

STATUTES OF THE JESUIT CONFERENCE OF AFRICA AND MADAGASCAR (JESAM)

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITIONS

The first joint meeting of English and French-speaking Major Superiors of Africa was held in 1970 in Lusaka. This was the historical foundation of the Conference of *Jesuit Superiors of Africa and Madagascar* (JESAM).

1.1 In these Statutes:

1.1.1 **“The Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar”** (JESAM or “the Conference”) shall mean the Conference of Jesuit Major Superiors having jurisdiction in ACE, ANW, AOC, AOR, MDG, MOZ, RWB, SAF, ZAM, ZIM and any other areas assigned by Father General as part of JESAM.

1.1.2 **“JESAM Centres of Formation”** shall mean those institutions of studies and their associated houses of formation of the Society of Jesus in Africa and Madagascar, designated as such by Father General. The JESAM Centres of Formation at present are:

Hekima College – Nairobi

Arrupe College – Harare

Institut de Théologie de la Compagnie de Jésus - Abidjan

1.1.3 **“JESAM Common Apostolic Works”** shall mean those apostolic works of the Conference specified as such by the Conference. The JESAM Common Apostolic Works at present are:

AFRICAMA House for the administration of JESAM structures and works

African Jesuits AIDS Network (AJAN)

Afrika Yetu Journal

1.1.4 **“JESAM Officials”** shall mean those Jesuits appointed by the President to fulfil subordinate roles within JESAM, such as, but not limited to, Delegates, Convenors, Coordinators, etc

1.1.5 **“JESAM Support Structures”**. JESAM Support structures are those that will enable JESAM to carry out its mission.

1.1.6 **“JESAM Consultants”** shall mean those Jesuits appointed by Father General as Conference Consultants as in Practics Quaedam #116.

1.1.7 **“The President of JESAM”** (or “the President”) shall mean the Major Superior appointed by Father General and entrusted with the government of the JESAM Common Works and Centres.

2.0 THE JESUIT CONFERENCE OF AFRICA AND MADAGASCAR

2.1 The Conference aims to build up the Society of Jesus in Africa and Madagascar into a prayerful and discerning community of apostolic men, and to foster union, communication, effective leadership and planning towards a common vision and the universal mission of the Society (GC35, D.5, n.18.a).

2.2 Objectives of the Conference: the Conference has the following objectives:

2.2.1 to share responsibility for the mission of the Society in Africa and Madagascar, to determine priorities and to encourage the Major Superiors of the Conference to assign personnel accordingly;

2.2.2 to implement in Africa and Madagascar the universal apostolic priorities of the Society, as identified from time to time by the General Congregations and Father General;

2.2.3 to plan common projects and to coordinate common actions on issues of importance to the Conference

2.2.4 to foster inter-provincial cooperation with Africa and Madagascar and with the rest of the Society;

2.2.5 to assist the President in the government of JESAM Common Works and Centres.

- 2.3 Functioning of the Conference: the Conference shall conduct business as follows:
- 2.3.1 The quorum for meetings of the Conference is two thirds of the total number of Major Superiors of the Conference, rounded up to the nearest whole number. Only Major Superiors of the Conference have a right to vote.
- 2.3.2 The Conference has no direct authority over individual members of the Provinces or Regions of which it is composed. Major Superiors retain their autonomy in matters falling within their competence.
- 2.3.3 The Conference has the authority to make decisions in pursuance of the objectives of the Conference in accordance with the directives of GC 34, D. 21 (21–22) that are binding on all its members.
- 2.3.4 In the spirit of GC 35, D.5, n.20.b.2, the Conference will aim at a discerned consensus among the Major Superiors. Where this is not achieved Conference decisions require a two third majority of the vote of the Major Superiors present, the quorum rule being observed.
- 2.3.5 The Conference can also make recommendations to Father General or the President. These require a two thirds majority vote of the Major Superiors present, the quorum rule being observed.
- 2.3.6 In accordance with GC 35, D.5. n. 20.c.1, individual Major Superiors “are involved in a new way of interconnection and interdependence” and are individually and jointly responsible for the implementation of Conference decisions.
- 2.3.7 Major Superiors are accountable to the President in the strict area of his competence (GC 35, D.5. n.20.c.2).
- 2.4 The Conference normally meets once a year for a period that allows for prayerful discernment and for responsible and effective collaboration. Fr General usually attends one meeting of the Conference in a year and the African Assistant usually attends all Conference Meetings. Every second year a Conference meeting will be held in Rome. If for some serious reason a Major Superior is unable to attend, his Socius or one of the Consultors will take his place, with no right to vote.

3.0 THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE

- 3.1 The responsibilities of the President of JESAM are as follows:
- 3.1.1 He convenes the meetings of the Conference, prepares the agenda, attends to the follow-up.
- 3.1.2 He animates the Conference and helps its members to develop a broader vision of the needs of the Church and the Society’s mission in Africa and Madagascar and beyond and Jesuit formation.
- 3.1.3 He will work closely with the African Assistant and, together with the Assistant, will be a link between Father General and the Major Superiors of the Conference.
- 3.1.4 He guides efforts towards setting priorities and decision-making for the Conference.
- 3.1.5 He encourages cooperation between the individual Provinces and Regions, especially to facilitate planning, to help the Provinces and Regions of JESAM realise joint apostolic projects.
- 3.1.6 He also encourages individual Provinces and Regions of JESAM to cooperate at a regional level when this gives promise of greater fruit.
- 3.1.7 He is *ex officio* Chairman of all the Governing Bodies under the authority of the Conference and may delegate this role to another member of the Conference.
- 3.1.8 He coordinates the overall planning and development of the Society’s mission in Africa and Madagascar.
- 3.1.9 He is consulted before a Major Superior of the Conference approaches Father General for the necessary approval to open or close Institutes of Higher Education, Novitiates and Juniorates, and for the establishment, reconfiguration and suppression of Provinces and Regions.
- 3.1.10 He has a responsibility to encourage training for leadership and ongoing formation. (GC 35. D.5 30, 31, 32, 36).

