

**CONSTITUTION OF THE
SINGAPORE SOKA ASSOCIATION**

1. This Association shall be known as the Singapore Soka Association.

2. PLACE OF BUSINESS

Its place of business shall be at 10 Tampines Street 81, Singapore 529014 or such other place as the Association may decide subject to the approval of the Registrar of Societies. The address for correspondence shall be at 10 Tampines Street 81, Singapore 529014.

3. OBJECT

The objects of the Association are:

- a. To promote and propagate the Buddhist teachings of Nichiren Daishonin;
- b. To contribute to the attainment of peace, happiness, stability and prosperity of all persons through the teachings of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism;
- c. To organise and conduct study classes, seminars, forums, examinations and discussions relating to Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism;
- d. To promote and encourage moral and spiritual education, cultural activities, community welfare services and charitable activities based on Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism;
- e. To publish and circulate newsletters, literature and materials pertaining to Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism and related articles of interest;
- f. To provide assistance to cultural, educational and charitable institutions where necessary in connection with the advancement of education,

culture and welfare and/or other charitable aims which the Committee may decide from time to time deem expedient;

- g. To initiate and organise religious rites and other functions for the promotion of faith and welfare of its members;
- h. To run a kindergarten to provide pre-primary education programme which aims to equip children with basic language proficiency and numeracy; to facilitate their physical and aesthetic development; and to inculcate in them the desired moral values and attitudes in life.
- i. To do all such other things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects or any of them.

4. MEMBERSHIP AND ADMISSION

The Association shall have three categories of membership, namely Ordinary (Voting) Members, Ordinary (Non-Voting) Members and Associate Members.

a. ORDINARY (VOTING) MEMBERS

- i) Ordinary (voting) membership shall only be open to all Singapore citizens above the age of twenty-one years irrespective of sex, race and status who are of good character and willing to observe the Buddhist teachings of Nichiren Daishonin and to abide by the Rules and Regulations of the Association.
- ii) Every application for ordinary (voting) membership shall be proposed by an Ordinary (Voting) Member, and no applicant shall be admitted as an Ordinary (Voting) Member of the Association until the Committee is satisfied that he/she is a Singapore citizen and approve his/her application. This rule as far as Singapore citizenship status is concerned shall not be altered or deleted.
- iii) All persons who were Ordinary Members of the Association immediately prior to the date on which this Rule 4a. is amended, shall on the effective date of the said amendment, automatically become Ordinary (Voting) Members of the Association, having all the rights to which Ordinary (Voting) Members are entitled to under this Constitution.

b. ORDINARY (NON-VOTING) MEMBERS

- i) Ordinary (non-voting) membership shall only be open to Singapore citizens above the age of sixteen years irrespective of sex and race who are followers of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. This rule as far as Singapore citizenship status is concerned shall not be altered or deleted.
- ii) Ordinary (Non-Voting) Members may participate in all activities organised by the Association, but they shall not, at any time, have any right:
 - (1) to attend any general meetings of the Association (or receive notice of the same);
 - (2) to vote or be elected as officers of the Association;
- iii) All persons who were Associate Members of the Association immediately prior to the date on which this Rule 4b. is amended, shall on the effective date of the said amendment, automatically become Ordinary (Non-Voting) Members of the Association, having all the rights to which Ordinary (Non-Voting) Members are entitled to under this Constitution.

c. ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

- i) The Association may admit non-Singapore citizens, who are followers or believers of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, as Associate Members of the Association.
- ii) All Associate Members may participate in all activities organised by the Association, but they shall not, at any time, have any right:
 - (1) to attend any general meetings (or receive notice of the same);
 - (2) to vote or be elected as officers of the Association; nor
 - (3) over the property, premises or funds of the Association.

d. GENERAL RULES RELATING TO ALL MEMBERS

- i) All applications for membership (of whatever category) shall be made on the application forms prescribed by the Committee from time to time. All applications shall be completed by the applicant, in compliance with the relevant provisions of this Constitution, and submitted to the Committee for approval.

