

**By Laws of  
Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council, USA  
New York, USA**

**ARTICLE I  
Name and Logo**

The name of this organization shall be Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad, USA, Inc. This organization may also be referred to as Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council, USA or may be represented in its abbreviated form BHBCUC, USA. The Organization shall maintain effective communications and relations with the Central Committee of Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council located in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The organization shall have a logo registered with USPTO. The mark consists of a black bordered pigeon with its frontal part in a red circle. Above around its head inscribed "Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council, USA".

**ARTICLE II  
Address**

The Headquarters of this organization shall be physically located within the geographic area of the metropolitan the City of New York within the State of New York.

**Article III  
Jurisdiction**

This organization shall function throughout the United States and shall have jurisdictions over all state or branch organizations bearing the title "Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council" within the U.S.

**Article IV  
Mission Statement**

Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council is a national organization and united platform of the Hindu, Buddhist, Christian religious people and all other indigenous and ethnic minorities living in the USA with the strategic goal:

- i) To ameliorate the situation-political, economic and social- of the Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, Indigenous and ethnic minorities living in Bangladesh through:
  - (a) Human rights advocacy in the USA, in the UN and before other Governments and Non-governmental organizations;
  - (b) Rehabilitation of the victims;
  - (c) Seeking punishments of the perpetrators-direct or indirect;
  - (d) Drawing attention of the Bangladesh governments;
  - (e) International human rights forums including but not limited to International Court of

- Justice, UN Human Rights Commission etc.;
- (f) Asking and recovering compensations from the Government of Bangladesh for the victims of atrocities due to the direct action(s), negligence, inability, connivance of the Government, its different departments, agencies or by the private group or groups;
  - (g) Holding the Government of Bangladesh responsible and accountable in all relevant world forums;
  - ii) To help religious, indigenous and ethnic minorities of Bangladeshi origin in seeking remedy for the past injustices, and
  - iii) To ensure religious freedom and equal rights both in theory, under the Constitution of Bangladesh and other international Human Rights instruments, and in practice.
  - iv) To provide framework for adequate protections for the religious and ethnic minorities of Bangladesh from future violations against them through awareness, advocacy, interfaith dialogues, and other peaceful and legal means.
  - v) To ensure religious freedom, equal civil, political and social rights by promoting, fostering, and upholding the principal tenets of Independence War of Bangladesh, particularly the Secularism, as well as ensuring a just, peaceful, dignified and humane living environment for all religious, indigenous and ethnic minorities in Bangladesh based on equal rights and equitable and proportionate representations in legislature, executive and in judiciary of Bangladesh.

#### **ARTICLE V** **Advisory Board**

The Board, by resolution adopted by a majority of the entire Board, may designate an Advisory Board. Such Advisory Board shall consist of persons who are support in the purpose and principles of the Organization. The advisory Board and each member thereof shall serve at the pleasure of the Board of Governors. Any vacancy in the Advisory Board may be filled and the Board may remove any member of the Advisory Board, either with or without cause. The Advisory Board individually or collectively shall advise the Board as to any matters that are put before it by the Board concerning the organization. The Advisory Board shall not have or purport to exercise any powers of the Board nor shall it have the power to bind the Organization in any manner.

#### **ARTICLE VI** **Chapters**

- i) Members residing or working in a given state, county, municipality, or a regional or metropolitan area may form a chapter, or members may join or form virtual chapters that are not tied to a geographic region.
- ii) A chapter shall consist of no fewer than eleven members, formulate bylaws consistent with these bylaws, convene and operate for the stated purpose of the national organization, and elect its officers.
- iii) Chapters shall be chartered by the national organization upon meeting these requirements.
- iv) The policies and programs of each chapter shall be defined by its members so long as such

- policies and programs are not contrary to those enacted by the national bylaws.
- v) Membership in a chapter and voting privileges in the election of chapter officers shall be open to all members who meet the chapter dues and length-of-membership requirements, if any; provided however that members may be voting members of only one chapter.
  - vi) Each Chapter shall elect one person to act as liaison between the Chapter and national Executive Committee and s/he shall be ex officio member of the national Executive Committee.
  - vii) Provisions regarding requirement of certain number/percentage of personal presence in meetings may not be applicable to the members so selected by any Chapter(s). They may fulfill this requirement through proxy voting.

