

# **CONSTITUTION OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT**

WE, members of the People's Democratic Movement (hereinafter called P.D.M or the Movement), continue the struggles of our Kalinago and African predecessors for economic and social justice and ADOPT THE FOLLOWING RULES AND REGULATIONS.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **THE MOVEMENT**

**Article 1:** PDM is a broad-based political organisation that has as its goal to take our country from mere constitutional independence to full economic, political and cultural independence.

**Article 2:** The motto of the movement is: "Dominica for Dominicans at Home and Abroad."

**Article 3:** The electoral symbol of the Movement is the .

**Article 4:** The colour of the Movement is Orange.

**Article 5:** PDM's emblem depicts a yellow rose superimposed on a caring heart.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

**Article 7:** The Movement is guided by the following principles, namely:

- (a) The Creator holds the central place in the affairs of our nation.
- (b) People and the quality of their lives are the object of development.
- (c) We believe in a multi-party political system in which citizens are free to form and join a political party to contest elections.
- (d) All Dominicans, at home or in the diaspora, are equal partners in the process of national development.
- (e) A full time job, good health, proper housing and secondary schooling: each of these is a right of each and every one of our people.

- (f) Government has a duty to protect the poor and disadvantaged amongst the population.
- (g) Local government is critical to community development and must be enshrined in our nation's Constitution.
- (h) Corruption in public office is a gross betrayal of the people's trust and must be severely punished.

**Article 8:** We fully support our country's role in the OECS and CARICOM and its participation as a general rule in international organizations.

**Article 9:** We are opposed to war and violence and we support all movements for peace, democracy and social progress.

### **CHAPTER THREE**

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

**Article 10:** Membership of PDM is open to any citizen of Dominica or the British Commonwealth above the age of 18 years who:

- (a) is not a member of another political party in Dominica;
- (b) undertakes to respect and uphold its rules and regulations;
- (c) pays a registration fee of \$5.00 and a monthly subscription fee of \$5.00.
- (d) pledges to promote the unity of the Movement at all times.

**Article 11:** An application for membership shall be made on a form prescribed for that purpose and shall be approved or rejected by a simple majority vote in a meeting of the PDM Branch (where the applicant resides) called to consider applications.

**Article 12:** Every member shall have the right to:

- (a) participate as equals in all meetings of the branch of the Movement to which he/she belongs.
- (b) freely express opinions on all matters under discussion.

(c) vote, if a paid-up member, on all decisions to be taken.

**Article 13:** Every member of the Movement has a duty to:

- (a) pay dues promptly and regularly.
- (b) observe the attendance of meetings and others to which he/she is invited.
- (c) freely express opinions at such meetings.
- (d) abide by, support and carry out the Movement's agreed policies and decisions.
- (e) conduct oneself in a manner that does credit to PDM.
- (f) participate in programmes of political education directed by the Movement.
- (g) encourage people to become members of the Movement.

**Article 14:** A member's membership may be suspended or terminated for gross indiscipline and disrespect of the Movement.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ORGANS OF THE MOVEMENT**

#### **BRANCH**

**Article 15:** A Branch shall be the basic unit of the Movement.

**Article 16:** A Branch shall consist of no less than seven (7) members residing in the same polling division.

**Article 17:** A Branch shall elect an Executive Committee from amongst its members which shall include a Chairperson, a Secretary/Treasurer and a Public Relations Officer.

**Article 18:** A Branch shall meet at least once a month.

**Article 19:** Decisions of the Branch shall be taken at meetings of the Branch and, between such meetings, at meetings of the Executive Committee of the Branch.

**Article 20:** A Branch Executive Committee shall meet at least twice monthly.

### **CONSTITUENCY ASSOCIATION**

**Article 21:** Each Branch elects a maximum of ten (10) of its members to sit on a Constituency Association.

**Article 22:** A Constituency Association shall elect from its membership an Executive Committee comprising a Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations Officer and two (2) Committee members.

**Article 23:** A Constituency Association shall meet at least once monthly.

**Article 24:** Decisions of the Constituency Association shall be taken at its meetings and, between such meetings, by the Constituency Association Executive Committee.

