POLICY ON SAFEGUARDING THE PARTY NAME, IDENTITY AND REPUTATION

1. POLICY TITLE

This Policy shall be known as:

"*AAAIC Policy on Safeguarding the Party Name, Identity, Brand Integrity and Institutional Reputation*" (hereinafter referred to as "the Policy").

2. RECITALS

WHEREAS ARISE AFRIKA ARISE INDEPENDENT CONGRESS (AAAIC) is a lawfully constituted political organisation operating within the Republic of South Africa and participating in democratic and electoral processes;

AND WHEREAS the name, identity, symbols, slogans, communications, and reputation of **AAAIC** constitute core institutional assets essential to its political legitimacy, public trust, and organisational integrity;

AND WHEREAS unauthorised representation, misinformation, defamatory conduct, or misuse of the **AAAIC** name or insignia may cause material harm to the Party's reputation, electoral credibility, and legal standing;

AND WHEREAS it is necessary to establish a binding governance framework regulating the use of the Party's name, authority to speak on its behalf, and conduct expected of all members, officials, and representatives;

NOW THEREFORE this Policy is adopted to regulate, protect, and enforce standards relating to the safeguarding of the AAAIC name, identity, and reputation.

3. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

3.1. The purpose of this Policy is to:

3.1.1. Protect the **AAAIC** name, symbols, reputation, and institutional identity from misuse, misrepresentation, and reputational harm;

3.1.2. Establish clear authority structures governing who may speak, act, or communicate on behalf of **AAAIC**;

3.1.3. Regulate the conduct of members, office-bearers, and representatives in public, political, and digital environments;

3.1.4. Prevent defamation, reputational damage, impersonation, and unauthorised branding or representation;

3.1.5. Ensure consistent messaging and organisational discipline across all platforms of communication;

3.1.6. Provide enforcement mechanisms for breaches of this Policy, including disciplinary procedures and sanctions;

3.1.7. Safeguard the Party's credibility in its dealings with the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), state institutions, civil society, and the general public.

4. DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

In this Policy, unless the context indicates otherwise, the following terms and expressions shall bear the meanings assigned to them:

4.1. **"*AAAIC*" or "the Party"** means **ARISE AFRIKA ARISE INDEPENDENT CONGRESS,** including all its structures, affiliates, branches, regions, wings, and any authorised representatives acting in its name.

4.2. **"*Authorised Representative*"** means any person formally mandated in writing by the Party President, Secretary-General, or National Executive Committee (NEC) to represent or speak on behalf of **AAAIC**.

4.3. ***"Brand Identity"*** means all visual, verbal, and symbolic representations of AAAIC including its name, logo, colours, slogans, emblems, banners, uniforms, and related distinguishing features.

4.4. **"Communication"** means any form of public or private expression including oral statements, written documents, press releases, digital content, social media posts, speeches, interviews, or electronic messaging.

4.5. ***"Constitution of AAAIC"*** means the founding governing document of the Party, including any amendments duly adopted in accordance with its provisions.

4.6. ***"Disciplinary Authority"*** means the designated body or structure within AAAIC responsible for enforcing compliance with this Policy, including any disciplinary committee or equivalent organ.

4.7. ***"Disrepute"*** means any conduct, statement, omission, or publication that reasonably has the effect of lowering the reputation, credibility, dignity, or public standing of AAAIC.

4.8. ***"Impersonation"*** means falsely representing oneself as an official, authorised member, or spokesperson of AAAIC without lawful mandate.

4.9. ***"Internal Communication"*** means any communication restricted to members, structures, or officials of AAAIC and not intended for public dissemination.

4.10. ***"Member"*** means any person admitted into AAAIC in accordance with its membership rules, whether active, dormant, or suspended.

4.11. ***"Misrepresentation"*** means any statement or conduct that creates a false impression regarding AAAIC policy, position, authority, or endorsement.

4.12. **"*National Executive Committee (NEC)"*** means the highest decision-making body below the National General Council (NGC) of AAAIC between national conferences.

4.13. ***"Official Communication"*** means any communication expressly approved or issued by authorised structures of **AAAIC** in accordance with this Policy.

4.14. ***"Party Name"*** means the registered and recognised name **ARISE AFRIKA ARISE INDEPENDENT CONGRESS** and all its lawful abbreviations including "AAAIC".

4.15. ***"Public Statement"*** means any communication intended or reasonably likely to reach members of the public or media.

4.16. **"*Reputational Harm"*** means any actual or potential damage to the standing, trustworthiness, credibility, or public perception of AAAIC.

4.17. **"*Social Media Platforms"*** includes all digital communication platforms such as Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp groups, Telegram channels, blogs, and any similar digital medium.

4.18. **"*Spokesperson"*** means a person formally appointed by AAAIC to communicate official Party positions to the media or public.

4.19. ***"Unauthorised Use"*** means any use of the Party Name, Brand Identity, or authority without formal approval or mandate.

4.20. ***"Written Mandate"*** means a formal written instrument issued by an authorised AAAIC structure granting permission to act, speak, or represent the Party.

5. SCOPE, APPLICATION AND BINDING EFFECT

5.1. Scope

This Policy shall apply to:

5.1.1. All members of AAAIC irrespective of rank, position, or duration of membership;

5.1.2. All elected representatives, public representatives, councillors, members of legislatures, office-bearers, committee members, branch executives, regional executives, provincial executives, and national executives;

5.1.3. All volunteers, campaign workers, consultants, advisors, spokespersons, agents, and persons acting under the authority or perceived authority of AAAIC;

5.1.4. All structures, formations, leagues, forums, task teams, committees, and affiliated bodies established by or operating under the auspices of AAAIC;

5.1.5. Former office-bearers and former representatives to the extent that they continue to use, represent, or associate themselves with the Party name, identity, symbols, or authority.