The policies and programs of each state organization shall be defined by its members and chapters so long as such policies and programs are not contrary to those established by the national bylaws. Chapter(s) formed in any given geographic area shall work primarily with the State organization of the given State. Virtual Chapter(s) shall work closely with the national organization.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **International Affiliates**

The national organization may establish affiliates or may affiliate with existing organizations in other countries to promote the cause of minority Hindu, Buddhist, Christian and indigenous people of Bangladesh.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Board of Governors**

As an entity of the state, nonprofit organizations are guided by laws created by both Federal and State governments. The responsibility to set policies consistent with the public mission and purpose of the organization, oversee the operation, and to ensure its conformance with the law shall be vested on the Board of Governors. Board of Governors shall assert its authority to secure that the nonprofit's mission is fulfilled and the organization is held accountable to the government, its members, and to the general public. **A member of the Board of Governors shall be elected for a period of three years.**

Board of Governors shall formulate its internal **operating structure** as it see fit besides mandatory appointment of a **Chairman** and **Member Secretary** from its rank, by internal election or selection, at the beginning of the new term subject to restructure as may be necessary or in the events of vacancies to serve out the remainder of the term. These officials shall have NO executive power or extraordinary privilege except facilitating the meetings of the Board of Governors and communicating the Board's decisions. All members of the Board of Governors shall be coequal. Members of Board of Governors, if so desire, may attend at the Executive Committee meetings and participate in its deliberations and decision makings.

The Board of Governors shall be comprised of 15 members including three Presidents, Secretary and Treasurer of the Executive Committee. The latter five members shall be ex-officio members of the Board.

- i. The three Presidents, one from each of the three religious

communities in the organization, shall sit on the Board of Governors in "ex officio" capacity and enjoy the full faith and prestige as the members of the body.

- ii. **General Secretary** and the **Treasurer** shall sit on the Board of Governors in "ex officio" capacity and enjoy the full faith and prestige as the members of the body.

#### **A. Powers.**

- (i) The Board of Governors is the governing board of the Organization and it supervises, manages, and controls all of the affairs and business activities, and establishes all of the policies of the Organization.
- (ii) The Board shall supervise the election of Governors and officers and, if there is a vacancy in an elected Governorship or office, fill that vacancy, as set out in these Bylaws.
- (iii) The Board acts as an appellate body to hear charges brought against a Chapter officer or member seeking that individual's removal from Chapter office or membership.
- (iv) By an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Governors present and voting at a meeting, the Board of Governors may take whatever disciplinary action against a Member of the Organization it deems appropriate upon:
  - (1) The report, communication, recommendation by the Executive Committee or by any member of good standing; or
  - (2) The report and recommendation of a Chapter on matters involving misconduct in a professional relation or misconduct of any nature warranting disciplinary action against the Member;
  - (3) Its own initiative, whether the Member belongs to the national organization or to any Chapter.

#### **B. Initial Board of Governors.**

The initial Board of Governors shall be selected at first meeting of the Board including those individuals named in the Association's Articles of Incorporation and other individuals as nominated by the members of the Convening Committee,

The Board of Governors shall be comprised of the three Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, and other who will be elected by the Membership (the "**Elected Governors**").

Attendance requirements shall equally apply to all members of the Board of Governors, Executive Committee and Members to be aspiring to be eligible to vote in the

AGM.

If any member of the Board of Governor, Executive Committee fails to attend 50% of the meetings/events in a given year s/he shall be deemed to have abandoned their respective position and voting right, as the case may be, but s/he shall remain as a general member of the organization. Member of the Board of Governor shall serve for 3 years or until his/her removal, resignation from or abandonment of the position, whichever comes first.

**C. Resignation.**

- (a) A Governor may resign at any time by delivering a signed notice of resignation to the Executive Director or the Secretary of the Organization.
- (b) A resignation is effective when the notice is delivered unless the notice specifies a later time.

