AFRICAN STUDENTS & ALUMNI FORUM
FORUM DES ÉTUDIANTS & DES ANCIENS BOURSIERS AFRICAINS

CODE OF CONDUCT

ASAF MEMBERS

African Students and Alumni Forum

2026 Edition

Revised following Member Consultation and ESS input

Preamble

The African Students and Alumni Forum (ASAF) bring together current and former beneficiaries of international mobility scholarships funded by the European Union and the African Union, committed to promoting Africa-Europe cooperation in education, research, and innovation. Its governance is based on its Statutes and Rules of Procedure (RoP).

This Code of Conduct is developed in accordance with Article 11 of the ASAF Rules of Procedure (RoP, 2023) and shall remain in full force and effect notwithstanding any future amendments to or revision of ASAF's founding and governance documents, until formally repealed or superseded by a decision of the Meeting of Members.

It defines the principles and expected behaviors of members. It aims to ensure a safe, inclusive, and productive environment, while providing a clear framework to address misconduct and ensure collective accountability.

It governs standards of conduct and behavior between ASAF Members and between Members and Board Members.

For the avoidance of doubt, this Code addresses issues of conduct and behavior between ASAF Members and between Members and Board Members. Matters concerning Board governance, including Board decision-making, fiduciary responsibilities, conflicts of interest, and relationships amongst Board Members, shall be governed by the Statutes, Board Code of Conduct and other applicable governance instruments.

Reading the Statutes, the RoP, and this Code together is essential to ensure

(i) a comprehensive understanding of ASAF's governance framework and
(ii) the consistent application of procedural rules.

To preserve the trust of members, partners, and the European Union, our main donor, each member commits to fully respecting and adhering to this Code of Conduct.

Definition of Terms

- AGF: Annual General Forum
- Forum / ASAF: African Students and Alumni Forum
- Members: individuals who have participated in or are currently engaged with AU/EU-funded higher education mobility and cooperation programmes in Africa and/or Europe, and who have officially joined ASAF.
- Criminal behaviour: any act contrary to the applicable national legislation in the country of residence of the member concerned or in the country where the act was committed.

Article 1. CORE PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

ASAF is committed to building a community grounded in shared values. By joining the Forum, each member adheres to the following principles:

1. **Integrity**: Act with honesty, transparency, and ethical responsibility in everything you do as an ASAF member.

2. **Excellence:** Strive for the highest standards of quality and continuous improvement in your contributions to the network.

3. **Democratic Participation:** Engage actively and inclusively in ASAF processes, respect diverse opinions, and uphold every member's equal right to be heard.

4. **Diversity and Inclusivity:** Respect the cultural, academic, and professional diversity of the network and promote equal opportunities for all members.

5. **Collaboration and Teamwork:** Cooperate, share knowledge, and work collectively with fellow members towards ASAF's shared goals.

6. **Respect and Solidarity**: Treat all members with mutual respect and empathy, contributing to a community built on unity and a culture of peace.

7. **Accountability and Transparency**: Take responsibility for your actions and conduct yourself with openness and honesty in all ASAF engagements.

8. **Innovation: Bring** creative and forward-looking thinking to ASAF's work and remain open to new ideas that advance the network's mission.

9. **Professionalism:** Conduct yourself with competence and dedication in all ASAF engagements, upholding the reputation and credibility of the network.

10. **Service to Society:** Use your knowledge, skills, and networks to contribute to education, sustainable development, and positive transformation in Africa and beyond.

Article 2. MEMBER COMMITMENTS

All Forum members are invited to embody the following behavioral commitments in a spirit of shared responsibility:

Article 2.1. Participation and Engagement

Actively contribute to ASAF initiatives, discussions, and projects, bringing your skills to serve the collective mission.

Article 2.2. Respectful Communication

All communication, whether verbal or written, must remain respectful and professional. Insults, discriminatory remarks, hostile comments, or personal attacks are not tolerated.

Article 2.3. Representation of ASAF

Members ensure that their public actions and statements reflect positively on ASAF's values. The use of ASAF's brand, resources, and affiliations is subject to prior explicit authorization by ASAF Board through Communication Liaison Officer.

