SANGGUNIANG LAIKO NG PILIPINAS
(COUNCIL OF THE LAITY OF THE PHILIPPINES)

STATUTES

ARTICLE 1
IDENTITY

The Sangguniang Laiko ng Pilipinas (Council of the Laity of the Philippines, or LAIKO) is a public association of the faithful erected by the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) in order to “develop the consultation and collaboration of the lay faithful” (Saint John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation Christifideles laici on the Vocation and Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World, n. 25).

ARTICLE 2
MEMBERS

The members of LAIKO are the Arch/Diocesan Councils of the Laity (DCLs) duly erected by competent authority and the National Lay Associations (NLAs) recognized or erected by the CBCP or by the Holy See.

ARTICLE 3
PURPOSE

The Catholic Laity, i.e., “all the faithful except those in holy orders and those in the state of religious life specially approved by the Church”, “by their very vocation, seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God” (Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution Lumen gentium on the Church, 31).

In accord with the Second Vatican Council’s Decree Apostolicam actuositatem on the Apostolate of the Laity (n. 26), LAIKO is instituted by the CBCP to help
the ECLA in carrying out its functions, viz. to “animate and facilitate, coordinate and integrate all forms of lay Catholic action and activity” of all NLAs; and to assist in establishing and coordinating Pastoral Councils and DCLs in the provincial, regional and national levels (cf. CBCP, By Laws, Section 18).

**Article 4**

**LAIKO and CBCP**

In order to achieve the purposes enunciated in Articles 1 and 3, LAIKO maintains a stable relationship with the CBCP, serves as the implementing office or arm of the ECLA, and collaborates with the other CBCP Commissions, Committees, and Offices. Thus, the Chairman of the ECLA participates in the life and activities of LAIKO as National Director.

**Article 5**

**LAIKO and Other Entities**

LAIKO maintains relationships with the Pontifical Council for the Laity and, following the guidelines and directives of the Holy See and of the CBCP, with the national bodies of the laity of other countries; the national coordinating bodies of the clergy and of institutes of consecrated life, both male and female; and the international coordinating bodies of the apostolate of the laity.

**Article 6**

**Principal Office**

The principal office of LAIKO is to be located in close proximity to the principal office of the CBCP.

**Article 7**

**Structure and Officers**

LAIKO has the following structure: the National Director, the National Assembly, the Board of Trustees,
and the Advisers of LAIKO.

LAIKO has the following officers: the President, the Executive Vice President, the Regional Representatives, the Treasurer, the Secretary, the Public Relations Officer, and the Auditor.

**Article 8**

**The National Director**

The Chairman of ECLA functions as the *de officio* National Director and Spiritual Guide of LAIKO.

The National Director shall bring to the attention of LAIKO the decisions, opinions and recommendations of the CBCP and ECLA affecting LAIKO and vice versa. He is to see to it that the decisions of LAIKO are in accordance with the policies and programs of the CBCP and of ECLA.

He is to pastor and guide LAIKO so that “the integrity of faith and morals is preserved in them and… so that abuse does not creep into ecclesiastical discipline” (canon 305 §1 *CIC*). Therefore, he may disallow – with charity – any proposal, decision, or action that, in his judgment, would contradict Catholic faith and morals or violate the Statutes and Canon Law. Canon law, of which the salvation of souls is the supreme law (cf. canon 1752 *CIC*), takes precedence over all provisions of these Statutes.

**Article 9**

**The National Assembly**

§ 1 Composition

The National Assembly is made up of the accredited delegates of the DCLs and of the NLAs.

§ 2 Tasks

The National Assembly ratifies the acts of the Board of Trustees, fixes the annual share of members in the costs of activities, and elects the eighteen members of the Board of Trustees.
§ 3 Meetings

The National Assembly meets triennially. It can also be summoned by the Board of Trustees.

The President of LAIKO presides over the National Assembly.

The presence of half plus one of the members of LAIKO constitutes a quorum.

§ 4 Decisions

The National Assembly decides by an absolute majority of those present with right to vote. Amendments to the Statutes, in accord with Article 15.1, require the favorable vote of at least two thirds of members with right to vote.

ARTICLE 10
THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

§ 1 Composition

The Board of Trustees is made up of eighteen members elected by the member DCLs and NLAs.

The members and officers of the Board of Trustees hold office for three years, starting from 1 January of the year after an elective national assembly and ending on 31 December of the third year.

The Trustees shall not receive any compensation or remuneration.

A Trustee loses his/her seat due to death, resignation, or absence from meetings for at least six months. When the vacancy is declared, the remainder of his/her term is served by the one who got the next highest votes in the elections.

