

## ***Presentation***

The Constitution of any organization constitutes the rules and regulations which shall govern and guide the relationship among members and between members and the organization.

On becoming a member of the organization the new member agrees to comply with those rules and regulations. A Political Party is such an organization.

In determining the nature and purport of these rules and regulations one must be informed by the aims and objectives of the Organization. The rules and regulations must conduce to attainment of those aims and objectives and not operate against them. This is what the framers of this draft Constitution of the **United National Congress** have sought to do. This final draft is the result of consensus following upon discussion with all the relevant Party organs, which offered valuable suggestions.

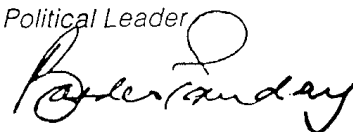
I wish to place on record my congratulations and sincere thanks to all those who have contributed of their time, their energies and their knowledge in the preparation of this draft Constitution for the party.

Let us be true to the theme of this National Assembly:

***PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST***

Basdeo Panday

*Political Leader*



**UNC Constitution**

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## ARTICLE 1 – NAME, SYMBOL & MOTTO

The name of the Party shall be the United National Congress (UNC). The symbol of the Party shall be the Rising Sun over the Trinity Hills above the letters UNC a specimen of which is annexed as Appendix A. The motto of the Party shall be "WE ARE THE FUTURE".

### UNC: Mission Statement

"To be a knowledge-based society with a globally competitive, technologically driven, diversified economy that will sustain full employment, growing prosperity, equal opportunity, a secure life, social cohesion, and the highest standard of living for all citizens".

## ARTICLE 2 - AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

WHEREAS the Citizens of Trinidad and Tobago:-

Have affirmed that the nation of Trinidad and Tobago is founded upon principles that acknowledge the supremacy of God, faith in fundamental human rights and freedoms, the position of the family in a society of free men and free institutions, the dignity of the human person and the equal and inalienable rights with which all members of the human family are endowed by their Creator;

Respect the principle of social justice and therefore believe that the operation of the economic system should result in the material resources of the community being so distributed as to subserve the common good, that there should be adequate means of livelihood for all, that labour should not be exploited or forced by economic necessity to operate in inhumane conditions but there should be opportunity for advancement on the basis of recognition of merit, ability and integrity; Have asserted their belief in a democratic society in which all persons may, to the extent of their capacity, play some part in the institutions of national life and thus develop and maintain due respect for lawfully constituted authority;

Have recognized that men and institutions remain free only when freedom is founded upon respect for moral and spiritual values and the rule of law; \

AND WHEREAS the UNC is a political party pledged to uphold and maintain the aforesaid principles and furthermore to promote regional and international peace and harmony within the community of nations and to promote human rights, the dignity of the individual and open government.

TO THIS END, THE UNC IS COMMITTED TO THE FOLLOWING AIMS AND OBJECTS:-

- (i) To provide and/or ensure good government to the people of Trinidad and Tobago;
- (ii) To inculcate an abiding appreciation and respect for the ethnic, cultural and religious diversity of our society in order to foster harmony, understanding, cooperation and togetherness and promote national unity, purpose and cohesion;
- (iii) To eliminate all forms of discrimination, whether based on race, color, origin, religion, gender, class or region and to ensure that equal treatment is meted out to all citizens by public or private authority through the medium of education and awareness and the establishment of appropriate mechanisms, procedures and institutions.
- (iv) To nurture a society in which opportunity is availed of and advancement is achieved on the basis of merit. ability, competence and integrity and to enforce sanctions against all acts of discrimination, favouritism, nepotism and corruption;
- (v) To strive to ensure a just and equitable distribution of state resources as between groups, communities, classes and regions as an indispensable prerequisite for instilling a sense of patriotism, belonging and fraternity among all;
- (vi) To foster the ethos, substance and processes of democracy in all spheres and aspects of national life and in particular, to promote the unrestricted freedom of citizens to participate in the choice of their representatives and to encourage the implementation of the principles of economic and industrial democracy and the most widespread ownership of economic assets;

- (vii) To struggle against any tendency towards authoritarianism, autocracy and dictatorship and to promote a viable diffusion of centres of power and decision-making as a check against the concentration and abuse of power;
- (viii) To promote active citizen involvement at all levels of decision-making as the foundation for a participatory democracy and as a prerequisite for self-reliant development;
- (ix) To inculcate a sense of responsibility and commitment among all citizens to contribute to the moulding and enrichment of their own lives and environment through an appropriate system of decentralized exercise of power and decision making;
- (x) To encourage creativity, productive endeavour and discipline in all spheres of activity and enterprise and among all citizens as the basis for enduring economic development and social progress.
- (xi) To facilitate the attainment of a higher standard of living- for all including the provision of adequate infrastructure whereby all persons may strive to achieve their own happiness;
- (xii) Generally to promote the political, social and economic development of the people of Trinidad & Tobago.

#### **ARTICLE 3 - MEMBERSHIP**

- (A) Membership shall be of three kinds:-
  - (i) Individual Membership:-
    - (a) Adult
    - (b) Youth
  - (ii) Group Membership
  - (iii) Overseas Membership

#### **ARTICLE 4 - ADULT MEMBERSHIP**

- (A) ELIGIBILITY:  
Any person who is eligible to vote at a National Election in Trinidad and Tobago is eligible for membership in the Party if he:-

- (i) accepts the aims, objects, principles, policies and programmes of the Party and pledges himself to work for the achievement thereof;
  - (ii) agrees to abide by the CONSTITUTION of the Party, its discipline and decisions;
  - (iii) is not a member of any other political party or is not a member of any organization the aims, objects, principles, policies and programmes of which are contrary to or inconsistent with those of the Party.
- (B) **PROCEDURE:**  
To become a member a person shall make an application on the prescribed form accompanied by such sum as may be prescribed from time to time by the National Executive and ratified by the National Congress either:-
- (i) to the Secretary of the Party Group in the Polling Division in which he resides; or
  - (ii) if there is no Party Group operating in that Polling Division, to the Secretary of the Constituency Executive; or
  - (iii) if there is no such Constituency Executive existing in the Constituency, to the General Secretary of the Party.
- (C) Notwithstanding the procedure for application for membership as mentioned above the National Executive shall have the power to deal directly with applications for membership to the Party and if it does exercise such powers by admitting a member where there is a functioning Party Group or Constituency Executive it must inform the Party Group or Constituency Executive in writing of its decision within 14 days of admitting the member to the Party provided however that in , circumstances in which an application under Article 4 (B) hereinabove is rejected the National Executive may consider the same by way of appeal from such rejection provided that the reasons therefore shall be furnished to the National Executive in writing from the relevant quarter upon notice of such appeal in such form as shall be considered appropriate being given to the National Executive by the unsuccessful applicant.