Article 2.4. Professional Conduct

Members commit to:

1. representing the Forum professionally in all communications, including those conducted online or on social media;
2. refraining from using Forum resources or platforms for personal gain or unauthorized activities;
3. protecting the confidentiality of Forum information unless explicitly authorized to disclose it.

Article 2.5. Participation in Events

In a spirit of constructive cooperation, members are invited to:

- participate in accordance with event guidelines and contribute to a collaborative, welcoming atmosphere;
- support organizers in their facilitating role, engaging with their guidance in a spirit of cooperation;
- adhere to the rules and guidelines established for each Forum activity.

Article 3. CONDUCT INCOMPATIBLE WITH ASAF VALUES

The following behaviours are incompatible with ASAF's values and are strictly prohibited:

Article 3.1. Discrimination

Any form of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or any other personal characteristic.

Article 3.2. Harassment

1. Any repeated unwelcome conduct, comments, communications, or behavior directed at a member that a reasonable person would consider degrading, humiliating, hostile, or offensive, and which has the purpose or effect of undermining that member's dignity or creating a hostile environment.

2. Harassment may occur through verbal, written, electronic, physical, or sexual conduct.

3. Reasonable disagreement, criticism, debate, advocacy, campaigning, the submission of complaints, the raising of governance concerns, or the exercise of rights under the Statutes or other ASAF governance documents shall not, in themselves, constitute harassment.

Article 3.3. Bullying and Threats

1. Threats, coercion, or any form of aggressive conduct intended to harm others

2. Prohibited conduct includes:

    - repeated hostile, abusive, or targeted conduct directed at a particular person;

    - threats of physical harm, reputational harm, or other adverse consequences intended to coerce, silence, or improperly influence another person;

    - attempts to pressure or coerce a person into refraining from exercising their rights under the ASAF's governing documents or participating in ASAF activities.

3. For the purposes of this Article, disagreement, criticism, debate, advocacy, campaigning, or the expression of opposing views shall not, in themselves, constitute bullying or threats.

Article 3.4. Misrepresentation

Falsifying information or misrepresenting oneself or ASAF.

Article 3.5. Conflict of Interest

Engaging in activities or a situation in which a person is in a position where it is possible for them to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity (or based on insider information that provided them with unfair advantage over others).

Article 3.6. Disruption

1. Deliberately engaging in conduct that materially disrupts or obstructs the lawful and orderly conduct of Forum activities, events, meetings, elections, votes, or other official processes.

2. Disruptive conduct includes:

    - repeatedly interrupting speakers or proceedings in a manner that materially impedes the orderly conduct of a Forum activity, event, or meeting; and

    - engaging in conduct that intentionally obstructs or prevents the lawful conduct of Forum activities, events, meetings, elections, votes, or other official processes.

3. For the avoidance of doubt, respectful disagreement, criticism, debate, advocacy, campaigning, the submission of complaints, the raising of governance concerns, or the exercise of rights under the Statutes, Rules of Procedure, or other Forum policies shall not constitute disruptive conduct.

Article 3.7. Unauthorized Use

Using ASAF resources, funds, or intellectual property without prior authorization

Article 3.8. Breach of Confidentiality

Disclosing, sharing, or misusing information obtained through participation in ASAF activities, governance processes, or internal communications without explicit authorization. This includes but is not limited to sharing deliberations of closed meetings, personal data of members, and internal documents not intended for public circulation

Article 3.9. Abuse of Authority

Using an elected, appointed, or volunteer position within ASAF to intimidate, unduly influence, favor, or disadvantage any member. This includes but is not limited to leveraging a position of authority to suppress complaints, manipulate decisions, or obstruct due process.

Article 3.10. Online Misconduct and Misuse of Digital Platforms

Using ASAF digital platforms, social media channels, or any online medium to engage in cyberbullying, spread false or misleading information about ASAF or its members, access unauthorized information, or otherwise cause harm to any member or to ASAF's reputation.

Article 3.11. Retaliation

Taking any action, directly or indirectly, intended to punish, intimidate, disadvantage, or discourage a member who has reported a violation, participated in an investigation, or exercised any right under this Code.

