Preamble

WHEREAS:

- Africa is a continent rich in democratic traditions and peacemaking processes.
- Dramatic social changes, which have taken place in the last nine centuries, have undermined indigenous African traditions and institutions, and as a result have led to various levels of conflict, including existential and developmental challenges;
- These challenges are ones that should engage the active interest of persons and groups in a sustained, organized, systematic, and concerted manner;
- Meeting these challenges requires organized and special trainings grounded in contemporary social sciences and conflict resolution theories;
- Nova Southeastern University is an institution committed to the development of ideas and paradigms for the engagement of global issues;
- The Department of Conflict Analysis and Resolution (DCAR) in the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences of Nova Southeastern University is organized with the principal mission of training individuals
in the area of developing best theories and practices of conflict analysis and resolution;

- The DCAR degree curriculum offers basic and general training in theory and practice in contemporary conflict resolution profession;
- There exists a fundamental need for a professional and scholarly forum within DCAR to pursue detailed and case-tailored programs and activities to meet the peculiar dynamics of Africa’s conflict and developmental challenges;
- And whereas an Institute for Conflict Studies in Africa (ICSA) in the DCAR program will go a long way to meeting some of these goals;

We, the members of the African Working Group of Nova Southeastern University, in commitment to the above realizations, do hereby ordain and establish the following byelaws for the attainment of the above stated vision and for the peaceful functioning of our organization:

**Article I: Name**

The name of this group shall be the African Working Group (AWG) of Nova Southeastern University, and it shall for all purposes be so addressed.

**Article II: Purpose**

The primary purpose of the Group is to foster and promote serious discussions of the conflict and developmental challenges, which have been affecting the African continent negatively.
The objectives of the Group are:

a. To advance a deeper understanding regarding the general patterns of conflict in contemporary Africa;

b. To augment DCAR degree curriculum by providing vital avenues, outside the classroom, to DCAR faculty and students, to critically examine and modify, where appropriate, the theories, practices, and models of social conflict and resolution, which are continually emerging in the academic institutions of western societies;

c. To pursue the creation of the Institute for Conflict Studies in Africa (ICS A) in the DCAR program of Nova Southeastern University;

d. To develop and sustain professional relationship with universities and other related organizations relative to research and practices in the area of social conflict and conflict resolution in Africa;

e. To support DCAR and its faculty who are interested in pursuing research in critical areas in Africa (e.g. indigenous processes of conflict resolution, resource-based conflicts, ethnic conflicts, etc.);

f. To initiate the process of building a network of scholars and practitioners in the African continent through DCAR alumni and other relevant groups;

g. To provide social support system to the DCAR students and faculty by organizing periodic social events;

h. To organize discussion panels and conferences on selected topics regarding social conflicts and conflict resolution in Africa;
i. To promote the education, and help expand the knowledge, skills and awareness, of its members in the interrelated fields of conflict analysis and conflict management, with particular focus on the continent of Africa;

j. To encourage free exchange of ideas among its members;

k. To promote effective communication to keep members abreast of current events in Africa that can be of benefit to them, especially at the professional level;

l. To pursue other related objectives to the ones specifically enumerated.

**Article III: Membership**

Any person interested in the purpose and objectives of the Group as stated in Article II shall be eligible for membership in the Group, subject to rules established under this byelaw and such other rules as may from time to time be enacted.

**Article IV: Channel of Communication**

a. Every official communication of the AWG shall be conducted via its list-serve.

b. The official list-serve of AWG shall be Africa@list.nova.edu or such reconfiguration as may at anytime become necessary.

c. Messages intended for the list-serve shall be processed through a moderator to ensure that they meet the standards of decency and professional ethics.

d. The moderation of messages on the AWG list-serve shall not be used as a means of censorship; but shall be used to ensure that any communication that exposes the AWG to the potential for ridicule and litigation are disallowed.
e. AWG shall maintain a website, located within the NSU electronic system.

f. AWG website will be used for the purpose of posting the activities of AWG only.

