

OHUHU PROGRESSIVE UNION, Inc.

**A
CONSTITUTION**
**Made by and for the Membership of
Ohuhu Progressive Union, Inc.
Houston, Texas, U.S.A.**

Published - February 15, 2015

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Article 1

Mission Statement

Section A: Mission Statement

We, the people of Ohuhu in Abia State Nigeria, residing in the United States of America and in Diaspora, it is of our greatest interest to participate in the development and education of Ohuhu community, to promote Ohuhu traditions and cultures, and to seek ways and means to further the unity of all Ohuhu sons and daughters and humanity everywhere in the world, do hereby resolve to constitute ourselves into the Ohuhu Progressive Union Houston, Inc.

Article 2

Name and Location of the Association

Section A: Name of the Association

This Association shall be known, called, and addressed as "Ohuhu Progressive Union Houston", Inc. (OPU) (unanimously Adopted May 6, 2010).

Section B: Location of the Association

The Association shall maintain its headquarters in Houston, Texas, USA. as its primary offices.

Article 3

Membership Eligibility

Section A: Eligibility

Every son or daughter born of Ohuhu decent by father, mother, or by marriage into Ohuhu Clan is eligible to become a member of OPU-Houston. Membership is open to all indigenes resident anywhere in the United States.

Section B: Meeting Periods

General meetings shall be held once a month. The date shall be any date which falls on the third (3rd) Sunday of the month.

Section C: Time of meeting

Meetings shall commence from five (5) O'clock in the evening and last no more than two (2) hours. Meeting quorum is $\frac{1}{4}$ of membership, and meeting shall terminate after 45 minutes from 5 O'clock, if quorum is not formed.

Section D: Immediate Family Structure

OPU shall consider a family structure to consist of the following: Father and Mother (either could be born in Ohuhu); any child including adopted child under eighteen (18 years) of age.

Section E: Member Relative

As stated in Section D above.

Article 4

Transferable Membership

Section A -Transferable Membership

Membership of any financial member of OPU who used to live in Houston but transferred to another city, town, or state, within the United States, and is also active financially in that city, town, or state, shall be considered transferred. Such membership shall also be considered suspended in OPU. All benefits and privileges shall be reactivated as soon as such member returns and resides in Houston. The member shall be assessed no fees for membership.

Article 5

Finance

Section A – Membership & Registration

1. Registration: Member registration request begins when registration form is completed and no less than fifty (\$50) dollars is deposited with the Association. Registration shall be per family, while the ten (\$10) monthly dues are per adult person in the family. Payment for registration must be in full at the time of registration.

Section B –Dues

Ten (10) dollars union dues will be assessed and paid by each member monthly, for as long as the member remains financially active.

Section C- Tardiness

A fee of two (\$2.00) dollars shall be levied on any member who enters the meeting place after 6:00 P.M. in the evening. Official meeting start time is 5:00 P.M. The levy is waived if the member's lateness is communicated to the President within a reasonable period of time, and must be communicated to the President through any means before the official start of the meeting.

The President must also announce the name(s) of the member(s) who communicated their lateness to meeting/membership before the full meeting starts. There are no exceptions to this required announcement by the President.

Section D - New Member from another chapter

Any new member, in good standing from other recognized Ohuhu organization, with a transfer letter from that organization, shall be exempt from registration fees and shall be admitted into OPU Houston as a full member with all rights and privileges, after six (6) months of continued financial membership.

Article 6

Offices and Officers

The following offices shall be elected every two years:

Section A – President

1. The President shall preside over all general and executive meetings
2. The President shall convene all emergency, general, and executive meetings, when necessary.
3. The President has the right to cancel, postpone, or reschedule meetings, in consultation with the Executive Committee.
4. The President shall work diligently to protect and implement all policies so adopted by both the general membership and Executive meetings.
5. The President shall present annual report to OPU Houston, regarding the financial status and the state of the association. Such report shall be made by the end of the month of December of every year, but no later than February of the following year.
6. The President shall be accountable to the OPU Houston.
7. The President shall represent the OPU Houston during all outside event(s). In his absence, The Vice President shall deputize for the President. In the absence of the Vice President, the International Council (IC) Representative

shall deputize for the V.P. In the absence of the IC Rep, any member of the Executive approved by the President shall act on such official capacity.