§ 2 Tasks

The Board of Trustees is the highest policy making body of LAIKO. It is responsible for implementing the decisions of the General Assembly; formulating and, upon approval by the National Director, implementing policies; promoting relationships with the CBCP, particularly with the ECLA; promoting relationships
with the bodies listed in Article 5; and monitoring the administration and preparing the annual budget and report.

§ 3 Meetings

The Board of Trustees shall meet at least quarterly.

The National Director attends the meetings of the Board of Trustees.

§ 4 Decisions

The Board of Trustees decides by an absolute majority of those present. Amendments to the Guidelines require the favorable vote of at least two thirds of those present. These take effect upon the approval by the CBCP.

§ 5 Suppression and Re-establishment

In accord with canon 320 §2 CIC, the CBCP can suppress the Board of Trustees “if its activity causes serious harm to ecclesiastical doctrine or discipline or is a scandal to the faithful” (canon 326 §1 CIC). The CBCP shall then appoint an interim Board that will serve until the election of the new Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE 11
THE ADVISERS OF LAIKO

The past members of the LAIKO Board of Trustees are considered Advisers of LAIKO. They may be invited to the meetings of the Board as non-voting consultants.

ARTICLE 12
COMMITTEES OR COMMISSIONS

Committees or Commissions may be created by the Board of Trustees upon the recommendation of the President to act on special or urgent matters.
**ARTICLE 13**

**FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

LAIKO shall be maintained and financed by means of contributions, donations, fees, bequests, gifts, subsidies, grants and endowments from members, non-members, patrons, philanthropic institutions, partnerships, corporations, associations, government entities, and through other sources permissible under law.

No part of the funds and properties of LAIKO shall inure to the benefit of any individual member thereof.

**ARTICLE 14**

**AMENDMENTS**

The Statutes may be amended in two ways:

1. Amendments proposed by at least an absolute majority of the Board of Trustees require the favorable vote of at least two thirds of members with right to vote. These amendments take effect upon approval by the CBCP.

2. Amendments required by ecclesiastical law, precept or norm shall be proposed by the ECLA to the CBCP after consulting the Board of Trustees. These amendments take effect upon approval by the CBCP.
IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES

I. Membership

1. The request for recognition is addressed to and decided by the ECLA after study and recommendation by LAIKO. Recognition entails membership in LAIKO and confers the rights and obligations of members.

2. A DCL is granted recognition after:
   a. certification by their Ordinary and
   b. submission of their Statutes in accord with c. 513 CIC.

3. In the absence of a DCL, the lay members of the Diocesan Pastoral Assembly or a similar diocesan institute may be certified as a group by their Ordinary as the representative of the Diocese to the LAIKO. They shall be considered the DCL and enjoy the rights and obligations of full members.

4. A third order, mandated organization, renewal movement, or similar group is recognized as a NLA after:
   a. certification by at least six Ordinaries distributed among the four regions of Ecclesiastical Province of Manila, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao that the Association is present in and contributes positively to the pastoral life of their respective jurisdictions.
   b. submission of their Statutes in accord with c. 304 CIC.

II. Purpose

In fulfillment of the purpose for which it was instituted, LAIKO may – under the guidance of the National Director and in collaboration with the pertinent ecclesiastical persons and institutes – undertake the following, among others:
1. unite all efforts among the laity towards the integration of the different forms of Christian lay activity from the parochial to the national level so as to attain the Christian renewal of the temporal order;

2. maintain contact and continuing dialogue among the different Christian lay groups, whether enjoying the mandate of the hierarchy or not, and thus act more effectively in the strengthening of the Christian faith in the individual, in the family and in society in general;

3. foster the faithful observance of ecclesiastical laws concerning the laity in relation to the Catholic Hierarchy with particular stress on the need of preserving complete adherence, allegiance and loyalty to the Church’s Magisterium;

4. conduct studies for the further clarification of questions concerning the relationship between the clergy and the laity;

5. receive, give, and provide the information on problems of the lay apostolate and establish a documentation center that shall give guidance in the formation of the laity;

6. utilize mass media and other forms of modern means of social communications as an effective instrument of the lay apostolate; and

7. participate actively in ecumenical activities for the promotion of Christian unity.

III. Principal Office

The principal office of LAIKO is in the LAIKO BUILDING with address at 372 Cabildo Street, Intramuros, Manila, Philippines.

IV. The National Assembly

1. The place and date of the meetings of the National Assembly are fixed by the Board of Trustees.

2. There are two types of delegates to the National
Assembly:
   a. voting, and
   b. non-voting.

3. Voting and non-voting delegates require accreditation as such. Accreditation is constituted through certification:
   a. for delegates of a DCL, by their Ordinary; and
   b. for delegates of a NLA, by their National Spiritual Director.

