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BHUTAN TENDREL PARTY

2022

“If we want to remain exceptional, our efforts should also be exceptional. As a small, developing country sandwiched between two giant neighbours, in an ever-changing world, our only option is to be extraordinary. We must focus all our current efforts to build strong foundations of an extraordinary nation.”

-His Majesty The King

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | |
|----|---|----|
| 1 | PREAMBLE | 3 |
| 2 | ARTICLE I. Name and Symbol | 4 |
| 3 | ARTICLE II. Ideology and Principles | 4 |
| 4 | ARTICLE III. Vision | 4 |
| 5 | ARTICLE IV. Mission | 4 |
| 6 | ARTICLE V. Definitions | 5 |
| 7 | ARTICLE VI. Party Allegiance and Commitments | 5 |
| 8 | ARTICLE VII. Core Values | 6 |
| 9 | ARTICLE VIII. Structure of the Party | 6 |
| 10 | ARTICLE IX. General Assembly | 8 |
| 11 | ARTICLE X. Party Executive Committee | 9 |
| 12 | ARTICLE XI. National Advisory Committee | 11 |
| 13 | ARTICLE XII. Party Secretariat | 11 |
| 14 | ARTICLE XIII. Dzongkhag Offices | 12 |
| 15 | ARTICLE XIV. Dzongkhag Coordinator | 13 |
| 16 | ARTICLE XV. Other Committees | 13 |
| 17 | ARTICLE XVI. Party President | 13 |
| 18 | ARTICLE XVII. General Secretary | 14 |
| 19 | ARTICLE XVIII. Treasurer | 14 |
| 20 | ARTICLE XIX. Party Membership | 14 |
| 21 | ARTICLE XX. Party Obligation | 16 |
| 22 | ARTICLE XXI. Party Conduct | 16 |
| 23 | ARTICLE XXII. Nomination of Candidates for Election to National Assembly | 16 |
| 24 | ARTICLE XXIII. Dispute Resolution | 17 |
| 25 | ARTICLE XXIV. Party Accounts and Financial Management | 17 |
| 26 | ARTICLE XXV. Dissolution of Party | 17 |
| 27 | ARTICLE XXVI. Interpretation and Amendment of the Charter. | 18 |

CHARTER OF BHUTAN TENDREL PARTY

PREAMBLE

Bhutan is at a cusp of change. It has reached an inflection point and the monumental transformation taking place currently are all geared towards building a strong national character. The Character of our democracy, our society and our economy, will have a lasting impact on our future generation. The country just endured one of the worst public health crises of its time, severely impacting the economy. It is the need of the hour to revive people's confidence in governance and democracy. Our actions today will determine the course of our future and we have no choice but to work with the greatest sense of urgency.

Inspired by our visionary monarchs in institutionalizing a vibrant Democratic Constitutional Monarchy for the well-being of the nation;

Motivated by His Majesty's vision of transformed Bhutan;

Convinced that democracy is indispensable for the stability, peace and development of the country;

Conscious that a strong political party with national appeal is the need of the 21st Century;

Recognizing that people's participation is fundamental to nurture democratic principles and driven by people's support from all sections of the society;

Confident that we will rise to the call of the nation at all times and deliver;

Committed to place the interests of the nation and the people before anything else;

Considering that solidarity among and cooperation between people, institutions and leaders is crucial for the nation's economic and social progress;

Bearing in mind that promotion and protection of national sovereignty is a prerequisite for a democratic society, and recognizing the importance of good governance in all spheres; and

Empowered by the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan and in keeping with the provisions of the Election Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan, and the Political Parties Rules of the Kingdom of Bhutan, We, the members of BHUTAN TENDREL PARTY give unto ourselves this Charter and pledge to abide by its provision laid hereunder.