5.2. Binding Effect

5.2.1. Compliance with this Policy shall constitute a condition of membership, leadership, appointment, deployment, candidature, and continued association with AAAIC.

5.2.2. Every person falling within the scope of this Policy shall be deemed to have accepted its provisions and shall be bound thereby.

5.2.3. Ignorance of this Policy shall not constitute a defence to misconduct or non-compliance.

5.2.4. This Policy shall be read together with the Constitution of AAAIC, Codes of Conduct, Disciplinary Codes, Electoral Rules, Communication Policies, and all other governance instruments adopted by the Party.

5.2.5. In the event of conflict between this Policy and any subordinate directive, the Constitution of AAAIC and this Policy shall prevail.

6. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE PARTY'S NAME AND REPUTATION

6.1. Foundational Principle

The name, reputation, credibility, public trust, symbols, and institutional standing of AAAIC constitute valuable organisational assets which shall be protected by every member and structure of the Party.

6.2. Duty of Loyalty

Every member shall:

6.2.1. Promote the objectives, values, and principles of AAAIC;
6.2.2. Refrain from conduct likely to undermine the Party;
6.2.3. Act honestly, responsibly, and in good faith;
6.2.4. Place the interests of the Party above personal ambitions when acting in an official capacity.

6.3. Duty to Protect Reputation

Every member shall have a positive obligation to:

6.3.1. Protect the good name of AAAIC;
6.3.2. Prevent reputational harm where reasonably possible;
6.3.3. Report conduct that may expose the Party to scandal, legal liability, public embarrassment, or loss of confidence;
6.3.4. Correct misinformation concerning the Party through appropriate internal channels.

6.4. Accountability Principle

All members shall remain accountable for:

6.4.1. Statements made in public;
6.4.2. Statements made on social media;
6.4.3. Conduct undertaken in the name of AAAIC;

6.4.4. Conduct which may reasonably be associated with the Party.

7. CONDUCT BRINGING THE PARTY INTO DISREPUTE

7.1. General Principle

7.1.1. A member, office-bearer, representative, volunteer, candidate, or structure may be found guilty of bringing AAAIC into disrepute where such person's conduct, statement, omission, neglect, failure to act, or association has caused or is reasonably likely to cause reputational harm to the Party.

7.1.2. For purposes of this Policy, actual damage need not be proven.

7.1.3. It shall be sufficient if a reasonable person would conclude that the conduct complained of had the potential to damage the reputation, credibility, integrity, dignity, standing, electoral prospects, or public confidence in AAAIC.

7.2. ACTIONS CONSTITUTING DISREPUTE

Without limiting the generality of this Policy, the following conduct may constitute bringing the Party into disrepute:

7.2.1. False Statements

Knowingly making false, misleading, deceptive, or dishonest statements regarding:

(a) AAAIC;
(b) its leadership;
(c) its policies;
(d) its finances;
(e) its members;
(f) its governance structures.

7.2.2. Public Attacks on the Party

Publicly attacking, insulting, ridiculing, or disparaging:

(a) AAAIC;
(b) its Constitution;
(c) its elected structures;
(d) its office-bearers;
(e) its duly adopted policies, without first exhausting internal remedies.

7.2.3. Defamatory Conduct

Making defamatory allegations against:

(a) the Party;
(b) members;
(c) leaders;
(d) supporters;
(e) coalition partners;
(f) public institutions; where such allegations are reckless, malicious, unsubstantiated, or made in bad faith.

7.2.4. Unauthorised Media Engagement

Purporting to speak on behalf of AAAIC without authority.

7.2.5. Misuse of Party Symbols

Using Party logos, letterheads, uniforms, membership databases, campaign materials, or official insignia without authorisation.

7.2.6. Criminal Conduct

Being convicted of, or engaging in conduct involving:

(a) fraud;
(b) corruption;
(c) theft;
(d) dishonesty;

(e) money laundering;
(f) violence;
(g) intimidation;
(h) extortion;
(i) bribery; where such conduct may reasonably affect the Party's reputation.

7.2.7. Hate Speech and Discrimination

Engaging in:

(a) racism;
(b) tribalism;
(c) xenophobia;
(d) sexism;
(e) religious intolerance;
(f) hate speech; or any conduct inconsistent with constitutional values.

7.2.8. Electoral Misconduct

Engaging in conduct that may undermine public confidence in the Party's electoral integrity.

7.2.9. Social Media Misconduct

Publishing material that:

(a) embarrasses the Party;
(b) damages its reputation;
(c) exposes internal disputes;
(d) undermines leadership legitimacy;
(e) creates public confusion regarding Party positions.

7.2.10. Dishonest Fundraising

Soliciting funds, donations, sponsorships, or contributions using the Party name without proper authorisation.

7.3. OMISSIONS CONSTITUTING DISREPUTE

The failure to act may be equally damaging as misconduct itself.
Accordingly, the following omissions may constitute bringing the Party into disrepute:

7.3.1. Failure to Correct False Information

Knowingly allowing false information concerning AAAIC to circulate where the member has authority or responsibility to address it.

7.3.2. Failure to Report Serious Misconduct

Failure to report known incidents involving:

(a) corruption;
(b) fraud;
(c) theft;
(d) abuse of office;
(e) financial irregularities;
(f) unlawful conduct; committed by Party representatives.

7.3.3. Failure to Protect Party Assets

Neglecting to safeguard:

(a) Party documents;
(b) membership records;
(c) confidential information;
(d) electronic systems;
(e) intellectual property.

7.3.4. Failure to Comply with Party Directives

Ignoring lawful instructions issued by competent Party structures where such non-compliance

results in reputational damage.

7.3.5. Failure to Distance Oneself from Unauthorised Conduct

Remaining silent while allowing others to falsely represent that they act on behalf of AAAIC under one's authority or supervision.

7.3.6. Failure to Attend Disciplinary or Investigative Proceedings

Refusing, without good cause, to cooperate with legitimate Party investigations where such refusal undermines public confidence.