8. The President shall be a signatory to all banking and all financial transactions of OPU – Houston.
9. The President shall be a member of the Executive Committee.
10. The President shall, in consultation with the executive committee develop administrative operating procedures governing finance, Committees, or other functions of the Association.
11. The President shall prepare operating budget annually and such budget shall be subject to approval by the general house.
12. The President is empowered to expend up to three (\$300) dollars without approval on emergency basis. Any amount above \$300 dollars shall require two of the three signatories and approval from the association.
13. The President shall insure that the tax exempt status granted OPU by the Internal Revenue Service remains active and in compliance with related laws and regulations pertaining to it.

Section B -- Vice President

1. The Vice President (V.P.) shall deputize for the president in his absence.
2. The V.P. shall succeed the president in case of resignation, terminal illness, or during anytime the president could not discharge his duties.
3. The V.P. shall chair all Ad-hoc committees and all Executive Committees in the absence of the president.
4. The V.P. shall coordinate all projects and programs as delegated by the President.
5. The V.P. shall be a member of the Executive Committee.
6. The V.P. shall perform all other duties incident of the Vice President and such other duties that may be outlined from time to time by the President.

Section C—Secretary

1. The Secretary shall take all dictation during general and Executive meetings. He shall also prepare the minutes, read the minutes to the association during general and executive meetings.
2. The Secretary shall be responsible for sending all correspondence to all outside contacts, and all interested parties.
3. The Secretary shall in consultation with and approval of the President prepare the meeting agenda.
4. Shall work closely with the Parliamentarian (Provost) to insure that accurate and complete membership attendance record is collected and maintained during each meeting.

Section C1 – Asst. Secretary

1. The Asst. Secretary shall deputize and perform all responsibilities of the Secretary in the Secretary's absence.

Section D -- Financial Secretary

1. The Financial Secretary shall be the official financial recorder of the association.
2. The Financial Secretary shall keep record of all fee and other financial transactions of the OPU.
3. The Financial Secretary shall present quarterly financial report to OPU and she/he shall work in conjunction with the Treasurer to present quarterly and annual financial reports to the association.
4. The Financial Secretary shall cooperate with auditors during investigations.
5. The Financial secretary shall be member of the executive committee.
6. The Financial Secretary shall approve all financial transactions through the President before disbursement by the Treasurer.
7. The Financial Secretary shall timely update each member's financial status and record, and provide such record to each member during meetings.

8. The Financial Secretary shall work with the Treasurer and Secretary to insure that the tax exempt status granted OPU by the Internal Revenue Service remains active and in compliance with related laws and regulations pertaining to it.

Section E -- Treasurer

1. The Treasurer shall collect all monies from the Financial Secretary at the end of every meeting and shall deposit same in the association's bank account located in Houston on a timely manner, and not later than 3 business days.
2. The Treasurer shall collect the bank statement from the Financial Secretary at least 7 days before the monthly meeting and make it available to the organization, all statements monthly and annually.
3. The Treasurer shall keep records of all financial transactions.
4. The Treasurer shall closely work with the Financial Secretary in preparation and presentation of the monthly and annual financial reports.
5. The Treasurer shall submit to, and surrender pertinent documents, and provide information to outside auditors, whenever necessary.
6. The Treasurer shall be a member of the Executive Committee.
7. The Treasurer shall work with the Financial Secretary and Secretary to insure that the tax exempt status granted OPU by the Internal Revenue Service remains active and in compliance with related laws and regulations pertaining to it.

Section F—Public Relations Officer (PRO)

1. The PRO shall head the catastrophic Emergency Response Team.
2. The PRO shall keep updated files of all member contacts in good standing.
3. Be a liaison between the executive and OPU membership.
4. Be responsible for distributing OPU's publications, soliciting for donations, fundraising from corporations, public and private as well as non-profit organizations.

5. Be responsible for member recruitment.
6. Be the custodian of OPU information and other pertinent information as may seem fit by OPU Executive.
7. Shall perform other duties that may be assigned by the OPU Executive Committee, and shall be a member of the Executive Committee.
8. Shall produce, distribute to members, as well as maintain current membership directory at all time.
9. Shall represent OPU on membership orientation related drives.
10. Shall be responsible for sending out notices, announcements, or other public information to all members of the organization in a timely manner.