ARTICLE I
Name and Symbol

- 1 The party shall be called “Bhutan Tendrel Party,” a people’s party redefining the character of the People and of the Nation.
- 2 Its election symbol shall be an ‘Elephant’ symbolizing strength, stability and wisdom in fulfilling our mandates in a harmonious manner. It depicts unwavering loyalty of Bhutan Tendrel Party to the Tsa-Wa-Sum.

ARTICLE II
Ideology

- 1 The Party shall follow the principles of Democratic Constitutional Monarchy. All plans, policies and programs shall be directed at meeting the optimum welfare and enhancing the livelihood of the people. Governance will be participatory, and the interests of special and marginalized groups will be fairly included.

ARTICLE III
Vision

1. Our vision is to create a Bhutanese society that is safe, self-reliant, healthy, resilient, united, and inclusive and empowered to harness the opportunities of the 21st century based on the principles of equality, solidarity, diversity and fairness.

ARTICLE IV
Mission

1. Upholding His Majesty, the King’s Transformation Initiatives.
2. Bringing social justice, sustainable development, economic reform and equitable development across the country.
3. Creating a safe environment for Bhutanese citizens with a special focus on the elderly, people with special needs, women and children.
4. Creating professional, resilient, competent and productive work force through skilling, up-skilling and re-skilling opportunities.
5. Fostering employment opportunities for youth by supporting the growth of private sector, equitable development of all the regions and facilitating overseas employment.
6. Facilitating better maternal and child care facilities to improve the current birth rate.
7. Empowering Bhutanese citizens with digital skills and facilities for faster service delivery, better governance, transparency, safety, security and economic growth.
8. Inspiring and facilitating self-learning and lifelong learning for people of all ages in order to address digital divide among different generations and communities.
9. Encouraging active participation of the citizens in the democratic process by building people’s trust and confidence in democracy.

10. Strengthening national unity and patriotism through equitable policies and opportunities for all sections of the society.
11. Strengthening regional ties of friendship with our valued neighbors and international society while upholding the sovereignty of the country.
12. Encouraging transparency and fairness in all sectors of the society to curb corruption.

ARTICLE V
Definitions

1. In this Charter, unless the context otherwise requires;
 - a) “Commission” means the Election Commission of Bhutan;
 - b) “Election Act” means the Election Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2008;
 - c) “General Assembly” means the highest policy making body of Bhutan Tendrel Party;
 - d) “Party Executive Committee” is the highest decision-making body of the Bhutan Tendrel Party;
 - e) “President” means the head of the Bhutan Tendrel Party;
 - f) “General Secretary” means the Chief Executive Officer of the Bhutan Tendrel Party;
 - g) “Treasurer” is an office-bearer entrusted with the responsibilities prescribed in article XVIII of this charter;
 - h) The words importing the masculine gender shall include feminine gender; and
 - i) The words importing the singular number shall include the plural number and vice versa, unless the context otherwise requires.

ARTICLE VI
Party Allegiance and Commitments

- 1 Bhutan Tendrel Party shall:
 - a) Bear true faith and allegiance to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo and the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan;
 - b) Uphold the sovereignty, national security, unity and integrity of the Kingdom;
 - c) Ensure a broad-based membership with representation from all Dzongkhags;
 - d) Commit itself to the advancement of democracy and social, cultural, political and economic growth of Bhutan;
 - e) Advance socio-economic development of the nation through innovation and technology;
 - f) Protect and uphold the freedom of speech, opinion, expression and press;
 - g) Empower women, youth and other marginalized groups;
 - h) Strengthen the health and education services with emphasis on standards, quality and accessibility while ensuring free access to basic public health services in both modern and traditional medicine;

- i) Continue to provide free primary and secondary education and promote technical and professional education;
- j) Abide by the rule of law at all times including the Election Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2008; Public Election Fund Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2008; and all Rules and Regulations made thereunder.