V. The Board of Trustees

1. The member NLAs shall have nine representatives in the Board of Trustees.

2. In harmony with the system of representation in the CBCP Permanent Council, each of the following regions shall have one representative in the Board:
   d. Southeast Luzon: Boac, Calapan, Gumaca, Infanta, Lipa, Lucena, San José in Mindoro.
   e. South Luzon: Cáceres, Daet, Libmanan, Legazpi, Mashbate, Sorsogon, Virac.
   f. West Visayas: Bacolod, Cápiz, Jaro, Kabankalan, Kalibo, Romblon, San Carlos, San José de Antique.
g. East Visayas: Borongan, Calbayog, Catarman, Cebu, Dumaguete, Maasin, Naval, Palo, Tagbilaran, Talibon.

h. North Mindanao: Butuán, Cagayán de Oro, Dipolog, Iligan, Malaybalay, Marawi, Ozamis, Pagadian, Surigao, Tandag.

i. South Mindanao: Cotabato, Davao, Digos, Isabela, Ipi, Jolo, Kidapawan, Marbel, Mati, Tagum, Zamboanga.

VI. OFFICERS

1. Criteria for Election and Term of Office
   a. The following Officers are elected from among the Trustees: the President, the Executive Vice President, the Regional Vice Presidents, the Treasurer, the Secretary, the Public Relations Officer, and the Auditor.
   b. All Officers serve for a term of three years. All Officers, except the President, may be elected to a second consecutive term for the same office, but not to a third. The President serves for a term of three years without re-election. After his/her term of office, he/she automatically serves as "ex officio" member of the Board of Trustees with active right to vote for a term of three years. After his/her term as "ex officio" member of the Board of Trustees, he/she becomes an Adviser of LAIKO.

2. Duties of the President
   a. preside over the regular and special meetings of the Board and of the National Assembly;
   b. act as the Chief Executive Officer of LAIKO;
   c. with the prior consent of the Board, sign and execute all contracts, deeds and conveyance on behalf of LAIKO;
   d. accept donations, gifts, grants and other bequests in favor of LAIKO;
e. sign and countersign all checks and other instruments of disbursements;

f. appoint other officers and employees of LAIKO and dismiss them for cause after due process;

g. prepare programs of activities and budgets of LAIKO; and

h. perform such other activities as are inherent in the Office of the President as well as those duties that are vested upon him/her by the Board of Trustees and the ECLA.

3. **Duties of the Executive Vice President**

a. act as the President if qualified in the latter’s absence and succeed the authority of the President if the office becomes vacant until a new President shall have been elected;

b. officially represent the President in external functions in the latter's absence; and

c. exercise such other powers as may be delegated to him/her by the Board of Trustees and by the President from time to time.

4. **Duties of the Regional Representatives**

a. promote, coordinate, and supervise lay apostolate in their respective regions;

b. organize DCLs in their respective regions; and

c. perform such other functions as may be assigned to them by the Board and by the President from time to time.

5. **Duties of the Treasurer**

a. deposit and keep in the proper banks and institutions designated by the Board of Trustees the contributions, funds and monies of LAIKO;

b. make and keep an accurate account of all receipts and disbursements of all funds,
inventories, properties and all financial documents of LAIKO in appropriate books and records in accordance with existing laws;

c. sign all checks and other instruments for disbursements with proper co-signatories;

d. support with receipts and vouchers and other written evidences all disbursements and obligations incurred by LAIKO;

e. render a financial account of all the receipts and disbursements of the funds in regular meetings of the Board of Trustees;

f. post a bond if required by the Board of Trustees for the faithful compliance of his/her duties;

g. although the organization is tax exempt, prepare a yearly income tax return in compliance with Internal Revenue regulations;

h. delegate routine clerical work to the LAIKO office staff at his/her discretion; and

i. perform such other duties as may be assigned to him/her by the Board of Trustees from time to time.

6. **Duties of the Secretary**

a. prepare the agenda, the minutes and other documents of meetings of the Board of Trustees and of the National Assembly;

b. send notices of meetings;

c. act as custodian of all documents and correspondences;

d. prepare all reports to ecclesiastical and civil authorities;

e. submit at all regular and special meetings of LAIKO, reports on the activities, affairs and issuances of LAIKO, the Arch/Diocesan Councils of the Laity and the National Lay Associations;

f. see that all orders and resolutions of the
foregoing councils and national assemblies are faithfully implemented;

g. satisfy inquiries regarding the lay apostolate, take care of the correspondences of LAIKO, and collect information on the activities of lay associations both domestic and foreign;

h. delegate routine secretarial work to the LAIKO office staff at his/her discretion; and

i. perform such other duties as may be assigned to him/her by the Board of Trustees and by the President from time to time.