Section G – International Council (IC) Representative

1. IC Rep shall represent OPU and liaison between OPU and ODUI in all matter with Ohuhu Development Union, International (ODUI).
2. IC Rep shall attend and participate in all IC and ODUI Board of Directors (BOD) meetings duly summoned by these bodies live or by other means such as teleconference.
3. IC Rep must brief the OPU Executive on all matters applicable to OPU as well as provide IC and ODUI updates during OPU's monthly meetings.
4. IC Rep must convey accurate and complete information and position of OPU on all matters to ODUI, as well as those of IC/ODUI back to OPU.
5. Shall be a member of the OPU Executive Committee.

Section H – Parliamentarian (Provost)

1. Shall maintain order during OPU meetings and functions.
2. Shall collect fines and hand such fines to the Financial Secretary.
3. Shall work with the Secretary to insure that accurate and complete membership attendance record is collected and maintained during each meeting.

Article 7

Executive Committee

Section A --Executive Committee

1. All elected officers of OPU shall constitute the Executive Committee.
2. The President shall preside over the executive committee.
3. The executive committee shall hold their Committee meeting once a month or on the Saturday prior to each monthly meeting.
4. The Executive Committee shall recommend to the general assembly actions, projects, or matters concerning the Union.
5. The Executive Committee in conjunction with the President shall work hard and employ all diplomatic means necessary to foster unity among Ohuhu indigenes in the metro-Houston area.
6. The Executive shall endeavor and intentionally seek to reconcile and resolve any issues which will have potential to divide or destroy the peace, harmony, unity, and brotherliness that must exist in our Houston - Ohuhu Community.

Article 8

Auditors

Section A -- Auditors

1. The general assemble of OPU shall be empowered to appoint auditors. Auditors shall not be members of the executive council. Auditors shall be independent of the executive council. The auditors shall audit the accounts of Ohuhu progressive Union and shall submit interim reports as well as final reports to the general assembly. The auditors shall have up to 90 days to conclude audit reports, if such extended period of time is necessary.
2. OPU's books and records shall be audited yearly to insure full compliance of OPU's tax exempt status.
3. The Association can authorize implementation of audit examination of its books and records at any time, as may be necessary.

Article 9

Government

Section A- Duration of Government

1. The duration of all elected office(s) and/ or government(s), shall be for the period of no more than two (2) years.
2. Such elected office shall terminate after no more than two consecutive terms.
3. Election for new offices shall be conducted following the expiration of the existing government. The New OPU government shall assume office no later than 30 days following successful elections.
4. Previous officers may seek any position other than the one held for the past 2 consecutive terms. But after a waiting period of two (2) years he or she had been out of office, the previous officer may contest for a position held in the prior government.

Section B- Qualification for Office

To qualify for any elected office, the candidate must meet the following criteria:

- A. Be an Ohuhu indigene by birth, marriage, naturalization, or by adoption.
- B. Must have lived in Houston, Texas continuously for at least one (1) year.
- C. Must be an active and financial member of OPU for at least one (1) year.
- D. Must be in good financial standing and must not be charged and convicted of any criminal offense, either personally or by association.

Section C- Official OPU Business

- A. OPU shall reimburse Executive members monies expended for all approved local official OPU business. Such reimbursement(s) shall not exceed three hundred (\$300) dollars; regardless of the amount of money incurred by such executive member engaged the said official OPU business.
- B. For out-of-town official OPU business, OPU shall reimburse the executive member(s) reasonable amount expended for all approved official OPU

business, after receipt is tendered. The executive must be prudent and should exercise professional judgment in all costs incurred for such trip to avoid disallowance of part or all costs incurred by the executive(s).

Article 10

Elections

Section A- Election Process

This process for choosing representatives for OPU shall be maintained during all election processes.

- A. Elections shall be held in the month of November of every two years.
- B. Announcements for the election shall commence in the month of August of year through election month of the same year.
- C. Interested candidates shall register with the Electoral College appointed by the general house of the organization no later than the month of August of the same year.
- D. The Electoral College shall from among themselves appoint a returning officer.
- E. The candidates shall be allowed five (5) minutes each to address the house on objectives and plans of action for the next two (2) years of office.
- F. Each financial member shall have one vote for each candidate.
- G. Voting shall be only by Secret Ballot. The candidate with greatest number of votes for any office shall be declared the winner of the election.
- H. All elected members shall assume respective offices during the next meeting following elections.
- I. To insure smooth transition, old officers must work with the new officers in good faith. Old officers must surrender every property of OPU in their possession to the new officer on demand, and during the next meeting following elections.

