

# Constitution of the Harvard African Law Association

## Article 1: Name of the Organization

The name of the organization shall be Harvard African Law Association [hereinafter “HALA”].

## Article 2: Mission and Guiding Principles

The mission of the organization shall be to:

- i. To encourage open dialogue on Harvard Law School’s campus in the area of African affairs, especially legal affairs, among University affiliates interested in these issues;
- ii. To raise awareness about African issues, particularly African legal affairs, among Harvard University affiliates, particularly among law students;
- iii. To facilitate opportunities for intellectual, social, and cultural exchange among students interested in various Africa-related issues.

The guiding principles of the organization are:

- i. To encourage University affiliates, especially law students, to share many different perspectives on African affairs;
- ii. To foster an environment of respect and tolerance for diversity in all respects during such discussions and debates;
- iii. To maintain a forum for law students interested in African affairs to engage in exchanges of a social and cultural nature;
- iv. To foster the creation and maintenance of a network of law students and alumni with an interest in African issues.

## Article 3: Executive Board

- i. All members of the HALA executive board shall be charged with working as a team to organize official HALA events and play a leadership role in conducting other affairs of the organization. No executive board member need be *exclusively* responsible for any aspect of conducting HALA’s affairs. However, each board member shall be primarily responsible for work in one specific area, as outlined below.
- ii. HALA Executive Board meetings shall generally occur every two weeks during the academic year, with the exception of winter term, subject to the discretion of Executive Board officers;
- iii. HALA Executive Board officers may resign at any time and shall do so via electronic mail or otherwise in writing.
- iv. Unfilled Executive Board positions may be filled by appointment at the discretion of the board with notification of the HALA membership;
- v. Members of the outgoing and incoming HALA Executive Boards shall communicate about the transition between executive boards within a

reasonable period of time after the election of the new board, in a manner deemed appropriate by the outgoing and incoming board members;

- vi. The HALA Executive Board shall consist of one law student holding each of the following positions, in addition to any positions that the HALA Executive Board chooses to create, as needed:
  - i. President
    - 1. The President shall coordinate the activities of the other members of the HALA Executive Board and is responsible for ensuring that HALA programs, events, and other activities are effectively and faithfully carried out;
    - 2. The President is the primary representative of HALA and shall, as general matter, be the initial point of contact for the organization;
    - 3. The President shall typically represent HALA at events requiring the presence of a HALA representative;
    - 4. The President shall call to order and adjourn meetings of the HALA executive board;
    - 5. The President shall be empowered to establish ad-hoc committees to draft HALA members to participate in the planning of events, as deemed necessary by the President;
  - ii. Treasurer
    - 1. The Treasurer shall be charged with the financial affairs of the organization, including, but not limited to, organizing funding and budgeting for all official HALA events.
  - iii. Publicity and Outreach Chair
    - 1. The Outreach Chair shall be principally responsible for publicizing official HALA events and for new member recruitment;
    - 2. The Outreach Chair shall make any announcements to the email listserv with regard to internal HALA affairs that the Executive Board deems necessary.
  - iv. Africa Week Chair
    - 1. The Africa Week Chair shall be principally responsible for organizing Africa Week events and shall be contact person for all persons seeking involvement in or participating in Africa Week.
  - v. 1L Representative
    - 1. The 1L Representative shall be a first-year law student and shall be responsible for outreach to the first year class.
  - vi. LLM Representative
    - 1. The LLM representative shall be a member of the current LLM class and shall be responsible for outreach to the LLM class.
  - vii. Secretary
    - 1. The Secretary shall record minutes for all HALA Executive Board meetings;

2. The Secretary shall document all official HALA activities using various forms of media, including but not limited to, written form, audio-visual form, and photography;
3. The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining and conserving a record of documentation of HALA events;
4. The Secretary shall pass on all such documentation to his or her successor.

#### **Article 4: Membership**

- i. Membership in HALA shall be open to all persons enrolled in a program of study at Harvard Law School without regard to gender, race, color, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, physical disability, or affiliation with any social group who affirmatively elect to be a member of the organization, by writing their names or electronic mail addresses on a HALA membership sign-up sheet, or by contacting any member of the executive board with a request to be added to the membership;
- ii. Persons shall be removed from the membership upon request by those persons to any member of the executive board or at such time as those persons cease to be enrolled in a program of study at Harvard Law School;
- iii. Members typically have an interest in African affairs. However, there are no membership requirements in this regard;
- iv. There shall be at least one general body meeting per semester, with the exception of winter term.

#### **Article 5: Elections**

- i. Members of the Executive Board shall be elected annually by popular vote of HALA members in April and shall begin serving their year-long terms in May;
- ii. Any member of HALA may nominate himself, herself, or another HALA member for any board position;
- iii. The election shall be organized and carried out by the current LLM Representative;
- iv. The vote shall take place over electronic mail sent to and tallied by the LLM Representative;
- v. The tally released by the LLM Representative shall be the official and final counts;
- vi. Requests for recounts shall not be granted except in extraordinary circumstances pursuant to a vote by the outgoing Executive Board.

#### **Article 6: Process for Amending the Constitution**

- i. Any member of HALA may propose an amendment to the HALA constitution at any time during the official academic semester of Harvard Law School as specified by the Office of the Registrar;
- ii. Any member proposing an amendment to the HALA constitution shall submit the text of the proposed amendment to the President of the organization who shall distribute the text within one week of receipt to the text to HALA listserv;
- iii. All members of HALA shall be eligible to vote on any proposed amendment and such a vote shall take place no later than two weeks following the submission of the proposed amendment;
- iv. The vote shall take place via a secure and confidential online poll, the result of which shall be accessible to all poll respondents;
- v. Two-thirds of the HALA members must vote in the affirmative in order for any proposed amendment to be added to the HALA constitution.