Article 4. REPORTING VIOLATIONS

Article 4.1. Competent Reporting Body

1. Any member who becomes aware of a violation of this Code of Conduct shall report the matter to the ASAF Board, which shall serve as the interim competent body for receiving and acting on reports of misconduct, pending the establishment of a Disciplinary body that may be formed under the ASAF Statutes.

2. Upon the establishment of a designated Disciplinary body in accordance with the ASAF Statutes, all reporting functions currently assigned to the Board under this Article shall transfer automatically to the Disciplinary body, without the need for further amendment of this Code.

Article 4.2. Format of Reports

1. All reports of violations shall be addressed to the Internal Affairs Liaison and Co-Speakers, with the rest of the Board in copy, and shall be submitted in writing. Reports shall include:

    - A clear description of the nature of the alleged violation;
    - The identity of the individual(s) alleged to have committed the violation;
    - The date(s) and circumstances in which the violation occurred; and
    - Any available supporting evidence.

2. Upon receipt of a report, the Legal and Internal Affairs Liaison shall issue a written acknowledgement to the reporting member within ten (10) working days confirming that the report has been received and registered. The acknowledgement shall include a reference number for the matter and an indication of the next steps in the process. Failure to acknowledge receipt within this period shall not invalidate the report or the subsequent process.

Article 4.3. Confidentiality of Reports

1. ASAF recognizes that members may sometimes wish to report concerns anonymously. However, anonymous reporting may limit the ability to assess allegations, obtain additional information, and conduct a fair and effective investigation. For this reason, reports submitted under this Code must identify the reporting member.

2. In exceptional circumstances where a member can demonstrate a genuine and reasonable fear of retaliation notwithstanding the protections set out in this Article, the Board may exercise discretion to accept an anonymous report.

- The identity of the reporting member and any information that may reasonably reveal their identity shall be treated as confidential and shall only be disclosed where:
    - the reporting member consents to the disclosure;
    - disclosure is necessary to ensure a fair investigation or disciplinary process; or
    - disclosure is required by law;

3. ASAF shall take reasonable measures to protect reporting members from retaliation, harassment, discrimination, or any other adverse treatment arising from the good-faith submission of a report under this Code.

4. No member shall be subject to disciplinary action, loss of membership rights, or other adverse consequences for reporting a suspected violation in good faith, even where the allegation is ultimately not substantiated.

Article 4.4. Protection of Reporting Members

1. Retaliation against any member who reports a violation in good faith is strictly prohibited.

2. For the purposes of this Article, retaliation includes any act or omission intended to punish, intimidate, disadvantage, or discourage a member from reporting a violation or participating in an investigation. Any act of retaliation itself shall constitute a violation of this Code and shall be subject to the same disciplinary procedures.

Article 5. CONDUCT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE AND SANCTIONS [REVISED]

Article 5.1. Deference Clause

1. The disciplinary procedures set out in this Article shall apply as long as an ASAF disciplinary body has not been formally established under the ASAF Statutes. Upon establishment of a designated Disciplinary body the investigation and adjudication functions described in this Article shall vest automatically in the Disciplinary body, in accordance with the ASAF Statutes and any applicable internal regulations.

2. In the event that ASAF adopts a standalone Disciplinary Code, the provisions of that Code should supersede the disciplinary procedures set out in this Article to the extent of any inconsistency.

Article 5.2. Guiding Principles

ASAF adopts a graduated and proportionate approach to conduct management, guided by the following principles:

1. Fairness and due process: every member accused of a violation shall have the right to be informed of the allegations and to present their position before any sanction is imposed;

2. Proportionality: sanctions shall be proportionate to the nature and severity of the violation;

3. Graduated response: dialogue and informal resolution shall be exhausted before formal procedures are initiated, except in cases of serious misconduct;

4. Rehabilitation: where appropriate, sanctions shall aim to correct behaviour rather than punish, in recognition of ASAF's nature as a voluntary network.

Article 5.3. Conflict of Interest and Recusal

Article 5.3.1. General Rule

No member shall participate in the investigation, adjudication, or appeal of any case in which they are implicated, have a personal interest, or where their involvement would compromise the impartiality of the process. Any such member shall be automatically recused, and their role shall be reassigned in accordance with this Article.