- (D) An application for membership may be made by any person in respect of a Party Group or Constituency situated otherwise than by reference to his place of residence or other address.
- (E) **ADMISSION:-**
  - (i) On admission a member shall:-
    - (a) receive a duly authenticated membership card;
    - (b) pay the triennial subscription fee as prescribed by the Party; and thereby obtain financial standing;
    - (c) become liable to such additional impositions as may from time to time be required of him by the Party.

**ARTICLE 5 - YOUTH MEMBERSHIP**

- (A) **ELIGIBILITY:**  
Any person who under the laws of Trinidad and Tobago would be entitled on attaining the age of 18 years to be able to vote in any National election will be eligible for youth membership if he or she:-
- (i) is not less than thirteen (13) years of age and has not yet attained the age of twenty-five (25) years;
  - (ii) accepts the aims, objects, principles, policies and programmes of the Party;
  - (iii) agrees to abide by the CONSTITUTION of the Party and to its discipline and decisions;
  - (iv) is not a member of any other Political Party or is not a member of any organization the aims, objects, principles, policies and programmes of which are contrary to or inconsistent with those of the Party; and
  - (v) has obtained the written consent of his parent or guardian to become a youth member of the Party.
- (B) **PROCEDURE:**  
To become a member, a person shall make an application on the prescribed form and comply with the procedure set out in Article 4 (B) above.

(C) TRANSFER:

Youth members on attaining the age of eighteen (18) years shall be entitled to become adult members of the Party subject however to the provisions of Article 4 hereinabove. Prior to attaining such age youth members shall exercise voting rights only in respect of the National Congress of Youth.

(b) pay an annual fee of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$100.00);

(c) Group members shall not be entitled to exercise any voting rights.

**ARTICLE 6 - GROUP MEMBERSHIP**

(A) ELIGIBILITY:

Any organization in Trinidad and Tobago or overseas which is committed to the principles of democracy shall be eligible for group membership of the Party provided that such organisation:-

- (i) accepts the aims, objects, principles, policies and programmes of the Party and pledges itself to work for their achievement;
- (ii) agrees to abide by the CONSTITUTION of the Party and to its discipline and decisions;
- (iii) is not affiliated to or connected with any organization whose aims and objects or principles or policies or programmes are contrary to or inconsistent with those of the Party.

(B) PROCEDURE:

To become a group member of the Party an organization shall:-

- (i) make an application to the General Secretary of the Party;
- (ii) submit with its application an authenticated copy of its charter of operations, Constitution and rules, if any as well as a list of names of its Officers duly certified by its Chairman or President and Secretary;
- (iii) pay together with its application a group membership fee of one hundred dollars (\$100.00.)

(C) ADMISSION:

- (i) On admission such an organization shall:-
  - (a) receive a Certificate of Group Membership signed by the Chairman and General Secretary of the Party;

**ARTICLE 7 - OVERSEAS MEMBERSHIP**

Persons residing abroad are eligible for membership in the Party in the discretion of the National Executive, and if accepted and financial will be entitled to exercise voting rights if present in Trinidad and Tobago.

**ARTICLE 8 - UNITS**

(A) The Units and Organs of the Party shall comprise the following:-

- (i) The Party Group
- (ii) The Constituency Executive
- (iii) The Constituency Council
- (iv) The Annual Constituency Congress
- (v) The Parliamentary Arm
- (vi) The Parliamentary Caucus
- (vii) The National Congress of Women
- (viii) The National Congress of Youth
- (ix) The National Executive
- (x) The National Congress
- (xi) The National Assembly and Special National Assembly

(B) THE PARTY GROUP

- (ii) The basic institution of the Party shall be the Party Group.
- (ii) The Party Group shall consist of a minimum of TEN (10) members.

- (iii) Each Party Group shall operate within specified geographical districts provided however that the National Executive may approve such modifications to the area of operations and composition of a Party Group as may be deemed necessary including but not limited to restructuring it with reference to polling divisions and mandating the coordination of functions between itself and other Party Groups.
- (iv) The Party Group shall:-
  - (a) recruit members for the Party;
  - (b) assist in outreach activities of and within the Community;
  - (c) provide such information as may be required by the Constituency Council;
  - (d) raise funds for the Constituency;
  - (e) make recommendations to the elected Representative or designated representative for the Constituency;
  - (f) submit reports of activities of the Party Group to the Constituency Council.
- (v) The officers of the Party Group shall be:-
  - (a) Chairman
  - (b) Vice Chairman
  - (c) Secretary
  - (d) Assistant Secretary
  - (e) Treasurer
  - (f) Women's Affairs Officer
  - (g) Youth Officer
  - (h) Elections Officer
  - (i) Public Relations Officer
- (vi) The Party Group shall meet at least once every month.
- (vii) Each Party Group shall be represented on the Constituency Council by TWO (2) representatives and an additional representative for every TEN (10) members in excess of the contingent of TEN (10).

- (viii) The quorum for meetings of a Party Group shall be not less than FOUR (4) members of whom TWO (2) must be elected officers provided however that where after half an hour from the time appointed or commencing the meeting a quorum is not in attendance the meeting shall be adjourned to a fixed date and time at which the members present and in attendance shall constitute a quorum.
- (ix) The Secretary of each Party Group shall within SEVEN (7) days of the election of the officers of the Party Group forward to the General Secretary of the Party and to the Secretary of the Constituency Executive the names of the said Officers.
- (x) The Secretary of each Party Group shall keep a register of members of the Party Group and such other records as may be prescribed by the National Executive from time to time and which shall be kept by the Party Group provided however that the respective Party Groups shall furnish on an ongoing basis all particulars and documentation thereof to the Secretariat.
- (xi) Each Party Group shall through its Secretary forward to the General Secretary and/or to its Constituency Council a quarterly report which shall contain:-
  - (a) a return of all applications for membership;
  - (b) a return of its members and their financial standing;
  - (c) a statement of its financial position; and
  - (d) a written report of its activities for that quarter.
- (xii) Each Party Group shall, through its Secretary, forward each month to the Constituency Council/ all monies due and payable by it under this Constitution.
- (xiii) A Party Group which fails to submit its Quarterly Report and/or contravenes any of the provisions of this Constitution may be subject to such disciplinary action including suspension or dis-bandment as the National Executive may in the circumstances deem fit subject however to ratification by the National Congress.

