

Statutes of COVIAM – 2000

1. The Conference of the Visitors of Africa and Madagascar (abbreviated as COVIAM) is a not-for-profit body whose objective is the promotion and coordination of activities in various provinces, vice-provinces and missions in Africa and Madagascar.

2. The general purpose of COVIAM is to update the charism of St. Vincent, while taking into account the specific situation of the African continent; and to promote the unity, brotherhood, and collaboration of the Vincentians who work there.

3. To reach that purpose, COVIAM is committed to:
 - a) promoting information and collaboration, especially in the area of formation and of [missionary] activities;

 - b) reflecting on the problems of the continent and on our presence and mission in Africa;

 - c) looking for global solutions to common problems.

4. COVIAM will hold a general assembly at least every two years.

5. The general assembly of COVIAM is made up of representative members (Visitors, Vice-Visitors and Regional Superiors or their delegates). Also members of the general assembly, with voting right, are the Superior General or his delegate, and the Assistants General, if any are present. By way of exception, other persons, Vincentians or not, can also be admitted to the general assembly as experts or observers. They enjoy only the right to be present but not the right to vote.

6. The two languages used are English and French.

7. The general assembly of COVIAM elects for three years a president and vice-president, and an executive secretary who may be chosen from outside the members of the assembly. In this case he should be present at the meetings but without the right to vote.
8. The executive secretary is responsible for carrying out the decisions taken by COVIAM, and for distributing such information as may interest the Vincentians of Africa and Madagascar. With the agreement of the president and the vice-president, he will prepare the general assembly and other meetings that it decides to hold.
9. The executive secretary will also look after the decisions once they are taken. Each province will preserve its autonomy, and the decisions of COVIAM will be implemented in a province only after approval by the provincial council.
10. The executive secretary of COVIAM will keep in touch with the General Curia and with other Regional Conferences of Visitors.
11. Fees related to travel are the responsibility of each province or mission. The expenses incurred by the secretariat and by other activities of COVIAM are covered by a budget adopted by the general assembly.

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