7.3.7. Failure to Disclose Conflicts of Interest

Failing to disclose actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest that may compromise the integrity of the Party.

7.3.8. Failure to Defend the Party Against Malicious Falsehoods

Where a member holds leadership responsibilities, failure to take reasonable steps to counter deliberate falsehoods that may materially damage the Party.

7.4. CONDUCT PRESUMED TO CAUSE SERIOUS REPUTATIONAL HARM

Unless proven otherwise, the following conduct shall be deemed inherently prejudicial to AAAIC:

7.4.1. Publicly calling for the downfall, dissolution, defeat, collapse, or destruction of AAAIC;
7.4.2. Campaigning for another party while retaining AAAIC membership;
7.4.3. Publicly endorsing rival candidates against official AAAIC candidates;
7.4.4. Leaking confidential Party documents;
7.4.5. Creating parallel leadership structures;
7.4.6. Falsely claiming authority from the President, National Executive Committee, Provincial Executive Committee, Regional Executive Committee, or Branch Executive Committee;

7.4.7. Bringing frivolous, vexatious, malicious, or bad-faith legal proceedings in the name of AAAIC;

7.4.8. Knowingly making false accusations against Party leaders, members, or structures;

7.4.9. Deliberately sabotaging Party programmes, campaigns, elections, meetings, conferences, or lawful decisions.

8. AUTHORITY TO SPEAK ON BEHALF OF THE PARTY

8.1. General Principle

8.1.1. The right to communicate official positions, policies, decisions, viewpoints, instructions, commitments, undertakings, endorsements, objections, demands, or representations on behalf of AAAIC shall vest exclusively in duly authorised Party structures and officials.

8.1.2. No person shall claim, imply, suggest, or create the impression that he or she speaks on behalf of AAAIC unless authorised in terms of this Policy.

8.2. Official Custodians of Party Communications

Subject to the Constitution of AAAIC, the following office-bearers shall be recognised as principal custodians of official Party communications:

8.2.1. President

The President shall be the principal political spokesperson of AAAIC and may communicate on:

(a) national policy matters;
(b) political strategy;
(c) coalition matters;
(d) governance matters;

(e) national political developments;
(f) matters affecting the overall direction of the Party.

8.2.2. Secretary-General

The Secretary-General shall be the principal administrative spokesperson and custodian of organisational communications concerning:

(a) membership matters;
(b) organisational administration;
(c) constitutional matters;
(d) governance decisions;
(e) notices and directives;
(f) official records.

8.2.3. National Spokesperson

Where appointed, the National Spokesperson shall:

(a) communicate official Party positions;
(b) manage media relations;
(c) coordinate messaging;
(d) issue authorised media statements.

8.2.4. Provincial, Regional and Branch Leaders

Provincial, Regional, and Branch office-bearers may only communicate on matters falling within their respective jurisdictions and shall remain bound by national policy and messaging directives.

8.3. Written Authorisation Requirement

8.3.1. No member shall:

(a) issue media statements;
(b) conduct press briefings;
(c) represent Party policy;
(d) negotiate on behalf of AAAIC;
(e) enter into public commitments; without proper authority.

8.3.2. Authority shall preferably be reduced to writing and shall specify:

(a) scope of authority;
(b) duration of authority;
(c) limitations of authority;
(d) reporting obligations.

8.4. Prohibited Representations

No member shall:

8.4.1. Claim to be a spokesperson without appointment.
8.4.2. Issue statements under Party letterheads without authorisation.
8.4.3. Use Party insignia to create the impression of official authority where no such authority exists.
8.4.4. Represent personal opinions as official Party policy.
8.4.5. Commit the Party to financial, legal, political, coalition, contractual, or electoral obligations without proper mandate.

8.5. Consequences of Unauthorised Communication

Unauthorised communications may result in:

(a) withdrawal of authority;
(b) disciplinary action;
(c) suspension;
(d) removal from office;
(e) expulsion;
(f) legal proceedings where appropriate.

9. MEDIA, PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND REPUTATIONAL RISK MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL

9.1. Purpose

The purpose of this section is to ensure that all public communications:

(a) protect the integrity of AAAIC;
(b) promote message consistency;
(c) prevent misinformation;
(d) reduce legal and reputational risks.

9.2. Official Communications

9.2.1. Only authorised communications shall constitute official Party positions.

9.2.2. Any communication not approved through the prescribed Party structures shall not bind AAAIC.

9.3. Media Interviews

No member shall participate in:

(a) radio interviews;
(b) television interviews;
(c) newspaper interviews;
(d) online media interviews; on behalf of AAAIC unless duly authorised.

9.4. Accuracy and Verification

Before any public statement is issued:

9.4.1. Facts shall be verified.
9.4.2. Sources shall be confirmed.
9.4.3. Legal implications shall be considered.

9.4.4. The communication shall be assessed for reputational risk.

9.5. Prohibited Media Conduct

Members shall not:

9.5.1. Knowingly disseminate false information.
9.5.2. Make reckless allegations.
9.5.3. Publish unverified accusations.
9.5.4. Disclose confidential Party information.
9.5.5. Discuss internal disciplinary matters publicly unless authorised.
9.5.6. Publicly undermine official Party positions.
9.5.7. Incite hostility against Party structures.

9.6. Crisis Communication

9.6.1. Where AAAIC faces:

(a) scandal;
(b) litigation;
(c) public controversy;
(d) reputational attacks;
(e) political crises; all communications shall be coordinated through designated leadership structures.

9.6.2. No member shall issue independent responses that may worsen the situation.

9.7. Duty to Refer Media Enquiries

Members who receive media enquiries outside their authority shall refer such enquiries to the designated spokesperson or authorised office-bearer.

9.8. Retractions and Corrections

9.8.1. Where inaccurate information has been disseminated:

(a) immediate corrective action shall be taken;
(b) corrections shall be publicised appropriately;
(c) retractions shall be issued where necessary.