**D. Removal.**

**(a) Removal by the Board of Governors.**

- (I) A Governor may be censured, suspended, or removed by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Governors present and voting at a meeting after a fair hearing held before the Board of Governors.
- (II) A Governor may appeal the decision of the Board of Governors to the Membership, which may overrule the action of the Board of Governors by a majority vote of the Members in good standing present and voting at a meeting of the Members.

**E. Removal by the Members.**

A Governor may be removed by action of the Members only for cause by a majority vote of the Members in good standing present and voting at a meeting of the Members.

- (i) For purposes of this Section 4.8(B), "cause" means:
- (ii) A Governor ceases to meet the requirements for Membership of the Organization as set forth in the byelaws of the Organization.

**F. Selection of a Governor in case of Death, Resignation or Removal:**

In case of a member of the Board of Governors resigns, is removed or his/her post becomes vacant due to his/her death the BoG may elect a new Governor for the rest of the period of his/her term.

**ARTICLE IX  
Executive Committee:**

The organization's committee may be comprised of 71 members in total but the Board of Governors may increase the number to accommodate more leaders for the benefit of the organization. It shall function according to the by-laws of the organization as adopted. It shall also operate within the rules and guidelines set during regular meetings and AGM. The number of members may be increased by the Executive Committee with prior consent by the Board of Governors. This increase in number of the Executive Committee requires to be approved by the next AGM.

## **ARTICLE X Membership**

- i) **Qualification:** All Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, Indigenous people of Bangladeshi origin of the age of 18 or older who live in the USA who conform to the mission and goal of the organization shall be eligible to apply for memberships.

Process: after the words “approval by the” new words “Board of Governors and the” shall be inserted. (before it was by the Executive Committee only. But in view of the fact that now we have smaller BoG and Exec Comt everyone can join and decide).

After ii) Process and before iii) Fee: a new sub-paragraph iii)

Classification of Members: To run the organization efficiently there shall two categories of members: i. Member and ii. General Member.

- i. Member: Members of the organization shall be entitled to take part in decision making process including but not limited to casting their votes in electing/ selecting BoG, Executive Committee and in accepting/approving a new Member or General Member. BoG and Executive Committee shall be responsible in making decisions to include/elevate a General Member and offer Membership based on his/her loyalty, dedication, contribution and future potential of that general member.
- ii. General Member: All Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, Indigenous people of Bangladeshi origin and of the age of 18 or older who live in the USA and who conform to the mission and goal of the organization shall be eligible to apply for membership. Any application for membership shall be considered as an application for General Membership.

Sub-paragraph iii) of Article X (previously V) shall be replaced with the following sub-paragraph iv) & v):

iv) Fees: A minimum of \$20 a month fee shall levied on a Member totaling minimum \$240 a year. This fee can be paid each month or in full in the beginning of the year. A General Member shall pay a minimum fee of \$10 per month or minimum \$120 a year. The fee of \$120 can be paid in full at the beginning of the year.

v) Life Membership: Any Member or General Member can be a Life Member of the

organization by paying \$500 at one time. Life members of organization will not be subject to renewal of the membership. But the condition of attendance shall remain applicable for Members to be eligible for voting in any decision making process. A Member who becomes a Life Member by making payment of \$500 may be moved his Membership to General Membership if s/he fails to attend at least 50% meetings and other programs of the organization for consecutive two years without sufficient and valid reason to the satisfaction of the BoG and Executive Committee. A member of the BoG shall pay \$300 in addition to Membership fee of minimum of \$20 per month or, in case of a Life Member, even after payment of \$500. This provision prevails notwithstanding any other provision may therein in the Bye-laws in contradiction to it.

**II. Limitations:** A member in good standing shall-

- a. Be a member in the organization for at least one year.
- b. Not be more than six (6) months in arrears of his/ her membership dues.
- c. Attend or participate in at least 50% of all the events, activities, and/or the required meetings covering two-year period.
- d. Not be a subject of disciplinary proceedings.
- e. Not convicted of any crime, felony or crime involving moral turpitude.