- (xiv) Any Party Group which is suspended or deemed to be disbanded by the National Executive shall be without any entitlement in the Party provided however that it may be reconstituted or reinstated for good reason on such terms and conditions as the National Executive may decide provided also that the status of a member of such Party Group as a bonafide member of the Party shall not be adversely affected solely for the reason that action has been taken under this Article against a Party Group of which he is a member.
- (xv) No Party Group shall enter into any affiliation or association with or give political or other support of any kind whatever to any other Party, Political Group, Organization, individual or any candidate other than the Party's Candidate for elections without the prior written approval of the National Executive.

#### **ARTICLE 9 - THE ANNUAL CONSTITUENCY CONGRESS**

- (A) There shall be an Annual Constituency Congress for each Constituency.
- (B) All members of the Party within the Constituency and those assigned to it shall be eligible to attend the Annual Constituency Congress but only financial members shall be eligible to vote at the said Congress.
- (C) The Annual Constituency Congress shall be summoned by the National Executive after consultation with the Constituency Council. The Quorum for such meeting shall be ONE-THIRD (1/3) of its membership or FIFTY (50) members whichever is less provided that if at a duly constituted meeting after half an hour from the appointed time for commencing the meeting a quorum is not in attendance the meeting shall be adjourned to a fixed date and time at which the members present shall constitute the required quorum for the meeting.

- (D) The Annual Constituency Congress shall elect the following Officers who shall comprise the Constituency Executive:-
  - (i) Chairman
  - (ii) Deputy Chairman
  - (iii) Secretary
  - (iv) Assistant Secretary
  - (v) Treasurer
  - (vi) Party Organizer
  - (vii) Welfare Officer
  - (viii) Education & Research Officer
  - (ix) Women's Affairs Officer
  - (x) Youth Affairs Officer
  - (xi) Election Officer
  - (xii) Public Relations Officer
- (E) The Election of Officers at the Annual Constituency Congress shall be under the supervision of the National Executive.
- (F) The Annual Constituency Congress shall:-
  - (i) Review the activities of the Party Group within the Constituency.
  - (ii) Consider written reports from the Constituency Council.
  - (iii) Approve resolutions for submission to the National Congress, National Assembly, Special National Assembly and National Executive.

#### **ARTICLE 10 - THE CONSTITUENCY COUNCIL**

- (A) There shall be a Constituency Council for each Constituency which shall comprise:-
  - (i) The Officers elected at the Annual Constituency Congress for a one year term;
  - (ii) Representatives from each Party Group in accordance with Article 8 (B) (vii) hereinabove;
  - (iii) Members of the Parliamentary Arm within the Constituency.
- (B) The Constituency Council shall be the governing body of the Constituency between Constituency Congresses.

- (C) The Constituency Council shall:-
- (i) Meet at least once every three months. The quorum for such a meeting shall be ONE-THIRD (1/3) of its membership, or TWENTY (20) members whichever is less provided that if at a duly constituted meeting after half an hour from the appointed time for commencing the meeting a quorum is not in attendance the meeting shall be adjourned to a fixed date at which date and time the members present shall constitute the required quorum for that meeting.
  - (ii) Receive and consider reports from Party Group and members of the Parliamentary Arm within the Constituency.
  - (iii) Submit Reports and Resolutions to the Annual Constituency Congress, the National Congress, National Assembly, Special National Assembly and quarterly to the National Executive.
  - (iv) Recommend to the National Executive prospective Candidates for Municipal, Tobago House of Assembly (THA) and General Elections.
  - (v) Recommend to the National Executive suitable persons for appointment to Boards of State Corporations, State Enterprises and Statutory Authorities.
  - (vi) Raise funds for the proper functioning of the Party within the Constituency.
  - (vii) Maintain a Constituency Office of the Party and such other sub offices as it may consider necessary.
  - (viii) Assist the Party in community outreach programs in pursuance of the development of the Constituency.
  - (ix) Discuss and refer to the National Executive, necessary any matter including that of discipline affecting the Party within the Constituency.

## ARTICLE 11 - THE NATIONAL CONGRESS

The meetings of the National Congress shall be summoned by the National Executive.

- A) The National Congress shall comprise:-
  - (i) All members of the National Executive
  - (ii) Two (2) representatives from each Constituency and an additional representative for every FIFTY (50) financial members in excess of FIFTY (50) financial members
  - (iii) All Members of Parliament
  - (iv) Mayors/Chairmen of Regional Corporations/ Councillors
- (B) It shall meet at least once every THREE (3) months. The quorum for meetings of the National Congress shall be ONE THIRD (1/3) of its membership or SEVENTY-FIVE (75) members whichever is less provided that if at a duly constituted meeting after half an hour from the appointed time for commencing the meeting a quorum is not in attendance the meeting shall be adjourned to a fixed date and time at which date and time the members present shall constitute the required quorum for that meeting.
- (C) It shall assist in the formulation of Policies and Programmes of the Party and shall make recommendations to the Party, its Political Leader. the Parliamentary Arm and the Parliamentary Caucus.
- (D) It shall appoint members to the Disciplinary Committee referred to in Article 29 (A) (i).
- (E) It shall have the power to require the National Executive to summon a Special National Assembly by a Resolution supported by not less than SIXTY-SIX AND TWO-THIRDS (66 2/3%) percent of the financial members of the National Congress present and voting upon the fulfillment of which condition the National Executive shall summon the Special National Assembly.
- (F) It shall develop a disciplinary code of conduct for members of the Party.



- (G) It shall have the power to adjudicate on all matters referred to it by the National Executive pursuant to Article 29 (A) (v) (e) and may impose such sanctions as are deemed necessary provided, however that suspension or expulsion of any officer of the Party elected by the National Assembly shall be by a vote of not less than SEVENTY-FIVE (75%) percent of its financial membership.
- (H) It shall be the highest authority in the Party between National Assemblies.

