

JERRY WHILDRAVE Hen 63

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**COSAS**

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CONGRESS OF  
SOUTH AFRICAN  
STUDENTS

**Constitution**

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We the students in South Africa regarding ourselves first as members of society before we are students and BELIEVING that students have a responsibility to society, that students are morally and spiritually obliged to contribute constructively towards the welfare of society and that the unity of students is the vital key to the realisation of our objectives. THEREFORE RESOLVES to establish an organisation as set out below.

#### 1. NAME:

The Congress of South African Students, herein-after referred to as COSAS.

#### 2. OBJECTS:

- 2.1. To normalise the relationship between students, teachers and parents.
- 2.2. To create a spirit of trust and co-operation between students and parents.

- 2.3. To create a spirit of trust, responsibility, understanding and creative companionship between students.
- 2.4. To impress on the student the essence of his being even after completion of his studies.
- 2.5. To strive towards an education dynamic, free and compulsory for the betterment of society.
- 2.6. To become practically involved in projects contributing to the improvement of COSAS in pursuance of the above objects.

#### 3. MEMBERSHIP:

- 3.1. Membership shall be open to all students in South Africa.
- 3.2. Branch membership shall be open to areas which have at least four members of COSAS, subject to the acceptance of the National Council.
- 3.3. Students who are members of SRC's affiliated to COSAS may become members of COSAS.
- 3.4. The membership fee for all members of COSAS shall be R1.00 per annum.

#### 4. NATIONAL CONGRESS OF COSAS:

- 4.1. The National Congress shall be the supreme policy body of COSAS and shall meet at least once a year.
- 4.2. The National Congress shall be constituted as follows: Members of the National Executive Committee shall each have one vote. Branches may nominate up to five of their members as delegates to the National Congress, and each eligible member shall have one vote. Members in areas where there are no branches shall enjoy the same nomination and voting rights as branch delegates.
- 4.3. The chairperson shall have both a deliberative and a casting vote at the Congress.
- 4.4. The National Congress shall elect the members of the National Executive Committee by majority vote.
- 4.5. In addition to the annual National Congress, further meetings of the National Congress shall be convened in the following circumstances: When the National Executive Committee so resolves by majority vote. When one third of the branches petition the National Executive Committee for a meeting of the National Congress.

#### 5. STRUCTURE:

##### 5.1. NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

5.1.1. The National Executive Committee shall consist of the following members;

- |                       |                             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. President          | 5. Two fulltime organisers  |
| 2. Vice-president     | 6. Publicity secretary      |
| 3. General secretary  | 7. Administrative secretary |
| 4. National Organiser | 8. Treasurer                |

5.1.2. Members of the Executive Committee must be members of COSAS, and shall be elected to their office at the National Congress.

5.1.3. Members of the Executive Committee shall normally hold office for a period of two years, and may be re-elected for a second term.

5.1.4. The Executive Committee shall meet at least four times per annum.

5.1.5. The National Executive Committee is charged with carrying out the decisions and purposes of the National Congress and the National Executive Council.

5.1.6. The National Executive Committee shall notify every branch before it co-opts any person.



## 5.2. NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

- 5.2.1. The National Executive Council shall consist of:  
the members of the National Executive Committee.  
Two delegates of each regional committee  
two representatives of the Executive  
any two members of every branch not included in a regional committee.
- 5.2.2. The National Executive Council shall be convened four times per annum.
- 5.2.3. The National Executive Council is responsible for making decisions to enact the resolution of the National Congress.

## 5.3. REGIONAL COMMITTEES

- 5.3.1. Regional committees shall be formed in areas which have three or more COSAS branches.
- 5.3.2. Regional committees shall be elected by the Committees of all branches in the region.
- 5.3.3. The following members shall be elected to the regional committee:

- |                     |                             |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Chairperson      | 4. Organiser                |
| 2. Vice-chairperson | 5. Publicity secretary      |
| 3. Secretary        | 6. Three additional members |

- 5.3.4. Regional Executive Committee members shall hold office for the duration of one year and may be re-elected.
- 5.3.5. Regional committees shall meet at least once a month, unless the situation demands otherwise.

## 5.4. BRANCH COMMITTEES

- 5.4.1. A branch of COSAS may be established, subject to the acceptance of the National Council (where there is no regional committee);  
where there are at least four members for COSAS, at individual schools in rural or isolated areas,  
where a number of schools combine to form a COSAS branch, either schools with affiliated SRC's or schools without SRCs
- 5.4.2. members, SRC members, or school members as the case may be, may meet to elect the members of a branch committee.