Article 5.3.2. Cascading Recusal Framework

The following reassignment rules shall apply where a conflict of interest arises:

1. Where the implicated person is an ordinary member: the standard procedure under Article 5.5 applies without modification.

2. Where the implicated person is a member of the Legal and Internal Affairs Task Force or one of its Co-Speakers: the investigation role shall be reassigned to the President of the Board, and the Legal and Internal Affairs Task Force shall be fully recused from the matter.

3. Where the implicated person is a Board member other than the President or Vice-President- in relation to another ordinary member: the Internal Affairs Task Force shall conduct the investigation, but the final decision shall be referred directly to the Meeting of Members, bypassing the Board.

4. Where the implicated person is the Vice-President: the President shall oversee the process, and the matter shall be referred directly to the Meeting of Members for final determination.

5. Where the implicated person is the President: The Vice-President shall assume oversight of the process and the matter shall be referred directly to the Meeting of Members for final determination.

6. Where the complaint alleges misconduct by the Board acting collectively, or concerns a majority of the Board's members, all implicated Board members shall be recused from the matter. Pending the establishment of a competent disciplinary body under the ASAF Statutes, the matter shall be referred to the Meeting of Members for final determination.

Article 5.4. Classification of Violations

For the purposes of this Code, violations are classified into three categories. The classification is determined by reference to the conduct described in Articles 2 and 3 of this Code.

Article 5.4.1 Category A Minor Violations

Minor violations are isolated breaches of the obligations and standards of conduct set out in this Code that cause no significant harm to any member or to ASAF and do not involve conduct prohibited under Article 3. Category A violations include:

1. A single instance of failure by a member holding an elected position within ASAF, without reasonable justification or prior notice, to fulfil a responsibility, task, or commitment arising from that position and prescribed by the Statutes, Rules of Procedure, or other applicable ASAF governance documents.

2. A single instance of communication that falls short of the standard of respect and professionalism required under Article 2.2; and

3. A single instance of failure to adhere to event guidelines in breach of Article 2.5.

Article 5.4.2 Category B Serious Violations

Serious Violations are conduct that breaches Article 3 in a manner that causes harm, or repeated Category A violations after a warning. Category B violations include:

1. A single incident of discriminatory remarks or behavior in breach of Article 3.1;

2. A single incident of harassment causing harm to a member in breach of Article 3.2;

3. A single incident of bullying, intimidation, or threatening behavior in breach of Article 3.3;

4. A single incident of misrepresentation of information or of oneself or of ASAF in breach of Article 3.4;

5. A single incident of engaging in a conflict of interest, including the use of an official position or insider information for personal benefit, in breach of Article 3.5.

6. A single incident of conduct that deliberately and materially disrupts or obstructs Forum activities, events, meetings, elections, votes, or other official processes in breach of Article 3.6.

7. A single incident of unauthorized use of ASAF resources, funds, or intellectual property in breach of Article 3.7;

8. A single incident of unauthorized disclosure of confidential ASAF information with limited consequences in breach of Article 3.8;

9. A single incident of using an ASAF position to unduly influence or disadvantage a member in breach of Article 3.9; and

10. A single incident of online misconduct or misuse of ASAF digital platforms in breach of Article 3.10.

Article 5.4.3 Category C Grave Violations

These are the most serious breaches of Article 3 that cause significant harm to a member or to ASAF, or that fundamentally undermine the integrity of the network, or repeated Category B violations after sanctions have been imposed. Category C violations include:

1. Repeated or systematic discriminatory behavior in breach of Article 3.1;

2. Repeated or severe harassment, including sexual harassment, in breach of Article 3.2;

3. Repeated or serious bullying, threats, or physical aggression in breach of Article 3.3;

4. Fraud, serious misappropriation of ASAF funds or resources, or deliberate falsification of information causing significant harm, in breach of Articles 3.4 and 3.7;

5. A serious or repeated conflict of interest causing demonstrable harm to ASAF in breach of Article 3.5;

6. Repeated breach of confidentiality with demonstrable adverse consequences for a member or for ASAF in breach of Article 3.8;

7. Repeated or systematic abuse of authority or position causing significant harm to a member or to ASAF's governance in breach of Article 3.9;

8. Online misconduct causing serious reputational harm to ASAF or significant harm to a member in breach of Article 3.10; and

9. Any act of retaliation against a member who has reported a violation or participated in an investigation, in breach of Article 3.11.