Article V: Faculty Director

1. Establishment:

   There shall be a faculty director for the AWG;

2. Qualification:

   The faculty director shall be a faculty at Nova Southeastern University who has a demonstrated professional or scholarly interest in conflict studies and developmental challenges on the African continent.

3. Duties:

   a. The faculty director shall be the head of the Institute for Conflict Studies in Africa (ICSA) when established;
   
   b. For purposes of the Institute for Conflict Studies in Africa, the faculty director shall go with the designation of ‘Director of Institute for Conflict Studies in Africa;
   
   c. The faculty director shall serve as the liaison between the committees, members of the AWG, the DCAR, and the Nova Southeastern University;
   
   d. The faculty director shall serve as the public relations personnel for the Africa Working Group;
e. The faculty director shall exercise professional responsibilities to promote the best interest of the AWG;

f. The faculty director shall be an ex-officio member of all committees of the AWG;

g. The faculty director shall be the moderator of the AWG list-serve;

h. The faculty director shall serve such other functions as are either incidental to the effective execution of the enumerated duties or may be assigned from time to time by the Central Working Committee.

Article VI: Committees of Africa Working Group

To effectively meet the stated goals of the group, the following committees are hereby established:

I. The Central Working Committee

II. The Institutionalization Committee

III. The Research and Publication Committee

IV. The Event and Socials Committee

V. Reports and Information Committee

VI. Programming Committee

I. The Central Working Committee

1. Composition:

   a. The Central Working Committee shall comprise the chairs of the other committees established or to be established under this bylaw;
b. The committee shall elect by a simple majority one of its members as chair of the Central Working Committee;

c. The committee shall also elect by a simple majority one of its members as secretary of the Central Working Committee;

d. The committee may appoint or elect one or more of its members to perform such functions as may become necessary.

2. Functions:

a. The Central Working Committee shall serve as the central management body for the Africa Working Group;

b. It shall formulate policies for the AWG;

c. It shall scrutinize and approve the activities of the other committees of the AWG;

d. It shall perform such other functions as are necessary to ensure proper coordination of all the other committee and agencies of the AWG.

e. All committee members understand and agree to render their services pro bono.

II. The Institutionalization Committee

1. Composition:

a. The Institutionalization Committee shall be composed of such number of people, not less than three and no more than seven, as the general assembly of the AWG may decide;
b. The committee shall elect by a simple majority one of its members to serve as its chair;

c. The committee shall elect by a simple majority one of its members to serve as its secretary;

d. The committee may appoint or elect one or more of its members to perform such specific functions as are necessary to achieve the goals of the committee.

2. Functions:

a. The committee shall work towards creating and maintaining necessary infrastructural support for the AWG;

b. The committee shall work toward the creation of the Institute for Conflict Studies in Africa (ICSA)

c. The committee shall ensure the proper integration of the AWG and its core activities into the general scheme of the DCAR and NSU programs;

d. The committee shall work to develop needed professional and strategic relationships with persons and institutions both within and outside the United States;

e. The Committee shall work within the framework of NSU and DCAR to establish an institute for conflict resolution in Africa;

f. The committee shall perform such other related functions as are necessary for, and incidental to, the actualization of the above stated ones.

g. All committee members understand and agree to render their services pro bono.
III. The Research and Publications Committee

1. Composition:
   a. The Research and Publications Committee shall be composed of such number of people, not less than three and no more than seven, as the general assembly of the AWG may decide;
   b. The committee shall elect by a simple majority one of its members to serve as its chair;
   c. The committee shall elect by a simple majority one of its members to serve as its secretary;
   d. The committee may appoint or elect one or more of its members to perform such specific functions as are necessary to achieve the goals of the committee.

2. Functions:
   a. The committee shall encourage research and publications especially on issues related to African development and conflict;
   b. The committee shall have the power to call for articles and initiate research into any subject it deems of strategic interest to the AWG;
   c. The committee shall have the power to negotiate publishing contracts on behalf of the AWG;
   d. The committee shall perform such other related functions as are necessary for, and incidental to, the actualization of the above stated ones.
   e. All committee members understand and agree to render their services pro bono.
IV. **Events and Socials Committee**

1. **Composition**
   
   a. The Events and Socials Committee shall be composed of such number of people, not less than three and no more than seven, as the general assembly of the AWG may decide;
   
   b. The committee shall elect by a simple majority one of its members to serve as its chair;
   
   c. The committee shall elect by a simple majority one of its members to serve as its secretary;
   
   d. The committee may appoint or elect one or more of its members to perform such specific functions as are necessary to achieve the goals of the committee.