ARTICLE VII

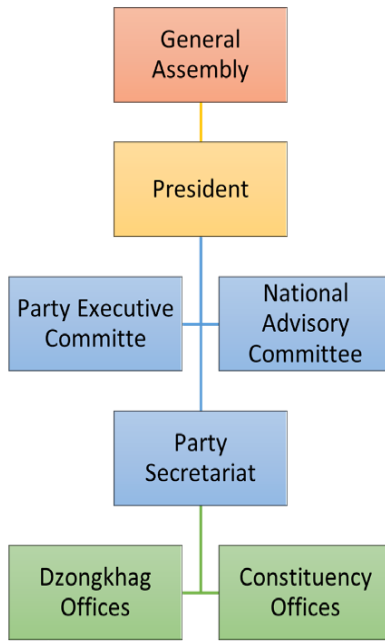
Core Values

1. Bhutan Tendrel Party's core values are:
 - a) **Integrity** - Conduct our duties with honesty and highest level of democratic governance.
 - b) **Excellence** – Strive for the highest possible standards while conducting our duties.
 - c) **Responsibility** - Take responsibility to create a conducive environment for GNH values.
 - d) **Transparency** - Carry out our duties and responsibility with the highest ethical and moral standards.
 - e) **Accountability** - Take accountability for the welfare of the people of Bhutan.

ARTICLE VIII

Structure of the Party

1. The principal organs of the Bhutan Tendrel Party shall be:
 - a) General Assembly
 - b) Party Executive Committee
 - c) Party Secretariat
 - d) Dzongkhag Offices
2. The Party shall have a President who shall be the head of the Party, two Vice Presidents, a General Secretary and a Treasurer.
3. The party shall have its Head Office in Thimphu and its Dzongkhag offices in every dzongkhag.
4. The highest decision-making body of the Party shall be the Party Executive Committee.
5. The Party shall institute an internal audit unit headed by the internal auditor, serving as an independent body to provide check and balance on financial matters.
6. The Bhutan Tendrel Party's organogram is structured as follows:



ARTICLE IX
General Assembly

1. Composition and Protocol of the General Assembly

- a) All registered members of the Party shall be entitled to attend the General Assembly and they shall enjoy equal rights irrespective of their posts or positions in the Party.
- b) A General Assembly session must be attended by the Executive Committee members, dzongkhag coordinators and the coordinators from constituencies.
- c) All General Assembly session meetings and their agenda shall be announced reasonably in advance, or by sending direct invitation to the members.
- d) The General Assembly shall be the highest policy making body providing authority, control and direction for the Party.
- e) The General Assembly shall convene once a year or as decided by the Party Executive Committee and it shall be called the Annual Convention.
- f) The President shall preside over all sessions of the General Assembly. In his/her absence, either of the Vice Presidents shall preside over the sessions. In the absence of both the President and Vice Presidents, the Party Executive Committee shall decide on an interim Chairperson to preside over the General Assembly session.
- g) The General Assembly may discuss any questions or matters within the scope of the Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided in the Charter.
- h) A special/extraordinary session may be held as per the decision of the Party Executive Committee, with a clearly defined agenda, as and when necessary.
- i) The General Secretary of the Party shall inform, all the Party members, in writing, of the dates and venue of the General Assembly, at least one month before the meeting.
- j) The General Secretary of the Party shall give a written notification to all members on the provisional agenda at least one week before the General Assembly.

2. Rules of Procedure

- a) Any member may submit a proposal or resolution in writing to the Party Executive Committee for discussion in the General Assembly through their respective constituency coordinator/Dzongkhag office or through the Party Secretariat at Thimphu.
- b) A member may submit such proposal or resolution to the General Secretary at least two weeks before the proposed date of the General Assembly.
- c) The Party Executive Committee shall consider the submission and inform the proposer in writing on its decision for inclusion or exclusion from the provisional agenda.

