

Structure and Functioning of United for Peace and Justice

As amended at 3rd UFPJ National Assembly - June 22-24, 2007.

I. MEMBERSHIP IN UFPJ

Any active local, state, regional or national organization, which is in agreement with the UFPJ Unity Statement and which agrees to work cooperatively and in good faith with other UFPJ organizations, shall be considered a member of UFPJ. Members are invited to send representatives to the UFPJ National Peace and Justice Assembly. All member groups will be put on appropriate UFPJ email and other mail lists, will receive regular notification about the work of UFPJ's working groups and other programmatic developments, can participate in UFPJ discussions about strategy, program and general direction, can propose candidates for the Steering Committee, and are encouraged to be active on at least one of UFPJ's working groups.

Member organizations of UFPJ are required to make an annual financial contribution and/or provide in-kind services on a sliding scale of \$50-\$1,000 or more. UFPJ recommends the following contributions:

- Local organization with no paid staff: \$50
- Local organization with paid staff: \$100
- National organization with no paid staff: \$200
- National organization with one paid staff: \$300
- National organization with more than one paid staff: \$500

UFPJ will send to its member organizations annual dues notices. Member organizations that cannot make an annual contribution of any amount may request a waiver from UFPJ. UFPJ will work with its member organizations to raise money for their annual financial contributions through the selling merchandise, holding house parties and other fundraisers, etc.

Member Groups are encouraged to assume greater leadership in UFPJ by running for the Steering Committee, serving on working groups and initiating proposals.

II. NATIONAL PEACE AND JUSTICE ASSEMBLY

The National Peace and Justice Assembly is the primary decision-making body of UFPJ, open to representatives from any grassroots, local, state, regional or national organization that agrees to the UFPJ unity statement and is willing to work cooperatively and in good faith with other UFPJ organizations to carry out that mission.

The Peace and Justice Assembly will meet at least every 18 months and is responsible for:

- ... Setting overall political direction and priorities for UFPJ
- ... Electing the Steering Committee
- ... Facilitating movement-building connections
- ... Reviewing and evaluating the work of UFPJ as a whole

UFPJ member groups are allocated voting representatives as follows:

- 2 per local or regional group
- 2 per national organization
- 1 per chapter (branch, affiliate or other subgroup) of a national organization or of UFPJ affiliates.

Recognizing the fluidity of the political landscape and relevant political and organizational conditions, the Steering Committee is empowered to make appropriate operational adjustments and alterations when implementing the plan of action developed and decided upon by the National Peace and Justice Assembly at the National Conference. However, to make any major changes in policy or practice the SC is responsible for organizing an accessible and substantive process of consultation with the National Peace and Justice Assembly. One form, for example, this consultation might take is a series of well-announced conference calls open to any representatives of UFPJ members organizations. The SC is responsible for developing other inclusive mechanisms for this consultation.

III. STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee is the decision-making body of UFPJ between National Assemblies. It will serve as a broad and representative leadership body made up of 40 participating organizations elected at the National Peace and Justice Assembly, 50% (20) from local or regional groups or coalitions, 50% (20) from national organizations.

Due to circumstances related to the timing of the UFPJ National Assembly in relation to the US Social Forum, the racial and youth composition of the UFPJ Assembly is likely to be much smaller than in past years. For this reason, the 2007 Assembly will elect 30 participating organizations, 50% (15) from local or regional groups or coalitions, 50% (15) from national organizations. The newly elected steering committee will then be empowered to add 10 additional members to adjust the composition of the Steering Committee to meet the guidelines outlined below.

To ensure the representation of local and regional groups on the Steering Committee, the National Assembly will vote for up to 15 local and regional representatives and up to 15 national representatives on separate ballots. Candidates for the Steering Committee can run on only one ballot: local/regional or national. National organizations with local/ regional chapters may run up to one candidate on the national ballot and up to two candidates on the local/regional ballot. Ballots containing votes for more than 15 candidates on either ballot will be disqualified. The top 15 vote-getters on each ballot will comprise the 30 initial members of the Steering Committee.

To ensure that the Steering Committee of UFPJ represents the diversity of the peace and justice constituencies in the United States, we adopt the following criteria:

- At least 50% of Steering Committee members must be women.
- At least 50% of Steering Committee members must be people of color.
- At least 20% must be youth and students (under 30)
- At least 15% must be Lesbian/Gay/Bi/Transgender-identified persons.

The Steering Committee is authorized to add groups to reach these minimums if they are not achieved via the election of representatives. The SC is also authorized, by a 2/3 majority vote, to add up to five new organizations, representing important new groups that either form or decide to join UFPJ. The SC is also authorized to add up to five former members of the SC as non-voting ex-officio members of the new SC to ensure organizational continuity and institutional memory. In addition to these specific criteria, representatives are strongly recommended to use as guidelines in electing representatives the necessity for geographic and political diversity, and full representation of key constituencies, including religious and labor activists. The SC must also ensure that some number of women, people of color, and youth representatives on the SC represent organizations made up of those constituencies.

Persons are elected to represent groups and the Steering Committee will develop procedures for a group to select an alternate representative if the person elected becomes unable to serve. Nominees do not have to be present to run for the Steering Committee but at the time of nomination must have confirmed their willingness to serve.

