country Chapters

1) The Country Chapters shall be governed by the AHILA Constitution, but the Constitution shall be adopted and registered within the Laws of each Country;
2) Each Country Chapter shall have an Executive Board to handle all the affairs of the Chapter;
3) Each Country Chapter shall prepare a Biennial Country report and submit it to the AHILA Secretary General two months before the Biennial Congress;
4) Each Country Chapter shall levy subscription fees for its operations as shall be agreed by its members and approved by the AHILA Executive Board;
5) Each Country Chapter shall remit 5% of its total subscription fees to the Association for support;
6) Country Chapter members shall be required to pay the prescribed membership dues to the AHILA main Association;
7) The Country Chapter Executive Board may request for assistance from AHILA Executive Board to achieve its objectives.

B: Country Chapter Branches

1) Branches may be formed within a Country chapter;
2) All Branch chairpersons shall be members of the Executive Board of the Country Chapter;
3) Branches shall operate in accordance with the provisions of the instruments establishing Country Chapters;
4) All Branch finances shall be coordinated by the Executive Board of the Country Chapter;
5) All Branches shall present in writing annual progress reports to the Chair of the Country Chapter.
BY-LAWS: ARTICLE 6. COMMITTEES

1) The following shall constitute the Standing committees of the Association: (a) Finance and Fund Raising, (b) Membership and Continuing Education, (c) Publications and Publicity (including the website) and d) African Index Medicus [and a Biennial Congress Local Organising committee (at the host institution)];

2) Each standing Committee shall have a membership of NOT more than five (5) members unless additional membership is approved by the Executive Board. The Composition of the standing committees shall reflect representation of the Association membership;

3) Each Standing Committee shall come up with a list of activities and shall communicate the same to the Executive Board and the Country chapters;

4) The Chair for each standing Committee shall provide a written annual progress report to the Executive Board;

5) The Standing committee members shall serve for two (2) years, but shall be eligible to serve for another two (2) years only;

6) Standing Committee chairs who are not members of the Executive Board may participate in meetings of the Executive Board as the Executive Board deems fit but shall not have the right to vote;

7) The President shall be an ex-officio member of all the standing committees;

8) The President may delegate ex-officio membership to any standing committee to the two Vice-Presidents;

9) Standing committee chairs shall call and conduct the meetings and report to the Executive Board;

10) The Executive Board shall appoint an ad hoc committee if so required and provide the terms of reference to each Committee.

End