- 5.4.3. COSAS branch committees shall consist of the following members:

- |                     |                              |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Chairperson      | 4. Organiser                 |
| 2. Vice-chairperson | 5. Publicity secretary       |
| 3. Secretary        | 6. Three additional members. |

- 5.4.4. Branch members shall be elected at the beginning of the year and hold office for that year, but may be re-elected.
- 5.4.5. COSAS branches shall meet at least once a month.

## 5.5. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCILS (SRC)

Believing that autonomous SRCs are a necessity at all schools, and wishing to affiliate with them, COSAS recommends the following constitution:

- 5.5.1. Realising that students need greater understanding of each other as students, or the school staff, and of matters concerning education, and realising that teachers need great co-operation in their educational endeavours, and a serious approach from students, we hereby resolve to establish an SRC as set out below:

### 5.5.2. NAME:

The Students Representative Council; herein-after referred to as SRC.

### 5.5.3. AIMS

1. To assist the staff to instill responsibility, determination, farsightedness and dignity into students.
2. To activate students in all matters effecting the student concerning the school, their education and development.
3. To represent the student body wherever necessary.
4. To promote students development from the grassroots level.
5. To promote the aims and objectives of COSAS amongst students.

### 5.5.4. STRUCTURE

1. The SRC will divide its members into the following committees:
  - a. The Executive Committee
  - b. The Entertainment Committee
  - c. The Programmes Committee



- d. The Sports Committee
- e. The Education Committee
- f. The disciplinary Committee
- g. The Welfare Committee

2. Each committee shall have the right to incorporate other students.
3. Committees may seek advice and assistance from the school staff.
4. Committees shall design or amend their own constitution or structure at their own discretion, subject to the approval of the SRC.
5. The SRC shall encourage Christian Movements to be established and have a strong working relationship with them.

#### 5.5.5. MEETINGS

1. The Executive shall meet from time to time as it decides for the proper running of the SRC.
2. The Executive shall call mass meetings of the student body whenever it deems fit.
3. Other committees may convene meetings in matters within the sphere of their responsibility, with approval of the SRCs.
4. Mass meetings by any committee must be called with the approval of the Executive committee.
5. Members of committees shall be elected at a meeting of all students registered as members of the SRC, and are normally elected in February of each year.  
Members of committees shall hold office for one school year but may be re-elected during their period of attendance at a particular school, unless a contradictory ruling is made by the disciplinary committee.

#### 5.5.6. MEMBERSHIP

Any student at a school may register as a member of the SRC of that school. Students who are members of SRCs affiliated to COSAS may become members of COSAS.

#### 5.5.7. AFFILIATION

All Student Representative Councils are encouraged to affiliate to COSAS.

#### 6. DUTIES OF COMMITTEES:

##### 6.1. NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Shell run the activities of COSAS.  
Shell review the progress of the Organisation.  
Shell ensure adherence to the principles and policies of COSAS.  
Shell only have power to recommend changes.  
Shell be bound by decisions of the National Council and the National Congress.  
Shell carry out the decisions of the National Council and the National Congress.  
Shell be entitled to exercise its discretion, 1. in the event of circumstances arising which render the implementation of such decisions virtually impossible or, 2. if it is impossible to convene a meeting of the National Council within a reasonable period.

##### 6.2. NATIONAL COUNCIL

Shell run the affairs of the organisation.  
Shell review the progress of the Regions and Branches.  
Shell decide upon recommendations from the National Executive committee.  
Shell supervise the Regions and Branches of the organisation.  
Shell call the annual National Congress.

##### 6.3. REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Shell supervise all aspects and activities of branches under its jurisdiction.  
Shell review the progress of the Branches.  
Shell act as the liaison between the National Executive Committee and the local branches.

##### 6.4. BRANCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Shell supervise all the aspects and activities of the members or SRCs within the area of its jurisdiction.  
Shell review the progress of SRCs.  
Shell be responsible for all National projects and programmes.



in its area.

Shall have the discretion to run its own projects.  
WHERE THERE IS NO REGIONAL COMMITTEE OR SRC, the BRANCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE shall liaise directly with the National Executive Committee.

Assume the duties of the Regional Committee.  
Assume the duties of the SRCs.

#### 6.5. SRC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Shall be responsible for the administration of the sub-committees.

Shall review the progress of the sub-committees.

Shall act as the liaison between students and staff, and between students and the local COSAS Branch.

Shall keep the students informed about COSAS activities, and take COSAS reports directly to the students.