**Article 25:** A Constituency Association Executive Committee shall meet at least twice monthly.

### **ZONAL ASSOCIATION**

**Article 26:** There shall be six (6) zones corresponding to present constituency boundaries as follows: Cottage, Portsmouth, Paix Bouche, and Vieille Case; Colihaut, Salisbury, St. Joseph, and Mahaut; Wesley, Marigot, Castle Bruce and Carib Territory; Roseau North, Roseau Central, Roseau South and Roseau Valley; Morne Jaune and La Plaine; Soufriere, Grandbay and Petite Savanne.

**Article 27:** Each Constituency Association shall elect a maximum of ten (10) of its members to sit on a zonal association appropriate to the constituency in question.

**Article 28:** A zonal association shall elect from amongst its members an Executive Committee comprising a Chairperson, a Deputy Chairperson, a Secretary, a Treasurer, a Public Relations Officer and two (2) Committee members.

**Article 29:** Decisions of a zonal association shall be made at its meetings and, between such meetings, by its Executive Committee.

**Article 30:** A zonal association shall meet at least once in every two months.

**Article 31:** The Executive Committee of a Zonal Association shall meet at least once monthly.

### **CONGRESS**

**Article 32:** Congress is composed of duly elected delegates of the Movement's organs, as follows: two (2) from each Branch; ten (10) from each Constituency Association; all members of the National Council; five (5) from the Movement of Democratic Youth (MODY) and five (5) from the Democratic Women's Organisation.

**Article 33:** Congress is the supreme body of PDM and its main functions are to elect the National Council, elect members of the National Council, review the work of the Movement and approve guidelines for the next period. Between meetings, its functions are carried out by the National Council.

**Article 34:** Congress shall normally meet once a year but shall have authority to convene in special emergency session from time to time. A special Congress has the same rights and duties as a normal Congress.

### **NATIONAL COUNCIL**

**Article 35:** The National Council comprises the following officers, namely, Political Leader, General Secretary, Deputy Political Leader, Assistant General Secretary, Treasurer, Field Co-ordinator, six (6) Field Officers, Public Relations Officer, Political Education Officer, International Secretary, Co-ordinator of the Movement of Democratic Youth, Co-ordinator of the Democratic Women's Organization and a Projects Officer.

**Article 36:** The National Council is elected at the first and subsequent annual meetings of Congress.

**Article 37:** The National Council meets at least once monthly.

**Article 38:** The National Council may appoint Standing Committees to assist in its work.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **STEERING COMMITTEE**

**Article 39:** In the period preceding election of the first National Council the Movement's affairs shall be managed by a Steering Committee.

**Article 40:** The Steering Committee shall elect from among its members an Executive comprising a Co-ordinator, Secretary/Treasurer, Public Relations Officer, and a Field Officer.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **VOTING**

**Article 41:** Voting shall be on the basis of one man, one vote and, where appropriate, by secret ballot or a showing of hands.

**Article 42:** A quorum is constituted by one quarter of the members of the Party organ calling the meeting.

**Article 43:** All decisions within the Movement are made by simple majority of members voting.

**Article 44:** Only paid-up members have the right to vote.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S ORGANISATION**

**Article 45:** The Democratic Women's Organisation (DWO) is the women's arm of PDM. It is an integral component of the Movement and is responsible for promoting the special interests of women in PDM and in the wider community.

**Article 46:** The DWO shall incorporate all women members of PDM and shall have units at constituency, zonal and national levels.

**Article 47:** At constituency and zonal levels the DWO shall once every year elect an Executive Committee comprising a Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations Officer, Field Officer and two (2) Committee members.

**Article 48:** A constituency or zonal unit of DWO shall meet at least once a month.

**Article 49:** The supreme organ of the DWO shall be its Annual Conference. The Annual Conference shall elect an Executive Committee comprising a Co-ordinator, Deputy Co-ordinator, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations Officer, Education Officer, Projects Officer, and three (3) Field Officers.

**Article 50:** Each constituency unit of DWO shall send ten (10) representatives with voting rights to the Annual Conference, and each zonal unit shall send five (5).

**Article 51:** The DWO shall present a report of its yearly work to Congress for discussion, ratification and action.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **MOVEMENT OF DEMOCRATIC YOUTH**

**Article 52:** The Movement of Democratic Youth (MODY) is the youth arm of PDM. It is an integral component of the Movement and is responsible for promoting sports and cultural activities amongst its members and in the wider community.