- 3.1.11 He deals with requests from dioceses within Africa and Madagascar which are not territorially covered by Jesuit Provinces or Regions in consultation with the Major Superiors who may be in a position to respond.
- 3.1.12 He serves as a point of contact in matters of common interest and concern for the Society in Africa and Madagascar and overseas. He attends the meeting of the Moderators/Presidents' Conference whenever it is called by Father General. And he is *ex officio* member of the General Congregation.
- 3.1.13 Normally he will consult with as many Major Superiors of the Conference as possible before releasing any statements to the press, but in urgent situations he may proceed as he sees fit.
- 3.2 The President has the ordinary jurisdiction of a Major Superior over all JESAM Common Works and Centres. In this capacity and subject to the approval or decision of Father General, when required by the statutes of the Institution:
- 3.2.1 He plans for, requests, and appoints personnel released by Provinces and Regions for JESAM Common Works and Centres. In making these appointments he must, while seeing to the common good, be mindful of his responsibility towards the men being appointed, their Major Superiors and the works affected by their transfer.
- 3.2.2 In those rare situations which the President and the respective Major Superior cannot come to an agreement about the assignment of a particular individual, the matter will be referred to the General for resolution (GC35, D.5 20.a.3).
- 3.2.3 He has the '*cura personalis*' of the men assigned to JESAM Common Works and Centres.
- 3.2.4 He receives the accounts of conscience of Jesuits permanently assigned to the Common Houses and Works (GC35, D5, 21d).
- 3.2.5 He oversees the financial resources of the Common Houses and Works (GC35, D5, 21a)
- 3.2.6 Jesuits not yet in final vows currently assigned or designated to be assigned in the future as staff members of JESAM Common Works continue to be under the authority of their own Major Superiors.
- 3.2.7 He is responsible for the ongoing formation of all Jesuits assigned to the JESAM Common Works and Centres. He must give permission for sabbaticals, personal renewal and foreign visits for the purpose of study, ministry, health etc.
- 3.3 The President or the person whom he delegates represents the Society in Africa and Madagascar to the Symposium of the Catholic Bishops of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM), the Conference of Religious and other bodies as the Conference sees fit.
- 3.4 The President may be assisted by a Socius, who is normally the Secretary of the Conference, a Treasurer and any other officials which from time-to-time may be deemed necessary by the Conference.
- 3.5 The President of the Conference, as a Major Superior, will have a Consult. This consult is to be composed of two members of the Conference and two other Jesuits, all of whom are to be appointed by Father General.
- 3.5.1 The Consult must meet at least three times a year and whenever matters of major importance arise. Teleconferencing could also be used when and if the technology avails itself to all the Consultors.
- 3.6 The term of office for the President of JESAM is the same as those for any Major Superior. The *terna* of his successor is prepared by the President and the Conference after hearing his consultors and following a broad consultation of those under his authority.

4.0 JESAM SUPPORT STRUCTURES

4.1 The officials of JESAM Support Structures assist the President of the Conference in coordinating and promoting Jesuit works in the sector entrusted to them. They will liaise with coordinators of their respective apostolic sectors in the Provinces and Regions of the Conference.

4.2 The officials of JESAM Support Structures are appointed by the President of the Conference, after consulting the Major Superiors of the Conference. Ordinarily the term of office is three years, once renewable.

4.3 They will have a coordinating role on behalf of the JESAM, to which they will submit yearly reports. Their job descriptions are to be approved by the Conference.

4.4 The President of the Conference will normally meet each of them annually. They will, from time-to-time be invited to meetings of JESAM to review the work of their apostolic sector.

4.5 The Support Structures are created and dissolved by the Conference as it sees fit.

5.0 JURIDICAL AND FINANCIAL MATTER*

5.1 The Jesuits in JESAM Common Works and Centres are not juridically applied (*'applicati'*) but assigned to them. They, the President of the Conference and his staff retain full rights with regard to Congregations, suffrages, etc. in the Provinces or Regions to which they belong, according to the general law of the Society. By reason of his office the President attends the Congregation of his Province or Region and the meetings of Major Superiors of the universal Society.

5.2 The President will ensure that each year the Conference is presented with an annual budget and a statement of accounts.

5.3 The Conference has a right, by an absolute majority of the membership of the Conference to resolve problems of procedure and doubts in the interpretation of these Statutes.

5.4 These statutes may be amended by Father General after a necessary consultation.

The original JESAM Statutes were approved by the Superior General of the Society of Jesus on 20th September 2000. This revised edition, made by the Conference in accordance with GC 35 (D.5. 18.c.2), has been approved by Father General on **November 24, 2009**, and is to be reviewed in three years from this date.



Approved
Q. Mordani

* For more details on personnel and financial matters see the JESAM internally binding document on Resources (IAG #312).