Shall organise seminars and leadership training for students.

Shall arrange a regular circular with contributions from stu-

dents to assist the students generally and to form an historical document of the school in the course of the school in the course of time.

#### 6.6. DUTIES OF SRC SUB-COMMITTEES

##### 6.6.1. DEBATING COMMITTEE

Organise regular debates on educative topics amongst the students.

Decide on fixed debating days to the convenience of all classes.

Organise debates between the school and students in other institutions to assist in establishing understanding and harmony between students.

Extend its concerns and activities to other schools where possible.

##### 6.6.2. EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Evaluate and assist in solving difficulties experienced by students in the different classes.

Plan and stimulate educative discussions in classes between

classes.

Organise special tuition for students where necessary.

##### 6.6.3. SPORTS COMMITTEE

Organise sporting activities and care for the school facilities.

Arrange a correct balance between sporting and academic activities for athletes.

##### 6.6.4. Entertainment and Cultural Committees

Evaluate the films, plays and other functions available for student experience and make necessary arrangements.

Organise discussions, readings, writing and other presentations of a cultural nature.

##### 6.6.5. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

Seek to promote a well disciplined student body, without the use of brutal or emotional measures, in conjunction with the staff.

Stimulate students to discuss the importance of discipline, particularly over their school work, punctuality and co-operation, and their responsibility to the student body.

#### 7. DUTIES OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

##### 7.1. THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

###### 7.1.1. President

Shall be the chief executive officer.

Shall represent COSAS at all times.

Shall preside over all meetings of the National Executive, National Council, and National Congress.

Shall issue statements on behalf of COSAS, with the approval of the other Executive members.

###### 7.1.2. Vice-president

Shall deputise for the President.

Shall assist the president in his duties.

Shall carry out assignments for the National Executive.

###### 7.1.3. Secretary General

Shall be responsible for the correspondence of the organisation.

Shall keep the records of correspondence.

Shall keep the register of all meetings on behalf of the President.



Shell conduct all correspondence and keep records.  
 Shell register members and issue membership cards.  
 Shell administer financial matters in accordance with the instructions of the Committee.

7.2.4. Organiser

Shell carry out the projects of the organisation.  
 Shell be responsible for organising meetings and venues.  
 Shell co-ordinate activities with the Region/Branch/SRC.

7.2.5. Publicity Secretary

Shell be responsible for the distribution of literature, and pamphlets.  
 Shell attend to the production and distribution of local publications.  
 Shell obtain approval for local publications from the National Publicity Secretary.

7.2.6. Additional Members

Shell assist in the duties of the Executive.  
 Shell deputise in case of the absence of an officer or member.

Shell carry out assignments as requested by the Executive.

8. STAFF MEMBERS

The National Executive Council may employ full time assistance from persons who are no longer students to assist in the work of COSAS, with job descriptions and conditions of engagement approved by the National Congress. Such staff members shall at all times be subject to the direction of the National Congress through the National Executive, and be appointed with a specific job description and responsibility to one of the officers of the National Executive. Staff members may be invited to attend any committee, council or Congress, but shall not be voting members thereof.

9. DISCIPLINE

The National Council shall serve as the Disciplinary Committee when charges are brought against a member of COSAS, or a committee member. The National Executive, Regional Committees and Branch Committees shall NOT have power to act against a member on matters of expulsion, without the mandate of the National

Council. The member concerned shall have the right to present his/her case, and to appeal against any decision.

10. ASSOCIATES

Associate status may be accorded to any individual or organisation upon application to the National Executive Committee. The National Executive Committee shall retain an absolute discretion whether or not accord associate status to any person or organisation so applying, and conflict being remedied at the ensuing National Congress.

Persons and organisations enjoying associate status shall be kept informed of the activities of COSAS, and shall be invited to meetings of COSAS when deemed desirable by COSAS. They shall however have no right to vote at any COSAS meeting.

11. LEGAL PERSONA AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

COSAS shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession and the power to hold property in its own name.  
 The signatures of two members of the Executive Committee shall

be necessary to operate any banking account of COSAS. At least three signatories must be approved by the appropriate Committees in each case.

All payments (except Petty Cash disbursements) shall be made by way of cheque payments.

12. AMENDMENT

Any provisions of this Constitution may be amended by a resolution supported by two thirds of those present and voting at a National Congress of COSAS.

13. ACCEPTANCE

All the above provisions of this Constitution were formally accepted by the required majority at a Meeting of the National Congress of COSAS held

at ----- or -----

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