- d) At least two members shall second a proposal/resolution submitted by another member for discussion in the Convention.
- e) Decisions in all meetings of the Party shall normally be taken by consensus.
- f) When all efforts fail to reach a consensus, decisions may be taken by a simple majority vote of the members present. In case of a tie, the Chairperson shall cast a deciding vote.
- g) Any proposal to change the Party Charter shall require support by a two-thirds majority in a Party meeting.
- h) The General Secretary shall maintain and circulate the minutes of the General Assembly to the members. The Chairperson shall have full authority to control the proceedings of the General Assembly so that the deliberations are fruitful and orderly.

3. Functions

The main functions of the General Assembly will consist of the following but not be limited to:

- a) Availing prior approval from the Election Commission of Bhutan and make amendments to the Party Charter, Name, Symbol and Party Ideology;
- b) Electing the President, Vice Presidents, General Secretary and Treasurer of the Party keeping in view the need to maintain regional representation;
- c) Electing members from the General Assembly to the Party Executive Committee as per the criteria laid down by the General Assembly;
- d) Considering the annual report of the Party;
- e) Approving the annual budget of the Party;
- f) Approving the annual programme of work of the Party Executive Committee; and
- g) Deciding on any other matter brought to its attention as per prescribed rules of the Party.

ARTICLE X Party Executive Committee

1. Membership and Procedure

- a) The Party Executive Committee shall consist of 15 members comprising the President, two Vice Presidents, General Secretary, Treasurer, National coordinator, five members from among the candidates and five party supporters/representatives.
- b) The President, two Vice Presidents, General Secretary, Treasurer and National Coordinator shall automatically become members of the Party Executive Committee by virtue of their position in the Party.
- c) The President shall nominate five members from among the candidates with representation of both elected and non-elected candidates.

- d) The National coordinator shall nominate five members representing party coordinators/ supporters/members, with a fair regional representation.
- e) The Party Executive Committee shall meet once every quarter or as and when called by the General Secretary with prior approval of the President.
- f) The President of the party shall serve as the chairperson of the Party Executive Committee.
- g) Two third of the Party Executive Committee members shall constitute a quorum to hold any Party Executive Committee meetings.
- h) All decisions of the Party Executive Committee shall be taken with a simple majority.
- i) The General Secretary shall be the member secretary of the Party Executive Committee and shall record all the minutes of the meetings.
- j) The Party shall encourage and promote equal representation of women in the Party Executive Committee.

2. Adoption of Charter

- a) The first Party Executive Committee meeting was convened by key party promoters (key members) to adopt the provisional Charter.
- b) The Charter is formally approved and endorsed by the first Party Convention.

3. Functions and Powers of the Party Executive Committee

The Party Executive Committee shall:

- a) Implement policy-decisions taken by the General Assembly;
- b) Submit recommendations on policy related issues;
- c) Coordinate the secretariat's activities and make appropriate decisions for the Party;
- d) Appoint a member to fill any vacancy on the Party Executive Committee until the next General Assembly;
- e) Appoint sub-committees on critical issues and provide recommendations to the party secretariat and members;
- f) Appoint, pay and dismiss staffs employed by the Party as per the rules and regulations set thereof;
- g) Purchase, take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise, acquire, movable or immovable property of any kind in furtherance of the objectives of the Party;
- h) Sell, exchange, lease, or otherwise dispose of any movable or immovable property or interest thereon in accordance with established national rules and practices;
- i) Build, construct, improve, develop and maintain any Party property;
- j) Make nomination of candidates for election to the National Assembly;

ARTICLE XI
National Advisory Committee

1. Membership

- a) The National Advisory Committee shall consist of a maximum of 11 members who shall be appointed by Party Executive Committee;
- b) The members shall be chosen keeping in view the need to maintain regional balance, diverse experiences and give due regard to the participation of women in the Party; and
- c) The members of the National Advisory Committee shall be selected from among the registered members in the Party.