**Article XI**

**Organizational Structure**

**I. Executive Committee (EC):** The Executive Committee shall be the face of the organization to public in general. The organization's Executive Committee may be comprised of **71** members in total excluding the Board of Governors. It shall function according to the by-laws of the organization as adopted. It shall also operate within the rules and guidelines set during regular meetings and AGM. The number of members may be increased by the Executive Committee with prior consent by the Board of Governors. This increase in number of the Executive Committee requires to be approved by the next AGM.

There shall be three Presidents representing all three religious communities-Hindu, Buddhist and Christian, One General Secretary, One Treasurer, Twenty Secretaries, and twenty six Executive Members.

**Executive Committee:** The Executive Committee is the primary functioning body of the organization empowered with running the day to day operations of the organization. The Executive Committee shall be consisted of the following offices:

- i. **President:** The President shall preside at the Executive Committee meetings, provide executive leadership at all levels of the organization, and approve all formal communications and statement of policies for the

Foundation. He/She shall present at each Annual General Meeting an annual report of the organization. He/she shall ensure all books, reports, and certificates required by law are properly kept or filed. He/She shall have such powers as may be reasonably construed as belonging to the Chief Executive of any organization. The Presidents from the three communities shall chair the organization's meetings and dispense executive authority by rotations.

**Secretariat:** The Secretariat under the leadership of the Executive Presidents and General Secretary and with supervision of the General Secretary and Joint Secretaries shall implement the directives of and shall be accountable to the Board of Governors. Distribution of responsibilities among the secretaries shall be administered by the General Secretary during orientation according to the standard practice and precedence, and in consultation with the Executive Presidents.

Secretariat shall be comprised of, but not limited to, the following departments:

- (a) One (1) General Secretary
- (b) Four (4) Joint Secretaries
- (c) Four Organizing Secretaries
- (d) One (1) Publication Secretary
- (e) One (1) Foreign Affairs Secretary
- (f) One (1) Legal Affairs Secretary
- (g) One (1) Education & Cultural Secretary
- (h) One (1) Tribal & Indigenous Affairs Secretary
- (i) One (1) Research & Legislative Affairs Secretary
- (j) One (1) Women's Affairs Secretary
- (k) One (1) Communication & Publicity Secretary (1)
- (l) One (1) Information & Technology Secretary
- (m) One (1) Joint Treasurer
- (n) One (1) Office Secretary

The Joint Secretaries and the Organizing Secretaries shall oversee the organization's activities in specific geographic area(s).

- iii. **Treasurer:** Treasurer shall have the care and custody of all monies belonging to the organization and shall inform the Presidents and the General Secretary of the organization's financial health fully and timely. S(h)e shall reimburse all expenses duly approved by the President, General Secretary and/or by the appropriately designated representative of the organization, and provide written periodic statement of the organization's accounts and finances to the Executive committee and/or at the Annual General Meeting.
- iv. **Executive Member:** Executive Member shall commit to and be an advocate for the organization, gain understanding of how it fulfills its mission, and support fellow committee members and staff. S/he shall prepare for and attend meetings regularly, participate in the decision



making process by asking questions or putting forth proposals, and work to implement the decisions of the majority and perform other incidental and special responsibilities that the position entails.

**Term of The Certain Members of the Executive Committee:**

Presidents and the General Secretary of the Organization shall not be eligible to be elected for more than two (2) consecutive terms.

II. Supporters: The organization may register, as supporters, any interested individual belonging to and irrespective of their ethnicity, country of origin, religious affiliation or non-religious (including but not limited to atheist, skeptic, humanist, LGBT etc.) person or groups who conform to the mission of the organization and function within the constraints of the its by-laws. Supporters may be required to fill out a prescribed form. Supporters shall NOT be entitled to exercise membership privileges. Their payment(s) and participation to the organization shall be voluntary.

**Article XII**

**Accounts & Finance**

- I. **Fiscal Year:** The fiscal year of the Organization shall be following the Christian calendar year.
- II. **Revenue:** The revenue of the organization shall be obtained through membership dues, donations, grants, and all other fundraising means allowed by law.
- III. **Collections & Deposits:** All contributions/ donations shall be accepted and collected only in the name of the organization. All funds shall be deposited immediately, not later than three (3) business-days, to the credit of the organization in the designated bank account operated in the name of the organization.