9.8.2. Failure to correct known falsehoods may itself constitute misconduct.

10. SOCIAL MEDIA, DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS AND ONLINE CONDUCT

10.1. General Principle

10.1.1. AAAIC recognises the constitutional right of members to freedom of expression.

10.1.2. However, such freedom shall be exercised responsibly and consistently with:

(a) loyalty to the Party;
(b) organisational discipline;
(c) constitutional values;
(d) protection of the Party's reputation.

10.2. Application

This section shall apply to:

(a) Facebook;
(b) X (Twitter);
(c) Instagram;
(d) TikTok;
(e) WhatsApp;
(f) Telegram;
(g) YouTube;
(h) LinkedIn;
(i) blogs;
(j) podcasts;
(k) websites;
(l) future digital platforms.

10.3. Personal Accounts

10.3.1. Members may maintain personal social media accounts.

10.3.2. However, personal accounts shall not be used to:

(a) Misrepresent Party policy.
(b) Attack Party leadership.
(c) Spread false information regarding AAAIC.
(d) Incite hostility against Party structures.
(e) Create public confusion regarding official Party positions.

10.4. Use of Party Identity Online

No person shall without authority:

(a) create official-looking Party pages;
(b) use Party logos;
(c) use Party branding;
(d) issue Party directives;
(e) collect donations in the Party's name.

10.5. Online Harassment and Abuse

Members shall not engage in:

(a) cyberbullying;
(b) intimidation;
(c) threats;
(d) hate speech;
(e) harassment;
(f) discriminatory conduct.

10.6. Confidential Information

The publication, disclosure, forwarding, distribution, sharing, leaking, or dissemination of confidential information shall constitute serious misconduct.

10.7. Social Media Misconduct Constituting Gross Misconduct

The following shall ordinarily constitute gross misconduct:

(a) Publishing confidential Party documents.
(b) Publishing false allegations against Party leaders.
(c) Encouraging members to resign from AAAIC.
(d) Campaigning for rival political organisations.
(e) Creating parallel communication structures intended to undermine Party authority.
(f) Using anonymous accounts to attack AAAIC.
(g) Publishing material intended to embarrass, humiliate, ridicule, or damage the Party.
(h) Disseminating fabricated documents falsely attributed to AAAIC.
(i) Publishing material likely to expose AAAIC to legal claims, regulatory sanctions, or public scandal.

10.8. Continuing Duty

10.8.1. The duty to protect the Party's reputation shall continue:

(a) after elections;
(b) during internal disputes;
(c) during disciplinary proceedings;
(d) during suspensions;
(e) during appeals;
(f) after resignation from office.

10.8.2. No member shall exploit such circumstances to inflict reputational harm upon AAAIC.

11. PROTECTION OF THE PARTY NAME, LOGO, SYMBOLS, INSIGNIA, BRAND IDENTITY AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

11.1. Recognition of Party Identity as a Protected Asset

11.1.1. The name **ARISE AFRIKA ARISE INDEPENDENT CONGRESS (AAAIC)**, its abbreviations, logos, symbols, slogans, colours, insignia, campaign material,

publications, digital content, intellectual creations, and all associated identifiers shall constitute valuable organisational assets of the Party.

11.1.2. Such assets shall be protected against misuse, unauthorised reproduction, misrepresentation, dilution, infringement, alteration, or unlawful exploitation.

11.1.3. Every member shall have a duty to safeguard and promote the integrity of the Party's identity.

11.2. Ownership

11.2.1. All rights, title, and interests in the Party's intellectual property shall vest in AAAIC.

11.2.2. No member, office-bearer, employee, volunteer, consultant, or representative shall acquire personal ownership rights over Party property merely by virtue of creating, designing, commissioning, managing, or using such property.

11.2.3. Any intellectual property developed using Party resources, funds, structures, or authority shall automatically vest in AAAIC unless otherwise determined by a written agreement approved by the National Executive Committee.

11.3. Prohibited Conduct

No person shall:

(a) Register, reserve, acquire, or attempt to acquire ownership of any name, domain name, social media account, trademark, logo, slogan, or symbol substantially similar to that of AAAIC without written approval.

(b) Alter, distort, manipulate, or modify Party branding in a manner likely to mislead the public.

(c) Use Party branding to advance personal business interests.

(d) Use Party symbols in support of another political party, organisation, candidate, or cause without authorisation.

(e) Sell, licence, distribute, or commercially exploit Party assets without approval.

11.4. Recovery of Party Property

11.4.1. Upon:

(a) resignation;
(b) suspension;
(c) expulsion;
(d) removal from office;
(e) termination of appointment; the affected person shall immediately surrender all Party property in his or her possession.

11.4.2. This shall include:

(a) membership databases;
(b) computers;
(c) electronic records;
(d) documents;
(e) letterheads;
(f) branding materials;
(g) passwords;
(h) social media access credentials;
(i) campaign assets.

11.5. Continuing Protection

The obligation to protect Party intellectual property shall survive:

(a) resignation;
(b) suspension;
(c) expulsion;
(d) termination of office;
(e) termination of employment.

12. CONFIDENTIALITY, INFORMATION SECURITY AND PROTECTION OF PARTY INFORMATION

12.1. Duty of Confidentiality

Every member shall protect confidential information obtained through membership, office, appointment, deployment, election, or association with AAAIC.

12.2. Confidential Information

Confidential information includes, but is not limited to:

12.2.1. Organisational Information

(a) strategic plans;
(b) campaign plans;
(c) electoral strategies;
(d) coalition negotiations;
(e) internal assessments.

12.2.2. Membership Information

(a) membership records;
(b) contact details;
(c) databases;
(d) recruitment information.

12.2.3. Financial Information

(a) budgets;
(b) donor information;
(c) fundraising plans;
(d) banking information;
(e) procurement records.