2. Procedure

- a) The National Advisory Committee shall elect from among its members a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson and any other posts as deemed necessary to carry out its functions;
- b) The General Secretary or a nominee made by the Party Executive Committee shall attend the National Advisory Committee meetings as its Member-Secretary;
- c) The National Advisory Committee shall meet at least once a year. It can however meet more often if deemed necessary by the Chairperson;
- d) The National Advisory Committee meetings shall be presided over by the Chairperson, and the Vice-Chair in his/her absence;
- e) The decisions shall be taken as per the procedures laid down above for the General Assembly and Party Executive Committee; and
- f) The members of the National Advisory Committee can attend the Party Executive Committee meetings as observers.

3. Duties of the National Advisory Committee

- a) The National Advisory Committee shall provide advice to the Party Executive Committee on policies and strategies of the Party;
- b) The National Advisory Committee shall advise the Party Executive Committee on funding and financial sustainability. The National Advisory Committee shall monitor and evaluate the performance of the Secretariat and its wings and report to the Party Executive Committee on its findings; and
- c) The National Advisory Committee shall undertake any other assignments prescribed by the Party Executive Committee in the interest of the Party.

ARTICLE XII
Party Secretariat

1. There shall be a Party Secretariat based in Thimphu which will be headed by the General Secretary.
2. The Secretariat shall have the following wings, each to be headed by a Party member appointed by the Party Executive Committee who in turn will be supported by other staff to carry out the following functions:
 - a) Operation wing: Manage all affairs of the Party Secretariat including finances, direct and supervise the work of dzongkhag and constituency offices, maintain register of Party members, summon Party Conventions and keep all members fully informed of all-important activities.
 - b) Program & Research wing: The primary function is to gather information and maintain database for evidence-based decision making. To provide information to Party members to form, defend or oppose policies and manifesto. To keep track of current events and policy issues.
 - c) Media and communication wing: Responsible for providing information to the media and the public regarding the Party and its activities including the development of communication and campaign strategy and materials.
3. The secretariat shall establish any other wings as deemed to be in the interest of the Party and this shall be done only on the recommendation of the Party Executive Committee.

ARTICLE XIII
Dzongkhag Offices

1. The Party shall establish Dzongkhag offices headed by the Dzongkhag coordinator as determined by the Party Executive Committee and as per the requirements of the Election Commission of Bhutan.
2. Every constituency shall have a focal contact point that will function as the node for Party activities in the constituency.
3. The Party shall for all official purposes communicate with the Dzongkhags as well as with constituency focal points.
4. Wherever deemed appropriate, the Dzongkhag offices may also function as a constituency focal point for that particular constituency in which the office is located.
5. The party shall institute a Dzongkhag Co-ordination Committee to mobilize support and re- sources in the Dzongkhag.
6. One of the Party candidate from the constituency shall be the Chairperson of Dzongkhag Coordination Committee.
7. A Party candidate/appointee shall appoint a representative from among registered members to assist him/her and also to officiate in his/her absence.
8. Dzongkhag and constituency coordinators shall be appointed by the Dzongkhag

Coordination Committee with at least one representative from each Gewog and Thromde under that constituency.

9. The candidate representative shall serve as the member-secretary and shall maintain all official documents including minutes of the meeting, communication with the Party head office, list of Party members and book of accounts.

ARTICLE XIV Dzongkhag Coordinator

1. The functions of the Dzongkhag Coordinator:
 - a) The Dzongkhag Coordinator shall coordinate the activities of the constituencies.
 - b) Arrange logistics for the Party representatives and leaders during their visits to the constituencies and the Dzongkhag.
 - c) Liaise with the Election Commission of Bhutan or any other agency with due information of the Party Secretariat.
 - d) Any other functions as prescribed by the Party Executive Committee.

ARTICLE XV Other Committees

1. The Party shall establish any other committees with such functions as and when appropriate to further the mandate of the Party and in accordance with the national rules and regulations.