Article 11

Banking

Section A- Banking

1. Ohuhu Progressive Union - Houston must maintain a bank account with a public bank(s) recognized by the Federal Insurance Deposit Corporation (FDIC), and the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation (FSLIC), and the bank must be approved by the general assembly.
2. Signatories to the OPU's bank account shall consist of the President, Financial Secretary, and the Treasurer, or any combination of the two members.
3. No later than fourteen (14) days after every election, the Executive shall draft, ratify, and promptly submit a power of Attorney to the bank changing signatories to the OPU's bank account.
4. The Treasurer cannot expend money without a voucher from the Financial Secretary.

Article 12

Dress Code and Member Conduct

Section A – Dress Code

- A. Slacks, Shirts, Tie, Jackets, and Shoes shall be allowed at the meeting. Nigerian traditional clothing is also allowed (No short pants). No other type of inappropriate attire shall be allowed at the general meeting.
- B. No shorts, T-Shirts, shower shoes (slippers), bare feet, shirts or dress with provocative or inciting inscriptions, ball caps, or any other attire not approved by the Union shall be worn to the general meeting.

Section B –Member Conduct

- A. Every eligible member shall conduct himself or herself appropriately both during and outside OPU meetings. Inappropriate conducts include fighting during meetings or on public places, vulgar language usage, disruption during official OPU meetings, and any other misconduct so determined by the association must not be allowed. *Violation shall* range from probation,

fine of up to \$100, or expulsion from the **Association**. Level of punishment shall be determined by a constituted panel approved by the President.

Article 13

Impeachments

Section A -Impeachment of Officers

An official of the Ohuhu Progressive Union shall be impeached if any of the following occurs:-

- 1) Embezzlement of association's funds.
- 2) Misappropriation of association's funds.
- 3) Unauthorized use of association's fund or property, or any other reason found to be inappropriate by the association
- 4) Engagement in criminal activity.
- 5) Conviction and/or imprisonment for any criminal activity.
- 6) Negligence of duty
- 7) Misrepresentation of OPU.

Section B -Procedure for impeachment

- 1) The president shall set up a committee to investigate allegations of impeachment offence and make recommendations for action to the president.
- 2) The President shall study the recommendation(s) by the investigative committee and in turn make Recommendations to the Executive committee for deliberation.
- 3) If the President is involved in the accusation then, the general membership shall nominate no more than five (5) members to investigate and make Recommendation to the Executive committee for necessary action.

- 4) The Executive committee shall consider the recommendation(s) of the investigating committee and then suggest line of action to the general membership.
- 5) The general membership shall accept, reject, or modify the recommendation by a majority vote to impeach any officer.
- 6) Upon impeachment, the officer must return all union properties in his or her possession to Ohuhu Progressive Union within five (5) working days to the President of the association.

Article 14

Resignation of Officer

Section A - Resignation of Officers

Officer resigning shall submit a letter of resignation to the president and shall upon acceptance of his/her resignation by the general membership, return all OPU's property in his/her possession immediately.

Article 15

Inactive Members

Section A - Inactive Members

A member shall be considered inactive after non-payment of all dues and fees, and absent from meetings after 4 consecutive months. Such member(s) shall remain inactive until the time the inactive member reinstates. Reinstatement of membership into OPU shall be by a Payment of one hundred (\$100) dollars flat fee and all monthly due and fees shall become due henceforth. The remainder of the dues shall be payable after one hundred and twenty (120) days. Alternative option shall be by registration as a new member.

Section B - Member Resignation

A member shall be considered resigned when all fees and dues have lapsed and no efforts to renew them were made within a reasonable time, after four (4) months of formal application.

Section C - Reinstatement of Members

Reinstatement of membership shall be by a fee payment of one hundred dollars (\$100) flat fee. Inactive member clauses shall apply.

Article 16

Benefits

Section A –Benefit

Members will be entitled to benefit after one year of completion of registration and active membership in good standing. Reinstated member will be entitled for benefits after eighteen (18) months (1 ½ years) of active membership in OPU.