12.2.4. Governance Information

(a) disciplinary proceedings;
(b) internal investigations;
(c) legal opinions;
(d) legal strategies;
(e) committee deliberations.

12.2.5. Digital Information

(a) passwords;
(b) access credentials;
(c) electronic records;
(d) server information;
(e) website administration information.

12.3. Unauthorised Disclosure

No member shall:

(a) Leak confidential information.
(b) Provide confidential information to the media.
(c) Provide confidential information to rival political parties.
(d) Disclose confidential information for personal gain.
(e) Use confidential information to embarrass or undermine AAAIC.

12.4. Protection of Membership Information

12.4.1. Members entrusted with personal information shall comply with all applicable laws governing privacy and information protection.

12.4.2. Such information shall only be used for legitimate Party purposes.

12.5. Information Security Responsibilities

Every office-bearer shall take reasonable steps to:

(a) secure records;
(b) protect databases;
(c) safeguard passwords;
(d) prevent unauthorised access;
(e) preserve electronic communications.

12.6. Presumption of Serious Misconduct

The deliberate leaking of confidential information for the purpose of:

(a) damaging the Party;
(b) embarrassing the Party;
(c) undermining leadership;
(d) influencing internal elections;
(e) assisting rivals; shall constitute serious misconduct and may justify suspension, removal from office, or expulsion.

13. CONFLICT OF INTEREST, DUTY OF LOYALTY AND FIDUCIARY OBLIGATIONS

13.1. General Principle

13.1.1. Persons entrusted with leadership responsibilities within AAAIC occupy positions of trust.

13.1.2. Such persons shall act:

(a) honestly;
(b) loyally;
(c) diligently;
(d) in good faith;
(e) in the best interests of AAAIC.

13.2. Duty of Loyalty

Every member shall:

(a) Promote the objectives of AAAIC.
(b) Avoid conduct that undermines the Party.
(c) Refrain from advancing interests hostile to the Party.
(d) Support lawful decisions adopted by competent Party structures.

13.3. Fiduciary Obligations of Leaders

Office-bearers shall:

(a) Act in the best interests of AAAIC.
(b) Exercise powers for proper purposes.
(c) Avoid abuse of authority.
(d) Avoid self-enrichment through Party positions.
(e) Protect Party resources.
(f) Avoid placing personal interests above Party interests.

13.4. Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest shall arise where personal, financial, political, family, business, or other interests may influence, or appear to influence, objective decision-making.

13.5. Duty of Disclosure

Any member or office-bearer who becomes aware of an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest shall promptly disclose such conflict to the appropriate Party structure.

13.6. Examples of Conflicts of Interest

Without limitation, conflicts of interest may include:

(a) Participating in decisions affecting one's own financial interests.
(b) Awarding Party opportunities to relatives.
(c) Using Party information for private advantage.
(d) Representing competing political interests.
(e) Simultaneously serving structures whose interests are materially adverse to AAAIC.
(f) Receiving undisclosed benefits from third parties seeking influence within AAAIC.

13.7. Dual Membership and Rival Political Activities

Unless specifically authorised by the Constitution of AAAIC:

(a) No member may simultaneously hold membership in another political party.
(b) No member may campaign for another political party while retaining AAAIC membership.
(c) No member may publicly endorse rival candidates against officially endorsed AAAIC candidates.
(d) No member may use Party resources to support competing political interests.

13.8. Duty to Avoid Reputational Conflicts

Members shall avoid conduct which, although not necessarily unlawful, creates a reasonable perception that:

(a) AAAIC tolerates corruption;
(b) AAAIC lacks integrity;
(c) AAAIC is improperly influenced;
(d) Party decisions are bought, manipulated, or compromised.

13.9. Breach of Fiduciary Duties

Any serious breach of loyalty, fiduciary duty, or conflict-of-interest obligations shall constitute misconduct and may result in:

(a) disciplinary proceedings;
(b) removal from office;
(c) suspension of membership;
(d) expulsion from the Party;

(e) recovery of losses suffered by the Party;

(f) referral to law-enforcement agencies where appropriate.

14. WHISTLEBLOWING, PROTECTED DISCLOSURES AND GOOD-FAITH REPORTING

14.1. Purpose

14.1.1. The purpose of this section is to ensure that the protection of the Party's reputation is not used to conceal misconduct, corruption, maladministration, abuse of power, unlawful conduct, financial irregularities, constitutional violations, or conduct inconsistent with the values and objectives of AAAIC.

14.1.2. The Party recognises that genuine accountability strengthens, rather than weakens, the reputation and integrity of the organisation.

14.2. Right and Duty to Report Misconduct

Every member shall have both the right and, where appropriate, the duty to report:

(a) Fraud.

(b) Corruption.

(c) Financial misconduct.

(d) Abuse of authority.

(e) Unlawful conduct.

(f) Constitutional violations.

(g) Electoral misconduct.

(h) Harassment or discrimination.

(i) Serious breaches of Party policies.

(j) Any conduct reasonably capable of causing substantial harm to AAAIC.

14.3. Protected Disclosure

A disclosure shall be regarded as protected where:

(a) The person making the disclosure genuinely believes the information to be substantially

true.

(b) The disclosure is made honestly and in good faith.

(c) The disclosure is not motivated primarily by malice, personal vendetta, political factionalism, revenge, or personal gain.

(d) Reasonable efforts have been made to utilise internal Party mechanisms where such mechanisms are available and reasonably capable of addressing the complaint.

14.4. Protection Against Retaliation

No member shall be subjected to:

(a) victimisation;

(b) intimidation;

(c) threats;

(d) harassment;

(e) suspension;

(f) removal from office;

(g) disciplinary action; solely because that member made a protected disclosure in good faith.

14.5. False, Reckless and Malicious Complaints

Nothing in this section shall protect a person who:

(a) Knowingly submits false allegations.

(b) Acts with reckless disregard for the truth.