- ii) Admission of applicants for any category of membership shall be at the sole discretion of the Committee who may refuse to admit any person as a member without giving any reason whatsoever for such refusal.
- iii) On the admission of a new member, the Hon Secretary shall register such person as a member by recording the name, address, occupation and other particulars of the member in a Register kept for that purpose.
- iv) All memberships shall be non-transferrable and non-assignable.
- v) Membership in the Ordinary (Non-Voting) Members and Associate Members categories shall be unlimited.
- vi) Unless the Committee otherwise decides, there shall be no entrance or membership fee payable for membership in the Association.
- vii) The Register of Members for all the categories of membership is subject to periodic review and update by the Committee.

5. FUNDS

Until the Committee otherwise decides, the funds of the Association shall be primarily derived from the voluntary donations or contributions by members and well wishers. The funds will be used only in furtherance of the objects of the Association.

6. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

a. RESIGNATION

Any member may resign his membership by giving to the Hon Secretary written notice to that effect and every such notice shall, unless otherwise expressed, be deemed to take effect from the date of receipt by the Hon Secretary of the notice and the Hon Secretary shall acknowledge and record such resignation in the Register of Members.

b. EXPULSION

- i) Subject to Rule 6b(ii), the Committee shall be empowered at its discretion, to expel any member from the Association when the member is determined by the Committee:-
- (1) to have ceased being a follower or believer of the Buddhist teachings of Nichiren Daishonin;
 - (2) to have breached any provision of the Constitution, Rules and By-Laws of the Association; or
 - (3) to have done some act against the interests or harmony of the Association; or
 - (4) to have made use of the name of the Association for personal gain.
- ii) Before a member is expelled, his conduct shall be inquired into by the Management Committee or a Disciplinary Committee and/or Board of Inquiry appointed by the Management, and he shall be given full opportunity to defend himself and to justify or explain his conduct. If a majority of the Management Committee are of the opinion that the member is guilty of such conduct as aforesaid and that the member has failed to justify or explain it satisfactorily, the Management Committee shall call upon the member to resign and, if he does not resign, shall expel him.

c. EFFECTS OF TERMINATION

Any person shall upon ceasing to be a member, forfeit all right to claim upon and access to the Association, its property, premises and funds. Expelled members shall be barred from participating in any of the Association's activities.

7. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

a. COMPOSITION OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The management of the affairs of the Association shall be vested in the Management Committee consisting of the following:-

- 1 Chairman
- 2 Vice Chairmen
- 1 Honorary Secretary
- 1 Assistant Honorary Secretary
- 1 Honorary Treasurer
- 1 Assistant Honorary Treasurer
- 5 to 8 Committee Members

Unless with the prior approval in writing of the Registrar or an Assistant Registrar of Societies, majority of the Management Committee Members shall be Singapore Citizens. In addition, the Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer and their deputies shall be Singapore Citizens or Singapore Permanent Residents. Foreign Diplomats shall not serve as Management Committee Members.

b. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- i) All officers shall be elected at each annual general meeting and shall hold office until the next following annual general meeting.
- ii) Names of the officers shall be proposed and seconded at the annual general meeting and election will be on a simple majority vote for members.
- iii) Officers shall only be eligible for election into the post of Chairman, Vice Chairman, Honorary Secretary or Honorary Treasurer, when they have served on the Committee for at least two terms.
- iv) Except for the Hon Treasurer and Asst Hon Treasurer, who may be only re-elected to the same or related post for a further term of one year, all other officers may be re-elected.
- v) Paid staff, who are ordinary voting members, can be elected into the Committee. However, the total number of paid staff should not comprise more than one-third of the Committee. They are not allowed to vote on matters pertaining to the remuneration of the staff employed by the Association.
- vi) Upon the death, incapacity or resignation of any officer, the remaining members of the Committee shall have the power, from time to time, to co-opt any Ordinary (Voting) Member as an officer to fill up such vacancy. Any such co-opted officer shall hold office for such period of time as

determined by the Committee. Any changes in the Committee shall be notified to the Registrar of Societies and Commissioner of Charities within two (2) weeks of the change.