2. **Functions**
   
   a. The committee shall plan and implement all AWG social functions;
   
   b. The committee shall source funding, including donations and other forms of voluntary contributions, to meet its goals;
   
   c. The committee shall ensure that at such social events, African cultures and traditions are, to the extent necessary and appropriate, showcased and celebrated;
   
   d. The committee shall have the power to negotiate and enter into contracts incidental to the effective performance of its functions;
   
   e. The committee shall perform such other related functions as are necessary for, and incidental to, the actualization of the above stated ones.
f. All committee members understand and agree to render their services pro bono.

V. Reports and Information Committee

1. Composition:
   a. The Reports and Information Committee shall be composed of such number of people, not less than three and no more than seven, as the general assembly of the AWG may decide;
   b. The committee shall elect by a simple majority one of its members to serve as its chair;
   c. The committee shall elect by a simple majority one of its members to serve as its secretary;
   e. The committee may appoint or elect one or more of its members to perform such specific functions as are necessary to achieve the goals of the committee.

2. Functions:
   a. The committee shall be responsible for collating reports and information relative to Africa and the general goals of AWG;
   b. The committee shall maintain a database of materials relative to Africa and the general goals of AWG;
   c. The committee shall develop a means for capturing up-to-date news and information on Africa and other areas of interest to AWG and making same available to members of AWG;
d. The committee shall gather relevant information regarding new degree programs in African universities in the areas of conflict resolution and developmental studies;

e. The committee shall perform such other related functions as are necessary for, and incidental to, the actualization of the above stated ones.

f. All committee members understand and agree to render their services pro bono.

VI. The Programming Committee

1. Composition:

e. The Programming Committee shall be composed of such number of people, not less than three and no more than seven, as the general assembly of the AWG may decide;

f. The committee shall elect by a simple majority one of its members to serve as its chair;

g. The committee shall elect by a simple majority one of its members to serve as its secretary;

h. The committee may appoint or elect one or more of its members to perform such specific functions as are necessary to achieve the goals of the committee.

2. Functions:

a. The committee shall be responsible for organizing discussion panels, workshops, seminars, symposia, and similar forums, for the propagation of ideas on African conflicts and developmental challenges;
b. The committee shall be responsible for inviting seasoned and reputable scholars and experts on African issues to take part in the above mentioned forums;

c. The committee shall be responsible for arranging the logistics for the effective implementation of the said programs;

d. The committee shall work to develop and nurture needed professional and strategic relationships with persons and institutions both within and outside the United States;

h. The committee shall perform such other related functions as are necessary for, and incidental to, the actualization of the above stated ones.

i. All committee members understand and agree to render their services pro bono.

VI. In the composition of committees and other appointments and elections to bodies and offices of the AWG, deliberate effort shall be made to ensure that both residential and nonresidential members have equal chance to such bodies and offices.

**Article VII: Tenure of Offices**

a. The tenure of offices, including committee membership, shall be two years.

b. There shall be no term limit
Article VIII: Meetings

1. The bodies established under this bylaw, or that may from time to time be established, may meet either at a physical location, where reasonably feasible, or telephonically in a teleconference;

2. The minutes of such meetings shall be taken and published for the attention of the general AWG membership;

3. Meetings of AWG committees shall be duly constituted with at least three (3) members of such committees present at the time of commencement of such meetings.
Special Note: The original purpose of creating the Institutionalization Committee was to facilitate the creation of Center of Conflict Studies in Africa. However, due to factors related to resources, it has not been able to achieve that goal at the present time. Thus, this bylaw will serve as the governing document for the functions of the Africa Working Group (AWG). When the process of creating the Institute for Conflict Studies in Africa (ICSA) is completed, a more appropriate governing document will be drafted.