(c) Fabricates evidence.

(d) Uses allegations as a weapon to destroy reputations.

(e) Makes complaints motivated by malice or bad faith.

(f) Such conduct shall itself constitute serious misconduct.

14.6. Internal Reporting Channels

Reports may be submitted to:

(a) Branch Executive Committees;

(b) Regional Executive Committees;

(c) Provincial Executive Committees;
(d) The Secretary-General;
(e) The National Executive Committee;
(f) The Ethics and Integrity Committee;
(g) Any designated investigative structure established by the Party.

14.7. Preservation of Confidentiality

Persons receiving disclosures shall:

(a) treat such information confidentially;
(b) protect the identity of complainants where reasonably possible;
(c) prevent unnecessary dissemination of allegations before investigation.

15. INVESTIGATION OF REPUTATIONAL HARM, MISCONDUCT AND POLICY BREACHES

15.1. Duty to Investigate

Where credible allegations arise concerning conduct capable of bringing AAAIC into disrepute, the Party shall be entitled and obliged to investigate such allegations.

15.2. Preliminary Assessment

Upon receipt of a complaint, the appropriate authority shall determine:

15.2.1. Whether the complaint falls within the scope of this Policy.
15.2.2. Whether there is prima facie evidence.
15.2.3. Whether urgent intervention is necessary.
15.2.4. Whether the complaint should proceed to formal investigation.

15.3. Investigation Powers

Authorised investigators may:

(a) Interview witnesses.
(b) Request documents.
(c) Examine electronic records.
(d) Review social media content.
(e) Obtain written statements.
(f) Compile investigation reports.

15.4. Procedural Fairness

No person shall be found guilty of misconduct unless:

(a) The allegations have been communicated.
(b) The member has been afforded a reasonable opportunity to respond.
(c) The matter has been considered by a properly constituted body.
(d) The decision has been reached fairly and impartially.

15.5. Precautionary Suspension

Where necessary to protect:

(a) the integrity of investigations;
(b) Party operations;
(c) evidence;
(d) witnesses;
(e) the reputation of AAAIC; a member may be placed on precautionary suspension.

15.6. Nature of Precautionary Suspension

15.6.1. A precautionary suspension shall not constitute a finding of guilt.
15.6.2. A suspended member shall retain the presumption of innocence until a final determination is made.
15.6.3. Precautionary suspension shall be reviewed periodically to avoid unnecessary prejudice.

15.7. Standard of Proof

In disciplinary proceedings conducted under this Policy, findings shall generally be made on a balance of probabilities unless the Constitution of AAAIC prescribes a higher standard.

15.8. Investigation Reports

Investigation reports shall contain:

(a) findings of fact;
(b) evidence considered;
(c) recommendations;
(d) proposed remedial action where appropriate.

16. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES, SANCTIONS AND REMEDIAL ACTION

16.1. Objectives of Discipline

The objectives of discipline shall be:

(a) Protection of the Party.
(b) Correction of misconduct.
(c) Preservation of organisational integrity.
(d) Promotion of accountability.
(e) Deterrence of future misconduct.
(f) Restoration of public confidence.

16.2. Factors to be Considered

When determining sanctions, consideration shall be given to:

(a) The seriousness of the misconduct.
(b) The member's position and responsibilities.
(c) The degree of reputational harm caused.
(d) Whether the conduct was intentional or negligent.
(e) Previous disciplinary history.
(f) Mitigating and aggravating circumstances.
(g) The interests of justice and organisational integrity.

16.3. Available Sanctions

The Party may impose one or more of the following sanctions:

16.3.1. Verbal Warning

For minor infractions.

16.3.2. Written Warning

For misconduct warranting formal correction.

16.3.3. Final Written Warning

For serious misconduct where dismissal or expulsion is not yet justified.

16.3.4. Mandatory Apology

Public or private apology as directed.

16.3.5. Corrective Training

Attendance of governance, ethics, leadership, or communications training.

16.3.6. Removal from Specific Responsibilities

Withdrawal of delegated authority.

16.3.7. Removal from Office

Removal from elected or appointed positions.

16.3.8. Suspension

Temporary suspension of membership rights.

16.3.9. Disqualification

Disqualification from holding office, contesting internal elections, or serving as a candidate.

16.3.10. Expulsion

Permanent termination of membership.

16.3.11. Restitution

Repayment or restoration of losses caused to the Party.

16.3.12. Referral

Referral to law enforcement, regulatory bodies, or appropriate authorities.

16.4. Aggravating Circumstances

The following shall generally justify more severe sanctions:

(a) Abuse of leadership position.
(b) Repeated misconduct.
(c) Dishonesty.
(d) Corruption.
(e) Intentional reputational sabotage.
(f) Victimisation of whistleblowers.
(g) Misconduct during election periods.
(h) Publication of confidential information.

16.5. Exceptional Circumstances Justifying Expulsion

The following may warrant expulsion:

(a) Deliberate sabotage of the Party.
(b) Persistent conduct bringing the Party into serious disrepute.
(c) Establishment of parallel Party structures.
(d) Fraudulent misuse of Party identity.

(e) Campaigning for rival political organisations while remaining a member.

(f) Serious corruption or dishonesty.

(g) Conduct fundamentally incompatible with continued membership.

16.6. Remedial Measures

In addition to sanctions, the Party may direct:

(a) public clarification;

(b) withdrawal of statements;

(c) retractions;

(d) corrective communications;

(e) mediation;

(f) reconciliation processes;

(g) restoration programmes;

(h) governance interventions.

16.7. Principle of Proportionality

Disciplinary sanctions shall be proportionate to the nature, seriousness, and consequences of the misconduct and shall not be arbitrary, capricious, or excessive.

17. APPEALS, REVIEWS AND RECONSIDERATION OF DECISIONS

17.1. Right of Appeal

17.1.1. Any member, office-bearer, representative, candidate, deployee, volunteer, or person affected by a decision taken under this Policy shall have the right to appeal against such decision.