No subscription, grant, donation shall be accepted by any member without being so nominated by the Executive Committee delivering receipt printed and prescribed by the Organization for the same amount.
- IV. **Use of Funds and Properties:** The funds, resources, material and intellectual properties of the organization shall be used only to conduct the activities of the organization.
- V. **Authorization:** The Executive Committee shall authorize and approve all expenditures within the limits of these by-laws. Any one of the three Presidents and Treasurer shall jointly maintain the accounts. All bank checks for payment or cashing shall have to be jointly signed at least by one of the Presidents or Secretary and the Treasurer; and in absence of the Treasurer by the Joint Treasurer.
- VI. **Voucher:** All expenses and payments on behalf of the organization shall be vouched for by receipt/bill and shall be preserved by the Treasurer and General Secretary for a period of minimum six years in the office.
- VII. **Oversight:** All expenses and payments on behalf of the organization shall be subject to review by the Board of Governors.

## **Article XIII**

### **Methods of Election**

- I. Only the inaugural committee of the organization shall be selected by the members of the Convening Committee formed on November 2014 and sub-Committees as formed later by the Convening Committee, and presented to the newly formed organization's General Convention for ratification. All subsequent committees shall be commissioned according to the democratic processes enshrined in the by-laws. Inaugural committee shall be exempt from any procedural challenge.
- II. All Committees shall be formed at the conclusion of the Committees' term through secret ballots by the eligible voting members or through negotiated methods of selection or other viable processes approved by the General Membership.
- III. A special "Rules Committee" may be impaneled jointly by the committees (Board of Governors and Executive Committee) well in advance of the formation of the new committee. The adaptation of the election method(s) shall be made at special "Rules Committee" meetings at least two weeks (15 days) prior to the election or selection date. The Rules Committee shall have no more than 11 (eleven) members in it and the members may not run for any positions in the committee. Recommendation of the Rules Committee governing the election or selection process may require approval by the Board of Governors.
- IV. Members with good standing in the organization for at least one year shall be eligible to run for positions in the committee.
- V. Adequate representations from all the three religious groups shall be ensured as much as possible when electing or selecting members in the committees.
- VI. All members of the Board of Governors and the Executive Committee shall take oath in a prescribed manner and form upon their election/selection. One of the Immediate past Presidents shall conduct the oath taking ceremony.

## **Article XIV**

### **Meeting**

- I. Each committee shall meet whenever necessary but at least once every 3 (three) months.
- II. Members of the Board of Governors shall have the authority to participate in the Executive Committee meetings as observers without voting privileges.
- III. Extraordinary meetings of the "organization" (i.e. Special General Meeting, Joint Meetings, etc) may be called periodically or in emergent circumstances only by the Board of Governors.
- IV. The entire membership in the organization shall meet once in every year for "Annual General Meeting (AGM)" to be called by the Board of Governors.
- V. All joint meetings shall be chaired by the Chairman of the Board of Governors and conducted by one of the three presidents who may be dispensing the Presidents' executive duties at the time.

- VI. Motions in the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Executive Committee meeting shall be approved by simple majority of the officials in attendance.
- VII. Motions in the Board of Governors shall be approved by two-third majority of the officials in attendance.

**All meetings are subject to quorum and notice requirements.**

## **Article XV**

### **Conducting Meetings**

- i. All members who would like to join any deliberation shall do some homework on the agenda.
- ii. Shall be respectful of the time allotted and shall try to finish within the time so determined at the meeting.
- iii. All speeches shall be addressed at the Chair of the meeting, not to any individual member.
- iv. Anyone having difference of opinion shall mention that without mentioning the name of the member, but for the sake of convenience, if mentioning the name of the member is necessary, it shall be in a very respectful manner.
- v. Any deliberation made and decision taken by the Committee may not be discussed with press/media or any other person without the prior consent of the Committee.
- vi. Only the person(s) authorized by the organization shall make announcement(s) of any program, comment(s) on any news item in line with the decision of the meeting.
- vii. In case of emergency any President of the Organization may express their reaction in consultation with other Presidents, Secretary and other available members that they deem necessary at that moment.
- viii. Executive Committee shall take necessary step(s) to record-both audio and video—of all the deliberations and discussions in the meeting(s) for future reference(s).