## ARTICLE 12 - THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

- (A) The National Executive shall comprise:-
  - (i) All Officers of the National Executive elected by one man / one vote system of the Party's membership.
  - (ii) The Officers of the Secretariat of the Party may on the invitation of the National Executive attend the meetings of the National Executive.
  - (iii) The Officers to be elected by the Party's membership are as follows:-
    - (a) Political Leader
    - (b) Three Deputy Political Leaders
    - (c) Chairman
    - (d) Deputy Chairman
    - (e) Policy and Strategy Officer
    - (f) Education Officer
    - (g) Research Officer
    - (h) Elections Officer
    - (i) Treasurer
    - (j) Party Organizer
    - (k) International Relations Officer
    - (l) Five elected regional representatives of Tobago, North, East, Central and South Trinidad.
  - (iv) The National Executive shall meet at least once per month and quorum for such meeting shall be TWELVE (12) members.

The National Executive shall:-

- (a) be responsible for the overall organisation of the Party including its day to day administration, the implementation of the Policies of the Party and the overseeing and implementation of the Policies and decisions of the Party and make recommendations to the National Congress on general policy matters and strategic initiatives and seek ratification of urgent decisions taken of a fundamental nature;
- (b) prescribe all matters that require to be so prescribed whether by Regulations hereunder or otherwise and whether with respect to matters of a substantive or procedural nature including but not limited to quorums and time for meetings of any Unit or Organ of the Party;
- (c) approve applications for membership;
- (d) establish and operate an **Administrative** Secretariat to implement a performance management appraisal system of all Units/Organs of the Party for the effective administration of the Party which shall consist of the General Secretary, Administrative Secretary, the Public Relations Officer, the Treasurer and such other persons as the National Executive may prescribe from time to time and it shall have the power to determine the nature and extent of the duties and/or functions to be performed by any of the officers of the Secretariat provided however that a member of Parliament shall not be eligible to be appointed to an office within the Secretariat.
- (e) supervise the establishment and functioning of Party Groups, Constituency Councils, Standing Committees and the election of their officers;
- (f) summon meetings of any institution or organ of the Party as may be necessary;

- (g) approve candidates to contest elections to the House of Representatives, Municipal Corporations and the Tobago House of Assembly after consultation with the Party's Organs and institutions;
- (h) investigate all matters of discipline affecting the Party and where necessary refer any such matters for the consideration of the Disciplinary Committee of the Party pursuant to Article 29 (A) (v);
- (i) summon and organise Annual Constituency Congresses;
- (j) summon and organize the National Congress and report to the National Congress at such time as it is convened;
- (k) summon and organize the National Assembly and report to the National Assembly at such time as it is convened;
- (l) summon and organize the Special National Assembly where required;
- (m) appoint Trustees, of the Party's property and undertaking, Tribunals, Committees, Chairmen and Members of Standing and Special Committees and fill such vacancies therein as may be necessary from time to time;
- (n) appoint such staff to the Secretariat on such terms and conditions as it considers necessary;
- (o) have the power to determine the nature and extent of the functions and duties to be delegated to the Officers of the Secretariat;
- (p) propose such levies or charges as it considers necessary; upon members, organs and units of the Party, Members of Parliament and Municipal Corporation and Tobago House of Assembly representatives such decisions to be subject to approval by the National Congress;

- (q) propose to the National Congress for its approval rules and regulations to attain the aims and objects of the Party and implement its constitution;
- (r) propose to the National Congress for its approval the holding of elections for Officers within it notwithstanding that their term has not expired otherwise than in cases of casual vacancy;
- (s) do all such things as are necessary to promote the aims and objects of the Party and in the discharge of its functions and duties
- (t) implement a performance management appraisal system of all Units / Organs of the Party

- (B) The National Executive reserves the right to admit new members. Such a member shall enjoy voting rights and can hold office subject to Section 19 (B).

#### ARTICLE 13 - THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

- (A) The NATIONAL ASSEMBLY shall be the highest authority of the Party and shall:-
  - (i) comprise all financial members of the Party;
  - (ii) meet at least once every year;
  - (iii) elect the Officers of the Party as described in Article 12 (A);
  - (iv) amend the Party Constitution in accordance with Article 25;
  - (v) consider and if thought appropriate approve policies and programmes of the Party submitted to it by the NATIONAL CONGRESS;
  - (vi) consider and if thought appropriate ratify decisions of the National Executive or National Congress to affiliate with other political parties or organisations.

- (B) A SPECIAL NATIONAL ASSEMBLY may be summoned in accordance with Article 11 (e) and it shall have all the powers of a National Assembly within the scope of the purpose for which the said Special National Assembly was convened.  
The Members present at the National Assembly and/or Special National Assembly shall constitute the quorum for such meetings.

#### **ARTICLE 14 - NATIONAL CONGRESS OF YOUTH**

- (A) There shall be a National Congress of Youth which all Youth Members shall be entitled to attend.
- (B) The National Congress of Youth shall meet at least once every THREE (3) months.
- (C) It shall elect the following Officers:-
- (i) Chairman (who will be a National Executive Member)
  - (ii) Vice-Chairman
  - (iii) Secretary
  - (iv) Assistant Secretary
  - (v) Treasurer
  - (vi) Welfare Officer
  - (vii) Public Relations Officer
- (D) It shall be accountable to the National Executive.
- (E) The Chairman shall be responsible for coordinating and promoting the affairs of Youth in the Party.  
The National Executive may prescribe regulations from time to time in respect of the National Congress of Youth.

#### **ARTICLE 15 - NATIONAL CONGRESS OF WOMEN**

- (A) All women members of the Party in good financial standing shall comprise the National Congress of Women.
- (B) It shall meet at least once every THREE (3) months.

- (C) It shall elect the following Officers:-
- (i) Chairperson (who will be a National Executive member)
  - (ii) Vice-Chairperson
  - (iii) Secretary
  - (iv) Assistant Secretary
  - (v) Treasurer
  - (vi) Welfare Officer
  - (vii) Public Relations Officer
- (D) The Chairperson shall be responsible for coordinating and promoting the affairs of Women within the Party.
- (E) It shall be under the supervision of and accountable to the National Executive. The National Executive may prescribe regulations from time to time in respect of the National Congress of Women.