ARTICLE XVI Party President

1. The President of the Party shall hold both the post of the Party President and the post of the Prime Minister or the Opposition Leader.
2. If the President does not win the elections despite the party's win, an election will be held through a General Assembly to elect another President. In such an event, the Party Executive Committee will nominate three candidates
3. The President shall have the following major responsibilities:
 - a) To provide effective leadership to the Party;
 - b) To take responsibility for his/her actions as the head of the Party;
 - c) To represent the Party in various national and international forums;
 - d) To lead various teams within the Party at national and local levels; and
 - e) To delegate clear responsibilities to other members in the Party hierarchy within the broad guidelines given in the Charter.

ARTICLE XVII
General Secretary

1. Under the direction of the President and Party Executive Committee, the General Secretary of the Party shall:
 - a) Convene the General Assembly, any Special Party Conferences and all meetings of the Party Executive Committee;
 - b) Prepare supporting documents for the above meetings including their agendas;
 - c) Make all correspondences under the directions of the Party Executive Committee;
 - d) Maintain records of all-Party members;
 - e) Maintain records of General Assembly, Party Executive Committee and National Advisory Committee meetings;
 - f) Keep all members fully informed of important decisions of the Party Executive Committee;
 - g) Inform members of the date fixed for the General Assembly and other relevant events;
 - h) Be assisted by an Assistant General Secretary, if appointed; and
 - i) Facilitate registration and de-registration of members.

ARTICLE XVIII
Treasurer

1. Under the direction of the President and Party Executive Committee, the treasurer of the party shall:
 - a) Manage the funds of the Party including incomes and expenditures;
 - b) Issue proper receipts for all payments made to and by the Party;
 - c) Maintain and operate bank accounts;
 - d) Sign all cheques and other financial instruments along with other signatories authorized by the Party Executive Committee;
 - e) Be responsible for drawing up the Financial Statement and Accounts for presentation to the General Assembly;
 - f) Be responsible for correspondence on all financial matters with the Election Commission, in accordance with existing electoral laws and rules; and
 - g) Respond to all audit issues relating to financial matters.

ARTICLE XIX
Party Membership

1. **Membership**

The Party membership shall be open to any Bhutanese citizen who is a registered voter but not a member of any other political party, civil service, armed forces, the National Council or Local Government and who undertakes to comply with this Charter and the conditions of membership as given below:

- a) Membership will be broad based and voluntary.
- b) All members must pay a one-time Registration fee of Nu 100 and annual Membership

fee of Nu 200.

- c) The membership shall be approved by the Party's Dzongkhag Offices and a Membership Card shall be issued to the member by the Party's Secretariat.
- d) Upon the acceptance of membership, notice shall be given to him/her, with a request to pay the amount of his first subscription to the Treasurer within 15 (fifteen) days from the date of issue of notice.
- e) The membership shall be revoked if the subscription is not paid within 15 days, unless such deadline is extended by a competent authority in the Party.
- f) A member of the Party may withdraw his/her membership by notifying the Dzongkhag party office in writing.
- g) The Party shall neither solicit nor accept candidates for any elective posts from a member who is disqualified under 179, 180 and 181 of the Election Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2008.
- h) A member shall be loyal to the King and country, and uphold the Constitution of Bhutan.
- i) A member shall abide by the Charter, principles, policies and objectives of the Party.
- j) Application for membership shall be made using the Party membership application form.
- k) It shall be the duty of the Dzongkhag/Constituency Committee and the General Secretary to consider carefully the suitability of the applicant for admission as a member, giving due regard to the ideals and guidelines of the Party.
- l) Upon approval of a member, he/she shall be asked to pay the membership fees as fixed by the Party Executive Committee within a stipulated date. An applicant shall become a member only after making full payment of his/her subscription.
- m) The membership shall cease by death, resignation or removal.

2. Discipline

- a) In the best interest of the Party, the Party Executive Committee shall institute disciplinary action against any member including suspension or removal from a post or expulsion from the Party for anti-Party actions or behaviors. The Party Executive Committee shall formulate rules and regulations for this purpose.
- b) An expelled member shall have the right of appeal to the General Assembly or a body constituted by it for this purpose.
- c) An expelled member may be re-inducted into the Party on the recommendation of the Party Executive Committee.