Only members who paid their national dues are entitled to the National benefit package.

OPU benefit package is separate from ODUI National benefit package and only those members who paid their national dues, as stated above can benefit from the ODUI National Benefit package.

Section B- New - Born(s)

- 1) OPU shall make a cash presentation of two hundred (\$200) dollars to the family of the new born in good financial standing. In case of multiple birth, the donation will be (\$200.00) per child.
- 2) Where a ceremony is planned by the family, the progressive shall participate in the both the church and at home if required.
- 3) The money donated shall be from the OPU's account.

Section C- Death of Member's Relative

Member's Relative: This is defined as financial member's father or mother. OPU shall visit the deceased financial member immediately, without delay with a five hundred (\$500) dollars donation to the member. A levy of twenty (\$20) dollars shall be imposed on all members to offset the disbursement.

Section D- Death of Member

The sum of \$2,000 shall be given to the family of a deceased financial member. A death levy of twenty (\$50) dollars shall be imposed on all members to offset the disbursement.

Section E- Death of Member's Child

The sum of \$500 shall be given to the family of a deceased financial member's child. A death levy of twenty (\$20) dollars shall be imposed on all members to offset the disbursement.

Section F- Death of Other Member's Relatives

Death of other member's relatives will include brother, sister, aunt, uncle, nephew, niece, etc.

As we strive to be our brother's keeper, which is a shared responsibility in honor and respect for our culture and tradition, announcement of other member's relative death will be followed with a condolence visit to the affected member's family.

Although no official donation from OPU will be made to the family during such visit, free will or non-mandatory donations can be made to the family by those in attendance.

Section G- Group Life Insurance

1. OPU Executive must insure that every member of the Association is given an opportunity to participate in the group life insurance, notwithstanding when the member joined the Association.
2. Participation in the group life insurance will be by choice of the member, and only those members who pay their required premium when due will be covered in the group life insurance yearly. Full premiums must be collected from participants and paid to the insurance in advance in every plan year.
3. The Executive must solicit and invite reasonable number bid from vendors and then select the best offering that benefits the members and their families the most.

Section H- Death of Member's Spouse

1. Spouse is defined as Husband or Wife of a financial member.
2. Spouse must be current husband or wife of a financial member. Former spouse or separated husband or wife of a financial member is excluded for this benefit to a member. Member must be currently married to the deceased spouse at the time of his or her death to receive benefit.
3. The sum of \$1,000 shall be given to the family of a deceased financial member's child. A death levy of twenty (\$20) dollars shall be imposed on all members to offset the disbursement.

Article 17

Wedding and Graduation Ceremonies

Section A --Wedding Ceremony

- 1) OPU must render necessary help before during and after the wedding arrangements.
- 2) OPU shall present two hundred (\$200) worth of gift thereof to each Newly Weds

Section B- Graduation Ceremony

- 3) Each year, all Ohuhu Progressive Union children graduating from high school will be presented with \$200.00 gift and a bible each. This benefit is only available to children of financial members of OPU, no exceptions.

Article 18

At-Large Membership

Section A: At-Large Membership

1. Ohuhu Progressive Union (OPU) welcomes anyone with relationship to Ohuhu Clan, whether through birth or through marriage. At-large membership is available or granted to anyone who is resident in neighboring cities outside Houston, but within the State of Texas, as well as anyone resident in neighboring States outside the State of Texas. At-Large membership into OPU is not available to anyone residing in a city with an active and existing Ohuhu organization.

2. At-Large member must complete membership registration/application form. Additionally, At-Large member must submit signed written statement, expressing his or her interest to becoming At-Large member in OPU Houston, Texas, as well as commitment to abide by and uphold the constitution of OPU in its entirety.
3. At-large member is entitled to all benefits that are available or granted to a regular member by the Union. At-Large member is also subject to disciplinary actions stipulated in OPU's constitution, if necessary. At-large member is equally responsible to fulfill all membership obligations, such as monthly dues, levies, attendance, and hosting of monthly meeting. At-Large member must attend at least one monthly live meeting within a calendar year. Attendance to events within Houston by an At-Large member, such as OPU End of Year Christmas party, new born-baby visits, weddings, wake keeping, etc., will not count or be considered as having met At-Large member's minimum meeting attendance requirement.
4. No monetary benefit will be paid to an At-Large member until after one year of continuous membership in OPU.