#### **ARTICLE 16 - THE PARLIAMENTARY ARM**

- (A) The Parliamentary Arm shall comprise:-
- (i) All members of the Party who are members of the House of Representatives and the Senate.
  - (ii) All members of the Party who are members of Local Government bodies and the Tobago House of Assembly (THA).
  - (iii) Members of the National Executive
- (B) It shall meet as often as is required but at least once every THREE (3) months.
- (C) The quorum for such meeting shall be FIFTY (50%) percent of the number of persons eligible to attend such meeting provided however that if at a duly constituted meeting after half an hour from the appointed time for commencing the meeting a quorum is not in attendance the meeting shall be adjourned to a fixed date at which date the members present shall constitute the required quorum for that meeting.
- (D) It shall submit a quarterly report of its activities to the National Executive and the National Congress.

- (E) Meetings of the Parliamentary Arm shall be presided over by the Political Leader and in his absence by the Deputy Political Leader or in the absence of both by a person elected from those present.
- (F) It shall be the duty of the members of the Parliamentary Arm to implement the policies of the Party in the discharge of their respective duties and functions.

**ARTICLE 17 -THE PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS**

The Parliamentary Caucus shall comprise all the members of the Party who are members of the House of Representatives, Senate and Chairmen of Regional Corporations.

The Parliamentary Caucus shall be chaired by the Leader of Party's Business in the House of Representatives appointed or revoked (House of Representatives) by the Political Leader after consultation with the members of the (House of Representatives).

**ARTICLE 18 - ELECTION AND REMOVAL OF OFFICERS**

The Political Leader shall hold Office for three (3) years. All other elected National Executive Officers shall hold Office for two (2) years. They shall hold Office until successors to their offices have been elected unless they resign or are removed from office prior to the expiry of their tenure or their offices otherwise become vacant for any cause.

**ARTICLE 19 - VOTING AND ELIGIBILITY FOR OFFICE**

- (A) Voting at all elections within all units and organs of the Party shall be by secret ballot.
- (B) No person shall be elected to hold any office in the party or to represent the Party at any level who:-
  - (i) has not been a member of the Party for at least TWELVE (12) MONTHS
  - (i) is unfinancial; and
  - (ii) is the subject of any pending disciplinary charges in the Party.

- (C) The office of any person elected or appointed to hold office or to represent the party or any of its units, organs or committees, shall be rendered automatically vacant if he absents himself from THREE (3) consecutive meetings of such unit, organ or committee without reasonable excuse communicated to the unit, organ or committee.
- (D) No unfinancial member may vote at any election of officers to a unit or organ.

**ARTICLE 20 - FUNDS OF THE PARTY**

- (A) The Funds of the Party shall consist of such dues, levies, subscriptions, donations and other contributions as may and in such manner, from time to time be determined by the National Executive.
- (B) All monies and property of the Party shall be vested in the name of the Party or in the name of Trustees for and on behalf of the Party duly appointed by the National Executive.
- (C) It shall be the duty of the National Executive to make proper arrangements for the raising, collection, maintenance and control of the funds of the Party.
- (D) Each of the several units and organs of the Party shall be responsible for such of the funds and property of the Party as for the time being come under its particular control and shall account for such funds and property to the National Executive.
- (E) The National Executive shall consult with Constituency Councils of the Party for agreement upon a monthly sum to be paid by them to the Party-for in pursuance of the promotion of its aims and objects.
- (F) The National Executive may in respect of financial matters but not otherwise delegate its powers and functions to the Treasurer to assist it in managing the financial affairs of the Party.
- (G) The Treasurer shall be subject to the direction of the National Executive and be accountable to it.

- (H) The Treasurer shall be invested with responsibility, for inspection and audit of all books and records of the Party and all Units or Organs thereof and shall furnish a statement of affairs, balance sheet and such other accounts of the Party and/or the said Units or Organs as the National Executive shall direct from time to time.
- (I) In the event of dissolution of the Party the assets of the Party shall be applied in discharge of all subsisting obligations for its account, and the residue thereof if any distributed among reputable charitable organisations in Trinidad and Tobago.

#### **ARTICLE 21 - DISCIPLINE**

- (A) If a member of the Party shall, in opposition to any Party Candidate or Nominee or otherwise in defiance of or contrary to any Party directive or declared policy:-
  - (i) publicly announce his intention to participate in or contest, or be a candidate-or nominee for election to a seat in parliament or any public forum or municipal corporation;
  - (ii) accept nomination or appointment to any such public forum or municipal corporation shall thereupon cease to be a member of the Party and shall not "subsequently be or be entitled to be a member of the Party except after the expiration of five (5) years from the date of such announcement or participation or acceptance or consent or otherwise as the case may be as determined by the National Executive and then only upon the approval of and on such terms and conditions as the National Executive may prescribe.

- (B) No member of the Party in Parliament or any public forum or municipal corporation or any other body to which he has been nominated by the Party, may tender his resignation therefrom without first giving to the National Executive notice in writing thereof and the National Executive shall acknowledge such notice in writing within in one week of its receipt. Any such member who tenders his resignation without such prior notice or who allows his seat lapse by default or otherwise, shall be liable to such disciplinary action as the National Executive may deem fit.
- (C) Any member of the Party who publicly expresses any opinion or makes any statement or pronouncement on the declared policies or principles or programmes of the Party or takes any action which in the opinion of the National Executive is in conflict with or contrary to or in contradiction of the declared policies or principles or programmes of the Party, or who enters into public controversy inimical to the interest of the Party through any such opinion, statement, pronouncement, or action shall be required to explain his conduct to the satisfaction of the National Executive and if he fails to do so, shall be liable to such disciplinary action as the National Executive may deem fit.
- (D) Any member of the Party serving in Parliament or on any municipal corporation or other public forum who votes contrary to the declared policies or principles or programmes of the Party or to any directive of the Party on any matter, or who willfully omits to vote or to act in accordance with any directive or policies, principles or programmes of the Party or does or willfully omits to do any act in connection therewith, which in the opinion of the National Executive conflicts with or is contrary to the declared policies, or principles or programmes of the Party is liable to immediate suspension pending the determination thereof by the Disciplinary Committee. If the said matter results in expulsion, he shall not subsequently be or be entitled to be a member of the Party, except after the expiration of FIVE (5) years from the date of any such act or omission or otherwise as the case may be and then only upon the recommendation of the National Congress and on such terms and conditions as the National Congress may prescribe.