3. Term

- a) The term of all post holders or office bearers in the Party except support staff shall ordinarily be for four years. He/she may hold an office for a maximum of one more term, subject to endorsement by the General Assembly; and
- b) He/she can resign at any time giving a month's written notice to the General Secretary.

ARTICLE XX
Party Obligation

1. The party shall abide by the laws, rules and regulations as prescribed by the Election Commission of Bhutan (ECB) in relation to functioning of political parties, elections and funding.
2. The Party shall promptly communicate to the ECB on any changes in the Party structure, its offices, office-bearers, address, or any other changes.
3. The Party shall submit all documents, reports and any other information as required by the ECB. It shall follow the reporting mechanism instituted by the ECB and abide by the processes established by it.
4. It shall submit a consolidated statement of the annual accounts, duly audited by the Royal Audit Authority, to the ECB in such form as prescribed under the Public Election Fund Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan. It shall contain, *inter alia*, the following information:-
 - a) Annual income and expenses;
 - b) Sources of funds;
 - c) Assets and liabilities; and
 - d) Campaign accounts after an election.

ARTICLE XXI
Party Conduct

1. The Party shall always strive to conduct itself in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Election Act of the Kingdom of Bhutan and the Rules and Regulations made therein.
2. The Party shall take stringent action, as determined by the Party Executive Committee, on the following activities:
 - a) Gambling of any kind, whether for stakes or otherwise, substance or drug abuse and any illegal practices shall be forbidden on the Party office's premises.
 - b) The Party funds shall not be used to pay the fines of members who have been convicted in a court of law.

ARTICLE XXII
Nomination of Candidates for Election to the National Assembly

1. The names of candidate for contesting the National Assembly elections may be suggested by the Party Secretariat, Dzongkhag Committees, National Advisory Committee or any other committee set up by the Party for this purpose.
2. The Committee shall be responsible for ensuring that all such nominations fulfill the minimum criteria laid down by the Election Commission of Bhutan.
3. The Party Executive Committee shall consider all such names and shall make the nomination of candidates for election to the National Assembly after a decision of the Party is taken with simple majority votes of the members present during a Party

Executive Committee meeting organized for the purpose.

4. The Party shall nominate the right number of candidates for the number of seats in the National Assembly.
5. All nominated candidates shall declare his/her assets and liabilities in the manner prescribed by the Election Commission of Bhutan.

ARTICLE XXIII **Dispute Resolution**

1. All dispute pertaining to the Party and its members shall be resolved as per the *dispute resolution process* adopted by the Party.

ARTICLE XXIV **Party Accounts and Financial Management**

1. The sources of income of the Party shall be strictly limited to the following three sources and their amounts not exceeding the ceilings prescribed by the Election Commission of Bhutan:
 - a) Registration fees;
 - b) Membership fees; and
 - c) Voluntary contributions from the registered members only.
2. The Treasurer will be responsible for maintaining and reporting on the accounts of the Party.
3. The Party shall not engage in any illegal strikes or demonstrations or in any disruptive or harmful activities against the King, country, and people; and
4. The Party shall not organize any lottery, whether confined to its members or not, in the name of the Party or its office-bearers, committee or members, unless approved by relevant Government authorities.

ARTICLE XXV **Dissolution of the Party**

1. The Party shall stand dissolved by a declaration of the Supreme Court of Bhutan as per Section 146 of the Election Act.

ARTICLE XXVI

Authority of Interpretation and Amendment of the Charter

1. The Party Executive Committee shall be the final authority on the interpretation of the Charter.
2. The Party Executive Committee shall propose to the General Assembly such amendments to the Charter as may be deemed desirable and necessitated by political circumstances.
3. The Dzongkha text shall be the authoritative text, if there exists any difference in the meaning between the Dzongkha and English text.