7. **Duties of the Public Relations Officer**

a. publish and disseminate information about the LAIKO in coordination with the President;

b. perform other duties as may be assigned to him/her by the Board of Trustees and by the President from time to time.

8. **Duties of the Auditor**

a. perform the regular yearly verification and examination of financial statements and related accounting records of the organization in accordance with existing laws;

b. render an opinion as to the fairness and accuracy of the organization's statement of financial condition and results of its operations in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles;

c. submit to the Board of Trustees a quarterly audit report on the financial condition of LAIKO; and

d. perform such other duties as may be assigned to him/her by the Board of Trustees from time to time.

**VII. Elections**

1. Each of the nine regional representatives of the DCLs may be elected in following manner:
a. One month before the triennial convention, the Bishop who represents the region in the CBCP Permanent Council shall convene the member DCLs or their equivalent in his region (see infra, I.3) in order to elect among themselves a layperson, known for integrity and capable of promoting lay leadership in communion with the Bishops of the region, as their head. The Bishop shall then certify the lay regional head as the region’s representative to the LAIKO Board for the coming triennium. If this is not possible, the election will be done during the triennial convention.

b. The regional representatives attend the triennial convention and take part in the election of the Officers.

2. The nine representatives of the NLAs are elected in the following manner:

a. The nine representatives of the NLAs are elected in the National Assembly on the third Saturday of October and at a place to be fixed by the Board, provided notice shall have been sent to all accredited members.

b. Each of the three accredited voting lay delegates representing each accredited NLA is entitled to vote.

c. The names, affiliations and curriculum vitae of all nominees for elections shall be endorsed by the Spiritual Director of the NLA, and submitted to the ECLA for approval one month prior to the National Assembly provided that the nominees are present during the election. No floor nomination shall be allowed. Voting shall be by secret ballot. No proxy voting shall be allowed.

3. The new Board of Trustees, i.e., the nine regional representatives and the nine representatives of NLAs acting as a body, shall elect the Officers from among themselves by secret ballot, viz., the President, the Executive Vice President, the
Treasurer, the Secretary, Public Relations Officer and the Auditor.

4. The decision of the Committee on Elections, whose members are appointed by the outgoing President, shall be final.

VIII. COMMITTEES OR COMMISSIONS

The heads and members of the various committees or commissions shall be appointed by the President from among dedicated and qualified lay leaders. He/She, however, shall submit such appointments to the National Director for his counsel and to the Board of Trustees for confirmation.

IX. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

1. LAIKO, with the favorable vote of at least two thirds of the Trustees and the favorable vote of at least two thirds of the members of LAIKO, may acquire by purchase, lease, donation or assignment such real and personal property as may be necessary for the purpose of LAIKO and to borrow money for the needs and use of LAIKO and to secure the same by mortgage of corporate property or otherwise.

2. LAIKO, with the favorable vote of at least two thirds of the Trustees and the favorable vote of at least two thirds of the members of LAIKO, may alienate its real property, provided said property is sold only to individuals or institutes that share the teachings and values of the Catholic Church. The sale of real property not exceeding one million piso (P1,000,000) in one year requires the favorable vote of at least two thirds of the Trustees. The sale of real property exceeding one million piso in one year requires the favorable vote of at least two thirds of the members of LAIKO.

3. The Board of Trustees shall have control and supervision of all monies, properties, finances, contractual transactions and obligations of LAIKO.
The Treasurer, at least two months prior to the beginning of the next calendar year, shall prepare and recommend through the President an annual operating budget for the Board of Trustees’ approval. The Treasurer may also submit through the President for the Board of Trustees’ approval such supplementary budgets as may be deemed expedient or in the best interest of LAIKO.

4. No amount shall be disbursed by the Treasurer unless the expenditure is provided in the budget and unless it bears the written approval of the President or, in his/her absence, of the Executive Vice President.

5. No check, letter of exchange, promissory note, letter of credit, deposited fund or property of LAIKO shall be withdrawn unless authorized or approved by the Treasurer. Withdrawals shall be signed by either the President or the Executive Vice President and by either the Treasurer or the National Director.

X. AMENDMENTS

The Guidelines may be amended in two ways:

1. Amendments proposed by at least an absolute majority of the Board of Trustees require the favorable vote of at least two thirds of members with right to vote. These amendments take effect upon approval by the CBCP.

2. Amendments required by ecclesiastical law, precept or norm shall be proposed by the ECLA to the CBCP after consulting the Board of Trustees. These amendments take effect upon approval by the CBCP.