- (E) Any member of the Party whose conduct is in the opinion of the National Executive inimical to the best interests of the Party shall be liable to such disciplinary action as the National Executive may determine.
- (F) Any member of the Party who is charged with any breach of discipline may, in the discretion of the National Executive, be suspended from membership pending the investigation and determination of such charge.
- (G) A disciplinary charge shall be disposed of expeditiously and in any case within THREE (3) months of the date of the laying of such charge failing which the charge shall lapse.
- (H) Any member of the Party who is dissatisfied with any disciplinary order or ruling made under this Article or who has been suspended or expelled by the National Executive shall have a right to appeal to the next National Congress according to the procedure prescribed in Regulations formulated for that purpose.

**ARTICLE 22 - NOTICES OF MEETINGS**

At least SEVEN (7) days notice shall be given for the holding of any meeting of any institution other than the National Assembly and the Special National Assembly. The National Executive may in an emergency waive this requirement and summon a meeting by shorter notice.

**ARTICLE 23 - RESERVE POWERS AND INTERPRETATION**

The National Executive shall have the power to determine all matters on which this Constitution and any Standing Orders or Rules or Regulations made hereunder are silent, or from which ambiguity or difficulty or interpretation or otherwise arises and its decision on any such matter shall be final.

**ARTICLE 24 - CASUAL VACANCIES**

Unless otherwise provided herein every organ and unit of the Party shall be invested with and shall be entitled to exercise the prerogative of electing or appointing members to fill casual vacates arising for any cause whatsoever in any office or post within it which tenure shall subsist for the same duration as the former incumbent would have subsisted and shall expire at the same time as that tenure would have expired in the normal course.

**ARTICLE 25 - AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION**

- (A) This Constitution may be amended at a National Assembly or Special National Assembly called for that purpose on the basis of written proposals duly submitted to it by any Unit or Organ of the Party.
- (B) Such proposals shall not be considered at the National or Special Assembly without the prior approval of the National Congress.
- (C) A resolution to amend the Constitution must receive at least TWO-THIRDS (2/3) of the votes of the delegates present at the meeting.
- (D) Any amendment to this constitution shall become effective upon such amendment being approved by the National Assembly or Special National Assembly as shall be the case and upon being published in such manner as the National Executive shall determine.

**ARTICLE 26 - SUSPENSION AND REPEAL OF CONSTITUTION**

- (A) This Constitution and its operation may be suspended or upon such suspension restored or may be repealed by the resolution of a Special National Assembly summoned for that purpose by the National Executive and the resolution for such suspension or its restoration or such repeal shall require to be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of all financial members of the Party present and voting.

- (B) Upon the repeal of the Constitution and the non-promulgation of any replacement thereof the Party shall be dissolved.
- (C) For the avoidance of doubt where the context so requires within the ambit of this Constitution the singular shall include the plural and words in the masculine gender shall include the feminine.

#### **ARTICLE 27 - THE POLITICAL LEADER**

Subject to the provisions of this Constitution the Political Leader shall be responsible to the Party for the execution of its political affairs and in the discharge of those responsibilities he shall in his discretion act in consultation with such officers and/or institutions of the Party as he considers necessary.

#### **ARTICLE 28 - THE DEPUTY POLITICAL LEADERS**

Three Deputy Political Leaders shall be elected by the one man / one vote system of Party members at the election of other officers of the National Executive.

The Deputy Political Leaders shall assist the Political Leader in the execution of his duties and responsibilities in his relations with the Party and in matters affecting the relations of the Party with the electorate.

Any of the Deputy Political Leaders shall perform the functions of the Political Leader of the Party whenever the Political Leader is out of the country and/or whenever required to do so by the Political Leader or otherwise if for any reason the Political Leader is incapacitated.

#### **ARTICLE 29 - STANDING COMMITTEES**

##### **(A) DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE**

- (i) **MEMBERS:**  
The Disciplinary Committee shall comprise TWELVE (12) members drawn from each of the following:-
  - (a) SIX (6) members appointed by the National Executive.
  - (b) SIX (6) members appointed annually by the National Congress.

A member of the National Executive shall not be eligible to be a member of the Disciplinary Committee.
- (ii) **MEETINGS:**  
Members of the Committee shall hold office for ONE (1) year. The Disciplinary Committee shall meet as often as it is necessary for the prompt determination of matters referred to it.
- (iii) **QUORUM AND TIME:**  
At a meeting of the Disciplinary Committee SIX (6) members shall constitute a quorum,
- (iv) **OFFICERS:**  
The Chairman shall be appointed by the National Executive. The Committee at its first meeting shall elect annually from among its members the following other officers:-
  - (a) Vice Chairman
  - (b) Secretary
  - (c) Assistant Secretary
- (v) **FUNCTIONS:**  
(a) The Disciplinary Committee shall be responsible for all matters of discipline in the Party and shall hear and determine charges brought against a member, unit, organ, committee or other functionary of the Party by the National Executive.

- (b) The members of the Committee shall, for the purpose of discharging their responsibilities, have the power to call for and shall have access to all books, records, documents of the Party to be produced before it.
  - (c) In hearing and determining of any matter referred to it, the Committee shall observe the principles of natural justice and in particular a member charged with any disciplinary offence shall be allowed to name any other member to assist him in his defense.
  - (d) The Committee, where it considers that the circumstances so warrant, may request any member, unit, organ or committee or other functionary of the Party against which any charge or allegation is preferred by it to submit if he or it so desires within a fixed time his or its defense in writing and may in its discretion and in accordance with such procedure as it shall devise but without obligation to convene any formal hearing, having regard to the defense set out, determine such charge or matter.
  - (e) The Committee shall transmit its findings and recommendations in writing to the National Executive upon any matter referred to it as expeditiously as possible after determination thereof upon which the National Executive may in its deliberate discretion act or otherwise refer the same to the National Congress to its determination pursuant to Article 11 (G).
- (vi) VOTING:
- (a) Decisions of the Committee shall be by simple majority.
  - (b) Voting by the Committee on any matter shall be by secret ballot.

- (vii) REPORTS:  
The Committee shall submit:-
  - (a) Quarterly reports on its activities to the National Executive.
  - (b) An Annual Report to the National Executive.