**Article 53:** Membership in MODY is open to young men and women above the age of 14 years who undertake to respect, abide by and obey the rules and regulations of MODY and PDM and undertake to carry out their work.

**Article 54:** Members of MODY on reaching 18 years of age are automatically, upon application, admitted to membership of PDM.

**Article 55:** MODY shall organize its members at constituency, zonal and national levels. At constituency and zonal levels it shall once every year elect an Executive Committee comprising a Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations Officer, Field Officer and two (2) Committee members.

**Article 56:** A constituency or zonal unit of MODY shall meet at least once a month.

**Article 57:** The Supreme organ of the MODY shall be its Annual Conference. The Annual Conference shall elect an Executive Committee comprising a Co-ordinator, Deputy Co-ordinator, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations Officer, Education Officer, Projects Officer and three (3) Field Officers.

**Article 58:** Each constituency unit of MODY shall send ten (10) representatives with voting rights to the Annual Conference, and each zonal unit shall send five (5).

**Article 59:** MODY shall present a report of its yearly work to Congress for discussion, ratification and action.

## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **LEADERSHIP**

**Article 60:** The Political Leader shall be the head of PDM and has responsibility for over-all co-ordination of all its activities. He/ She shall carry out his/her duties after full consultation with the General Secretary of the Movement.

**Article 61:** Where the Movement holds a majority of seats in Parliament the Political Leader shall be put forward for the position of Prime Minister.

**Article 62:** The Political Leader shall be called upon to resign where a Petition calling for his resignation is approved by a two-thirds majority of delegates assembled in Congress PROVIDED THAT the Petition is signed by at least 300 paid-up members of the Movement and has beforehand been supported by a simple majority vote of the National Council.

**Article 63:** A Petition calling for the resignation of the Political Leader shall be presented to the General Secretary of the Movement.

**Article 64:** The Political Leader shall be Chairperson of the National Council and Congress.

**Article 65:** A new Political Leader shall be elected within 60 days of the resignation of his predecessor.

**Article 66:** The Political Leader as Prime Minister shall not recommend persons for Cabinet posts or as Senators without prior consultation with the National Council.

### **GENERAL SECRETARY**

**Article 67:** The General Secretary shall have specific responsibility for building the organs of the Movement and for linking the Movement with the masses.

**Article 68:** The General Secretary shall carry out his duties with full consultation with the Field Co-ordinator, Field Officers, the DWO Co-ordinator, the MODY Co-ordinator and with officials responsible for field work at Constituency and Branch levels of the Movement.

**Article 69:** The General Secretary shall be Chairperson of the Zonal Associations.

**Article 70:** In the absence of the Political Leader, the Deputy Political Leader shall carry out his duties.

**Article 71:** In the absence of the General Secretary the Assistant General Secretary shall carry out his duties.

## **CHAPTER TEN**

### **GENERAL ELECTIONS**

**Article 72:** Every member of PDM has an equal right to represent the Movement in elections to the nation's Parliament.

**Article 73:** A candidate shall be endorsed by a simple majority of any organ of the Movement.

**Article 74:** Where more than one member is so endorsed, the Constituency Association shall convene a Primary to elect the Movement's choice. The choice of the Constituency Association shall be adopted by Congress.

**Article 75:** A PDM parliamentarian wishing to cross the floor shall first obtain the consent of his or her constituents by way of referendum or by-election.

## **CHAPTER ELEVEN**

### **INTERNAL DISCIPLINE**

**Article 76:** The National Council shall have authority to discipline any member of the Movement, including to impose a fine, to suspend a member's participation in the Movement's work, and to terminate his or her membership.

**Article 77:** A member who has been disciplined by the National Council may appeal that decision to the next Congress.

**Article 78:** A recommendation to discipline a member shall be made by simple majority vote of the Constituency Association to which the member belongs.

## **CHAPTER TWELVE**

### **AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

**Article 79:** Any paid-up member of PDM may table a motion before Congress to amend its rules and regulations.

**Article 80:** Notice of a motion to amend, including the text of the amendment(s) proposed, shall be sent to the National Council at least eight (8) weeks before Congress is scheduled to convene.

**Article 81:** To succeed, a motion to amend shall be supported by no less than two-thirds of the votes of delegates present at Congress.

*January 6<sup>th</sup> 2006*