c. COMMITTEE MEETING

- i) A Committee meeting shall be held at least once in every two months, and shall be convened on such date and at such time as the Chairman (or in his absence, the Vice-Chairman) may deem fit. The committee members shall be notified of the meeting at least three days in advance.
- ii) At least half of the officers of the Committee, inclusive of either the Chairman or the Vice Chairman, must be present for its proceedings to form a quorum.
- iii) All resolutions of the Committee shall be deemed passed if approved by a simple majority of the officers present thereat.
- iv) A resolution of the Committee shall also be deemed valid and effective, as if it had been passed at a Committee meeting duly convened and held, if it is signed by not less than half of the committee members, inclusive of the Chairman, Hon Secretary and Hon Treasurer. Any such resolution may consist of several documents in like form, each signed by one or more of the three key officers.
- v) Whenever a member of the Management Committee in any way, directly or indirectly, has an interest in a transaction or project or other matter to be discussed at a meeting, the member shall disclose the nature of his interest before the discussion on the matter begins.
- vi) The member concerned should not participate in the discussion or vote on the matter, and should also offer to withdraw from the meeting and the Management Committee shall decide if this should be accepted.

d. POWERS OF COMMITTEE

- i) The Committee shall have power to authorise running expenditure up to a sum of \$350,000.00 per month from the Association's funds for the Association's purposes.

- ii) The Committee shall have power to employ, supervise, pay and dismiss such servants or agents as they may deem necessary.
- iii) The duties of the Committee shall include organising and supervising the daily activities of the Association; and the Committee shall have such administrative powers as may be necessary for properly carrying out the objects of the Association in accordance with these Rules.
- iv) The Committee may, at any time, and from time to time, make by-laws to regulate the conduct of any or all categories of members, which by-laws shall be binding on all such members.
- v) The Committee shall have the power and authority to deposit and/or invest the Association's surplus funds and assets with banks or financial institutions with the objective to generate reliable and safe income. The exercise of such power and authority by the Committee shall be made with prudence and care to protect the funds of the Association.

8. OFFICE BEARERS

The duties of the office bearers are as follows:

- a. The Chairman shall attend to the general supervision of the management of the various religious activities and conduct all general and committee meetings. He shall also represent the Association in its dealings with outside persons.
- b. The Vice Chairman shall assist the Chairman and deputise during the latter's absence.
- c. The Hon Secretary shall keep all records, except financial, of the Association and shall be responsible for their correctness. He will keep minutes of all general and committee meetings.
- d. The Asst Hon Secretary shall assist the Hon Secretary and deputise during the latter's absence.
- e. The Hon Treasurer shall keep all funds, collect and disburse all monies on behalf of the Association. He shall keep an account of monetary transactions and shall be responsible for their correctness. He is authorised to expend up to \$15,000.00 per month for petty expenses on behalf of the Association. He shall not keep

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more than \$15,000.00 in the form of cash and money in excess of this amount shall be deposited in a bank or other financial institution.

- f. Cheques for withdrawals from the Association's bank account(s) shall be signed by the Chairman or Vice Chairman, and the Hon Secretary in addition to the Treasurer.
- g. The Asst Hon Treasurer shall assist the Hon Treasurer and in the latter's absence will sign cheques, etc. for withdrawals from the bank in addition to the Chairman and the Hon Secretary.
- h. The committee members shall assist in the general affairs of the Association.

9. GENERAL MEETING

- a. The supreme authority of the society is vested in a General Meeting of the members.
- b. An annual general meeting will be held not later than the last day of April each year. At other times, a general meeting may be called by the Chairman on the request in writing of 30 or more Ordinary (Voting) Members and may be called at any time by order of the Committee.
- c. At least two weeks' notice will be given of an annual general meeting and at least ten days' notice of any other general meeting to the Ordinary (Voting) Members of the Association. Particulars of its agenda will be posted on the Association's notice board four days in advance of the meeting. The following points will be considered at the annual general meeting:
 - i) The previous year's account and report of the Committee.
 - ii) The election of office bearers for the following year.
 - iii) Matters concerning the activities of the Association.
- d. Any Ordinary (Voting) Member who wishes to place an item on the agenda of a general meeting may do so provided he gives notice to the Hon Secretary one week before the meeting is due to be held.
- e. The quorum for a general meeting shall be one quarter of the total ordinary (voting) membership of the Association

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- f. In the event of there being no quorum, the meeting shall be adjourned to the same day in the following week at a place and time to be appointed and should the number then present be insufficient to form a quorum, those present shall be considered a quorum, but they have no power to alter, amend or make additions to any of the existing rules.
- g. The omission to give notice of a general meeting of the Association or the non-receipt of a notice of such meeting by any person entitled to receive such notice shall not invalidate any thing done at such meeting.
- h. All resolutions tabled at the general meeting shall be deemed passed where it is approved by a simple majority vote of the Ordinary (Voting) Members present at the general meeting.