Article 5.5. Graduated Disciplinary Procedure

The following graduated procedure shall apply, with the level of formality and severity of response proportionate to the category of the violation:

Article 5.5.1. Step One - Informal Dialogue (Category A)

For Category A violations, an informal and constructive dialogue shall be the first response, before any formal action is taken.

1. A designated Board member or Co-Speaker of the Internal Affairs Task Force shall initiate a direct, confidential conversation with the member concerned.

2. The purpose of this conversation is to bring the matter to the members' attention, understand the circumstances, and agree on corrective step

3. A brief written record of the discussion and any agreed corrective steps shall be documented and retained confidentially

4. No further action shall be taken where the matter is resolved at this stage.

Article 5.5.2. Step Two - Written Warning (Category A unresolved or recurring, or Category B)

1. A formal written warning shall be issued where:

    - the informal dialogue under Article 5.5.1 did not resolve the matter or produced no demonstrable change in behavior; or

    - a Category A violation recurs after informal dialogue has been conducted; or

    - the violation is a first instance Category B violation.

2. Written warning procedure:

    - The Internal Affairs Liaison and Co-Speakers shall review the record of the informal dialogue conducted under Article 5.5.1, together with any additional evidence, and shall submit a written recommendation to the Board

    - The Board shall review the recommendation and decide whether a written warning is warranted.

    - The written warning shall be issued by the Board and shall specify:

        - the nature of the violation and the article of this Code breached;
        - the evidence and record considered;
        - the improvement required and the timeline within which it is expected; and
        - the consequences of further violations.

3. The members shall acknowledge receipt of the written warning in writing by signing the document and returning it to the board within ten (10) working days. Failure to acknowledge receipt shall not invalidate the warning.

4. A record of the written warning shall be retained in the member's conduct file, in accordance with Article 5.9 of this Code.

Article 5.5.3. Step Three - Temporary Suspension (Category B repeated, or Category C)

1. Suspension is a temporary withdrawal of membership rights and privileges.

   For the avoidance of doubt, a suspended member shall, for the duration of the suspension, be treated as a non-member and shall not be eligible to:

   - vote in any ASAF governance process or election;
   - hold or exercise any elected or appointed position within ASAF;
   - join or participate in any Task Force, Committee, or Working Group;
   - attend or participate in ASAF activities, events, or communications; or
   - represent ASAF in any capacity whatsoever

2. A short suspension of between one (1) and three (3) months shall be imposed where the violation falls within Category B violations as classified in Article 5.4.2 and has recurred after a written warning has been issued.

3. A prolonged suspension of between three (3) and twelve (12) months shall be imposed where the violation falls within Category C violations as classified in Article 5.4.3.

4. The Board shall determine the specific duration within the applicable range having regard to the nature, severity, and circumstances of the violation.

Article 5.5.4 Suspension procedure

1. The Internal Affairs Task Force (or designated investigator in the case of a recusal) shall investigate the matter and submit a written report with recommendations to the Board within six (6) weeks of the complaint being registered.

   - Where exceptional circumstances prevent the completion of the investigation within this period, the Internal Affairs Liaison shall notify the Board and the complainant in writing, stating the reasons for the delay and the revised expected timeline.
   - Any extension shall not exceed two (2) months from the date the complaint was registered, after which the investigation shall be concluded and a report submitted regardless of whether all enquiries have been completed.

2. The members concerned shall be notified in writing of the allegations and the investigation report no fewer than ten (10) working days before the hearing, giving them sufficient time to prepare their response.

3. A hearing shall be convened by the Board, at which the members concerned shall have the right to:

    - appear in person or via video conferencing;
    - present their account of events verbally;
    - submit supporting evidence; and
    - be accompanied by another ASAF member of their choice who may support but not speak on their behalf.

4. Where a member is unable to attend the scheduled hearing, the member shall, within ten (10) working days of the missed hearing, propose an alternative date in consultation with the Board to reschedule the hearing.