The Steering Committee is responsible for:

- ... Considering and making decisions regarding strategy and political issues between Assemblies
- ... Initiating and coordinating UFPJ program through meetings, the formation of working groups, and empowering a smaller Administrative Committee (see below)
- ... Endorsing events
- ... Approving the annual budget
- ... Hiring the national coordinator and working with her/him to define staff structure and procedures
- ... Selecting media spokespeople
- ... Deciding on new proposals and establishing whatever working groups are needed.
- ... Serving on working groups

Responsibilities and Expectations of Steering Committee Members

Steering Committee members are expected to actively participate in the work of UFPJ, including, but not limited to:

- Participating in regular, monthly conference calls
- Attending occasional face-to-face meetings (on average, three-four per year)
- Providing email feedback on proposals and other work between meetings

- Taking an active part in the work of UFPJ by convening working groups and participating in ad hoc sub-committees of the Steering Committee
- Raising funds for UFPJ
- Representing UFPJ at meetings, protests, rallies, and conferences
- Checking in with and being accountable to the organization they represent on the Steering Committee, including consulting with it about UFPJ proposals and policies
- Advancing the work of UFPJ within the context of its unity statement
- Meeting at the end of the UFPJ assembly to organize the Steering Committee and set a date for the first face-to-face meeting

Representatives of organizations who do not participate actively and regularly in the work of the Steering Committee will be asked by the Steering Committee to appoint an alternate representative from the same organization. Organizations appointing an alternate are encouraged to do so in a way in which UFPJ diversity goals are maintained.

An organization that is represented on the Steering Committee and does not participate actively and regularly in the work of the Steering Committee can be removed by the Steering Committee by a 2/3 vote. The Steering Committee will alert an organization that it is considering its removal from the Steering Committee before it does so and give the organization an opportunity to improve its participation. The new Steering Committee will set clear guidelines for the circumstances under which a group will be replaced due to lack of participation. The Steering Committee will appoint a replacement for any Steering Committee member removed for non-participation. The Steering Committee is encouraged to make this appointment in a way in which UFPJ diversity goals are maintained.

As the duly-elected leadership body, the Steering Committee has authority over all financial instruments and media (websites, listserves, email accounts, etc.) of United for Peace and Justice.

All of the groups represented on the UFPJ National Steering Committee should be asked to contribute to a travel pool to help even out the costs and ensure fuller participation at all meetings.

The Steering Committee will establish various working groups, permanent or temporary, as necessary, to develop the work of United for Peace and Justice. Those working groups shall be formed and will operate under the authority of the Steering Committee, with regular oversight carried out by the Administrative Committee.

A primary role for the Steering Committee will be to define staff roles and responsibilities. Staff can and should participate in the discussions and processes of the Steering Committee and other leadership bodies, but do not have voting rights in those leadership bodies. Individuals cannot simultaneously serve as their group's representative on the Steering Committee and on the national staff.

The Steering Committee will elect three Co-Chairs to serve as UFPJ spokespersons, chair and convene the leadership bodies, and act as trouble-shooters in maintaining the overall organizational and political health of UFPJ. The Steering Committee can empower other officers as necessary.

The Steering Committee will meet monthly via conference call and otherwise as it chooses. Meetings are open to all coalition members. Caucus listserves will be formed on which Steering Committee members can consult with caucuses they are identified with on a regular basis: People of Color/Women/ Youth/Queer.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

An Administrative Committee will be chosen by the Steering Committee, and will be comprised of 12 members, at least 2/3 of whom shall be Steering Committee members.

The Administrative Committee is accountable to the Steering Committee and is responsible for:

- ... Providing oversight and direction to the national staff
- ... Convening key working groups, including Fundraising, Media, Communications etc.

- ... Endorsing actions in emergency situations
- ... Approving periodic financial reports
- ... Developing policy recommendations for the Steering Committee regarding personnel or organizational issues
- ... Preparing for Steering Committee meetings

The Administrative Committee will meet every two weeks or as needed. Regular reports will be issued to the Steering Committee.

V. DECISION-MAKING AND REPORTING

There will be no proxy voting at the national Peace and Justice Assembly or in the elected leadership bodies.

In the leadership bodies of UFPJ (the Peace and Justice Assembly, Steering Committee and Administrative Committee), consensus will be the preferred mode of decision-making. Where consensus cannot be achieved, a 2/3 vote will be required, unless otherwise specified or agreed to.

50% will constitute a quorum in leadership bodies of UFPJ.

Minutes are to be kept of all decisions in all meetings of the Steering Committee, Administrative Committee and National Peace and Justice Assembly. UFPJ minutes and all financial reports shall be made available to all member groups.

To share information and solicit feedback from its member groups, the UFPJ staff and steering committee will conduct periodic phone banking, conference calls and direct mailings. In addition, the UFPJ staff will create and maintain a web-based system for member groups, to be used for reporting, surveying, information and resource sharing, as well as discussion and debate.

VI. INTERIM FUNCTIONING

Until a new Administrative Committee is chosen by the Steering Committee, the current interim Administrative Committee will continue to function.

The Steering Committee will make it a first order of business to define staff roles and a hiring process for the national coordinator(s), and other staff.

VII. OTHER UFPJ ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

Prior to a National Peace and Justice Assembly, the Steering Committee can authorize experimentation with new UFPJ structures where there is a desire to do so by our members. Changes to the basic UFPJ Organizational Structure can only be made at a National Peace and Justice Assembly by a 2/3's majority vote of representatives present.