(B) EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- (i) MEMBERS:  
The Education Committee shall comprise:-
  - (a) the Education Officer of the Party
  - (b) the Youth Arm Officer
  - (c) the Public Relations Officer
  - (d) Women's Affairs Officer
  - (e) All Constituency Education and Research Officers
  - (f) Policy and Strategy Officer
  - (g) The Research Officer of the Party.
 The National Executive shall have the discretion to appoint persons and provide resources to assist the Committee in furtherance of the fulfillment of its aims and objects.
- (ii) QUORUM AND TIME:  
At meetings of the Committee EIGHT (8) members shall comprise a quorum provided that if at a duly constituted meeting after half an hour from the appointed time for commencing the meeting a quorum is not in attendance the meeting shall be adjourned to a fixed date at which date the members present shall constitute the required quorum for that meeting.
- (iii) OFFICERS:
  - (a) The Chairman of the Committee shall be the Education Officer of the Party.
  - (b) The Committee shall elect annually at its first meeting the following other Officers:-
    - (1) Vice-Chairman
    - (2) Secretary
    - (3) Assistant Secretary



- (iv) **TERMS OF REFERENCE:**
    - (a) The Committee shall be responsible for the social, political, economic and cultural education of the members of the Party in particular and the members of the public in general and shall take appropriate steps for the attainment of these objectives.
  - (v) **MEETINGS:**  
The Committee shall meet at least once per month.
  - (vi) **REPORTS:**  
The Committee shall, in accordance with the Constitution prepare for consideration of the National Executive:
    - (a) An Annual report on its activities.
    - (b) An Annual Action plan.
- (C) **RESEARCH COMMITTEE**
- (i) **MEMBERSHIP:**  
The Research Committee shall comprise fifteen members appointed by the National Executive. The Committee shall have the power to co-opt members of the Party to assist in its work. The Committee may interface with such available expertise as considered relevant to its deliberations
  - (ii) **QUORUM AND TIME:**  
At meetings of the Committee FIVE (5) members shall constitute a quorum provided that if at a duly constituted meeting after half an hour from the appointed time for commencing the meeting a quorum is not in attendance the meeting shall be adjourned to a fixed date at which date the members present shall constitute the required quorum for that meeting.
  - (iii) **OFFICERS:**  
The Officers of the Committee shall be the Chairman who shall be the Research Officer of the Party and the Secretary elected by the Committee from among its members.

- (iv) **FUNCTIONS:**  
The functions of the Committee shall be as follows:-
    - (a) to establish, maintain and control the archives and information systems of the Party;
    - (b) to prepare studies on social, economic, political and other subjects for consideration by the National Executive and for action by the Education Committee;
    - (c) to prepare and maintain data, records and statistics relating to Party and national elections.
  - (v) **POWERS:**  
In addition to preparing statements on subjects referred to it by the National Executive, the Committee shall have power to initiate studies on subjects upon which it considers the National Executive should be advised.
  - (vi) **MEETINGS:**  
The Committee shall meet as often as necessary, but in any case at least once per month.
  - (vii) **REPORTS:**  
The Committee shall in accordance with the Constitution prepare for consideration of the National Executive:
    - (a) An Annual report on its activities
    - (b) An Annual Action Plan
- (D) **PUBLIC RELATIONS AND PUBLICITY**
- (i) **MEMBERS:**  
The Committee shall comprise:-
    - (a) The Public Relations Officer of the Party, who shall be the Chairman.
    - (b) The Public Relations Officer of each Constituency.
    - (c) The Public Relations Officer of the National Congress of Women.
    - (d) The Public Relations Officer of the National Youth Assembly.
    - (e) FIVE (5) other members appointed by the National Executive.

- (f) For the avoidance of doubt all media interviews, press releases and official Publications of the Party shall be subject to the general direction of the National Executive.
- (ii) **QUORUM AND TIME:**  
At meetings of the Committee TEN (10) members shall constitute a quorum provided that if at a duly constituted meeting after half an hour from the appointed time for commencing the meeting a quorum is not in attendance the meeting shall be adjourned to a fixed date at which date the members present shall constitute the required quorum for that meeting.
- (iii) **OFFICERS:**  
The Committee shall elect annually, at its first meeting the following officers:-
  - (a) Vice Chairman
  - (b) Secretary
  - (c) Assistant Secretary
- (iv) **TERMS OF REFERENCE:**  
The Committee shall be responsible
  - (a) for analyzing and evaluating public thought and sentiment towards the Party;
  - (b) for keeping constantly before the public eye, the aims, objects and achievements of the Party and identifying these with the public interest;
  - (c) for recommending to the National Executive such action as it may deem necessary to counteract criticisms and propaganda which affects the Party;
  - (d) for printing, publishing and circulating a regular Party newspaper, newsletter and pamphlets in an effort to promote the aims and objects of the Party;
  - (e) for setting up and administering a Party shop where articles and paraphernalia of the Party can be sold;
  - (f) for recommending to the National Executive ways and means of promoting the Party;

- (g) for finding out and reporting to the National Executive the sentiments of the country and membership of the Party on any proposed Action of Government.
- (v) **MEETINGS:**  
The Committee shall meet at least once per month.
- (vi) **REPORTS:**  
The Committee shall, in accordance with the Constitution, prepare for the consideration of the National Executive:-
  - (a) Quarterly reports on its activities.
  - (b) An Annual Action Plan.
  - (c) An Annual Report on its working for the previous year.
- (E) **ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**
  - (i) **MEMBERS AND OFFICERS:**  
The Elections Committee shall comprise:-
    - (a) The Elections Officer who shall be Chairman and other persons appointed by the National Executive. The Ex-Officio members of the Committee shall be:
      - (1) The Political Leader
      - (2) The Deputy Political Leader
      - (3) The Chief Whip
      - (4) The Party Chairman
      - (5) Treasurer
      - (6) The Public Relations Officer
      - (7) Youth Affairs Officer
      - (8) Women's Affairs Officer
  - (ii) **OFFICERS:**  
The Committee shall elect annually, at its first meeting the following officers:-
    - (a) Vice Chairman
    - (b) Secretary
    - (c) Assistant Secretary