5. Where the member concerned fails to propose an alternative date, the Board shall reschedule the hearing once, giving the member no fewer than ten (10) working days notice of the rescheduled date.

6. Where the member fails to attend the rescheduled hearing without providing justification acceptable to the Board, the Board shall proceed to consider the matter on the basis of the investigation report and any written response submitted by the member. The absence of the member from the hearing shall not prevent the Board from reaching a determination.

7. Where the member provides an acceptable justification for non-attendance at the rescheduled hearing, they may submit a written response in lieu of attendance, which the Board shall consider alongside the investigation report.

8. The Board, excluding any implicated members, shall consider the investigation report, the hearing record, and the recommendations of the Internal Affairs Task Force or in the case of a recusal, the designated investigator, and shall decide whether to impose suspension.

9. Suspension shall be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of eligible Board members.

10. The members shall receive written notification of the decision within five (5) working days of the Board's determination, specifying the grounds, duration, and any conditions attached to the suspension.

Article 5.5.5 Permanent Exclusion

Where the severity or repetition of misconduct is such that suspension is insufficient, the matter may be referred to the Meeting of Members for consideration of permanent exclusion from ASAF in accordance with the procedures prescribed in the ASAF Statutes.

Article 5.6. Investigation Principles

All investigations conducted under this Article shall adhere to the following principles:

1. Investigations shall be initiated within ten days (10) working days of receipt of a complaint;

2. The Internal Affairs task force or designated investigating body in the case of a recusal, shall act impartially and shall have no prior involvement in the matter;

3. Both the complainant and the members concerned shall have the opportunity to present their account and evidence;

4. Investigations shall be conducted confidentially, and information shall be shared only with those who need it to conduct the process; and

5. A written report shall be produced at the conclusion of every investigation, regardless of outcome.

Article 5.7. Appeals

Article 5.7.1. General

Disciplinary appeals under this Code shall be handled by the Appeals Committee constituted by the Standing Appeals Pool in accordance with Article 5.7.3 of this Code. Where a competent appeals body is eventually established under the ASAF Statutes, all appeal functions under this Article shall transfer automatically to that body.

Article 5.7.2. Notice of Intention to Appeal

1. Any member who is dissatisfied with a disciplinary decision taken under Article 5.5 of this may submit a written notice of intention to appeal within ten (10) working days of receiving the reasoned decision, to the Appeals Pool Chairperson.

2. The notice shall also be sent to the Board President and the Internal Affairs Liaison for information for administrative awareness only. They shall have no authority to intervene in or delay the appeals process.

3. The notice shall contain the following information:

    - the name of the appealing member;
    - the date of the original hearing;
    - the nature of the decision being appealed;
    - the article of this Code under which the decision was taken; and
    - a statement that the full grounds of appeal will be provided to the Appeals Committee.

Article 5.7.3. Establishment of the Standing Appeals Pool

1. The Standing Appeals Pool shall consist of seven (7) ordinary members of good standing elected by the Meeting of Members.

2. To be eligible for election to the Standing Appeals Pool, a member shall:

    - be an Ordinary Member of ASAF;
    - not hold any elected or appointed position within ASAF at the time of nomination, including but not limited to Board positions, Co-Ambassador roles, and Task Force Co-Speaker positions; and
    - have no pending disciplinary proceedings and no history of sanctions against them under this Code, the ASAF Statutes or other governance documents.

3. The Board and Service Provider shall publish a call for nominations at least eight (8) weeks before the Annual General Forum;

4. Eligible members may nominate within two (2) weeks of the call being published by submitting a written expression of interest supported by the endorsement of at least five (5) ordinary members who have no pending disciplinary proceedings against them or history of sanctions against them;

5. The eligibility of all nominees shall be verified by the Service Provider within two (2) weeks of the closure of nominations;

6. The Service Provider shall publish the full list of eligible nominees for the membership, immediately upon completion of verification.