17.1.2. The right of appeal shall apply to:

(a) findings of misconduct;

(b) disciplinary sanctions;

(c) precautionary suspensions;

(d) removals from office;
(e) disqualifications;
(f) expulsions;
(g) any other adverse determination made in terms of this Policy.

17.1.3. No appeal shall operate as an automatic suspension of a disciplinary sanction unless the Appeal Authority expressly orders otherwise.

17.2. Grounds of Appeal

An appeal may be lodged on one or more of the following grounds:

(a) Material procedural irregularity.
(b) Bias or reasonable apprehension of bias.
(c) Error of law.
(d) Error of fact.
(e) New evidence which was not reasonably available at the time of the original proceedings.
(f) Disproportionate sanction.
(g) Any other ground recognised by the Constitution of AAAIC.

17.3. Appeal Authority

17.3.1. Appeals shall be heard by an independent Appeal Committee established in accordance with the Constitution of AAAIC.

17.3.2. No person who participated in the original investigation or disciplinary process shall participate in determining the appeal.

17.3.3. Members of the Appeal Committee shall be impartial and shall disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest.

17.4. Powers of Appeal Authority

The Appeal Authority may:

(a) Confirm the original decision.
(b) Set aside the original decision.
(c) Substitute a different finding.
(d) Reduce or increase sanctions where justified.
(e) Refer the matter back for reconsideration.
(f) Order further investigation.
(g) Grant any other appropriate relief.

17.5. Finality of Decisions

Subject to the Constitution of AAAIC and applicable law, decisions of the Appeal Authority shall be final and binding upon all members and structures of the Party.

18. IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

18.1. Responsibility for Implementation

The National Executive Committee, alternatively, the National General Council, in exceptional circumstances, shall bear overall responsibility for the implementation and enforcement of this Policy.

18.2. Institutional Custodians

Without limiting the powers of the NEC, the following structures shall have responsibility for implementation:

(a) The President.
(b) The Secretary-General.
(c) The National Disciplinary Committee.
(d) The Ethics and Integrity Committee.
(e) Provincial Executive Committees.
(f) Regional Executive Committees.
(g) Branch Executive Committees.

18.3. Duty to Promote Compliance

All leadership structures shall actively promote compliance with this Policy through:

(a) education;
(b) awareness programmes;
(c) leadership development;
(d) governance training;
(e) ethics programmes;
(f) communications management.

18.4. Monitoring Mechanisms

The Party may establish systems to monitor:

(a) Reputational risks.
(b) Media coverage.
(c) Public statements.
(d) Official communications.
(e) Digital platforms and authorised Party accounts.
(f) Use of Party branding and identity.

Provided that such monitoring shall be lawful, reasonable, and consistent with constitutional rights and applicable legislation.

18.5. Annual Integrity Assessment

The NEC may conduct annual assessments of:

(a) reputational risks;
(b) governance vulnerabilities;
(c) compliance trends;
(d) disciplinary patterns;
(e) communications risks.

The findings may be used to strengthen governance and protect the Party.

18.6. Mandatory Compliance

Compliance with this Policy shall be mandatory for:

(a) members;
(b) candidates;
(c) office-bearers;
(d) councillors;
(e) public representatives;
(f) deployees;
(g) volunteers;
(h) employees;
(i) consultants acting on behalf of AAAIC.

18.7. Reporting Obligations

Every leadership structure shall promptly report serious breaches of this Policy to the appropriate Party authority.

Failure to report serious misconduct may itself constitute misconduct.

18.8. Non-Waiver

Failure by the Party to take action in any particular instance shall not constitute:

(a) approval of the conduct;
(b) abandonment of rights;
(c) waiver of disciplinary authority.

OATH AND DECLARATION TO PROTECT THE NAME, INTEGRITY, IDENTITY AND REPUTATION OF AAAIC

Mandatory Oath

The following persons shall subscribe to this Oath:

(a) Members of the National Executive Committee;
(b) Provincial Executive Committees;
(c) Regional Executive Committees;
(d) Branch Executive Committees;
(e) Candidates for public office;
(f) Councillors;
(g) Public representatives;
(h) Deployees;
(i) Office-bearers;
(j) Any other category determined by the NEC.

AAAIC OATH OF PROTECTION OF THE PARTY'S NAME, IDENTITY AND REPUTATION

I, _____, being a member and representative of the **ARISE AFRIKA ARISE INDEPENDENT CONGRESS (AAAIC),** do hereby solemnly swear (or affirm) that:

1. I shall uphold, protect, preserve, and defend the Constitution, principles, values, policies, objectives, reputation, identity, and good name of AAAIC.

2. I shall faithfully serve the Party with honesty, integrity, diligence, discipline, accountability, and loyalty.

3. I shall not knowingly engage in any conduct, action, omission, statement, publication, communication, or association which may unlawfully or improperly bring AAAIC into disrepute.

4. I shall not misuse Party resources, authority, information, branding, symbols, identity, or influence for personal gain or improper purposes.

5. I shall respect lawful decisions taken by competent Party structures and shall utilise internal remedies before resorting to public actions capable of damaging the Party.

6. I shall protect confidential information entrusted to me and shall not disclose such information except where authorised or legally required.

7. I shall disclose conflicts of interest honestly and promptly.

8. I shall neither impersonate authority nor falsely claim to act on behalf of AAAIC.

9. I shall report corruption, fraud, misconduct, abuse of power, and any conduct threatening the integrity of the Party.

10. I acknowledge that leadership is a sacred trust and that the reputation of AAAIC belongs not to any individual but to the collective membership and future generations who shall inherit this organisation.

11. I accept that any breach of this Oath may subject me to disciplinary proceedings and sanctions in accordance with the Constitution and policies of AAAIC.