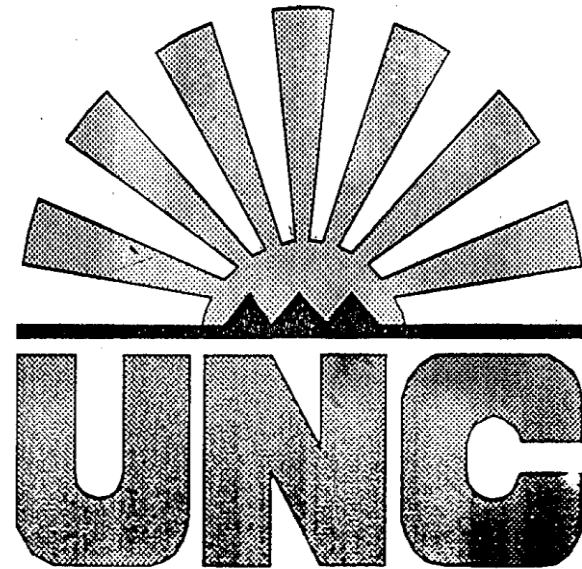
- (iii) **QUORUM AND TIME:**  
At the meetings of the Committee SIX (6) members shall constitute quorum provided that if at a duly constituted meeting after half an hour from the appointed time for commencing the meeting a quorum is not in attendance the meeting shall be adjourned to a fixed date at which date the members present shall constitute the required quorum for that meeting.
- (iv) **POWERS AND DUTIES:**  
The Committee shall be:-
- (a) Responsible for ensuring that the elections machinery of Constituencies are well organized.
  - (b) Ensuring that Constituency Councils and/or Party Groups have the Party supporters in their respective Constituencies registered to vote well in advance of national and municipal Elections.
  - (c) To coordinate with the National Executive and/or Strategy Committee in ensuring that all plans relating to public meetings, the Manifesto for elections, propaganda documents and statements are strategically and effectively distributed.
  - (d) To work in liaison with Constituency Elections Officers to ensure that suitable Election Campaign Managers for each Constituency are appointed.
  - (e) To submit a report to the National Executive on a quarterly basis.
  - (f) To set up Committees to assist it in its duties and functions in pursuance of which it may deploy such available expertise as it considers necessary.
  - (g) To keep proper records of all public address systems and to maintain in good repair and under proper supervision the elections apparatus and paraphernalia of the Party.

- (h) To work in association with the Public Relations Department of the Party.
  - (i) To prepare and manage the public address systems and platforms for meetings arranged by the Party.
  - (j) To make suitable security arrangements at all public meetings.
- (F) **THE POLICY AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE**
- (i) The Policy and Strategy Committee shall be chaired by the Policy and Strategy Officer and in his absence his nominee who shall also be a member of the Committee. Other members of the Committee shall be:-
- (a) The Political Leader
  - (b) The Leader of Party's Business in the House of Representatives
  - (c) The Youth Affairs Officer or a representative of the National Assembly of Youth
  - (d) Two persons appointed by the Political Leader
  - (e) Women's Affairs Officer or a representative of the National Women's Congress
  - (f) Such other members as the Committee may appoint from time to time.
- (ii) **TERMS OF REFERENCE:**  
The terms of reference of the Committee shall be:-
- (a) To consider and report to the National Executives pending and/or contemplated and/or desirable legislation.
  - (b) To prepare draft manifestoes for elections for the consideration of the National Executive.
  - (c) To prepare draft statements of the Policy on the appropriate matters for the consideration of the National Executive.
  - (d) To review on an ongoing basis existing policies of the Party and to focus on perspectives for the future in the light of changing circumstances.
  - (e) To determine the strategy of the Party for all elections.

- (f) To promote effective liaison between a UNC Government and the Party.
- (g) Establish other sub-committees of different Sectors
- (iii) **SUB COMMITTEES:**
  - (a) The Committee may set up Sub-Committees and working parties with specific terms of reference as may be considered necessary.
  - (b) The Committee may interface with such available expertise as is considered relevant to its deliberations.
- (iv) **MEETINGS:**  
The Committee shall meet at such time as summoned by the Policy and Strategy Officer or the Political Leader.
- (v) **REPORTS:**  
The Committee shall prepare for the consideration of the National Executive:
  - (a) An Annual Report on its activities.
  - (b) An Annual Action Plan.
- (G) **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**
  - (i) **MEMBERS:**  
The Membership Committee shall comprise of:
    - (a) The Party Organiser.
    - (b) The General Secretary.
    - (c) Five (5) other members to be determined by the National Executive.
  - (ii) **QUORUM AND TIME:**  
At meetings of the Committee FOUR (4) members shall comprise a quorum provided that if at a duly constituted meeting after half an hour from the appointed time for commencing the meeting a quorum is not in attendance the meeting shall be adjourned to a fixed date at which date the members present shall constitute the required quorum for that meeting.

- (iii) **OFFICERS:**  
The Chairman of the committee shall be the Party Organiser. The Committee shall elect annually, at its first meeting the following officers:-
  - (a) Vice Chairman
  - (b) Secretary
  - (c) Assistant Secretary
- (iv) **FUNCTIONS:**  
The functions of the Membership Committee shall be:-
  - (a) To increase the membership of the Party.
  - (b) To scrutinize all applications for membership in the Party referred to it by the National Executive and to make recommendations thereon to it.
  - (c) To pay careful attention to and conduct such inquiries as may be necessary prior to recommending acceptance or rejection of applicants who are known to be members of organizations whose principles and programmes are contrary to or inconsistent with those of the Party.
  - (d) To appoint such Sub-Committees as may be necessary for the discharge of its functions.
- (v) **VOTING:**
  - (a) Decisions of the Committee shall be by simple majority.
  - (b) Voting by the Committee on any matter shall be by secret ballot.
- (vi) **REPORTS:**  
The Committee shall submit for the consideration of the National Executive:
  - (a) a monthly report on its activities;
  - (b) an annual report on its working for the previous year.

## APPENDIX A



The National Executive appointed a Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Tim Gopeesingh in August 2003 to review the Constitution of the United National Congress and to make recommendations for changes. The Committee undertook a series of consultations throughout the country and with the various Arms and Institutions of the Party.

The Draft was presented to the National Congress on October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2003, agreed to at a Special National Congress on February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2004 and ratified at a National Assembly on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2004

Sun rays: PANTONE Process Yellow  
Three Hills: Black  
UNC: PANTONE Orange 021  
Outline: Black