7. Eligible nominees shall have one (1) week to present themselves and their candidacy on the ASAF Community Portal;

8. Voting shall take place online on the ASAF Community Portal for one (1) week prior to the Annual General Forum or Extraordinary Meetings of Members;

9. The seven (7) candidates with the highest number of votes shall be declared elected and shall be confirmed at the Annual General Forum; and

10. The elected candidate with the highest number of votes among the seven shall serve as the Code of Conduct Appeals Pool Chairperson who will be the official recipient of all notices of intention to appeal submitted under *Article 5.7.2* and shall be responsible for notifying the remaining pool members within five (5) working days of receiving a notice. The Appeals Pool Chairperson may serve on the Appeals Committee for any appeal in which they are not conflicted, notwithstanding their administrative role.

11. Pool members shall serve until the next AGF. The following conditions apply during the term:

    - Pool members shall not take up any Board position or other elected ASAF position during their term in the poll;

- Pool members should serve in a personal capacity and not as representatives of any ASAF body;

- A pool member who develops a conflict of interest in relation to a specific appeal shall recuse themselves from that case and immediately notify the Appeals Pool Chairperson in writing.

- Where a pool member fails to self-recuse and a conflict of interest is subsequently identified by any party to appeal, the Appeals Committee shall have authority to rule on whether a conflict of interest exists and to remove the pool member from that specific appeal. A pool member removed for failure to self-recuse shall not be eligible for other appeals during their term and the matter shall be noted in the conduct register.

- Where the number of eligible and available pool members falls below five (5) at any point during the term, whether due to resignation, disqualification, or any other reason, the Board and Service Provider shall publish a call for nominations within thirty (30) days. The same nomination, verification, and campaign procedure applicable to the original election shall apply. Voting shall take place on the ASAF Community Portal and the candidate or candidates with the highest number of votes shall be added to the pool to restore it to seven (7) members. The replenished members shall serve until the next AGF.

Article 5.7.4. Constitution of the Appeals Committee

1. When a notice of appeal is filed in accordance with Art 5.7.2. of this code, the Appeals Pool Chairperson shall notify all members of the Standing Appeals Pool within five (5) working days.

2. Pool members shall indicate their availability within ten (10) working days of notification. The first three (3) members to confirm availability shall constitute the Appeals Committee for that appeal.

3. Where fewer than three (3) pool members are available, the appeal shall be held in abeyance until the Appeals Committee is properly constituted.

4. The Appeals Committee shall consist solely of the three (3) pool members described above, who shall serve as the sole decision-making body for the appeal. No other person shall form part of the Appeals Committee.

5. No member who participated in any stage of the original disciplinary process, including investigation, hearing, or determination of the previous outcome, shall be eligible to serve on the Appeals Committee for that specific appeal.

Article 5.7.5. Other people involved in the hearing

1. The appealing member shall be entitled, if they wish, to nominate one spokesperson, drawn from the general ASAF membership, to attend the hearing and present their position on their behalf.

2. The Board shall also be entitled to nominate a spokesperson, drawn from among themselves.

3. Spokespersons shall attend the hearing in that capacity only and shall have no role in the deliberations or determination of the appeal.

4. One (1) observer may attend the hearing for the purpose of documenting the proceedings.

    - The observer shall be jointly nominated by the appealing member and the Board prior to the hearing.
    - Where the parties cannot agree on a nominee, the Appeals Committee shall appoint an observer from among ordinary ASAF members in good standing who have no connection to the matter.
    - The observer shall have no speaking rights, no voting rights, and shall not form part of the Appeals Committee.
    - The observer shall produce a written record of their observations which shall be submitted to the Meeting of Members alongside the Appeals Committee's recommendation.

Article 5.7.6. Process

The Appeals Committee shall conduct its proceedings as follows:

1. There shall be a Panel Chair who will be the pool member with the longest continuous ASAF membership among the three members constituted for that specific appeal.

    Where two or more pool members have equal length of membership, the Panel Chair shall be the member who first confirmed their availability for that specific appeal. No pool member shall serve as Panel Chair in consecutive appeals where another pool member is available to assume the role.