The Members of the Organization are expected that:

- i. In no circumstance they will not raise voice to any and/or all other members.
- ii. They will restrain from making indecent, disrespectful utterances, gestures or manners to any or all other members or any other person--directly, indirectly or by insinuation in any given meeting or in public.

- iii. They do not interrupt any member who is speaking with the permission of the Chair. As everyone may have their turn the members should jot down your thought(s)/point(s), and wait for their turns.

No unnecessary reference of the past shall be made.

## **Article XVI**

### **Notice**

- I. At least 2 weeks (15 days) notice shall be given for Election and Annual General Meeting (AGM) or Special General Meetings or Joint Meetings.
- II. At least 1 week (7 days) notice shall be given for regular meetings of Board of Governors or the Executive Committee.
- III. Emergency meetings can be held with a notice of at least 3 (three) days or less.

## **Article XVII**

### **Quorum**

- I. Attendance of the one third (33%) of the total membership shall be required to transact business at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), Special General Meeting (GM) or Joint Committee meetings.
- II. Presence of the one-fifth (20%) of the committee members shall be required to transact business at the Executive Committee meetings.
- III. Presence of the two-third (67%) of the Board of Governors shall be required to transact business at the Board of Governors' meetings.
- IV. No quorum shall be required to reconvene an adjourned meeting with **identical** agenda; notice requirements shall apply.  
The requirement of attendance in the meetings shall not be taken mechanically. The extra-ordinary situation being faced by any member during the time in question shall be considered in good faith by the EC and BoG. The BoG can waive/condone or make exception to this requirement case-by-case basis for the benefit of the organization.

## **Article XVIII**

### **Disciplinary Action**

Charge(s) of violation(s) and conflict of interest with regards to the organization's mission may be brought against any member of any committee or any officer by any member of any committee or by any officer. The Board of Governors shall have the sole authority to punish, admonish, censure, or dismiss any member, staff or committee of any status in the organization for evident detrimental and subversive acts committed against the organization or its interests

or for non-conformation with the organization's mission. Due process shall be afforded and ensured throughout the deliberations.

Violations or conflicts arise when:

- I. A member in a position of authority makes unauthorized exercise of power or privileges, misrepresents his/her position and roles in the organization, and/or benefits personally from decisions (s)he makes or activities (s)he performs.
- II. Failure to respect the doctrine of "majority rules" and decisions adopted through due processes.
- III. Being animus towards fellow member(s) and failing to maintain proper decorum during meetings or events commissioned and participated by the organization.
- IV. Committing improprieties involving the financial, material, and intellectual assets and properties of the organization.
- V. Committing malicious acts while acting as a member of the organization that are physically, financially, and or emotionally injurious to members of the committee or the general public for whose benefit the Organization is formed.
- VI. Anyone who acts and/or makes comments on behalf of the organization or tries to , publicizes
- VII. Anyone who in an unauthorized manner holds out himself/herself as the spokesperson of the Organization, makes any comment(s), publicizes in any mode-print or electronic media shall be considered in violation of the constitution of the Organization.
- VIII. In case any person or persons, who are not registered member(s) of the Organization, try to hold out themselves as the representatives of the Organization in order to confuse general public, governmental and nongovernmental agencies, departments or other organization(s) the Executive Committee through its representative(s) shall initially communicate privately with that person/persons and request them to restrain from doing so. But if that person/persons continue(s) that anti-organization activities in that case the Organization, may consult with the Central Committee of Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist & Christian Unity Council of Bangladesh, and take appropriate action against that person/persons.

## **Article XIX**

### **Amendments**

Proposed amendments to these By-Laws shall be officiated and submitted to the Board of Governors for vetting and clearance before submission to the general membership at the AGM for adoption.

- IX. A two-third majority shall be required to pass the amendment as Law of the Organization.

New York

July 10, 2015

As amended as of March 22, 2019