10. AUDIT

- a. In accordance with the provision in Section 14 of the Charities Act 1994, an approved company auditor shall be appointed to audit the Association's financial statements of accounts.
- b. The appointment of the Auditor shall be effected with a resolution adopted by the Management Committee.
- c. The Auditor will be required to audit each year's account and present a report upon them to the Annual General Meeting. They may also be required by the Chairman to audit the Association's accounts for any period within their service and at any date and make a report to the Chairman.

11. TRUSTEES

- a. If the Association at any time acquires any immovable property, such property shall be vested in trustees (who need not be members of the Association) who shall be appointed from time to time by the Committee. All trustees shall be required to execute appropriate declarations of trust of such property in favour of the Association. The trustees shall not effect any sale or mortgage of property without the approval of the General Meeting.

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- b. Any trustee may at any time resign his trusteeship, subject to his proper transfer of all property of the Association vested in his name to the remaining or new trustees.
- c. If a trustee dies or becomes a lunatic or of unsound mind or moves permanently or is absent from the Republic of Singapore for a period of one year, he shall be deemed to have resigned his trusteeship.
- d. If a trustee is guilty of misconduct of such kind as to render it undesirable that he continues as a trustee, the Committee may forthwith remove him from his trusteeship.
- e. Vacancies in the trusteeship may be filled at a general meeting, but the number shall not be greater than five or less than two.
- f. Notice of any proposal to remove a trustee from his trusteeship or to appoint a new trustee to fill a vacancy must be given by affixing in the premises of the Association a document containing such proposal at least two weeks before the meeting at which the proposal is to be discussed. The result of such meeting shall then be notified to the Registrar of Societies and the Commissioner of Charities for approval.
- g. Only Singapore citizens shall be trustees. This rule shall not be altered or deleted.
- h. The address of each immovable property, name of each trustee and any subsequent change must be notified to the Registrar of Societies and Commissioner of Charities.

12. PROHIBITIONS

- a. Gambling of any kind, excluding the promotion or conduct of a private lottery which has been permitted under the Private Lotteries Act Cap 250, is forbidden on the Association's premises. The introduction of materials for gambling or drug taking and, of bad characters into the premises is prohibited.
- b. The funds of the Association shall not be used to pay the fines of members who have been convicted in court. The Association shall not stand bail or guarantor for any person.

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Last edition 2013*

- c. The Association shall not attempt to restrict or in any other manner interfere with trade or prices or engage in any trade union activity as defined in any written law relating to Trade Unions for the time being in force in Singapore.
- d. The Association shall not hold any lottery, whether confined to its members or not, in the name of the Association or its office bearers, Committee or member.
- e. The Association shall not indulge in any political activity or allow its funds and/or premises to be used for political purposes.

13. AMENDMENT TO RULES

No alteration or addition to these Rules shall be made except as approved by a resolution passed by a majority of the Ordinary (Voting) Members who are present at a general meeting called for such purpose, and they shall not come into force without the prior sanction of the Registrar of Societies and the Commissioner of Charities.

14. INTERPRETATION

In the event of any question or matter arising out of any point which is not expressly provided for in the Rules, the Committee shall have the power to use its own discretion to determine the same, which determination shall be final and binding on all members.

15. DISSOLUTION AND CESSATION OF CHARITY STATUS

- a. The Association shall not be dissolved except with the consent of not less than 3/5 of the members of the Association for the time being resident in Singapore, expressed either in person or by proxy at a general meeting convened for the purpose, or by postal vote.
- b. In the event of the Association being dissolved as provided above, and that the Association ceases to be a registered charity under the Charities Act, all debts and liabilities legally incurred on behalf of the Association shall be fully discharged, and the remaining funds will be contributed to charity with similar objects in Singapore which are registered under the Charities Act, and as the members of

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the Association may determine at the General Meeting, unless otherwise allowed by the Commissioner of Charities.

- c. Notice of dissolution shall be given within seven days of the dissolution to the Registrar of Societies and the Commissioner of Charities.

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