Article 19

OPU Council of Chiefs and Traditional Rulers

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT - OHUHU PROGRESSIVE UNION'S AUTHORITY & MANDATE TO OPU CHIEFS AND TRADITIONAL RULERS IN HOUSTON, TEXAS, USA.

AUGUST 18, 2013

Preamble:

We, the General Membership of Ohuhu Progressive Union (OPU) who are domiciled in Houston and contiguous cities in Texas and other states in the United States of America by virtue of their membership to OPU, but share the vision and aspirations of the Ohuhu Clan, in order to build a virile Union, promote our socioeconomic advancement, insure Fairness and Justice for all, encourage the exchange of idea, cultivate a sense of belonging amongst sons and daughters of

Ohuhu and their families and bequeath an exemplary legacy for our children, do hereby propose, enact, and give to the Chiefs and Traditional Rulers in OPU, and hereby referred to as “OPU Council of Chiefs”, in our mist the following charge for purposes of fostering and maintaining peace, harmony, and reconciliation between and amongst members of our great Ohuhu Progressive Union:

DUTIES:

1. Elect officers within their rank.
2. Deliberate on issues and matters that are formally referred to the OPU Council of Chiefs by the leadership and general membership of OPU.
3. Only issues and matters agreed to be decided by OPU Council of Chiefs by the disputing persons or parties must be referred to the OPU Council of Chiefs.
4. Carefully and diligently investigate all issues and matters referred them through and by any means acceptable to them to insure fairness and justice to the parties.
5. Recommend appropriate action(s) to be meted with the responsible parties to the Executive Board of OPU for implementation.

POWERS AND AUTHORITY:

1. The decision of the OPU Counsel of Chiefs is final, and must not be challenged by the parties.
2. The OPU Council of Chiefs, through appropriate channels can and will refer any behavior or actions of any party which is detrimental as well as undermine the good name, tradition, and culture of our Ohuhu Clan to the Traditional Rulers at home, in Nigeria.

Article 20

Member Responsibility

- A. Each financial member is responsible to host one meeting a year on an assigned date. Any member who fails to host a meeting must pay the sum of \$250 to OPU, and not to the group in which the member is assigned to host the meeting with.
- B. Every OPU member shall attend other members' events to support a fellow OPU member during family visits or ceremonies for child birth, graduation, sickness/hospitalization, wake keeping, wedding, birthday, etc.
- C. Teach Igbo language, culture, and tradition to our children, as well as nurture and train them to be good citizens of the world.
- D. Assist any member in need, in the area of job, education, and/or general basic necessities of life that will help the member become productive citizen of our community.
- E. Be good ambassador of our great Ohuhu Clan by speaking the truth, be honest, be trustworthy, be friendly, be responsible, have respect for others as well as respect for the laws of the land. Avoid participation in criminal or any other activity that will tarnish the image of a fellow OPU member and that of the Ohuhu Clan.
- F. Have respect for, and uphold the great culture and traditions of our great Ohuhu Clan, and the Igbo culture as a whole.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

On behalf of the Constitution Review Committee, I want to thank Chief Godwin Akobundu – OPU President, OPU Executive, and the entire members of Ohuhu Progressive Union for offering my committee this special honor and recognition to serve our great organization by producing this document that my Committee strongly believes will stand the test of time to play a significant part in uniting our members and our Ohuhu Community to achieve and maintain progress, peace, and harmony in OPU. Although this great document, in whole or in part may not satisfactorily or completely address all foreseeable situations and circumstances, issues or concerns of every member, my committee is faithfully convinced this day that strict adherence to the letters of this document will insure just and equitable treatment to all OPU members. Thank you Ohuhu Progressive Union!

Chief Onyema Godwin Ndukwe
Chairman – Constitution Review Committee
February 15, 2015

Review Committee Members

- 1) Chief Onyema Godwin Ndukwe -----Chairman
- 2) Mrs. Catherine Adibe -----Secretary
- 3) Mrs. Mercy Joseph-----Member
- 4) Mr. Gabriel Nwokocha-----PRO
- 5) Atty. Chinyere Agomo Onukwubiri-----Member

THE END