I make this Oath freely, voluntarily, and in good faith, conscious of the responsibilities entrusted to me as a member and representative of ARISE AFRIKA ARISE INDEPENDENT CONGRESS (AAAIC).

SIGNED AT: _____

ON THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 20_____

MEMBER / OFFICE-BEARER

Name: _____

Signature: _____

WITNESS 1

Name: _____

Signature: _____

WITNESS 2

Name: _____

Signature: _____

19. REVIEW, AMENDMENT, COMMENCEMENT AND SHORT TITLE

19.1. Review

This Policy shall be reviewed periodically by the National Executive Committee to ensure:

(a) continued relevance;
(b) legal compliance;
(c) governance effectiveness;
(d) alignment with the Constitution of AAAIC.

19.2. Amendments

No amendment to this Policy shall be valid unless approved by the competent authority established by the Constitution of AAAIC.

19.3. Transitional Arrangements

Upon adoption of this Policy:

(a) all members shall be deemed bound by its provisions;
(b) existing office-bearers shall sign the prescribed Oath within a period determined by the NEC;
(c) all future appointments and candidatures shall be subject to compliance with this Policy.

19.4. Commencement

This Policy shall come into operation on the date of its adoption by the duly authorised structure of AAAIC.

19.5. Short Title

This Policy shall be cited as the: **"*AAAIC Policy on Safeguarding the Party Name, Identity, Brand Integrity and Institutional Reputation, 2026*."**

SCHEDULE A: CLASSIFICATION OF REPUTATIONAL MISCONDUCT

1. Purpose of this Schedule

1.1. This Schedule provides a structured framework for classifying conduct that may bring AAAIC into disrepute.

1.2. It is intended to guide:

(a) disciplinary authorities;
(b) investigators;
(c) appeal structures;
(d) leadership decision-making;
(e) sanction proportionality assessments.

1.3. This Schedule must be interpreted in conjunction with the main Policy and the Constitution of AAAIC.

CATEGORY 1: MINOR MISCONDUCT (ADMINISTRATIVE BREACHES)

Conduct that does not materially damage the Party but reflects poor discipline or governance awareness.

Examples include:

(a) Failure to use approved Party communication templates.
(b) Minor unauthorised use of Party branding without malicious intent.
(c) Unauthorised participation in low-risk public events without formal mandate.
(d) Failure to adhere to internal reporting lines.
(e) Inadvertent public misstatement corrected promptly.

Typical Sanctions:

(a) verbal warning
(b) written warning
(c) corrective training

CATEGORY 2: SERIOUS MISCONDUCT (REPUTATIONAL RISK CONDUCT)

Conduct that creates a **reasonable risk of reputational harm** or public confusion.

Examples include:

(a) Public statements implying Party policy without authority.
(b) Social media posts misrepresenting Party positions.
(c) Repeated failure to comply with communication protocols.
(d) Negligent disclosure of internal Party information.
(e) Public criticism of Party leadership in a manner likely to damage unity.
(f) Failure to correct false public statements after becoming aware of them.

Typical Sanctions:

(a) final written warning
(b) suspension (short-term)
(c) removal from delegated authority
(d) mandatory re-training

CATEGORY 3: GROSS MISCONDUCT (ACTUAL REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE)

Conduct that **causes actual harm or significant reputational injury** to AAAIC.

Examples include:

(a) Knowingly making false public statements about the Party.
(b) Defamatory statements against Party leadership or structures.
(c) Leaking confidential Party documents to external parties.
(d) Impersonating Party authority or spokesperson roles.
(e) Public endorsement of rival political parties while remaining a member.
(f) Organising or promoting parallel leadership structures.
(g) Fraudulent use of Party name for fundraising or personal gain.
(h) Deliberate disruption of Party campaigns or electoral activities.

Typical Sanctions:

(a) suspension
(b) removal from office
(c) disqualification from candidacy
(d) restitution orders
(e) referral to law enforcement (where applicable)

CATEGORY 4: EXPULSION-WARRANTING OFFENCES (SEVERE ORGANISATIONAL SABOTAGE)

Conduct fundamentally incompatible with continued membership of AAAIC.

Examples include:

(a) Deliberate sabotage of Party structures, campaigns, or elections.
(b) Persistent and wilful conduct bringing the Party into serious disrepute.
(c) Establishment of competing or breakaway political structures using AAAIC identity.
(d) Corruption, fraud, or serious financial misconduct involving Party resources.
(e) Systematic leaking of confidential strategic or financial information.
(f) Coordinated disinformation campaigns against AAAIC.
(g) Violence, intimidation, or criminal conduct associated with Party activities.
(h) Continuous campaigning for rival political organisations.

Typical Sanctions:

(a) expulsion from AAAIC
(b) permanent disqualification from office
(c) referral to authorities
(d) recovery of losses
(e) public clarification/retraction orders

PRINCIPLES FOR CLASSIFICATION

Classification must be based on **evidence, not political preference**.

The following factors must be considered:

(a) intent (deliberate vs negligent)
(b) scale of reputational harm
(c) seniority of offender
(d) repetition of conduct
(e) timing (especially election periods)
(f) public impact

PROPORTIONALITY RULE

No sanction may be imposed unless it is:

(a) reasonable
(b) justified
(c) proportionate to harm caused

Disciplinary action must avoid:

(a) political persecution
(b) factional targeting
(c) arbitrary punishment

CONTINUING EFFECT OF MISCONDUCT

Misconduct remains actionable even if:

(a) the member resigns
(b) the member is suspended
(c) the member completes term of office
(d) the member relocates or changes position

AAAIC retains jurisdiction over reputational harm caused during membership.

FINAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

This Schedule is intended to ensure that AAAIC:

(a) protects its institutional integrity,
(b) enforces disciplined communications,
(c) prevents reputational sabotage, and
(d) maintains public trust in its political mission, while still preserving fairness, accountability, and constitutional governance standards.