2. The appealing member and the Board's representative shall be given no fewer than ten (10) working days notice of the hearing date;

3. The appealing member shall have the right to appear in person or via video conferencing, present their case verbally, submit supporting evidence, and be accompanied by another ASAF member of their choice in a supportive capacity;

4. The Board's representative shall similarly have the right to present the Board's position and submit supporting evidence;

5. The three pool members shall deliberate privately following the hearing and shall reach their decision by simple majority vote, a minimum of two out of three; and

6. The Appeals Committee shall issue a written decision with reasons within ten (10) working days of the hearing.

7. Where either the appealing member or the Board's representative is unable to attend the scheduled hearing, the Panel Chair shall reschedule the hearing once, giving all parties no fewer than ten (10) working days notice of the rescheduled date.

8. Where the appealing member fails to attend the rescheduled hearing without providing justification acceptable to the Panel Chair, the Appeals Committee shall proceed to consider the matter on the basis of the written appeal and any supporting evidence submitted. Where the Board's representative fails to attend the rescheduled hearing, the Appeals Committee shall proceed in their absence.

Article 5.7.7. Decision and Notification

1. The decision of the Appeals Committee shall constitute a recommendation to the Meeting of Members, which shall have the authority to uphold or dismiss the appeal.

2. The Board shall be notified of both the recommendation and the final decision of the Meeting of Members but shall have no role in determining the outcome.

3. The decision of the Meeting of Members shall be final and binding on all parties.

Article 5.8. Legal Action

1. In cases involving criminal conduct as described under Category C violations, ASAF may, subject to its registration as an entity in the relevant jurisdiction and following a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board, report the matter to the relevant authorities.

2. Nothing in this Article shall prevent a member who has been directly harmed by the conduct of another member from pursuing whatever legal remedies are available to them under the laws of the relevant jurisdiction.

3. ASAF's internal disciplinary process does not preclude, replace, or prejudice any legal action that an affected member may choose to take in their personal capacity, and ASAF shall not be obliged to suspend its internal process pending the outcome of any external legal proceedings.

Article 5.9. Record-Keeping

1. The Board shall maintain a confidential conduct register recording all disciplinary actions taken under this Article, including informal dialogues, written warnings, and suspensions.

2. The conduct register shall be administered jointly by the Service Provider and the Board President on behalf of the Board. The Service Provider's role is administrative only and does not confer any authority to make determinations on disciplinary matters or to grant access to the register beyond what is prescribed in this Article.

3. Access to the conduct register shall be restricted to:
    - the Board President, in a custodial capacity only;
    - the Internal Affairs Liaison;
    - the Service Provider, for administrative purposes only; and
    - Members of the Appeals Committee constituted a specific appeal, who shall have access only to the conduct file directly relevant to that appeal and only for the duration of the appeal proceedings.
4. Any access to the conduct registers beyond that prescribed above shall require approval by a simple majority vote of the Board. The Board President and the Internal Affairs Liaison shall have no authority to grant access unilaterally outside the persons listed above.
5. No other person shall have access to the conduct register without such Board approval. Records shall be retained for a minimum of five (5) years from the date of the last entry.

Article 6. MEMBER RIGHTS AND PROCEDURAL GUARANTEES

ASAF is committed to protecting the rights of all its members. In any dispute or disciplinary procedure, members are guaranteed the following:

1. Fair process: disputes are handled impartially in accordance with agreed-upon rules.
2. Right to information: members are promptly and clearly informed of any allegation against them.
3. Right to be heard members may present their position and respond to concerns in a fair setting.
4. Access to evidence: members have access to relevant information and evidence, with a reasonable time to prepare their response.
5. Timely and reasoned resolution: complaints are addressed diligently, with clear reasoning provided for all decisions.

Article 7. AMENDMENT OF THE CODE

This Code of Conduct shall be reviewed periodically to ensure its relevance and alignment with ASAF's evolving objectives and other relevant governance documents. Members will be informed of any updates, and their feedback will be actively sought to improve governance practices.

Article 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND COMMITMENT

By joining ASAF, each member commits to upholding this Code of Conduct in all their activities and interactions within the Forum, and to actively supporting ASAF's mission of promoting Africa-Europe cooperation.

Article 9. COMMENCEMENT

This Code of Conduct shall take effect on the date of its adoption by members on the ASAF community portal and will be published on the official website of the association, unless otherwise specified.

Signed:

_____

Full Name

Internal Affairs Liaison Officer

Date: _____